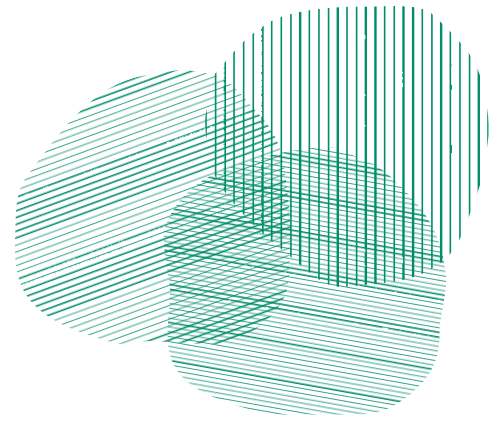


SKIN

MEMBRANE
ORGAN
ARCHIVE



An exhibition by Frauenmuseum Berlin e.V.
in cooperation with alpha nova & galerie futura,
curated by Julie August and Katharina Koch

ZAK / Galerie / OG

Zentrum für Aktuelle Kunst, Zitadelle, 13599 Berlin – Opening February 9th, 2023, 7pm

SKIN – MEMBRANE, ORGAN, ARCHIVE brings together works by 28 international artists living in Berlin. Skin is a supermaterial: malleable and flexible, breathable and self-regenerating, a protective membrane for bodies, but at the same time also a target: vulnerable and sensitive. Above all, however, skin is charged with meaning. It is socially and culturally coded, determines identities, is an object of politics, religion, and also an economic factor.

The artists engage with the topic of skin via video, audio, photography, sculpture, painting, drawing, collage, installation, and performances. Juxtaposed with the theme is the historically patriarchal exhibition venue – the Spandau Citadel. The exhibition confronts the male-dominated site with feminist counter-narratives through the thematic complexity of skin, which makes visible the interconnectedness of sexism, racism, classism, ageism, and ableism; bears witness to individual and collective archival practices; and as a simultaneously sensual, resistant, and vulnerable organ becomes the starting point of artistic analysis. The works are grouped according to three main topics, which are bundled under the terms MEMBRANE, ORGAN, and ARCHIVE. However, these are not to be understood as static attributes, but rather as associative thematic fields that lightly structure the exhibition, which are porous and entangled with one another.

MEMBRANE: These works deal with skin as protection and a projection surface, as well as its social implications. For example, the floor sculpture *The Distance Between Me and Everything Else* (2017) by Mehtap Baydu shows a bodily shell shed by the artist. Baydu thereby reflects on the alienation of the self in the wake of normative assigned roles in different political and cultural contexts. On the other hand, the emergency blanket in Harriet Groß contribution (2022), which also lays on the floor and appears to be moving with the slightest breeze, evokes scenarios of flight and catastrophe.

ORGAN: Works in this section deal with skin as an organ of perception in the sense of touch, erotics, disgust, vulnerability, and stigmatization, as well as their materialities. For example, the installation *Doro & Moran* (2022) by Moran Shavit and Dorothea Nold consists of a photo series that visualizes Doro's treatment for breast cancer and Moran's concurrent pregnancy – two existential experiences, which have left physical and psychic traces on the skin. In *Skin Studies* (2018), the artist Margherita Pevere manifests her fascination with microbial cellulose, whose materiality resembles skin and meat. The series consists of a collection of samples that Pevere cultivated from bacterial colonies in nutrient fluid, dried, and cultivated on Japanese paper.

Tina Bara
Mehtap Baydu
Anguezomo Mba Bikoro
Anna Bromley
Yvon Chabrowski
Alba D'Urbano
Manja Ebert
Yishay Garbasz
Ina Geißler
Andrea Golla
Harriet Groß
Isabel Kerkermeier
Rachel Kohn
Verena Kyselka
Julia Lübbecke
Loredana Nemes
Dorothea Nold
Margherita Pevere
Moran Sanderovich
Franziska Schaum
Zuzanna Schumkalla
Moran Shavit
Zuzanna Skiba
Anja Sonnenburg
Marianne Stoll
Ivonne Thein
Sophie Utikal
Gisela Weimann

ARCHIVE: Works that take into consideration the skin as a repository of knowledge and a space where experiences are inscribed. Sophie Utikal continues her series *There is No Separation* (2022) with a large-scale textile work. The artist pursues experiences like pain, transgenerational trauma, as well as the alienation from one's own body in relation to *white* normativity. However, her textile images, which unite different layers and embroidered scars through appliqués, also offer poetic possibilities for healing. Zuzanna Schmutkalla's installation (*untitl.*), finds a surprising metaphor for (also unintentionally) inscribing experiences with burrs adhering to wafer-thin gauze, while Verena Kyselka interweaves elements from her own artistic archive (which in turn also includes, for example, costumes she designed – second skin), in a collage-like manner with newly created work components.

An emblematic work in the exhibition, which unites all of the three terms, is the installation *Becoming* by Yishay Garbasz, which consists of 32 analogue animated moving images in a monumental zoetrope, which will be presented in Europe for the first time. In *Becoming*, the artist deals with her gender reassignment and the implications of "becoming a woman" in a public procedure by photographically displaying her naked, changing body, thus addressing a highly political issue: making the experiences of trans*people visible beyond their social exclusion. From an interior perspective, Garbasz shows "hautnah" how physicality and gender are situated in a continuous state of becoming and make normative gender attributions obsolete. This work, which oscillates between performance and installation, is groundbreaking for the exhibition context, as it acts as a hinge between exhibit and performative staging and also directly interacts with the audience.

Many of the 28 artists have a transnational background. They live in Berlin, nevertheless their experiences, influences, and connections are rooted in different sociopolitical contexts. The diversity of the artistic positions particularly challenges the exhibition site determined by regional history, bringing forth new narratives that virtually cover the Spandau Citadel with a new "skin". A bi-lingual exhibition documentation (DE/EN) will complement the exhibition through illustrations and texts, as well as essays by interdisciplinary authors (Edna Bonhomme, Christine Irrgang, Barbara Oettl, Regine Rapp). In addition, there will be accompanying events with a catalog presentation and panel discussion, performances, guided tours by curators as well as artists, along with film screenings.

We would be happy to send further information about the artists, as well as high resolution images that can be used free of charge upon request.

ZAK / Galerie / OG
Center for Contemporary Art
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Am Juliusturm 64, 13599 Berlin
Open from: 10.2.–7.5.2023
Fr – Mi 10–17 Uhr, Do 13–20 Uhr
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