

EN  
v3108*ERIC MEIER ANDREA PICHL***Eric Meier, Andrea Pichl**

September 10 – October 25, 2025

– shortlisted for VBKI Award Berlin Galleries –

Galerie Mountains

Rosa-Luxemburg-Platz, Weydingerstr. 6, 10178 Berlin

Wednesday – Saturday 12 – 6 pm and by appt.

Extended opening hours during BERLIN ART WEEK:

Wednesday Sep 10, 12 – 6 pm (Preview Day)

Thursday Sep 11, 12 – 10 pm

Friday Sep 12, 12 – 6 pm

Saturday Sep 13, 12 – 6 pm

Sunday Sep 14, 12 – 6 pm



## Events

**Thursday, Sep 11, 6–10 pm | Vernissage**

Exhibition opening coinciding with GALLERY NIGHT by GALLERY WEEKEND BERLIN

**Friday, Sep 12, 6–11 pm | Award ceremony**

VBKI Sommerfest, EUREF-Campus, Berlin Schöneberg

The VBKI Award Berlin Galleries will be awarded by Berlin State Senator for Economy Franziska Giffey

## Press

For an exhibition preview and press material please contact the gallery.

## Exhibition

Mountains is pleased to announce the exhibition *ERIC MEIER ANDREA PICHL*, featuring the two artists **Eric Meier** (\*1989 East Berlin, GDR, lives in Berlin) and **Andrea Pichl** (\*1964 Haldensleben, GDR, lives in Berlin). Eric Meier has been represented by Mountains since the gallery's founding in 2019. In 2024/2025, Andrea Pichl became the first East German artist to have a solo exhibition at Hamburger Bahnhof Berlin and is currently a guest artist at Mountains.

With this duo exhibition, Mountains once again engages with the discourse on East German identity, particularly in the field of art. The exhibition *ERIC MEIER ANDREA PICHL* brings together two artistic positions that address the GDR, reunification, and the aftereffects of East German experience in very different ways. Between critical investigation and ironic disruption, Andrea Pichl and Eric Meier raise questions of visibility, value, promise – and disappointment.

Andrea Pichl presents her work "Wessen Morgen ist der Morgen? Wessen Welt ist die Welt? / "Whose tomorrow is tomorrow? Whose world is the world?" –, a quotation from the workers' song by Bertolt Brecht and Ernst Busch, set to music by Hanns Eisler in the context of the Great Depression of 1929. The installation consists of printed construction tarpaulins mounted on fences – a form that evokes not only building sites, but also temporary barriers, ruptures, and transitions. Pichl's sculptural and architectural works analyze the codes and power structures of the built environment of the GDR. At the same time, they ask how history inscribes itself into space – and how such spaces are reinterpreted, overwritten, or newly claimed.

Eric Meier responds with the series "Enttäuschte Gesichter (Wir haben uns mehr erwartet)" / "Disappointed Faces (We had expected more)" – photographs of banana slices in which disappointed, ironic "Wessi" expressions appear. The banana, once a symbol of Western promise in the East, becomes a projection surface for post-reunification disillusionment. His work plays with clichés, media narratives, and the question of how much seriousness, how much play, and how much self-doubt is permitted – or necessary – in the artistic engagement with East German themes.

The exhibition *ERIC MEIER ANDREA PICHL* raises not only questions about the future, but also about interpretive authority: Who tells whose story – and from which perspective?

Text  
Undine Rietz

“The present always bears the weight of the past; no one exists without imprints and experiences.”<sup>1</sup>

With this formulation, sociologist Steffen Mau describes the persistent asymmetry between East and West – a difference that continues beyond reunification, embedded in structures, wealth, cultural self-images, and political perception. While in the West division has long since been historicized, in the East it remains a present reality of life. There persists a “memory of upheaval,” fed by the experiences of the transformation years – deindustrialization, administrative restructuring, and the intergenerational transmission of economic inequality. There is a perceptual difference between citizens socialized in East and West Germany.

In the exhibition *ERIC MEIER ANDREA PICHL*, two generations of East German identity come together. Eric Meier belongs to the so-called Nachwendekinder (“post-reunification children”), whose upbringing was shaped both by parental GDR experience and the self-evidence of a democratic state. Andrea Pichl, by contrast, belongs to the generation that experienced the repressions of the SED state, the fall of the Wall, and the ensuing upheavals as a young adult. Both engage artistically with the social consequences of reunification – with the question of how private and everyday life worlds are shaped by historical ruptures, and how the two societies, grown apart in division, remain engaged in a fragile, often faltering process of coming together.

Eric Meier works with pseudo-documentary photography, East German-connotated objects, and architectural fragments. Deformation, de- and reconstruction become strategies for making the ambivalence of his socialization visible, reflecting the artist’s present and past experiences and personal imprint. His works oscillate between staging and documentation: photography asserts authenticity, yet simultaneously reveals itself as stage. Pop-cultural references – both generation-specific and timeless – intertwine with art-historical citations, ranging from Andy Warhol’s cover for the first Velvet Underground album to Marcel Broodthaers’ poetic shifts and accumulations of material. These influences frame Meier’s practice within a larger art-historical context that repeatedly interrogates the tensions between surface, consumption, and memory. The materiality of his photographs and installations lends them a polyvalence that unfolds beyond the narrow dichotomy of East and West. Their strength lies precisely here: in showing how imprints that begin biographically become universalized as cultural, political, and aesthetic questions.

In *Enttäuschte Gesichter (Wir haben uns mehr erwartet) / Disappointed Faces (We had expected more)*, slimy, wet banana slices appear as grimacing portraits – an ironic commentary on a cultural stereotype. The banana – in the West a symbol of the Wirtschaftswunder, in the East a scarce good – here carries a history marked by ideological charge and political calculation. During his 1957 election campaign events, then-Chancellor Konrad Adenauer deliberately had bananas distributed to children in order to make the fruits of West German prosperity literally tangible.<sup>2</sup> In the GDR, the import of tropical fruit was declared a matter for the Council of Ministers in the 1970s.<sup>3</sup> The socialist government recognized the symbolic explosive power of scarcity in certain consumer goods and concluded long-term trade agreements with Cuba for tropical fruit, among others. These agreements were part of the so-called Kombinatpolitik of foreign trade, in which products like citrus fruit, coffee, or bananas were traded with political calculation. Historian André Steiner describes this process as “a balancing act between supply security and system preservation.”<sup>4</sup> Bananas were even partially imported from Western countries – a tacit admission that ideological isolation reached its limits when it came to popular acceptance. Meier employs the banana as a marker of a “cultural battle through consumption,”<sup>5</sup> as the grimace of those uncomprehending “Wessis” who cannot understand the frustration over an unfulfilled reunification – preferring to seek its causes in supposed deficits of mentality rather than in structural deindustrialization, the administrative personnel turnover of East German institutions, or the devaluation of an East German cultural identity.

Andrea Pichl turns her gaze to built structures – to GDR architecture and its transformation after 1989/90. Her installations, drawings, and photographs show how standardized architecture not only shapes spaces but also social relations, manifesting ideological premises. In *Wessen Morgen ist der Morgen? Wessen Welt ist die Welt? / Whose tomorrow is tomorrow? Whose world is the world?* she documents four significant public buildings of the GDR – the Sportforum Hohenschönhausen, the Fachhochschule Potsdam, the Ministry of Construction of the GDR, and the Sports and Recreation Center (SEZ) in Berlin-Friedrichshain – in states of neglect or demolition. Their sober façades testify less to repressive state power than to contemporary political decisions about which past is allowed to remain visible in the cityscape and which should disappear. Pichl’s photographs from her private archive show brutalist and postmodern architectural testaments of GDR modernism that could indeed be considered as architectural icons.<sup>6</sup> Broken windows and graffiti visibly reveal dereliction; the apparent purposelessness of their existence in reunified Germany. This is echoed in the shifting ownership

structures after 1989, which can be seen as evidence of capitalist hegemony. Mounted on construction fences, the photographs address a seemingly deliberate refusal to engage with the built identity of a politically and socially formative period of German-German history.

In the case of the Fachhochschule building in Potsdam and the Ministry of Construction in Berlin, one also sees a building policy that sacrifices GDR structures in favor of a return to pre-industrial, monarchical city silhouettes. Their demolition made way for pseudo-baroque new constructions referencing Prussian heritage. This is particularly evident in the ensemble with the reconstructed Potsdam City Palace, now home to the Brandenburg Parliament. The strategy is not new: the Palace of the Republic had to make way for the reconstruction of the Berlin Palace. Implicit in this lies a narrative that equates the two German dictatorships ideologically and architecturally while reverting to a supposedly “innocent” epoch of monarchy – a past that can certainly be staged more easily as a tourist backdrop.

The two artistic positions of Eric Meier and Andrea Pichl illustrate how history resonates in structures as well as in identities, and how selectively these traces are politically negotiated. German politics’ handling of the architectures of both dictatorships reveals a striking ambivalence: while Nazi buildings are embedded within elaborate cultures of remembrance, GDR buildings are often gutted, reshaped, or erased. In this process, confrontation shifts from historical reality to symbolic-political backdrops – an attitude that could be described as curated amnesia. Meier and Pichl give this amnesia a form. Their works are not only testimonies to personal imprint but also counter-narratives to an official historiography that sells selective memory as national coherence. They show that the present, whether we like it or not, carries the weight of the past – not only as narrative but as built, lived, and continuing reality.

— Undine Rietz

1. Mau, Steffen, *Ungleich vereint. Warum der Osten anders bleibt*, Suhrkamp Verlag, Berlin 2024, S. 20.
2. Wollé, Stefan, *Die heile Welt der Diktatur. Alltag und Herrschaft in der DDR 1971–1989*, Bundeszentrale für politische Bildung, Bonn 2011, S. 136.
3. <https://www.zeit.de/gesellschaft/zeitgeschehen/2012-01/leserartikel-bananen-ddr>, 10.08.25.
4. Steiner, André, *Von Plan zu Plan. Eine Wirtschaftsgeschichte der DDR*, Bundeszentrale für politische Bildung, Bonn 2004, S. 203
5. Ebd.
6. Vgl. <https://www.bauwelt.de/rubriken/bauten/Sport-und-Erholungszentrum-Friedrichshain-Berlin-SEZ-4097644.html>, 15.08.2025.

## Biographies

**Eric Meier** (b. 1989, East Berlin, GDR) lives and works in Berlin. He studied with Prof. Heidi Specker at HfG Leipzig and with Prof. Manfred Pernice at UdK Berlin and has been represented by Mountains since the gallery's founding in 2019.

Major exhibitions include *Identität nicht nachgewiesen* at Bundeskunsthalle Bonn (2022); *Flaschen & Geister* at Mountains, Berlin (2022); and *Diktat* at Valletta Contemporary, Malta (2019). In June 2025 Galerie Mountains presented two of Meier's installations at BASEL SOCIAL CLUB.

Meier's works are included, among others, in the Federal Art Collection of Germany (Sammlung zeitgenössischer Kunst der Bundesrepublik Deutschland), the Staatliche Kunstsammlungen Dresden and the Hoffmann Collection.

**Andrea Pichl** (b. 1964, Haldensleben, Saxony-Anhalt, GDR) lives and works in Berlin. She studied at Kunsthochschule Berlin-Weissensee and Chelsea College of Art & Design in London. Pichl is the recipient of the Ernst Franz Vogelmann Prize for Contemporary Sculpture 2026.

Her recent solo exhibitions include *Wertewirtschaft* at Hamburger Bahnhof – Nationalgalerie der Gegenwart, Berlin (2024–2025); *Geschichte findet statt* at Galerie Pankow, Berlin (2025); *Palimpsest* at the Federal Ministry of Finance, Berlin (since 2024, permanent installation, collection Hamburger Bahnhof – Nationalgalerie der Gegenwart, Berlin ); and *Kiosk – Fragmente einer Zeit*, a permanent sculpture outside Kunsthalle Rostock (2023). Group exhibitions and curatorial projects have taken her to the Irish Museum of Modern Art, Dublin; the M HKA Museum of Contemporary Art, Antwerp; and in 2022 to Kunstraum Kreuzberg/Bethanien, Berlin, where she initiated and curated *Worin unsere Stärke besteht – Fünfzig Künstlerinnen aus der DDR*.

Her works are represented in collections including the Staatliche Museen zu Berlin, Kunsthalle Rostock and Leal Rios Foundation, Lisbon. Furthermore, Pichl's works are on view as permanent installations in public space, among them the sculpture *Kiosk* at Kunsthalle Rostock, *Atomic Garden* at Humboldt University Berlin's North Campus, and the sculpture *Hoch hinaus* in front of a school in Berlin-Lichtenberg. Publications on her work have been released by Sternberg Press and by Distanz Verlag.

**Undine Rietz** (b. 1989 in Potsdam) is an art historian, curator, and writer. She studied art history at Leipzig University. Her research focuses include German-German history, classism, and feminist debates, as well as environmental issues, sustainability, and digitalization. Most recently, she worked as curator at Kunstverein Bielefeld. Previously, she was involved with the German Pavilion in Venice, Art Basel, Spinnerei Leipzig, and Leipzig University.

## Galerie Mountains

Founded in 2019, Mountains is a Berlin-based gallery for contemporary art. Its focus lies on international positions characterized by conceptual depth, formal openness, and an independent visual language. The intergenerational program brings together young, emerging positions with established artists. A special focus lies on the representation of two artistic estates (David Medalla, Martina Kügler), combining both art-historical anchoring and a contemporary, affective approach to art. The gallery currently represents 15 artists, realizes multiple carefully curated exhibitions, and regularly participates in international fairs. Recently, Mountains took part in Basel Social Club, with upcoming presentations at Wilhelmshallen Berlin and Art Cologne. Mountains is a partner of BERLIN ART WEEK 2025 and has been shortlisted for the VBKI Award Berlin Galleries. Simultaneously in September, Mountains will also present a solo show of David Medalla (1938–2020) at HALLEN 06 and, as the only Berlin gallery, participates in FRANKFURT ART EXPERIENCE, presenting a solo exhibition on the occasion of the 80th birthday of Martina Kügler (1945–2017).

## Social media

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