

# Capitain Petzel

Monica Bonvicini

*It is Night Outside*

1 May – 7 June 2025

Capitain Petzel is pleased to announce *It is Night Outside*, Monica Bonvicini's first solo exhibition with the gallery, opening 1 May 2025, as part of Gallery Weekend Berlin.

Spanning all three levels of the gallery, Bonvicini's new sculptures, works on paper and a new site-specific video installation invite viewers to engage with themes of space, identity, and their construction.

The two-channel video installation, which lends its title to the exhibition, is screened in the lower exhibition space, while announcing itself with immersive sounds that resonate throughout the upper galleries. It features three performers navigating an undefined environment. Unrelenting and restless, they repeatedly rearrange the interior. The continuous nature of their actions transcends individual gestures and can be interpreted as a broader reflection on the societal condition and an act of resistance.

Bonvicini consistently explores how we perceive space and the meanings ascribed to it, the role of architecture in relation to safety and identity, and the restless struggle for self-determination. These concerns have been central to her practice since her iconic early video installations *Wallfuckin'* (1995/96) and *Destroy She Said* (1998), and continue in more recent films like *I See a White Building, Pink and Blue* (2020).

In the main gallery, a group of monolithic sculptures, a synergy of metal and leather, are on view. They are covered in interwoven leather belts, asserting their presence so forcefully that they nearly evoke a feeling of physical discomfort. The use of leather suggests discipline, power and masculine dominance. The belts surround the armatures, yet they do not fully conceal them, instead revealing smooth metal beneath. This outward display of stability offers a glimpse into a fragile structure, akin to the current state of society, one which asks to be dismantled.

Bonvicini also debuts a series of works on paper: *Bitch*, *Vamp (light)* and *Vamp (pink)* – terms historically used to categorize and demean women. By isolating these words, Bonvicini urges viewers to reconsider them through a progressive lens, as part of a feminist process of linguistic reclamation.

A new series of sculptures feature delicate glass facsimiles of classic English coat and hat hooks, rendered in an almost ethereal materiality. However, instead of supporting coats or hats, the hooks hold underwear. Here, the act of undressing transcends everyday utility. More than just an expression of comfort, it points to a sense of safety and self-empowerment. Bonvicini interrogates how intimacy is staged, displayed and preserved – negotiating the ambivalence between voyeurism and control.

With *It is Night Outside*, Monica Bonvicini reflects on the tensions of our time, both on an individual and societal level. The exhibition raises questions about self-representation, alienation and interpretive authority, while drawing attention to the fragility of societal structures, a subject of pressing political urgency.

**Monica Bonvicini** has held solo exhibitions at major institutions including Pinacoteca Agnelli, Lingotto, Turin (2024); Neue Nationalgalerie, Berlin (2022–2023); Kunst Museum Winterthur (2022); Kunsthaus Graz (2022); Bauhaus Dessau (2022); Kunsthalle Bielefeld (2020); Belvedere 21, Vienna (2019); Berlinische Galerie (2017); Baltic Centre for Contemporary Art, Gateshead (2016); Deichtorhallen, Hamburg (2012); and Museum Abteiberg, Mönchengladbach (2012). Her works have been featured in numerous institutional group exhibitions, including at the Centre Pompidou, Paris (2025); Kunstmuseum Bonn (2023); Kunsthaus Zürich (2023); Art Sonje Center, Seoul

# Capitain Petzel

(2022); Castello di Rivoli, Turin (2021, 2005); National Gallery, Copenhagen (2019); MAXXI, Rome (2024, 2018); Zachęta – National Gallery of Art, Warsaw (2017); MAMBO, Bogotá (2016); Hirshhorn Museum and Sculpture Garden, Washington, D.C. (2013); Fridericianum, Kassel (2011); MoMA PS1, New York (2009); and Lenbachhaus, Munich (2009). Bonvicini has also participated in major biennials including Busan (2020), Istanbul (2017, 2003) and Venice (2015, 2011, 2005, 2001, 1999).

Since 2003, she has taught sculpture and performance art, first at the Academy of Fine Arts in Vienna and, since 2017, sculpture at the University of the Arts in Berlin.