



Installation view *Herbert Brandl. Exposed to Painting. The Past Twenty Years*, photo: Markus Wörgötter

April 28, 2020

Belvedere 21

Arsenalstraße 1  
1030 Vienna

**Opening hours:**

Tuesday to Sunday,  
11 a.m. to 6 p.m.

Late night hours:

Thursday and Friday until 9 p.m.

Mondays, open on public holidays  
only

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**Press contact:**

Irene Jäger

+43 664 800 141 185

[i.jaeger@belvedere.at](mailto:i.jaeger@belvedere.at)

## HERBERT BRANDL. EXPOSED TO PAINTING THE PAST TWENTY YEARS

January 31 to October 26, 2020

With his large-format pictorial worlds, Herbert Brandl is among the most successful Austrian painters of the present day. Belvedere 21 is paying tribute to his creation from the past twenty years, which is shaped by an examination of the diverse manifestations of nature.

"Herbert Brandl's strongly expressive painting is both romantic and visionary. The powerful gestures with which the artist captures mountains, rivers, and color fields on the canvas, always refer to the process of painting itself," says General Director Stella Rollig.

Unfazed by contemporary trends, Herbert Brandl's self-image as a painter was already solidified in a period in which painting had been declared dead, and disciplines such as conceptual art, performance, and media art dominated. As far back as his studies at the University of Applied Arts in Vienna under Herbert Tasquil and Peter Weibel beginning in 1978, the Styrian painter set off on a path toward a unique artistic position that is currently beyond dispute.

The natural motif dominates Brandl's oeuvre and appears in a variety of manifestations. With images that open the gaze to the monumental, as well as "zoom-ins" and "blow ups," he alternates between close-ups and distant views. Large mountain formations, imposing waterfalls, and atmospheric meadow landscapes stand side-by-side with intimate close-ups of bits of lawns and fields from the microcosm of his own garden. Brandl plays with expressive gestures, abstract color spaces, and mighty shaped structures. His art evolves in painting processes: rapidly, intuitively, with great physical effort, without

a preplanned, targeted procedure. In the tension of figuration and abstraction, Brandl's works oscillate between a recognition of nature and sensual impressions of color and form. In his most recent works, Brandl largely leaves the concrete landscape behind, and turns his attention to the effects of pure color.

The exhibition at Belvedere 21 presents Brandl's pictorial oeuvre, with a focus on works from the past two decades including works that the artist created specifically for this exhibition. A monumental new work bears the ironic, pointed title *Apokalypse zur schönen Aussicht*. The triptych is flanked by ominous "post-apocalyptic" bronze creatures. *Exposed to Painting* displays that references to painting of the Romantic period are evident in Brandl's treatment of "nature" as a subject. In his landscape paintings, the artist shows a boundless, wild, simultaneously spectacular nature in the sense of the aesthetic category of the sublime. Brandl conceives of nature in its original form, that is, in the sense of organic and inorganic nature that has grown of its own accord, which arises and exists without any human intervention.

"At the level of the subject and also in the sentiment, overlaps can be observed consistently between the pictorial language of the Romantic period and Brandl's work," stipulates curator Rolf H. Johannsen. "Brandl's goal is not a recognition of nature oriented on reality, but instead, the recording of form, which can extend into the ideal, but also the heroic, starting points for Christoph Ransmayr in his literary texts on selected paintings, which are original, integral parts of the exhibition."

Nonetheless, Brandl's approach to nature is a contemporary one. The artist consciously deals with the environmental problems of the twenty-first century and also acts as a concerned, environmental protectionist. When, through his selection of motifs, he points to endangered natural areas, such as the Schwarze Sulm or the Koralpe in Styria, his artistic interest in nature attains a concrete political dimension. Brandl has dedicated numerous works to both of these landscapes. With this, he articulates a calm but clear appeal for the protection of nature—a gesture that couldn't be any more topical in times of advancing environmental destruction and climate change.

## BIOGRAPHY

Herbert Brandl was born in Graz in 1959 and grew up in Schwanberg/Styria. He attended the University of Applied Arts in Vienna and studied under Herbert Tasquil and Peter Weibel. From 2004 to 2019 Brandl was a professor at the Kunstakademie Düsseldorf. He lives and works in Vienna and Schwanberg.

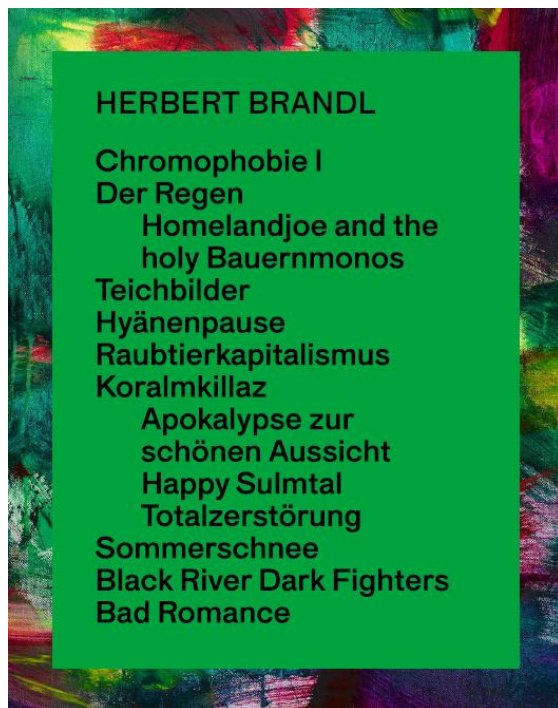
Herbert Brandl's works can be found in numerous national and international public collections, among others: Kunsthalle Bern; Kunstmuseum Bonn; Kunsthaus Bregenz; Renaissance Society, Chicago; Museum MMK für moderne Kunst, Frankfurt am Main; Stedelijk Museum voor Actuele Kunst, Gent; Neue Galerie Graz; LENTOS Kunstmuseum Linz; Museo Nacional Centro de Arte Reina Sofía, Madrid; Musée d'art moderne de la Ville de Paris; Centre Georges Pompidou, Paris; Museu Serralves, Porto; Museum der Moderne Salzburg; Niederösterreichisches Landesmuseum, Sankt Pölten; Albertina, Vienna; Belvedere, Vienna; mumok, Vienna; and Kunsthalle Zürich

### Solo and group exhibitions (selection)

- 1984 Neue Galerie am Landesmuseum Joanneum, Graz
- 1985 participation in the Biennale de Paris
- 1986 *Hacken im Eis* (with Gunter Damisch, Josef Danner, Hubert Scheibl, Otto Zitko), Kunsthalle Bern and Museum des 20. Jahrhunderts, Vienna
- 1990 *Herbert Brandl, Ernst Caramelle, Franz West*, Musée d'art moderne de la Ville de Paris
- 1991 Kunsthalle Bern  
Museum Van Hedendaagse Kunst, Gent
- 1992 participation in documenta IX, Kassel
- 1993 *Der zerbrochene Spiegel. Positionen zur Malerei*, Kunsthalle Wien; Deichtorhallen, Hamburg
- 1997 prize of the city of Vienna
- 1998 Secession, Vienna
- 1999 Kunsthalle Basel
- 2002 *Chromophobie I*, Neue Galerie im Künstlerhaus Graz and Neue Galerie Graz am Landesmuseum Joanneum  
*PAINTING ON THE MOVE: After Reality. Realism and Current Painting*, Kunsthalle Basel and Kunstmuseum Basel
- 2007 participation in the Venice Biennale, Austrian pavilion  
*Grün riecht übernatürlich*, Galerie Bärbel Grässlin, Frankfurt am Main
- 2009 *Herbert Brandl. Malerei*, Deichtorhallen, Hamburg
- 2010 *Mountains and Landscapes. Monotypes 2009/2010*, Albertina, Vienna  
*Painting: Process and Expansion*, mumok, Vienna
- 2012 Bank Austria Kunstforum, Vienna  
*Herbert Brandl – Landschaften. Monotypien und Gemälde*, Kunsthalle Emden and Altana Kulturstiftung, Bad Homburg
- 2013 *Teichbilder*, Galerie Bärbel Grässlin, Frankfurt am Main
- 2014 *Black River Dark Fighters*, Galerie nächst St. Stephan Rosemarie Schwarzwälder, Vienna  
*Pure Water. The Most Valuable Resource in the World*, LENTOS Kunstmuseum Linz
- 2015 *Homelandjoe and the holy Bauernmonos*, Greith-Haus Kulturverein St. Ulrich im Greith

- 2016 *Sommerschnee*, Galerie Elisabeth & Klaus Thoman, Innsbruck
- 2017 *Hyänenpause*, Museum Franz Gertsch, Burgdorf
- 2019 *Der Regen*, Galerie nächst St. Stephan Rosemarie Schwarzwälder, Vienna  
Galerie Elisabeth & Klaus Thoman, Innsbruck  
*Touch Wood*, MMKK Museum Moderner Kunst Kärnten, Klagenfurt
- 2020 *Herbert Brandl. Exposed to Painting. The Past Twenty Years*, Belvedere 21, Vienna  
*Ultra Hybrid*, Kunsthaus Graz (from July 3, 2020)  
*Bad Romance*, Künstlerhaus, Halle für Kunst & Medien, Graz (from July 3, 2020)

## CATALOGUE



### Herbert Brandl. Exposed to Painting The Past Twenty Years

Editors: Stella Rollig, Rolf H. Johannsen  
Authors: Véronique Abpurg, Rolf H. Johannsen, Ines  
Mitterer, Christoph Ransmayr, Stella Rollig  
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## EXHIBITION PROGRAM

### GENERAL GUIDED TOUR

Sundays and holidays / 4 p.m.

Herbert Brandl's painting focuses on the landscape as subject. We will view mountain ranges, water courses, and fields of flowers, and discuss the ideal image of untouched nature and pastose explosions of color.

### SPECIAL GUIDED TOUR

#### **Climbing mountains with the brush**

With Rolf H. Johannsen (exhibition curator)

Thursday, February 20 und May 14 / 6 p.m.

Mountains are an important reference point in Herbert Brandl's oeuvre. Curator Rolf H. Johannsen speaks about the mountain as motif between concreteness and abstraction.

### SPECIAL GUIDED TOUR

#### **The eight-thousanders in the studio**

With Véronique Abpurg (curatorial assistant)

Thursday, March 5 / 6 p.m.

Monumental mountain landscape, rushing water, or silent meadow: Véronique Abpurg turns our gaze to the origins and process of formation of Brandl's natural subject.

### SPECIAL GUIDED TOUR

#### **Collecting Brandl**

With Thomas Angermair (lawyer and art collector) and Rolf H. Johannsen (exhibition curator)

Friday, March 20 / 6 p.m.

In this tour, situated between expertise and anecdote, Thomas Angermair talks about his enthusiasm for Brandl's painting and his friendship with the artist.

### FILM

#### **Herbert Brandl – *Kunst und Obsession***

Ines Mitterer, 2017, stereo, 52 min

Thursday, February 20 and April 23 / 7 p.m. / Blickle Kino

A sensitive cinematic portrait of the painter Herbert Brandl, which grants varying insights and traces "painting as life's work."

**Tickets: [www.belvedere.at/programm](http://www.belvedere.at/programm)**

## GENERAL INFORMATION

Exhibition title	<i>Herbert Brandl. Exposed to Painting. The Past Twenty Years</i>
Curator	Rolf H. Johannsen
Works	34
Dates	January 31 to October 26, 2020
Location	Belvedere 21 Arsenalstraße 1, 1030 Vienna
Opening hours	Tuesday to Sunday 11 a.m. to 6 p.m. Late night hours: Thursday and Friday until 9 p.m. Mondays, open on holidays only
Tickets	Regular   8 € Discounted   6 € Annual pass Belvedere 39 € Children and youth up to 19   free
Web	belvedere.at facebook.com/belvedere21 twitter.com/belvedere21 instagram.com/belvedere21wien  #HerbertBrandl

Further perspectives on Herbert Brandl's artistic oeuvre will be shown in solo exhibitions at Kunsthaus Graz and Künstlerhaus, Halle für Kunst & Medien in Graz.

*Ultra Hybrid*, Kunsthaus Graz: July 3 to October 18, 2020

*Bad Romance*, Künstlerhaus, Halle für Kunst & Medien, Graz: July 3 to October 18, 2020

Each of the three exhibitions is accompanied by its own catalogue presenting the complex work of the artist through to the most recent positions.

The press release as well as high resolution press photos are available at [belvedere.at/presse](http://belvedere.at/presse) for download.