

Maharam Introduces Thomas Bayrle: Playtime

Maharam is proud to support Thomas Bayrle: Playtime, a major retrospective organized by the New Museum in New York. Occupying the museum's third and fourth floors, this comprehensive survey brings together more than one-hundred works created by the German artist and Maharam collaborator over a period of fifty years while specifically highlighting Bayrle's "prescient commentary on the relationship between consumerism, technology, propaganda, and desire."

Born in Berlin in 1937, Thomas Bayrle is a key figure in European Pop Art and one of the most important artists to have emerged during the West German economic boom of the 1960s. Based in Frankfurt am Main, Bayrle pursues a varied practice encompassing painting, sculpture, drawing, video, and film. Having apprenticed as a jacquard weaver early in his career, Bayrle also creates textiles, wallpaper, carpets, and clothing. His work largely centers on an exploration of consumerism, aestheticizing and magnifying its serial nature by replicating and repeating a single unit to form an expansive mass, thereby describing a world suspended between beneficial collectivism and deadening uniformity. This body of work originated at a time when Bayrle was simultaneously engaged in corporate advertising and Germany's student protest movement; the artist explains that he "mixed communist and capitalist patterns without qualm, simply under the aspect of accumulation."

For the New Museum, Maharam enlists its advanced digital printing capabilities to help Bayrle realize an ambitious installation in which the floor and all four walls of an entire gallery will be covered in two respective patterns: Schuhe (Shoes, 1967) and La vache qui rit (The Laughing Cow, 1967/1997). This is the second time Maharam and Bayrle have collaborated on such a scale, having blanketed the main entrance corridor to the 2012 edition of Frieze London with a 180' long installation of Sloping Loafers. (Bayrle's Maharam Digital Project, Shoes, resulted from this Frieze Projects commission.)


Launched in 2009, Maharam Digital Projects is a curated assemblage of more than 120 large-scale works created by esteemed artists, designers, illustrators, and photographers that are sized and produced to order. In extending Maharam's practice of interdisciplinary collaboration to the art world, Maharam Digital Projects offers sophisticated content in a dramatic but useful format while injecting unexpected scale and unlimited image and color complexity to Maharam's product offering. Printed with UV-resistant, water-based pigment inks on an archival-quality substrate, most Maharam Digital Projects are 10' in height and exceed 16' in width. Recent and upcoming collaborators include Kristin Baker, Katherine Bernhardt, Matt Connors, and Sarah Crowner.

Maharam's longstanding commitment to art and design was recognized by the Cooper Hewitt, Smithsonian Design Museum's Design Patron award (2007). This spring, in addition to Thomas Bayrle: Playtime, Maharam is also providing material support for an installation of Maharam Digital Projects' Peony by Dutch graphic designer Karel Martens as part of the Cooper Hewitt's exhibition, Saturated: The Allure and Science of Color, as well as a new work, I'm the President, Baby by American filmmaker, artist, and writer, Miranda July, for the Victoria & Albert Museum's exhibition, The Future Starts Here. An installation by American artist, Math Bass, for the Hammer Museum is also in progress for the fall. Ongoing support is provided for the RISD Maharam STEAM Fellowship, which encourages the application of art and design thinking to environmental and social issues through student internships with government agencies or nonprofit organizations in the United States and abroad.

[Thomas Bayrle: Playtime](#) will be on view at the New Museum from June 20 until September 2, 2018.

About New Museum

The New Museum is the only museum in New York City exclusively devoted to contemporary art. Founded in 1977, the New Museum is a center for exhibitions, information, and documentation about living artists from around the world. From its beginnings as a one-room office on Hudson Street to the inauguration of its first freestanding building on the Bowery designed by SANAA in 2007, the New Museum continues to be a place of experimentation and a hub of new art and new ideas.

Additional assets available online:  [Photos \(4\)](#)



<https://news.millerknoll.com/2018-05-01-Thomas-Bayrle-Playtime>