



September 24, 2019

Belvedere 21

Arsenalstrasse 1
1030 Vienna

Opening hours:

Wed to Sun 11 a.m. to 6 p.m.
Wed and Fri until 9 p.m.
(also on public holidays)

Press downloads:

belvedere.at/presse

Press contact:

Irene Jäger
+43 664 800 141 185
i.jaeger@belvedere.at

Installation view *Henrike Naumann. Das Reich*, 2019, Photo: Johannes Stoll, © Belvedere, Vienna

HENRIKE NAUMANN

Das Reich

September 26, 2019 to January 12, 2020

Henrike Naumann's spatial installation at the Belvedere 21 transports visitors back to the year 1990 and outlines a fictitious scenario in which political conspiracy theories are intertwined with personal fates and the discontinuities in German and Austrian history.

"Henrike Naumann is one of the shooting stars of the young art scene. She translates topical subjects into scenographically designed spaces, seeking to find out how the radicalization of broad swaths of the population is reflected in interior design," according to Stella Rollig, CEO of the Belvedere.

The Reichsbürger ("Reich Citizens") are a Rightist political movement whose members do not recognize the legitimacy and sovereignty of the Federal Republic of Germany. They demand a peace treaty negotiation laid down in the German constitution in 1949, and consequently insist that the German Reich still exists. They consider themselves an endangered indigenous people in an occupied country and beg the United Nations for support in the face of perceived breaches of international law. The Reichsbürger hoard weapons and munition in anticipation of their D-Day, when they will launch their final battle and the German Reich will be resurrected.

With the exhibition *Das Reich* Henrike Naumann has developed a fictitious scenario in which the Reichsbürgerbewegung ("Reich Citizens' Movement") does in fact take over control of a reunited Germany in 1990. Austria subsequently joins the reestablished German Reich. This reawakens a feeling of racial (*völkisch*) unity, which is celebrated euphorically. However, unlike in 1938, this does not find its expression in mass marches but in rampant consumer culture. "I shop therefore I am!" is the rallying cry that summons up the strength to forge a new Germanicness from this unmitigated shopping spree. Just as in East Germany, furniture stores spring up all over Austria. Instead of "just being," Germanness is lived and breathed as a hedonistic lifestyle that can be bought in the form of products.

This sociopolitical atmosphere is sketched out by Henrike Naumann in an immersive spatial installation comprising furniture, decorations, home accessories, and videos. The Reich (Citizens') Chancellery is portrayed as a kind of nationalistic cultic site where home videos by the National Socialist underground and by revelers on Ibiza meet a 1990s furniture store and all manner of finca chic.

"Das Reich can be interpreted as a psychogram of an alternative world view, which alarmingly resembles the worlds of thought of today's extreme right-wing movements," according to Curator Severin Dünser.

THE FOLLOWING GROUPS OF WORKS HAVE BEEN INCORPORATED IN THE EXHIBITION CONCEPT:

Das Reich, 2017

Furniture, television, props, pelts, digital video with sound, approx. 7 × 7 × 3 m

Das Reich was first presented in the banquet hall of the Crown Prince's Palace on Unter den Linden in Berlin. It was at this historic site that the German-German Unification Treaty was signed in 1990, which stipulates the details of reunification. Henrike Naumann paints a picture of a dystopia in which the Reichsbürger took over government affairs in 1990. Naumann portrays the provisional Reich (Citizens') Chancellery as a "Stonehenge of new Germanism." There, nationalist conspiracy theories are intertwined with personal fates and the discontinuities of German history.

Anschluss '90, 2018

Furniture, props, dimensions variable

Anschluss '90 was first displayed in 2018 in the context of the steirischer herbst festival for contemporary art. Here Naumann portrays the display area of a furniture store that opened shortly after the hypothetical renewed Anschluss in 1990. Furniture, furnishings, books, and decorations merge into a mirror of a society that wants to express in their homes an identity founded on German nationalism and consumerism. This alternative historical scenario reveals the debris that is left by a failure to come to terms with German and Austrian history and that now provides fertile soil for the politics of right-wing populism and even radicalism.

Terror, 2012

VHS video, 15' 24"

Three youths experience their "last summer of innocence" in Jena in 1992 before finally becoming radicalized. They are called Beate, Böhni, and Uwe—a reference to Beate Zschäpe, Uwe Böhnhardt, and Uwe Mundlos, who committed right-wing terrorist attacks and murders as the NSU (National Socialist Underground) from 1999. The video begins with a scene in which the trio steals a VHS video camera with which they then document their everyday lives. In a neo-Nazi teenage bedroom between a Reich flag, stuffed animals, and Alf greeting card, the three pass the time reading the teen magazine *Bravo*, an article about the dangers of ecstasy, and fooling around. In her video Naumann investigates the banality of evil by faking a self-dramatization in the VHS style and hence making moments of creeping right-wing radicalization tangible. This video is the companion piece to *Amnesia*, which was also created in 2012.

Amnesia, 2012

VHS video, 15' 24"

In contrast to *Terror*, *Amnesia* is set on Ibiza in 1992. Here the protagonists have been joined by a young man who takes over the passive role of the cameraman. The teenagers move into their hotel room, where they eventually get into a party mood. They chant "Ibiza 92," fool around, drink hard liquor, smoke, make out, do coke, get dressed up, and party at "Amnesia," Ibiza's hippest club. As in *Terror*, in *Amnesia* their mirror image is destroyed, and the protagonists' boredom is expressed in aggression and excess. The youths are also similar in the extremism that they develop in their search for identity. On Ibiza they seek salvation in intoxication and oblivion, in the dissolution of their old egos by being open to the new—as opposed to building on a nationalistic identity that was founded in the past, as in Jena. In both videos Henrike Naumann investigates where the innocence of three young neo-Nazis ends and the responsibility of apolitical hedonists begins.

SHORT BIOGRAPHY OF HENRIKE NAUMANN

Henrike Naumann is born in Zwickau in 1984 and grows up there at a time when the GDR is drawing to a political close and the state is ultimately absorbed into a reunited Germany. She transforms the experiences of her youth—between hedonism, consumer culture, and growing far-right radicalism—into installations for several exhibitions. As an artist she is interested in the design vocabulary spawned by these extremes in the population's everyday lives. To what extent do furniture and objects reflect attitudes and history? In alternative historical scenarios Naumann explores the correlations between aesthetics and ideology, which her walk-in spatial settings enable visitors to experience.

Henrike Nauman lives and works in Berlin. Her work has recently been exhibited at the Kunstverein Hannover; at KOW, Berlin; at the Museum Abteiberg, Mönchengladbach; at the MMK, Frankfurt am Main; in the context of the Steirischer Herbst, Graz; at the Busan Biennale; at the Ghetto Biennale, Port-au-Prince; and at the Musée d'Art Contemporain et Multimédia, Kinshasa; among others.

www.henrikenaumann.com

SUPPORTING PROGRAM

EXHIBITION OPENING

Henrike Naumann. Das Reich

Wednesday, September 25, 2019 | 7 p.m.

Speakers:

Stella Rollig, CEO

Severin Dünser, curator

The artist will be present.

Reception with champagne by Kattus and wine from the Esterházy vineyard.

FROM 9 P.M.: OPENING PARTY WITH PURE

Since 1991 Pure has been a DJ, producer, live act, event organizer, curator, software developer, lecturer in electronic music production, and has given talks about whisky and Doom Metal. He is happy to rise to the musical challenge set out by Henrike Naumann: "Danceable apocalypse and a bridge back to early '90s Vienna and the first illegal raves." <http://pure.test.at>

ARTIST TALK

Langer Tag der Flucht

Artist talk with Henrike Naumann

Fri, September 27, 2019 | 7 p.m.

In a conversation with Curator Severin Dünser, the artist relates her career and discusses connections between the fictitious scenario in her exhibition *Das Reich* and current social trends.

Free event / duration: 1 hour

Limited number of participants / register via: www.belvedere.at/programm

In cooperation with Langer Tag der Flucht by UNHCR Austria

www.langertagderflucht.at

EXHIBITION TOUR

Henrike Naumann. Das Reich

Sunday, October 13, 2019 | 3 p.m.

This tour of the exhibition focuses on the political and social contexts communicated in Henrike Naumann's work.

€4 (plus admission) | duration: 1 hour

Free for Friends of the Belvedere and annual ticket holders

Limited number of participants

FOCUS TOUR

When Attitudes Become Furnishings

Wednesday, October 30, 2019 | 7 p.m.

With a walk-in spatial installation comprising furniture, furnishings, and home videos, Henrike Naumann has outlined the psychogram of an alternative world view that resembles to a worrying degree the very real conceptual system of modern-day extreme right-wing movements. During a guided tour of the exhibition, Curator Severin Dünser will talk about the way in which home furnishings become an expression of attitudes in Naumann's work.

€4 (plus admission) / duration: 1 hour

Free for Friends of the Belvedere and annual ticket holders

Limited number of participants

VIENNA ART WEEK SPECIAL PROGRAM

Henrike Naumann. Das Reich

Friday, November 15, 2019 | 7 p.m.

Curator Severin Dünser gives a guided tour of Henrike Naumann's walk-in spatial installation and explains the background of select pieces of furniture, decorations, and videos.

Free event as part of VIENNA ART WEEK / duration: 1 hour

Limited number of participants / register via: www.belvedere.at/programm

GENERAL INFORMATION

Exhibition title	<i>Henrike Naumann. Das Reich</i>
Curator	Severin Dünser
Duration	September 25, 2019 to January 12, 2020
Venue	Belvedere 21 Arsenalstrasse 1, 1030 Vienna
Opening hours	Wednesday to Sunday 11 a.m. to 6 p.m. Long evenings: Wednesday and Friday to 9 p.m. Also on public holidays
Tickets	Regular €8 Belvedere 21 Annual Ticket €21 Reduced €6 Children and teenagers under 18 free
Web	belvedere.at/en facebook.com/belvedere21 twitter.com/belvedere21wien instagram.com/belvedere21wien #HenrikeNaumann

The press release along with high-resolution press photographs are available for download at:
belvedere.at/en/press