

## SHOWING STYRIA

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# SHOWING STYRIA 2025

## Ambition & Illusion: History Repeating?

### Three pavilions of SHOWING STYRIA 2025

#### History Repeating?

**Duration:** 13.03. – 30.03.2025

daily from 10 a.m. to 6 p.m., admission free

Heldenplatz, 1010 Vienna

[www.steiermarkschau.at](http://www.steiermarkschau.at)

Under the title *Ambition & Illusion*, Schloss Eggenberg will be transformed into the venue for the third edition of SHOWING STYRIA at the end of April 2025. The UNESCO World Heritage Site and all the museums on site invite visitors to take an unadulterated look at the history of the palace and all its inhabitants. In addition, the 2025 show will be completed by a total of three pavilions, which will bring together art positions under the title *History Repeating?* and enable a new reception of the past. The architectural concept of the pavilions is designed by the Graz-based architectural group studioWG3, the exhibition is curated by Günther Holler-Schuster and works by a total of 16 artists can be seen and heard.

Schloss Eggenberg was built during turbulent and contradictory times. The country was on the brink of collapse under the impact of various crises. The Thirty Years' War drove streams of migrants through Europe; epidemics and diseases plagued the population, as did the disastrous economic situation. We are currently experiencing similar occurrences when we think of the current theaters of war. The global world order is changing, nationalism is on the rise, and fear is growing. Economic aberrations and the accompanying social issues are becoming more and more pressing. Climate change caused by humans as an expression of the Anthropocene is leading, like armed conflicts, to enormous migration flows. These crises and parallels are taken up by the artists in their works in the three pavilions.

### The architecture of the pavilions enables diverse and innovative uses

The design concept by the **Graz-based architectural group studioWG3** attempts to “interpret the history, architecture and beauty of Schloss Eggenberg in an innovative and creative way”. The design, which emerged from an invited competition, realizes a highly narrative architecture that conveys the idea of the palace, but also masks it in an innovative way. The pavilions consist of wooden frameworks covered with tarpaulins, resembling tents. Designed as temporary structures, the pavilions will be dismantled and reassembled at other locations after the preview in Vienna. They are constructed to be both stable and easy to assemble, while the design allows for flexible and pragmatic reuse, as the structure can be quickly dismantled and transported. The total area of the pavilions exceeds 470 square meters, with each pavilion covering approximately 150 square meters.

## The curatorial concept is guided by the architecture

While baroque palaces were eminent spaces for art in the sense of the idea of the Gesamtkunstwerk, this idea is taken up in the pavilions. The architecture was therefore fundamental to the concept of the exhibition. The architecture was therefore fundamental to the concept of the exhibition. It allows for a homogeneous, installative and cohesive arrangement of the artists' positions, which can be experienced both in their ensemble (Vienna) and in their division (Schloss Eggenberg, Ljubljana, Mariazell, Leoben). The pavilion landscape—presented as a unified ensemble in Vienna—highlights the diversity of artistic positions and their themes, which become particularly visible in this arrangement.

## Three pavilions of SHOWING STYIRA 2025

### Music Pavilion – Baroque theatrics

Music plays a central role in the pavilion positioned in front of the palace. The architecture of the pavilion takes up the baroque theatrics and the element of the garden pavilion. The flexible architecture results in performative moments that make the location appear ever-changing. The composer **Klaus Lang** has explored the music composed at the Eggenberg Court and the emblems incorporated into the palace's ceiling paintings. Emblemata served to educate and enlighten the aristocratic youth and were therefore not only intellectual riddles, but also instructions for conduct. Lang's compositions refer to this and resonate in the pavilion in their relevance to the present day. Instructions for action and the performativity of sculpture are essential elements in the reflections of the sculptor **Erwin Wurm**. This time the idea of his One Minute Sculptures and the performativity of his art in general are integrated into the context of baroque drama. The exaltation of the Baroque, which is closely related to the narcissistic society of today, unfolds in the ensemble of sculptures selected for the pavilion. The sculptures form an imaginary court society whose psychological disposition seems to have been shaken, at least here. The curtain walls of the pavilion are dominated by a monumental digital painting by **Hubert Schmalix**. It runs around the entire pavilion. The partial opening and closing of the curtains heightens the character of the spectacle. The images essentially refer to digital communication – emojis. They are focused on gazes and clear gestures and, in Schmalix's work, become instructions for action – they either instruct or attract. The **Music Pavilion** will subsequently be on display in **Schlosspark Eggenberg from April 26 to November 2, 2025**.

### Styria Pavilion – tradition and modernity

The pavilion provides a clear architectural guideline. An intermediate ceiling-like section divides the overall space diagonally, horizontally. In one part of the pavilion, a stylized mountain range symbolizes the topography of Styria. **Herbert Brandl** has enlivened this zone in the tradition of panorama painting. The monumental painting leads the public to the beauty of the Alpine landscape as well as reminding them of the storms of the country's turbulent history. The pavilions also refer fundamentally to their locations. Mariazell as a prominent place of pilgrimage and Leoben with its long mining tradition are both located in extensive woodland with a strong forestry industry. How does a country represent itself in a picture, how do its people represent themselves in the mirror of history? Where does tradition meet modernity and the present? These questions arise in view of the artistic contributions in this pavilion. **Constantin Luser's** acoustic tree, as well as his trumpet figures, open up a cultural space in which the regional context is reflected in multiple ways. The duo **Plateau Residue** specifically addresses the use of resources using the example of forestry. **Karoline Rudolf** and **Antonia Jeitler** take up the presentation form of the monument in their considerations. The plinth, which usually elevates and exposes the figure, becomes an unstable terrain in Rudolf's work, on which the artist resists the turbulence of reality. Jeitler's portraits of anonymous people

who remain invisible in society testify to the fragility of the self-image and the possible exposure to the exposed place on the pedestal, which here is a dubious one. It is always the confrontation between tradition and modernity that is expressed in art – regional aspects against the backdrop of global reality. This is also visible in **Mito Gegič**'s video work, where a gigantic wrecking ball swings from one monitor to the other between two young people in folkloristic clothing. The **Styria Pavilion** will be on display in **Mariazell from May 1 to July 28, 2025**, and in **Leoben from August 20 to October 31, 2025**.

#### **Alpine Adriatic region Pavilion – Regional identities**

The **Alpine Adriatic region** is connected by a partially shared history. However, it is also characterized by difficult historical conflicts. Until 1918 it was part of the Habsburg Monarchy, and after the Second World War it was the border region between Austria, Italy and Yugoslavia. The new geopolitical order after 1945 led to the territorial fragmentation of the region and the mutual separation of the people living there. The architecture of this pavilion therefore provides for a three-part division and thus refers to the history of the region with its historical references to the idea of "Inner Austria" with Graz as its residence. In the 1960s, the "Trigon idea" recalled this historical moment. The renewed encounter between the regions of the historical territory was seen as an opportunity to reposition Graz in terms of cultural policy against the backdrop of the "Cold War". The artistic contributions do not explicitly deal with this topic, but indirectly take up aspects of it. They thus extend the regional context to a more general reception. In addition to art-immanent aspects, the focus here is on migration scenarios, cultural identities (**Lena Violetta Leitner, Andreas Heller, Michael Pöllinger**) as well as questions of territorial and cultural claims (**Milica Tomić, Franz Kapfer**) and cultural roots (**Total Refusal, Christof Neugebauer**). The **Alpine Adriatic region Pavilion** will then be located in **Ljubljana**.

## SHOWING STYRIA 2025

### **Ambition & Illusion**

#### **Schloss Eggenberg: The Staging of a World**

**Opening:** 26.04.2025

**Duration:** 26.04. - 02.11.2025

Schloss Eggenberg, Alte Galerie, Coin Cabinet, Archaeology Museum  
Eggenberger Allee 90, 8020 Graz

With an innovative reinterpretation of the traditional provincial exhibitions, SHOWING STYRIA presents socially significant topics from an artistic and scientific perspective every two years. Under the title *Ambition & Illusion*, Schloss Eggenberg will be transformed into the venue for the third edition of SHOWING STYRIA from 26 April 2025. The UNESCO World Heritage Site invites visitors to take an unadulterated look at the history of the palace and all its inhabitants. The State Rooms and Planetary Room take on their original role: they become platforms for the grand staging of a princely family who managed to turn their failure into an eternal success story with the help of a work of art. SHOWING STYRIA at Schloss Eggenberg brings not only the members of the Eggenberg family before the curtain but also the people who shaped the court and tells of their lives.

**Client:** Land Steiermark

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We thank our main sponsors of SHOWING STYRIA 2025: **Energie Steiermark, Grazer Wechselseitige Versicherung AG, Raiffeisen-Landesbank Steiermark**, as well as the project partners of the pavilions, **Sattler AG, AT&S** and **Mit Loidl oder Co GmbH**.