

# NINO MIER GALLERY

LOS ANGELES | BRUSSELS | NEW YORK | MARFA

CORNELIA BALTES

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The background is an abstract composition of three main colors: a vibrant orange on the left, a light blue on the right, and a black shape in the bottom right corner. A large, light blue circle is partially visible on the left side, overlapping the orange background. The word "BIOGRAPHY" is centered in the middle of the image, spanning across the orange and light blue areas.

# BIOGRAPHY

# Cornelia Baltes

**b. 1978, Mönchengladbach, DE**  
**Lives and works in Berlin, DE**



Cornelia Baltes is a German artist known for her paintings and installations that blend abstraction and figuration. Corporeal elements such as hands, feet, and facial features are suggested amid bold color fields and gestures. These biomorphic elements capture the experience of viewing a bodily form in flight, not fully registered by the eye. To construct her paintings, Baltes applies dense pigment in a tightly controlled palette to canvas, creating finely gradated color fields that at times mask the raw canvas, and at other times reveal it. Then, the artist applies brushstrokes in spare but vibrant compositions. Her approach to installation is a natural extension of her paintings, using the architecture of the room to create a larger scene of compositional coherence.

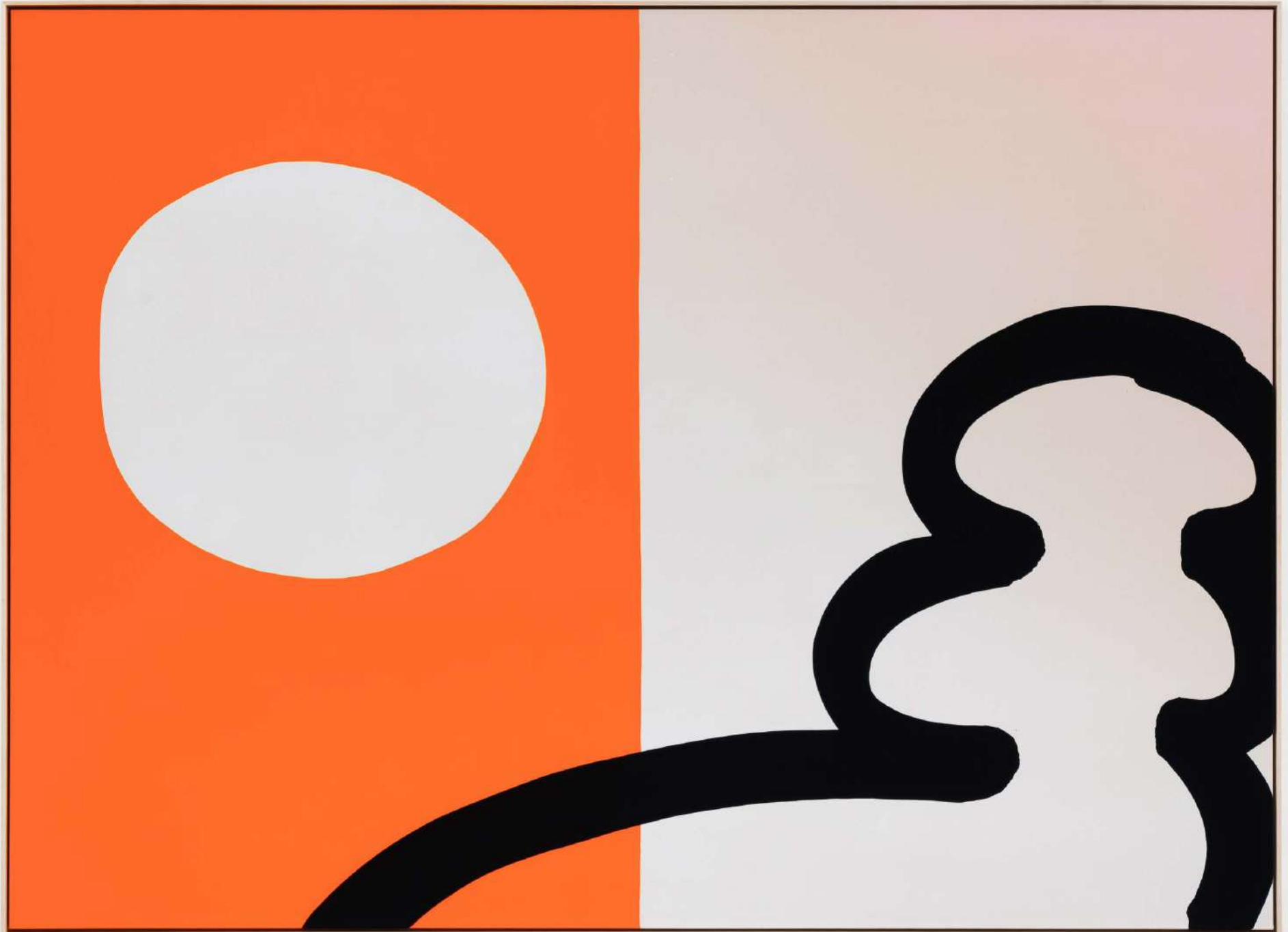
Cornelia Baltes (b.1978, Mönchengladbach, DE; lives and works in Berlin, DE) graduated from the Slade School of Fine Art; London in 2011. She has exhibited in solo and group shows at Deichtorhallen Hamburg; Kunstmuseum Bonn; Kunstsammlungen Chemnitz; Museum Wiesbaden; Chapter Arts Center, Cardiff; Mostyn, Llandudno (Wales); Northern Gallery for Contemporary Arts, Sunderland (UK), ICA London, Walker Art Gallery, Liverpool; Royal Academy of Arts, London; Kunsthalle Nuremberg; Museum Folkwang (Essen), Museum Kunst Palast Dusseldorf among many others.



# SAMPLE WORKS

*\*sample selection does not reflect current availability*

*Cal*, 2022, acrylic on canvas, 63 x 86 5/8 x 1 5/8 in, 160 x 220 x 4 cm, (CBA22.012)



*Nem*, 2022  
Acrylic on canvas  
72 1/2 x 52 1/8 x 2 1/2 in (framed)  
184.2 x 132.4 x 6.3 cm (framed)  
(CBA22.005)





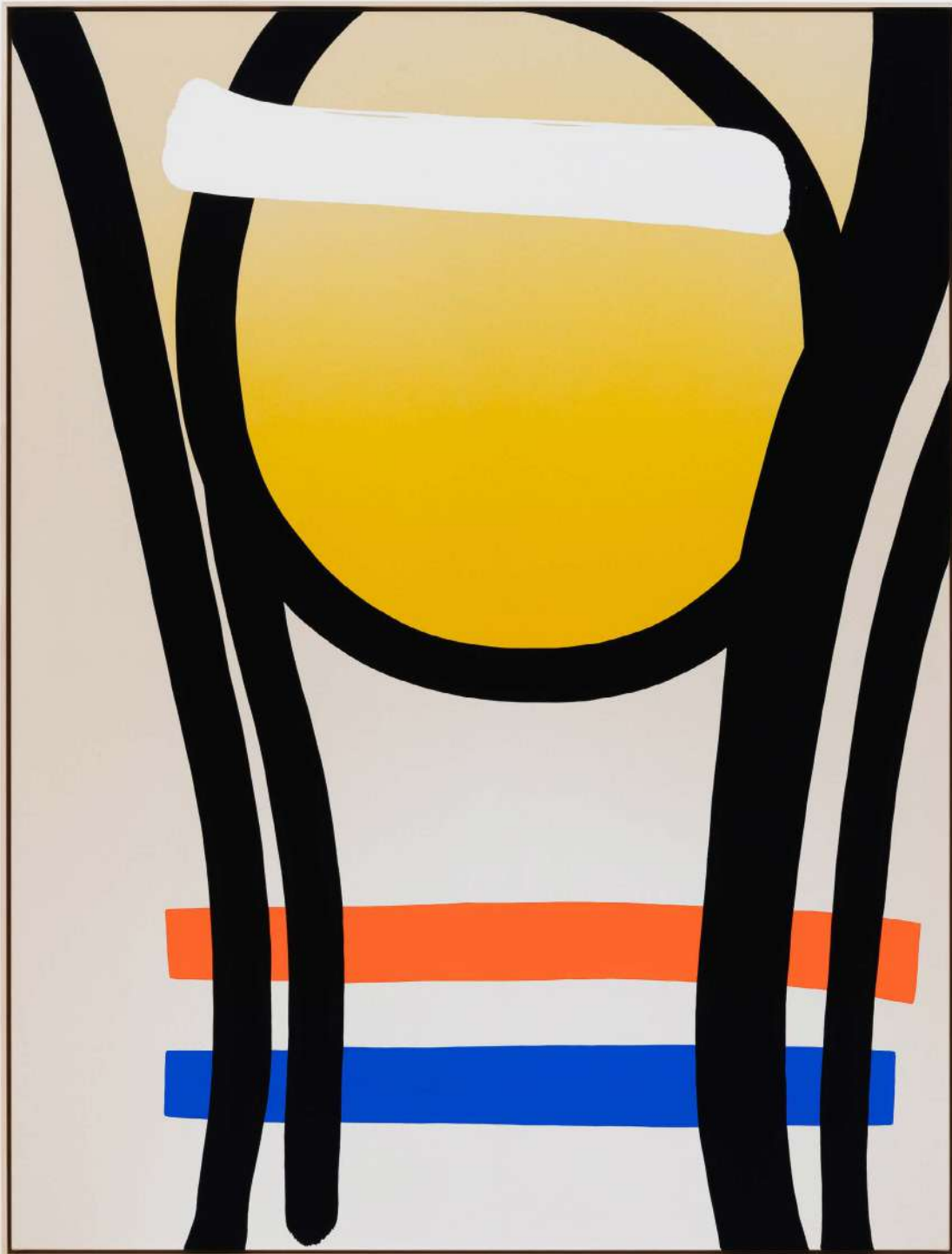
*Tho*, 2022  
Acrylic on canvas  
74 3/4 x 55 1/8 x 1 1/8 in  
190 x 140 x 3 cm  
(CBA22.001)



*Odi*, 2022  
Acrylic on canvas  
76 1/8 x 56 1/2 x 2 1/2 in (framed)  
193.4 x 143.5 x 6.3 cm (framed)  
(CBA22.002)







*Rik, 2022*  
Acrylic on canvas  
74 3/4 x 55 1/8 x 1 5/8 in  
190 x 140 x 4 cm  
(CBA22.004)

*Boo*, 2022  
Acrylic on canvas  
76 1/8 x 56 1/2 x 2 1/2 in (framed)  
193.4 x 143.5 x 6.3 cm (framed)  
(CBA22.007)







*Olm, 2022*  
Acrylic on canvas, framed  
87 3/4 x 64 x 2 1/4 in (framed)  
222.9 x 162.6 x 5.7 cm (framed)  
(CBA22.013)

*Eld*, 2022  
Acrylic on canvas  
76 1/8 x 56 3/8 x 2 1/2 in (framed)  
193.4 x 143.2 x 6.3 cm (framed)  
(CBA22.008)





*Tak*, 2022  
Acrylic on canvas  
11 3/4 x 15 3/4 x 7/8 in  
30 x 40 x 2.3 cm  
(CBA22.015)



The background features a series of vertical stripes in two shades of green and light blue. Overlaid on these stripes are large, organic, hand-drawn shapes in the opposite colors, creating a layered and textured effect. The overall composition is abstract and modern.

**SELECTED EXHIBITONS  
AND PROJECTS**

# SELECTED EXHIBITIONS AND PROJECTS

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***KEINE ILLUSIONEN - MALEREI IM RAUM***

WITH CORNELIA BALTES, SHILA KHATAMI, INGO MELLER AND ROLF ROSE

2023

HAMBURGER KUNSTHALLE  
HAMBURG, DE

***HUB BUB***

2023

ANDRÉHN SCHIPTJENKO  
STOCKHOLM, SE

***7TH EDITION OF CONTEMPORARY SCULPTURE FULMER***

2023

CONTEMPORARY SCULPTURE FULMER  
SLOUGH, UK

***LAZY BONES***

2022

NINO MIER GALLERY  
LOS ANGELES, CA, US

***WAGGLE DANCE***

2022

RODOLPHE JANSSEN  
BRUSSELS, BE

***EIGENBRÖTLER***

2021

EIGEN + ARTLAB  
BERLIN, DE

***COMISSIONS: GLEN AND SLIPS AND TRIPS***

2021

SOSU SCHOOL OF SECONDARY EDUCATION  
AARHUS AND SILKEBORG, DK



## ***KEINE ILLUSION - MALEREI IM RAUM***

*WITH CORNELIA BALTES, SHILA KHATAMI, INGO MELLER AND ROLF ROSE.*

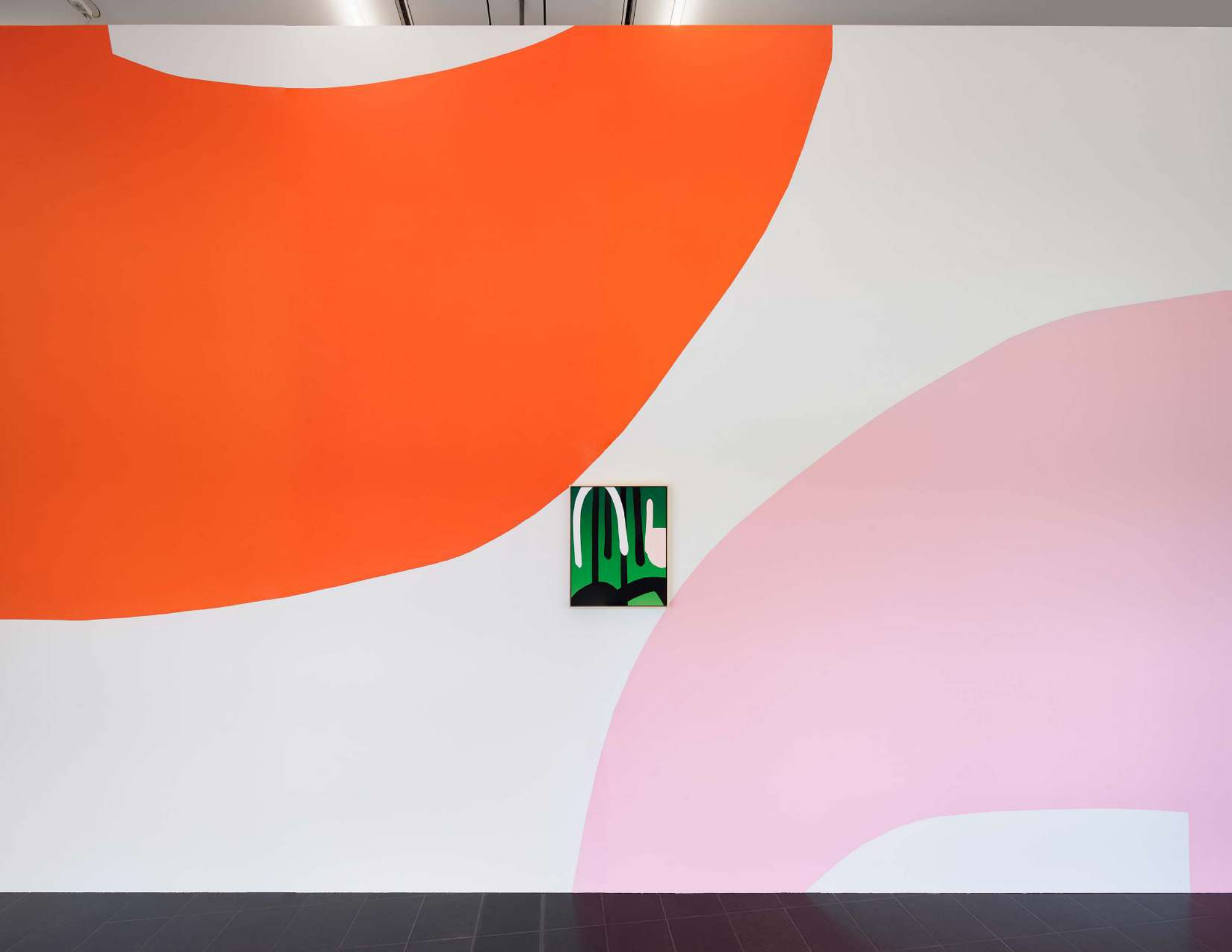
**2023  
HAMBURGER KUNSTALLE  
HAMBURG, DE**

The exhibition *NO ILLUSIONS* explores the properties and limits of the medium of painting using different contemporary positions. Works by four invited artists are shown, who create (partly) new works for the exhibition: The “radical painting” of Ingo Meller (\*1955) meets the partly larger-than-life painting surfaces of Rolf Rose (\*1933), which represent the signature of the brush and seem to materialize paint itself. The painting by Cornelia Baltes (\*1978), which stands between abstraction and figuration, blurs the boundaries between image and space, while Shila Khatami’s (\*1976) compositions made of perforated steel-aluminum panels address the medium of painting itself.

For centuries, painting was the medium in which people, nature and objects were captured from their animation and three-dimensionality onto a surface. But painting didn’t always have to do with illusion. Rather, she asks about the limits of the reality that can be represented and continually tests herself and her own limits. It has therefore always been “abstract” and also always “conceptual”. And always focused on the space surrounding them, like the engagement with the viewer. The contribution of those who look at the picture is just as important as that of the artists. While the latter invent an image, the audience carries these images forward. Museums, as places of collective visual memory, often make it possible to present works of art to a large audience for the first time. They can act as a muse as well as create a stage











## ***7TH EDITION OF CONTEMPORARY SCULPTURE FULMER***

**2023  
CONTEMPORARY SCULPTURE FULMER  
SLOUGH, UK**

Contemporary Sculpture Fulmer is delighted to announce the re-opening of its grounds for a final season. Exhibiting emerging to established artists from around the world working across a myriad of mediums from clay to marble, the outdoor sculptures each respond to the sensitivity of the site, from the open grounds to its still ponds and woodland nooks. Running from 13 May - 29 July 2023, the 7th edition will see Jenn Ellis - founder of Apsara Studio and AORA - as Guest Curator. Since its inception in 2017, Contemporary Sculpture Fulmer has been leading commissioning and the exhibition of outdoor sculpture, providing a thoughtful space for discovery just outside London in collaboration with artists, galleries and institutions globally. In this final edition, visitors will be able to explore works by: Cornelia Baltes, David Cooper, Elena Gileva, Rebecca Halliwell Sutton, Henry Hussey, Yeni Mao, Marco Miehl, Adeline de Monseignat, David Murphy, Will Nash, Henrique Oliveira, Ryan Orme, Milly Peck, Lucia Pizzani, Jesse Pollock, Hannah Rowan, Andrew Sabin, Amba Sayal-Bennett, Alex Seton and Gavin Turk.

oh-OH is a simple gesture - telegraphing the memory of a wedge of swans swimming on open water - using the most economical means possible. The folded forms recall minimalist artists like Judd, but there is humour and pathos in the colour and spacing of the pared down elements, which counters a reading of this as simply austere minimalism.

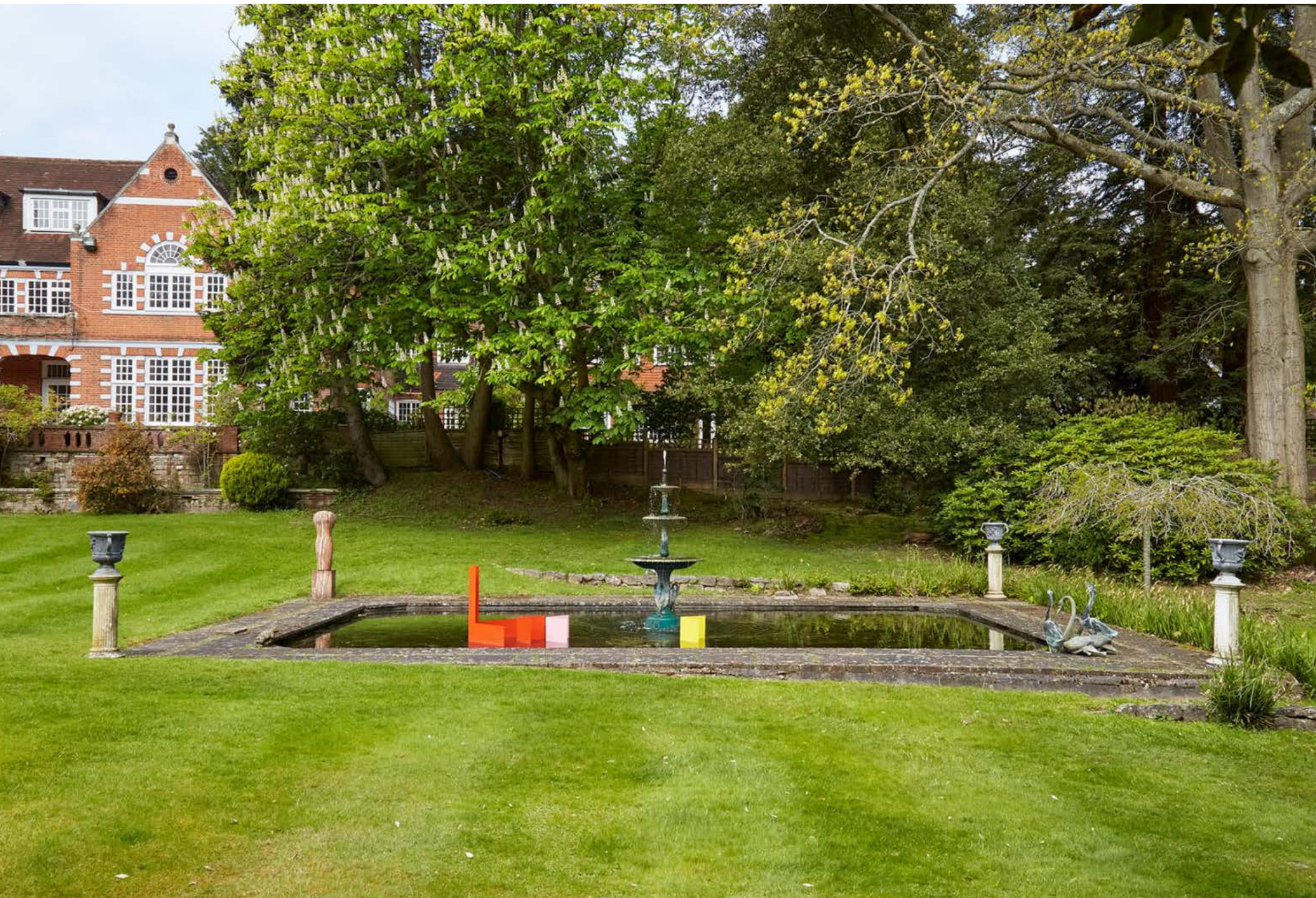
Baltes, is a Berlin-based artist known for her paintings and installations that stand on the edge of abstraction and figuration. In this new move into outdoor sculpture, she stays true to her practice language that utilises edited, defined shape, block colour and abstraction.

The brightly coloured components, made from powder-coated steel are set into a baseplate that preserves the spacing. This can then be submerged under the water, so the elements appear to float.

*Images courtesy of Cornelia Baltes.*







# HUB BUB

2023

ANDRÉHN SCHIPTJENKO  
STOCKHOLM, SE

We are pleased to present Cornelia Baltes' first exhibition at Andréhn-Schiptjenko. The opening takes place between 5-8pm on Thursday, May 4.

Cornelia Baltes is known for her paintings and installations that oscillate between abstraction and figuration. Her iconography slips in and out of recognition, where the viewer may discern hints of objects or figures in the broad, fluid strokes overlaying iridescent colour. Baltes scans the environment for everyday, peripheral details and convert them into something monumental, tempting the viewer to process and make sense of what is seen. The resulting paintings are formally and figuratively in flux, and morph into a different narrative for each of us.

Charged with a distinct intensity and sense of movement, Baltes' minimal compositions balance playfulness with subtle detail. Seemingly spontaneous brushstrokes are in fact meticulously applied with highly pigmented paint over solid fields or gradations of colour. The superflat surfaces are created through a combination of precise brushwork and airbrushing - a tool Baltes began working with almost a decade ago to provide more control over her colour gradients than spray cans would allow. This technique has become an integral part of her visual language of amplification through simplification.

In Cornelia Baltes' often large-scale paintings, there is room for interplay between the body and the gesture; her sweeping lines - the trace of a choreography on the canvas - extends to murals and colour fields on the walls. She wants to surround the viewer with her work, to immerse them in it. This physical connection of the paintings to the space makes them appear as characters on a stage. The exhibition is viewed as scenery for a play that the audience participates in, with different vantage points and lines of sight directly affecting the viewer's experience. Baltes is acutely aware of the paintings as a group and pays careful consideration to how they interact with one another and the various other elements of the installation.

Equally multivalent as the paintings themselves, Baltes' titles feed into the indefinite play between figuration and abstraction. She finds it important to acknowledge the individuality of each work, which entails a process of trying to find a title that feels onomatopoeically "correct", i.e. that the sound of the title instantly conjures an image or action. The exhibition title takes the onomatopoeic word hubbub - meaning a loud, confused noise from many sources - describing unclarity over what exactly is being said and by whom, and separates it into further unclarity and gibberish, ripe for (mis)interpretation.

*Images courtesy of Andréhn-Schiptjenko.*











# LAZYBONES

2022

NINO MIER GALLERY  
LOS ANGELES, CA, US

Cornelia Baltes trades in the diagonal look. This sideways glance betrays an omnivorous curiosity, absorbing the world at slant. The curve of a lapel, knobby knees, the profile of a dusty vase, a new trainer's sole, flexed muscle: Baltes' eye is restlessly precise. It scans the environment, translating the incidental into something monumental. Baltes produces images like we consume them, her references are panoramic. Attending to the everyday; she sees and undoes the world by harnessing the peripheral look.

Diagonal looking is messy. Much of what we see in the corner of our eyesight is made up in the mind. Our eyes tend to be much less sensitive in indirect vision and our brains have to piece together information from memory and social conditioning to make sense of what we see. These paintings disrupt cognition, messing with the ocular and neurological. The eye and mind start to talk over each other producing productive mistranslations.

Baltes' paintings refract, simplify, expand, edit, remix, and amplify the world. Drawing remains central to this transformation, marking out and mutating, mapping and un-mapping. Hints of Ellsworth Kelly and Patrick Caulfield merge with the visual wit of Disney, the elegance of Japanese ink drawing and the slapstick comedy of Buster Keaton. This influence soup is refracted through the chromatic vocabulary of graphic design and commercial imagery.

In linguistics, a homonym is a word that has multiple meanings and these images trade in a similar multivalency: they are painterly homonyms. The painter Frank Auerbach once said: "a great painting is like ice on a stove. It is a shape riding on its own melting into matter and space; it never stops moving backwards and forwards," and his words resonate here. Putting Auerbach and Baltes into the same text feel incongruous; like comparing chocolate gateau with lemon sorbet. Yet, the quote characterizes the painterly animation that Baltes' engages with. This iconographic slipperiness — is it a blade of grass or an arm? — mirrors this mobility of the indistinct look. These paintings are invitations to flex the occipital lobe — the part of the brain where sight is processed — and make it sweat.

Of course, Baltes' work looks simple. But it isn't. The surfaces, which are as smooth as vinyl, are produced through laborious repainting. The title of the exhibition — *Lazybones* — coupled with the iconography of the show which riffs on gym imagery, and the less-than-obvious labour seems self-depreciative. As a non-native English speaker, one wonders how Baltes is translating the idiom: does she see a slouching skeleton or a pile of knackered bones? *Lazybones* is a fairly abstract phrase and is often used interchangeably with bone idle and lazy boots. When taken out of their native context, idioms are ripe for misreading. Unlike math, written and visual language is not an efficient form of communication.

Images that slip in and out of recognition, paintings that look breezy but aren't, titles that don't quite add up. It's in the space of formal and metaphorical in-betweenness that Baltes' practice is situated. The title is outlier; don't believe it: *Lazybones* is an invitation to accompany the artist in her diagonal looking (and thinking). Start exercising, put that brain to task and make it sweat.





CORNELIA BALTES

LAZYBONES

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ER GALLERY

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## WAGGLE DANCE

2022  
RODOLPHE JANSSEN  
BRUSSELS, BE

*Images courtesy of Rodolphe Janssen Gallery. Photography by HV Studio.*

*Waggle Dance*, Cornelia Baltes' first solo presentation at rodolphe janssen in Brussels, sees the space teeming with life, activating the gallery with large vividly pigmented paintings built from sprayed gradients, bold gestures and fine brushwork set within a space-wide wall painting.

Titled after a movement some bees enact to share information about the direction and distance of resources like nectar and water, *Waggle Dance* invites the viewer to enter a zone where Baltes playfully blurs the lines between figuration and abstraction in compositions that never quite settle into an unambiguous motif. We may recognise a shape as a peach or a bum, or perhaps a set of eyes. These forever undefined 'characters', as Baltes refers to her paintings, radiate joyfulness and humour.

The paintings are developed from brush-sketches that are themselves painted from the memory of observational sketching in botanical gardens. The super-saturated, rich palette – which in flowers functions to attract and direct bees – in combination with the wall painting extrapolated from foliage, casts the exhibition space as a garden, with the accompanying suggestion that perhaps the audience are the bees.

Typically accessible and generous, the exhibition is an invitation to see differently, taking quotidian subject matter and offering a strange sidelong glance. Like the bees communicating the presence of resources, Baltes' *Waggle Dance* performatively gestures toward the multiplicity in painting and acknowledges the important role of the viewer buzzing around the space in completing the work with their own readings and associations.













# EIGENBRÖTLER

2021  
EIGEN + ART LAB  
BERLIN, DE

A lot has been said about painting: Who took it to a new level. Who revolutionized painting, who killed it, and who supposedly reanimated it. There have been “painter princes”, geniuses, lunatics, addicts, the mania-driven, obsessives. The lack of ambiguity that the medium demands makes it easy for myths to twine around the originators, and the fascination with painters and their work is unbroken. But there are other ways to approach painting that are often neglected in the traditional discourse: approaches characterized by clarity and unambiguousness that develop their humor precisely from that. Something that can be expressed as much in a picture as in all the human fragments of a late capitalist period that demands much from its inhabitants and therefore needs an opposite pole with even greater urgency.

Cornelia Baltes' painting presents such a counter-pole. In 2011, the artist completed her studies at the Slade School of Art in London. And it may have been the distance from Germany and its mythical painters that gave her the freedom to respond to the world in her very own way – detached from the expectations still so often projected here on painters, who, if they want to be recognized as serious artists, somehow are supposed to poke around in people's brokenness. Under the title “Eigenbrötler” seven paintings and three murals are now assembled in Baltes' first solo exhibition in her home city, Berlin, in the *EIGEN + ART Lab*.

All the pictures are connected, but each can stand on its own. The densely layered, deep pictures bring clarity into a mess of expectations that one is exposed to daily; they do so by eluding every all-too-precise categorization and by inventing their own rules. They shimmer between figuration and abstraction – and between cozily sweet and humorously roguish. To give the pictures their ownsatisfied satiety, Baltes works with up to ten layers of paint and densely pigmented black. This is a depth that requires courage, because it produces unambiguity and, in this simplicity, a space in which one can grant one's thoughts a pause, before returning to bustling life in which one must constantly direct one's attention to ten different things to avoid being catapulted away from the constantly whirling carousel of productivity. In this kind of jam-packed everyday life, one seldom has the opportunity to cut capers or to practice activities whose sole purpose is fun and joy; the thick, soft black of some of Baltes' pictures feels like an invitation to precisely this. The painterly gestures are so exuberant and large that they sometimes leave the canvas to land on the walls. The forms she designs are expansive and generous. Indeed, Cornelia Baltes' work is characterized by a generosity that is displayed in the depth of the colors, but also in the size of the pictures. Her pictures reject every renunciation and negate everything that smacks of modesty imploring to be seen as understatement. It is a lusty, ruthless way to deal with color and form, and it gives the viewer a calming satisfaction.

Sometimes one can read a face into the forms, sometimes recognize an arm or a leg. The idea of corporeality is no coincidence: Baltes usually works with vertically oriented canvases that, if one consistently follows the narrative of the motifs, spur one to think of very boxy people. And so her pictures radiate their very own bodily presence; if they were really people, one would gladly go out with them for a drink. Lost in thought, one follows the thick brushstrokes and notices that here everything has its place and that, in its mirthful restraint, each of the pictures is exactly where it should be. Precisely these days, when one practices social renunciation and the future sloshes around between R values and incidence figures, Baltes' oddballs are the right contemporaries for surrounding oneself with a little amiable lightness, some humorous pointedness, and exuberant gestures. Nonetheless, despite all the clarity and resoluteness inherent in these pictures, they still have room for what is uncertain and unspoken – for the hope that implants itself in the interstices, that shines through in joyful expectation, and that heralds the future and the summer, and with them the end of all abstinence.



Installation view of *Eigenbrötler*, 2021, *Eigen+Art Lab*, Berlin, DE  
Photography by Joe Clark









## **COMISSIONS: GLEN & SLIPS AND TRIPS**

**2021  
SOSU SCHOOL OF SECONDARY EDUCATION,  
CREATED IN PARTNERSHIP WITH CREATOR  
PROJECTS  
AARHAUS & SILKEBORG, DK**

In 2021, Cornelia worked with Creator Projects to develop a series of commissions for two secondary schools in Denmark that offer vocational training and educational programmes in the field of health sciences.

“Glen” stands as a new site-specific mural in the centre of the school’s gym in Aarhus. Based on the teaching focus on bodies and physics, the artwork responds to the environment of the SOSU campus with its dynamic combination of colour gradients and warm motifs, carefully measured and executed on the large surface. The painting contributes to daily activities with a sensibility appropriate to the site. In its own way, “Glen” participates in all daily activities and contributes to the vibrancy that characterises the space, encouraging reflection on one’s own movement and the way one stands, walks, runs or is simply present in the space.

The second site-specific partner mural, “Slips and Trips”, which adorns the staircase, was created especially for SOSU in Silkeborg. The abstract motif of the mural is inspired by the dynamic and essential function of the school’s staircase as a place of meet and greet. “Slips and Trips” mimics the carved crooked, colourful steps and body shapes, surrounding the staircase with a humorous parallel universe of imaginary stairs. Baltes’ use of deep black paint as fragmented components adds a contrast that gives the work a grace while making it seem abrupt. The work offers a playful intervention in the space and invites the viewer to bring it to life.

*Comissions with Creator Projects, “Glen” at SOSU Aarhus, (top) and “Slips and Trips” at SOSU Silkeborg (bottom), DK  
All Photography by Joakim Züger*









**PRESS**

# PRESS

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**ARTREVIEW**

MAY 2021

BY MARTIN HERBERT

**VANITY FAIR**

DECEMBER 2018

BY DANIELLE WALSH

**W ART**

JULY 2018

BY WALL STREE MAGAZIMNE STAFF

**ELEPHANT**

JUNE 2017

EMILY STEER

**FAD MAGAZINE**

AUGUST 2016

BY BEN AUSTIN

**ARTSY**

JUNE 2016

BY MOLLY GOTTSCHALK

**ARTFORUM**

JANUARY 2016

BY NICHOLAS JOHN JONES

# ArtReview

MAY 2021

## Cornelia Baltes Shows Us How to Play Among Paintings

By Martin Herbert



*Mina*, 2021, acrylic on canvas, 230 x 170 cm. Courtesy of the artist and Eigen + Art Lab, Berlin

According to the exhibition checklist, Cornelia Baltes's *Eigenbrötler* (or '*Loner*') comprises eight paintings – some on the wall, some suspended and double-sided – and three murals; but actually navigating it gives you the impression of being in the midst of one big, spatialised painting. The German-born, Slade-educated artist's aesthetic is outwardly reductive, favouring restful, slow-modulating colour gradients topped with thick, confident, almost cartoonish gestural marks that can recall closeup scribbles or, more fancily, high modernism. You'll glimpse allusions here to Robert Motherwell's midcentury *Elegy to the Spanish Republic* canvases and, in the opening painting – an obliquely semicircular form in Persian blue cradled in an elbow of pink – to Ellsworth Kelly. But that painting sits against a larger abstract mural, a buttery expanse of unmodulated yellow upon white, the contours of which line up with shapes in the painting, making it clear that Baltes is proposing a playful conversation between pictorial elements, and questioning where a painting might end, or not end.

Looking around, you see colours and forms continually articulated and then picked up elsewhere, winking across the room, usually a little tweaked in transit. The white-and-yellow palette broadly recurs in a painting tucked round the corner, whose addition of a thickly black-lined squiggle in turn recurs, modulated, in other canvases. Head to a far corner of the second room and look back, and the space turns into a minisymphony of cool blues and juicy oranges. Individually the canvases are enjoyable enough in a quick-hit way, a melange of high abstraction and Pop minimalism. But it's when you feel like you're composing yourself – taking a step to the left or right, backward or forwards, so a new set of planes aligns and the colours high-five each other – that they take off. In this manner, Baltes manages to fold relational art and the networked painting that peaked a decade ago into her taxonomy of styles. It's not the most taxing approach in the world but it's not lightweight either, just easeful and exceptionally convivial, and at this present juncture, a balm. Before you know it, you're out on the floor, doing her dance.

## 9 of the Most Exciting Artists to Follow from Miami Art Week 2018

By Danielle Walsh



Left, Cornelia Baltés, *Kenn*, 2018, Acrylic On Canvas, 190 X 140 X 3.3 Cm/74.5 X 55.1 In; Right, Cornelia Baltés, *Bob*, 2018, Acrylic On Canvas, 190 X 140 X 3.3 Cm/74.5 X 55.1 In. Courtesy Of Galleri Nicolai Wallner/Cornelia Baltés.

Kanye West and Leonardo DiCaprio have gone home, which means a calm is finally washing over Miami's South Beach. But for the artists whose work made an impact at this year's Art Week in Miami, the hubbub may be just beginning. Ahead, a look at the nine artists whose unique vision and skill truly stood out.

### **CORNELIA BALTÉS (GALLERI NICOLAI WALLNER BOOTH AT MIAMI ART BASEL 2018)**

Berlin-based artist Cornelia Baltés creates paintings rooted in observations of the everyday. Baltés's quirky abstractions and imagery are composed of a few simple lines and bold colors often displayed unconventionally throughout gallery spaces, adding to the playfulness in her paintings.

JULY 2018

## Cornelia Baltes @ Frutta Gallery

By Wall Street Magazine Staff



Cornelia Baltes. Courtesy of Frutta Gallery.

Entering Cornelia Baltes's latest solo exhibition at Frutta Gallery, the viewer is immediately confronted with 13 paintings on board suspended from the ceiling. Freed from the walls, the paintings actively occupy the room, seemingly of their own accord.

As we navigate a course through the exhibition the paintings reveal and obscure each other, decoupling, recoupling and unsettling our understanding of them. In the exhibition, Baltes reconfigures the archetype of display by transforming Frutta Gallery into a setting where the viewer experiences an imaginative attempt away from pre-existing modes of display.

The works float above us, their jet black negative space--made by routing the edges on the reverse--presents an escape from modern reason and the art histories of the masculine subject. On one, white lines gesture upwards. On another, geometric forms force a sense of depth, a harmonious, nuanced way for exploring the ground between space and each composition. Elements of some of the paintings are cut and sliced with blocks of colour and line, but soon thereafter the eye begins to register subtle, human and quasi-human contours, foregrounding an inherent surface tension in her work. Seen together, these works unveil prospects in painting both hidden and latent, lines that seemingly come alive reveal the storytelling power of line and contour, foreground and background.

Beneath these bold surfaces, Baltes's technique uncovers new, unconventional aspects of playfulness. The humour and depth of her gestures thereby function as freedom to associate between imagery and idea, rhythmic patterns that oscillate with themes borrowed from everyday life. This ultimately leads to a condensation and sense of dynamism in her work, lines that may appear like clothing, bodies or facial expressions on the one hand, instead contain

multilayered meanings and relief-like potentialities. In their overlap, different associations enter the viewer's mind, a reminder that abstraction is not an evasion of the real, but rather an affirmation of the real.

The movement and depth of her works burst forth with aesthetic multiplicities, while at the same time highlighting an alternative sense of presentation away from the rationalized space of the gallery wall. 'Teamwork' is an attempt to form a visual vocabulary and make sense of Baltes's painterly tools and symbols. Initially, what may seem like a return to formalist and abstract painting instead references a multitude of new beginnings.

The exhibition presents Baltes's work in Frutta Gallery as a starting point for an expanded conversation on the elemental processes of contemporary painting, exploring the relationship between composition, colour, gesture and materiality. The patterns that emerge from her work not only react with one another, but in doing so unveil the exhibition space as a single, unified plane.

# ELEPHANT

JUNE 2017

## 31 Women

By Emily Steer



Cornelia Baltes, *Twiste wo ich swinge I*, 2015, Acrylic and Router on Black MDF, powder coated aluminum frame, 69 x 55 cm.  
Courtesy of the artist and Galleri Nicolai Wallner

The combination of artists based purely on their femaleness can at times feel gimmicky. Here, it feels fun and celebratory, drawing on far more intricate common threads than gender alone. A giant yellow sunshine from Laura Aldridge (*Be a Nose! #2*, 2014) greets visitors as they enter the clean, white space, grinning down from a big blue disk which is hung from the ceiling. To the right of this, Cornelia Baltes's *Twiste wo ich swinge I* shows under-panted skinny buttocks (presumably male, but perhaps not, viewers spent a while pondering this on opening night) jiggling against a sunflower yellow background—one of the few outright depictions of the body in the show.

There are two key modes of thought here: the first looking at artistic positions which explore psychological, erotic and instinctual elements; the second at abstract mark making and production. This springs from the exhibition's starting point around 1940, when both Surrealism and Abstract Expressionism coexisted in New York. The influence of these two movements can be seen in moments throughout the show, but the work moves in many directions beyond this (it is important to consider the heavily male weighting that these movements have been imbued by history, however).

In the lead up to the exhibition, it seemed unimaginable to picture so many artists fitting into this space without seeming too noisy, but the floor has been used economically, with only a few works to navigate away from the walls, and the many wall-hung works are kept within relatively tight sections with plenty of white space around them.

Painting is a key focus here, and some of the non-wall-hung works have painterly aspects to them also, especially Aimee Parrott's deep aubergine *Pelt* (2017) which droops rug-like in the middle of the room, the nude body hung upside down in the manner of a drying animal skin.



One small section of wall holds thirteen works, nestled together in close proximity. Clare Woods's *Babs the Impossible* (2014) is a lusciously painted highlight in the middle, a single foot depicted in deep pinks, dusty blues and browns. It plays well with the Catherine Yarrow's neighbouring *Kneeling Purple Figure (Morges)* from 1935 which is both soft and hard—watery red and purple tones depicting an angular figure which looks as though it is screaming in despair or possibly on fire.

The perpendicular wall holds some of the most exciting artists of the last few generations, with well-established names such as Bridget Riley, Rachel Whiteread and Tracey Emin alongside newer and no less brilliant artists such as Ella Kruglyanskaya. Whiteread's *Step* is particularly enjoyable, a simple plaster and resin work that again holds both hardness and softness—the bottom plaster bricks looking as though they have come directly from a building site, the upper pink and orange resin bricks looking jelly-like and rather tempting to take a bite out of.

It's good to see such a mix of career levels here—this isn't about presenting the female artist as a new or changed phenomenon, but a constant force. Some are just getting started, others, such as Rose Wylie, have been working for years and are just getting the recognition they deserve (a discovery later in life which is being reflected frequently at the moment, not least in the career of Phyllida Barlow and her current representation of Britain at the Venice Biennale), and others have been part of the art world fabric for a long while. A celebration of female artists but also of art in general, at its most spirited.

## Young Artist to Watch: Cornelia Baltes

By Ben Austin



*Cindy*, Acrylic and Oil on Canvas, 180 x 140 cm, 2016

Cornelia Baltes graduated from the MA Fine Art degree at the Slade. She previously studied communication design at the Folkwang University of the Arts, Essen, Germany. Cornelia challenges the notion of what painting is and what it can be. The work at times mischievously escapes the confines of the picture frame, her loose abstractions, blocks of colour, strong lines all make for an art that defies explanation.

Cornelia covers all media, incorporating painting, photographs, sculptures and installations; throughout her work there is consistent minimalism and playfulness of gesture. Much of her work stems from observations of the everyday, aspects of clothing, human facial expressions all condensed down to the elemental. Baltes most recent exhibition at Limoncello, amusing entitled, 'Drunk Octopuss wants to fight' sees canvases suspended back-to-back from the ceiling, again defying how painting should be seen traditionally flat on the wall. The palette have a soft graduation of colour, from a orange hue to yellow, from yellow fading into white, contrasting the thick black lines and mark making.

The work is idiosyncratic and quirky. The titles suggest portraits in part, such as 'Hendrik', 'Steve' and 'Monika', reduced down to referencing their clothes, we have a pair of jeans shown from the back, the pockets crudely expressed by two white lines, again the graduation of colour is subtle and expertly handled. Everything here is implied and suggested, there are comic hints and amusing allusions to real world stuff. Vigorous marks and powerful lines temper the graphic style, disrupting the flat colours and carefully controlled shading. The overall effect is a kooky coolness, run through with frisky humour.

Baltes is definitely a young artist to watch out for. Artsy highlighted her solo presentation at Liste and she has recently been in a group show in The New Gallery, Milan. Previously she was selected for the prestigious Bloomberg New Contemporaries exhibition in October 2011 and was a finalist in the John Moores Painting Prize (2010).



JUNE 2016

## 10 Artists to Watch at LISTE

By Molly Gottschalk

The 21st edition of LISTE opened to VIPs on Monday, welcoming a horde of collectors to Basel's historic Warteck Brewery. Over its more than two decades, the fair has seen a number of key tastemaker galleries from Mathew to High Art—some of whom (like High Art and Gregor Staiger) have gone off to found their own fair, Paris Internationale. This year, with a number of programs having moved up to the main event at Art Basel in Basel, LISTE offers something of a fresh crop of young dealers, particularly from heretofore underrepresented regions and cities like Cairo, Kosovo, and Estonia. With them, these dealers bring a host of new artists to discover across the fair, butting up against notable presentations by recent institutional favorites. Below, we bring you the 10 artists we'll be keeping our eye on after the fair.

### **CORNELIA BALTES @ LIMONCELLO**

One of Artsy's 16 artists to watch in 2016, at LISTE, Baltes debuts works fresh from the studio, plucked from the same series she showed to great acclaim at the London gallery this January. In past exhibitions, the German artist's works have hung from the ceiling or sat upon wheels on the oor. This time, elevated on shallow plinths, her paintings-cum-sculptures (priced between £3,000–8,000) are scattered across a blue carpet in a way meant to mimic sketches strewn across the artist's studio oor. Look for Baltes later this month in a group show at Brand New Gallery or for her upcoming public commission at Cathedral Primary School in Bristol in 2017.

# ARTFORUM

JANUARY 2016

## Cornelia Baltes

By Nicholas John Jones



View of Cornelia Baltes, 2016

Interrupting the view from the entrance of Cornelia Baltes's show is a large suspended canvas. On it, a bright blue fade and two U shapes are contained by a wobbling matte black background. Initially, these forms register as a strange alien creature with closed eyes, but quickly they reconfigure into the rear of a pair of jeans. The title: *Steve* (all works 2015–16). *Steve* turns out to be bum-to-bum with *Monika*, a set of raw canvas legs outlined in more black with horizontal bands of red and blue, suggesting sport socks or anklets. Nearby, *Fin* is set at an angle, just off the wall, while Greg leans back. The two hang little more than ten centimeters apart and are irting like mad. Cindy wrings her fingers in the corner . . . Perhaps she likes Greg, too. Hendrik's loitering in the back of the gallery with *Twinkle*. *Untitled (Electrolytes)* consists of two inverted swoops of bright yellow set over a pure white surface, while *Feathers* has three gradating orange- to-white ovals straddling a naive-looking E routed into the MDF support. These two works are spaced between but away from the two main clusters of their anthropomorphic counterparts; ornaments in the backdrop of this hip gathering.

Baltes's titles are suggestive yet elusive, just like her imagery. Their mostly mono-word format aptly echoes the reductive and quirky qualities of her approach. Real-world observations inform but fall away from her stylized works. Though the artist's clean and unabashedly chic graphic sensibility suffuses this exhibition, the occasional scuff or rough drag of paint satisfyingly upsets the status quo of tidy lines, at colors, and expertly graduated shades. Baltes's ability to imbue rigorously conceived form with playfulness and humor is impressive. And though her "cool kids" look decidedly "in," their visible, kooky neuroses manage to charm and utterly endear.



**CURRICULUM VITAE**

## CORNELIA BALTES

Born 1978, Mönchengladbach, Germany  
Lives and works in Berlin, Germany

### EDUCATION

2011 Slade School of Fine Art London, UK  
2006 Folkwang University of the Arts, Essen, DE  
2003 Bergische Universität Wuppertal, DE

### SELECTED SOLO EXHIBITIONS

2023 *Hub Bub*, Andrén-Schiptjenko, Stockholm, SE

2022 *Waggle Dance*, Rodolphe Janssen, Brussels, BE

2022 *Lazybones*, Nino Mier Gallery, Los Angeles, CA, US

2021 *Eigenbrötler*, EIGEN + ART Lab, Berlin, DE

2020 *Tit For Tat*, Galleri Nicolai Wallner, Copenhagen, DK

2018 *Mingle Mime*, BolteLang, Zurich, CH  
*Teamwork*, Frutta Gallery, Glasgow, UK  
*Lightbox*, Chapter Arts Center, Cardiff, UK

2017 *CAPRI*, Galleri Nicolai Wallner, Copenhagen, DK

2016 *Eclipse*, @ung5 (curated by kubaParis), Cologne, DE  
*Gone Fishing* (with Jean-Philippe Dordolo) Centrum, Berlin, DE  
*Drunk Octopus wants to fight*, Limencello, London, UK  
*Liste*, Basel (solo presentation with Limencello), CH  
*Come Together Projects*, 5,26 m3, Cologne, DE

2015 *Turner*, Northern Gallery for Contemporary Art, Sunderland, UK  
*Dancer*, Kunstverein, Ulm, DE

2013 *Theres a light and a whistle for attracting attention*, DREI, Cologne, DE  
*Schnick Schnack Schnuck!*, Limencello, London, UK

2012 *Sunday Art Fair*, Limencello, London, UK  
*Hoolooovoo*, Aspex Galleri Portsmouth, UK

2010 *The Great Loop Forward*, Tank Gallery, London, UK

### SELECTED GROUP EXHIBITIONS

2023 *BOTTOM UP*, Kühlhaus Berlin, Berlin, DE  
*7th Garden Edition*, Contemporary Sculpture Fulmer, Slough, UK  
*Beach*, curated by Danny Moynihan, Nino Mier Gallery, New York, NY US  
*Keine illusionen – Malerei im Raum*, Hamburger Kunsthalle, Hamburg, DE

2022 *State of Play*, Canary Wharf, London, UK  
*Girl meets Girl*, Vestfossen Kunstlaboratorium, Oslo, Norway

- Neun Positionen der jungen Malerei*, Lippische Gesellschaft für Kunst e.V., Landesmuseum Detmold  
*Trio Feminin*, Christine Köning Galerie, Vienna, AT
- 2021 *Jahresgaben Ausstellung*, Kunstverein Reutlingen, Reutlingen, DE  
*Schau...7*, Kunsthaus Kollitsch, Klagenfurt, AT
- 2020 *Cadmium Limón*, Galería Pelaires, Palma, Mallorca, ES  
*You Can Do Better – Bad Painting*, Elektrohalle Rhomberg, Salzburg, AT  
*Jetzt! Young Painting in Germany*, Deichtorhallen, Hamburg, DE  
*Girl Meets Girl*, Vestfossen Kunstlaboratorium, Vestfossen, NO
- 2019 *Jetzt! Young Painting in Germany*, Kunstmuseum Bonn, Museum Wiesbaden, Kunstsammlung Chemnitz, AT  
*I Would Love Just One Flower, I Don't Need the Whole Bouquet*, Galleri Nicolai Wallner, Copenhagen, DK
- 2018 *Group Show*, Frutta Gallery, Rome, IT  
*The Everyday and Extraordinary*, Birmingham Museum and Art Gallery, Birmingham, UK  
*Towner Art Gallery*, Eastbourne, UK
- 2017 *31 Women*, BREESE LITTLE, London, UK  
*Jump Ball*, Dio Horia, Mykonos, GR  
*An eyeful of wry*, Government Art Collection, Hull, UK  
*Cinque Monstre*, American Academy in Rome, Rome, IT  
*Schau 4*, Kunsthaus Kollitsch, AT  
*Home is not a Place*, Contemporary Art from Berlin and London, London, UK  
*Every Line Tells Its Own Story*, Galerie Nathalie Halgand, Vienna, AT  
*JUMP*, Galleri Nicolai Wallner, Copenhagen, DK  
*Jokes on Painting*, Schau Fenster, Berlin, DE  
*You see me like a UFO*, Marcelle Joseph Projects, London, UK
- 2016 *Catherine Biocca Cornelia Balthes Rosalie Schweiker*, Mission Gallery, Swansea, UK  
*Double Acts*, At Home Salon, curated by Marcelle Joseph, London, UK  
*Alice in Crisis*, Dio Horia, Mykonos, GR  
*New Adventures in vexillology 2*, curated by Valeska hageney, Kunstverein Amrum, AT  
*Life Eraser*, curated by Dominco de Chirico, Brand New Galleri, Milan, IT  
*Your Swath, My Jab*, DREI, Cologne, DE  
*True Love Over Physics*, Coma Galleri, Sydney, AU  
*Gestalt and Werden*, Feldbusch Wiesner Rudolph, Berlin, DE
- 2015 *Womens Art Society II*, MOSTYN, Wales, UK  
*Oh, of course, you were berry picking*, DREI, Cologne, DE  
*Feel the discourse* (curated by Christina Ramos, Guest Projects, London, UK
- 2014 *100 Painters of tomorrow*, Book Launch, Christies /Beers Contemporary, London, UK  
*Off the wall*, Kunsthalle Nuremberg, Nuremberg, DE  
*Apples and Pears*, DREI, Cologne, DE
- 2013 *Curiosity and Method*, Less is More Projects, London, UK  
*Carousel*, Aspex Gallery, Portsmouth, UK  
*Nur was nicht ist ist möglich – Malerei im Raum*, Museum Folkwang, Essen, DE  
*Zero Gravity*, Less is more projects, Paris, FR
- 2012 *Chimera Q.T.E.*, Cell Project Space, London, UK  
*P/N/7 The summary show*, Project Number, London, UK  
*Summer Exhibition*, Royal Academy London, London, UK  
*Curatorial Spotlight*, FordProject, New York, US  
*Young British Art II*, Dienstgebäude, Zurich, CH
- 2011 *Crash Open Salon Show*, Charlie Dutton Gallery, London, UK

- 2010 *John Moores Painting Prize*, Jealous Gallery, London, UK  
*Istanbul was Constantinople*, Hush Gallery, Istanbul, TR  
*Slade Interim Show*, Woburn Research Center, London, UK  
*Art in Focus: Black and white Flower painting St. Marys Hospice*, London, UK Threads Tank Gallery, London, UK  
*Exhibitionism*, Eastwing 9, The Courtauld Institute of Art, Somerset House, London, UK  
*Pastiche – When a tree falls in the Forest...*, Solyst Castle Park, Jyderup, DK
- 2008 *3 in 1*, Kunsthaus Essen, Essen, DE  
*Grosse Kunstaussstellung NRW*, Museum Kunst Palast Duesseldorf, DE
- 2007 *Love Stories*, GAM-Galerie am Museum, Essen, DE  
*Ches Nouz*, Kunsthaus Essen, DE
- 2006 *Enface*, diploma exhibition, Forum for Art and Architecture, Essen, DE  
*Pentiment, Show*, Summer Academy, Hamburg, DE  
*Ruhrplus Music and Art Festival*, Bochum, DE  
*Herrengedeck*, Gallery Brave Lotte, Duisburg, DE
- 2005 *Schon wieder Winter*, Solaris e. V. Dusseldorf, DE  
*Sichtwerk*, University Duisburg – Essen, DE  
*Aussenstelle No. 2*, Forum for Art and Architecture, Essen, DE

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*Womens Art Society II Ausstellungskatalog*, Mostyn Publishing, S. 11-14
- 2014 *100 Painters of Tomorrow*, Thames & Hudson, 2014, p36-37  
 Hrsg. Institut für moderne Kunst, mit einem Text von Harriet Zilch, 64
- 2013 *Nur was nicht ist ist möglich – Malerei im Raum*, Edition Folkwang/Steidl, 2013, p 92-101
- 2011 *Bloomberg New Contemporaries In the Presence*, 2011, p33-34
- 2010 *John Moores 26 Contemporary Painting Prize 2010*, Walker Art Gallery, p24
- 2008 *Die große Kunstaussstellung NRW 2008 – Ausstellungskatalog*, 2008

#### SELECTED PRESS

- 2021 *“Cornelia Baltes Shows Us How to Play Among Paintings,”* Martin Herbert, ArtReview, May 2021
- 2018 *“Cornelia Baltes,”* Wall Street International Art Mag, June 2018  
*“9 of the Most Exciting Artists to Follow from Miami Art Week,”* Danielle Walsh, Vanity Fair, December 2018
- 2017 *“Cornelia Baltes makes simply complex works of art,”* Bobby Solomon, The Fox is Black, September 5, 2017  
*“31 Women,”* Emily Steer, Elephant Mag, June 2017  
*“Cornelia Baltes: CAPRI,”* ArtLead, August 2017  
*“The All-Female Show Channeling Peggy Guggenheim’s Legacy,”* Holly Black, AnOther Mag, June 2017
- 2016 *“Cornelia Baltes, the creator of delicious fine art”* Lucy Bourton, It’s Nice That, October 18, 2016  
*Review of Cornelia Baltes’ “Drunk Octopus Wants to Fight”*, Louisa Elderton, Flash Art, March/April, 2016  
*“Cornelia Baltes: Drunk Octopus Wants to Fight”*, Sophie Risner, This is Tomorrow, February 3, 2016  
*“Critics’ Picks”*, Nicolas John Jones, Art Forum Online, February 29, 2016  
*“Cornelia Baltes: Young Artist to Watch,”* Ben Austin, Fad Mag, August



- 2015 *"Cornelia Baltes: Turner"*, George Vasey, *This is Tomorrow*, July 15, 2015  
*"Philip Guston, Cornelia Blates, Stan Douglas: this week's new exhibitions"*, Robert Clarke, *Guardian Guide*, June 6, 2015  
*"16 Emerging Artists to Watch in 2016"*, Editorial, *Artsy*, December 16, 2015
- 2014 *"London Art Fair 2014: 10 highlights"* Lowenna Waters, *The Telegraph Online*, January 11, 2014  
*"London Art Fair 2014"*, Liz Elton, *PaintUnion Blog*, January 17, 2014  
*"London Art Fair 2014: A Metamorphosis of Maturity and Sophistication"*, Ben Austin, *ArtLyst*, January 16, 2014
- 2013 *"Wenn alles aus den Fugen gerät – Cornelia Baltes"*, *Kunst*, Winter, p. 34-39  
*"Starter – die neuen Künstler"*, *ART Das Kunstmagazine*, August, 2013  
*"Cornelia Baltes"*, Denis Bury, *Museum Folkwang Catalogue*, May, 2013, p. 93  
*Review of Cornelia Baltes' Schnick Schnack Schnuck*, Theo Page, *The Page*, March, 2013  
*Review of Cornelia Baltes' Schnick Schnack Schnuck*, Francesca Brooks, *Hackney Citizen*, February, 2013  
*Review of Chimera Q.T.E*, Morgan Quaintance, *Rhizome*, January, 2013
- 2012 *"24 Artists to watch"*, *Modern Painters*, December, 2012, p. 82  
*"Eine Künstlerin zwischen zwei Welten"*, *Die Welt*, June 6, 2012, p.8  
*"Chimera Q. T. E"*, Mette Kjaergaard Praest, *This is Tomorrow*, 2012, p.8
- 2011 *"Sheffield New Wave"*, Sarah Cockburn, *The Culture Vulture*, September 27
- 2010 *"Cornelia Baltes: The Great Loop Forward"*, *ArtRabbit*, October, 2010  
*"Artist Set for John Moores Painting Prize"*, Julia Houston, *BBC News*, September 11, 2010

## GRANTS

- 2016 Working Grant, *Kunstfonds Bonn e.V.*
- 2015 Project Grant, *Kunststiftung NRW*
- 2014 Marianne-Defet-Painting fellowship  
 Commission, *Royal London Hospital (VitalArts)*
- 2012 Finalist, *Beers Lamberts Award for Emerging Art*
- 2011 Graduate Printmaking Prize Winner, *Jealous Gallery, London*  
*Bloomberg New Contemporaries*  
 Scholarship, *Hartmut und Lore Schuler-Stiftung*
- 2008 Start-up Atelier, *Kunsthaus Essen e.V.*
- 2006 Scholarship, *Pentiment Sommer Akademie Hamburg*



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