

iconoclastic acts

**DISHONOUR
TYRANT
IDOLS**

Sylvia Eckermann & Gerald Nestler

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Series of 13 portraits, 2025/2026



Ludwig von Mises 1881–1973



Friedrich Hayek 1899–1992



Murray Rothbard 1926–1995



Charles Koch *1935



Robert & Rebekah Mercer *1946/*1973



Larry Fink *1952



Steve Bannon *1953



Marc Andreessen *1971



Peter Thiel *1967



Elon Musk *1971



Curtis Yarvin *1973



Kevin Roberts *1974



J.D. Vance *1984

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The power of autocrats is on the rise. For decades, reactionary forces with considerable financial and strategic resources have been distorting reality and driving social division, particularly regarding public, fiscal, social, and environmental issues. In alliance with technocapitalist oligarchs, they twist the truth, deny facts, bend the law, and manipulate elections. Now, they are weaponizing AI against democracy and fundamental rights.

In times of crisis and conflict, artists respond by creating images and voicing dissent against abuses of power and acts of violence. Today, however, criticism is no longer sufficient to counter authoritarian power fantasies. Artistic resistance needs more than a visual language because art must also overcome its capture by a capitalist art market oligarchy. Art needs a new modality, a new strategy of deconstruction to tear down the false image of the world propagated by far-right extremists. Art must turn renegade to expose and betray those who blatantly misappropriate wealth and power and shatter their abusive influence on the imagination.

Our response is a call for iconoclastic acts.

In four performances, each concluding one of the HOTHOUSE evenings, we smashed sculptured representations of key figures whose ideological extremism threatens fundamental rights, democracy and livelihoods. Thirteen balloon sculptures, created by Sylvia Eckermann, floated in the exhibition space. In a tribunalistic ritual, accompanied by the K rd l r choir, Gerald Nestler popped the portraits with a golf club. Through this disruptive act, the public image of these figures metamorphosed - at the very moment of their destruction - into an effigy of contemporary authoritarianism.

Operating at the symbolic level, artworks can be beacons of resistance and resilience. To that effect, Iconoclastic Acts: DISHONOUR TYRANT IDOLS performs what we feel is an urgent task: the subversive act of artistic self-defence against the power grab of right-wing extremists and the violence and destruction inherent to it.

Photographs of the smashed sculptures form the basis of this art print series.

Four tribunalistic rituals performed during
HOTHOUSE. The Future of Demonstration. Season 5.
Atelier Augarten, Vienna, and Livestream,
September 12-October 4, 2025
thefutureofdemonstration.net/hothouse

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Quotes that served as counts of indictment in the tribunaltistic ritual.

Ludwig von Mises 1881-1973

Austrian-American political economist of the Austrian school who had a major influence on neoliberal, libertarian, and anarcho-capitalist movements.

“It cannot be denied that Austrofascism and similar movements aiming at the establishment of dictatorships are full of the best intentions and that their intervention has, for the moment, saved European civilization. The merit that Fascism has thereby won for itself will live on eternally in history. But its policy [...] is not of the kind which could promise continued success. Fascism was an emergency makeshift.

If history could teach us anything, it would be that private property is inextricably linked with civilization.

A society that chooses between capitalism and socialism does not choose between two social systems; it chooses between social cooperation and the disintegration of society.

Friedrich Hayek 1889-1992

Austrian-British economist and philosopher, student of Ludwig von Mises. One of the most influential champions of free-market capitalism.

“The marketplace is indispensable for individual freedom while the ballot box is not.

As long-term institution I am totally against dictatorships. But sometimes it is necessary for a country to have, for a time, some form of dictatorial power. I personally prefer a liberal dictator to a democratic government lacking liberalism.

There are many instances of authoritarian governments under which personal liberty was safer than under many democracies.

Murray Rothbard 1926-1995

American economist of the Austrian School and central figure in the American libertarian movement. Founder of Anarcho-Capitalism.

“It is the state that is ripping us all off. I is the state that is the common enemy of mankind – a gang of thieves writ large. The State thrives on war – unless, of course, it is defeated and crushed.

No man or group of men may aggress against the person or property of anyone else. This is the libertarian creed. Anarchists oppose the State because it has its very being in such aggression, namely, the expropriation of private property through taxation, the coercive exclusion of other providers of defense service from its territory, and all of the other depredations and coercions that are built upon these twin foci of invasions of individual rights.

We must stress the return of the good old bourgeois values, and fight against the degenerate modern values of egalitarianism.

Charles Koch *1935

American billionaire. Owns the second largest private company in America. Co-founder of the first climate change denial and disinformation think tank, the Cato Institute (in 1977). Financier of libertarian projects aimed at undermining and destroying democracy.

“There has been warming. The Carbon Capture has probably contributed to that. They say it's going to be catastrophic. There is no evidence to that. To be scientific, it has to be testable and refutable. I want it to be real science, not politicized science. Do we want to create a catastrophe today in the economy because of some speculation based on models that don't work?

Due to higher temperatures and an increase in atmospheric carbon dioxide, the Earth will be able to support enormously more people because a far greater land area will be available to produce food.

Robert & Rebekah Mercer *1946 /*1973

American hedge fund manager & computer scientist / American heiress & director of the Mercer Family Foundation. Financed Cambridge Analytica, the data science firm targeting voters through psychological profiling during Brexit and the 2016 Trump campaign.

Donors to ultra-right wing and climate-science-denying groups, such as the Heartland Institute, the Heritage Foundation, and the Cato Institute.

“As a scientist, I don't believe in democracy.

I don't think we should have ever given the vote to women. I don't believe that people are equal. I believe that people should be rewarded according to their productive value rather than treated as having equal rights or entitlements.

Only property owners or people with 'skin in the game' should have voting rights.

Larry Fink *1952

Founder, chairman and CEO of BlackRock, the largest asset management firm in the world. While Fink has addressed climate change, BlackRock has an exposure of 30% of global energy related emissions due to its investments in the most polluting sectors. Despite the impact of AI on resources like water and energy, BlackRock runs a multi-billion-dollar investment strategy to secure ownership of AI infrastructure.

Before 2022:

“Every company and every industry will be transformed by the transition to a net-zero world. Will you lead, or will you be led? Without global action, every nation will bear enormous costs from a warming planet, including damage from more frequent natural disasters and supply-chain failures.

In 2022:

We do not consider resolutions on climate change to be consistent with our clients' long-term financial interests.

Mobilizing private capital to build AI infrastructure will unlock a multi-trillion-dollar long-term investment opportunity.

Steve Bannon *1953

American media executive, far-right political strategist, and former investment banker.

“Flood the zone with shit.

Politics is war.

I'm a Leninist. Lenin wanted to destroy the state, and that's my goal, too.

AI weaponize the narrative.

Birth control makes women unattractive and crazy.

Would you rather your child had feminism or cancer?

Peter Thiel *1967

American billionaire, entrepreneur and venture capitalist. Founder of the data intelligence firm Palantir and the prayer app Hallow (with J.D. Vance), among others. Kingmakers of Donald Trump in 2016 and J.D. Vance in 2024. Right-wing libertarian activist who blends religious authoritarianism with technofascism.

“*I no longer believe that freedom and democracy are compatible.*

COVID-19 created a shift. There used to be this feeling that the future was being held back somehow. Now the future is set free.

We need to take over the world.

I'm a predator and the predators win.

Marc Andreessen *1971

American businessman and early Internet pioneer who co-developed the Mosaic and Netscape browsers. Co-founder and general partner of Andreessen Horowitz, the largest global venture capital firm.

“*The Iron Law of Oligarchy: Democracy is Fake.*

Rule by elites is inevitable, so get out of our way.

Techno-capitalist accelerationism leads the way.

Techno-Optimists believe that societies, like sharks, grow or die.

Any material problem can be solved with more technology.

AI will save the world and the climate.

Artificial Intelligence is our alchemy, our Philosopher's Stone – we are making sand think. We are becoming technological supermen.

Elon Musk *1971

South African-American Entrepreneur. The richest person in the world.

“*I love @realDonaldTrump as much as a straight man can love another man.*

The real threat to democracy is the people who accuse Trump of endangering it.

Population collapse due to low birth rates is a much bigger risk to civilization than global warming.

I disagree with the idea of unions. I just don't like anything which creates a lords and peasants sort of thing.

I think the unions naturally try to create negativity in a company.

Neoliberals use the state to strengthen the market, whereas libertarian authoritarians consider the democratic state itself, the authorities and their regulations, to be invasive and harmful.

Curtis Yarvin *1973

American political blogger and former software developer. His anti-democratic “dark enlightenment” ideology has strongly influenced figures like Peter Thiel and J.D. Vance.

“*Democracy should be replaced by a monarchy run by a CEO. If Americans want to change their government, they're going to have to get over their dictator phobia. Let's treat government as a business. The state would be a heavily-armed, ultra-profitable, sovereign corporation.*

For the underclass, it is crucial to find a humane alternative to genocide that achieves the same result as mass murder but without any of the moral stigma – imprison them in a permanent immersive virtual-reality so they experience a rich, fulfilling life in a completely imaginary world.

The only problem with colonialism was that it got nationalized. Colonialism as a government department is a disaster. Colonialism chartered company-style is profitable.

The new Gaza is the LA of the Mediterranean, a new charter city on humanity's oldest ocean, sublime real estate with an absolutely perfect Apple-quality government. This city will be worth six trillion dollars, making every Gazan a millionaire – they can all afford to move to Dubai from their enclave. They will be replaced by Thai gastarbeiter picking irrigated watermelons in the Negev.

Kevin Roberts *1974

American political strategist. President of right-wing Heritage Foundation and mastermind of Project 2025, whose “Mandate for Leadership” is a manual for replacing democracy with authoritarianism.

“*Donald Trump is the standard bearer for conservatives. Project 2025 is institutionalizing Trumpism.*

God's law can be a huge influence on the civil laws. Our definition of 'freedom' is not the freedom to do whatever the

heck we want, but the freedom to do what we ought as Christian nationalists.

Hungary's Viktor Orbán should be celebrated for moving Hungary on a conservative Christian path.

The birth control pill was the product of a decades-long research agenda paid for by the Rockefeller Foundation and other eugenicist and population control-oriented groups.

The frontier is dangerous. It is majestic yet simple. It is imposing yet liberating. It is the most American thing there is. A European, even an Australian, may be civilized, but an American is a dangerous creature.

J.D. Vance *1984

American politician, author, and Marine Corps veteran. The 50th vice president of the United States.

“*Judges shouldn't be allowed to control the executive's legitimate power.*

We believe that excessive regulation of the AI sector could kill a transformative industry just as it's taking off. The Trump administration is troubled by reports that some foreign governments are considering tightening screws on U.S. tech companies. America cannot and will not accept that.

Project 2025 is a fundamentally Christian view of culture and economics. In the fights that lay ahead, these ideas are an essential weapon.

The threat that I worry the most about vis-à-vis Europe is not Russia. What I worry about is the threat from within. The retreat of Europe from some of its most fundamental values, values shared with the USA.

End abortion. In instances of rape or incest, two wrongs don't make a right. It's not whether a woman should be forced to bring a child to term, it's whether a child should be allowed to live, even though the circumstances of that child's birth are somehow inconvenient or a problem to the society.

Beware of 'liberals'
who've leveraged
power and wealth exponentially
and no longer hide
their authoritarian tendencies.
Anti-democratic,
they enjoy life beyond measure.
PATHETIC!

Therefore, we convene a tribunal
against supremacy and AGI
against racist, elitist, transphobic biases
against the total extraction of resources
and the devastation
of social and earth systems

A tribunal
against AI weaponization
against manipulation and fraud
against the corruption of democracy.

LET'S TURN RENEGADE!
Let's divest and betray.

Imaginative and resourceful
our dissidence and insurrection
will tear down their fortunes and privilege
They don't own us if we don't let them!
SMASH THEM!

We renounce compliance and loyalty.
We dishonour tyrant idols.

Resolution:
SMASH THEM!

REJOICE!

Lyrics of the Tribunal Song

Text, Concept, Performance: Gerald Nestler, Composition: Volkmar Klien, 2025
Balloon Sculptures: Sylvia Eckermann

