

Watercolours, Chapter I

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Everyday Washout

*David Weiss' art is as good as The Velvet Underground's first record.
It is funny and heartbreaking; sexy, alive, understated, fearless,
pedestrian—everything I miss right now.*
– Emily Sundblad

Daniele Milvio's *Watercolours, Chapter I* exhibition poster takes after the poster for Paul Thomas Anderson's feature film *Magnolia* (1999). In one of the movie's most memorable scenes, frogs rain down on the San Fernando Valley. The downpour is torrential: careening cars into strip malls, splatting on sidewalks, interrupting a suicide attempt. Like the second Plague of Egypt in the *Book of Exodus*, the flood of frogs connects a cast from separate storylines, reminding us that their individual experiences share a geographical setting. The current pandemic—and the climate crisis—invite easy analogy to biblical plagues. Simultaneously triggering end time anxieties and compulsions, the ongoing moment of uncertainty underscores how distinctively collective events are experienced. But yet: marketing campaigns insist we are in it #AloneTogether, the willful naïveté that such shared experience might soften the separations of subjectivity or of market-shaped, strident individuality, are also present. It feels like the perfect moment to start a series of exhibitions featuring watercolors. The medium that is unambiguously ambivalent: watercolors are neither drawing nor painting—and somehow they're always both. The medium's liquidity begets speed, touch and mistakes, but it also encourages wistful strokes. Motifs in watercolor invite comparison to children's designs—but they more often than not insinuate mannerism and gravity. Simply put, aquarelle washes the everyday into an absurd daydream, rendering fantasies mundane in turn. That's what constitutes a fantasy: it feels unique, but everyone's got them.

But does everyone have graphic fantasies? Or maybe it's just some do some don't. A fantasy like making up a little story. Or replaying a scenario, embellished with *what ifs*. Remember sexual fantasies without sex, like in elementary school, elaborate scenarios that climax in kissing by the water fountain, things like that. Watercolor is ideal for daydreaming: it lets fantasy slip in easy. Can you catch yourself dreaming? Commit it to paper? Is that what's happening, like that's what watercolors are for? What if you waited for a taxi so long that you started to grow roots? Or skeleton arms salted your feet? Or you gave a blowjob with your pandemic mouth? *Watercolours, Chapter 1* brings together artists that suffuse the everyday with the fantastic, make space to move fast and play things out. To slip from limitless dreamscapes to the comfort of your own bedroom—and back.

Daniele Milvio made watercolors of the view from his bed—closet ajar, feet tented under the sheets—just before the lockdown. So this series takes on an eerily prophetic quality and continued unimpeded in happy isolation from the outside world. But the closet—something that can shut, caught up with shame—has had a recurring presence in his practice. A selection of works from 2007-8 take a look inside, a stack of folded shirts, printed wallpaper. In line with his evolving examination of domestic and architectural fixtures, he has also used the closet as a framing device, mounting a work in collage on wool inside of closet doors so that they could close and obscure the work entirely. He scrutinizes the domestic as a private space: structured to shroud secrets, skeletons in the closet. And then slices the house open like a delicate chicken breast, looking at interiors from the outside, the temptation of a dollhouse view. He pictures two skeleton arms reaching out of the closet to sprinkle salt on feet, setting the scene for the age-old torture technique in which a prisoner's feet were doused with salty water for a tethered, greedy goat to lick until the flesh wore away.

For Emily Sundblad, watercolors are for window gazing and longing for a tangle of sweaty limbs in a dark room somewhere. To picture Dolly Parton's beehive, to get carried away by the jungle and the creatures that prowl there. She started working in watercolor because it fit into a life lived on the go, though the medium has accompanied her in recent months of stasis, rendering studied views of Stockholm's rooftops from her window. Sundblad taps into the medium's propensity to move between reality and fantasy, hovering somewhere between memory, imagination, postcard and portrait. These imagined club scenes continue a series of erotic drawings, which the artist has returned to since illustrating Pierre Klossowski's *Living*

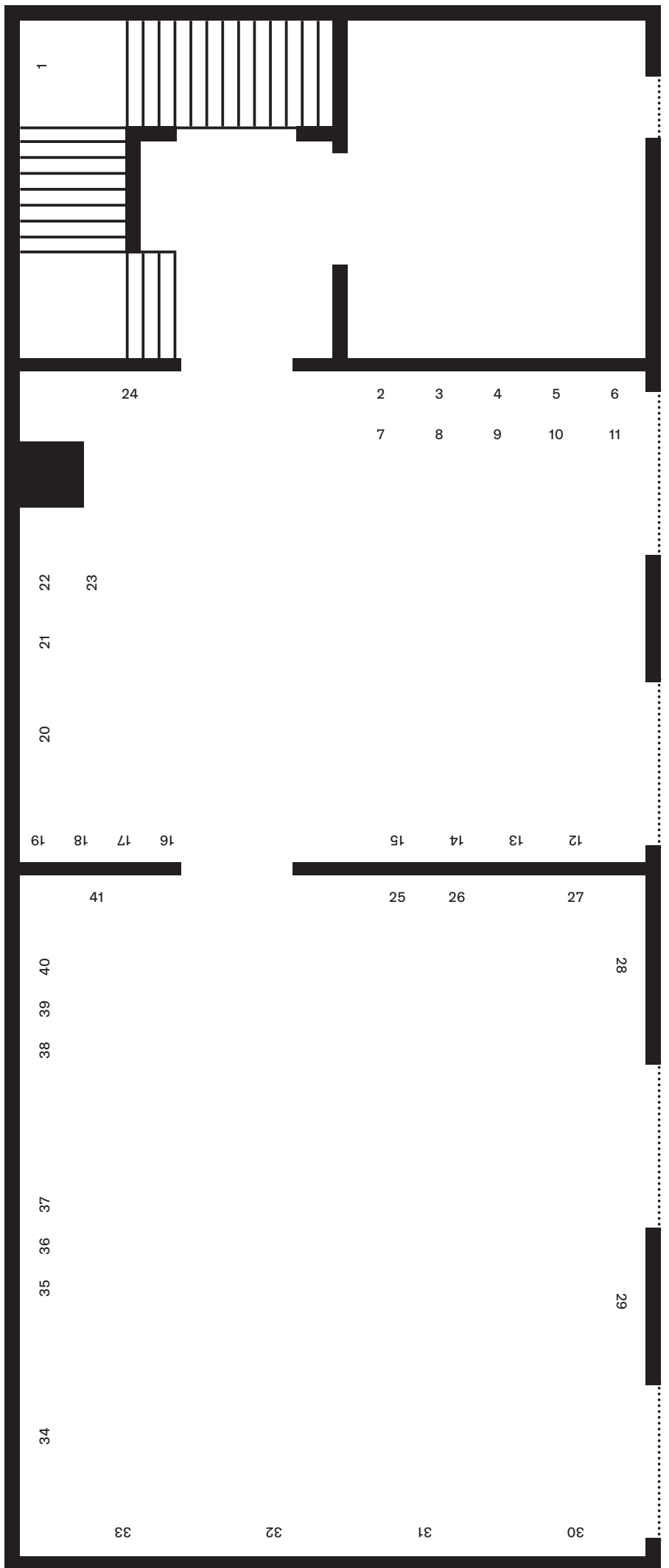
Currency with auto-erotica drawn with eyeliner on Colony Club stationary when she moved into the hotel during Hurricane Sandy. The stationary design becomes a part of the works themselves, a nod to Kippenberger and Salvo's hotel drawings. What was a very real life of endless travel, close contact and sexy shared spaces assumed a dream-like quality in a world abruptly grinded to a halt. The watercolors manifest desire for a lifestyle that distance rendered increasingly radical and essential to the artist. She'd risk a lot for it.

What if you stayed still so long you turned into a tree? Like you're waiting for a taxi, you want to catch a last-minute flight, but no car comes and planes aren't flying and you can't go anywhere so you start to sprout, grow roots. Life takes over. More water, less control. Urban Zellweger uses a lot of liquid in his watercolors on paper and to thin the paint in his works on canvas. His works carry their washed-outness with grace. Taking water as a subject matter as well, he imagines it as the source of transformations. Zellweger started working with tree imagery about a year ago. His trunks are usually in some stage of germination from humanness, still wearing jeans or a sweater like a vestige of a former state. For a while now, he has been interested in metamorphosis, through the classic transformative figure of the butterfly, for instance. A monsterish amphibian—possibly a rain frog—emerges from a slosh of blue-green like some sort of shapeshifting sea monster. In a collaboration in textile with artist and architect Ella Mathys, initiated with a curtain installation created last month, butterflies staccato paint washed fabrics.

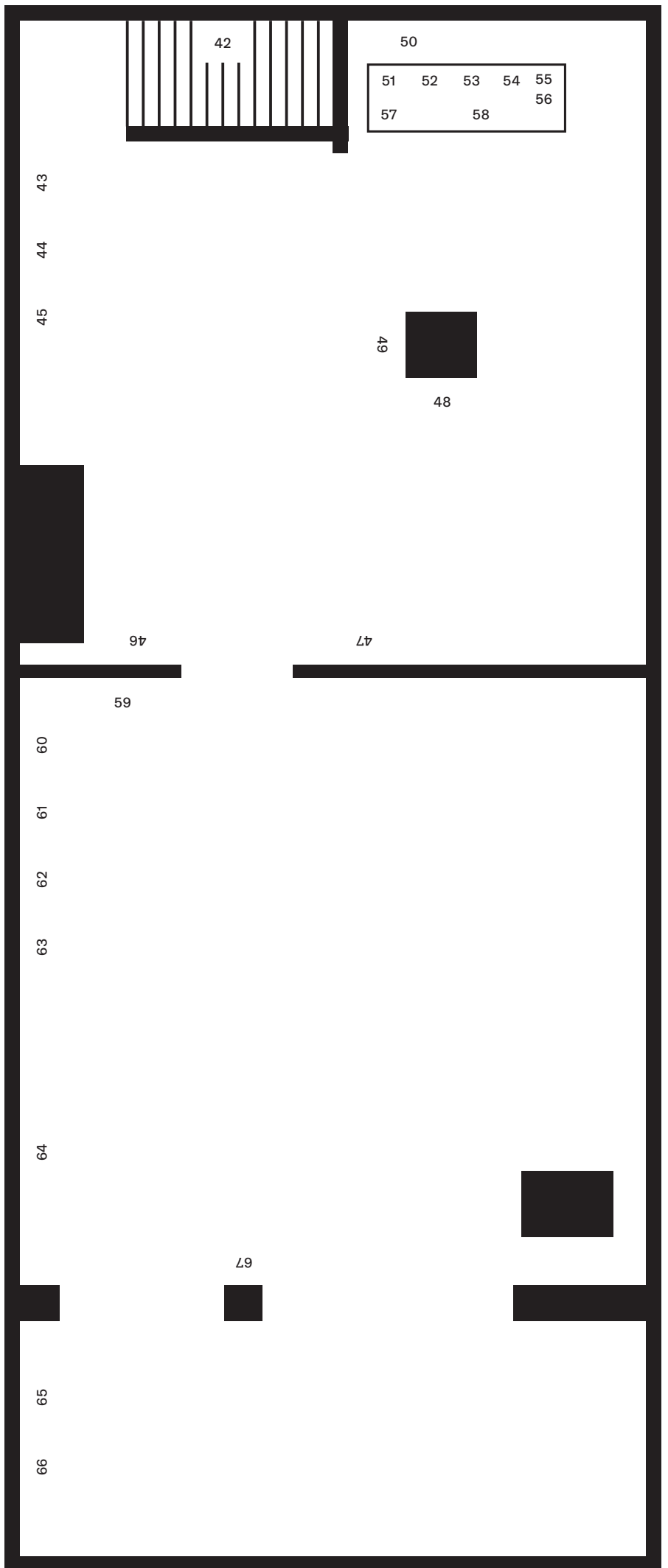
Amelie von Wulffen's watercolors cast foods and objects in petty human narratives. A melon lies on the sofa, knees knobby and lips thin, staring into space, while its partner chops charcuterie. A pair of sausages are couch shopping with a little one in toe, one leans over to stroke a ribbed green velvet couch as the other rolls its eyes. When New York painter Amy Silmman saw von Wulffen's watercolors in 2011, she thought of them as "a lampoon of our failings." Von Wulffen rakes up those everyday experiences of boredom, pride, irritation, staging them as scenes between lipsticks and a lighter or a pair of mushrooms. She proffers these interactions as the inevitable core of the bourgeois human experience. The shameful banality of bickering, the humiliation of being a body among bodies. Von Wulffen started working in comic-like pencil drawings around 2008, which inform this ongoing watercolor series, often confessing art world anxieties or acting out childhood memories.

David Weiss' watercolors from 1978-79 offer a glimpse into his practice before his ongoing Fischli/Weiss collaboration. There was something about the medium that didn't make sense to him in collaboration, like sculpture or video did. The *Quiet Nights* series, like the *Blaue Stunde* in light washed violet, orange, red, are like a love letter to the city at night. A series following the wanderings of a cartoonish flower figure enact his chafing at the conservatism of postwar Swiss society, as the flower-flâneur sprouts up in a variety of everyday scenes. In *Die Funktion der falschen Gefühle (1)*, a flower with a maniacal grin leans over a picket fence typical of a suburban Swiss single-family home. It seems to personify the purpose of wrong feelings, as the title suggests, popping up out of painterly shrubs with crazy eyes, lusting for what lies beyond. Weiss was a part of a burgeoning bohemian movement within Switzerland's rigid contours, living in a commune in Meret Oppenheim's house in Ticino for much of the Seventies. Indeed the influence of Oppenheim's surrealist compositions is also palpable in his works, as Weiss also draws upon the cartoonishness he admired in Philip Guston. Emily Sundblad calls his watercolors as good as The Velvet Underground's first album, something that always makes her feel better. His watercolors have something of the feeling of a musical score, the energy of a quick and light notation. The melody chimes both somber and sunny.

Tenzing Barshee & Camila McHugh



1	Daniele Milvio <i>D'Après Magnolia</i> , 2020 42 × 29.7 cm	15	David Weiss <i>Untitled</i> , 1978 Watercolour and ink on paper 23.5 × 16.5 cm	28	David Weiss <i>Untitled</i> , 1978 Watercolour and ink on paper 23.5 × 16.5 cm	40	Urban Zellweger <i>Trees don't wait I</i> , 2020 Watercolour and print on paper 29.7 × 21 cm
2	Emily Sundblad <i>Untitled</i> , 2020 Gouache on paper 14.5 × 10.5 cm	16	Urban Zellweger <i>Pipes IV</i> , 2020 Watercolour, pen and print on paper 29.7 × 21 cm	29	Amelie von Wulffen <i>Untitled</i> , 2014 Watercolor and ink on paper 29.7 × 21 cm	41	David Weiss <i>Untitled</i> , 1978 Watercolour and ink on paper 23.5 × 16.5 cm
3	Emily Sundblad <i>Untitled</i> , 2020 Gouache on paper 15 × 10 cm	17	Urban Zellweger <i>Pipes III</i> , 2020 Watercolour, pen and print on paper 29.7 × 21 cm	30	Amelie von Wulffen <i>Untitled</i> , 2018 Watercolor and ink on paper 21 × 29.7 cm		
4	Emily Sundblad <i>Untitled</i> , 2020 Gouache on paper 14.5 × 10.5 cm	18	Urban Zellweger <i>Pipes I</i> , 2020 Watercolour, pen and print on paper 29.7 × 21 cm	31	Amelie von Wulffen <i>Untitled</i> , 2018 Watercolor and ink on paper 21 × 29.7 cm		
5	Emily Sundblad <i>Untitled</i> , 2020 Gouache on paper 15 × 10 cm	19	Urban Zellweger <i>Pipes II</i> , 2020 Watercolour, pen and print on paper 29.7 × 21 cm	32	Amelie von Wulffen <i>Untitled</i> , 2015 Watercolor and ink on paper 29.7 × 21 cm		
6	Emily Sundblad <i>Untitled</i> , 2020 Gouache on paper 15 × 10 cm	20	Emily Sundblad <i>Untitled</i> , 2020 Gouache on paper 26 × 18 cm	33	Amelie von Wulffen <i>Untitled</i> , 2020 Watercolor and ink on paper 21 × 29.7 cm		
7	Emily Sundblad <i>Untitled</i> , 2020 Gouache on paper 14.5 × 10.5 cm	21	Daniele Milvio <i>Quella Roma degli Schostal, dei Carminati</i> , 2009 Watercolour on paper 29.7 × 21	34	Urban Zellweger <i>Blume</i> , 2020 Watercolour and pen on paper 42 × 29.7 cm		
8	Emily Sundblad <i>Untitled</i> , 2020 Gouache on paper 15 × 10 cm	22	Daniele Milvio <i>Franzosini</i> , 2008 Watercolour on paper 21 × 29.7	35	David Weiss <i>Untitled</i> , 1978 Watercolour and ink on paper 23.5 × 16.5 cm		
9	Emily Sundblad <i>Untitled</i> , 2020 Gouache on paper 14.5 × 10.5 cm	23	Daniele Milvio <i>AM</i> , 2008 Watercolour on paper 21 × 29.7	36	David Weiss <i>Untitled</i> , 1978 Watercolour and ink on paper 23.5 × 16.5 cm		
10	Emily Sundblad <i>Untitled</i> , 2020 Gouache on paper 15 × 10 cm	24	Emily Sundblad <i>Untitled</i> , 2020 Gouache on paper 14.5 × 10.5 cm	37	David Weiss <i>Untitled</i> , 1978 Watercolour and ink on paper 23.5 × 16.5 cm		
11	Emily Sundblad <i>Untitled</i> , 2020 Gouache on paper 15 × 10 cm	25	David Weiss <i>Untitled</i> , 1978 Watercolour and ink on paper 23.5 × 16.5 cm	38	Urban Zellweger <i>Park Tree</i> , 2020 Watercolour on paper 29.7 × 21 cm		
12	Urban Zellweger <i>Sidewalk Tree I</i> , 2020 Watercolour and ink on paper 29.7 × 21 cm	26	David Weiss <i>Untitled</i> , 1978 Watercolour and ink on paper 23.5 × 16.5 cm	39	Urban Zellweger <i>Trees don't wait II</i> , 2020 Watercolour and ink on paper 29.7 × 21 cm		
13	Urban Zellweger <i>Sidewalk Tree III</i> , 2020 Watercolour and ink on paper 29.7 × 21 cm	27	Urban Zellweger <i>Untitled</i> , 2020 Ink and sticker on paper 29.7 × 21 cm				
14	Urban Zellweger <i>Sidewalk Tree II</i> , 2020 Watercolour and ink on paper 29.7 × 21 cm						



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| 42 | Ella Mathys & Urban Zellweger
<i>Burn Out Dream IV</i> , 2020
Watercolour, ink and gouache on fabric
217 × 125 cm | 55 | Emily Sundblad
<i>Untitled</i> , 2020
Gouache on paper
14.5 × 10.5 cm |
| 43 | David Weiss
<i>Untitled (Quiet Nights)</i> , 1979
23.5 × 16.5 cm | 56 | Emily Sundblad
<i>Untitled</i> , 2020
Gouache on paper
14.5 × 10.5 cm |
| 44 | David Weiss
<i>Untitled (Quiet Nights)</i> , 1979
16.5 × 23.5 cm | 57 | Emily Sundblad
<i>Untitled</i> , 2020
Gouache on paper
21 × 14.5 cm |
| 45 | David Weiss
<i>Untitled (Quiet Nights)</i> , 1979
16.5 × 23.5 cm | 58 | Emily Sundblad
<i>Untitled</i> , 2020
Gouache on paper, linen
24 × 124 cm |
| 46 | Amelie von Wulffen
<i>Untitled</i> , 2015
Watercolor and ink on paper
29.7 × 21 cm | 59 | Daniele Milvio
<i>Murene</i> , 2012
Watercolour and ink on paper
29.7 × 21 |
| 47 | Urban Zellweger
<i>Megahex.fm</i> , 2020
Watercolour on paper
29.7 × 21 cm | 60 | Daniele Milvio
<i>Untitled</i> , 2013
Watercolour on paper
29.7 × 21 |
| 48 | David Weiss
<i>Die Funktion der falschen Gefühle (1)</i> , 1979
16.5 × 23.5 cm | 61 | Daniele Milvio
<i>Pelle d'orso occhiuta</i> , 2012
Watercolour on paper
21 × 29.7 |
| 49 | Emily Sundblad
<i>Untitled</i> , 2020
Gouache on paper
14.5 × 10.5 cm | 62 | Daniele Milvio
<i>Serpente continuo</i> , 2013
Watercolour on paper
29.7 × 21 |
| 50 | David Weiss
<i>Untitled (Quiet Nights)</i> , 1979
16.5 × 23.5 cm | 63 | Daniele Milvio
<i>Torcia umana</i> , 2012
Watercolour on paper
29.7 × 21 |
| 51 | David Weiss
<i>Untitled (Crack of the Dawn)</i> , 1978
Ink on paper
21 × 29.7 cm | 64 | Daniele Milvio
<i>Prego, entri dal camino</i> , 2020
Watercolour and ink on paper
29.7 × 21 |
| 52 | David Weiss
<i>Untitled (Crack of the Dawn)</i> , 1978
Ink on paper
21 × 29.7 cm | 65 | Daniele Milvio
<i>De Martino III</i> , 2020
Watercolour on paper
29.7 × 21 |
| 53 | David Weiss
<i>Untitled (Crack of the Dawn)</i> , 1978
Ink on cardboard
21 × 29.7 cm | 66 | Daniele Milvio
<i>Sgradevolo</i> , 2020
Watercolour and ink on paper
29.7 × 21 |
| 54 | David Weiss
<i>Untitled (Crack of the Dawn)</i> , 1978
Ink on paper
21 × 29.7 cm | 67 | Ella Mathys & Urban Zellweger
<i>Burn Out Dream III</i> , 2020
Watercolour, ink and gouache on fabric
170 × 121 cm |