

**Die Bunkergartenkinder Stiftung &
The Nostalgic Plastic Museum Archive**

Communiqué de presse
August 30th, 2025

Subject: Exhibition at the Neuer Kunstverein Gießen
[Project: *Lebensraum*, Dates: 30.08-18.10.25]

AD 1937: The year this former kiosk was built; the year Volkswagen is formed to produce the new people's car; the year IG Farben first produces polyurethane and the opioid Methadone (automobiles, plastics and pharmaceuticals; *amen*). July 15th: the Buchenwald concentration camp opens in Weimar; July 18th: the Haus der Kunst opens in Munich; July 20th: one of the largest public swimming pools in the world opens near Dresden.

AD 1937: After consolidating SS and police forces, Heinrich Himmler passes the *Runderlass über vorbeugende Verbrechensbekämpfung durch die Polizei* (Basic Decree on the Prevention of Crime by the Police) which gives the police a new level of authority, leading to mass arrests of people suspected of being "career or habitual offenders" and "asocials", transferring thousands to concentration camps without trial.

AD 1937: Hitler holds a secret meeting where he announces his plan to acquire *Lebensraum* ("living space") for the German people. From the beginning, *Lebensraum* policies are deeply inspired by Manifest Destiny and the USA's settler-colonial advancements in the West. While Hitler was a huge fan of Karl May's novels romanticizing the "noble Indian" Winnetoo, he instead took inspiration from the "cowboy's" prowess for genocide and land theft, violently acquiring arable land for the Aryan race in the East (mainly Poland and Czech Republic).¹ Meanwhile the NS party promotes a *Blut und Boden* (blood and soil) aesthetic, instrumentalizing the landscape to naturalize nationalism; and the once rebellious, nature-loving *Wandervögel* groups start joining Nazi youth,² trading hikes for marches.³

¹ Ironically, in Germany, a country built on land "cleansed" through genocide and supremacist policies, Native American culture is still invoked to symbolize a close-to-nature lifestyle: Tipis and feathers are a hallmark of outdoor recreation centres and festivals. The beneficiaries of German settler colonialism put on the sacred garb of Indigenous people decimated by the U.S. settler colonial entity which inspired their own, a grotesque appreciation for a land afforded to them through dispossession and genocide. See *Indianthusiasm: Indigenous Responses*, ed. Lutz, Strzelczyk, and Watchman. [Folio 1]

² European relations to the land are almost always shaped by domination and dispossession and in Germany, the history of ecology is deeply intertwined with fascism. See *Eco-Fascism: Learning from the German Experience*, Peter Staudenmeier; *The Conquest of Nature: Water, Landscape and the Making of Modern Germany*, David Blackburn. [Folio 2 & 3]

³ See "Auch der Führer wandert: Organisiertes Wandern und Marschieren im Nationalsozialismus", Alexander Schmidt in *Wanderland*. [Folio 4]

AD 2025: What does private property mean on land marked by these histories? What do our little plots of land hold between their fences? What ghosts bloom in our gardens? With whom and what did we populate and furnish the spaces we “cleared” of unwanted others, the green fields we made of drained marshes, the cities we built through exploitation, the countries kept comfortable and safe – *for some* – through genocide, war and refugee camps? What tales are told beneath the rolling hills and winding garden paths that flowerly frame our freely frolicking wedlocked lovers?

AD 1937: While some enjoy more *Lebensraum*, bigger swimming pools, nice gardens, long walks in nature reserves and family road trips on the autobahn, others are rounded up in concentration camps.

AD 2025: The same could still be said.⁴ Reverberations of supremacist and exclusionary ideologies and policies, past and present, can be perceived in the everyday expressions of private property living, particularly in the bourgeois family home with a garden and its dreams of nature as exalted in the pure and remote mountain landscapes. Our own(ed) ample *Lebensraum* is carved out of the space taken from others or from the commons, and is increased by the constant reduction of living space for people considered other, both within and outside our borders. In our fence-filled gardens, the entire exclusionary infrastructure of timeless border regimes mobilized to protect illegitimate kingdoms built on stolen and pillaged land is reflected.⁵ All the *Sichtschutz* and *Zaun* (privacy screen and fence) in the world won’t hide and keep out the rising smoke of a world on fire! The walls of the garden will have to fall and private property will have to be shared. No more “living space” for a chosen few. We have to live in space together.

The Nostalgic Plastic Museum Communications Bureau
C/O François Pisapia, director

⁴ For example, German tax money, German weapons, and the majority of German media and politicians have been **enabling the genocide in Gaza** and what has been described as an open air prison (Humans Rights Watch), a ghetto (Masha Gessen) and a soon-to-be concentration camp (former Israeli prime minister Ehud Olmert). And within the country’s borders, refugees are kept in increasingly unlivable centres, where life is like being on house arrest with strict curfews and restricted movements (Open Letter from Eisenhüttenstadt Refugees, via No Border Assembly).

⁵ At the same time, the elites are bunkering up in luxurious underground armed dwellings while millions are left outside at the mercy of climate-change catastrophes; catastrophes caused by the plundering, extractivist bunker which also sends out a deluge of life-destroying bombs. Our walled gardens bloom in the deserts of scorched-earth policies which Europa and America deploy onto the world beyond its impenetrable walls. See “The Iron Dome is Global But So Is The Resistance”, Naomi Klein. [Folio 5]