

**BUNDESKUNSTHALLE**



**VAJIKO CHACHKHIANI**

**Heavy Metal Honey**

29 June to 7 October 2018

**Media Conference: 28 June 2018, 11 a.m.**

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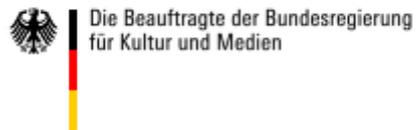
## Exhibition Dates

Exhibition	29 June to 7 October 2018
Director	Rein Wolfs
Managing Director	Patrick Schmeing
Curator	Susanne Kleine
Head of Corporate Communications / Press Officer	Sven Bergmann
Catalogue / Press Copy	€ 14.80 / € 7
Opening Hours	Tuesday and Wednesday: 10 a.m. to 9 p.m. Thursday to Sunday: 10 a.m. to 7 p.m. Public Holidays: 10 a.m. to 7 p.m. Closed on Mondays
Admission standard / reduced / family ticket	€ 4 / € 3 / € 7.50
Happy Hour-Ticket	€ 7 Tuesday and Wednesday: 7 to 9 p.m. Thursday to Sunday: 5 to 7 p.m. (for individuals only)
Guided Group Tours information and registration	T +49 228 9171-243 F +49 228 9171-244 <a href="mailto:kunstvermittlung@bundeskunsthalle.de">kunstvermittlung@bundeskunsthalle.de</a>
Public Transport	Underground lines 16, 63, 66 and bus lines 610, 611 and 630 to Heussallee / Museumsmeile Deutsche Bahn / UN-Campus: Lines RB 26 (MittelrheinBahn), RB 30 (Rhein-Ahr- Bahn) and RB 48 (Rhein-Wupper-Bahn)
Parking	There is a car and coach park on Emil- Nolde-Straße behind the Bundeskunsthalle. Navigation: Emil-Nolde-Straße 11, 53113 Bonn

Press Information (German / English) [www.bundeskunsthalle.de](http://www.bundeskunsthalle.de)  
For press files follow 'press'.

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## Information on the Exhibition

For the exhibition *Heavy Metal Honey*, Vajiko Chachkhiani developed an installation, which, through films and sculptures, reflects the cycle of life and the parallelism of histories that are only vaguely visible. Much remains hidden, ultimately comes to light, and flows together when the unexpected happens: The internal now also becomes externally visible. At times, global and individual history is inseparably linked, and only the moment of action and cognition make history (or histories) a turning point which influences narration and perception.

The individual works of the 1985 in Tiflis, Georgia born artist – films, sculptures, performances, photographs, and large-scale installations – are characterized in their overall compositions by a dense narration that suggests various tracks and interweaves everything in dramaturgical density. On the balanced interface between the reality of the outside world and the inner human psyche, they delve into existential questions of life, human perception, and the culture of remembrance.

The materials of his works emphasize historical references, as well as the bond with his homeland, which occasionally leaves its mark on his oeuvre.

Rein Wolfs, Director of the Bundeskunsthalle: “Vajiko Chachkhiani confronts us with a Georgian natural catastrophe, family constellations and mythological symbolism. In his work, kinship becomes universal and the past gains in currency.”



## Work Descriptions

### *Winter which was not there*, 2017

HD video projection, 12:30 min

Courtesy of the artist and Daniel Marzona, Berlin

In *Winter which was not there* (2017) a monumental statue, an apparently historical monument, is pulled out of the sea. Few men are watching the recovery work. Soon we discover that one of them is the man which the statue depicts. Finally, the man lays the statue on the road and ties it to the back of his car. He then starts to drive, dragging the statue on the road. The driver, the protagonist of the grinding process, and his dog act out this business with a 'stony face'. Alongside other aspects, this underlines the driver's function as a proxy and visualises one possible way of dealing with history (and even one's personal involvement). The act implies torture, but the implication of torture provides the statue with another round of living death or dead life. We see the depicted man driving through landscapes, villages, towns. The image of the dragged statue recalls the symbolic ends of totalitarian regimes when monumental statues of dictators move from a vertical to a horizontal position after they were uprooted from their base. The dragging of the statue on the road erodes and pulverizes it until it disappears. Nevertheless, the man does not stop and continues to drive even after the statue disappears and we are only left with the rope.

### *Secret that mountain kept*, 2018

Installation, mixed materials

Dimensions variable

Courtesy of the artist and Daniel Marzona, Berlin

*Secret that mountain kept* makes one suspect that the task is to set off on a (mysterious) search for clues. The inspiration for this work was a historic event from the year 2015 where the small River Were, which runs through Tiflis, the capital of Georgia, burst its banks because of a severe flood:

19 June 2015, 6:43 pm

Georgia

Tiger in Tiflis

*Escaped Zoo Animals: Following Heavy Floods, a Tiger Is on the Loose in the City.*

*Following the heavy floods in Tiflis, another tiger from the destroyed zoo of the capital of Georgia is on the loose. Huntsman Giorgi Metreweli states that at least 15 citizens have seen the predator on the outskirts of the city. At the weekend, a flash flood in the centre of Tiflis had cost the lives of 19 people and devastated the zoo. Several animals escaped, amongst them a white tiger that killed a man on Wednesday before being shot. Alongside tigers, also a bear, lions, a rhinoceros and a crocodile broke out of the zoo.*

More than 50 per cent of the 600 animals at the zoo died in the floods when, after heavy showers, the small rivulet suddenly transformed into a rapid stream.



Nineteen people lost their lives and numerous houses and facilities were destroyed. The flood which brought death to so many at the same time also brought with it a state of expected freedom for some of the animals – albeit a state of freedom which they did not know how to cope with, as life in the zoo had forced them into a state of apathy that suppressed their natural instincts. If anything unexpected does move into their field of vision, their instincts are awoken and it comes to tragic encounters such as the one described above. The complexity and Janus-faced quality of (hi)story and stories is a part of Chachkhiani's narration.

To the artist, this catastrophe was emblematic for a mythological scenario, and he dedicates the entire narrative to the man who just wanted to do his job like on any other normal day but was killed on his way by a white tiger who had escaped. In the exhibition, this dedication is symbolised by a head made of concrete, hewn, which is presented to the River Were on a rock – it looks as if it had been washed up there and yet as if it were positioned on an altar (dedicated to the gods).

Used materials he has found on site, leftovers of the events, for example, parts of the cage, rods, which, in their brittleness, illustrate an original 'display' of compounds and cages will be installed in the exhibition as fragmentary remains of cages. The installation is completed by dried and hollow seed pods placed on top of the rods here and there, to which the artist attached the claws and fangs of various animals. What was originally used as a vessel to decant wine now also points symbolically at the Dionysian celebrations.

Then again, the old, nostalgic carousel figures – various animals, a boat or a car, placed behind bushes – bring to mind our (childhood) memories and give evidence of former activities, former 'life'; they could have been part of a carousel that once stood outside the zoo.

The old "night shops" are a far more substantial sculptural intervention – they are kiosks that have been removed from the cityscape. To the artist, these kiosks with their historical architecture are mute witnesses of urban nightlife. Seen from the outside in the exhibition, with their poetic, flaky colours, they look like a large abstract painting. But inside, there are dead trees and mud, referring to a past life that was active, and intermeshing reality and the imagination.

***Heavy Metal Honey*, 2018**

HD video projection, 14:15 min

Courtesy of the artist and Daniel Marzona, Berlin

The artist thanks the Han Nefkens Foundation who supported his film production.

With this work Chachkhiani attempts to understand the structure of inner psychology/ies, so it can be interpreted as a kind of 'experimental setup' or 'family constellations': a totally normal extended family and their friends meet up for dinner on a Friday night, everyone is busy, everyone plays their usual role, the mother carries the food to the table. Everyone is talking with the other and



talking at the same time, everyone is having fun – in spite of the fact that it is raining in the living room and everything is wet and soaked in water.

This rather irritating mise-en-scene functions as a prompt for the ensuing, surreal action. Everyone is sitting at the table, eating and happily chatting about everyday events; only the mother is quietly observing the others. Suddenly, she gets up and walks into the kitchen, where she stays for a while. Although the intensity of the rain is increasing, the others do not let this spoil their 'fun'. Eventually, the mother walks back into the room, carrying a weapon in her hand, but nobody is paying her any attention. She shoots single members of her family, but when she turns and points the gun at her son, there is no bullet left in the magazine. She sits down again – the rain carries on pouring down.

The film offers us two possible endings: the one taken from the imagination – it is still raining, the camera focuses on the supper again, the family members and friends are talking happily; the mother is watching them all. And then there is the reality: the sun is shining into the same living room, the dying mother is supine on the sofa; she is surrounded by friends and family. In a steamed-up mirror, the onlooker can see blurred silhouettes.

As there is no absolute closure to this story, the onlooker is included quite explicitly, and due to the repetitive elements, the work also stands symbolically for the way history repeats itself, and for the circularity of life, which seems to stand still for a moment here. Even the title, *Heavy Metal Honey*, alludes to the cycle of repetition: heavy metal (in the earth, in the mud) stands as a metaphor for history, which is always there – sometimes more relevant, when it is washed to the surface; sometimes less so, when it is covered up, and the (sweet but viscous) honey is a metaphor for inner (familiar) structures.

We would like to advise visitors that the film work (at the end of the exhibition) contains dream scenes involving violence. Even in the company of their parents or guardians, children and young people under the age of 16 may find this work disturbing.

The film (14:15 min.) will be shown every hour on the hour. We strongly recommend watching it in full length, otherwise certain scenes may be misunderstood.



## **Biography**

Born 1985 in Tbilisi, Georgia  
Lives and works in Berlin and Tiflis

In 2017, the artist represented Georgia at the 57<sup>th</sup> Venice Biennale

## **Education**

2003–2004 Technical University Tbilisi, Georgia  
Mathematics and Informatics

2008–2009 Gerrit Rietveld Academie Amsterdam, Netherlands  
Audio Visual Department

2009–2013 Universität der Künste (UdK), Berlin, Germany  
Class of Prof. Gregor Schneider

## **Awards and Grants**

2012  
BINZ39 Artist Residency, Zurich, Switzerland

2013  
DAAD-Scholarship

2014  
7<sup>th</sup> Rubens Promotional Award of the City Siegen, Museum für  
Gegenwartskunst, Siegen, Germany

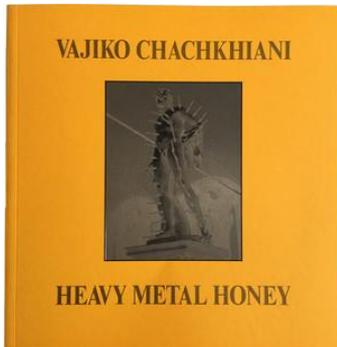
2015  
Work scholarship, Stiftung Kunstfonds, Bonn, Germany

2016  
ISCP Residency Program, New York, USA

Yarat Contemporary Art Center, Residency Program, Baku, Azerbaijan

2017  
The Future Generation Art Prize 2017 by PinchukArtCentre, Kiev, Ukraine

## Publication



Vajiko Chachkhiani  
Heavy Metal Honey

Editor: Kunst- und Ausstellungshalle der Bundesrepublik Deutschland GmbH  
Authors: Ory Dessau, Susanne Kleine

96 pages  
Softcover: 20.3 x 26.2 cm  
25 colour ill, 28 b/w ill.  
€ 14.80



## Current and Upcoming Exhibitions

### **MARINA ABRAMOVIC**

#### **The Cleaner**

**until 12 August 2018**

Radical, controversial and admired in equal measure, Marina Abramović is one of the most talked about international artists today. She is famous for her ground-breaking performances in which she explores personal experience and responsibility and continues to probe her own physical and psychological limits. She addresses fundamental existential questions – the passage of time, physical vulnerability, memory, pain, loss, endurance and trust – that provoke or touch the viewer with great immediacy.

The first major retrospective to be shown in Europe, the exhibition presents works from all periods of Abramović's career – from the early years to the present. Films, photographs, paintings and objects, installations and select archival material shed light on the depth and conceptual reach of the Marina Abramović's creative cosmos. A series of reperformances enhances the visitor experience.

An exhibition of Bundeskunsthalle in cooperation with Moderna Museet, Stockholm, and Louisiana Museum of Modern Art, Humlebæk

### **NAZCA – DIVINE DRAWINGS**

#### **Archaeological Discoveries from the Peruvian Desert**

**until 16 September 2018**

In the southern Peruvian desert, one of the biggest archaeological mysteries is waiting to be solved: the giant geoglyphs of the Nazca culture of ca. 200 BC – 650 AD.

There has been endless speculation about the meaning of the Nazca Lines. But it was not until recently that archaeological research has provided clues to the worldview and culture of the Nazca.

The exhibition takes visitors on a fascinating journey into the mysterious southern Peru of the Nazca period. It invites them to marvel at rich funerary gifts from vast burial complexes, images of strange flying beings – half human, half animal – on colourful ceramic vessels and the most stunningly beautiful archaeological textile finds. Many of the exhibits have never been shown outside Peru. The geoglyphs, some of which extend over several kilometres on the arid plateau between the towns of Nazca and Palpa, are presented in modern multimedia installations.

An exhibition of the Museo de Arte de Lima – MALI – and the Museum Rietberg, Zürich, in cooperation with the Bundeskunsthalle



## **THE PLAYGROUND PROJECT**

### **Outdoor**

**until 28 October 2018**

To complement The Playground Project (from 13 July), the Bundeskunsthalle is opening the roof garden and the forecourt to Outdoor, an exhibition on the subject of 'Play', which provides contemporary artists Nevin Aladağ, Kristina Buch, Olafur Eliasson, Jeppe Hein, Carsten Höller, Christian Jankowski, Llobet & Pons, Michel Majerus, Andreas Schmitten, Thomas Schütte, Superflex, Rirkrit Tiravanija, Alvaro Urbano and Ina Weber with an opportunity to design interactive installations and spaces, forms and utensil for play. Visitors are invited to experience art in a playful, participatory and performative manner. According to a philosophical definition of Homo ludens, play is a primary condition of the generation of culture, because it is through play that Homo ludens, unlike Homo faber, develops his skills. It is in play as a fundamental, formative and necessary human activity that he discovers his individual qualities, and this experience allows him to develop his dormant personality. In this definition, play is equated with freedom and autonomy of mind.

## **CARSTEN HÖLLER**

### **Bonner Rutschbahn / Bonn Slide**

The Stockholm-based Belgian artist Carsten Höller has developed a site-specific slide connecting the roof and the forecourt for the entrance façade of the Bundeskunsthalle. Höller's sculpture and Gustav Peichl's architecture enter into a respectful symbiotic relationship that allows the visitor to see both in a new light that brings together the hitherto separate qualities of aesthetics and functionalism. The slide will be inaugurated as part of the exhibition The Playground Project – Outdoor, but will remain in place for several years to be enjoyed during the outdoor season.

Carsten Höller conceives of the museum as a space that is not just devoted to the preservation of the old, but also to experimentation, innovation and to trying out unexpected ideas and concepts. He expands the medium of sculpture, turning it into a platform for playful activities that transform the physical and emotional experience of the viewer/visitor into an integral and central part of his art.

## **THE PLAYGROUND PROJECT**

### **Indoor**

**13 July to 28 October 2018**

Between 1950 and 1980, the playground was a creative laboratory. In the cities of the industrialised world, a plethora of innovative, crazy, interesting and exciting projects were developed. Landscape architects, artists, activists and citizens sought to provide children with the best possible environment to play in and, at the same time, to rethink communal and urban life. *The Playground Project* captures this wealth of ideas in images, models, plans, books and numerous films as well as in play sculptures that invite visitors to slide, play hide and seek,



laugh and run. Children, parents, playground designers, educators and architects are welcome to rediscover the playground of yesteryear and to imagine that of tomorrow.

Taking its starting point in the work of the pioneers of new playground concepts in the first half of the twentieth century, the exhibition shows how their ideas were received, adapted and developed in different countries. The playground is more than just an element of urban life; it also says much about the society that devised it. Last, but by no means least, the exhibition presents playgrounds as sites with a non-standard aesthetic of their own, where citizens of all ages identify with their city.

*The Playground Project* was developed as a travelling exhibition by Gabriela Burkhalter and adapted for its presentation at Bundeskunsthalle in cooperation with Kunsthalle Zürich.

## **MALERFÜRSTEN**

**28 September 2018 to 27 January 2019**

In the Renaissance and the Baroque period, painters like Raphael, Titian, Rubens and van Dyck attained a special status that came with social recognition and courtly privilege. In their conduct and self-portraits, these artists presented themselves as *Malerfürsten*, as 'painter princes'. The *Malerfürst* phenomenon, which transcends national borders and spans several centuries, forms the starting point of the exhibition. Focusing on the heyday of the *Malerfürst* in the nineteenth century, it showcases artists such as Frederic Lord Leighton, Hans Makart, Franz von Lenbach, Mihály Munkácsy, Jan Matejko, Friedrich August von Kaulbach and Franz von Stuck. It investigates their carefully crafted public personas, the veneration they inspired and their ability to draw on a network of powerful contacts to advance their social status. New reproductive print media, extravagantly staged exhibitions, studio visits and interviews in newspapers promoted the artists and their work, created a highly profitable international market and successfully established the social construct of the *Malerfürst*.

## **ERNST LUDWIG KIRCHNER**

**Imaginary Travels**

**16 November 2018 to 17 February 2019**

Ernst Ludwig Kirchner, co-founder of the Brücke group, is one of the best-known German Expressionists. One of the leitmotifs of his life and work is the quest for the exotic and the primal, for far-off lands and cultures. It led him to create strikingly colourful images that conjure imaginary, far-away worlds, without ever leaving the everyday reality of his life.

Tracing the artist's progress through Dresden, Berlin, Fehmarn and Davos, the exhibition sheds light on Kirchner's career. With a selection of more than 180 paintings, the retrospective explores how the artist responded to social and artistic influences, engaging with them in ever new ways, always prepared to break new ground, both personally and pictorially.



The exhibition *Ernst Ludwig Kirchner. Imaginary Travels* is curated by Katharina Beisiegel (Art Centre Basel) in collaboration with Dr. Thorsten Sadowsky (Kirchner Museum Davos) and organised by the Art Centre Basel in cooperation with Bundeskunsthalle.

Subject to change!

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