

SAD GENERATION WITH HAPPY PICTURES

Warsaw Gallery Weekend

Warsaw, Włochy district – Popularna 29. A pre-war tenement house, today functioning as Sortownia Vintage, becomes the unlikely site for SAD GENERATION WITH HAPPY PICTURES. For the duration of Warsaw Gallery Weekend, this raw and layered space transforms into a gallery, not with sterile light and white walls, but with memory, movement, and truth. The exhibition grows directly out of what is ordinary, awkward, and full of cracks.

The title comes from a phrase found online: “We are a sad generation with happy pictures.” It sounds like a meme, light, ironic. But the longer one sits with it, the sharper its sting becomes. Everything looks good in photos, yet inside it creaks. This tension between appearance and reality forms the core of SAD GENERATION WITH HAPPY PICTURES, curated by Aleksandra Cegielska, founder of ELEVEN TEN STUDIO in Basel. For the first time, she brings together four distinct voices from the Swiss art scene into a shared narrative.

Duncan Passmore begins with questions of meaning. His paintings are visual labyrinths of apophenia, the human tendency to find patterns in randomness. Echoing René Daumal's Mount Analogue, his works resemble fragments on a phone screen: traces we stitch together into a narrative to keep chaos at bay.

From Passmore, the exhibition flows to Matthias Amsler, who scrutinizes the systems designed to protect and regulate us, bureaucracy, economy, routine. In 3022 CHF, a 1971 banknote bearing a Dance of Death motif is wedged into a wall. Swiss precision collides with memento mori, a reminder that every system contains the shadow of violence. His series Up and Down continues this exploration, transforming airplane window views into portals of freedom or claustrophobic traps.

Luca Harlacher counters with humor, tinged with unease. His monochrome paintings depict absurd, playful scenes, each accompanied by a bizarre hanging creature, a sculpture that watches from the corner of the eye. Among these works appears a participatory frame, a patchwork of drawings and fragments contributed by strangers since 2021. Here, for the first time, the project takes full form: a collective portrait in which visitors can place themselves, blurring the line between play and responsibility.

Finally, Viviane Herzog presents works about relationships as tangled fabrics rather than straight lines. Her Thanda series, paintings on reclaimed textiles, speaks of history, equality, and global interdependence. Uneven, stretched, and resistant, they embody the negotiation of human bonds. In Woven Together, realized during the Waking Life Festival, Herzog extends the process to others: communal weaving becomes a fragile but restorative act of solidarity.

Adding a Polish element, the exhibition includes a limited edition wearable object: the Bad Life Choices T-shirt. Not merchandise, but sculpture, an object worn as manifesto. On the back, collaged headlines and YouTube thumbnails amplify the themes of overstimulation, commodified fear, and fragile reassurance.

SAD GENERATION WITH HAPPY PICTURES reveals that life may resemble a neatly arranged gallery, yet is in fact a tangle of contradictions. It is an essay about a generation struggling to carve meaning out of chaos, even if only temporarily, even if only for one picture.

About ELEVEN TEN STUDIO

ELEVEN TEN STUDIO is an artist-run, non-profit gallery founded in 2022 in Basel. Dedicated to empowering emerging talents, the space offers many artists their first gallery experience while fostering meaningful connections between artists, curators, and collectors.

Its program emphasizes socially engaged art and curatorial experimentation, presenting exhibitions that encourage critical dialogue on contemporary issues. Beyond the white cube, ELEVEN TEN STUDIO advocates for innovative forms of art acquisition and sustainable artist support.

As a publicly accessible space, it contributes actively to both local and international art ecosystems, pioneering new ways of experiencing, supporting, and engaging with art.

Artists

Matthias Amsler (CH), Luca Harlacher (CH), Vivienne Herzog (CH), Duncan Passmore (UK/CH)

Curator

Aleksandra Cegielska (ELEVEN TEN STUDIO, Basel, Switzerland)

Address

Sortownia Vintage
Popularna 29, Warsaw-Włochy

Collaboration

The project is accompanied by a limited T-shirt drop created especially for the exhibition in collaboration with the Polish brand Bad Life Choices.

eleventenstudio.com

contact@eleventenstudio.com