

***“I am all Arnolds, including Mrs. Arnold.”***

## **arnold schmidt – a retrospective**

**OPENING: Wednesday, February 21, 2024, 7:00 pm**

**Exhibition duration: February 22 until May 17, 2024**

The *galerie gugging* is starting its 30<sup>th</sup> anniversary year with a very special premiere. Visit the *galerie gugging*'s first solo exhibition dedicated to the works of the *Gugging Artist Arnold Schmidt*. Let us take you into Schmidt's vividly coloured worlds!

*“I am all Arnolds, including Mrs. Arnold”* is a quote from a book of poems by the *Gugging Artist Arnold Schmidt*, which spoke directly to the curator of our spring exhibition **Irina Katnik**: *“Schmidt's works are unique in their expressive gesture and probably cannot be compared to any other Gugging Artist. His dynamic way of working gives his seemingly simple subjects a certain lightness and breathes life and different characters into them. Perhaps Schmidt was ahead of his time with this statement from 1991 and unconsciously recognised the importance of diversity early on.”*

**Arnold Schmidt** was born in 1959 in Wiener Neustadt, Austria, and has lived in the *House of Artists* in Gugging since 1986. Everyone there affectionately calls him “Andi” and he also signs his works with this nickname. The cheerful artist prefers to work in the *atelier gugging*, which is located on the same floor as the *galerie gugging*, and is happy to be assisted during the creative process, for example when mixing paint. With his open nature, the Oskar Kokoschka Prize winner always radiates good energy, which can also be felt in his works.

His oeuvre began with the human figure, which Schmidt always depicts frontally, facing the viewer. The male figure is basically created from several superimposed circles, while the female figure made up of individual strokes is depicted with a waisted silhouette and long hair. In the early 2000s, the artist took on new themes such as airplanes, which he supplemented with horizontal lines, cars, bicycles, birds, and rabbits. However, he has remained true to his circular strokes to this day. Using acrylics, watercolours, pencils,

coloured pencils, oil crayons and black charcoal, he develops a dense, abstract, merging structure of lines that exerts a veritable suction effect.

**Schmidt** works boldly, intuitively, and dynamically on both paper and canvas and sets himself no limits in his choice of format. It can sometimes happen that a work is perforated by the firm application of colour. With quick, dynamic strokes, he first depicts the subject with charcoal, pencil or coloured pencil, then fills the inside with oil pastels and finally paints it with watercolours, which can lead to rivulets of colour due to the sometimes watery layer of paint, giving the works a melancholy expression. In this way, his motifs dance against the white background of the paper or canvas.

In our spring exhibition, you can look forward to a varied overview that goes back to 1986 and explores the artist's various subjects. The highlights will be the red couch painted by Schmidt and his large-format canvases, as well as more recent works that have never been shown before and appear in delicate pastel shades. In addition, our *gugging twingy* (the digital twin) – a forgery-proof certificate of authenticity based on CO2-neutral blockchain technology that guarantees permanent preservation of ownership for generations – is entering a new round. If you purchase an original work, we will be happy to produce the digital twin for you for a small surcharge.

We look forward to welcoming you in the presence of **Arnold Schmidt** at our **opening** on **February 21, 2024, at 7:00 pm** in Maria Gugging.

**Yours Irina Katnik, Nina Katschnig & the *galerie gugging* team**