

Media release

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## **Heute Nacht geträumt** **An exhibition by Ruth Buchanan**

March 19–August 14, 2022, Kunstmuseum Basel | Gegenwart

Curators: Maja Wismer with Len Schaller

The Kunstmuseum Basel | Gegenwart presents *Heute Nacht geträumt*, the Aotearoa New Zealand artist Ruth Buchanan's (b. 1980) first institutional solo exhibition in Switzerland. Buchanan has developed a walking tour of a "Gegenwart era" spanning forty years and envisions a possible future of the building.

From the ground floor up to the third floor, one question guides the presentation on each level: "From what point does the contemporary begin?", "Which documents say what?", "Where does my body belong?" or "Do I want to come back?". These questions, addressed to the context, the spatial framework, the visitors, and the museum's relation to its own history, serve as points of departure for *Heute Nacht geträumt*'s effort to unfold a vivid experience of a museum of the contemporary. Buchanan's polymorphous creations spread out over all four levels of the venue, structuring the exhibition experience through colors, materials, writings, and temporary architectural elements she adds to the existing galleries—and, importantly, through close to a hundred works from the Kunstmuseum Basel's collection. To realize the production, the artist worked with the curators Maja Wismer and Len Schaller, the graphic design studio HIT, the architect Andreas Müller, and members of the visitor services staff.

A red-violet walkable viewing platform hugs the walls on the second floor. The same color reappears in the perforated screens that both direct and disrupt the visitor's gaze. Sulfur-yellow display cases, moss-green chaises, a spiral-shaped curtain, and walls painted lilac by the artist and the curatorial team: these installations guide the audience's walk through the collection works, all of which entered the Kunstmuseum's or the Emanuel Hoffmann Foundation's collections as acquisitions or gifts between the venue's inauguration in 1980 and today. Arranged chronologically by accession date from the ground floor to the upper levels, they gather in Buchanan's mise-en-scène in almost a time-lapse review.

The immersion into the history of the Kunstmuseum Basel | Gegenwart's exhibition programming and collection is complemented by various datasets defined by Buchanan and interpreted in the form of a work of art, including information such as the proportion of works by various categories of artists held in the collection, which media are most represented in the collection, the composition of the staff, which languages were used in the institution at which time, and the development of the entrance fees.

The exhibition's title is directly borrowed from a work held in the collection, Miriam Cahn's painting *heute nacht geträumt (meine werkstatt in N.Y.)*. Its title, which associates the scene of dreaming with the scene of artistic production, was a source of inspiration for Buchanan, and so it is installed in a central position on the museum's third floor.

Also part of the exhibition is a brochure containing an essay by the artist, sketches related to the project, an institutional afterword, the full set of statistics generated, and a list of all works from the Öffentliche Kunstsammlung, the public art collection of Basel, and the Emanuel Hoffmann Foundation on view in the galleries.

**The exhibition is supported by:**

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**Images**

[kunstmuseumbasel.ch/en/media](http://kunstmuseumbasel.ch/en/media)

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## Biographical note

Ruth Buchanan (b. Te Atiawa and Taranaki, Aotearoa New Zealand, 1980; lives and works in Berlin) studied fine arts at the Piet Zwart Institute, Rotterdam, and the University of Auckland's Elam School of Fine Art, Aotearoa New Zealand.

Buchanan has realized a number of large-scale projects, including at the Tate Modern, London; the Gwangju Biennale, Gwangju; the MASP São Paulo; the Badischer Kunstverein, Karlsruhe; the Kröller-Müller Museum, Otterlo; the Hamburger Bahnhof, Berlin; and the Adam Art Gallery, Wellington. An extensive exhibition staging the collection of the Govett-Brewster Art Gallery, a contemporary art museum in Ngāmotu New Plymouth, Aotearoa New Zealand, was on view in 2019.

In addition to her exhibition activities, the artist writes on a regular basis and teaches as a guest lecturer at various universities. In 2018, she was awarded Aotearoa New Zealand's prestigious Walters Prize.