

BLUE VELVET

JULIAN-JAKOB KNEER
FANATICS II

14 June – 26 July 2025

BLUE VELVET at Villa Nomad
Talstrasse 37, 8001 Zurich

Blue Velvet is excited to present FANATICS II by Julian-Jakob Kneer.

In FANATICS II, Julian-Jakob Kneer stages a series of vitrines that function as both shrines and crime scenes – repositories of cultural residue where pop relics are transformed into charged evidence. These forensically and meticulously presented displays house devotional objects drawn from fandom memorabilia, moral panic, kitsch, and controversy. Disney plush meets black metal merch; Precious Moments objects bear the marks of ideological defilement.

Kneer collapses supposedly opposing mythologies – childhood and cult, innocence and transgression, nostalgia and propaganda – revealing that their shared architectures are not just parallel but structurally aligned and mutually dependent. Meaning is not fixed; it is performed, warped, and reshaped by context. By aestheticizing contradiction, Kneer refuses the binaries of morality and immorality, letting ideological ambiguity speak for itself.

Each vitrine invites projection, discomfort, and desire – an associative zone where emotional legibility begins to blur. His clinically stark displays paradoxically heighten, rather than neutralize, the emotional and symbolic charge of these artifacts, compelling viewers toward active, critical engagement. Here, pop culture becomes pathology, mass-produced sentiment gets weaponized, and the sacred is always, just barely, unholy. FANATICS is not a warning, nor a celebration – but an ambient exposure of destabilized belief systems.

— Laurie Rojas

A collaborative performance by British choreographer and musician BLACKHAINE and Julian-Jakob Kneer was presented during the private preview reception of FANATICS II. Our sincere thanks go to the Eigenmann Collection for their generous support in making the evening possible.