

17 Shows to See in Europe in 2023, From a Survey of Yayoi Kusama's Inflatables to the Largest Showcase of Vermeer's Work Yet

Our European team handpicked the must-see exhibitions for the first half of this year.

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This year may lack big headliners like Documenta and the Venice Biennale, but there is certainly no shortage of showstoppers. We scoured institutional programs across the continent and selected 17 shows set to open between January and June that we think will be the talks of the town.

General Idea The Stedelijk, Amsterdam March–July, 2023



Installation view, "General Idea," June 3 to November 20, 2022, National Gallery of Canada, Ottawa. © General Idea. Photo: NGC.

I've always been a fan of gallows humor. The surprisingly tight gap between levity and hopelessness can be an effective space in which to broach difficult subjects, and to express unwieldy emotions. So, following its opening at the National Gallery of Canada, I'm excited that this retrospective of General Idea is coming to Europe.

The Stedelijk will lend its spotlight to the collective, made up of Canadian artists Felix Partz, Jorge Xontal, and AA Bronson, who were active under the moniker between 1969 and 1994. The exhibition is the most comprehensive retrospective on the trio to date, and charts the group's witty and eccentric output through more than 200 works. From major installations such as the 1987 AIDS sculpture, which riffs on Robert Indiana's "LOVE" motif—both Xontal and Partz contracted HIV in the 1980s—to archival materials, publications, painting, and sculpture, the exhibition showcases the group's playful commentary and critique on mass media, consumer culture, social inequality, queerness, and the art economy, tracing its impact on both their own moment and milieu.

—N.R.