



April 28, 2020

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/presse21

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Installation view *Eva Grubinger. Malady of the Infinite*, Photo: Johannes Stoll, © Belvedere, Vienna
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EVA GRUBINGER

MALADY OF THE INFINITE

22 November 2019 to 6 January 2021

Eva Grubinger's solo show at the Belvedere 21 paints a picture of structural inequality, of infinite desire with no prospect of satisfaction for rich or poor, tycoon or pirate. Power and impotence face off against each other on the high seas.

"Eva Grubinger is interested in how the human drives—power, greed, and desire—impact on social developments. Her sculptures and installations are awash with associations and highly political. They awaken the audience's curiosity and challenge viewers to contemplate their subject matter," according to Artistic Director Stella Rollig.

Malady of the Infinite focuses on a sculptural object in the center of the exhibition space: the cockpit chassis of a superyacht. Although it dominates the space, it is held at bay by other, much smaller objects: the yacht is surrounded by sea mines that rise from the floor as if floating on the ocean surface.

The oceans are associated with conquest, colonialism, freedom, and autonomy at the same time as being sites of longing and opportunity. After all, the high seas are where not only leisure activities like sailing and traveling take place but also piracy, fishing, shipping, and human trafficking. The yacht occupies a special place among the various crafts on the oceans. It gives pleasure, conveys a sense of control over nature and self-sufficiency from society, while simultaneously symbolizing power and dominance. As a small, swimming state the yacht is geared toward autonomy. Nevertheless, Grubinger's exhibition suggests that this symbol of advanced capitalism is not immune to risks and dangers—namely to its

literal undermining by those who have nothing left to lose. Mines are a cost-effective means of asymmetrical warfare. They are easy to manufacture, quick to distribute, and with little effort have a big impact on even technologically superior adversaries.

Furthermore, *Malady of the Infinite* is an artistic reflection of a sociopolitical and psychosocial condition known as anomie. The word describes a situation in which social norms are either not highly developed or entirely lacking and provide individuals with no moral compass. This leads to the fragmentation of social identity. The dominance of global capitalism coupled with neoliberalism creates an atmosphere of social disconnection that pervades all layers of society. An associated idea emerging with modernity is that of an unlimited horizon of possibilities that promises all individuals free self-determination and self-actualization. It goes hand in hand with a phenomenon that the sociologist Émile Durkheim called "the malady of the infinite": an endless desire that cannot materially be satisfied. In Grubinger's exhibition this phenomenon is expressed in the form of a luxury object that does not work and offers no satisfaction. The superrich are not the only ones to suffer from the infinite; the middle class also finds itself in an existential crisis because it is being eroded by an economic injustice resulting from neoliberalism. The precariat's frustration at rising social inequality ultimately leads to a departure from ethical conduct. If poverty and instability leave no other room for maneuver, livelihoods are secured by turning to criminality, and this behavior is passed down the generations until it becomes the norm.

Eva Grubinger's exhibition compresses all this into a sculptural ensemble that emanates suspense and foreboding. The visitors experience a moment of conflict frozen in time, just a hairsbreadth removed from downfall.

"With its aesthetic appeal Eva Grubinger's exhibition conveys a sense of desire. At the same time, the artist makes it clear how dangerous it can be if we as a society prioritize individual desire over the common good. With a reduced yet impressive formal vocabulary, Malady of the Infinite brings together themes such as luxury, power, freedom, imbalance, and equal rights in an incisive parable of our tense present," according to Curator Severin Dünser.

CATALOGUE



Eva Grubinger. Malady of the Infinite

Editors: Stella Rollig, Severin Dünser

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SHORT BIOGRAPHY

Eva Grubinger (* 1970 in Salzburg) studied at the Hochschule der Künste Berlin (now UdK – Universität der Künste) under VALIE EXPORT and Katharina Sieverding from 1989 to 1995. Grubinger's works have been on display in international museum and gallery exhibitions since the mid-1990s. She has had solo shows at prestigious institutions such as: Bloomberg Space, London (2016); Institute of Contemporary Arts, London (2015); Belvedere, Vienna (2012); ZKM – Museum für Neue Kunst, Karlsruhe (2011); Museum der Moderne, Salzburg (2009); Schirn Kunsthalle, Frankfurt am Main (2007); Berlinische Galerie, Berlin (2004); Baltic Centre for Contemporary Art, Gateshead (2003); KIASMA Museum, Helsinki (2001). In addition, she has taken part in numerous national and international group shows, including at the Neues Museum, Nuremberg (2019); Busan Biennale, Busan (2018); Kunsthalle Wien, Vienna (2014, 2015); Witte de With Center for Contemporary Art, Rotterdam (2014); Marrakech Biennale (2012); Musée d'art contemporain de Bordeaux (2011); Akademie der Künste, Berlin (2010); Krannert Art Museum, Champaign, IL (2009); Kunsthalle Nürnberg, Nuremberg (2009); Taipei Fine Art Museum (2008); Kunst-Werke, Berlin (2005); and Deichtorhallen Hamburg (2002).

The artist lives and works in Berlin.

GENERAL INFORMATION

Exhibition title	<i>Eva Grubinger. Malady of the Infinite</i>
Curator	Severin Dünser
Duration	November 22, 2019 – January 6, 2021
Venue	Belvedere 21 Arsenalstrasse 1, 1030 Vienna
Opening hours	Tuesday to Sunday 11 am - 6 pm Late Nights: Thursday and Friday 11 am - 9 pm
Tickets	Regular €8 Belvedere Annual Ticket €39 Reduced €6 Children and teenagers under 18 free
Web	belvedere.at/en facebook.com/belvedere21 twitter.com/ belvedere21 instagram.com/belvedere21wien #EvaGrubinger

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