

KW

Pause: AA Bronson's Garten der Lüste 26–29 April 18

Opening: 25 April 18, 7 pm

Featuring AA Bronson / Collaborations with Adrian Hermanides, Mark Jan Krayenhoff van de Leur, Travis Meinolf, James Richards, and Scott Treleaven / Performances with Spencer Carter, Michael Dudeck, Richard John Jones, Ebe Oke, and Chrysanne Stathacos / Additional works by Elijah Burgher, TM Davy, Sholem Krishtalka, Chrysanne Stathacos / and introducing: JX Williams

AA Bronson's Garten der Lüste—a 5-day hybrid installation featuring performances and artworks—inaugurates KW Institute for Contemporary Art's second exhibition season of 2018 and is part of its *Pause* series. *Pause* is envisioned as a platform that punctuates the program by presenting a singular installation for a short period of time in order to bridge relationships between the past, present, and future.

AA Bronson (born 1946, Vancouver) is both an artist and curator, subject and object, in this project, which developed out of his practice of integrating his community of artists into his performances and artworks. The project takes Hieronymus Bosch's famous painting *The Garden of Earthly Delights* (*Garten der Lüste*, circa 1500) as its starting point. A pioneer of collaborative and queer visual art practice, AA Bronson is the sole surviving member of the art collective *General Idea* (1969–94). He has a long history of involvement with political and social issues in art and publishing, and has collaborated with many generations of artists across many disciplines. He is a founder of *FILE Magazine*, Toronto; *Art Metropole*, Toronto; *The NY Art Book Fair*, New York; *The Institute for Art, Religion and Social Justice*, New York; and AA Bronson's *School for Young Shamans*, which is nomadic. In the last decades, he has knitted elements from various religions into his work, from Tibetan Buddhism and Shamanism to Ceremonial Magic and Santería.



AA Bronson, *Folly* (in collaboration with Adrian Hermanides and Mark Jan Krayenhoff van de Leur), 2015
Courtesy the artist and Esther Schipper, Berlin

The installation in KW's ground floor and main hall brings together collaborative works developed over the past ten years into a single ensemble featuring four tents that accommodate inhabitation and intimacy.

The centerpiece *Folly* (2015), a collaboration with Adrian Hermanides and Mark Jan Krayenhoff van de Leur, is based on the famous Japanese Zen garden of Ryoanji, in Kyoto. It consists of a red-and-white, striped carnival tent and a group of objects arranged on a wide rectangular bed of mugwort. Inside the circus-like tent hangs a brass lamp casting orange light onto the organza interior, which is exposed to view through the entrance. Surrounding the tent are two dynastic Chinese urns standing on interlocking wooden plinths, a family of stuffed deer, a Isamu Noguchi paper floor lamp, and a mannequin dressed in a linen shaman coat adorned with a collar of moose antlers and quartz. *Folly* is enriched by the ambient sound work *FIELD* (2015) created by artist Ebe Oke.

Oke also appears within *Folly* at intervals, performing his vocals to the sound of the pre-recorded music.

Tent for Healing (2013), a collaboration with Travis Meinolf, is a large rectangular tent woven from colorfully striped cotton and wool. Inside, there is a chaise lounge covered with pillows and blankets for the healer. His assistants (Richard John Jones and Spencer Carter) serve tea to guests. Various objects populate and animate the tent: a tea set, chocolate, fruit, nuts, ritual objects, tarot cards, books, mistletoe, and small gifts from visitors. A vintage African ceremonial figure watches over the space from one corner. Dressed in a floor-length ceremonial robe with red-and-white geometric patterns, the healer, AA Bronson, engages with the guests. The tent can only be visited by appointment, making it a private environment separated from the public exhibition space outside. Visitors are asked to bring a gift for the healer, something that is difficult for them to give away.

Treehouse (2015) is a tent built on a simple structure of ash wood, hung with woven wool and linen fabrics in dark green, brown, and blue. In front of the *Treehouse*, a taxidermied fox stands on its hind legs in conversation with a crow, illustrating Aesop's fable. The tent and the animals are arranged on a bed of dried, shredded mugwort. During the installation process, AA Bronson spreads the mugwort as a meditative action, a secret performance.

The small green striped tent *Cabine* (2008), a collaboration with Scott Treleven, resembles a 19th century fortuneteller's booth with its silky material and harlequin styling. It is at once a changing cabin on the Lido and a private booth in a gay sauna. Its front curtains are raised, creating a stage-like opening. Every day around noon, artist Michael Dudeck sits inside *Cabine* and performs an intense durational work. In this fifth iteration of the performance *Fish Scroll (Yaldaboath)*, he inhabits the sorcerer's tent for three hours per day, body painted, wearing prosthetic breasts, holding a large dead fish in his arms while chanting an invented language.

Pythia Rose Mandala (2017) consists of a large floor mandala made of thousands of rose petals. Artist Chrysanne Stathacos will construct the mandala

throughout the preview and opening of the exhibition. At the exhibition's close, she will present a special performance in which the mandala is deconstructed and the petals scattered.

Furthermore, several works by AA Bronson's friends are distributed throughout the space. JX Williams, a queer black witch from New Orleans, repurposes household implements as ritual objects. TM Davy's painting *AA Bronson in the Magic Forest* presents the artist naked and lit by candlelight in the cruising woods of Fire Island, New York, while Elijah Burgher's portrait presents Bronson surrounded by acolytes, most of whom are Burgher himself. Sholem Krishtalka's miniature gouache is a dark rendition of *Folly* itself.



AA Bronson, *Tent for Healing* (in collaboration with Travis Meinholz), 2013
Courtesy the artist and Esther Schipper, Berlin

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**Opening hours during Gallery Weekend Berlin
26–29 April 18**

Thursday–Friday 11 am–9 pm
Saturday–Sunday 11 am–7 pm

Admission

5 €, reduced 3 €
Admission free on Thursday evening from 6–9 pm

AA Bronson's Garten der Lüste is only on view throughout Gallery Weekend Berlin. Simultaneously, Esther Schipper, Berlin presents *Catch me if you can!* *AA Bronson + General Idea, 1968–2018* from April 26 through May 26, 2018.

Colophon

Director: Krist Gruijthuijsen
Curator: AA Bronson
Assistant Curator and Project Management:
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Head of Production: Claire Spilker
Technical Management: Wilken Schade
Registrar: Monika Grzymislawska
Head of Installation and Media Technology:
Markus Krieger
Installation team: KW Installation Team
Interns: Alina Isabella Rentsch, Chinh Nguyen Thi,
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Esther Schipper



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