

# KÜNSTLERHAUS BETHANIEN

P R E S S R E L E A S E

Berlin, 11th May 2018

Dear Colleagues,

We are pleased to invite you to the opening of the following exhibitions:

GUGLIELMO CASTELLI  
Goodmorning Bambino

SAMIRA HODAEI  
Cinema Europe

KANAKO ISHII  
Re-Landscape

THOMAS KELLNER  
You & Me

Joint opening: THURSDAY, 24TH MAY, FROM 7 PM  
Showroom at Kottbusser Straße 10

Exhibitions: 25TH MAY – 17TH JUNE 2018  
Tuesday – Sunday, 14 – 19h

ATELIERS UND BÜROS: Kohlfurter Straße 41-43 · 10999 Berlin · SCHAURAUM: Kottbusser Straße 10

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RECHTSFORM: Künstlerhaus Bethanien GmbH · SITZ: Berlin · AG Charlottenburg

GESCHÄFTSFÜHRUNG: Christoph Tannert · Andrea Boche · HANDELSREGISTER: HRG 8089

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## GUGLIELMO CASTELLI

Guglielmo Castelli's artistic practice is based on a profound interest on the body and its relation to the space. His exhibition *Goodmorning Bambino* presents newly developed bright and large-scale paintings with full-figured bodies in uncertain environments that are brought to life through an intense work process. From the sketch-book to the final painting back onto an unprepared, drawing-like canvas, Castelli employs a multitude of experimental layers as he explores his subject matters, carefully selecting, testing, reforming and translating them.

Understanding the body as a kind of landscape, Castelli forms strong but melancholic, vigorous but fragile and violent but soft distortions by mapping them onto his figures and building the spaces around them. By unfolding layered fields of oil colour and pastel, cinematographically staged fluid figures reach beyond the frame, exist between the spaces and transform their surrounding into scenes, which the visitors are invited to enter to immerse themselves with the untold stories and bodily reaches of Castelli's protagonists. With his cautiously created ambivalences, that leave the viewer uncertain of the depicted destinies of his evolving, dissolving and merging bodies, Castelli developed a distinctive iconographic language that interconnects our contemporary state of instability, uncertainty and fleetingness with the constant desire for balance, safety and certitude.

GUGLIELMO CASTELLI \*1987 in Turin, Italy, lives and works in Turin. He studied Scenography for Theatre at the Accademia Albertina di Belle Arti di Torino. His work has been part of numerous regional and international shows, including CHALLENGING BEAUTY. Insights into Italian Contemporary Art at the Parkview Museum, Singapore (2018, curated by Lorand Hegyi), the Disegni – Artissima Art Fair, Turin (2017, curated by Luís Silva and João Mourão) as well as ASOMATOGNOSIA at the Royal Lounge of the Torino Porta Nuova Train Station (2017, curated by Treti Galaxie). In 2016, Forbes included him in the "30 Under 30" list for European Art.

Guglielmo Castelli is a grantee at Künstlerhaus Bethanien through the generous support of private funders. More at: [www.guglielmocastelli.com](http://www.guglielmocastelli.com) and [www.francescaantonini.it](http://www.francescaantonini.it)

## SAMIRA HODAEI

Iranian artist Samira Hodaei is presenting her latest ensemble of work, developed in Berlin and entitled *Cinema Europe*, at Künstlerhaus Bethanien. This represents the outcome and visual expression of her continued observations of border areas between public, private and abandoned architectural spaces and their influence on the existential reality of those people who have been linked with them.

Hodaei's installation, which combines everyday objects and painting, comprises an empathic reminiscence about "Cinema Europe", a film theatre opened at the heart of Teheran in 1968 and known all across the country; it was one of the biggest cinemas in a nation of film-enthusiasts.

Due to the difficulties in film production under the political conditions of the new age, censorship, the banning of foreign films, and a devastating fire, the once so lively centre of cultural exchange now faces imminent demolition.

In Berlin Samira Hodaei collected together old cinema seats made of wood and installed them together with a "big screen" made using black chadors (the cloths with which women in Iran veil themselves in public) in the exhibition space; a flickering light projection offers a reminder of the light from the projectors long since extinguished in "Cinema Europe". The ensemble is supplemented by small-format paintings, produced using a specific painting technique developed by Hodaei: the artist uses glass paints from Iran or Turkey and dabs them directly from the tube onto the carrier, so that her characteristic women's portraits emerge from the pixel-like dots.

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With her highly impressive symbolic reconstruction of the cinema, Hodaei has created a universal space of remembrance in Berlin – a decidedly artistic manifestation against forgetfulness, and for coming together and free exchange between people all over the world.

A **catalogue** is appearing for the exhibition, with numerous illustrations, an essay by Christoph Tannert, and an interview with the artist by Arsalan Mohammed.

**SAMIRA HODAEI** \*1981 in Teheran/ Iran, lives and works in Teheran. She completed a study of art at Alzahra Art University in Teheran.

With generous support from the **Oryx Foundation**, since 2010 she has also been working regularly in Switzerland. She is currently receiving a grant from the foundation enabling her to participate in the International Studio Programme as a guest in Künstlerhaus Bethanien. | More at: [www.samirahodaei.com](http://www.samirahodaei.com)

## KANAKO ISHII

Kanako Ishii's works are characterized by her engagement with metaphysical boundaries and apparent opposites – past and present, memory and forgetting, presence and absence.

Her current work, a video installation to be seen in Künstlerhaus Bethanien, is about childhood. In an encounter with texts by German philosopher Walter Benjamin, Ishii develops a visual concentration of the subject, which is linked irrevocably to questions of memory and the relationship between present and past. In this context, the emphasis is less on a showing of concrete objects or motifs and far more on the image's potential as a medium of remembrance and its function as a passage to the imaginary: rather than reverting to the representational, Ishii uses silence and delicate movements to reflect on how images evoke things past without simply reproducing or repeating them in the process. The "images of memory" that evolve here are dynamic constellations and transitory zones of passage and transition, opening up our perception to a ghostly space of the remembered, the dreamt and the imaginary.

**KANAKO ISHII** \*1984 in Tokyo, she spent her early childhood in Frankfurt am Main. She studied oil painting in Tokyo and Paris. In 2010 she came to Berlin on a DAAD fellowship, where she studied sculpture at the College of Art Berlin-Weissensee as from 2012. Ishii has already staged numerous solo exhibitions, incl. in the Japanese-German Centre Berlin (2015), the Goethe Institute in Tokyo (2014), at Tokushima LED Art Festival (2013), and in Art Line Kashiwa (2010 / 2011).

She is currently a guest at Künstlerhaus Bethanien, receiving a grant from the **Bunkacho - Agency for Cultural Affairs, Government of Japan**. | More at: [www.kanakoishii.com](http://www.kanakoishii.com)

## THOMAS KELLNER

In the exhibition *You & Me* Thomas Kellner (\*1966 in Bonn) is showing 20 works by 17 artists with whom he has exchanged 10 of his works over the course of 10 years.

In this exhibition, the "You" signifies first of all the other artist, whose work he exhibits in his studio and with whom he will perhaps exchange a work. But "You" is also the work of art, which Kellner invites into his home in order to get to know it, just as the visitor to an exhibition is confronted by something new. "You" is the guest in the studio. There cannot be a "You" without the corresponding "Me". "You" and "Me" are like Yin and Yang, mutually necessary, correspondent parts of a whole.

The presentation focuses on images of people, produced in artistic exploration of the body and portraiture.

Contrasting to these, Kellner's own images of architecture pose questions about our view of the world, which is

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generally defined even today by the central perspective of the Renaissance. Kellner dissolves this central focal point and makes a different suggestion: the multiperspective parts, chopped into various viewing angles, merge into a new whole suggesting a novel image of the world, no longer static but synthetic-dynamic.

Thomas Kellner sees himself not only as an artist but also as a networker and negotiator. For 20 years now, he has been using his studio in Siegen as a hub for his global activities, the aim being to promote exchange among artists. Kellner invites colleagues from all over the world to annual meetings, which have already culminated in a number of surprisingly original and unusual exhibitions.

*You & Me* shows works by **Lili Almog** (USA), **Marco Ambrosi** (I), **Max de Esteban** (E), **Diane Ducruet** (F), **April Gertler** (D), **Lorena Guillén Vaschetti** (RA), **Liu Lijie** (CHN), **Katarzyna Majak** (PL), **EJ Major** (GB), **Katharina Mouratidi** (D), **Wawi Navarroza** (RP), **Kitty Paranagua** (BR), **Diana Scherer** (NL), **Daniel Schumann** (D), **Urszula Tarasiewicz** (PL), **Rebecca Norris Webb** (USA), **Qiu Zhen** (CHN).