

# **Martina Morger**

**Lèche Vitrines**

**2021 Manor Art Prize St.Gallen**



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Lèche Vitrines | 2021 Manor Art Prize St.Gallen

17 September 2021 – 6 March 2022

Kunstmuseum St.Gallen

Martina Morger is the recipient of the 2021 Manor Art Prize St. Gallen. The jury is recognizing a performance and multimedia artist who works steadfastly and uncompromisingly and who critically questions social and economic working and living conditions. She persistently names social grievances and transforms fundamental issues of our existence into sometimes physically exhausting and sometimes unsettling performances. Martina Morger deals with the position of women and female artists in modern capitalist society in particular. She researches and reflects on female and queer voices and deals with topics such as technology, labor, and care.

Martina Morger was born in 1989 in Vaduz, Liechtenstein. She studied media studies at the University of Zurich and fine arts at the Zurich University of the Arts (ZHdK) from 2015 to 2018, before completing a master's in fine arts practice at the Glasgow School of Arts in 2019. She is co-curator of Perrrformat, which brings performance art into urban public spaces. In spring 2020 she completed a studio residency at the Cité Internationale des Arts in Paris. She lives and works in Balzers and Hannover.

Curator: Nadia Veronese



**Martina Morger** (\*1989 in Vaduz, Liechtenstein, lives and works in Balzers and Hanover)

***Lèche Vitrines, 2020***

HD video, 16:9, 16:48 min.

Camera: Lukas Zerbst and Youssef Chebbi

Editing and sound: Lukas Zerbst

The video work *Lèche-Vitrine* was created during a studio fellowship in 2020 at the Cité Internationale des Arts in Paris. The artist reacted to the lockdown that was in effect at the time, during which shops and offices throughout the city were closed. We see the artist strolling through the third arrondissement, purposefully or intuitively guided by the products in the shop windows. Seduced by the consumer goods on display, she approaches the window and, with a fixed gaze, begins to trace the outlines of the chosen object with her tongue. The objects of desire include everyday items as well as luxury goods, whose limited availability raises questions about appropriation and consumption.



***They Start To Lose It With Time, 2021***

Performance and installation, PVC, metal, variable

Matte traces of a long-term performance stand out on the shiny plastic sheet and point to a previous work process. The dumbbells were dragged back and forth over the plastic sheet as an act of strength over the course of many hours. They have been left behind, scratched and repainted, and attest to the arduous process of creating the work.



***Serving, 2021***

Installation, silver, chrome steel, variable

This work uses personal items to address the ubiquitous expectations of performance in a neoliberal society. With the invitation to visitors to continually expand and reshape the installation, the artist poses questions about ownership, services, and copyright.

Visitors are invited to add silver or chrome steel trays to the installation. For more information, please inquire at the ticket desk.



### ***Cleaning Her, 2021***

7 videos, 4K video, 19:10, 7 Hantarex monitors, 7 min. each  
 Camera, editing, and sound: Lukas Zerbst

The seven-part video work *Cleaning Her* focuses on art in public spaces. The gesture of cleaning and maintaining concentrates on works by artists from the region and abroad who live in the St. Gallen metropolitan area. In this way, Martina Morger generates attention and initiates a discourse on public commissions and funding in the art context. She also questions how artworks are treated and how they are made visible.

Information on the artworks:



Elisabeth Nembrini (\*1960 in Basel, lives and works in St. Gallen)  
*Untitled*, 2013

Fountain  
 Bronze, concrete  
 Bronze bowl:  
 29.0 × 60.0 × 47.0 cm  
 Concrete base:  
 90.0 × 72.0 × 51.0 cm  
 Langgasse 124, St. Gallen  
 City of St. Gallen



Eva Lips (\*1965 in Urdorf ZH, lives and works in St. Gallen)  
*Der etwas andere städtische Schulweg*, 1995

Unexpected breaking out of several cave creatures/mythical beings  
 (Metamorphosis from plant, animal, and human fragments)  
 On-site cement construction, cow teeth, dog claws  
 In the former embroidery district, park wall Villa Ruesch  
 100-meter-long park wall with tuff grotto  
 Unterstrasse, St. Gallen  
 City of St. Gallen



Jessica Stockholder (\*1959 in Seattle, lives and works in Chicago)  
*SIGN WAVING BLUSH*, 2002

Concrete, quartz, polyester,  
chrome steel, aluminum, nylon,  
candelabrum  
Teufenerstrasse 20, St. Gallen  
AXA Versicherungen



Maria Eichhorn (\*1962 in Bamberg, lives and works in Berlin)  
*Zeitkapsel im Wasserfall der Steinach*, 2012

Metal capsule, tablet  
Mühlener-Schluchtweg



Marie-Cécile Boog (\*1925 in St. Erhard, LU, lives in St. Gallen)  
*Brunnen Singenberg*, 1991

Liesberg Jurassic limestone,  
bronze  
Singenberg retirement home  
Rorschacherstrasse 80, St.  
Gallen  
Ortsbürgergemeinde St. Gallen



Monika Ebner (\*1959 in Wil, lives and works in Trogen)  
*Wassergarten*, 1998

Canal system, pioneer plants,  
gravel, glass  
Courtyard at  
Gartenstrasse/Wassergasse, St.  
Gallen  
Raiffeisen St. Gallen



Pipilotti Rist (\*1962 in Grabs, lives and works in Zurich) and Carlos Martinez (\*1967 in St. Gallen, lives and works in Widnau)  
*stadtlounge*, 2005

Tartan covering, various materials, 6,282 m<sup>2</sup>  
Raiffeisenplatz, St. Gallen  
Raiffeisen St. Gallen



***Cleaning Sappho*, 2021**  
4K video, 19:10, 7:34 min.  
Camera, editing, and sound: Lukas Zerbst

The video is on display in the shop window of the goldsmith Gabriela Frei at Marktgasse 26 in St. Gallen.

Information about the artwork:  
Adelaide Maraini-Pandiani  
(\*1836 in Milan, †1917 in Rome)  
*Sappho*, 1895

Marble, 200 cm  
Park Villa am Berg, Rosenbergstrasse 38, St. Gallen  
Kunstmuseum St. Gallen, donation from Generalkonsul Geiser, 1895





***Prospects: Sugar Beach, 2021***

Object, acrylic glass, silicone, pigment, 52 × 75 cm

Vacation brochures promote dreams of leisure and promise well-deserved relaxation, warm sunshine, and a refreshing sea breeze for those who need a break from work. For many, the advertised destinations seem like surreal, unreachable dreams. The blue and yellow tones that emanate from the transparent brochure holder recall sandy beaches, sun, and sea, as well as their fleetingness. *Prospects: Sugar Beach* encourages us to think about the environment, mass tourism, and our own personal desires.



***Your Dreams, 2021***

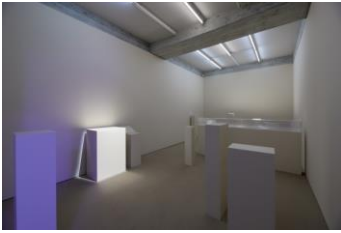
Audio installation, stereo sound, 6:03 min.

***Soft Opening, 2021***

Installation, poly organza, fragrance essence, variable

In a society geared toward performance, the optimization of body and mind is omnipresent and essential for the functioning and provision of services. The artist recites texts collaged from health brochures, yoga instructions, and her own scripts. The supposed appeal for relaxation quickly gives way to a reprimanding instruction. The overlapping of the voices exposes an obsessive strategy.

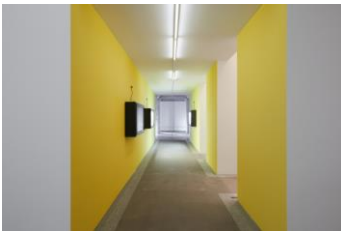
The visitors find themselves in a stage situation, simultaneously as spectators and performers. The boundaries between scenery, stage, and backstage are fluid and constantly shifting.



***Distant Lover, 2021***

Installation, wood, acrylic paint, Plexiglas, variable

Various displays arranged in the room create an intermediate state between an abandoned shop and one that is still under construction. The artificially created atmosphere is underlined by interior design elements such as carpet, wall paint, and light. *Distant Lover* refers to an unfulfilled longing and emphasizes the absence of things or of closeness.



***Passage, 2021***

Installation, 4 display cases, each 80 × 150 × 26 cm, neon light, wall paint, variable

Found display cases were technically manipulated by the artist so that their lights flicker irregularly and thus underline the neglect of their original use. The passage indicates a spatial and temporal transition, floating between public and private, between the past and the future.



***On Curation, 2018 & 2021***

Performance and installation, museum markers, LED, variable

Museum markers stake out a specific space and thus define the exhibition space. The boundary serves as a placeholder for performances and reserves the space for past and future works. The artist thus refers to the process of curating, archiving, and dealing with performance art.

# Performances during the exhibition

*So Long* is a performance by Martina Morger that was shown on 11 September 2021 at the Kunstmuseum St. Gallen and as part of the Neustart Festival.

At the opening, the performance *Are we there yet?* by Luca Büchler with Alyssa Berrez, Miruh Frutiger, Monica Germann, Jules Claude Gisler, Igor Guedes Santana, Marietheres Jopp, Ioana Izabela Puie, Lia Gattaneo, and Jana Slattery was shown.

For *Nachtschicht #24 (Soft Machines)* on 5 November 2021, organized by the Kunstverein St. Gallen, the artist Martina Morger and the curator Laura van der Tas invited performance artists from Switzerland and abroad to the Kunstmuseum St. Gallen. Participants included Andrea Vogel, Birgit Widmer, Cheyenne Oswald, Claude Bühler, Davide-Christelle Sanvee, Gemma Jones, Ivy Monteiro, Lei Saito, Lukas Zerbst, Mariya Vasilyeva, Mona Louisa-Melinka Hempel, Monica Germann, Sarah Glück, and Saturn Akin.

On 17 November 2021, Martina Morger's performance *Kosmetik* will take place at the Kunstmuseum St. Gallen.



## **So Long, 2021**

Performance and Installation, chrome steel, silicone, Lycra, cotton, glass, pearls, acrylic glass, 15 min.

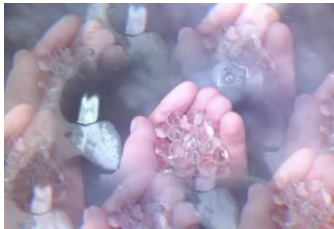
*“The performer moves toward you with elegant steps. The desire in her eyes fixates like a magpie on one of your accessories. With a focused gaze, it is molded out of silicone and placed on top of it. With each new kneading movement, the viscosity of the material and the body is tested. At some point, what has been kneaded becomes only a memory of the gesture, no longer consumable in the present. So long. Until we meet again.” – Martina Morger*



***Are we there yet?, 2021***

Performance, cotton, long-term performance

During this long-term performance, ten performance artists, dressed in identical, in some cases oversized suits, stand or walk around the exhibition space. Based on the normative garment of the suit, the performance addresses topics that deal with the perception of norms relating to the body and identity. Who or what is considered suitable under what conditions, and how can individual positions take power over these processes and question and deconstruct them in their apparent inviolability?



***Soft Machines, 2021***

This evening with 14 performances revolves around the interaction between machinery and body, both as an act and as a state. The performances will overlap like a mille-feuille and create a picture in individual parts and as a whole. The evening will be documented subjectively and from multiple perspectives by Lukas Zerbst and other performers. This video work will be presented in the context of the exhibition at a later date.



***Kosmetik, 2021***

Performance, acrylic glass, cotton, 20 min.

In a technical tour, the performer Martina Morger gives a lecture on the formal elements of the exhibition. Collaged from subjective experiences during the installation phase, quotations from the team members, and fragmentary facts about the museum architecture, the performance exposes the process of realizing an exhibition layer by layer. Illuminating the materialization and installation of art, the artist poses the question of what constitutes art in the context of an exhibition.



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