

“The Big Chill” at Bernheim, London

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“The Big Chill” at Bernheim, London, 2023. Courtesy: Bernheim Gallery. Photo: Annik Wetter

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I am thrilled to inaugurate Bernheim’s new location in Mayfair, London with the group show, “The Big Chill.” Titled after Lawrence Kasdan’s 1983 film focusing on a group of reunited college friends, it is a show built with the artists who have shaped the gallery program over the past decade: through their work, their artistic visions and, most importantly, through their committed friendships. Additionally, gallery artists have invited guests to participate: artists whose work has expanded their horizons, friends we all might share affinities with, artists with a strong connection to the gallery. Each participates with new works produced for the exhibition.

“The Big Chill” is a celebration. The celebration of an ever expanding group of artists, curators and friends who have somehow stuck together and succeeded in navigating the ups and downs of making art and life. We are all in pursuit, perhaps too idealistically, of building a sense of culture and community. We each consider what that means, and has meant, over the course of a tumultuous decade.

The opening group show of the Zurich gallery, in December 2015, was entitled “Tunguska,” in reference to the 1908 impact event, because I was aiming at being a platform for disruption. Today the necessity to expand our presence and the possibility for new and continued reunions and relationships felt more and more urgent. I am excited to share this community we have built with this new platform. Over the years, people have questioned the relationships between all of us, question how I have built a programme that seems so eclectic, but it isn’t looks that bring us together, rather a sense of aesthetic, of shared values and above all an ambitious excellence applied across media. It is needless to say that all the artists I work with are fantastic in their own ways. They have brought me, over the past eight years, a sense of family and purpose that I could not have dreamt of. They fill my life, challenge my thoughts, make me laugh and give me the will each and every day to champion them and be better.

I am thankful that we continue on this journey together, and am exhilarated by the new additions invited alongside them here. I hope some of that comes through with this exhibition.

—*Maria Bernheim*

Participating artists: Mitchell Anderson, Tolia Astakhishvili, Manuel Burgener, Sam Creasey, David Flaughter, Sophie Giroux, Romeo Gómez López, Svetlana Heger, Tishan Hsu, Min Jia, Ebecho Muslimova, Nick Oberthaler, Juan Antonio Olivares, Eli Ping, Jon Rafman, Rachel Rossin, Thomas Sauter, Denis Savary, Ilana Savdie, Bailey Scieszka, Ding Shilun, Sarah Slappey, Michelle Uckotter, Tom Waring, Rico Weber, Tsai Yun-Ju

at Bernheim, London
until January 22, 2024