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Belvedere 21

Arsenalstraße 1
1030 Vienna

Opening hours

Tuesday to Sunday
11 am to 6 pm
Late night: Thursday
11 am to 9 pm
Open Mondays on holidays

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belvedere.at/presse

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Oliver Ressler, *Dog Days Bite Back*, 2023

Courtesy of Oliver Ressler; àngels, Barcelona; The Gallery Apart, Rome © Bildrecht, Vienna 2024

OLIVER RESSLER DOG DAYS BITE BACK

March 1–June 2, 2024

Oliver Ressler's exhibition at Belvedere 21 is centered around works on the climate crisis: The films, photographs, and installations by the Austrian artist, activist, and filmmaker originate in documentary formats and take an active stance.

General Director Stella Rollig: *The earth is on fire. There is no clearer way of illustrating what the exhibition Dog Days Bite Back is all about. The climate collapse is no longer a future scenario, it is here and now. Oliver Ressler draws on extensive research to render the effects of climate change and the resistance against it visible.*

Oliver Ressler's artistic and activist practice is based on the conviction that social conditions are not given but rather can be changed. For around three decades, Ressler has been focusing on urgent aspects of democracy, the economy, migration, and ecology, highlighting structural causes as well as forms of resistance and possible courses of action. Making social alternatives conceivable and creating them is a central motif in his work. *Dog Days Bite Back* brings together films and photographic works from recent years that address various dimensions of the climate crisis in all its economic, political, and social complexity and intertwine them with international climate justice movements. Ressler links the effects of impending climate collapse—which can now be felt across the world from the Arctic to the island state of Nauru in the Pacific Ocean—to systematic failures in climate policy and a long overdue paradigm shift in global economic systems.

Curator Luisa Ziaja: *Taking a firm stance as an observer, Oliver Ressler documents acts of civil disobedience, portrays the different ways in which climate activists organize and mobilize themselves, and reflects on his role as an involved participant and artistic researcher.*

For example, the films *Barricade Cultures of the Future* (2021) and *Overturn the Present, Barricade the Future* (2021) are dedicated to the question of which strategies artists develop and deploy as part of various climate justice movements. *Not Sinking, Swarming* (2021) also sheds light on the process of organizing acts of civil disobedience, but uses pixelation as a key aesthetic element to preserve the anonymity of the participants. The unifying quality of a common slogan is demonstrated in the short video collage *A-Anti-Anticapitalista* (2021), which is based on found footage as well as film material shot by Ressler, thus alluding to the consensus that only systemic change—not individual behavior—can slow down the looming climate collapse.

Green House (1994), the oldest work in the exhibition, is not only a visualization of the English term "greenhouse effect"; it also highlights the artist's early interest in climate issues as well as his artistic evolution from the classic medium of painting to time-based, documentary techniques. One of the most recent yet most important works in the exhibition is the two-channel video installation *Climate Feedback Loops* (2023): striking images of Svalbard, a group of islands between the north coast of Norway and the North Pole, illustrate the severe disruption to the Arctic ecosystem caused by chain reactions and amplification effects as a result of rising temperatures, and are accompanied by harsh sounds as an acoustic counterpart. The film *Anubumin* (2017), made in collaboration with Zanny Begg, by contrast, centers around the island state of Nauru in the Pacific Ocean, which is barren following the over-exploitation of natural resources and has been operating so-called "reception camps" for refugees on behalf of and at the expense of Australia since 2001, while rising sea levels pose an increasing threat to life on the island.

In *Carbon and Captivity* (2020), Oliver Ressler explores technological approaches to reducing CO₂ in the atmosphere through the "Carbon Capture and Storage" (CCS) method, which he exposes as a strategy deployed by oil companies to delay decarbonization measures. With *Storage Block* (2024), the artist integrates an object that can be used as seating furniture and was made especially for the exhibition at Belvedere 21 from bio-based resin utilizing the process of "Carbon Capture and Utilization" (CCU). The four-channel video installation *Occupy, Resist, Produce* (2014–18), realized in collaboration with Dario Azzellini, examines the interconnection between ecological and economic contexts through the lens of organized factory occupations in four European cities that aim to establish democratic and sustainable alternatives to existing production systems. And in the twelve-part photographic work *Reclaiming Abundance* (2021), Ressler imagines how existing infrastructure facilities in Styria that currently rely on fossil fuels might have environmentally friendly alternative uses in 2050.

The title of the exhibition *Dog Days Bite Back* is borrowed from a photomontage by Ressler and refers to a statement by UN Secretary-General António Guterres about the summer of 2023 being the hottest since records began in 1940: "The dog days of summer are not just barking, they are biting." The work is part of a series of image-text montages that combine landscape formations with the concerns of climate activists using the visual language of protest posters, encapsulating the captivating urgency of Oliver Ressler's work.

CATALOGUE

Oliver Ressler. Dog Days Bite Back

Editors: Stella Rollig, Luisa Ziaja

Graphic design: Alexander Nussbaumer

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German & English in one volume

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BIOGRAPHY

Oliver Ressler, born 1970 in Austria, is an artist and filmmaker who produces installations, projects in public space, and films on issues such as economics, democracy, migration, the climate breakdown, forms of resistance and social alternatives.

Ressler has had 90 solo exhibitions, including at Berkeley Art Museum, USA; Museum of Contemporary Art, Belgrade; Centro Cultural Conde Duque, Madrid; Alexandria Contemporary Arts Forum (EG); The Cube Project Space, Taipei; Kunsthaus Graz, Graz and comprehensive solo exhibitions at Wyspa Institute of Art, Gdansk; Lentos Kunstmuseum, Linz; Centro Andaluz de Arte Contemporaneo – CAAC, Seville; SALT Galata, Istanbul; MNAC – National Museum of Contemporary Art, Bucharest; Cultural Centre of Belgrade; Museo Espacio, Aguascalientes (MX).

Ressler has participated in more than 400 group exhibitions, including Museo Reina Sofía, Madrid; Van Abbemuseum, Eindhoven; MASSMoCA, North Adams, USA; Centre Pompidou, Paris; CCK, Buenos Aires; the biennials in Prague (2005), Seville (2006), Moscow (2007), Taipei (2008), Lyon (2009), Gyumri (2012), Venice (2013), Athens (2013, 2015), Quebec (2014), Helsinki (2014), Jeju (2017), Kyiv (2017), Gothenburg (2019) Stavanger (2019) and Istanbul (2022) and at Documenta 14, Kassel, 2017 (exhibition organized by EMST).

Ressler has completed forty-two films that have been screened in thousands of events of social movements, art institutions and film festivals. A retrospective of his films took place at Centre d'Art Contemporain Genève in 2013.

In 2002, Ressler won the first prize at the International Media Art Award of the ZKM in Karlsruhe and he is the first prize winner of the *Prix Thun for Art and Ethics Award* in 2016.

For the Taipei Biennial 2008, Ressler curated an exhibition on the counter-globalization movement, *A World Where Many Worlds Fit*. A travelling show on the financial crisis, *It's the Political Economy, Stupid*, co-curated with Gregory Sholette, has been presented at nine venues (2011-2016).

2019–2023 Ressler has directed *Barricading the Ice Sheets*, a research project on the climate justice movements, funded by the Austrian Science Fund. Configurations of the project were solo exhibitions at Camera Austria, Graz (2021); Museum of Contemporary Art, Zagreb (2022); Neuer Berliner Kunstverein (n.b.k.), Berlin (2022); Tallinn Art Hall, Tallinn (2022); LABoral Centro de Arte y Creación Industrial, Gijón (2023); The Showroom, London (2023).

In 2024 Oliver Ressler will be represented in the main exhibition of the 60th Biennale di Venezia.

Ressler's works are part of the collections of Belvedere, Vienna; CAAC – Centro Andaluz de Arte Contemporaneo, Seville; Kontakt Collection, Vienna; LENTOS Kunstmuseum, Linz; MAXXI, Rome; Museo Nacional Centro de Arte Reina Sofía, Madrid; National Museum of Contemporary Art – EMST, Athens; Neuer Berliner Kunstverein (n.b.k.); Pori Art Museum, Pori; Universalmuseum Joanneum, Graz; Van Abbemuseum, Eindhoven; ZKM – Zentrum für Kunst und Medien, Karlsruhe.

www.ressler.at

GENERAL INFORMATION

Exhibition title	<i>Oliver Ressler. Dog Days Bite Back</i>
Curator	Luisa Ziaja
Assistant curators	Theresa Dann-Freyenschlag and Andrea Kopranovic
Duration	1 March to 2 June, 2024
Location	Belvedere 21 Arsenalstraße 1, 1030 Vienna
Opening hours	Tuesday to Sunday 11 am to 6 pm Late night: Thursday 11 am to 9 pm Open Mondays on holidays
Tickets	Regular €9.30 online, €11 on-site Discounted €6.90 online, €8 on-site Belvedere Annual Ticket €44 Children and youth up to the age of 18 free
Web	belvedere.at facebook.com/belvedere21 X.com/belvedere21 instagram.com/belvedere21wien #OliverRessler

The exhibition is the Belvedere's contribution to the Klima Biennale Wien.

For more information on the exhibition and high-resolution press photos, please visit belvedere.at/en/press.