



Installation view *Jonathan Monk. Limited Company*, Photo: Johannes Stoll / Belvedere, Vienna

Vienna, 22 May 2025

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

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JONATHAN MONK LIMITED COMPANY

23 May–21 September 2025

In his exhibition *Limited Company* at the Belvedere 21, Jonathan Monk stages an ongoing dialogue between art history, the setting, and personal recollection: a 115-foot printed curtain marks the point of departure for a continually shifting narrative that questions the idea of the classic retrospective and translates it into an exhibition space laid out as an open-ended process.

Stella Rollig, General Director of the Belvedere: *Jonathan Monk ranks among the foremost practitioners of conceptual art in his generation. In his first solo exhibition at a museum in Austria, he brings subtle irony to reflections on originality, authorship, and memory – and interweaves his own exhibition history with recent works in a multifaceted composition in three dimensions that explicitly ties in with its Viennese setting.*

Jonathan Monk enjoys international renown as a leading representative of conceptual contemporary art, a practice defined by its critical engagement with creative authorship, institutional structures, and art-historical narratives. His oeuvre unfolds in a complex interplay between appropriation, repetition, and conceptual displacements. Rather than just showcasing retrospective references to art history, he develops innovative formats to take his sources in new directions. The boundaries between different media, Monk believes, are made to be crossed: his art blends painting, photography, video, sculpture, and installation art with the same ease with which it mixes biographical motifs, art-theoretical perspectives, and subversive humour.

In many works, iconic oeuvres and gestural strategies of minimal and conceptual art – like those of On Kawara, Sol LeWitt, Louise Lawler, or Franz West – provide the inspiration for Monk's own works. Yet the artist's intention is not merely to pay homage or quote; his is a kind of conceptual appropriation that questions the idea of originality and unlocks new layers of meaning. In this context, Monk not only considers questions of serialism, repetition, and temporality, but also probes his own role in an increasingly commercialized art system. His works are at once notes on art history, performative self-interrogations, and ironic interventions into the logic of museum presentations.

Monk has studied the institutional frameworks of art since the 1990s – an inquiry he has taken to a new level since 2016 in the series *Exhibit Model*, for which he transposes photographic documentation of earlier exhibitions, works, and settings into new contexts, transforming them into immersive illusionistic displays that are exhibition and archive, reproduction and autonomous work in one. Printed onto wallpapers or – as in this instance – fabric panels, views of past presentations are arranged in complex picture-within-picture systems and superimpose the documented past onto real spaces. In this way, the exhibition as such becomes a quoted work that is awake to its own premises – a device that, in *Limited Company* at the Belvedere 21, articulates itself in a new dimension.

ON THE EXHIBITION

The title *Limited Company* alludes to Jonathan Monk's meditations on the presence and absence of his works in the exhibition space, while also gesturing toward the interplay between the works on display in the context of the exhibition, where many of them appear in pairs or serial variations. With a view to the widely used corporate legal form (most familiar under the abbreviation Ltd), in which the liability of members is capped to their investment, Monk also explores economic structures that shape the art world: in 2016, he defied the pressure to produce by presenting large-format photographic wallpapers with black-and-white installation views of earlier exhibitions rather than physical works.

Curator Axel Köhne: *Gifted with a flair for context, repetition, and appropriation, Jonathan Monk deftly scrutinizes the conventions governing conventional exhibition practices. By transforming the exhibition space into a dynamic ensemble in which past and present interpenetrate, he initiates a multifaceted play with the idea of reproduction and the (personal) retrospective.*

In his exhibition, Monk now responds to the Belvedere 21's distinctive architecture with a new iteration of his iconic *Exhibit Model* series. The large-format installation *Exhibit Model Nine* consists of twenty-two printed fabric panels forming a curtain with a total width of 115 feet that runs the length of the gallery. Printed with installation views of past exhibitions in cities including Berlin, Montreal, Tel Aviv, Copenhagen, and Vienna, the curtain unfurls a dense web of visual recollections. Perspectives, places, scales, and points in time are blurred in a sprawling self-contained visual archive that is recorded in photographs in turn and may resurface in future versions of *Exhibit Model*.

Unlike in a conventional retrospective, the order within this archive is neither chronologically nor thematically determined. The arrangement of the works results from a "carefully coordinated random process", as Monk puts it, which yields a labyrinthine system of nested references that intentionally eludes any linear reading. Meanwhile, the relationship between original and reproduction is renegotiated: photographed space supplants real space, the curtain becomes the support medium

putting itself on display. This deliberate inversion of traditional logics of presentation is a central aspect of Monk's creative strategy.

Carefully selected works from diverse series – including *Date Paintings*, *Parrot Paintings*, and *Separated* – moreover underscore the dialogical quality of the presentation and enter into direct, if sometimes subtle, interrelation with the curtain. While the exhibition is on view, some works are rearranged and some are exchanged for others, producing a series of novel constellations and contexts of meaning. In this way, the exhibition does not harden into a static display, instead becoming a versatile system undergoing continual change to reflect Monk's interest in process, repetition, and temporary propositions.

In cooperation with museum in progress, a series of flag works titled *West Wind* and created in connection with the exhibition are shown as part of the project *raising flags*. In these works, Monk plays with the format of the Austrian national flag by picking up on iconographic elements and reinterpreting them in Franz West's signature palette. One flag appears in the gallery as part of a new work dedicated to West; another is installed in the Belvedere 21's sculpture garden. Four additional flags bring Monk's strategy of appropriation into the public sphere: flying over the Stubenbrücke, a bridge in downtown Vienna, they are a humorous yet meticulously targeted intervention that extends the exhibition's vision beyond the bounds of the museum.

The motif of doubling recurs in the concept underlying the catalogue. The volume is available in two editions: the limited first edition documents the making of the curtain in Berlin and is only sold while the exhibition is on view. The second, which features conventional installation views, is released after the show opens. The texts and plate sections are identical in both editions.

In cooperation with

**museum
in progress**

BIOGRAPHY

Jonathan Monk (born 1969 in Leicester, Great Britain) studied at the Glasgow School of Art from 1988 to 1991. For over thirty years, the artist has exhibited worldwide in institutions, galleries, and also in public space. His multifaceted work can be found in international private and public collections. He lives and works in Berlin.

EXHIBITION CATALOGUE

JONATHAN
MONK
LIMITED
COMPANY

Jonathan Monk. Limited Company

Editors: Stella Rollig, Axel Köhne

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PRESS IMAGES

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GENERAL INFORMATION

Exhibition title	<i>Jonathan Monk. Limited Company</i>
Curator	Axel Köhne
Assistant Curator	Vasilena Stoyanova
Duration	23 May–21 September 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; €11 at the museum Concessions €6.90 online; €8 at the museum Belvedere annual pass €44 Children and young people under 18 free
Web	belvedere.at facebook.com/belvedere21 X.com/belvedere21 instagram.com/belvedere21wien #JonathanMonk

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