

Programme 2023

Community

Migros Museum

für Gegenwartskunst

In 2023, the Migros Museum für Gegenwartskunst takes the theme of *community* in its exhibitions, public programme, and education. We are all part of a community, and our relationships impact our sense of self, and our place in wider society. As a museum, our locality is important to us: it grounds our programme and offers us the possibility to expand and discuss complex topics with our audiences, both in Zurich and internationally. We encourage dialogue with our communities and offer our exhibitions and programmes as an entry point for a wide-range of perspectives.

At the beginning of the year, Ragnar Kjartansson's expansive video installation *The Visitors* (2012) will be back on display, after it was first commissioned by the museum eleven years ago. In this hour-long work projected across nine screens, visitors become part of the laid-back setting in the artist's historic mansion in upstate New York as he and his musician friends perform together. This work is in dialogue with the collaborative exhibition *Acts of Friendship*, presenting selected works from the collection that engage with friendship, collectivity and solidarity.

In the spring we present Pilvi Takala's newly commissioned multi-channel video installation, *Close Watch* (2022). Based on her experience of working as a security guard in one of Finland's largest shopping centres, the video explores models of surveillance, protection and profiling, questioning the role of security in our daily lives.

In the winter, the group exhibition, *Interdependencies* examines how we engage with models of care in the world today. As we gradually emerge from a global pandemic, our understanding of care is being critiqued and re-positioned. New commissions that centre the debate on issues of self-care, politicised care, and collective care, as well as an expansive public programme explore these complex issues.

As we contemplate the theme of *community*, the artists, performers, educators, writers and scholars who participate in our programme will continually inform and shape it to reflect debates taking place in our local context. We welcome audiences to the museum for in-person activities, and invite those who are located internationally to engage through our digital programmes.

Ragnar Kjartansson

The Visitors

Collection Migros Museum für Gegenwartskunst

Opening: Friday, January 27, 2023
January 28 to May 28, 2023

The Visitors, a 9-channel video installation of the artist Ragnar Kjartansson, transports visitors into the peculiar universe of a historical villa on the Hudson River in Upstate New York. The starting point for this project – which is shaped by Kjartansson's enthusiasm for music, his interest in sustained performance, as well as an emotional experience of art – are texts by the artist Ásdís Sif Gunnarsdóttir that Kjartansson and Davíð Þór Jónsson have set to music. For *The Visitors*, he had the song jointly performed by several musicians from his own circle of friends in various situations in the 43 rooms of the Villa Rokeby. Each of the nine projections highlights one of the rooms and one performer – with one exception: Outside on the porch of the house are the inhabitants in the role of choir and sonic artillery. The individual scenes thus join up into a space-spanning, filmic tableau, whereby this unique visual and acoustic arrangement shows a complex portrait of the house as well as its (temporary) residents, movingly expressing the experiences of love and loss, separation, and reunion.

The Visitors can be read as a homage to friendship, yet it is also an ode on longing and loss. *The Visitors* is a reference to the title of Abba's eponymous album that appeared in 1981, which was to be their last. Shortly after the publication the successful pop band broke up. In contrast, his work *The Visitors* brought Kjartansson international renown, and it was acclaimed by the press. For example, the British Guardian even described the work as the 'Best Artwork of the 21st Century'. With *The Visitors* a work is presented that illustrates the role of the Migros Museum für Gegenwartskunst as a commissioner of new works and a collecting institution, on the one hand, and can be understood as an outstanding example of the unique working method of the artist, on the other.

Ragnar Kjartansson (*1976, lives and works in Reykjavík) last made an appearance in Switzerland with the performance titled *Schmerz* (eng. Pain) at Zurich's Theater Spektakel (2022). *The Visitors* was produced for his solo exhibition at the Migros Museum für Gegenwartskunst in 2012 and has since been exhibited in many international art institutions – most recently at the San Francisco Museum of Modern Art, San Francisco and the TBA21 Thyssen-Bornemisza Art Contemporary, Madrid (both 2022); V-A-C, GES2, Moscow (2021–2022); High Museum of Art, Atlanta (2021); the Institute of Contemporary Art/Boston (2020); the Museum of Contemporary Art Kiasma, Helsinki (2019–2020). Kjartansson's works have been presented in prestigious institutions such as The Metropolitan in New York, Barbican, London and Palais de Tokio, Paris.

Acts of Friendship

A collaborative exhibition conceived with the museum team including works from the collection of the Migros Museum für Gegenwartskunst

Opening Act 1 & 2: Friday, January 27, 2023
Act 1 – Januar 28 to April 2, 2023; Act 2 – April 5 to May 28, 2023

Opening Act 3: Friday, June 9, 2023
Act 3 – June 10 to September 17, 2023

These days, we often associate friendship with the notion of a bond based on mutual trust, which supports us, not least in times of crisis. Yet friendships are also complex, contradictory structures that may indeed be subversive in character. Thus, friendships are not only able to support us as individuals in how we behave towards the world around us; they can also be pathway towards making ourselves heard as a collective and thereby rebelling against social (power) structures.

Inspired by Ragnar Kjartansson's video installation *The Visitors*, which can be understood as a homage to friendship, the team of the Migros Museum für Gegenwartskunst has selected for the exhibition, *Acts of Friendship* works from the collection, that in their view represent a particular aspect of friendship. The selected works, around thirty in all, are shown in three theme-based groups of works.

While the works represent the personal conceptions, approaches and perspectives of the individual team members toward friendship, they also serve as a starting point to reflect on questions around this subject, which is as multifaceted as the various approaches themselves. In *Acts of Friendship* the concern is not primarily with caring friendships linked to our inner circle, rather it's about complicity, alliances and solidarity. Thus, the path from togetherness and interaction in familiar company is not far from the sense of community that makes us publicly stand up for convictions and values, and which turns us into a politically active, hands-on collective.

With works from the collection by Alex Bag/Patterson Beckwith, Phyllida Barlow, Judith Bernstein, Alighiero Boetti, Olaf Breuning, Angela Bulloch, Mary Beth Edelson, Esther Eppstein, Ruth Erdt, Annika Eriksson, Fischli/Weiss, Alicia Framis, Gabriela Fridriksdóttir, Jan Peter Hammer, Lyle Ashton Harris, Martin Kippenberger, Lang/Baumann, Teresa Margolles, Bernhard Martin, Muda Mathis, Mickry 3, Claudia & Julia Müller, Juan Muñoz, Elodie Pong, Annika Ström, Rirkrit Tiravanija

Pilvi Takala

Close Watch

Opening: Friday, June 9, 2023
June 10 to September 17, 2023

The Finnish artist Pilvi Takala presents *Close Watch*, a new video installation that examines work cultures, communities and the presence of security in our everyday lives. For a period of six months, Takala worked as a security guard in a shopping mall in Finland. This multi-channel installation is based on her experiences and conversations, as well as those of the other security guards working in the mall. The work questions the complex roles security plays in society, providing protection, and at the same time maintaining control.

The video-installation was filmed during a three-day workshop organised by Takala, where she and her former colleagues discussed and tested new approaches to their roles as security guards. The conversation she developed is centred around violence, racism and toxic behaviour in the workplace, which reveal themselves through the examples of work experiences reported by the guards.

At its core, *Close Watch* facilitates a shift in expectation and observation; on one hand, as viewers we are confronted with the fact that we are often being closely monitored. On the other hand, our position is shifted to that of the observer: we are the ones watching the security guards discussing their role and working cultures. The inner workings of the world of security are laid bare to the wider public, raising questions about how we wish to be watched.

This is Pilvi Takala's first solo exhibition in Switzerland. *Close Watch* was first presented in the Finnish Pavilion at the 59th Venice Biennale (2022). At the Migros Museum für Gegenwartskunst the work has been expanded to include new elements and an expansive public programme addressing the complex themes in the exhibition.

Pilvi Takala (*1981, lives and works in Berlin and Helsinki) creates video works based on performative interventions in which she researches specific communities to question social structures. The resulting projects have been on view in venues including Seoul Mediacity Biennale; Manifesta 11, Zurich; Centre Pompidou, Paris; New Museum, New York and Kunsthalle Basel.

Interdependencies

Opening: Friday, October 6, 2023
October 7, 2023 to January 21, 2024

Throughout the COVID-19 pandemic we have all experienced varying levels of difficulties in our personal and private lives, brought on by isolation, sickness and adapting to new situations. Due to this monumental shift in society, an outpouring of care has been experienced across the globe. This is in stark contrast to the failures of care that have long been present in society, especially for the most vulnerable members of society. While for some, models of self-care might offer respite from the harsh realities of global capitalism, they are a privilege for the few. More than ever before, care has become a central question in a variety of contexts, in clinical environments, socially, and in the workplace.

It could be said that artists since the 1970s have always responded to various forms of care either collectively or individually, in response to social and political crises. But as care has entered the zeitgeist as a reaction to today's political climate, artists are seeking to present alternative models of radical care, which engage histories of grassroots community action, queer, feminist and social movements, and attack neoliberal models of self-care. This expansive group exhibition considers models of radical care through three distinct themes: *self-care*, *politicised care*, and *collective care*. These themes emerge through practices that propose and deliver interventions, commentary and acts of care that challenge our understanding of the phenomenon today.

The exhibition will include a publication, an extensive public programme and a symposium.

With works by Sharona Franklin, Maryam Jafri, Grace Ndiritu, Rory Pilgrim, Lauryn Youden and others

Address

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Directions

By public transport: Tram stop Löwenbräu (lines 4, 13, 17)
By car: Parking spaces in the courtyard (CHF 5/h)

Accessibility

The lift entrance is located at Limmatstrasse 268.
The exhibition space offers barrier-free access.
A signage system is available.
Call the reception for assistance.

MIGROSMUSEUM
für Gegenwartskunst

Opening hours

Tue – Sun: 11 am–6 pm
Thu: 11 am–8 pm
Public holidays: [migrosmuseum.ch/en/visit](https://www.migrosmuseum.ch/en/visit)

Art Education

Our diverse outreach programme is aimed at different age groups and, in addition to providing an in-depth insight into the exhibitions, enables discussions and interactions on current issues in contemporary art.

Find the current programme on our [website](#).

Events

Our event programme offers a broad spectrum of experience, entertainment and experimental approaches to contemporary art.

Find the current events on our [website](#).

Register [here](#) for the newsletter and stay informed!

Exhibitions and programme in German and English.

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