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ADKV-ART COLOGNE Prize for Art Associations 2026 goes to the Kunstverein Ludwigshafen and the Kunstverein Siegen

The ADKV-ART COLOGNE Prize for Art Associations 2026, endowed with 8,000 Euro, goes to the Kunstverein Ludwigshafen and the Kunstverein Siegen. This means that two art associations are being honoured together this year.

An independent five-member jury chose both prize winners from 18 nominees and 12 initiative applications from among the art associations organised in the ADKV. Both the Kunstverein Siegen and the Kunstverein Ludwigshafen were already nominated this year for the fourth time and are now receiving the well-deserved acknowledgment of their work with the prize.

The jury for the ADKV-ART COLOGNE Prize for Art Associations 2026:

Lynhan Balabat-Helbock (Savvy Contemporary), Amely Deiss (Kunstpalais Erfurt), Daniel Herrmann (Werkleitz Festival), Jule Hillgärtner (freelance curator), Rebekka Seubert (Ludwig Forum Aachen)

The jury substantiates its decision as follows:

"Both the Kunstverein Ludwigshafen and the Kunstverein Siegen convince with their artistic and interactive program with a strong character. They understand art as a means for societal participation and for involvement in urban development and social processes. Their work reflects a dedication to their own locations.

Both art associations are exemplary of the special engagement and the relevant cultural contribution that art associations make in Germany."

Kunstverein Ludwigshafen

The Kunstverein Ludwigshafen was founded in 1928 and sees itself as an open, collaborative, working institution. Artists of the most varied disciplines find space for experimentation and for the free development of their artistic practice here. The exhibition programme combines national and international positions in solo and group exhibitions revolving around changing areas of thematic focus.

As a place for encounter, the art association is oriented to the diverse urban society - for three years now even without a permanent home, while the institution was active in changing spaces in the city and the region due to restoration work. The nomadic format "Genius Loci" in 2025, inspired by the philosopher Vernon Lee, was dedicated in five cities in Rhineland-Westphalia to the question of the place, history and subjectivity of national narratives. The programme entitled "Not Yet: Utopia in the Making" (May to October 2026), drawing on the ideas of Ernst Bloch, takes the



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public space of Ludwigshafen and its urban planning transformation as the starting point for an artistic consideration.

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"For me, the Kunstverein Ludwigshafen is a place where art is free. We question cultural narratives and comprehend empathy not as consensus but as a willingness to see the world from a different perspective for a moment. The ADKV-ART COLOGNE Prize confirms us in this attitude - it is thanks to the artists who place their trust in us and make this space of visible complexity possible at all. This recognition reaches us amidst the renovation of our building like a promise that we will shape the future together, also there where no roof protects us yet", says Ameli M. Klein, Director of the Kunstverein Ludwigshafen, in response to the distinction.

Kunstverein Siegen

The Kunstverein Siegen originated in 1980 from a civic initiative as a non-profit provider for the promotion of art and culture. Today it understands itself as a place for international contemporary art, with a programme originating in a conscious exchange with the local social, cultural and historical reality of the place. Of central importance thereby is an interlocking with the urban space: exhibition and art education formats originate deliberately together with participants from the city and become visible in the public space - art thus becomes an immediate part of urban everyday life.

Beyond classic exhibition formats, the art association trusts in performative and mobile formats as well as long-term projects that merge artistic work with urban studies and art education work - for example, through the Siegener City Walks or the Hübbelbummler Tours. With "Satellit", a display window in the former Karstadt building, the art association has also maintained a fixed external location since 2025 that deals artistically with urban change and public life.

"After four nominations in a row, this national distinction is an important confirmation of our work. We understand the Kunstverein Siegen as a participant that repeatedly surveys itself with contemporary art and opens up new perspectives on the urban space and urban society. With this in mind, we interlock exhibitions with projects in the public space that directly examine the city and its transformation", says Jennifer Cierlitza, Director of the Kunstverein Siegen, about the distinction.

About the ADKV-ART COLOGNE Prize for Art Associations

The working group of German art associations (ADKV) and ART COLOGNE are already jointly awarding the prize for art associations for the twentieth time in 2026. The ADKV-Art Cologne Prize is unique in the German cultural landscape: it has set a clear signal for voluntary, democratic engagement in the realm of civil society since 2006 and reinforces the work of art associations.

Distinguished are associations that convince not only through innovative exhibition programmes and dedicated educational work, but that are also active in the field of cultural policy and create spaces for open discourse on location. The prize is addressed to all 308 art associations organised in the ADKV - irrespective of size, geographical location or media visibility.

Prize winners of the ADKV-ART COLOGNE Prize to-date

Kunstverein Dresden (2025), Kunstverein Global Forest (2024), Dortmunder Kunstverein (2023), Bonner Kunstverein (2022), Halle für Kunst Lüneburg (2020), KV - Verein für zeitgenössische Kunst Leipzig (2019), Temporary Gallery Köln (2018), HartWare MedienKunstVerein Dortmund (2017), Kunstverein Arnsberg und Kunstverein Harburger Bahnhof Hamburg (2016), Kunstverein für die Rheinlande und Westfalen Düsseldorf (2015), Bielefelder Kunstverein (2014), n.b.k. - Neuer Berliner Kunstverein (2013), Badischer Kunstverein Karlsruhe (2012), Kunstverein Nürnberg - Albrecht Dürer Gesellschaft (2011), Kölnischer Kunstverein (2010), Heidelberger Kunstverein (2009), Salzburger Kunstverein & Westfälischer Kunstverein Münster (2008), Kunstverein Wolfsburg (2007), ACC Galerie Weimar (2006).

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