

Press release

Eva Hesse, Lukas Heerich, Rindon Johnson
15 May – 4 July 2026

max goelitz is pleased to invite Hauser & Wirth on the occasion of Various Others 2026. The exhibition places works by contemporary artists Lukas Heerich and Rindon Johnson in dialogue with selected early works on paper and a painting by Eva Hesse. Across generations, these artists share an interest in material experimentation, occupying a space in which form emerges through process and reveals both physical and conceptual tensions. Within this presentation, Heerich and Johnson draw on Hesse's practice as a point of departure, reflecting on and extending themes that resonate throughout her painting and works on paper.

They respond to Hesse's embrace of instability, nonconformity, and vulnerability, as well as her exploration of corporeality and psychological entanglement, by reconfiguring the gallery space itself. Rather than treating architecture as a neutral container, both artists engage it as a porous body. Parts of the walls are removed, exposing the infrastructure behind them, while subtle yet decisive interventions guide perception and movement. The exhibition thus unfolds as a fragmented environment in which visibility and obstruction become active sculptural and conceptual conditions. In Hesse's work, processes of looking and self-examination are inseparable from questions of form, fragmentation, and embodiment. Heerich and Johnson mirror these concerns through their own materials and spatial strategies, evoking a bodily experience in which the viewer becomes newly aware of presence, orientation, vulnerability, and control.

Lukas Heerich explores liminal tensions reflected in personal and collective narratives of protection, isolation, and power. His practice is accompanied by years of research and frequently incorporates historical and socio-cultural contexts. At the same time, Heerich draws on spontaneous situations and personal experiences to create multilayered works in which seemingly ambivalent aspects are held in productive suspension. His materially pronounced oeuvre hovers on the threshold of visibility and invisibility, alluding to memory, atmosphere, and emotion.

For the exhibition, Heerich presents a group of fragile, partly in situ works that move between architecture, installation, sculpture, painting, drawing, and collage, treating each as a permeable layer, that can be opened onto the next. Drawing on architectural and medical processes such as grafting, cutting, and transplantation, he develops a practice in which acts of incision and repair are inscribed into both material and spatial relations. Materials and images are opened, displaced, stretched, and reassembled into structures that remain visibly provisional and unresolved. Structural insertions made from reclaimed timber appear as load-bearing gestures, translating the functional geometry of construction into a language of belonging and shelter. A new series of sculptures anchor the installation as bodily presences, oscillating between shielding and exposing, stability and fragility. Their forms recall systems of enclosure and support—structures designed to hold, contain or stabilize—while remaining temporary. Wall-based works extend these concerns into a more intimate register, where images, forms, and spatial references overlap without fully resolving, suggesting biographical and geographic layers that partially coincide.

Across these works, perforation emerges as both method and metaphor: what is cut open can also connect, and what is repaired forms something new rather than returning to its prior state. Within this framework, Heerich situates the human body within collective structures

of protection and exclusion, tracing how space can function simultaneously as a refuge and instrument of power.

Rindon Johnson (*1990 on the unceded territories of the Ohlone people, San Francisco) often works with animal-derived materials that unfold as a meditation on strength, mutability and that which is seemingly tractable. Working with rawhide, catgut, and goldbeater's skin for this exhibition, he brings into view the dense entanglements between human and non-human bodies.

Catgut plays a particularly important role in this context. At once ancient and enduring, it is a material with a long technological and bodily history: used in clockmaking for its tensile precision, in surgery for its capacity to be absorbed by the human body, and in musical instruments for its resonant qualities. In Johnson's work, catgut becomes both line and threshold, a sculptural means of delineating space while destabilizing the terms through which space is perceived. Suspended between two and three dimensions, it introduces questions of form and formlessness, while opening a dialogue between the geometric clarity of minimalism and the corporeal, materially grounded concerns of postminimalist practices.

Johnson's rawhide works introduce a temporal and material instability. Presented in alternating configurations, they resist a fixed form and refer back to a single animal body that can never be fully grasped, but only encountered in fragments, surfaces, and residues. This shifting condition echoes Hesse's own interest in process, precariousness, and the refusal of stable form. The wall-based works with goldbeater's skin open yet another register situated between visibility and opacity. Historically used to repair manuscripts and reinforce fragile objects, the material carries connotations of preservation, care, and transmission. Johnson overlays it with images of his personal archive, building dense surfaces in which blackness appears as both image and material condition.

A temporary brick structure inserted into the gallery window extends these concerns into the architecture itself. In contrast to the relative delicacy of the catgut intervention, the bricked-up window operates through mass, opacity, and control. It darkens the space, regulates the passage of light, and asserts architecture as a mechanism of decision-making and power. While producing a new condition of interiority it sharpens the exhibition's broader inquiry into how bodies move through systems shaped by protection, exclusion, and visibility.

Eva Hesse (1936–1970) produced a prodigious body of work in the 1960s that collapsed disciplinary boundaries and forged innovative approaches to materials, forms, and processes. She cultivated mistakes and surprises, precariousness and enigma, in an effort to create works capable of transcending literal association. Hesse's early paintings and works on paper mark an important moment of formal development and transition, in which the young artist began to investigate processes and shapes that would lead to her short yet decisive career as a sculptor.

On view is an example of Hesse's Spectre paintings from 1960. Coined by art historian and curator E. Luanne McKinnon, the term — derived from the Latin verb *specere*, meaning "to look" — not only describes the apparition-like figures rendered on the canvas but also points to Hesse's sustained examination of herself. The presentation also includes examples of Hesse's ink drawings on paper from 1961, which explore notions of corporeality, vulnerability, and psychological tension that she would later continue to develop in her sculptural practice. Produced at a critical point in her maturation as an artist, these works register the emergence of an artistic language concerned with coming to terms with the self through form and material.

Bringing Hesse into dialogue with Heerich and Johnson their works meet in the unstable terrain where materials exceed their assigned roles, where bodies are fragmented and reimagined, and where space itself becomes a site of tension and reflection.

Opening
Friday 15 May 2026
6 – 9 pm

On the occasion of Various Others 2026 max goelitz is hosting Eva Hesse with Hauser & Wirth, in Munich.

Opening hours for Various Others
Saturday 16 May, 11 am – 6 pm
Sunday 17 May, 11 am – 4 pm

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