

# ARTFORUM

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I N T E R N A T I O N A L

ARTIST-RUN GALLERIES

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This multivenue Festschrift constitutes the big push, yet its very weightiness feels at odds with Majerus's outwardly punkish approach. A painting outside the scope of this show (it's from 2000; New York's Museum of Modern Art owns it) declares that **WHAT LOOKS GOOD TODAY MAY NOT LOOK GOOD TOMORROW / NOW'S THE TIME**. The works here appear similarly unconcerned with how they might age, and that's their most invigorating aspect. But there's no doubt Majerus's vision of a crapped-out and horizontalized visual sphere—art no better than entertainment, everything swirling in a monoculture—feels prescient, even if it mainly evokes Adorno and Horkheimer's "culture industry" updated and on pep pills. In 1991—probably; the checklist has a question mark after the date—Majerus painted *Untitled*, a Heathcliff cartoon featuring block-lettered vulgarities. As the eponymous ginger cat from the 1980s television series casts his line off a fishing boat, an arrowed label pointing to his tail reads **MICHEL'S PENIS**; another, indicating wriggling bait in a cup and referring to the feline's girlfriend, reads **SONJA'S CUNT**. Now, fire up the popular Twitter account Hourly Pornhubbed Heathcliff, and tell me whose world we're living in.

—Martin Herbert

## DÜSSELDORF

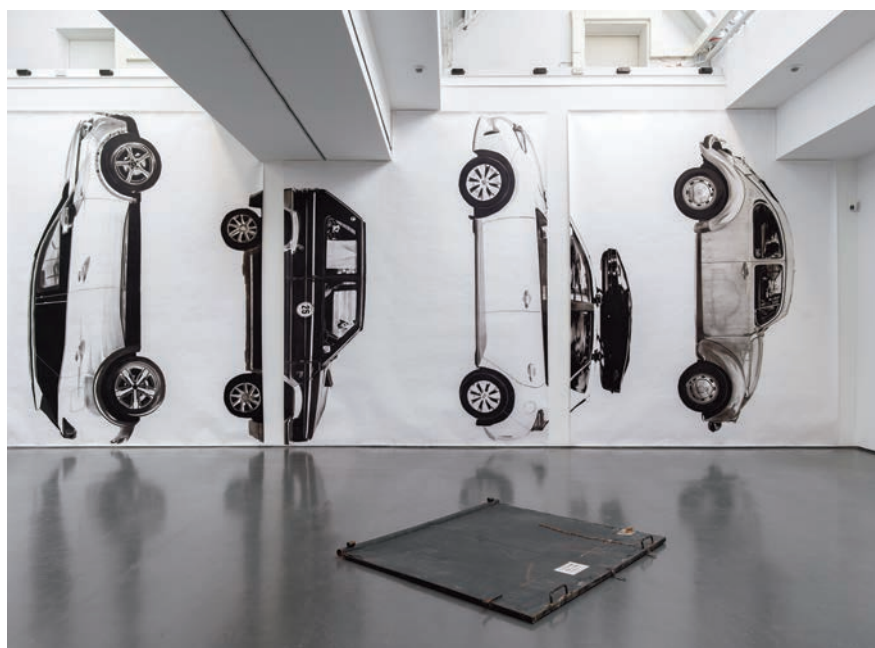
### Angharad Williams

KUNSTVEREIN FÜR DIE RHEINLANDE UND WESTFALEN

When Miss Rona showed up in 2019, she made access to private space the most salient side effect of social status. All but abandoned, public transport became the preserve of people with no particular place to go. Meanwhile, others did their best to tactfully obscure the fact that they had long since absconded to the safety of a second family home. Moreover, the warfare waged by those who could isolate in comfort against those who couldn't took on a sanctimony unimaginable since the 1980s: It wasn't the first time we were being told that intimacy was irresponsible.

"Eraser," the highly anticipated German institutional debut by Berlin-based Welsh artist Angharad Williams, mapped the dimensions of this enclosure. The works that were most social media-savvy were

View of "Angharad Williams," 2022. Wall: *Cars*, 2022. Floor: *What it feels like to live another day*, 2022. Photo: Cedric Mussano.



undeniably her series of monumental charcoal drawings "Cars," 2022. Rendered in varying degrees of realism, the images are based on photographs of automobiles that Williams spotted in different districts of Berlin, from a prosaic VW Beetle to a gas-guzzling Range Rover. More than the status their forms symbolize, the details recorded in their windows showcase the disparate worlds they contain. Where one sunshade features a cartoon penguin, presumably installed to protect newborn cargo and evoking the socially sanctioned intimacies of family life, the distorted reflection of foliage in the heavily tinted windows of another drawing conjures the image of a planet dissolving into smoke and flame.

In stark contrast to the works on paper, the kunstverein's floor was littered by parts of a sculpture cheekily titled *What it feels like to live another day*, 2022—a series of unaltered garbage-bin lids of the kind usually employed on construction sites, spring-loaded because too heavy to lift, chain locked because their contents need protecting from the less scrupulous factions of society. Within the kind of conceptual transfiguration that's quickly becoming Williams's signature style, the associations that unfolded between works were richly tongue-in-cheek. The banged-up lids of industrial trash receptacles immediately evoked the environmental costs of the desirable commodities on the wall—not to mention the world of analogies to be made between the containers' contents and those of the cars. And maybe on a meta level, the ready-mades' unfussy matter-of-factness let the artist's own appropriation of her assistants' labor in creating the conventionally pleasing "Cars" hang heavily in the air.

The video work *Enver's World*, 2022, was similarly perfunctory. The static shots of Williams's friend Enver Hadzijaj sleeping in the grass conjures the belated urban pastoralism of a Patagonia ad: Oh man, I miss the great outdoors! Yet the voyeuristically close cropping and absence of branded wear suggest more mundane forms of exclusion: Oh wait, is he, like, homeless? It seemed only logical that this oscillation between bourgeois desire and disgust should unfold in a domestic cinema installed in the kunstverein's foyer, where the floor-to-ceiling windows were blocked out, depriving the space of any natural light—an effect the artist underscored by conspicuously reducing the number of fluorescent tubes outside the cinema. To her credit, Williams succeeded in transforming the kunstverein's otherwise vast architecture into something that felt socially suffocating.

More mirror than window, "Eraser" didn't signal a way out as much as it coolly rubbed our noses in what could be this century's central question: coziness beyond compare, but for whom and at what cost? Perhaps counting on art to do anything else is too much to expect. The only moment of escape came in the form of an enormous light box, *Self reliance is a fetish*, 2022, installed on the building's facade. In a flurry of pixel and pattern, it shows a still from the most famous scene in Antonioni's *Zabriskie Point* (1970), in which the heroine compulsively imagines every detail of a neofascist villa as it explodes over and over again. Perhaps the only option left is to blow the whole fucking thing up.

—Stanton Taylor

## AMSTERDAM

### Gluklya

FRAMER FRAMED

Two yurts, a dome, and a stage: These four elements make up "To those who have no time to play," a solo presentation by Gluklya (Natalia Pershina-Yakimanskaya), an artist based in Saint Petersburg and Amsterdam. Between these structures, a collection of figures stand