



6 November 2024

Belvedere 21

Arsenalstraße 1
1030 Vienna

Opening hours:

Tuesday to Sunday
11 am–6 pm

Late opening:

Thursday 11 am–9 pm
Open Mondays on public
holidays

Press downloads:

belvedere.at/presse

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Monster Chetwynd, *Silk and Beer (Wages for Housework)*, 2024, Photo: Torvioll Jashari
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MONSTER CHETWYND

Moths, Bats and Velvet Worms!

Moths, Bats and Heretics!

7 November 2024–9 February 2025

Moths, bats and worms are taking over Belvedere 21 and throwing the doors open to heretics and witches: Monster Chetwynd's (ze/per) first solo museum exhibition in Austria interweaves art, (hi)stories, theory, craft and community to form an expansive work that was developed especially for the museum and will be activated and animated by a performance twice over the course of the exhibition.

General director Stella Rollig: *Monster Chetwynd's environments are at once enchanting, burlesque, childlike and uninhibited. They overshoot the mark and offer a superb alternative to the rational rigour that our current turbulent times seem to call for, yet they are also imbued with all the explosive issues that define this historical moment.*

Monster Chetwynd's practice transcends genres, encompassing film, collage, painting, and installation while interweaving elements of folk theatre, pop culture, and surrealist cinema. The artist is known for per anarchic bric-à-brac performances featuring handmade costumes, props, and stage sets, usually made with everyday materials that are easy to use and adapt such as paper, cardboard, papier mâché, wood, and fabric. Chetwynd's DIY artistic practice adopts a matter-of-fact approach to conservation and thrift, incorporating an ethic of repair and recycling. The collaborative process of creating the

artwork takes centre stage, resulting in joyful, funny, absurd, and sometimes unruly art that is both fastidious and improvisational. Often, as here in Belvedere 21, it culminates in a performance: a magic moment conjured up with the help of a team of trusted collaborators who act and interact in handmade costumes. Chetwynd describes per artistic work as 'impatiently made', but draws on painstakingly researched, diverse cultural references ranging from Christine de Pizan to Silvia Federici.

ABOUT THE EXHIBITION

The exhibition title *Moths, Bats and Velvet Worms! Moths, Bats and Heretics!* proclaims a forceful rallying cry, invoking objects and characters in the presentation: Belvedere 21 has become a habitat for nocturnal moths, bats and velvet worms, which populate wicker caves surrounded by puppets and sculpted creatures, medieval paintings and iconography.

Monster Chetwynd's exhibition at Belvedere 21 weaves in numerous allusions and references that take a variety of visual manifestations in the space. The installation stars a motley cast of characters: the non-conforming, resistant figures of witches and little devils; Renaissance paintings by Barthélemy d'Eyck; vastly enlarged film stills; nocturnal animals; and even hand-sewn dolls depicting the feminist film-makers Catherine Breillat and Joanna Hogg. Chetwynd centres marginalised players from human history and the animal kingdom alike, overlooked narratives and entities that obtain strident yet comical voices and play their own parts in the show as handcrafted subjects. Among these marginalised figures are the title's heretics: people accused of actions or statements that violate official religious doctrine, who are often said to have unmanageable magic powers and secret knowledge.

Silvia Federici's groundbreaking feminist Marxist study *Caliban and the Witch* (2004) is a key conceptual reference text for the artist and contributes another meta-level to the performance: Federici argues that the fear of women's bodies, medical knowledge, and (sexual) self-determination among patriarchal power holders was decisive in both medieval witch hunts and the beginnings of modern capitalism.

Curator Axel Köhne: *Monster Chetwynd assembles a wide array of eras, narratives, and elements from both high culture and popular culture in this exuberantly fantastical imagery. With this mode of art-making, Chetwynd asserts a radical artistic freedom that transcends genre boundaries, forging captivating works that relish a spirit of play.*

In per performances, Chetwynd relinquishes absolute autonomy in favour of a collective creative process, yet ze never loses sight of the audience, and indeed addresses us directly with per anarchic, visually arresting, and witty style.

BIOGRAPHY



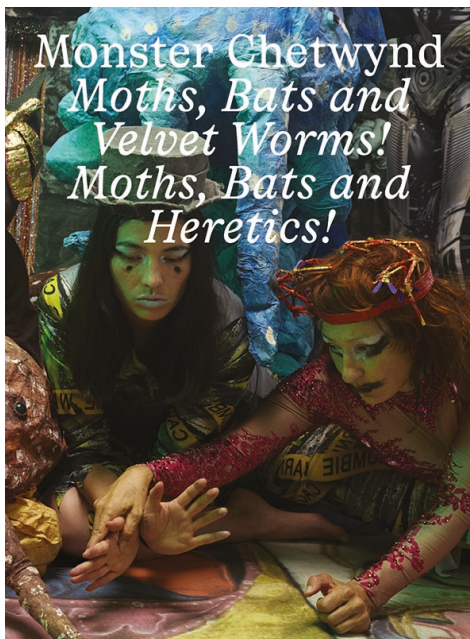
Monster Chetwynd
photo: Torvioll Jashar

Born in London in 1973, Monster Chetwynd (ze/per) studied painting at the Royal College of Art, London (2002–2004), after studying fine art at the Slade School of Art, London (1996–2000), and social anthropology and history at UCL, London (1992–1995). The artist debuted in 2006 using the pseudonym Spartacus Chetwynd (2006–2013), then produced work under the name Marvin Gaye Chetwynd (2013–2017) before adopting Monster as a first name in 2018. These identities represent distinct phases of her life and career.

Chetwynd is known for a wide-ranging artistic practice spanning collages, objects, installations, films, paintings and, above all, absurd and humorous performances staged in exhibition spaces worldwide. Recent solo exhibitions include *Moths*, Mount Stuart, Isle of Bute, Scotland; *Art on the Underground*, Gloucester Road, London; and *A CAT IS NOT A DOG*, Schirn Kunsthalle, Frankfurt am Main, all in 2023. In 2012, Chetwynd was nominated for the UK's Turner Prize, the first performance artist ever honoured with this distinction.

Monster Chetwynd lives and works in Zurich and has been teaching at Zurich University of the Arts since 2020.

CATALOGUE



Monster Chetwynd:

Moths, Bats and Velvet Worms!

Moths, Bats and Heretics!

Editors: Stella Rollig, Axel Köhne

Authors: Axel Köhne, Neil Mulholland, Jessica Ramm, Stella Rollig, Kate Sutton

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PERFORMANCE

Silk and Beer (Wages for Housework)

WED, 6. 11. 2024 / FR, 17. 1. 2025

For the opening and as part of the winter festival, Monster Chetwynd and an ensemble of performers will activate the exhibition with the specially produced performance *Silk and Beer (Wages for Housework)*.

Details of the events and further dates can be found at: [belvedere.at](https://www.belvedere.at)

GENERAL INFORMATION

Exhibition title:	Monster Chetwynd <i>Moths, Bats and Velvet Worms!</i> <i>Moths, Bats and Heretics!</i>
Curator:	Axel Köhne
Assistant Curator:	Andrea Kopranovic
Duration:	7 November 2024–9 February 2025
Venue:	Belvedere 21 Arsenalstraße 1, 1030 Vienna
Opening hours:	Tuesday to Sunday 11 am–6 pm Late opening: Thursday 11 am–9 pm Open Mondays on public holidays
Tickets:	Regular €9.30 online or €11 at the museum Concessions €6.90 online or €8 at the museum Belvedere annual pass €44 Children and young people under 18 free
Find us online at:	belvedere.at facebook.com/belvedere21 X.com/belvedere21 instagram.com/belvedere21wien #MonsterChetwynd

Further information and press images of the exhibition are available for download at belvedere.at/press.