

ART DÜSSEL DORF

Art Dusseldorf
Press Release
March 12, 2026

ART DÜSSELDORF 2026 OPENS ITS CURATORIAL THEMES TO ALL GALLERIES

The themes **Cosmic Feel**, **Panic Attack**, and **お辞儀 / Ōjigi** form the conceptual core of this year's edition. From these starting points, a multi-layered program unfolds, complemented by additional curated sections and new outdoor formats.

SAVE THE DATE

Preview: April 16, 2026

Press Conference: April 16, 2026, 11:00 a.m.

Public Days: April 17–19, 2026

Location: Areal Böhler, Düsseldorf

Art Düsseldorf continues to develop its curatorial profile. Curatorial themes have long been an integral part of the fair and have previously been explored primarily within the Solo & Projects section and through various guest formats.

In 2026, this model will be expanded: for the first time, all participating galleries have been invited to submit artistic positions in response to three defined thematic frameworks.

These themes provide a conceptual structure for the fair. They engage with questions emerging from current artistic and societal discourses and move between global networks of relationships, moments of destabilization, and a conscious culture of encounter.

This creates a dramaturgy within the exhibition architecture in which individual presentations are placed in a broader context and generate thematic resonance. For visitors, the themes offer new points of entry for engaging with the art; for galleries, they open up opportunities to highlight specific aspects of their programs.

“The strong response from galleries to our thematic framework shows that clearly articulated curatorial ideas can provide meaningful impetus. Dialogue with the galleries is essential for us—the themes evolve and deepen through exchange with the galleries and through the artistic positions submitted.”

Gilles Neiens, Artistic Director, Art Düsseldorf

The fair positions itself as a structured framework that fosters dialogue without prescribing artistic positions. The result is a format that combines curatorial clarity with openness and brings together diverse perspectives on the complexities of the present.

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Three Curatorial Themes Shape Art Düsseldorf 2026

Cosmic Feel - Art as a Space of Resonance.

The theme Cosmic Feel brings together artistic positions that understand the world not as a stable order, but as a dynamic structure of relationships. The cosmic appears here not as a distant realm, but as an experience of resonance, permeability, and connection. Transformation is understood not as an exception, but as a fundamental condition.

Twenty-six galleries have announced works responding to Cosmic Feel including **Soy Capitán** with Paloma Proudfoot and Grace Weaver, **Esther Schipper** (Berlin / Paris / Seoul) with Karolina Jabłońska, **Gether Contemporary** (Copenhagen) with Rune Bosse, and **Elektrohalle Rhomberg** (Salzburg) with Arang Choi.

Panic Attack - Fear as a Condition of the Present

Panic Attack presents artistic positions that understand fear not as an isolated emotion, but as a structural condition of our time. This does not refer to an eruptive state of emergency, but rather to a sustained intensification of overstimulation, acceleration, loss of control, and political and ecological uncertainty.

The submitted works examine moments in which certainties become fragile—spatially, materially, psychologically, or socially. Fear appears not as a pathology, but as a moment of insight: a threshold at which existing systems reach their limits. Panic Attack thus marks not an endpoint, but a starting point for new forms.

Nineteen galleries are presenting works on the theme of Panic Attack, including **Dürst Britt & Mayhew** (The Hague) with Puck Verkade, **Galerie Steinek** (Vienna) with works by Matthias Hermann, and **GALERIE LÆTITIA GORSY** (Leipzig) with Doris Ziegler.

お辞儀 / Ōjigi - A Gesture of Encounter

With the theme **お辞儀 / Ōjigi**, Art Düsseldorf continues and expands its focus on Japan in recent years. Ōjigi refers to the gesture of bowing, a sign of respect, attention, and connection. In the context of Art Düsseldorf 2026, Ōjigi stands for a conscious attitude of encounter between the work, the space, and the viewer. In a present shaped by acceleration and visual density, the theme proposes a different mode of presentation: reduction instead of excess, attention instead of assertion, relationship instead of dominance.

Twelve galleries are participating in the Ōjigi theme, including **Galerie Friese** (Berlin) with Asana Fujikawa, **Gebrüder Lehmann** (Dresden) with a solo presentation in the Paper section by Keiichi Tanaami, **EXILE** (Vienna / Berlin) with works by Kazuko Miyamoto, and **Lohaus Sominsky** (Munich) with its stand concept Fluid World, which brings together positions by Melanie Siegel, Hannes Heinrich, Juergen Staack, and Janina Roider.

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International Practices: Perspectives from South Korea and Japan

For the first time, a solo exhibition from South Korea will be presented at Art Düsseldorf in 2026: **‘J. Park. The Art of Noise’**. Curated by Gregor Jansen, former director of the Kunsthalle Düsseldorf, the exhibition features Korean artist J. Park (Jongkyu Park, born 1966 in Daegu, South Korea). The artist works with the concept of digital noise, transforming image disturbances, faulty signals, and data fragments into structured visual compositions.

Curator **Gregor Jansen** explains:

“Whether in the desert in front of the pyramids or at Art Düsseldorf, J. Park interprets history and the present as a ‘pure signal’ that can be reformulated and viewed through the artist’s digital interpretation—the ‘noise’ of the present.”

The **anonymous art project** will also return from Japan this year. For the third consecutive year, the Tokyo-based collective will present works by contemporary artists from Japan at Art Düsseldorf.

This year’s exhibition, titled **Made in AOMORI / 青森**, is curated by **Eriko Kimura**, director of the Hirosaki Museum of Contemporary Art. It features ten artists connected to the **Tohoku region** in northeastern Japan, whose works engage with the region and its cultural context.

Fragile Realities – A Curated Section by Pola van den Hövel

With the section **Fragile Realities**, curated by **Pola van den Hövel**, Art Düsseldorf 2026 highlights artistic positions that engage with perception, uncertainty, and the fragility of contemporary realities.

The section brings together galleries **founded or run by women** and presents works **exclusively by female artists**.

Participating galleries include **Anahita Sadighi** (Berlin), **Gallery Kaufmann** (Hamburg), **Martinetz** (Cologne), **Reiners Contemporary Art** (Marbella), **Gallery Roberta Keil** (Vienna), **DOD Galerie** (Cologne), **Kristin Hjellegjerde Gallery** (London, Berlin, West Palm Beach), **See You Next Tuesday** (Basel).

Born in Düsseldorf, curator **Pola van den Hövel** (*1991) is the interim director of Villa Schöningen in Potsdam. After completing a master’s degree in public history, she developed an interdisciplinary practice that brings together art, history, and spatial contexts. Her work explores the physical, spatial, and social conditions of the present. In addition to her institutional role, she curates exhibitions and writes texts for catalogues and artistic publications. Van den Hövel is also co-founder of the Berlin project space FKA Six.

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More Space for Sculpture: Expansion of Sculpture Spots with New Outdoor Formats

The **Sculpture Spots**, which have been particularly popular with galleries and were previously distributed across both exhibition halls, will now be expanded to include outdoor locations. Galleries may apply each year for these curated presentation formats.

New this year is the opportunity to apply for an outdoor sculpture spot at the **Künstlerverein Malkasten** as well as for an installation in the **Vitrine am Wasserturm**, located directly next to the main entrance of Art Düsseldorf.

In 2026, sculptures by Carl André (Konrad Fischer Gallery), Norbert Bisky (Esther Schipper), Jürgen Staack (Lohaus Sominsky), and Xenia Bond (City Gallery Vienna), among others, will be on display.

Selections for both exhibition halls have been made by **Pola van den Hövel**, for the Künstlerverein Malkasten by **Christoph Westermeier**, and for the Vitrine am Wasserturm by **Julika Bosch**.

With the further development of its thematic framework, the strengthening of curated sections, and the expansion of its presentation formats, Art Düsseldorf 2026 reinforces its position as a clearly structured fair that combines international perspectives with strong regional roots.

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About Art Düsseldorf

Art Düsseldorf is a contemporary art fair. Since its founding in 2017, it has established itself as an international meeting place for galleries, collectors, curators, and art enthusiasts.

The fair presents a curated selection of national and international galleries and emphasizes a focused, quality-driven program. It positions itself as a partner to the exhibiting galleries and as a platform for exchange and networking within the German-speaking and international art market.

The venue is Areal Böhler in Düsseldorf, whose historic industrial architecture and generous natural light provide a distinctive setting for the fair.

Through its program and accompanying formats, Art Düsseldorf fosters dialogue between galleries, artists, collectors, and institutions and contributes to strengthening North Rhine-Westphalia as an important art region.

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