

REGEN PROJECTS

Ahmed, Sahir. "Over Here." Family Style (January 20, 2026) [online]

FAMILY STYLE

Over Here

For four decades, Wolfgang Tillmans has charted contemporary life through images. In Los Angeles, the artist reconsiders what it means to document the world today.



Installation view of "Wolfgang Tillmans: Keep Movin,'" 2026. Photography by Evan Bedford. Image courtesy of the artist and Regen Projects.

Wolfgang Tillmans is one of those rare photographers whose images permeate contemporary culture so thoroughly that it's hard to imagine a time without them. Consider the blown-out flash of nightlife photography, the intimate portraits, or fashion campaigns staged to appear unposed—his influence is everywhere. Even the ways in which queer life and youth subcultures are captured today bears the iconoclast's imprint.

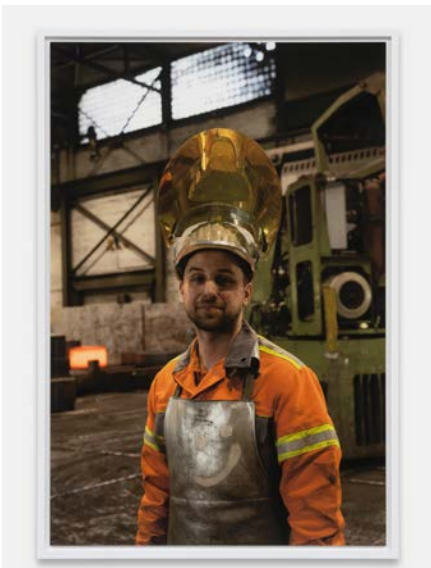
This week, Tillmans unveils his ninth exhibition at Regen Projects in Los Angeles, capping a year of major institutional presentations, including his installation at Paris' Centre Pompidou's public library. Aptly titled "Keep Movin'," the show gathers four decades of work into a meditation on what photography means in a world flooded with billions of images every day. Tillmans' archive evokes a peculiar sense of déjà vu: It is as if he had already anticipated the world we now inhabit, and we are only just catching up.

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Wolfgang Tillmans, *Work E for Blutsturz Party at Front, Hamburg*, 1988. Image courtesy of the artist and Regen Projects.

“What looks new often turns out to be something returning from 10 or 20 years ago,” he observes while walking through the exhibition. Across the gallery’s floor industrial-grade ropes (*Nautical Ropes and Concrete Lifting Loops*, 2025) sit in a coil, inspired by Tillmans’ trip to Fire Island last summer. The assemblage is a reflection of his fascination with objects engineered to bear impossible loads, a metaphor for longing and anchoring in a world that often feels unmoored.



Wolfgang Tillmans, *Robin Fischer, Dirostahl, Remscheid*, 2024. Image courtesy of the artist and Regen Projects.

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Nearby tables present a new iteration of “Truth Study Center,” the ongoing project Tillmans began in 2005 to examine how truth is constructed, circulated, and contested in public life. “At the time—10 years before anyone started talking about post-truth—I was strongly affected by the realization that most of the problems we faced came from men claiming absolute truths,” he says, citing widely discredited assertions as early signals of a crisis in epistemology, from weapons of mass destruction in Iraq to the early-2000s denial that H.I.V. causes A.I.D.S., promoted by South Africa’s government.



Wolfgang Tillmans, *Truth Study Center (LA07)*, 2025. Image courtesy of the artist and Regen Projects.

On one such table work (*LA07*, 2025), a January 9, 2026, *New York Post* headline, titled “Warrior of the Left,” reports the fatal shooting of Minneapolis resident Renée Nicole Good by an U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement agent. Next to it, a screenshot from Instagram memorializes Mohommad Mehdi Karami, a 22-year-old Iranian karate champion executed in January 2023 amid the Islamic Republic’s crackdown on protests following Mahsa Amini’s death in the custody of Iran’s morality police. By juxtaposing these scenes of state violence—one at the hands of U.S. federal agents, the other by Iran’s authoritarian judiciary—Tillmans reveals how political narratives can be marshaled to justify force and suppress dissent, and challenges the roles of images and information in shaping our perception of reality.

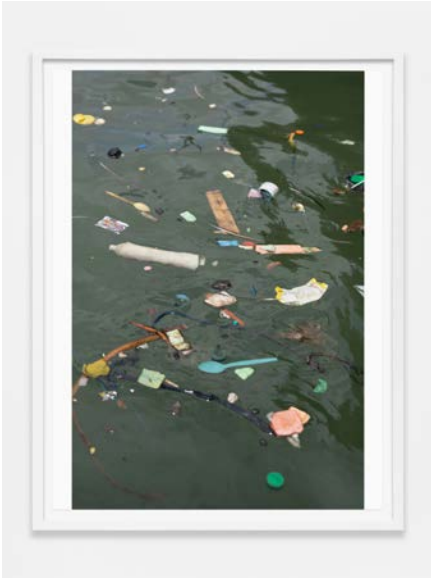
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Wolfgang Tillmans, *Wild Carrot*, 2025. Image courtesy of the artist and Regen Projects.

This same desire to document moments as they both unfold and are constructed also underpins Tillmans' earliest experiments with the photocopier, which resurface here. Works like 1988's *Work E for Blutsturz Party at Front, Hamburg*, date back to the very beginning of his career when he was immersed in Hamburg's underground club scene. The photocopy's imperfections, amplified through distortions, force the viewer to negotiate between what is seen and what is inferred, emphasizing how fragile meaning can be. This sensitivity to what is vulnerable, provisional, and easily overlooked forms the visual language that runs throughout Tillmans' oeuvre, extending seamlessly into his recent videos. In *Wild Carrot*, 2025, a looping close-up of a wild carrot flower trembles within a shallow field of focus, set to a spare soundtrack performed by the artist himself on the *kalimba*.

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Wolfgang Tillmans, *Lagoon Still Life*, 2022. Image courtesy of the artist and Regen Projects.

What defines “Keep Movin” is its attention to the connectivity of experience. Here, life unfolds in layers rather than a flat line. Whether it’s a print of trash floating on water (*Lagoon still life*, 2022) or a portrait of a steelworker at a factory in his hometown (*Robin Fischer, Dirostahl, Remscheid*, 2024), the exhibition traces the threads that tie disparate experiences together. Such revelations can easily be read as a moral argument about consequence or responsibility—there is that—but Tillmans resists turning observation into instruction. He simply asks us to look.

“Wolfgang Tillmans: Keep Movin” is on view through March 1, 2026 at Regen Projects at 6750 Santa Monica Blvd, Los Angeles, CA 90038.