

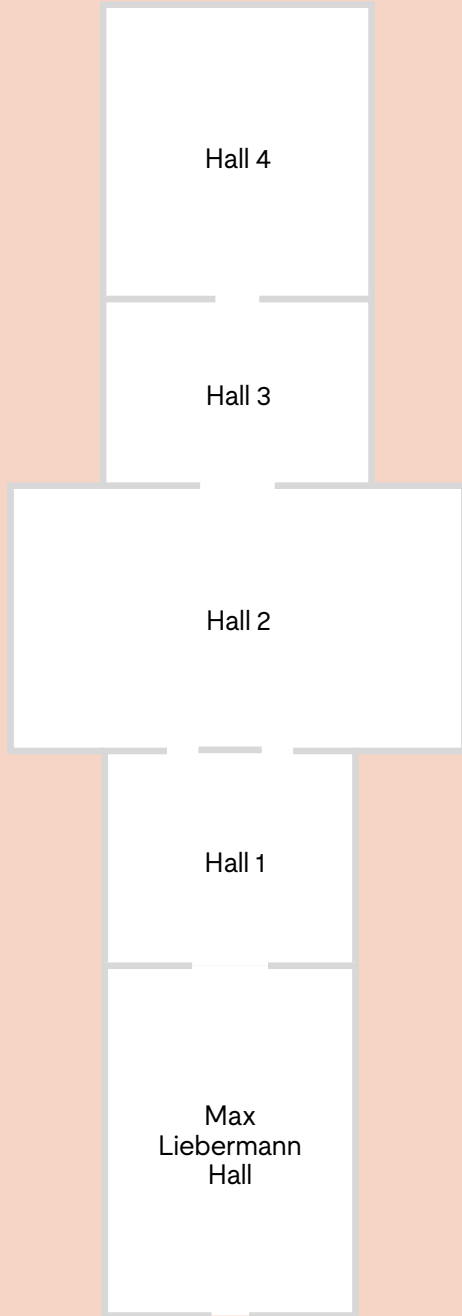
English

Luc  
Tuymans —  
Edith  
Clever

15 Sept – 26 Nov  
2023

AKADEMIE DER KÜNSTE

# Floor Plan Pariser Platz



Hall 4

Hall 3

Hall 2

Hall 1

Max  
Liebermann  
Hall

Lobby

# Edith Clever

## *Stimmbänder, 2023*

### Sound installation: Genoël von Lilienstern

It is the voice of Edith Clever and her particular variations in tonality around which composer Genoël von Lilienstern created the sound installation at the centre of the exhibition. With the help of “clustering analysis”, an AI technology used for data sorting, Genoël von Lilienstern reads out Edith Clever’s voice recordings. He achieves sound bands of varying qualities, from quiet whisperings and sharp hissing to song-like consonant sounds. The sounds emanate almost imperceptibly from different directions through the lobby of the Akademie der Künste building on Pariser Platz. They invite visitors to listen more closely. The soundscape introduces visitors to the actress’ mysterious, distorted, and surprising voice.



## Edith Clever *Nicht mehr. Mehr nicht.* Theatre and cinema stills, 2023

The selected theatre and film motifs from Edith Clever's work are not projected directly into the lobby but are instead obscured from direct view – much in line with the artist's affinity for the hidden and the mysterious. As a documentary montage, it is both an introduction and retrospective at the same time, more of a tracing than an outline, more associative in nature than purporting to claim completeness. The actress worked with Kurt Hübner, Peter Zadek, Luc Bondy, Klaus Michael Grüber, Peter Stein and Botho Strauss at theatres in Bremen and Berlin. She shared the stage with Bruno Ganz, Therese Giese, Jutta Lampe and Angela Winkler – in Wilfried Minks' radical, lightbulb-filled spaces or a cyclorama based on a Roy Lichtenstein painting. She also appeared in film early in her career, including productions by Eric Rohmer and Peter Handke. During her work at the Theater Bremen from 1966 to 1970 – at that time, the most important theatre in West Germany – Clever developed her acting talent for both the comic and the rebellious. From 1971 to 1989, she was a member of the legendary Schaubühne in Berlin under the direction of Peter Stein, where new forms of collective theatre work were being tested, and political theatre was championed. Famous for her interpretation of tragic female characters in literature – portraying Penthesilea, Agave, Clytemnestra, Medea and Lotte in *Groß und Klein* (1978) – the earnestness of her acting cannot be reduced to this factor alone. Clever's decision to leave the Schaubühne ensemble marked the beginning of an intensive artistic collaboration with the filmmaker Hans-Jürgen Syberberg. Most of Clever's texts, especially her long monologues, are written by men. Her voice makes gender-specific aspects irrelevant. Starting in the 1990s, she began directing her own productions. Even now, Clever continues to appear on stage.



## Edith Clever *Cinematic Portrait*, 2023 Film: Alex Salinas

The cinematic portrait of Edith Clever at the “end of her career” shows the actress’ bold resoluteness. It was filmed for the exhibition by photographer Alex Salinas, who also documented the work of the painter Luc Tuymans. At first glance, you see a static image – a close-up of a face in deep concentration. Initially, it is only her eyes that open slowly, thus indicating a slight shift in emotion. Extremes are avoided, and this is precisely what attunes our awareness to a cosmos of hope, melancholy, sadness, contentment and peace. Finally, her eyes close decisively and without haste. The game starts anew.

Edith Clever, who achieved stardom as a member of the Schaubühne in Berlin (1971–1989), began exploring new paths during the 1980s. Her participation in Hans-Jürgen Syberberg’s aesthetically radical film adaptation of *Parsifal* (1982) led to an intensive artistic bond with the director. This collaboration culminated in the two-part film *Die Nacht* (1985), where the actress performed a six-hour monologue. The performance premiered two evenings in Paris in 1984 at the Festival d’Automne but has never been shown in Berlin.

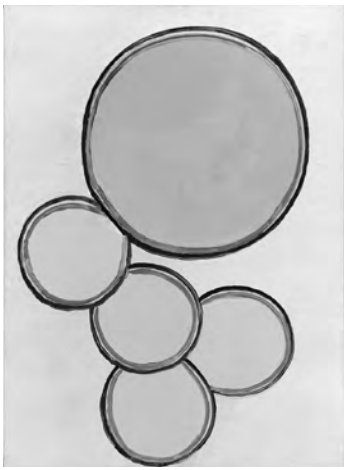
Syberberg’s film – shown in the exhibition’s penultimate room – entails a close-up of Clever in her younger years. Captured up close with her eyes closed, she recites from Goethe’s *Faust*, with her hands and fingers pressed to her face, in a meditative immersion in the text. The *Cinematic Portrait* created for the exhibition heralds the exhibition’s main themes: the representability and legacy of the past, and the dialogue arising from the interplay between static and moving images, between the visual and the audible.



## Luc Tuymans *Candle*, 2017

Oil on canvas 134.6 × 108.5 cm, private collection

Painting is colour and light. Yellow and orange tones radiate with a warm aura against a pale violet background as if through a milky veil. These colour tonalities and the cross-fading effects create space within the image. It is a specific sense of light that Luc Tuymans explores in his artistic work. In *Candle*, unlike his other paintings, this topic is addressed directly through the choice of the work's eponymous subject. The nearly monochrome painting is based on a photograph that Tuymans took of a burning candle behind a piece of paper. With this painterly gesture, he succeeded in rendering light perceptible and presenting it without explanation or direct illustration – an approach of fundamental significance for his work as a whole. A burning candle is commonly taken as a metaphor for transience, as it warms, burns and is extinguished. It is a symbol of both solace and mourning and, at the same time, a reference to the creation and fleeting nature of life on earth.



## Luc Tuymans *Heillicht*, 1991

Oil on canvas, triptych, *The Smell*, 85.5 × 63.3 cm; *Heillicht*, 50 × 40 cm; *Incest*, 37 × 40.5 cm, Collection Mu.ZEE – Flemish Community

In the three paintings, which were not originally painted as a triptych, reddish-orange hues exist alongside cooler tones, and reduced and seemingly abstract forms alongside figurative elements. Something hidden and eerie seems to be going on in the paintings. According to Luc Tuymans, he later decided to combine the three parts into a single work because of their muted colour, brightness and vibrancy. What they have in common is the exploration of touch and healing through colour, which can generate heat or its opposite. *Heillicht* means calming, healing light. The eponymous painting, which depicts a half-naked boy illuminated by a lamp, comes from Paul Wolff's book *Meine Erfahrungen mit der Leica* (My Experiences with the Leica). During the Second World War, Wolff developed a printing method for the mass production of colour photographs that decisively influenced the media impact of National Socialist propaganda. The painting *Smell*, with its small and large circles, is about disseminating the smell emitted from deodorant bottles. The sense of smell, which significantly influences memory, does not require visual imagery to unleash its mnemonic function. *Incest* – in contrast to the other two images in black-and-white – not only refers to the sense of touch through a close-up of an arm pushing through an opening but also evokes an air of danger and forbidden, transgressive behaviour.



## Luc Tuymans *The Swamp*, 2017

Oil on canvas, 216.2 × 125 cm, courtesy of the artist and David Zwirner

Is it a man seen climbing up a ladder, the view from above of a figure swimming in the middle of nowhere, or something else altogether? In the subtle colour details and their emotional undertones, Luc Tuymans' play with the ambivalence of the depicted subject takes on an immersive intensity. The inspiration for the painting was filmed footage of a soldier crawling away on the ground. Tuymans transforms the found footage into a meditation on disappearance and the state between life and death. At the same time, the painting deals with nature, invoking the topos of nature's subjugation. Tuymans reproduces the images he finds in a deliberately blurred style, using a soft palette of grey and brown tones while removing all illustrative and narrative elements. *The Swamp* represents three artworks created using different media and references the title of a 2017 exhibition in the Belgian village of Gotem near Borgloon, Belgium. As part of the local art project "En Route", carried out in collaboration with the artist and curator Gert Robijns, the painting was intended to be burned as a symbolic act of artistic freedom. The ensuing protests from the art world and press culminated in a ban of the planned action by the mayor of Borgloon "out of environmental concerns". This did not, however, prevent the two artists from carrying out a symbolic burning.



# Edith Clever

## Reading from Euripides' *The Bacchae* / Heinrich von Kleist's *Penthesilea*

Recording by the Akademie der Künste's Studio for Electroacoustic Music, 2023

The tragedy lies in misunderstandings. You destroy what you love. It's a theme played out on stage since antiquity: the condition of a mind-spinning and hopeless frenzy, misjudgement, pain of awareness in the discharge of irreconcilable opposites and unforgivable guilt. Penthesilea in Kleist's eponymous play and Agave in Euripides' *Bacchae* were prime roles for Edith Clever. The theatre images and film clips shown in the exhibition testify to the actress' powerful embodiment of these strong, uncontrollable women. While working with the texts, Edith Clever discovered that passages from these plays resemble each other when new contexts are created. This observation applies to accounts given by the Amazon Meroe on the killing of Achilles by Penthesilea and the killing of King Pentheus by his mother, Agave. Agave was a Bacchae, a follower of Dionysus, the god of intoxication and ecstasy. Kleist's transformation of this ancient text material for his *Penthesilea* is akin to a "mnemonic scene of poetry" (Lars Friedrich). The recontextualisation of existing text material meets the working method of Luc Tuymans, who transfers existing media into painted images. Edith Clever's new readings of both passages in the Studio for Electroacoustic Music recordings, using a deliberately factual tone, superimpose Tuymans' images.



# Luc Tuymans

## *Numbers, 2020*

Oil on canvas, quadriptych, *One*, 277.2 × 310 cm;  
*Three*, 280.2 cm × 325 cm; *Seven*, 280.4 × 319.7 cm;  
*Nine*, 277.4 cm × 343.3 cm, Pinault Collection



Numbers of different sizes flicker brightly against a shimmering dark background: concrete, abstract, universal. *Numbers*, the paintings are titled, and their slightly deviating formats have a sculptural and corporal feel to them. Created during the COVID pandemic, Luc Tuymans initially turns to this theme using gouache on paper. They are based on film stills from his early Super 8 footage from the 1980s, which he marked with sequential numbers. The numbers motif has played an important role in his work since the 1970s. Tuymans would, for example, glue numbers onto his canvases taken from tear-off calendars. His interest lies in the interplay between the concrete reality of numbers and the fictional nature of what is depicted; numbers make reference to the statistical reality with which media confronts us. What appears to be a monochrome base layer in the series of paintings is not actually black but instead infused with many nuances of violet and indigo hues. The *Numbers*, pulsating much like on a television screen, correspond with the filmed close-ups of the face of Edith Clever in *Die Nacht*, Syberberg's six-hour monologue from 1985.



## Luc Tuymans *The Stage*, 2020

Oil on canvas, 250.4 × 268.2 cm, courtesy of the Zeno X Gallery, Antwerp

Light and silence: The light reddish tone of the empty dais structure shimmers its reflection in the pulsating dark violet of the base layer, highlighted by the theatrical use of white paint and round spotlights on an empty stage devoid of actors. Created during the COVID restrictions, *The Stage* not only alludes to emptiness, a pause in a performance, or an interruption or interlude but also to a moment of inactivity charged with potential tension – in line with the all-pervading mood during the pandemic. It remains to be seen how life will develop beyond COVID. Luc Tuymans refers to the theatre – both as a place and an artistic form of expression that could not take place as live performances during that time. In its physical and sculptural effect, the image appears as a painterly reversal of the absence of the physical manifestation. At the same time, the title itself spans a direct line to the actress Edith Clever, whom the painter invited to be his counterpart for the exhibition at the Akademie der Künste. *The Stage* and *Numbers* were created simultaneously and the dark sections are painted in the same colours – a combination of red, indigo and violet.



## Luc Tuymans *Gloves*, 2021

Oil on canvas, diptych, 80.7 × 102.2 cm and 93.8 × 99.6 cm  
Courtesy of the artist and David Zwirner

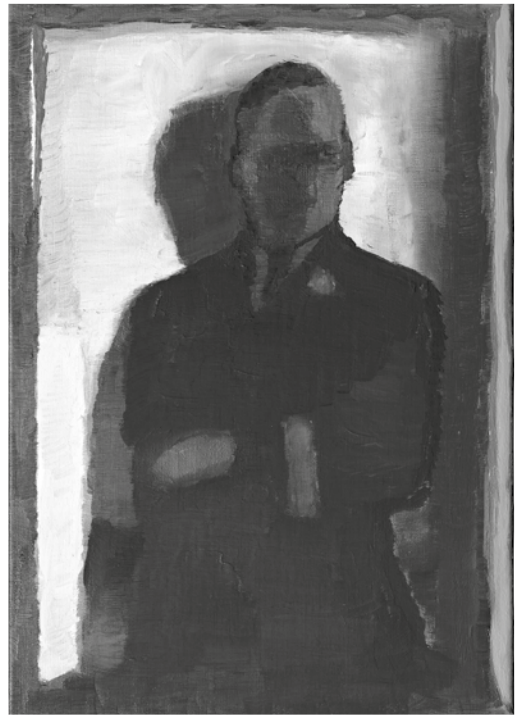
The close-up of the gloves in the left image of the diptych – the wearer of the gloves appears to be handling something – suggests a clinical situation. The companion piece emphasises the dark hue that forms the foil for the fragmentarily formulated shadowy figures. It is vaguely reminiscent of a crime scene or a laboratory. The original material for his painting, created during the COVID pandemic, comes from a YouTube tutorial of a painter cleaning his brushes. They have also been read as the work utensils of a butcher, suggesting a conflation of that role with that of the painter in the modern world.



## Luc Tuymans *Die blaue Eiche*, 1998

Oil on canvas, 176.5 × 105 cm, Grazyna Kulczyk Collection

Blurred shades of grey and blue cover an almost monochrome canvas with a deep horizon, broken only by a few delicate twigs in a vase. It is, in a sense, a cerebral landscape, much like those evoked by the German Romantics. The source for the painting with the German title *Die blaue Eiche* (The Blue Oak) is a drawing by Caspar David Friedrich (1774–1840) from a series of winter scenes, which Luc Tuymans traced, cut out and photographed with a Polaroid camera. This production process not only results in flattening the image but also creates distance from the original. The Belgian has a certain fascination with Friedrich's works precisely because – to use his own words – he comes from a country concerned with the real and has no connection to the Romantic tradition. As depicted in Romantic painting, rendering the illusion of a real landscape touches upon a fundamental question of art: Can we believe the depiction, or more precisely, the “illusion” of painting, or not? Tuymans' painting also evokes a history in which nationalism is interwoven with an abuse of Romantic ideas.



## Luc Tuymans *Himmler*, 1998

Oil on canvas, 51.5 × 36 cm, Kunstmuseum Wolfsburg

Bluish fading light shapes the first impression. We see a frame, as well as a shadow within the frame. Against a wall, a man is posing with his arms crossed, and there's something threatening about him. Behind the grey-brown painted half-figure, facing the viewer from the front without a uniform or hat, lurks the profile of a silhouette vaguely recognisable as Hitler. The face of the person portrayed is unrecognisable. The glimpse of an eye is visible across both silhouette and portrait. However, the title is unambiguous, revealing the identity of the person depicted: Himmler. Compared to the other paintings in the series dealing with the Holocaust, which are being shown for the first time in Berlin and include not only *Himmler* but also *Der Architekt* (Albert Speer), the unambiguous title is an exception. As Reichsführer of the SS, head of the entire German police force, Reich Commissioner for the Consolidation of German Nationhood, and later also Reich Minister of the Interior, Heinrich Himmler was one of the men who bore key responsibility for the Holocaust. In a telegram from Albert Speer, which went undiscovered until the late 1990s, Speer reported to him that the prisoners in the concentration camps had too much space available to them. While this story is not depicted per se in the series, all of the paintings refer to it. Therein lies its aesthetic and political significance.



Fragments from *Die Nacht* (projection), 1985  
Selected by Edith Clever, 2023  
A film by Hans-Jürgen Syberberg

Actress: Edith Clever

Camera: Xaver Schwarzenberger

Staatliche Museen zu Berlin, Nationalgalerie,  
acquired in 2001 by the state of Berlin

Editor: Jutta Brandstaedter

Original version: 35 mm, colour and black-and-white,  
367 min., edited version by Edith Clever, 275 min.

Music: Johann Sebastian Bach  
*Das Wohltemperierte Klavier*; Richard Wagner,  
*Tristan und Isolde*, "Götterdämmerung" from  
*Der Ring des Nibelungen*

A film by Hans-Jürgen Syberberg

Production: TMS Film GmbH, Munich,  
ZDF, Mainz, ORF, Vienna

DVD: *Syberberg Clever Monologe*,  
Distributor: [film@syberberg.de](mailto:film@syberberg.de)



Initially conceived as a play, *Die Nacht* is a dramatic monologue in four parts, lasting more than six hours. Edith Clever embodies poems, prose, letters, speeches and dramatic scenes that evoke grief and farewell, doom and approaching death. The poetic material that makes up Hans-Jürgen Syberberg's montage ranges from texts by Johann Wolfgang von Goethe and Heinrich von Kleist, Plato and Friedrich Hölderlin, Novalis and Jean Paul, Richard Wagner and Samuel Beckett to Chief Noah Seattle's 1854 speech in Washington. Edith Clever is alone in front of the camera – sitting, lying and standing up, turning and twisting, walking, dancing or balancing. Her body is an instrument for the words, movements and song. Rehearsals take place in the actress' living room, on a carpet intended to mimic the size of the performance space – 3 x 3 metres. There are no projections; the studio is empty – we see only Clever, a piece of fur on the floor, and a few simple props. Everything is reduced to the utmost. Bach's preludes and the strict calculation of his fugues act as a disciplined counter-voice. The demands placed on the audience through the long monologue and the slow pace of the presentation in the cinematic medium are substantial, breaking open conventional theatre and film formats. Syberberg's film moves beyond the realm of cinema and beyond that of the video installation as known from the visual arts. The cut version of *Die Nacht* projected in the exhibition links current debates about the value and critique of Western European art with the narrative of the decline of the Western world. Clever re-establishes a physical relationship by using omitted passages that were not performed on stage.



## Luc Tuymans *Der Architekt*, 1998

Oil on canvas, 113 × 144.5 cm, on loan from the Gesellschaft für Moderne Kunst in Dresden e. V. at the Albertinum, Staatliche Kunstsammlungen Dresden

A man on skis sits in the snow after a fall. His face is an empty white oval, like a hole, against which the bluish-white background evokes a feeling of destruction. It's a painterly full stop. The German title *Der Architekt* (The Architect) is noteworthy. Shortly before the painting was made, a telegram from Albert Speer, Hitler's architect and Minister of Armaments and War Production, was published for the first time after being discovered in the archives of the KGB. In it, Speer wrote to Heinrich Himmler, Reichsführer of the SS, explaining that the prisoners in the concentration camps had too much space at their disposal. It can be assumed that Speer knew what was happening in the camps. Had this been known at the time of the Nuremberg Trials, he would have received a different sentence. Immediately after sending the telegram, Speer went skiing. The private film that was shot in this context was part of a documentary film about Speer, which served as the inspiration for the painting.

The painting, based on a still image from a video recording of the documentary, has a blue flickering effect at the edges that is attributed to the video. Tuymans likes to work with existing material – images from the press, media, the internet and, of course, film. The small painting was first shown in Berlin, in a private residence on Torstraße. The former Prussian Academy of Arts, an artist's society long based on Pariser Platz, was forced to move out of the building in 1938 after Albert Speer occupied it with his planning office for transforming Berlin into the capital of the Third Reich. Hitler, coming from the nearby New Reich Chancellery building, would often visit Speer in the rooms that are once again used for exhibitions. *Der Architekt* is now on display at this historic location for the first time. "Because snow is mercurial, it is almost a non-existent element, even though it can still be a field", explains Luc Tuymans.

# Luc Tuymans

## *Carpet, 2023*

Wool, 800 × 1000 cm, private collection

Luc Tuymans produced this floor-based artwork to address the history of the Akademie der Künste building on Pariser Platz. This history entails the displacement of the artist's society from the exhibition venue headed by Max Liebermann, during the National Socialist period. The carpet references the famous skylight construction dating from the era of the Royal Prussian Academy of Arts and the dimensions of the old floor plan. The pulsating quality of the red to grey-violet hues has an unsettling and foreboding effect. The motif, which initially seems like an enlarged bouquet of flowers, is derived from *Tracing*, a small 1994 oil painting depicting embroidery that stems from a chair on which someone was murdered. Tuymans changed the colours of the embroidery to a deep red tone that evokes bloodstains, thus linking the decorative aspect with violence. "Decorative elements can be transformed into ornaments, and the ornament envelops the world – this stands for a circular idea by which everything ultimately returns to the same source."



## Luc Tuymans *Model*, 2015

Oil on canvas, 121 × 121.3 cm, courtesy of the artist and David Zwirner

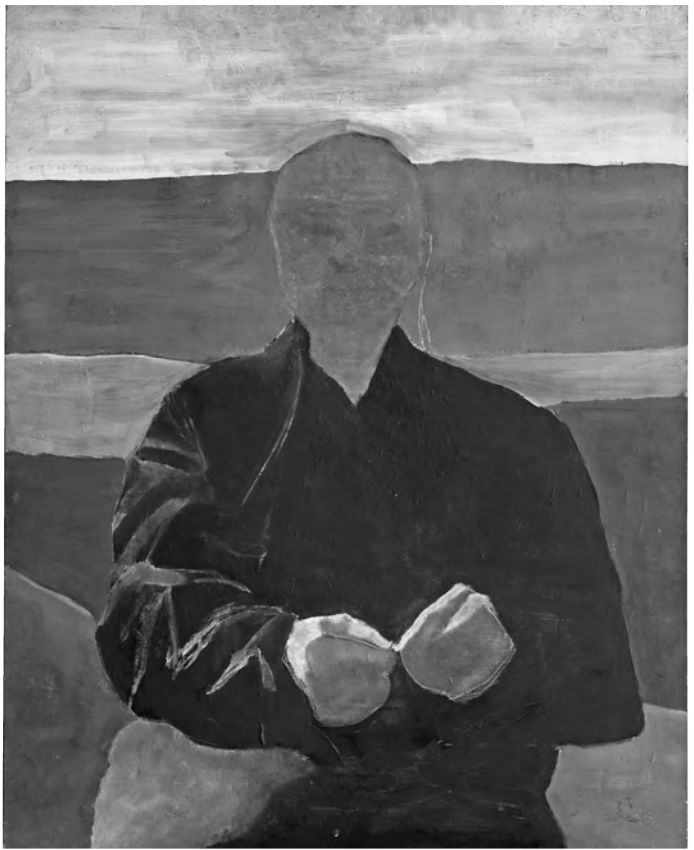
Like a black-and-white photo, the colour effect in the painting *Model* is created through the shading of two primary colours. Luc Tuymans explores a single ray of light falling on a curved piece of furniture, laying a veil over the contours of the depicted object. That which is perceptible is held in a state of suspension. The background appears black. The painter, however, never uses black paint since the blending of black and white, he says, creates a flat effect. Tuymans has long worked with Van Dyck Brown to achieve his deep, dark tones. Two layers of paint are applied over each other: first, a cooler bluish tone, then a brown. *Model* was painted in a single day like all of his paintings. The title also draws attention to the concept of architecture and the monumental in the fragmentary. An invisible link connects it with his other works in this exhibition space.



## Luc Tuymans *Mother of Pearl*, 2018

Oil on canvas, 204.6 × 159.7 cm, Elisa Nuyten Collection

The large-format painting is almost entirely made up of a pile of disk-like shapes shimmering in iridescent and creamy colour tones. They are meant to be casino chips – such as those used in Hong Kong and often featured in Hollywood films – which Luc Tuymans presents to the viewer up close. The motif is, in fact, based on a photograph. In the close-up, the gambling symbol becomes a painted vanitas of global greed. Boundaries are blurred, colour layers blend in and out of each other, while light reflections of mother-of-pearl tie the various elements of the painting together. Is the topic false money and rampant greed, or is the painter focused on the transience of wealth? In that case, we might understand the mother-of-pearl chips as relics of a shiny present day, carelessly discarded in a pile of rubbish, which glimmer once more in the moment of their passing. The fascination with the vibrant colour movements, which have something tactile, draws the viewer through the focus on the immersive shine of colour into the maelstrom of the paradoxical and the ambivalent.



## Luc Tuymans *Hands*, 1975

Oil on canvas, 100 × 80 cm, private collection

The warm light on the grey-blue hands, touching each other gently, convey great concentration. The person portrayed is the same one producing the work. Attention is focused on the hands. This early self-portrait, created in 1975, was not painted from a photograph. We recognise certain things that Luc Tuymans will later return to. It is an impersonal, expressionless face, allowing for no identification. And it is the first time that Tuymans applies paint horizontally, thereby rendering the surface of the painting and its effect flat. No psychology, empathy or sentimentality are allowed to enter the painting. All the more lasting and compelling is the effect of the dull, dark hue of the suit, expressing an erratic and, at the same time, self-content power emanating from the painter. The horizontal application of paint finds its echo in the almost monochrome painted stripe-like areas of the background, in grey, violet, blue and dark green muted tones.

# Edith Clever

## *Performative Interventionen, 2023*

“If you must be alone, then at least bury yourself among role models.”

How can an exhibition allow us to experience an actress who relies on the time-bound moment of a performance? After all, what defines theatre is that physical moment of interaction with the audience. While nowadays, visual arts and theatre are focused on the multi-sensory aspect revolving around the human body, an exhibition including an actress is inconceivable without a live performance. *Performative Interventionen*, however, does not refer to a theatre performance but instead describes spaces of exchange within a painting exhibition that open up in a temporary, surprising and unplanned way – spaces in which Edith Clever herself can be seen and heard. She has invited her long-time companion, Botho Strauß, to create a text collage from his new book, *Nicht mehr. Mehr nicht* (2022), which was not intended as a theatre text. The result is a monologue enhanced with mythological references to one of the great abandoned characters of world literature, one who is not seen as a loser in love. By way of references to the figure of the Phoenician Queen Dido, who is said to have founded Carthage and who was abandoned by Aeneas in Virgil’s epic poem, Clever uses literary disguises and cyphers to protect herself against the banality of events. The text allows the author to switch between myth and the present-day COVID reality. It enables the actress to bind the path through her work with questions about representability and the legacy of the past. For Botho Strauß, Edith Clever is “absolutely extraordinary”; she’s the one who indubitably assumes the lead whenever she takes the stage.

## Luc Tuymans and Edith Clever Video interview



The painter Luc Tuymans invited the actress Edith Clever to participate in a joint exhibition. It’s an unusual encounter of the best kind between Akademie members from different artistic disciplines. Their exchange has less to do with a cooperative approach than establishing counterparts in painting and theatre. Tuymans and Clever did not previously know one another personally. In a video interview recorded during the preparations for the exhibition in front of their works installed in the spaces at the Akademie’s Pariser Platz venue, they continue their intensive exchange. The interview is available online via this code.



# Edith Clever

## *Penthesilea*, 1987–88

### Directed by Hans-Jürgen Syberberg

Based on the play *Penthesilea* by Heinrich von Kleist  
U-matic video, colour, 240 min.

**Film Screening: Sun, 26 November 2023, 11 am – 7 pm, Black Box**

The filmmaker Hans-Jürgen Syberberg, a close collaborator of Edith Clever's, described Heinrich von Kleist's tragedy about the tragic love of the Amazon queen Penthesilea for the Greek hero Achilles, whom she faces on the battlefield before Troy, as a "poem of lyrical and dramatic nature". The drama revolves around a cruel and violent conflict between strong individual emotions and societal order. According to the law of the Amazons, love can only be granted to someone defeated in battle. In the film, Clever is the embodiment of a scream – the pain of a madwoman, her hands pressed to her face and her eyes wide open – who, in her state of delirium, becomes the law, kills, and only then comes to realisation. The text becomes a single giant monologue in the film, with Clever speaking all the roles. The actress not only personifies the text with her voice, she *is* the text, transcending in the process all conventional notions of theatre and film. Clever plays Penthesilea and Achilles. "Achilles is Penthesilea as a man; Penthesilea is Achilles as a woman." (Friedrich Gundolf) But Clever also mimes the festival of flowers, the war, and the battle lines. "There is no longer an audience in the film version of this *Penthesilea*. It all plays out only before the king, in the guise of a queen, before the king of art, and the audience, before us, the only guests."  
(Hans-Jürgen Syberberg)





Edith Clever

*Marquise von O (... vom Süden nach dem Norden verlegt)*, 1989

Directed by Hans-Jürgen Syberberg

Based on a novella by Heinrich von Kleist

U-matic video, colour, 224 min., camera: Hans Rombach,

sound: Norman Engel, music: Ludwig van Beethoven

**Film Screening: Sun, 26 November 2023, 11 am – 7 pm, Black Box**

Edith Clever's interpretations of the Marquise of O are legendary. She first played the lead role alongside Bruno Ganz and Otto Sander in the absurdist production by French filmmaker Éric Rohmer, which he shot in 1976, based on the novella by Heinrich von Kleist. It is the story of the consequences of the wartime rape of a young noblewoman, who unknowingly ends up pregnant. With Clever in the lead, the film becomes the opposite of a sentimental drama. It is the slow process of understanding, of forgiveness and of humanity beyond bourgeois conventions. After more than ten years, Hans-Jürgen Syberberg shifts the setting from the south to the north, shooting his film against the backdrop of projections of Berlin's destroyed Royal Palace and Friedersdorf Park, which Kleist visited before his suicide. He first staged the play with Edith Clever at the Hebbel Theatre in Berlin, before subsequently making the film. As is the case with his Clever monologues shot in the mid-1980s, all of its scenes and roles are filmed at a single location and with only one actress. This turns Kleist's text – in contrast to Rohmer's film adaptation – into an inner conflict carried out with different voices. In an interview, Edith Clever describes her approach to Kleist: "My relationship to Kleist is very much defined by the language. Kleist is, at least as far as the drama is concerned, closer to me than Goethe is; he simply has this tenderness and deep pain in his characters, who, after initially being securely embedded in their circumstances, in their families, are suddenly exposed to the most unfathomable calamities."

## Luc Tuymans – Edith Clever

Akademie der Künste, Pariser Platz 4, 10117 Berlin

15 September – 26 November 2023

### Exhibition

**Concept:** Edith Clever, Luc Tuymans,  
Angela Lammert

**Coordination:** Karoline Czech, Studio  
Luc Tuymans: Vanessa Van Obberghen, Bram Bots

**Planning and realisation:** Roswitha Kötz,  
Matthias Appelfelder, Stefan Dening,  
Mauve Weinzierl, Isabel Schlenther,  
Paul Walter, Jörg Scheil, mount berlin,  
Villa Schmück Dich GmbH, Berlin

**Realisation of theatre and cinema stills:**  
Rudolf Mast (Performing Arts Archives),  
Florian Unger (Media Archive),  
Kerstin Marth (Media Service)

**Media technology and lighting:** Björn Matzen  
(Planning) Act!worX, Vision B GmbH

**Loans:** Catherine Amé, Nadja Bender, Dalila Daut

**Conservator:** Barbara Haussmann

**Press and Public Relations:** Brigitte Heilmann,  
Marianne König, Mareike Wenzlau with ARTEFAKT  
Kulturkonzepte (on behalf of the Akademie der  
Künste, Berlin)

**Graphic design:** Rimini Berlin

### Booklet

**Texts:** Angela Lammert

**Coordination:** Karoline Czech

**Editing of the German texts:** Uta Grundmann,  
Nadine Brüggeborgs

**English translations:** Peter Rigney

**Editing of the English texts:** Wendy Wallis

**Graphic design:** Rimini Berlin

**Production:** Europrint Medien, Berlin

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Edith Clever und Luc Tuymans

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### Photo Credits

p. 4: Edith Clever in: *Groß und Klein* by Botho  
Strauß, 1978. Schaubühne in the CCC Filmstudios,  
Berlin-Spandau. Directed by Peter Stein,  
stage design: Karl Ernst Herrmann,  
costumes: Moidele Bickel. Photo: © Ruth Walz

p. 5: Alex Salinas

pp. 6–13, 15, 20–22: Studio Luc Tuymans

pp. 14, 18: Ben Blackwell, Courtesy of David  
Zwirner, New York/London

p. 16: Edith Clever in *Die Nacht*, 1985.

A film by Hans-Jürgen Syberberg. 35 mm, colour  
and black-and-white, 367 min.

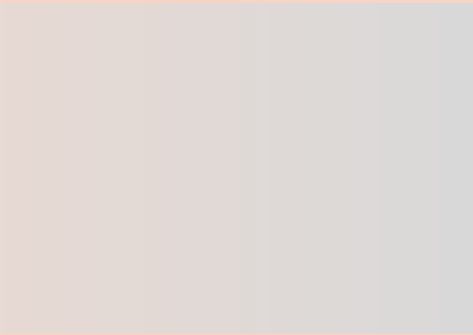
Photo: Hans-Jürgen Syberberg. Courtesy of  
Syberberg Clever Monologe, [film@syberberg.de](mailto:film@syberberg.de)

p. 24: Edith Clever in *Penthesilea*, Festival  
d'automne, Théâtre des Bouffes du Nord, Paris,  
1987. Photo: Hans-Jürgen Syberberg

p. 25: Edith Clever in *Die Marquise von O...*,  
Hebbel-Theater, Berlin, 1989.

Photo: Hans-Jürgen Syberberg





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