

The Kunsthalle Bielefeld is pleased to announce Monica Bonvicini's solo show, **LOVER'S MATERIAL**, which marks the beginning of a new phase for the museum under the recently appointed Christina Végh.

In her work, the internationally renowned artist Monica Bonvicini examines themes such as institutional critique, the relationship between gender and feminism, and the exercise of control and power. Bonvicini is known for her site-specific installations that deconstruct and question the architecture of art institutions in humorous ways. For the motif on the invitation to the exhibition in Bielefeld, she selected a 2020 drawing that refers to Philip Johnson, the architect of the Kunsthalle, who strove to create a clear setting for the modernist project with his International style building for the museum.

The show's title, **LOVER'S MATERIAL** is a reference to the author Franz Schulze's characterization of the relationship between Johnson and his partner Jon Stroup. In Schulze's biography of Johnson, Stroup is described as «comfortably passive». For Bonvicini, this opened up the notion that relationships can also be defined as something both objectifying and rationalizing. Starting with this idea, the whole exhibition delves into the relationships—economic and private, as well as political—that are linked to exhibition spaces. How can the artist's relationship to the museum's site, its works of art, its visitors, or its employees be defined, and what kind of dependencies are created?

Besides many new works of art, such as installations, sculptures, a video, and drawings made for the show, a glass sculpture titled «Up in Arms» (2019) will also be on display. As a visual wordplay, the piece—a reproduction of the artist's arms in pink cut-glass—symbolizes both tenderness and tension, as well as the call for resistance and protest proclaimed in its title. This connection characterizes many of the artist's new works, which have been produced under the contrasting impressions of today's worldwide protests and the isolation imposed by the COVID-19 pandemic. Here, private and public space, coercion and freedom exemplify the tensions of the current year.

Monica Bonvicini is the recipient of prominent international art prizes. Among them are the Golden Lion from the Venice Biennale (1999), the Nationalgalerie Berlin prize (2005), and more recently the Oskar Kokoschka Prize (2020). Her works have been shown several times at various Venice Biennales and the Berlin Biennial, and this fall they will be on display at the Quadriennale in Rome, the Busan Biennial, and at the Kunstmuseum Stuttgart. Aside from the numerous appearances of her art in national and international group shows, comprehensive shows of her artwork have been seen at the BALTIC Centre for Contemporary Art (2016), the 15<sup>th</sup> Istanbul Biennial (2017), the Belvedere 21 in Vienna (2019) and the OGR (Officine Grandi Riparazioni), Turin (2019).

Curator: Christina Végh  
Curatorial Assistant: Laura Rehme

The exhibition is sponsored by the Stiftung der Sparkasse Bielefeld and the Kulturstiftung Bielefeld.

**Monica Bonvicini**  
**LOVER'S**  
**MATERIAL**  
**10 10 20**  
**17 01 21**

**Press Conference**  
**08 10 20 / 11 am**

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