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NEW POSITIONS at ART COLOGNE 2025

19 outstanding artistic positions in the sponsorship booths at ART COLOGNE 2025

The NEW POSITIONS sponsorship programme has already been one of the central pillars of ART COLOGNE for 45 years. Initiated in 1980 by the German Association of Galleries and Art Dealers (BVDG) and realised to the present day in close cooperation with ART COLOGNE, the programme offers outstanding young artists the possibility to present themselves to an international trade public.

This year, 19 galleries will present artistic positions, selected by a high-quality jury, at ART COLOGNE from 6 to 9 November 2025 in Hall 11.2: **Maurin Dietrich**, Director of Kunstverein München; **Maurice Funken**, Director of NAK - Neuer Aachener Kunstverein; **Lisa Klosterkötter**, Artistic Director of Temporary Gallery// Center for Contemporary Art, Cologne; **Ursula Schöndeling**, First Chair of the ADKV, Berlin and **Dr Marc Wellmann**, Artistic Director of Haus am Lützowplatz - Förderkreis Kulturzentrum Berlin e.V.

Sponsored by the Federal Government Commissioner for Culture and the Media (BKM) with a project grant of 35,000 Euro, the programme is aimed at the sustained promotion of young talent. The goal is to ease the entry of artists creating exceptional work into the art market and to increase their visibility with collectors, museums and institutions.

19 NEW POSITIONS at ART COLOGNE 2025 (in alphabetical order of artists)

Arhun Aksakal, with **EBENSPERGER**, Berlin, grew up between Istanbul and Frankfurt and also moves in the field of tension between Orient and Occident in his artistic works. His grandparents, with whom Arhun Aksakal has a very close relationship, came as Gastarbeiter (guest workers) to Germany in the 1960s. They experienced the transformation from a country marked by war into a modern industrial nation and influenced Aksakal's perspective on societal structures with their stories, contributing to his developing a fine sense for ruptures, transitions and social tensions. His artistic work encompasses video, photography, sculpture and performance. His works at the interface of urban psychogeography, artefact and collective memory move between high-tech and ruin, decay and rebirth. Influenced from an early age by the diverse practices of recycling - collecting, repairing and passing on - dealings with remains are a guiding principle of his work. Aksakal develops narratives for the usually invisible, for that which is overlooked, forgotten or supplanted. His works are at the same time poetic and inquiring, analytical and speculative.

Noémi Barbaglia is being presented by the **Produzentengalerie Hamburg**. The artist examines the boundaries between the visible and the invisible in her sculptures and



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installations. Her works are more than simply physical objects; they reflect psychological and social conventions that shape our perception of space and identity. At the heart of Barbaglia's artistic practice is the veil as a multifaceted metaphor. It serves as a tool for redefining spaces and establishing relationships between the hidden and the obvious. Architectural elements like windows and corridors are deconstructed and reassembled to place the boundaries between inside and outside, private and public in question. In times of increasing polarisation and national seclusion, Barbaglia creates intermediate spaces with her works that make ambiguity and transitions experienceable. Her works remind us that clear boundaries are often illusions and that true insight originates in an involvement with the unfamiliar.

Page

2/7

Kea Bolenz, with KLEMM'S, Berlin, explores surreal realms in her drawings, in which the fascination with the occult and the subconscious, with sexuality and fetish as well as with the uncanniness of an increasingly unbounded present are interwoven with one another. Created in a concentrated format, these 'wimmelpictures', at first glance both exuberant and precisely positioned down to the most minute detail, set free a visual and poetic power that appears to depict the amalgam of the present *conditio humana* - the forces of our time, in every respect dissolving, and the perseverance of the physical. Kea Bolenz has developed an irritating, unmistakable aesthetic in her works that owes much to a large reservoir of predecessors from the history of culture and images as well as to the visual pool of off and pop culture.

The **Walter Storms Galerie, Munich/ Berlin** is showing **Natalie Brehmer** - a German-Polish artist who lives in Berlin and Stuttgart. The themes in her transdisciplinary, conceptual works deal with aspects of capitalism theory, gender studies and nature. She thereby works with the media of photography, installation and experimental works in glass. Brehmer's history to date is reflected in her works. She initially studied communication and urban design and then fine arts at the State Academy of Fine Arts in Stuttgart and in Nuremberg. She completed her studies as a master pupil with Jorinde Voigt and Ricarda Roggan in 2023. Brehmer has already exhibited in the Staatsgalerie Stuttgart, in the ZK/U Center for Art and Urbanistics, Berlin, the Württembergischer Kunstverein, the Baumwollspinnerei Leipzig and the Goethe Institute in Israel. Her work has been supported with numerous scholarships, including the Alexander Tutsek Stiftung scholarship for glass at the Summer Academy of Bildwerk-Frauenau and the "Junge Kunst und neue Wege" scholarship of the Bavarian State Ministry for Science and Art.

Cihan Çakmak is being shown by **EIGEN+ART, Berlin/ Leipzig**. She studied photography at the University of Applied Sciences and Arts Dortmund and continued her training at the Academy of Fine Arts Leipzig (HGB), where she graduated in 2023 as a master pupil of Tina Bara. In her works, Çakmak addresses questions of identity, trauma, self-image and collective memory. Her *em fraktal* series (2021) combines photographs, videos and sound to explore the interplay between individual and collective experiences. With *Tenseness* (2023/24), she created a series of photographs that enter into a dialogue with the collection of the Museum of Fine Arts Leipzig (MdbK) and deal with questions of physicality and pictorial representations in the field of tension between showing and concealing. Çakmak has

been distinguished for her works multiple times, including with the Paula Modersohn-Becker Prize for Young Talent (2020) as well as with the ein-blicke-Preis of the blicke Film Festival in Bochum (2023). Her works have been presented in numerous institutions, including in the Kunsthalle Erfurt, the Künstlerhaus Bethanien in Berlin and the Art and Exhibition Hall of the Federal Republic of Germany (Bundeskunsthalle) in Bonn. The Museum Morsbroich in Leverkusen will show works by Cihan Çakamk in a solo exhibition in 2026.

KROBATH from Vienna is presenting **Melanie Ender**. She works with conventional, industrial materials like sheetrock, copper pipe, brass rods or steel plate, which she subjects to a poetic transformation. The marginal substances are precisely processed and given a frame of reference with one another. Her sensitive handling of the material, the playful permutation and recombination of the elements, her clever game of deception with references and allusions also corresponds with her use of language and her sounding out of meanings and attributions. The artist understands her works as temporary constellations, as compositions that retain a great degree of openness in their arrangement and their fragmentary character. It is a cautious testing of relations, a tenacious sounding out of boundaries, where form becomes symbol and ultimately a bearer of meaning.

Sarah Friend, with **Galerie Nagel Draxler, Cologne/ Berlin**, is one of the especially innovative, committed and critical voices in the field of new digital art and its discourses. As artist, technologist and software developer, she moves at the multi-layered interfaces of art, finance and blockchain technology. Her work can be ascribed to the avant-garde of a generation of artists that examines cultures and technologies influencing the digital present - especially with regard to blockchain, metaverse and Web3. In 2022, Friend had her "Terraforming" solo exhibition in the Crypto Kiosk project space of Galerie Nagel Draxler in Berlin. Prior to this she was part of the group exhibition "Breadcrumbs" in the Galerie Nagel Draxler in Cologne.

Nicholas Grafia will be presented by **Christine König Galerie, Vienna**. In Grafia's works, masquerades, fragmented body images, subcultural codes and non-linear narrative structures function as means for the deconstruction of hegemonial classification systems. With a sense for the absurd and the theatrical, the monstrous and the uncanny, he develops a pictorial language that destabilises in a targeted fashion and makes alternative narratives visible. His works reject clear interpretations and create fluid spaces. Complex themes like cultural hybridity, queer identity and gender fluidity unfurl, inspired by Japanese manga and the Lady Oscar - The Rose of Versailles anime series based on it. Grafia's understanding of gender, power and social order were shaped by this romantic historical drama from 1979 - it conveyed European ideals and built an imaginative bridge between Southeast Asia and the West. His migration to Germany provided Grafia with the possibility to take up these defining influences in a different cultural context against the background of new auspices.

The **Galerie Christian Lethert, Cologne** is showing the American painter **Tony Huynh**. "I know we spend most of our lives behind a screen, the entrance into a digital world, and have access to what seems like the library of Alexandria in our pocket, but the images online will never do justice to a physical work like a

painting." Tony Huynh turned to painting after studying illustration. He creates memorable images of everyday experiences in a seemingly familiar world. One finds echoes of the American modernist Milton Avery, of the interiors of the French Nabi artist Édouard Vuillard, of landscape sceneries from Japanese woodblock prints as well as of the naive freedom of folk art. Huynh is not primarily interested in realistic depiction, but rather in the feeling that arises from an everyday look out the window, at the sight of a bird gliding through the air. He consciously seeks an unobstructed view full of curiosity in his painting. His works have a strong presence that decelerates the 'real' world, shows it in a resting state.

Page
4/7

The **KORNFELD Galerie, Berlin** introduces the Persian artist **Simin Jalilian**, who lives in Hamburg. In Iran she exclusively created images of women that have repression by the regime as their theme. Since Simin Jalilian has been working in Germany, the thematic focus of her art and her perspective on Iran have changed. In her current works, she primarily sketches men in their various typecast modes of expression and in their positions of power, perceived as usual. Subversive government operations or arbitrary street violence here provide the plot background for the staged representations. Simin Jalilian has expressed that the change of subject in her paintings is the result of a suppressed inner tension in the face of the normality of patriarchal, misogynistic structures. The artistic work in Germany without censorship and prohibition allows her to freely select and process relevant themes and motifs from current events.

The South Korean artist **Jeewi Lee**, who lives in Berlin and is presented there by **SEXAUER**, works with performative or everyday events that are only visible as traces in her room installations, actions and painting series. Her works attempt to make the societal and historical events visible that have become inscribed in the most varied materials. In the context of **NEW POSITIONS**, Jeewi Lee will show sculptures and pictures made of sand. Sand is an important resource, the immense, worldwide mining of which repeatedly causes damage to the environment and leads to the destruction of entire ecosystems. Concrete, cement or glass are manufactured with sand. Without sand there would be no streets, cities or microchips. However, sand is also a form of storage for drinking water and a habitat for many types of animals and plants. Sand consists of elements of sedimentary rock that has been pushed to the surface by tectonic shifts and then washed by rivers into the sea. Each individual element, no matter how tiny, is polished and shaped in the process. There are incomprehensibly long spans of time and distance enclosed in every grain of sand; each one tells of geological eras as well as of everyday consumption, capitalism and migration. Each one is an "embodiment of memories".

DITTRICH & SCHLECHTRIEM, Berlin, introduces the Israeli artist **Navot Miller**, who lives and works in Berlin and New York. Navot Miller portrays scenes from his life. Intimacy and intense emotions, interwoven with people and places, are at the heart of his work. He captures fragments of travels, experiences and moments that have been important to him in his painting. The colours of his paintings are intense and brilliant, but his motifs bear a feeling of melancholic longing within them. Miller strives for authenticity and the individuality of emotional moments in his works, in the process creating relevant and universally valid scenes of human existence.

Philipp Naujoks is being shown by the **Galerie Rupert Pfab from Düsseldorf**. The works of Philipp Naujoks are distinguished by a special multifacetedness of artistic means. Painting, drawing and engraving achieved through the effect of a specially developed laser condense to form an autonomous pictorial language. The heterogeneous materiality generates a poetic tension between precision and ephemerality. Fine lines cross the surface, create layers, vibrate, dissolve. The result is structures that only seem implied - traces of movement as a sedimented action. The eye of the beholder wanders between networks of lines, empty spaces and concentrations. Forms remain unspoken, motifs appear to only show themselves briefly before disappearing again. The reserved colourfulness thereby plays a central role. Delicate tonal values allow the ground to become visible. The works seem fragile and permeated by a subtle rhythm, as if they were negotiating a hesitant conversation between material, process, gaze and insight.

Kraupa-Tuskany Zeidler, Berlin, introduces the South Korean artist **Rim Park**, who lives in Seoul. The works of Rim Park document her encounters with untouched, often remote landscapes. She interprets the forms of nature in multifaceted compositions. In that she incorporates found organic elements like moss, the roots of trees and natural pigments, the artist explores the existence of beings that are seemingly detached from human interventions and appear to float in a timeless realm. She combines traditional Korean materials and pigments from nature to establish a dialogue between organic decomposition and synthetic conservation. Her works deal with the apparently indestructible nature of these beings, which seem to exist self-sufficiently and passively and are subjected to elementary forces in the stream of time. Rim Park deconstructs, disassembles, dissects and reassembles - whereby she allows imperfection as principle.

The **Galerie VAN HORN, Düsseldorf**, is presenting **Anys Reimann**, who decided to study art at the Düsseldorf Academy with Thomas Grünfeld and Ellen Gallagher in her mid-40s - full of experiences, with a focused gaze on the world and the wish to make her own urgent questions visible. Her works tell of identity, history and vulnerability - and at the same time of resistance, self-empowerment and beauty. Her broad knowledge of art history and pop culture is never merely citation or reference. She deploys it to find her own pictorial language. Her works originate from different materials and media - painting, collage, photography, sculpture, textiles. She combines these layers intuitively and individually, neither purely figurative nor abstract, but instead open, fragmented and ambiguous. Her compositions deal with the human body and are also inspired by, in addition to the European pictorial tradition, theatre, fashion and music. The artist understands herself as an archivist of the body and its (hi)stories; her artistic work is both young and mature, absolutely contemporary and politically relevant.

The Belgian textile artist **Thomas Renwart** is being presented by the **Rehbein Galerie, Cologne**. Renwart's wall works are woven, partly embroidered and present ambivalent subjects. The genre of wall tapestries has a long tradition in Belgium. They are part of the cultural heritage. Renwart's grandparents owned a weaving mill and his grandmother taught him embroidery there. He weaves his works himself on a loom in his studio in an old monastery in Ghent. He takes individual thoughts and feelings as his theme in the context the content of contemporary literature,

science, history or pop culture. In his textile works, he links the seemingly contradictory stylistic devices of poetry and realism, whereby a preference for the mythological, the mystical and the enchanted is expressed in the manifestations of flora and fauna. His textile works, which combine beauty and drama, are headstrong and unusual to the core.

Page
6/7

Su Yu Hsin, with **alexander levy**, **Berlin**, is a Berlin-based artist and filmmaker whose works deal with the field of tension between ecology and technology. Her artistic practice is based on intensive research and fieldwork, with a particular focus on the political ecologies of water. Through the analysis of site-specific data and ecological infrastructures, she shows how human and non-human systems interlock and influence our understanding of geography, territory and agency. With an analytical and at the same time "hydropoetic" approach, she creates multi-channel video installations that integrate operative and technical images in order to reveal the hidden mechanisms of the origination of geographical knowledge. Su continues to pursue this thematic field in newer works, which focus on the production of semiconductors in her homeland of Taiwan. In the process, she sheds light on the effects of resource mining - especially the use of ultra-pure water, which is indispensable for the cooling and purification of silicon plates - and questions the interrelations of technology, work, geopolitics and global economy.

Ruttkowski68, **Cologne/ Düsseldorf/ Bochum/ New York/ Paris**, is showing the Darmstadt/Cologne-based sculptor **Mathias Weinfurter**. In his installations, Weinfurter examines spatial systems of order, social structures and Remembrance Cultures. He works with industrial materials like exposed aggregate concrete, double rod mats or concrete recycling, the formal stringency of which he breaks up through modular placements and subtle interventions. Repetition and standardisation become means for making power relations, boundaries and their symbolic charge visible. A special quality of his work lies in the precise observation of spatial ordering - for example, in Stören (2023), where he placed the separation of public and private space in question with the minimal shifting of fenceposts. In other works, the focus shifts to collective forms of memory. The combination of sculptural clarity with poetic charging and his remarkable dealings with material and space enable the coming into being of visually strong, conceptually well-founded installations with depth and relevance.

The **Galerie Polansky from Prague** introduces the Czech artist **Stanislav Záborský**. His artistic practice is distinguished by an innovative approach with ceramics and concrete. Záborský is interested in the interaction between geological processes and the human perception of time. His works reflect his deep fascination with the transformation of materials under extreme conditions, whereby parallels between natural phenomena and artistic interventions are evident. Presented in a specific aesthetic of collecting, the viewer is invited to think about the life cycle of objects, selective appreciation and the respective inherent histories of objects. These newly created "fossils" - technological products like cultural artefacts - become relics of the Industrial Revolution and attempt in a time jump to arouse a consciousness that we live in futuristic geological layers and formations.

The online catalogue of ART COLOGNE, including all participating galleries and

the New Positions presentations, is now available online.
The 58th edition of ART COLOGNE starts on 6 November 2025 in the Cologne
exhibition halls.

Page

7/7

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