

SHIT HAPPENS!
Janet Mueller & Leonore Leitner

Friday, 11 July - Friday, 29 August 2025
Anggrek Agency Turbinenstrasse 46, 8005 Zurich

Curated with Maria Richner and Frank Polednik, Jr.

We are thrilled to present you **SHIT HAPPENS!** This show is especially meaningful to me — curated together with **Frank Polednik, Jr.** (from my year in the Executive Master in Art Market Studies program at the University of Zurich — same class, same chaos!) and **Maria Richner** (from the year after us — more chaos!). We are showing works by **Janet Mueller** and **Leonore Leitner** — both artists will be present!

Janet Mueller (born 1975, German, lives and works in Zurich) primarily works with acrylic on whatever medium she can find—paper, cardboard, canvas, and more. She deliberately channels her state of mind onto these surfaces, sometimes painting over entire works again, or even smashing them with a hammer—breaking, puncturing, and forcefully releasing the emotions she's grappling with.

Leonore Leitner (born 1996, Austrian, lives and works between Vienna and London) blends real-life references with pop-cultural elements for her work, often merging familiar iconography with motifs of transience. Her paintings capture the pulse of the present while playing with aesthetic tensions—between past and present, commerce and individuality, reality and pop.

Join us embracing life's misfortunes — missed promotions, breakups, existential dread, or just plain bad luck. Whatever it is, we're in this together. Let's make some noise. Let's make some mess. Because sometimes... **SHIT HAPPENS!**

Hope to see you soon,

Steven Anggrek



Janet Mueller's emotionally charged and urgent paintings evoke a raw immediacy that is both powerful and deeply sensitive. Her practice spans painting, installation, and performance, merging concrete, figurative, and typographic elements into layered surfaces where color is repeatedly applied, scraped away, and reimaged. The resulting works form a visceral, often haunting visual language that blends surrealist automatism with the expressive intensity of neo-expressionism, occasionally recalling the energy of Jean-Michel Basquiat.

In *Shit Happens!*, Janet Mueller scrawls phrases like “HAHAHA” into dense black fields, balancing manic humor with existential dread. Her figures—part ghost, part grotesque—hover between abstraction and psychological portraiture. *Der Tod spielt Klavier* (The Death Plays Piano) reveals a skeletal blue form etched in frantic lines, as if Death is toying with her emotional instrument following the loss of her brother. Another work, *Broken Heart*, features a torn canvas, hammered down by the artist herself. The faded neon pink surface is violently disrupted, and the piece is available for acquisition together with the hammer—exposing both presence and absence in a single gesture. Even Mueller's smaller works, drawn in raw, childlike strokes, carry a disarming emotional weight—tender, unsettling, and unfiltered.

Mueller's works are held in public and private collections, including those of the City of Zurich, the Canton of Zurich, the Swiss National Bank, and Swiss Post. Her visual language has also inspired other creatives, including Zürich-based fashion designer Yannik Zamboni, who drew from Mueller's work for his collection featured on Germany's Next Top Model.

Maria Richner



Janet Mueller, Der Tod spielt Klavier, 2021
Acrylic, UV lacquer on canvas
100 x 80 cm
CHF 6'100



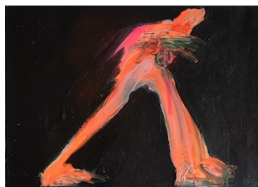
Janet Mueller, Broken heart, 2025
Acrylic, spray color, lacquer on canvas, hammer
80 x 60 cm
CHF 6'100



Janet Mueller, "DU & ICH", 2023
Acrylic on paper, diptych
Framed with museum glass
42 x 30 cm each
CHF 5'700



Janet Mueller, SMILE_ HA HA HA, 2024
Acrylic, UV lacquer on canvas, framed
50 x 40 cm
CHF 3'700



Janet Mueller, Auf der Flucht, 2025
Acrylic, UV lacquer on canvas
50 x 40 cm
CHF 3'200



Janet Mueller, Nachts sind alle Katzen blau, HA HA HA, 2024
Acrylic, spray color, UV lacquer on canvas
50 x 40 cm
CHF 3'200



Janet Mueller, No No No, 2025
Acrylic, graphite, pen on paper
Framed with museum-glass
42 x 30 cm
CHF 2'850



Janet Mueller, Fight, 2024
Acrylic, UV lacquer on canvas
Framed with museum glass
42 x 30 cm
CHF 2'850



Janet Mueller, Vorwärts, Marsch, 2025
Acrylic, spray color, pen, UV lacquer on canvas
40 x 30 cm
CHF 2'600



Janet Mueller, Das Paar, 2025
Acrylic, pencil, pen, UV lacquer on canvas
40 x 30 cm
CHF 2'600



Janet Mueller, Blumen in der Dunkelheit, 2021
Acrylic, spray color, UV lacquer on canvas
40 x 30 cm
CHF 2'600



Janet Mueller, Oh Oh Oh, 2025
Acrylic, spray color on canvas
40 x 30 cm
CHF 2'600



Janet Mueller, Der Tod steht Dir gut, 2023
Acrylic, UV lacquer on carton
Framed with museum-glass
30 x 21 cm
CHF 2'200



In Leitner's wry visual universe, mortality, anxiety and the absurd seep into the everyday, almost unnoticed – until they grip us. For *Shit Happens!*, Leitner presents deceptively simple paintings, each winking at pop-cultural and historical iconography even as they trace the inexorable passage of time and the comical futility of our attempts to master it.

A single purple noose hovers against a neutral field, its soft folds rendered with meticulous tactility. Its long, distorted shadow doubles the knot, suggesting how threats entwine themselves in our psyches well before we recognize their shape. Here, Leitner traps tension between impending collapse and the cool restraint of painterly detachment – a sly nod to how dread often lurks in the corners of our perception.

In the bar scene for instance, a sharply dressed skeleton sits at a scarred wooden table, cigarette smoldering, glass of whisky in hand. Over rows of faded bottles, Leitner stages a gallows-humor reflection on modern vice: we drink, we smoke, we negotiate pleasure and self-destruction under the indifferent gaze of time (and death). The skeleton's tailored suit – so of our era of branding and identity – illuminates the absurdity of trying to out-dress or outspend the void.

Finally, a classical bust of David weeps long, cartoonish tears that unfurl, blending high art with lowbrow graphic flourish. Leitner remixes Renaissance reverence and contemporary doodle, collapsing centuries into a single, sardonic gesture: even greatness cries, and often in shapes we never expected.

Across these works, Leitner's hand is equal parts painterly precision and pop-advertising playfulness – an inheritance of her training between Vienna and London. She mines the Zeitgeist with a playful pinch of satire, allowing impermanence to creep in not as melodrama but as sly undercurrent. *Shit Happens!* invites us to look again, to feel that frisson of recognition when the joke – our fragile, fleeting existence – finally lands.

Leitner studied at the School of Communication Arts in London and later completed a master's degree in Communication Design at the University of Applied Arts in Vienna. With a background in advertising, she brings a sharp visual sensibility to her artistic practice, blending classical techniques with contemporary narratives. Since beginning to exhibit her work in 2025, she has embraced the creative freedom that painting offers—an expressive counterpoint to her commercial design work. Her visual language is distinctly contemporary, often infused with satire and shaped by a keen sensitivity to the cultural moment.

Frank Polednik Jr.

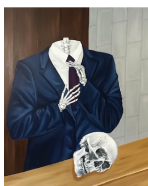


Leonore Leitner, Noch einen, bitte, 2024

Oil on canvas

90 x 130 cm

CHF 3'000



Leonore Leitner, Zugeknöpft 2025

Oil on canvas

110 x 90 cm

CHF 2'600



Leonore Leitner, Cry my eyes out, 2023

Oil on canvas

83.5 x 59.5 cm

CHF 1'775



Leonore Leitner, Dinner is served, 2025

Oil on canvas

70 x 50 cm

CHF 1'250



Leonore Leitner, The deal of a lifetime, 2025

Oil on canvas

70 x 50 cm

CHF 1'250



Leonore Leitner, Let it happen, 2025

Oil on canvas

59.5 x 42 cm

CHF 900