



## **Marius Steiger – Hermitage**

**September 6 – November 9, 2025**

Curated by Kiki Seiler-Michalitsi

Born in Bern in 1999, Marius Steiger is an emerging Swiss artist who explores the medium of painting and its history. His work examines the contrasts between authenticity and artificiality, figuration and abstraction, illusion and simulation, with particular attention to the relationship between humans and modern technologies. Steiger does not draw on nature or real objects, but instead on digitally generated 3D visualizations (renderings) of his own making. These serve as the basis for his works in the tradition of trompe l'oeil painting. His shaped canvases adopt a distinctly digital aesthetic, imitating motifs or situations. Yet their flawless surfaces and fragmented forms reveal their artificiality and their origin in the virtual world.

Hermitage at Kunst Raum Riehen is Steiger's first institutional solo exhibition. It raises questions about the transmission of iconic motifs and explores the persistence of vision. On view are paintings of symbolic structures such as architectural constructions, vehicles, classical artefacts, and abstract forms. Oscillating between image and object, between reality and rendering, they combine real narratives with fiction. This contradiction becomes especially evident in the artist's attempt to translate the seemingly endless possibilities of digital space into tangible form.

The arrangement of works responds directly to the three floors of Kunst Raum Riehen, acting as visual and conceptual framing elements within the architecture. In this spatial constellation, the paintings transform, both individually and in dialogue with one another, into a holistic, contemporary still life. In doing so, they reinterpret the vanitas tradition without recourse to its classic symbols of transience. The motifs are not merely objects; they also serve as surfaces for reflection on the medium of painting itself. They demonstrate how painting can preserve and transform the ephemeral by placing it in new contexts. Familiar icons, such as the delivery van—an emblematic image in the age of online shopping—or antique busts, appear in Steiger's work as vessels of memory and condensed meaning.

A central part of the exhibition involves covering all windows with red foil. Incoming daylight is transformed into a cinematic glow, immersing the rooms in a theatrical atmosphere that evokes desire, ecstasy, and transcendence. Through this filter, the outside world becomes part of the installation: alienated, symbolically charged, and suffused with cultural meaning. The foil itself functions as a living vanitas motif, not one of transience, but of recognition that every image is already colored by history, context, and heritage. In this way, Marius Steiger's exhibition becomes an artificially constructed world where tradition, myth, and the present converge: a place of retreat, a hermitage of painted illusions.

**Marius Steiger** is a Swiss artist who holds a Master's degree in Painting from the Royal College of Art in London. He was awarded a scholarship from the Patronage Fund for Young Swiss Artists at Kunsthalle Basel. His work is part of public collections including the Collection of the New Art Dealers Alliance, New York; the City of Zurich Art Collection; the Canton of Bern Art Collection; and the Swiss National Library, Bern. Recent exhibitions include *Monsieur Hulot*, Blue Velvet, Zurich (2025), *Clear History*, Perrotin, Paris (2025), *Brick Breath Horizon*, Lisson X Zian, Lisson Gallery, Shanghai (2025), *Maison Clearing*, Clearing NY LA (Off-Site), Basel (2025), *Day*, Galleri Opdahl, Stavanger (2024), *Sun shines*, *Money falls*, Blue Velvet, Zurich (2023) and *Lust for Life*, Incubator, London (2022). Marius Steiger currently lives between Bern and London.

## **Opening:**

**Friday, September 5, 2025, 7 pm**

Welcome:

Stefan Suter, Municipal Councillor

Kiki Seiler-Michalitsi, Curator

## **Events:**

**Thursday, September 18, 2025, 2 – 5 pm**

'Real Objects and Digital Worlds – Your 3D-Adventure' – Workshop for youth aged 12 to 16 with Tanja Weidmann, art education. Cost: CHF 7. Registration by September 10, 2025: [kunstraum@riehen.ch](mailto:kunstraum@riehen.ch)

**Wednesday, September 24, 2025, 6 pm**

Exhibition tour with Olga Osadtschy, artistic director of the Fondation Fernet-Branca, and Kiki Seiler-Michalitsi

**Wednesday, October 29, 2025, 6 pm**

Artist talk with Marius Steiger, moderated by Kiki Seiler-Michalitsi

The exhibition is supported by:

**Stanley Thomas Johnson Stiftung**

**Burggemeinde Bern**

**C. und A. Kupper-Stiftung**

**Marti-Clerici Stiftung**

**Kunst Raum Riehen**, im Berowergut, Baselstrasse 71, 4125 Riehen

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[kunstraum@riehen.ch](mailto:kunstraum@riehen.ch)

## **Opening hours during the exhibition:**

Wed – Fri: 1 pm – 6 pm

Sat/Sun: 11 am – 6 pm