



**Exhibition Information**  
**March 2021**

**Breaking Into Colour  
Reclaiming the Body  
Degenerate Art  
Artist Space: Dani Marti  
Sculpture Pavilion  
Mural: Melvin Galapon**





## GALLERY ZERO

### **ROOM ONE:** **Breaking Into Colour**

The 20th Century saw a revolution in abstract art and the use of colour and form, rather than figurative imagery, to express ideas and emotions. With the Impressionists of the late 19th Century, paintings of landscapes and figures also used expressive brush strokes and started to break up the rigid representation into more abstract loose imagery.

This exhibition looks at the ways in which artists use the vivacity of colour as a means to challenge, develop or break away from traditional forms of representation and explore new creative freedoms.

Curated by Lee Cavaliere



**Artworks, Left to Right:**

**Mouffe, Michel (b.1957)**  
*Grand Détachement, 2014*  
Mixed media on canvas, 366 x 183cm

Michel Mouffe explores the foundations of painting by challenging its limits. As he uses space to establish a dialogue, Mouffe's paintings are not just flat. An iron frame underneath the canvas shapes the surface, giving the work a sculptural character.

The colour, too, is mysterious - The surface is at once opaque and transparent, several layers of diluted paint are applied while the canvas is horizontal.

© 2020 the Artist and Axel Vervoordt

**Mitchell, Joan (1925 –1992)**  
*Untitled, 1951*  
Oil on canvas, 151 x 162cm

Joan Mitchell was counted among the American Abstract Expressionists, though she spent much of her career in Europe. While her work began in a figurative style, depicting figures and landscapes, she broke out into abstraction in the early 1950s. This piece sits at the cusp between her figurative and abstract work, and you can feel the tension between the two methods of working.

© 2020 Estate of Joan Mitchell



**Van Gogh, Vincent (1853 -1890)**  
***Starry Night, 1889***  
**Oil on Canvas, 73 cm x 92 cm**

One of the best-known artists of the late 1800s, Vincent Van Gogh was a pioneer in colour. His was a profoundly beautiful vision of a world full of color, movement and intrigue. This piece is a particularly hallucinogenic feel, but if we look closer we can see the command of the paint, the vigour of the brush strokes and the excitement of the artist in this moment.

Museum of Modern Art, Public Domain. Image Courtesy of Google Cultural Institute

**Mondrian, Piet (1872 -1944)**  
***Victory Boogie Woogie, 1942-44***  
**Oil and paper on canvas**  
**127 cm x 127 cm**

Piet Mondrian was a pioneer of abstract art. From his beginnings as a figurative painter, mainly of landscapes, he focused his visual language towards simple, geometric elements. This painting was his last, an unfinished piece from 1944, and the epitome of his refinement and simplicity.

Gemeentemuseum Den Haag, Public Domain

**Stockoe, Neil (1935 - 2019)**  
***Walking Figure 1981- 82***  
**Oil on canvas, 264.1 x 203.2 cm**

Stockoe created vibrant, edgy scenes which are at the point between figurative and abstract art. The artist was a contemporary in London with the likes of David Hockney (who some think was influenced by his style) and Francis Bacon, who was a close friend.

Stockoe rejoiced in accentuating colour and form, with large, striking canvases populated by figures that feel solitary, lost in themselves.



**Klein, Yves (1928–1962)**  
**IKB 79, 1959**  
**Paint on canvas on plywood, 139 x 119cm**

Klein had a unique utopian vision of the world, one which embraced the immaterial, the infinite. He created the colour International Klein Blue which he saw as the perfect expression of his ideas. The works are physically baffling - they are featureless but somehow the colour becomes almost physical - it assaults and envelopes our senses. The painting is something and yet nothing - it is both here and not here.

© ADAGP, Paris and DACS, London 2021 Photo © Tate

**Boris Bućan (b. 1947)**  
***Miljenko Smoje: Roko and Cicibela; Hrvatsko narodno kazalište, Split***  
**Screen print on paper**  
**203 x 196cm**

Boris Bućan is a Croatian artist and graphic designer who delights in combining the technologies of photography, photocopies, screenprint and other media to create a new visual language. He works across media, never staying still, from street art to painting and large-scale posters, like the one seen here.

Bućan's interest is in breaking down the barriers of art, to combine the more interesting aspects of graphic and public design with the museum and art worlds.

© 2021 Zvonko Stojević Museum Collection



**Albers, Josef (1888 -1976)**  
*Jaune, Crevette, Orange, 1970*  
Textile paint on Gobelin fabric,  
177,0 x 176,0 cm

**Albers, Josef (1888 -1976)**  
*Homage to the Square - 'Open Outward.' 1967*  
121,5 x 121,5 cm

**Albers, Josef (1888 -1976)**  
*4 Carrés, 4 Couleurs, 1970*  
Textile paint on gobelin fabric, 178 x 176 cm

Albers deconstructed space and colour into simplified forms - for decades he explored the simple arrangement of one square within another.

The square becomes an analysis of colour and shape, and by extension, of painting and art itself. By painting these inherently graphic forms onto a heavy-woven canvas, the artist also sits between the graphic and fine arts.

© bpk / LWL-Museum für Kunst und Kultur, Münster / Anne Neier

**Rothko, Mark (1903 -1970)**  
*Light Red Over Black, 1957*  
Oil paint on canvas  
Dimensions: 230 x 152 cm

Rothko did not subscribe to any particular art school or movement, but his work has become synonymous with Abstract Expressionism and the Colour Field theory. While being minimalist and non-representational, they ask us to consider the relationship between colour, shape and form. But also the effect on us physically; how we respond emotionally or intellectually when presented with a silent, thoughtful field of colour.

© 1998 Kate Rothko Prizel & Christopher Rothko ARS, NY and DACS,  
London Photo © Tate





## GALLERY ZERO

### **ROOM TWO:** **Reclaiming the Body**

This exhibition explores renewal and the restoration of power, specifically through the lens of the body.

The pillars of art history are built on some problematic foundations – towering masterpieces with imagery rooted in Classical European traditions of male dominance, invoking a culture distrust and debasement of women, where the illegitimacy of the female viewpoint was commonplace.

This exhibition asks how art has historically helped to bake social prejudice against women into our cultural fabric, and presents a new affirmation, in the renewal and reclamation of the female body by contemporary artists.

Curated by Lee Cavaliere



**Rubens, Peter Paul (1577 - 1640)**  
***Samson and Delilah, 1609–10***  
**Oil on Wood, 185 cm x 205 cm**

The painting depicts an episode from the Old Testament story of Samson and Delilah. Samson was a Hebrew hero known for fighting the Philistines. Having seduced him, Delilah oversees the cutting of Samson's hair, the source of his power.

Bare-breasted, Delilah depicts a common trope in classicist imagery: a woman weaponising her feminine wiles to overcome a male hero.

**National Gallery (London), Public Domain**

**Damoah, Adelaide (b. 1976)**  
***A Litany for Survival (2019)***  
**Oil on Canvas, 500 x 280cm**

***A Litany for Survival, 2019***  
**Video, 1min 33sec**

Damoah often uses her own body to explore issues of race, identity and personal histories. She often speaks to her own physical trauma as a metaphor for a human struggle to be, and to become.

This piece was the result of a performance, which we can see in the video here. The body is at once free and trapped, a way to express and a constant limitation; something to be overcome, and yet, something to celebrate.

**© 2020 The Artist**

**Caland, Huguette (1931 - 2019)**  
***Self Portrait (Bribes de Corps), 1973***  
**Oil on Linen, 120 x 120cm**

Caland's portrayal of the female body is upfront, uncompromising, sensual and deeply personal. These are representations of the female body, in a way that is so intimate, so close, that the body fills our vision. This abstraction of closeness, is a view of a body one only has in an extremely intimate situation.

**© 2020 Courtesy the Caland family**



**Botticelli, Sandro (1445 -1510)**  
***The Birth of Venus, 1484 – 1486***  
**Tempera on canvas, 172.5 cm × 278.9 cm**

Venus was the goddess of Love, Sex, Beauty and Fertility and is the Roman counterpart to the Greek Goddess Aphrodite. She was born from the foam produced by Uranus's genitals, which his son Cronus had severed and thrown into the sea. This act of violence was typical of classical mythology, yet here Venus rides the resultant wave with great serenity.

The painting is a cornerstone of the Italian Renaissance, which popularised for the first time since antiquity the depiction of classical figures. It was commissioned by a member of the powerful Medici family in Florence, perhaps as a way to link their power to ancient traditions.

**Uffizi, Florence; Public Domain**

**Kahlo, Frida (1907 - 1954)**  
***The Broken Column, 1944***  
**Oil on masonite, 39.8 cm × 30.6 cm**

Frida Kahlo was best known for her self portraits, in which she explored identity, personal suffering and the role of the woman in her native Mexico. Following an accident in her youth, she had chronic pain her entire life, and many of her portraits deal with her defiance and struggle to overcome this.

'The Broken Column' was painted shortly after the artist underwent spinal surgery, which left her in a metal corset as an attempt to alleviate the constant pain.

**Mexico City, Fundacion Dolores Olmedo. © 2021. Photo Schalkwijk/Art Resource/Scala, Florence**



**Gentileschi, Artemisia (1593 - 1656)**  
***Judith Beheading Holofernes, 1611-1612***  
**Oil on canvas, 158 x 128cm**

In a time where opportunities for women, let alone women artists, were scarce, Artemesia Gentileschi was among the most talented artists of the time.

This piece is among her most well-known; it depicts the beheading of Holofernes as told in the Bible. The figure of Judith is thought to be a self-portrait; in recounting the scene of her own rape by her father's colleague Agostino Tass, Gentileschi said: "After he had done his business he got off of me. When I saw myself free, I went to the table drawer and took a knife and moved toward Agostino, saying, 'I'd like to kill you with this knife because you have dishonored me.'"

She overcame many obstacles and has recently come to be known as an icon not only of Early Baroque art, but of the struggle of women in the face of adversity.

**Naples, Museo di Capodimonte. © 2021. Photo Scala, Florence**

**Hall, Trulee (b. 1976)**  
***Two Heads, Two Ways 2020***  
**HD Video, MP4**  
**Duration: 08:14**

This work fleshes out a narrative where multiple personalities and possibilities of self are visualised via the metaphor and physicality of a two-headed body. A dark fantasy of sex dolls and self-love unfolds by means of an out-of-body experience. The central character divides, seeing her body as a disembodied object. Her body parts separate and multiply as her other self – her alter ego – becomes her lover.

**@2021 the Artist and Daata**



**Szalay, Ilona (b. 1975)**  
***Some Are Born to Sweet Delight, 2019***  
**Oil on Aluminium, 200 x 150cm**

With a delicacy and a lightness of touch, Szalay portrays figures engaged in scenes ranging from the theatrical to the erotic. There is a sensuousness in her use of materials, and we're aware of our own gaze, often feeling we've stumbled on a private moment, as the figures within the frame play out their own interactions and dramas.

© 2020 The Artist

**Ana Mendieta**  
***Untitled (Facial Hair Transplants), 1972 / 1997***  
**Suite of seven color photographs**  
**Each 40.6 x 50.8 cm**

Ana Mendieta was a celebrated performance and video artist whose work was often inspired by displacement (she left her native Cuba for the US aged 12), and personal identity, particularly sexual identity.

Mendieta often found ways to use her body to question truths and social norms, through simple and ritualised gestures and actions. In this early example of her performance work, she asks a friend to shave their beard – she then attaches the hair to her own face, thereby talking to her own gender and the transformative power of hair on personal identity.

© The Estate of Ana Mendieta Collection, LLC  
Courtesy Galerie Lelong & Co.  
Licensed by Artists Rights Society (ARS), New York



**Petry, Michael (b. 1960)**  
***Golden Rain, 2006***  
**Dimensions variable**

Petry often reworks established mythologies and in this way, questions our loyalty to the past and to traditional ways of thinking about culture.

This work recalls the moment when Zeus, King of the Ancient Greek gods, impregnates Danaë by bathing her in a golden shower; shortly afterwards, she would give birth to Perseus. Petry's work often takes on a homoerotic edge, as here the golden shower can carry a double meaning.

© 2020 the Artist

**Garbati, Luciano (b. 1973)**  
***Medusa with the Head of Perseus, 2018***  
**Bronze**

The story of Medusa in ancient Greek mythology is a tragic one, when read through a contemporary lens. Raped and therefore banished for breaking her vow of celibacy, she was cursed to become a Gorgon, a monster upon whom nobody may gaze without turning to stone. Medusa was eventually beheaded by Perseus, through trickery and luck, and as a way to gain royal favour and renown.

Garbati has taken this story and reversed the roles; we see Medusa carrying the head of Perseus, in a pose resolute, defiant and sorrowful.

© 2020 the Artist

# GALLERY ONE



## Entartete Kunst (Degenerate Art)

In 1937, Germany's Nazi government held an exhibition in Munich entitled "Entartete Kunst", or Degenerate Art.

Artwork that was not purely figurative or decorative was seen by the Nazis as a threat to German traditionalist values, to the future of the country and the way of life of its people. As a result they held this exhibition, to publicly denounce the works of artists such as Matisse, Dix and Beckmann, who have come to be seen as some of the most mesmerising and influential artists of the past century. Some of these artists' seminal works are brought together here.

It is perhaps ironic that many of these works rose to prominence through their seizure by the Nazis, and eventual resale through the opaque channels of the art market. Many of these pieces remain in public museum collections, far from the families from which they were stolen.

This gallery is here to look transparently at history's more challenging moments, where art, and its destruction, were used as a means of oppression, or submission, and the ways in which these moments were, or were not, overcome.

Quotes on the walls are drawn from the original "Entartete Kunst" exhibition catalogue, and are recreated here to give recognition to how far we have, and have not progressed, since this dark moment in our recent history.

Curated by Lee Cavaliere



**Artworks  
(Clockwise from left)**

**Grosz, George (1893-1959)**

Blood is the Best Sauce, Kommunisten fallen - und die Devisen steigen) from the portfolio\r\nGod with Us (Gott mit uns) 1919 (published 1920).

Photolithograph

48 x 38cm

New York, Museum of Modern Art (MoMA). Publisher: Malik-Verlag, Berlin. Printer: Hermann Birkholz, Berlin. Edition: 125. Abby Aldrich Rockefeller Fund. @2020. Digital image, The Museum of Modern Art, New York/Scala, Florence

**Dix, Otto (1891-1969)**

Der Krieg (Triptychon), 1929-1931

Gemaelde / Mischtechnik auf Sperrholz

408 x 264cm

Dresden, Galerie Neue Meister - State Art Collections. @2020. Photo Scala, Florence / bpk, picture agency for art, culture and history, Berlin

**Derain, Andre (1880-1954)**

Valley of the Lot at Vers, 1912

Oil on canvas

73 x 92cm

New York, Museum of Modern Art (MoMA). Abby Aldrich Rockefeller Fund. @2020. Digital image, The Museum of Modern Art, New York/Scala, Florence

**Matisse, Henri (1869-1954)**

Red Room (Harmony in Red), 1908

Oil on canvas

180 x 220cm

The State Hermitage Museum, St. Petersburg; Photograph © The State Hermitage Museum. Photo by Vladimir Terebenin. © Succession H. Matisse



## **From the introduction to the “Degenerate Art” catalogue, 1937**

What are the aims of the “Degenerate Art” Exhibition?

It aims to start a new era for the German People, by providing through the display of original artworks, an insight into the harrowing cultural decay which took place during the decades which preceded the Great Change.

It aims to put an end to the endless chattering by some writers and cliques who, still today, deny that there was any degeneration in art forms.

It aims to make clear that this degeneration of art was more than just a passing rush of a few fools, follies, and experiments, which only died out with the coming of the National Socialist Revolution.

It aims to show that this was not a “cultural progression” of culture, but a planned attack on the essence and continued existence of art in general.

It aims to show the common root of political anarchy and cultural anarchy, which exposes degenerate art as Bolshevik in every sense of the word.

It aims to show the ideological, political, racial intentions and moral goals which were the driving forces behind the degeneration.

It will also demonstrate the extent to which this deliberately driven degeneracy attracted imitators, who, despite the latter’s earlier and sometimes later proven certain talent, character, joined in with this overall Jewish and Bolshevik nonsense.

It will show how some of the more dangerous Jewish and political leaders were able to attract a person, who might have rejected party political Bolshevism out of hand, into the service of that ideology through cultural anarchy.

# ARTIST SPACE



Marti, Dani (b. 1963)

*Still Life Under the Stars, 2021*

**Video**

**Songs of Surrender (2004-21) and Still life under the Stars (2021) were commissioned by Artspace, Sydney for 52 ACTIONS (22-28 February 2021).**

**© 2021 Courtesy of the artist and Dominik Mersch Gallery**

**Sound: Richard Chartier**

**Excerpts from 'Variable Dimensions' 2020 (LINE, US)**

I decided to revisit a visual diary I started back in August 2004 that went on for 5 months.

I wanted to document my first morning view or encounter, my face and the intake of a new drug that had just been added to my 'chemical cocktail' as part of the treating of my HIV condition. There was some fear, as no more options were left to control the levels of viral load in my body.

All those images have been sitting in my hard drive since then, dormant; not re-visited nor edited.

It is only after the events of last year - 2020 - that I decided to look at them again.

The act of SELF documenting, gave the whole journey an added dimension. It allowed me to distance myself from it, but at the same time it became more tangible, as if it could almost be touched by the end of my finger tips.



Marti, Dani (b. 1963)  
*Songs of Surrender, 2021*  
Video

**Songs of Surrender (2004-21) and Still life under the Stars (2021) were commissioned by Artspace, Sydney for 52 ACTIONS (22-28 February 2021).**  
© 2021 Courtesy of the artist and Dominik Mersch Gallery  
Sound: Richard Chartier  
Excerpts from 'Variable Dimensions' 2020 (LINE, US)

***Songs of Surrender***

The narrative and the abstraction

My father was a doctor.

I remember at very early age - seven, nine, maybe eleven - looking at his laparoscopy slides collection. Endless close ups of diseased livers and ulcerous stomachs.

The inner body under the spot light.

Mesmerising.

Dark caves, gentle valleys in endless reds and stalactites in shades of milky yellows.

December, 11th, 11am, 2020, mother dies in Barcelona.

Cycling with salty eyes in the Hunter Valley, Australia.

The screaming of cicadas deafening my senses. I stopped, and recorded their call. They resurface every 17 years.

I started working on new landscapes of endless valleys and shadows. Heat and violence underlaying every act of creation and transformation.

Denial, Anger, Acceptance.

Creating new lush, unspoken landscapes to dream in.

# DISCOVERIES



Blejerman, Helen

*A Visual Theory of the Soul, 2020*

**Top row, left to right:**

**URTICA DIOICA – Common Nettle**

**CHAMAENERION ANGUSTIFOLIUM – Rosebay Willowherb**

**TARAXACUM OFFICINALE – Dandelion**

**Bottom row, left to right:**

**TRIFOLIUM REPENS – White Clover**

**CONVOLVULUS – Bindweed**

**DIPSACUS FULLONUM – Common Teasel**

**Digital charcoal and oil made with Software and Wacom pen  
105 x 74cm**

In the summer of 2020 I found out about a recently erected plaque, at the back of Wadsley Church cemetery in north Sheffield. The plaque says: "Below this grass area lie the remains of over 2,500 men, women, and children from the South Yorkshire Asylum (1872 – 1948)". I felt the need to work with this place, as an artist that grew up with a mother who was committed to a mental asylum in Mexico City and who recently passed away.

I began my work creating a botanical logbook and recording every weed-flower that grows in the grassy area. I went to my art studio and in lockdown self-isolation closed the door for a few months. I made eight digital paintings that show what I believe to be the visual theory of those flowers' 'soul'. I thought that the bodies buried there would slowly turn into the soil, and then into the flowers, and into the birds and insects that feed on them. One early Sunday morning I presented the prints to the land and to the people buried there, and in situ, I offered to them these paintings as a memorial.

@2020 The Artist

# SCULPTURE PAVILION



## The Triumphal Arch of Palmyra

**Roman, 3rd Century, destroyed in 2015.**

A Roman-era monumental archway built during the reign of Septimus Severus, Palmyra's Triumphal arch was part of a large ruin at Palmyra in Syria, which was destroyed by ISIL in 2015.

This 3D model was created by the Institute of Digital Archaeology from scans taken at the original site as part of a drive to preserve ruins digitally.

# CHARITY PARTNER



## **Human Dignity Trust**

The Human Dignity Trust is the only organisation working globally to support strategic litigation to challenge laws that persecute people on the basis of their sexual orientation and/or gender identity. We provide technical legal, communications and security assistance to lawyers and activists who are defending human rights in countries where private consensual sexual activity between adults of the same sex is criminalised.

'The Human Dignity Trust is thrilled to be chosen as the first charity partner of the Virtual Online Museum of Art. Our organisational goal to eradicate discriminatory colonial-era laws, which criminalise LGBT people in over 70 countries around the world simply for who they are or who they love, intimately chimes with VOMA's aim to decolonise cultural history through the power of art. We enthusiastically look forward to a fruitful and enlightening collaboration within this innovative new space.'

Téa Braun, Director, Human Dignity Trust  
[www.humandignitytrust.org](http://www.humandignitytrust.org)



Kewpie (1942–2012) was a South African drag queen and hairdresser. She was a gender fluid individual whose salon in the inner-city District Six of Cape Town became the centre of the queer and drag community. Kewpie's photographs document queer life during apartheid and span the period from 1950 until the 1980s.

The photographs, taken when homosexuality was a crime punishable by up to seven years in prison and the law was used to harass and outlaw South African gay community events and political activists, are valuable and unique as they depict the carefully crafted public personas of drag queens when their very identity was illegal, as well as their private 'off-duty' selves. They are especially important as they also document queer, working class, coloured lives, which were all too often invisible during the apartheid regime.

South Africa decriminalised same-sex activity in 1998, whilst its post-apartheid Constitution was the first in the world to outlaw discrimination based on sexual orientation. Today, this key constitutional protection is used by the Human Dignity Trust and local lawyers and activists in the courtrooms around the world where strategic litigation to decriminalise adult consensual same sex activity is ongoing.

The country was the fifth country in the world to legalise same-sex marriage and to date the only country in Africa to have done so. LGBT people enjoy constitutional and statutory protections from discrimination in employment, the provision of goods and services and many other areas.

Nevertheless, LGBT South Africans, particularly those outside of the major cities, continue to face challenges, including homophobic violence (particularly corrective rape), and high rates of HIV/AIDS infection.

Emma Eastwood  
Head of Strategic Communications  
The Human Dignity Trust



## **Images (Left to Right)**

Group Picture Outside the Ambassador Club  
Mitzy, Brigitte, Patti, Sue, Kewpie, Miss Vi, and Gaya Outside the Ambassador Club  
circa 1955 to circa 1980  
Photograph  
60 x 57cm  
Courtesy of Gay & Lesbian Memory in Action (GALA)

Amy, Kewpie, and Stella at a Go-go Party  
circa 1960 to circa 1985  
Photograph 88 x 60cm  
Courtesy of Gay & Lesbian Memory in Action (GALA)

Kewpie and Brian Kiss  
circa 1960 to circa 1985  
Photograph 60 x 57cm  
Courtesy of Gay & Lesbian Memory in Action (GALA)

Kewpie at the Roaring '20s Night at the Ambassador Club  
circa 1960 to circa 1985  
Photograph  
43.8 x 60cm  
Courtesy of Gay & Lesbian Memory in Action (GALA)

Kewpie Outside of Salon Kewpie  
circa 1960 to circa 1985  
Photograph  
42.3 x 60cm  
Courtesy of Gay & Lesbian Memory in Action (GALA)

VIVA  
ONA