



Deutscher
Künstlerbund e.V.

Venus Rebellion

Laura Baginski | Fides Becker | Bea Emsbach | Miriam Lenk |
Rokudenashiko | Annegret Soltau | Annika van Vugt

Exhibition runs: 25 April 2025 – 18 July 2025
Opening: Thursday, April 24, 2025 | 6 pm
Words of welcome: Philip Kojo Metz, Board Member, Deutscher Künstlerbund
Micha Klapp, Secretary of State for Labour and Gender Equality
Senate Department for Labour, Social Services, Gender Equality,
Integration, Diversity and Anti-Discrimination
Introduction: Katharina Schilling, Art historian and independent curator
Hours of opening: Tuesday – Friday, 2 – 6 pm
Gallery Weekend: Friday, May 02, 2025 | noon – 9 pm
Saturday, May 03, 2025 | noon – 7 pm
Sunday, May 04, 2025 | noon – 5 pm
Location: Deutscher Künstlerbund
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Vorstand
Sandra Becker
María Linares, Sprecherin
Philip Kojo Metz
Cornelia Rößler, Sprecherin
Albert Weis

Geschäftsführung
Nini Palavandishvili

Press release

To mark the 75th anniversary of its re-founding in 1950, the Deutscher Künstlerbund is devoting itself to the highly topical subject of »gender equality«. The exhibition by the artist group »Venus Rebellion« kicks off with provocative, body-focused art. The seven female artists from three generations are united by an intense examination of gender identity and the exploration of the complex, often paradoxical conditions of femininity. The experience of one's own body and the search for a self-determined, unobstructed view are central themes in their works.

They show images of female autonomy: of pleasure and pain, of power and creativity, of tenderness, connectedness and loss, of cycles and transformation. In a broad media spectrum of drawing, painting, sculpture, photography, video and installation, a haunting, thematically condensed atmosphere is created between the works, which appear quite differently among each other.

In view of this abundance of female diversity and heterogeneity, it becomes obvious how much there is still a lack of such female perspectives, especially regarding body parts such as breasts or vulva. When we look back at our Western cultural history, we see images of women that were almost exclusively created by men. Even though significant progress has been made in recent years, our perception remains heavily influenced by a millennia-old patriarchal tradition of appropriation and tabooing of the female body, as well as a concept of gender in which the penis is defined as the normative ideal to be revered, while the vulva is seen as a disturbing and deficient deviation. To this day, this gender bias makes it difficult for many women and female-identifying individuals to relate positively to their own bodies. At the same time, it facilitates the exercise of oppression and violence against them. After all, those who do not know their own bodies, who are not allowed to feel at home in them, are less able to assert themselves.

This also reveals the political urgency of body-related art, as shown by »Venus Rebellion« at the Deutscher Künstlerbund. For in the creation of autonomous images of the female experience, the basic principle of the binary gender model, on which male superiority feeds, is undermined: the illusion that the female sex and female pleasure exist only passively in relation to the male sex. The negation of gender diversity on the part of right-wing conservatives and their increasingly massive fight against feminist and queer movements can also be understood in this way, as it is about nothing less than the control of sexuality and the preservation of patriarchal power structures.

»With our art, we want to address people who are looking for positive self-images outside the usual stereotypical image culture and thus more self-acceptance, and contribute to the fact that female realities of life become more present and recognized in the general perception. We seek to show the significance of existential and political self-determination over one's own body and the transformative potential it holds for society.«

So if a decisive factor for actual equality is the imagery that enable women and people outside the male norm to reclaim their bodies, then that is exactly what the artists offer: visionary visual worlds that break taboos and can expose and overcome the hidden matrix according to which our society functions.

About artists:

The sculptor **Laura Baginski** creates figurative sculptures of great sensual intensity, focusing on explicit depictions of the vulva and autonomous female pleasure, including the act of masturbation. In her video work »Lustsubjekte«, a vulva merges with images of nature to create associative images that suggest an understanding of lust as the driving force of all life.

In her illusionistic paintings, **Fides Becker** blurs the boundaries between emotionally charged objects and female body parts reinterpreted as object-like things. Whether luminous, disembodied floating breasts or corporeally shimmering cushion buttons, the irresolvable ambiguity of her images reveals meaning as a dynamic construct.

Bea Emsbach sees drawing as a struggle to capture the images of her unconscious. Her delicate, red-toned watercolors depict archaic, often hermaphroditic figures engaged in mysterious interactions—shedding their gender like old skin or tentatively revealing it—as silent companions of those fragile processes of a search for identity.

At the center of **Miriam Lenk's** monumental sculptures, composed of female body fragments, stands a female archetype—grand and powerful, liberated from all constraints—a figurehead for all those who have ever felt too loud, too big, or too different. No one can escape the presence of these expansive female forms taken to the extreme.

With her cheerful vulva art, manga artist **Rokudenashiko** is challenging prevailing perceptions of female genitalia. Her unintended success was evidenced by her imprisonment in Japan for publishing a 3D scan of her vulva. With her new work KI-Muschi (AI-Pussy), she invites audiences to chat about the female genitalia with an AI-controlled plush vulva.

Through her persistent examination of pregnancy, birth and motherhood **Annegret Soltau** has gained international recognition as a key figure of the Feminist Avantgarde with her photo etchings and stitchings. The photo series »Symbiosis« depicts herself breastfeeding her baby and—by the gradual scratching of the image—the process of self-loss as a mother.

In **Annika van Vugt's** paintings, one immediately senses that she knows the women she realistically portrays, that she has a personal connection to them. In particular, the intimate experiences of her motherhood are reflected in the self-portraits and portraits of her children; scars from C-section or the act of breastfeeding convey intense impressions of female corporeality.

Accompanying event

Exhibition talk with guests

Friday, June 13, 2025 | 7 pm

Talk by the artists Laura Baginski, Fides Becker, Miriam Lenk and Annika van Vugt with
Dr. habil. Rosa von der Schulenburg (art historian) and Hergen Wöbken (Institute for Strategic Development IFSE)

Moderation: Britta Adler, artist and curator

The event is free of charge.

Gefördert von:



Die Beauftragte der Bundesregierung
für Kultur und Medien

Senatsverwaltung
für Kultur und
Gesellschaftlichen Zusammenhalt

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Finanziert mit Mitteln der LOTTO-Stiftung Berlin

