



Peder

Wolfgang
Tillmans

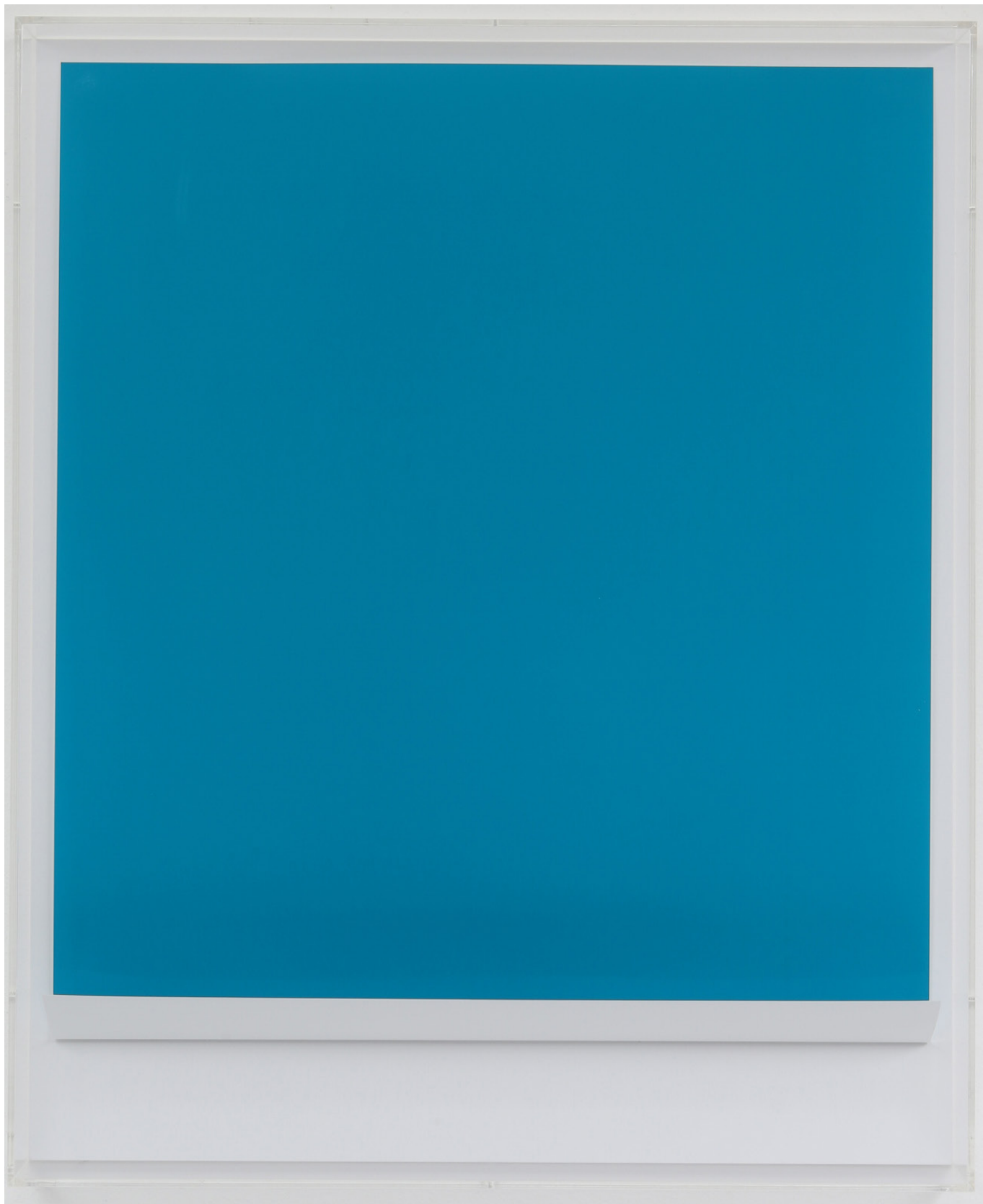
After Venice

March 5 - May 28, 2022

Lund



Wolfgang Tillmans
meeting lights
2006
c-print mounted on Dibond, in artist's frame
135 × 202 cm/ 145 × 212 × 6 cm (framed)
Edition of 1 + 1 AP (1/1)



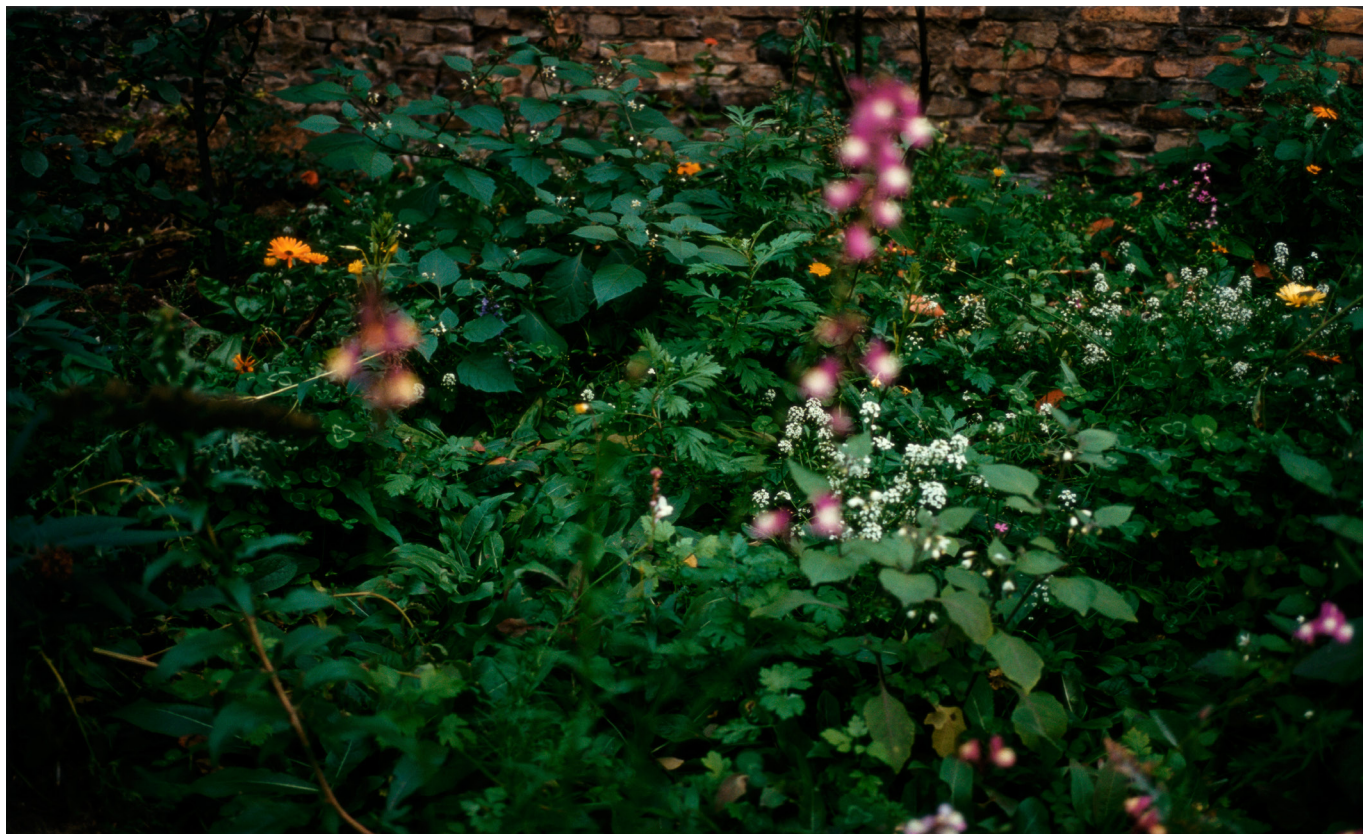
Wolfgang Tillmans
Lighter, blue up XI
2013
c-print in acrylic glass hood
61 × 50.8 cm/ 64,3 × 54,2 × 7 cm (framed)
unique



Wolfgang Tillmans
Wald (Briol I)
2008
c-print mounted on Forex, in artist's frame
248 × 171 cm/ 258 × 181 × 6 cm (framed)
Edition of 1 + 1 AP (1/1)



Wolfgang Tillmans
Silver installation VII
2009
26 unique c-prints
Overall dimensions: 306 × 843 cm
unique



Wolfgang Tillmans
Garten
2008
c-print, framed
30.5 × 40.6 cm/ 34 × 44 × 2.4 cm (framed)
Edition of 10 + 1 AP



Wolfgang Tillmans
Plant life
2005
c-print mounted on Dibond, in artist's frame
135 × 202 cm/ 145 × 212 × 6 cm (framed)
Edition of 1 + 1 AP (1/1)



Wolfgang Tillmans
Faltenwurf (Morgen) II
2009
c-print, framed
61 × 50.8 cm/ 64.5 × 54.2 × 2.4 cm (framed)
Edition of 3 + 1 AP



Beginning Saturday March 5, Peder Lund is honoured to present a new exhibition with works by one of the most influential and significant artists of his generation, Wolfgang Tillmans (b. 1968, Remscheid; lives and works in Berlin and London). *After Venice* marks the artist's first solo exhibition in Norway, and the selected works refer to a specific period in the artist's oeuvre, beginning with Tillmans participation in the exhibition *Fare Mondi - Making Worlds*, at the Venice Biennale in 2009.

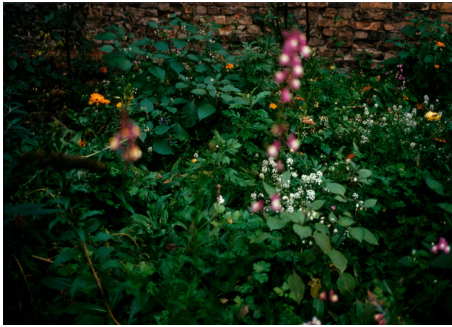
In addition to the unique *Silver installation VII* (2009) presented at the Venice Biennale and later at the Serpentine Gallery (2010), the show at Peder Lund presents central works from different series such as *Lighter* (2013), *Plant Life* (2005), *Wald (Briol I)* (2008), *Faltenwurf (Morgen) II* (2009) and *meeting lights* (2006). Combined, the works have a remarkable exhibition history, previously presented in renowned institutions as Museu de Arte Moderna, São Paulo (2012); Museo de Blanco de la Republic, Bogota (2012); Museu de Arte de Lima, Lima (2013); Museum Kunstpalast, Düsseldorf (2013) and Fondation Beyeler, Basel (2017).

Since winning the Turner Prize in 2000 for his 1990s oeuvre of portraits and snapshots of youths, clubs, and LGBTQ culture, Tillmans has increasingly moved towards the abstract and material-specific properties of his medium. Pushing boundaries and definitions of the photographic form, his installations and individual works, reflect his engagement with what he describes as 'an abstraction grounded in the real world'.



Tillmans began working on the *Silver* - series in 1992, which since evolved into a compilation of over 200 pieces. The *Silver*-series, is the result of a largely mechanical process, stripped of control, in which an undeveloped piece of photographic paper, exposed or unexposed, is passed through a printer with traces of chemicals that cause reactions on the paper.¹

Silver installation VII (2009) consists of 26 unique works, where the artist's study of the specifics of light and pure colours, manifests themselves in front of the viewer. By dismantling the artistic borders between different media, the works are painterly, photographic, sculptural installations, and in that way, becoming a continuing imagery taking place on the far end of a sequence between figuration and abstraction.² The artist talks about his process when explaining: "I see the abstract works as a bit of nature in themselves, as well as an observation of nature."³



Carefully displayed next to the large-scale *Silver* installation, the works *Plant life* (2005) and *Garten* (2008) points back to how they were exhibited at the Venice Biennale and then at Serpentine Gallery. During an artist talk held at the Serpentine Gallery, the artist explained that: "The works in the room in Venice were a consideration of representation of colour and nature - the pure colour of nature".⁴ By presenting the abstract and figurative motifs next to each other, Tillmans emphasizes that the *Silvers* are not there as representation of something, but as pure nature and colour, just in a similar way as *Garten*.⁵

In another series of works called *Faltenwurf*, Tillmans harmonizes classical motifs such as drapery and genre, like still-life or abstraction, into his works. These images entitled *Faltenwurf*, refer to a German art historical term that denotes classical drapery. The artist's use of these genres and motifs almost remains without parallel in contemporary photography, because Tillmans approach differs widely from the method of quoting genre stereotypes that has come to be understood as typically "postmodern".⁶

Instead of appropriate genres, Tillmans casually and with a playfulness modifies the general idea of the genre. In his essay *Picture Possible Lives: The Work of Wolfgang Tillmans*, Jan Verwoert writes:

"[The artist] treats genre not as a mode of representation but as a ready-made, as a form in which reality chooses to present itself. In this sense, a basic proposition that Tillmans makes in his work is that the difference between reality and its image is blurred - that the image is already inscribed into the world."⁷

From the composition of the clothes in *Faltenwurf (Morgen) II* (2009) it is possible to read the image as a self-portrait, with the absent body of the t-shirt and trousers owner, suggested by the garment itself. The garments shadowed folds, brings forward an immediate intimacy typical for the artist's drapery series. Critic Dale McFarland highlights the sensuality of the *Faltenwurf* images, saying: "[Tillmans'] studies of drapery ... have more than a hint of eroticism, clearly evoking the act of undressing, and appear to retain the warmth and smell of the wear."⁸



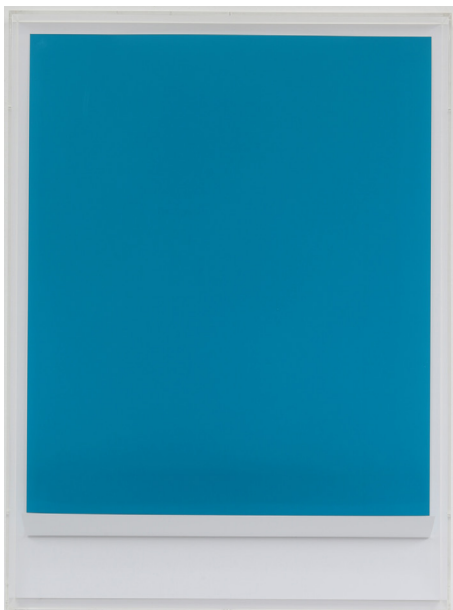


Throughout his life, Tillmans' resolute political outlook has been closely connected with his experimentation within the shifting field of photography. Speaking to art's social capacity to advocate for values and beliefs, Tillmans said that "[a]s an artist one also has the role of amplifier, of amplification."⁹ In 2006, Tillmans travelled to South Africa, when the HIV i-Base (London) and TAC (Cape Town) organized the meeting; International Treatment Literacy Meeting. *meeting lights* (2006) was a result of Tillmans documented the meeting.

In describing his motivations for *Truth Study Centre*, the artist roots his desire to ask questions regarding conditions for visibility in the AIDS crises: "AIDS is one of the subjects dealt with in this book: AIDS as an "invisible" thing, AIDS as an emblematic image of change and developments".¹⁰ Here, amidst wider reaching political, philosophical, and material queries Tillmans seats AIDS centrally, as a case study of how invisibility can occur. After AIDS was finally recognized as a medical conditional in the 1980s, the artist expressed:

"scientific invisibility was replaced by human and political denial and AIDS was allowed to multiply exponentially. That process of how the AIDS complex grew bigger and bigger but remained unobserved and then deliberately unwatched has a far-reaching symbolism".¹¹

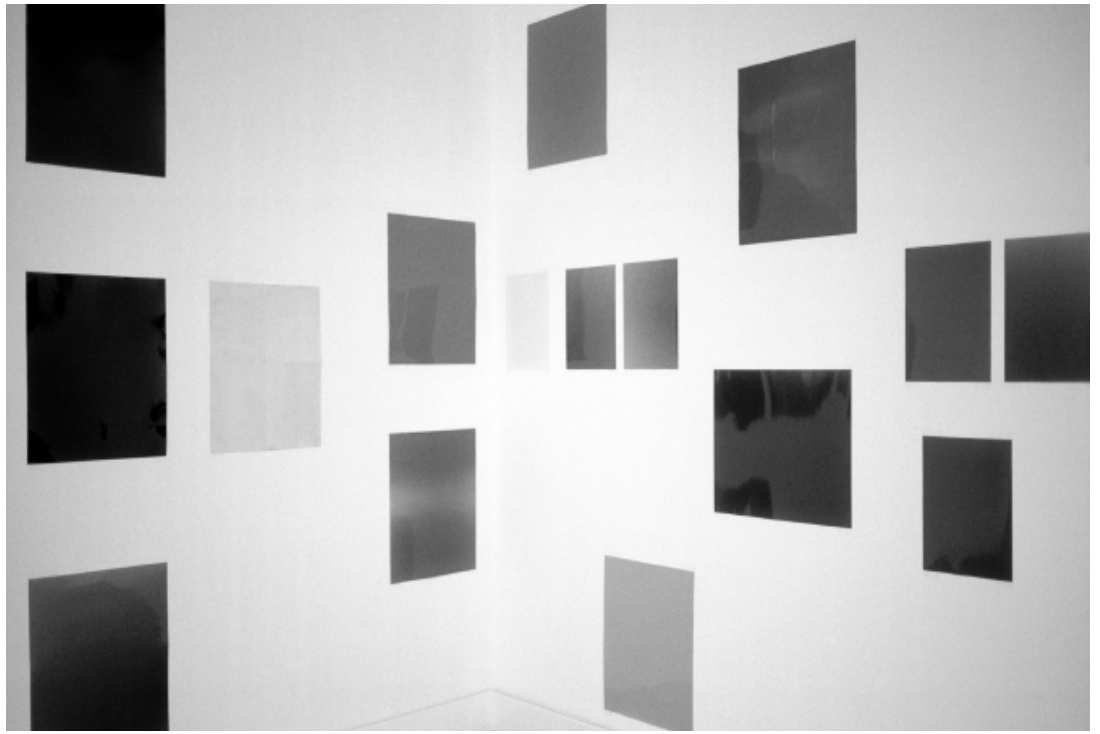
That Tillmans cultivates a provocatively blurry line between the symbolic and the real - insisting that both have effects - is clear in the sometimes-violent reactions to his works. To this end, his efforts both overtly activist and more lyrically salient, should be seen as a pattern.¹²



The large work *Wald (Briol I)* (2008) belongs to a three-part series on the Briol forest in northern Italy. For all three works, Tillmans used the same transformative reproduction process: with a photocopier, making a copy of an original photograph, which then enlarged again as a photographic print. The result is a blurring of the image that brings about not only a loss of definition but also an increase of abstraction. *Wald (Briol I)* forest depicts the play of bright light through the crowded trees. Elements of white brilliance create the illusion of Op-art effect, playing with the viewer's understanding of the scale and perspective of the image.¹³

On the left side of *Wald (Briol I)*, the work *Lighter, blue up XI* (2013) is installed. The creased and folded abstract *Lighter* works, followed the Blushes, *Freischwimmer*, and monochromatic *Silver*-series. By playing with photographic processes to create abstract works of luminous colour and light, the series was initially inspired by the most mundane occurrence: a paper jam in a printer caused the sheet of paper to crumple. *Lighter, blue up XI* is a unique chromogenic print, framed in a Perspex box, and its title has a description that alludes to its physical coloration and a numerical sequence. "*Lighter* refers to the actual light, to the weight, but also to a cigarette lighter. All three have something to do with it,"¹⁴ the artist expressed during an artist talk at the Museum Folkwagen in Essen in 2016.

The coolness of the work *Lighter, blue up XI*, may bring to mind the colour-field paintings of Barnett Newman or Morris Louis, though Tillmans works distracts themselves from the painterly references and re-connects the work to a somewhat science-fictional industrial strangeness, untethered to the formal arguments of fine art.¹⁵



Wolfgang Tillmans, numerous solo exhibitions include shows organized by Kunsthalle Zürich (2012); Les Rencontres d'Arles (2013); In 2012, the Moderna Museet, Stockholm, showcased a selection of works from the past twenty-five years; the same exhibition was on view at K21, Kunstsammlung Nordrhein-Westfalen, Düsseldorf, in 2013, while a comprehensive retrospective of Tillmans's oeuvre toured South America. In 2014, installations by Tillmans were displayed at the 8th Berlin Biennale, Manifesta 10, and as part of presentations of art from the collections at the Fondation Louis Vuitton, Paris, and the Folkwang Museum, Essen. His video installation "Book for Architects," which made its public debut at the 2014 Venice Architecture Biennale, subsequently traveled to the Metropolitan Museum, New York. A major solo exhibition opened at the National Museum of Art, Osaka, and in Gothenburg in 2015 on the occasion of Tillmans's receipt of the Hasselblad Award. In early 2016, he presented an extensive survey of his oeuvre at the Museu de Arte Contemporânea de Serralves, Porto, followed by major exhibitions at Tate Modern, London, and Fondation Beyeler, Riehen near Basel, in 2017. In 2018, he was awarded the Kaiserring, the art prize of the City of Goslar. Produced in collaboration with the Institut für Auslandsbeziehungen (ifa) in 2018, Tillmans's traveling exhibition "FRAGILE" has toured venues in numerous African cities including Kinshasa, Nairobi, Johannesburg, Addis Ababa, and Yaoundé, with more cities to follow.

Recent exhibitions have included retrospectives at the Carré d'Art-Musée d'art contemporain, Nîmes (2018); the Irish Museum of Modern Art, Dublin (2018); WIELS, Brussels (2020), Mumok, Vienna, (2021). A comprehensive retrospective of Wolfgang Tillmans's oeuvre at the MoMA, New York, is scheduled to open on September 12, 2022. Following its presentation at MoMA, the exhibition will travel to the Art Gallery of Ontario and the San Francisco Museum of Modern Art.

List of illustrations:

- 1 Installation view, Wolfgang Tillmans, *Wolfgang Tillmans*, Museo de Arte de Lima, Lima, 2013.
- 2 Installation view, Wolfgang Tillmans, *Fare Mondi – Making Worlds*, La biennale di Venezia 53, Venice, Italy, 2009.
- 3 Wolfgang Tillmans, *Plant life*, 2005
- 4 Wolfgang Tillmans, *Garten*, 2005
- 5 Installation view, Wolfgang Tillmans, *Wolfgang Tillmans*, Walker Art Gallery, Liverpool, United Kingdom, 2010.
- 6 Installation view, Wolfgang Tillmans, *Wolfgang Tillmans*, Fondation Beyeler, Basel, Switzerland, 2017.
- 7 Wolfgang Tillmans, *meeting lights*, 2006
- 8 Wolfgang Tillmans, *NICE HERE; but ever been to KYRGYZSTAN? Free Gender-Expression WORLDWIDE*, 2006
- 9 Installation view, Wolfgang Tillmans, *Fare Mondi – Making Worlds*, La biennale di Venezia 53, Venice, Italy, 2009.
- 10 Wolfgang Tillmans, *Lighter, blue up XI*, 2013
- 11 Installation view, Wolfgang Tillmans, *Fare Mondi – Making Worlds*, La biennale di Venezia 53, Venice, Italy, 2009.

List of notes:

- 1 *Their Own Thing: Wolfgang Tillmans' Silver Family*, Tom Holert. *Saturated Light*, Galerie Buchholz/Verlag der Buchhandlung Walther und Franz König, Berlin/Cologne, 2021, p. 4-5.
- 2 *Wolfgang Tillmans, K.*, Serpentine Gallery, Koenig Books London, London, 2010, p. 26.
- 3 *Wolfgang Tillmans, K.*, Serpentine Gallery, Koenig Books London, London, 2010, p. 27.
- 4 *Wolfgang Tillmans, K.*, Serpentine Gallery, Koenig Books London, London, 2010, p. 28.
- 5 Wolfgang Tillmans, Artist talk, Serpentine Gallery, 2010.
- 6 Ibid.
- 7 *Wolfgang Tillmans*, Phaidon Press, London, New York, 2002, p. 44.
- 8 Ibid.
- 9 *Beautiful Things*, Dale McFarland, Frieze, no.48, October 1999, pp.78-83.
- 10 *Wolfgang Tillmans*, interview with Hans Ulrich Obrist, The Conversation Series, no. 6 (Cologne: Walther König, 2008), p. 86-89.
- 11 Ibid.
- 12 *Wolfgang Tillmans*, Phaidon Press, London, New York, 2002, p. 198.
- 13 *Wolfgang Tillmans, K.*, Serpentine Gallery, Koenig Books London, London, 2010, p. 9.
- 14 *Wolfgang Tillmans, K.*, Serpentine Gallery, Koenig Books London, London, 2010, p. 14.
- 15 Ibid.