



Stephan Backes  
Undine Bandelin  
Georg Brueckmann  
Oliver Czarnetta  
Elisabeth Ehmann  
Ingar Krauss  
Markus Manowski  
Cyril Massimelli

BIZARRE

# Acknowledgements

The National Monegasque Committee for the Visual arts – A.I.A.P with the UNESCO, has kindly invited German artists as honoured guests of their annual exhibition in the principality of Monaco.

For the salon 2016, we are pleased to present the work of eight artists, living and working in Germany and out of which a certain route has been privileged: two highly renown cities in the field of arts, Berlin and Leipzig. Although independently curated, as a parallel to the Monegasque presentation, we have chosen to follow the theme *Bizarre* initiated by the A.I.A.P. We were both inspired by the theme and interested in exploring a respective angle aligned with the entirety of the exhibition.

*When we stand back for a moment and reflect on our daily actions, everything becomes Bizarre!*

*When we abstractly concentrate on a single word, repeating it, it suddenly becomes utterly Bizarre!*

*And what could better define our world, this encrypted reality?*

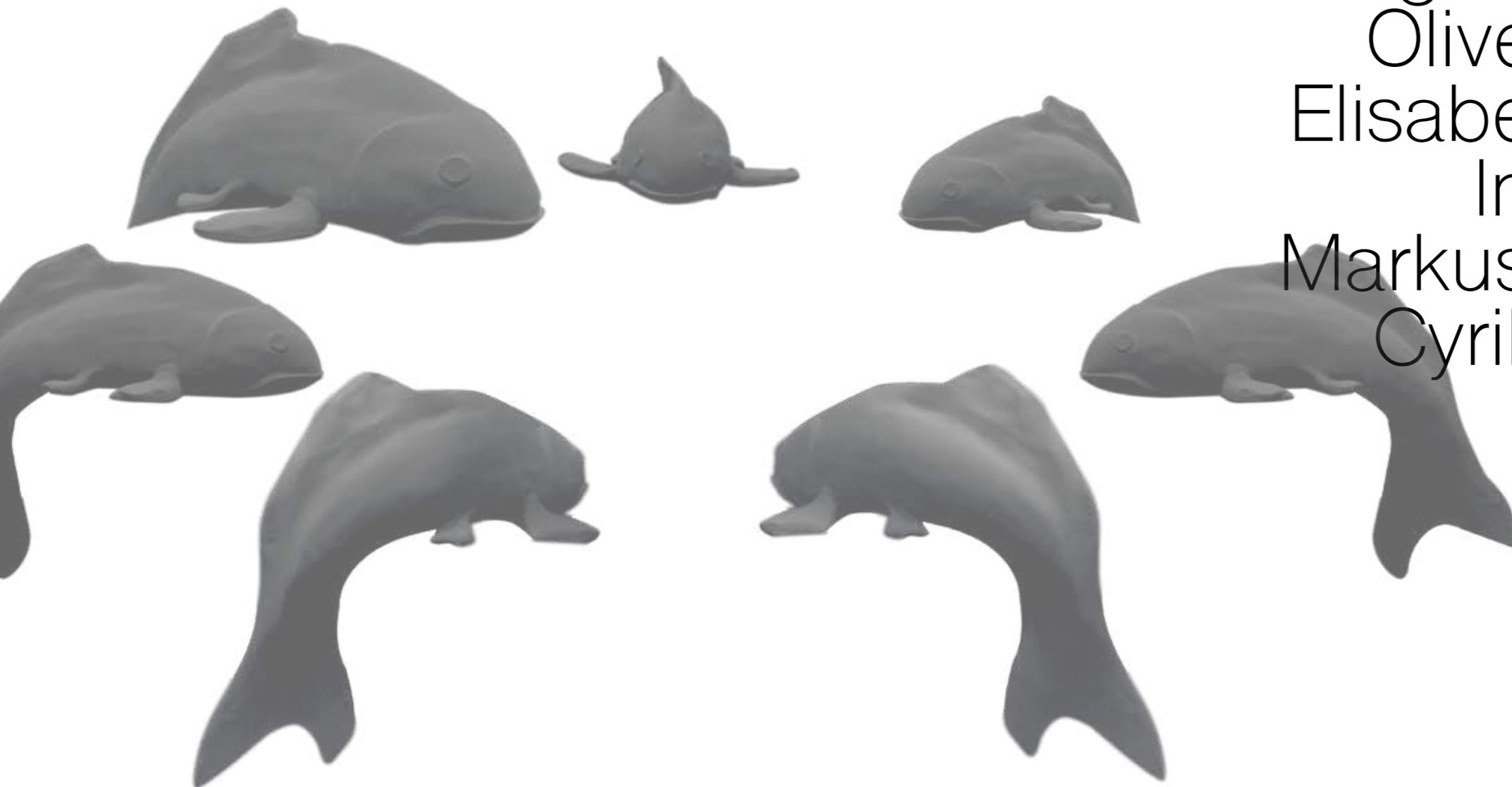
Several mediums and languages are explored in the Salon 2016, through attempts to grasp the strange in its diverse nuances and sequences.

We would like to warmly thank the whole National Monegasque Committee board for this invitation, Marie-Aimée Tirole, Marylaure Pastorelli, Christian Giordan, Christian Bonavia, Dominique Kindermann.

The exhibition has been possible thanks to the work and support of Stephan Backes, Undine Bandelin, Georg Brueckmann, Oliver Czarnetta, Elisabeth Ehmann, Ingar Krauss, Markus Manowski, Cyril Massimelli, Francesco Angelini, Detlef Bischoff, Tuula Hirvonen and Petra Schmidt.

Sincerely,

Stefania Angelini  
Esther Niebel



Stephan Backes 10  
Undine Bandelin 14  
Georg Brueckmann 18  
Oliver Czarnetta 22  
Elisabeth Ehmann 26  
Ingar Krauss 30  
Markus Manowski 34  
Cyril Massimelli 38

Lyar  
 Canard  
 Cougar  
 Dog Star  
 Bulgar  
 Film noir  
 Lounge car  
 Pourboire  
 Beaux Arts  
 Qatar  
 Raw bar  
 Solar  
 Bizarre.

As many attempts to grasp the strange.  
 Stefania Angelini, 2016

Seeping into strange atmospheres, recovering the origin of that feeling, grasping a sense of uncanniness. The etymology of the word bizarre is coincidentally murky.

The exhibition, with no mean to trace back the origin and the emergence of its title, seems to grasp, with each artist, fragments of this very wide conception. What refers to bizarre undoubtedly is in relation to the process of perception. Some sensationally strange occurrences which can be perceived through the violence of contrast, incongruity, or the association of both.

Upon its entrance in the exhibition space, the viewer's senses are imperceptibly bounced. The work series of Georg Brückmann's 'Kundmannngasse' consciously recreate the house constructed by Austrian philosopher Ludwig Wittgenstein. Built in 1925, it has been conceived in a very modernist way composed by three white rectangular blocks, resulting in a very regular and composite building. But something is slightly disturbing.

The way the artist creates its images confers to his witnesses something troubling, mirroring a special atmosphere that the house has been carrying along. One of the architects wrote in a letter: "I come home very depressed with a headache after a day of the worst quarrels, disputes, vexations, and this happens often. Mostly between me and Wittgenstein." "When the house was nearly finished he had a ceiling raised 30 mm so the room had the exact proportions he wanted. It took him a year to design the door handles, and another to design the radiators." Wittgenstein's eccentricity is here transmitted by the work of Brückmann. Working on another level, the artist lights up deeper memories captured within the walls of the white mansion.

A particular attention to the material is primal within the creative process – might the maker be an architect, a philosopher, an ethnologue, an artist. The field expert looking at a material often reveals aspects less considered by the public. Seemingly, the works of Oliver Czarnetta and Ingar Krauss draw our attention to transparency, each one very differently.

'Lethe' is a head made out of synthetic resin. Translucent albeit misty and fizzy. Absence and appearance entangled, the invisible ether is made illusive through the refraction of light. Glossy on the surface, spiky inward. Like a clear metaphor of human's psyche.

In the work series here exhibited by Ingar Krauss, the formality and purity of glass does not seem to be enough for the artist. Krauss transgresses the vernacular characteristic of the material to the profit of a more arcane lecture of transparency. The course of light through the chemical body becomes visible within his works. Refracted, reflected and finally dispersed. This also oddly reminds on how vast amounts of data are rushing through optical fibres. How a seemingly smooth and flat surface can turn into a brutal imagery. Profusion and this very overflow of images is part of what makes our

contemporary situation so uncomfortable. Elisabeth Ehmann erects elegant sculptures where a plethora of images and the attention to detail tend to give a sense of a mannerist gesture. Very aesthetic and sleek, varnished and embellished, the works of Ehmann are sensual detractions. By pointing out the very corporeality of excess, Ehmann acts directly against consumption but also prevents the decadence of ephemeral effects, praising their material quality. The complex and colourful compositions resemble some encrypted grotesque motifs which often confer unease besides their aesthetic value.

Strangely familiar. This strange stranger.

Cyril Massimelli's 'Lounge Series' setups are indeed disturbing. The very technical implementation and the variety of references to older masters are the first perceptible disquietude which leads us into the artist's world. His paintings often depict large crowds although each person seems to be enclosed within emptiness. People gather but do not really connect with each others. Perhaps something might be happening within the scenery, something the viewer cannot recover. Something mysterious albeit sad permeates from those anachronic sceneries.

Thus the strange is something dissonant, a singular appearance exerting the witness to leave his zone of comfort. The works of both, Undine Bandelin and Markus Manowski, recall these misty zones and mental imaginary, operating on some edgy terrains of the unconscious.

Questioning the role of imagery, Markus Manowski addresses the power of the pictorial media through society and particularly looking at the false memory phenomena where memory of people gets affected, altered by incorrect popular beliefs.

"The weird clown like demons that float in front of objects are up to all kinds of tricks" (Tim Morton, *Realistic Magic*, 2013). And what could better define

our world, this encrypted reality? Weaving delicately an underlying story the paintings of Markus Manowski endlessly repeat and defeat history. Like if something was ungraspable, after all, and if only the reversible operation to the addition could allow for more. More figuration, where foreground and background merge to disappear.

Meanwhile, the *surface* is exceeding, overloaded, up to pitch-dark.

The response of a surface is emphasised in the work of Stephan Backes. Wired sensual beings in space. Those ultrasonic sensors feel you. The sleek perspex is lurking at you. Caught in transmission, we are able to see our reflection and yet the illuminated surface keeps its distance.

Could that possibly be a better ending?

The tech creatures strangely remind me of those astonishing 'immortal' medusas, the *Turritopsis Nutricula*. As I share this with my peer, Esther Niebel directly refers back to the symbol of the Medusa. That 'evil-averting' device of Antiquity.

How strange,

Those emerging occurrences,  
Screened messages.

## Bizarre: Each foot placed in another world

Esther Niebel, 2016

There are times of conformity and repetition, and there are other times of destruction, upswing and renovation. This finding is not new and it is nothing new that these antagonistic forces represent the necessary condition for creativity or generally for every kind of human organization in process. Speaking about art becomes clear at ones that destruction and recreation are a fundamental engine, whereas this relation may be less eye-catching within other social spheres. When this destruction and this recreation can be understood as breathing in and out during the process of evolution, then the times of upheaval is the hiccup. A hiccup breaking out somewhere and exhaustively spreading in all directions in response to a persisting contraction until it finally dissolves away.

Unusual, curious, incomprehensible, on a whim, strange, cranky are the meanings associated with the adjective bizarre. The original meaning is based less on the object itself than of the shape of the object. The word bizarre derives from the Italian expression *bizarro* which means something to be „of strange form and shape“.

If „form follows function“ applies to architecture, the motto „form follows idea“ will apply to arts. Does a bizarre idea demand a bizarre form or is it the bizarre idea claiming a familiar shape? This question may be answered, probably as to everything in life, in one way or another. Finally the main challenge is the balance established between the single components: the truth is somewhere in the middle, emerging from dialog. After the painting has been declared death again and again one could accuse the painting to be the most bizarre medium within the arts ever since. On the other hand the painting repeatedly defeated death and returned stronger after each near-death experience reaching finally the top of the art scene, unbowed in its figurative form. In consequence three of the invited artists are engaged in figurative painting, dealing also with the art of painting itself.

Inside the triangle of painting Bandelin – Manowski – Massimelli the latter, with his painting characterized by image excerpts, a particular ductus and the attention to the anatomy of the characters painted, is the artist who is bounded most tightly to art history. Manowski and Bandelin are so in a different way. Both use a contemporary visual language that has not yet been fully established in our cultural awareness. On Manowski's paintings the shapes dissolve in abstraction. The surreal setting becomes snapshot, film style, interval leading the art to crossover. Crossover-like is also the art of Bandelin. She deals with depth psychology. Nightmarish fabulous creatures take over the scenery recalling Kafka. If only there were not those technoid neon colors.

Georg Brückmann and Ingar Krauss represent photography as their medium, with Brückmann working with it in a broader sense. By taking up philosophical subjects and translating them into a visual equivalent, he aims to confuse the viewer with a mixed-up medium composition. Krauss instead explicitly draws his attention to the subject matter of photography: the light. Doing so he gets shots that point beyond aesthetics by a self-reflection through the impact of the medium. Also Oliver Czarnetta works with light which is captured, refracted and reflected by glass or synthetic resin. His sculptures aim to render visible the non-visible space and mirror the human behaviour in process. Czarnetta uses irony to help the viewer in getting aware of himself.

Under a shiny surface you will discover the collages of Elisabeth Ehmann. Snippets with erotic themes collected from magazines, comics and books are stuck together mostly in miniature form. With the well varnished surface the motives turn into patterns and the sculptures resemble fine Chinese porcelain. Only upon closer inspection the viewer discovers that the sculptural bodies are defined by physical motives. Stephan Backes, at the end, is the only one among the represented artists who does not work with a classical medium. He works with videos, LEDs and synthetic materials woven into a virtual world. The material iciness is broken by poetical moments, where vitality superimposes itself on technical patterns. Despite all the differences in themes and form the artists here presented have one thing in common: they create tension by standing with one foot in the present time and with the other one in their very own universe.

## Stephan Backes

Stephan Backes uses electronic hardware, open-source software, seductive materials, video and installation to explore daily situations triggered and affected by new consumer technologies. He is currently focused on sensor-based technology and interlinked systems, attempting to increase the perception of interaction between integrated computers, digital tracking and analytic applications.

Stephan Backes was born in 1982 in Germany. He completed his MA in painting in 2014 at the Royal College of Arts in London.

*Strange, to get in contact through this translucent, wired device. They have always kept their distance. Now, they are approaching out of the 0xA9A9A9 Dark Gray. Interacting frequently. Their image appears in blurry 0xE9967A Light Salmon. Nearly there, one step in front of 0xAFEEEE PaleTurquoise. Finally, entering the zone. But, only the the 0x90EE90 Light Green shine keeps them apart.*

Stephan Backes, *LiveLy communication make the teamS from theSe fieLdS eSpeciaLLy SucceSSfuL*, 2016, mixed media, 125 x 75 x 6 cm





ConnectivitySimplicityNow, 2014, video still



ConnectivitySimplicityNow, 2014, video still

## Undine Bandelin

Undine Bandelin's paintings lead to a world, where constraints are lifted, those between human and animal kingdom and those between reality and dreams. In that world the viewer recognizes both parts within himself, animal and human nature, but refraining willingly from those individual peculiarities and kinds of behavior merely revealed. The person becomes the self, a close relative, an animal, a fabulous story, an appearance, the unknown absurd. Undine Bandelin was born in Jena in 1980. Bandelin studied painting from 2005 to 2011 at the HKD Burg Giebichenstein Halle/Saale with Ute Pleuger. Undine Bandelin lives and works in Leipzig.



Undine Bandelin, *Das Haustier*, 2016, mixed media on canvas, 41 x 41 cm

Next page: Undine Bandelin, *Die Horde*, 2016, mixed media on canvas, 230 x 360 cm



## Georg Brückmann

Reality and perception are the fields Georg Brückmann plays on. His works move close to the interface between installation, painting and photography, and thus generally solve the question concerning the reality represented in media contents in favour of the significance of art. The series 'Kundmannngasse 19' shows a house designed by the philosopher Ludwig Wittgenstein, which becomes setting and mirror to Georg Brückmann's artistic approach and offers the artist the possibility to fuse symbiotically with Wittgenstein's philosophy.

Georg Brückmann was born in Frankfurt in 1977. From 2003 to 2009 he studies photography at the Academy of Visual Arts Leipzig, from 2009 to 2012 he did his Master of Fine Arts. Brückmann lives and works in Leipzig.



Georg Brückmann, *Kundmannngasse 19*,  
*Palais Südgasse*, 2015, C-Print, 115 x 150 cm



Georg Brückmann, *Kundmanngasse 19, Saal*, 2015, C-Print, 115 x 150 cm



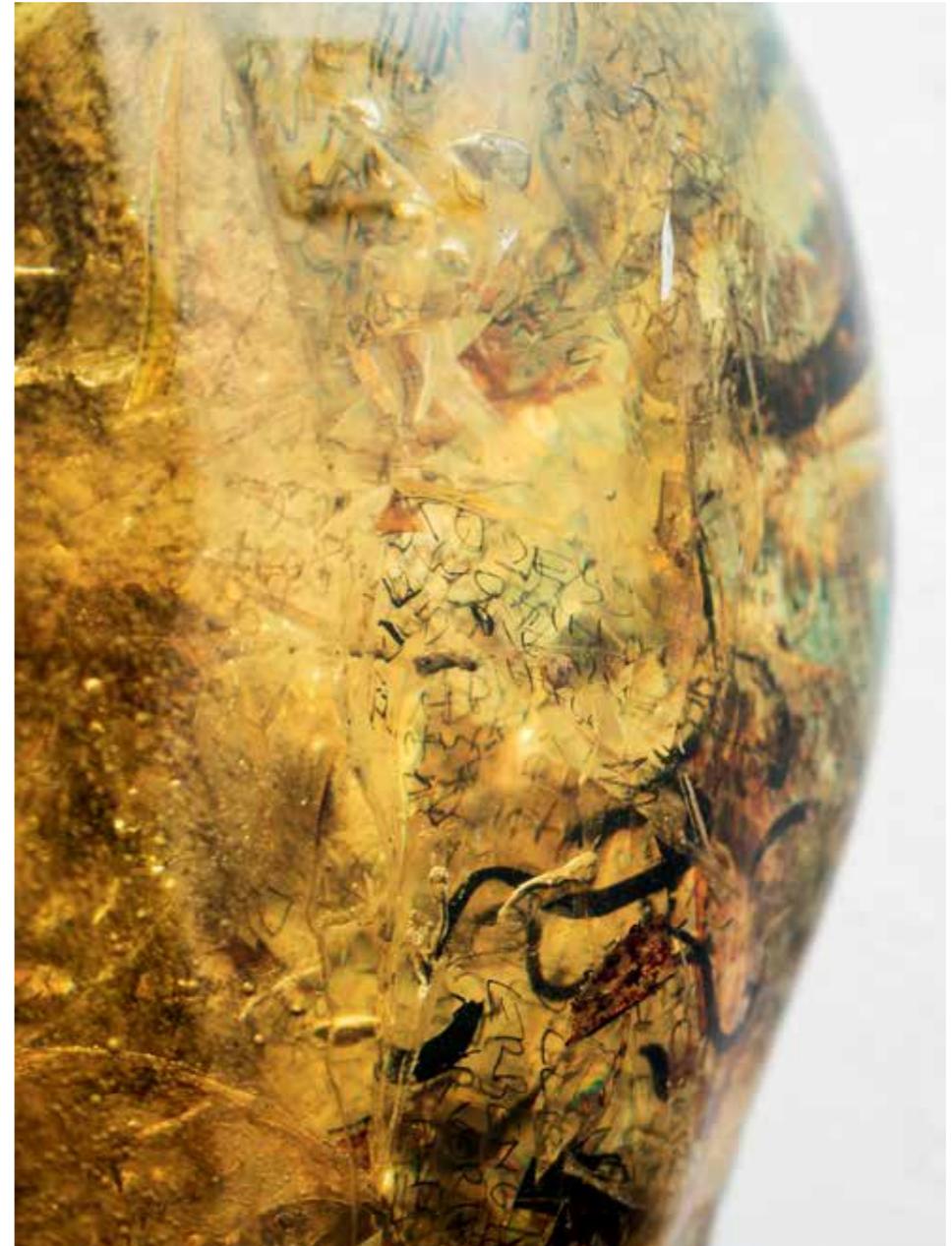
Georg Brückmann, *Kundmanngasse 19, Saal 2*, 2015, C-Print, 115 x 150 cm

## Oliver Czarnetta

Concrete, synthetic resin and found everyday objects are the primary materials Oliver Czarnetta works with. Synthetic resin is almost transparent. Only due to the refraction of light the invisible space, the air, can be brought to appearance. The concrete, on the contrary, symbolises archaic rawness, earth and minerality. The 'object trouvé' instead represents a playful aspect, which explicitly refers to man. Czarnetta aims to explore the individual being inserted into society, the world and the universe.

Oliver Czarnetta was born in Düren in 1966. From 1993 to 2004 Czarnetta studied art history and philosophy at RWTH Aachen, 2004 promotion to Dr. phil. of Art History. He lives and works in Aachen.

Oliver Czarnetta, *Lethe* (detail), 2016, resin, cement, 70 cm height





Oliver Czarnetta, *La Torpeur*, 2014, champagne glass, cement, 60 x 39 x 22 cm  
Right page: Oliver Czarnetta, *Spektrum*, 2015, resin, thistle, life-size



## Elisabeth Ehmann

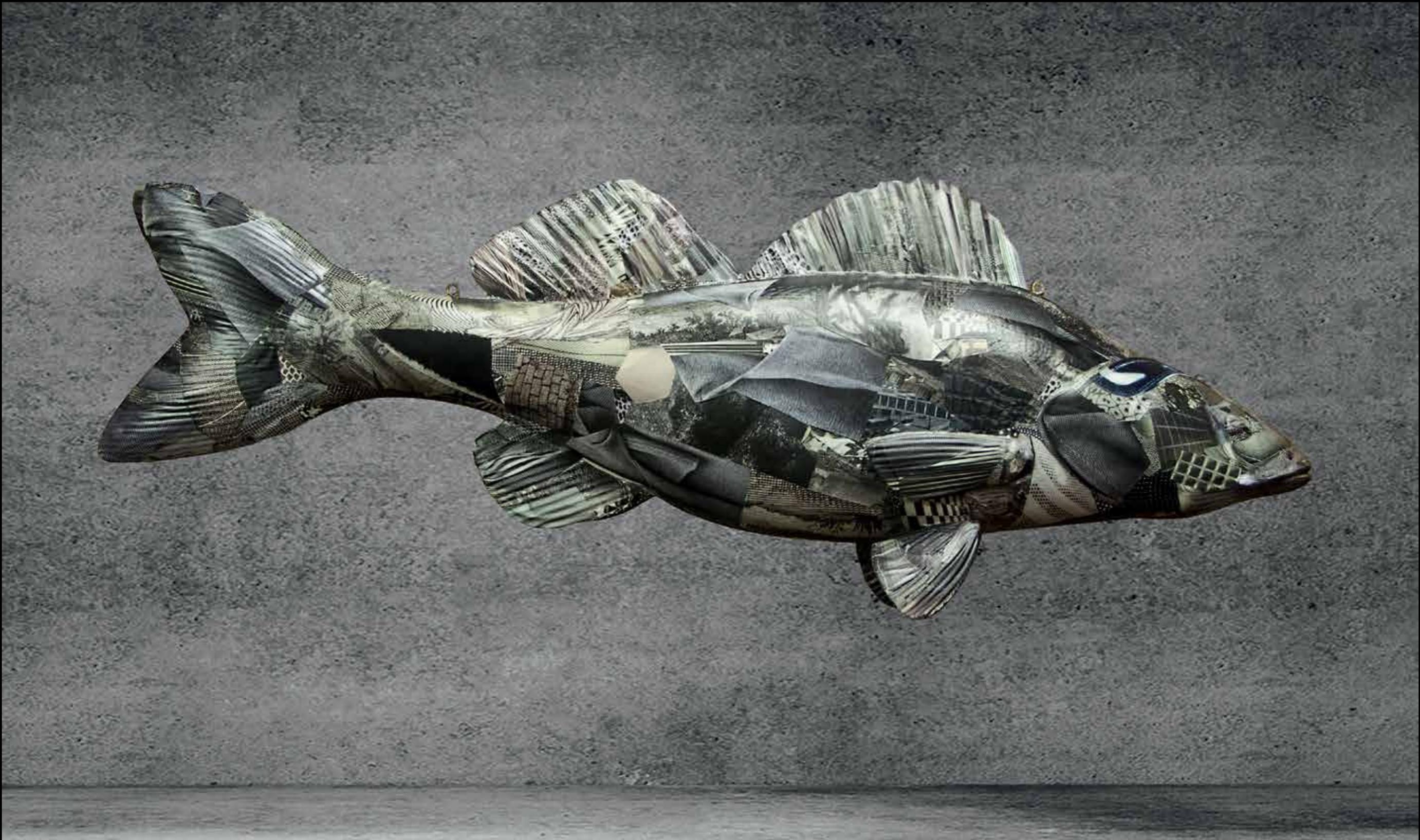
Elisabeth Ehmann's work is based on collage. Working on paper and more sculptural objects, Ehmann renders abstract compositions by the use of structural elements. Her colourful archive is taken out of photographic magazines and catalogues, abandoned books she collects. The artists meticulously cut, dissects glossy products out of our consumption goods, rearranging them until only fragment remain. Ehmann seeks to underline the ephemeral nature and variability of these flimsy values, aiming to repair the condition of the material into compound complex structures.

Elisabeth Ehmann was born in 1977 in Munich. She lives and works in Berlin.



Elisabeth Ehmann, *Losing Structure*, 2014, wood, oil, paper, print on linen/cotton, lacquer, ø 1,05 m

Next page: Elisabeth Ehmann, *Gegenstroemer*, 2014, resin, paper, laquer, 153 x 57 x 23 cm



## Ingar Krauss

Ingar Krauss' working method is marked by an interest in the materiality and feel of surfaces. Glass, as subtle as the light itself in its transparency, is typically used to protect a photograph in a frame, creating a reflective distance between the piece and the viewer. Here, its very corporeality and raw edges are highlighted. This series focus on light's inclusion and refraction through the glass.

Ingar Krauss photographs are analogue, he develops his black-and-white photography himself on silver gelatin paper and subsequently reworks the prints by hand with a glaze of oil paint.

Ingar Krauss was born in 1965 in East-Berlin. He lives and works between Berlin and Zechin.

Ingar Krauss, *Untitled (Zucchini)*, 2012, silver bromide paper and oil, 42 x 50 cm  
Next page: Ingar Krauss, *Untitled (Jena)*, 2014, silver bromide paper and oil, 64 x 78 cm





## Markus Manowski

Markus Manowski is a multifaceted artist taking inspiration from an intensive dialogue between painting, film and music. In his work, Manowski questions the role and power of pictorial media, the emotional characteristic of images and more specifically its consequences on the collective memory. The notion of animism is as well central to his approach, where humans, animals, organic and synthetic, are in constant exchange. An incessant inquiry into human's nature and its irrevocable conflict when meeting with its environment.

Markus Manowski was born in 1977 in Zabre (Poland). He lives and works in Berlin.

Markus Manowski, *The Following*, 2013 Oil on canvas 180 x 240 cm

Next page: Markus Manowski, *Untitled*, 2016, mixed media on canvas, 220 x 210 cm





## Cyril Massimelli

The works of Cyril Massimelli are characterized by a great love to painting. Playing with ductus, colour, composition and image excerpts, different eras of art history gleam through his paintings. This kind of approach confers on the persons and settings portrayed something far beyond time. The isolated individual left to its own within a hedonistic apolitical society represents the actual issue of the 'Lounge Series'. Massimelli thus reconciles the contemporary phenomenon of isolation with the anthropological evolution.

Cyril Massimelli was born in Paris in 1971. From 1995 to 1997 painting and sculpture studies at École Nationale Supérieure des Arts Décoratifs de Paris, with Charles Auffret, Pascal Vinardel, and Luc Gauthier. Massimelli lives and works in Dresden.

Cyril Massimelli, *Room Service*, 2016, oil on canvas, 32,75 x 35 cm

Next page: Cyril Massimelli, *Old School Lounge*, 2016, oil on canvas, 20 x 190 cm





# BIZARRE

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L A T E L I E R - K S R  
STEFANIA ANGELINI

 THE GRASS IS GREENER

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