GÜNTHER FÖRG

Zweigstelle Capitain X – Casa delle Arti Napoli in Palazzo Degas September 26 – December 5, 2026

Galerie Gisela Capitain is delighted to announce Zweigstelle Capitain X, the tenth edition of its biannual exhibition programme at Casa delle Arti, Napoli, in Palazzo Degas, Naples, Italy, with a solo exhibition of German artist Günther Förg (1952–2013).

There are few German painters of the postwar generation whose work is as inseparable from Italy as Günther Förg's. From the early 1980s onward, Förg travelled repeatedly through the country, photographing the architecture of Italian Rationalism of the 1920s–40s: the Casa del Fascio, the empty piazzas, Villa Malaparte, perched above the sea on Capri. These were buildings that seemed to hold both the promise and the failure of Modernism within their concrete. Many of the photographs are framed through windows and doorways, so that interior and exterior, order and openness, sit in the same image. The paintings carry that same friction. They are graphic, near-symmetrical, built on a kind of architectural logic that never quite holds: geometric rigour keeps running up against a much more spontaneous, physical hand. Almost every painting has another artist somewhere behind it, tested and absorbed rather than quoted, pulled toward something more austere. To show Förg in Naples is to bring the work back to one of its sources, and to follow these references through paintings spanning more than two decades of his practice.

Untitled (2001), a nearly three-metre square canvas, is built from a red grid, painted stroke by stroke over a warm, cream-coloured ground, with a dense band of black across the top. The pattern recalls Pierre Bonnard's dining-room interiors, where a tablecloth or table surface would shift and recur from painting to painting, never quite fixed. Förg takes that same instability somewhere colder and more architectural. *Untitled* (1998) goes further: one vertical band of burnt orange, edges frayed, running the full height of a tall, black canvas, close in spirit to Barnett Newman's zips. Förg is less interested in the style itself than in what sits underneath it: surface, rhythm, the relation between colour and space. *Untitled* (2004) is sparer still, reduced to a black diagonal, two short horizontal marks, and a cluster of soft white forms against an open field of pink and ochre. Its nearest relative is Philip Guston's *Paw* (1968), where a single crude hand carries the whole painting. Guston's mark stays attached to a body. Förg's doesn't; it's reduced to line as line, form as form.

In another room, the wall itself becomes the subject. *Untitled* (2002) is a field of masonry-like shapes in grey and ochre, seamed together with black and yellow, close to Philip Guston's late painting, *The Painter* (1976), where a brick wall fills the entire canvas. Guston's wall still carries a figure behind it. Förg's is stripped down to surface, caught between something austere and something fragile. Next to it hangs a group of paintings that turn the same wall into something to look through: a thick, black grid, close to the mullions of a window, sits over dense, bright fields of red, yellow, green, blue and pink, as if the wall had opened onto something behind it. It picks up on Förg's own photographic work, much of which consists of views taken through windows, marking the point where inside becomes outside. Hung in a room without windows of their own, they take on a second role here, too, standing in for the ones that are missing.

Across the grids, the zips, the walls and the windows, Förg keeps returning to the same handful of questions: structure against colour, restraint against gesture, one painting in conversation with another. In Naples, surrounded by the kind of architecture and light that shaped so much of his work, that conversation continues.

Günther Förg's work has been featured in numerous international exhibitions in major museums such as the Gemeentemuseum, The Hague (1988), Newport Harbor Art Museum (1990), Museum Fridericianum, Kassel (1990), Musée d'Art Moderne de la Ville de Paris (1991),

Museo Nacional Centro de Arte Reina Sofía, Madrid (1998), Kunstmuseum Basel (2006), Fondation Beyeler, Basel (2009), Deichtorhallen, Hamburg (2015), and Dallas Museum of Art (2017), among others.

Günther Förg's work is part of many museum collections, such as the Stedelijk Museum Amsterdam, National Gallery of Canada, Ottawa, Museum für Moderne Kunst Frankfurt, Ludwig Museum, Cologne, Tate Modern, London, The Museum of Modern Art, New York, San Francisco Museum of Modern Art, and Hamburger Bahnhof Museum für Gegenwart in Berlin.

Programme Zweigstelle Capitain X

Saturday, September 26
Opening reception
12 – 8 pm

Saturday, December 5
Finissage

Zweigstelle Capitain X
Casa delle Arti Napoli in Palazzo Degas
Calata Trinità Maggiore, 53
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Opening hours
Wed – Sat
11 am – 1 pm | 3 – 7 pm
and by appointment

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