

# ANDREAS MURKUDIS

Press Release

Berlin, April 10th, 2024

– For immediate release –

## **GRAND ÉLYSÉES by BERNHARD MARTIN** at ANDREAS MURKUDIS

Situated amongst some of the most high-profile galleries in Berlin, ANDREAS MURKUDIS becomes a bustling hotspot for art-, design- and fashion-fiends during the capital's annual Gallery Weekend (this year from 26 – 28th of April). As such, Gallery Weekend is one of the most important dates in the ANDREAS MURKUDIS calendar. On Wednesday, April 24th, we will open *Grand Élysées* – an art exhibition with works by German artist Bernhard Martin.

**Opening Event:** April 24th, 6 – 9pm, Potsdamer Strasse 81, 77 & 98, 10785 Berlin

*Élysées* is an equivocal word. Parisians associate it with the Avenue des Champs-Élysées and the adjacent Élysées Palace, the official residence of their President. Countless restaurants and hotels around the world carry the mystical word in their name. *Élysées* is French for the Elysian Fields, the island of the blessed and the heroic that have achieved greatness in Greek mythology. In other words, a beautiful place, even paradisiacal, “not unlike the ANDREAS MURKUDIS stores,” Bernhard Martin says. The focus of this exhibition, however, will be the so-called ‘dumbasses’, the overlooked and the Demimonde that inhabit the *Élysées* that is our world – and fall through its cracks. In the paintings on display, Martin explores those members of our society who reject the status quo in favor of a more bigoted existence. The ones who find loopholes in the rigid structure of our Western culture, defying its bureaucratic and at-all-times measurable nature.

To make this *invisible* parallel world of corruption and crookedness *visible*, Martin typecasts specific professions and the stereotypes associated with them. In his paintings he runs the gamut from moneychangers, paparazzis, private detectives, artists, fortune tellers, chefs, drug dealers and ventriloquists to name a few. In all the works on display, the motif is a placeholder for and signifier of a greater societal phenomenon.

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Martin unfolds these scorned professions in his signature genre-crossing painting style that draws on the likes of Hieronymus Bosch, Walt Disney, Francis Bacon and Salvador Dalí to name just a few. One would think that such a hodgepodge of both classical and pop styles would result in tasteless, gaudy canvases. Martin proves otherwise, instead establishing a creative principle that is distinctively his own.

The background of all Martin paintings is a pulsating, frothy haze of pastel-tones, that look as though applied with an airbrush. Onto this, the artist lays with precise brushwork seemingly unrelated motifs from high culture, to kitsch to trash. "I paint things in a way they haven't been painted before," the artist says. And everything is equally valid: the profane, the kitsch, the folkloristic as well as the tasteful and valuable objects, symbols and gestures coexist democratically. The layers of paint are applied so thinly that the subject matter appears translucent, shimmering, even lit from within. Bernhard Martin clearly possesses all the skills of a traditionally educated painter but uses techniques such as chiaroscuro to capture the elusive, the untraditional, the mundane and the unspeakable.

Martin is not pushing an agenda with his art – he's neither condoning nor condemning the impostors of our society. His paintings are to be understood as mere observations, uncharged and objective, like a mirror that does not distort. That being said, a degree of sympathy is palpable. A freelance painter, Bernhard Martin very much embodies a way of life and a career path that irritates Germany's notoriously precise fiscal authorities. *Grand Élysées* unpacks the "blind spots" of a patriarchal society whose order depends for its functioning on what it must repress or thinks it must repress.

All works on display will be for sale. Bernhard Martin will attend the opening event on April 24th. Additionally, he will do a guided tour of the exhibition on Saturday, April 27th, from 3.30pm in Potsdamer Strasse 77. Spots are limited – email [p.boltze@andreamurkudis.com](mailto:p.boltze@andreamurkudis.com) to sign-up.

*Grand Élysées* is set in Store 77, the gallery-space of ANDREAS MURKUDIS. Simultaneously, we will introduce the French brand COURRÈGES in Store 81 with a special installation highlighting their Reedition Collection. Both openings will take place on April 24th from 6 – 9pm.

Important information on wording for the press:

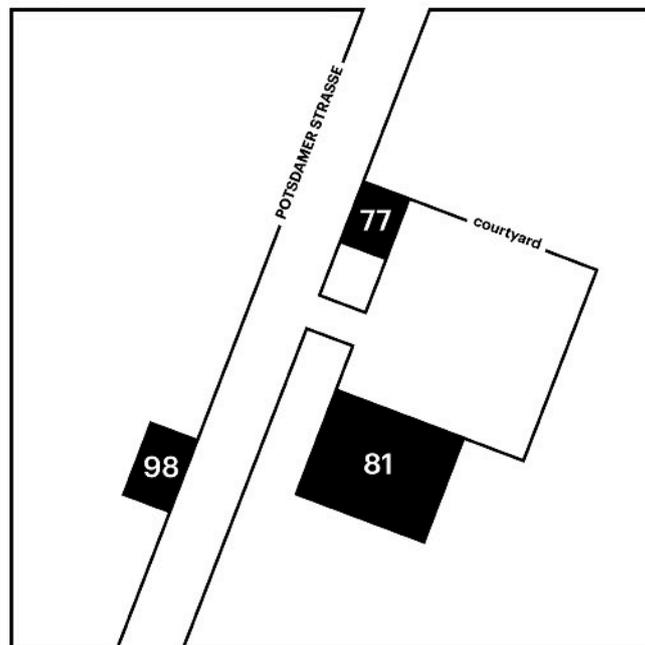
- When referring to Andreas Murkudis as an individual, please write “Andreas Murkudis”. When referring to the stores, please use following case sensitivity: “ANDREAS MURKUDIS”.
- Please use the term “multi-brand store” to describe ANDREAS MURKUDIS, instead of “concept store”.

Address:

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## **ABOUT ANDREAS MURKUDIS**

Andreas Murkudis is considered one of Germany's most renowned and experienced retailers in the design and fashion sector. The owner of three stores of the same name in Berlin offers in his assortment unique objects, which transcend short-lived trend cycles and are of utmost quality. In the spacious architecture of his stores, Andreas Murkudis showcases designer fashion, objects, cosmetics, interior design and home accessories. 2022 marked the 20th Anniversary of the ANDREAS MURKUDIS universe. Within two decades, Murkudis has established himself as an indispensable driving force of Berlin's creative scene and continues to push boundaries.

[www.andreasmurkudis.com](http://www.andreasmurkudis.com)

[@andreasmurkudis](https://www.instagram.com/andreasmurkudis)

## **ABOUT BERNHARD MARTIN**

Bernhard Martin (b. Hanover, Germany) lives and works between Berlin and the small town of Zeitz, Germany. Martin's works, primarily oil paintings, sculptures, and colored pencil drawings, bring art-historical and pop imagery together in surreal juxtaposition, fusing reality and fantasy. His complex narrative styles combine influences that lead the viewer into an alternate reality of a deeply personal deconstruction of the medium itself. His paintings can be understood as psychological and philosophical observations in which the artist deals with his perspectives on technology, environment, gender, politics, economics and class, without passing moral judgement. In recent years, Martin has exhibited his work around the world; his solo exhibition at MoMA PS1 in 2001 was a milestone. In 2015, Bernhard Martin was awarded the renowned Fred-Thieler-Prize in the Berlinische Galerie, Berlin.

[@bernhardmartinstudio](https://www.instagram.com/bernhardmartinstudio)