

# BERNHEIM

VLADISLAV MARKOV

LOCATION.LOCATION.LOCATION.

BERNHEIM, Zürich

23 April - 29 May, 2026

Well, this is a pretty awkward situation. Why did I agree to this? He thought it would be funny. I've worked with him for 4 years now, and I can tell you that "funny" is the motivation behind much of what he does. Vladislav Markov is having a show at Maria Bernheim's gallery in Zurich, and he asked me to write the text.

At Management, we describe Vlad's work as deconstructing and decontextualising readymades by procedurally shifting their ontological states from the physical to the digital and back again. That's not quite right. You feel like you understand, but you don't, do you? That's what Vlad's work is like.

For his first show at Management, Vlad transformed the space into an office-garage hybrid with carpet and pegboard, painted concrete gray and filled with low-laying fog. It had 4 "paintings" and one sculpture, *My mom lives by the beach (chrome delete)*. Three years later, he turned the space into a Beckett-esque seedy strip club haunted by amputee security guards that you could only see from a pitch-black room on the other side of a one-way mirror wall. We asked the curator and theorist Nicolas Bourriaud to write a text for it and he described Vladislav as the Courbet of our time. He also wrote that Vlad is one of those great artists who can produce images that are "alive, complex, unsettling, and resilient", and that he creates "truly contemporary forms, those that could not have been produced yesterday". Talk about over-delivering... It's going to be hard to shake that now.

When the strip club was taken apart, Vlad made four paintings from 3D scans of the interior with the performers, the area that viewers could see but couldn't enter. One of them was titled *free soup and artificial sunsets*, in reference to what the critic Travis Diehl wrote in his monthly column in Spike Art Magazine, lamenting that there were no girls in Vlad's strip club, but that the "realism" of the show was impressive. The New York Times wrote that he used hyper-realism to think about AI, surveillance, and something about Deleuze. Perhaps Bourriaud was onto something with the Courbet comparison, but let's not dwell on that too much. That whole thing was about the aftermath of war anyway.

Now back to Zurich, Switzerland. I'm not quite sure how to describe this show to you. Like with all of Vlad's exhibitions, you just have to be there. Sounds pretty cliché, but it's worse to simply offer a description. Entering Vlad's installations is akin to entering a confining and unstable mental space, not quite dreamlike, though nightmares and light PTSD are symptomatic of the experience. The "art" or the transformed environment eats away at your sense of reality, time, self, and location, location, location... the longer you are there, the more untethered you are from the "real". It's like being on the internet. I don't mean just using it to Google how to make Pasta Amatriciana, but "being" in the Hegelian sense, inhabiting the virtual, causing it to "be" by becoming "it". Sounds nonsensical, but it's true. Also, Hegelian metaphysics are nonsensical; all he did was rip off Heraclitus. But that's what Vlad's work is like. Its core quality is profound realism accompanied by banal absurdity, or the "funny". Like Anton Chekhov. Are you familiar? This is only Vlad's first show in Switzerland, and I'm probably going too deep. None of you know his work. Not like me.

— *Anton from Management*

---

Born 1993, Magadan, Russia. Vladislav Markov lives and works in New York, USA. Recent exhibitions include OBJECTS IN MIRROR MAY BE CLOSER THAN THEY APPEAR at Management, New York; Search for Tomorrow at Bernheim, London; NULL-Object at Commune, Vienna; Blood thinner, low-dose aspirin, best painkillers for kids at The Address, Brescia, Italy; PANSORI, the 15th Gwangju Biennale, South Korea; and Eight Feet Under at Management, New York; Markov's work has been written about in the New York Times, Spike Art Magazine, Artforum, Impulse, Flash Art Italia, King Kong, Numero Berlin, Elle Japan, and other publications. His work is included in the collections of the M Woods Museum, China, and the Jumex Museum, Mexico City. He holds a BFA from Parsons School of Design, New York (2016) and an MFA from Cornell University, Ithaca (2019).

BERNHEIM | LONDON | ZÜRICH

1 New Burlington St, W1S 2JA, London, United Kingdom  
Rämistrasse 31, 8001 Zürich, Switzerland  
[www.bernheimgallery.com](http://www.bernheimgallery.com)