



La Biennale di Venezia

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61ST INTERNATIONAL ART EXHIBITION
LA BIENNALE DI VENEZIA
GERMAN PAVILION

RUIN

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KATHLEEN REINHARDT CURATES
THE GERMAN PAVILION AT
THE VENICE BIENNALE 2026

ifa – Institut für Auslandsbeziehungen (Institute for International Relations), as commissioner of the German Pavilion at the Venice Biennale 2026, has appointed Kathleen Reinhardt, director of the Georg Kolbe Museum, as curator. A selection committee unanimously chose her, from experts invited from the fields of art practice and theory, as curator for the German Pavilion next year.

The Venice Biennale is one of the most important international exhibitions of contemporary art. As the commissioner, ifa is responsible for organizing Germany's participation, which it has been coordinating and realizing since 1971. For this year's nomination of the curator, ifa has appointed a selection committee to arrive at a decision in a two-stage selection process.

The selection committee explained its decision for Kathleen Reinhardt as follows: "Kathleen Reinhardt's curatorial practice has deeply impressed us. We have found her ability to astutely elucidate issues that are of urgency today from differing perspectives to be inspiring. She is capable of translating complex subject matter into aesthetically sophisticated yet lucid visual language. In doing so, she is able to make pertinent issues in contemporary art accessible to a broad and international audience, encouraging viewers to engage in an intense dialogue regarding the challenges society is currently confronted with."

Kathleen Reinhardt on being appointed curator of the German Pavilion 2026, stated: "I would like to thank the selection committee as well as ifa and the German Foreign Office for their trust and I look forward to approaching this important project together. In today's highly challenging world, art provides urgently needed spaces for creative visions, encounters, social negotiation and for collective critical reflection. Artists explore in their works our current condition, how we got here and, above all, where we are going and what that might look and feel like. The German Pavilion's long-established critical examination of history and society provides an ideal point of departure for engaging with such questions in the immediate present."

Gitte Zschoch, general secretary at ifa – Institut für Auslandsbeziehungen: "We are delighted that Kathleen Reinhardt, whose visionary and interdisciplinary approach enriches the international art scene, has been selected as curator of the German Pavilion. In her curatorial practice, Kathleen Reinhardt has succeeded in fostering a profound dialogue between disparate perspectives and in doing so utilize art as a unifying element. We are convinced that her contribution to the Biennale will have a significant impact on the landscape of global art."

Since December 2022, Dr. Kathleen Reinhardt has been director of the Georg Kolbe Museum in Berlin, where she inaugurated her institutional program with exhibitions by Lin May Saeed, Noa Eshkol and Gisèle Vienne. From 2016 to 2022, she was curator and conservator of contemporary art at the Albertinum of the Dresden State Art Collections. She played a key role in shaping the collection by initiating significant acquisitions, curated monographic exhibitions including Marlene Dumas

(*Skulls 2017*), *Slavs and Tatars (Made in Dschermany 2018)* and worked with such artists as Ruth Wolf-Rehfeldt, David Horvitz, Céline Condorelli, Kapwani Kiwanga, Judy Radul, Mario Pfeifer, Emeka Ogboh, and Hassan Khan. In 2020/21, she curated the highly acclaimed group exhibition *1 Million Roses for Angela Davis* and initiated the research and exhibition project *Revolutionary Romances? Transcultural Art Histories in the GDR (2019-2024)*. She had previously worked as studio manager for the Berlin-based artists Candice Breitz and Petrit Halilaj. Her past appointments include documenta 12, the Peggy Guggenheim Collection in Venice and the Goethe-Institut in Palermo. Kathleen Reinhardt regularly contributes to catalogues and journals and teaches art history, curatorial practice and the production of art in post-socialist spaces at universities and art schools worldwide. She was born in Sondershausen, studied literature and cultural studies as well as international management at the universities of Bayreuth, Amsterdam, and Los Angeles, was a Fulbright scholar at University of California Santa Cruz and received her doctorate in African-American art history from the Department of African Art at Freie Universität Berlin.

ABOUT GERMANY'S PARTICIPATION

ifa – Institut für Auslandsbeziehungen is commissioner of the German Pavilion at the Venice Biennale. In 2025, the curator has been appointed by an eight-member selection committee. The members were: Johanna Diehl (Technical University of Applied Sciences Würzburg-Schweinfurt), Florian Ebner (Centre Pompidou, Paris), Julia Grosse (curator and cultural manager), Gaby Horn (ex-Berlin Biennale), Anh-Linh Ngo (Arch+ and Academy of Arts Berlin), Angelika Richter (Weißensee Academy of Art Berlin), Stefan Rössel (German Foreign Office) and Gitte Zschoch (ifa – Institut für Auslandsbeziehungen).

Such artists as Gerhard Richter, Joseph Beuys, Bernd and Hilla Becher, Hans Haacke, Nam June Paik, Katharina Fritsch, Rosemarie Trockel, Martin Kippenberger, Candida Höfer, Tino Sehgal, Isa Genzken, Ai Weiwei, Anne Imhof, Maria Eichhorn, and most recently Yael Bartana and Ersan Mondtag have created works for the German Pavilion at the Venice Biennale.

Germany's participation has already won seven Golden Lions, four of them as best national pavilion: 1984 Lothar Baumgarten and A. R. Penck (commissioner: Johannes Cladders), 1986 Sigmar Polke (commissioner: Dierk Stemmler), 1990 Bernd und Hilla Becher (commissioner: Klaus Bußmann), 1993 Hans Haacke and Nam June Paik (commissioner: Klaus Bußmann), 2001 Gregor Schneider (commissioner: Udo Kittelmann), 2011 Christoph Schlingensiefel (curator: Susanne Gaensheimer), and 2017 Anne Imhof (curator: Susanne Pfeffer).

The artistic project for the 2026 pavilion will be announced at the end of May 2025.

ABOUT IFA

ifa – Institut für Auslandsbeziehungen, together with partners, advocates worldwide for freedom in art, research and civil society. It provides activists, artists and scholars with a voice, promotes collaborations and increasingly pursues its objectives with European partners. Based on its core competencies of art, research, and civil society, ifa builds networks to achieve ongoing impact.

In the field of contemporary art, ifa supports exhibitions by artists living in Germany and is involved in international networks and academic discussions on art and cultural exchange. As part of its exhibition funding, ifa enables German and Germany-based artists to participate in biennials worldwide, as well as artists from developing and transitioning countries to participate in biennials in Germany.

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