

**K20**

**Press Release**  
**12. Februar 2021**  
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**Stiftung Kunstsammlung**  
**Nordrhein-Westfalen**  
**Grabbeplatz 5**  
**40213 Düsseldorf**  
**+49 (0) 211 83 81 730**  
**presse@kunstsammlung.de**

## **Press Folder: Coming To Voice**

**Coming to Voice**  
**Graduates of the Düsseldorf Academy of Art 2020**  
**February 12 – March 21, 2021**  
**K21**

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Attachments: List of Works, Provinzial Art Scholarship

### **Text and image material for downloading:**

Exhibition views:

<https://www.kunstsammlung.de/de/press/>

Individual works:

<https://we.tl/t-ekn0cFpv0V>

<https://we.tl/t-ivnF4DuuXQ>

**#ComingToVoice**  
**#kunstakademiedüsseldorf**  
**#K21**

### Coming to Voice

Graduates of the Düsseldorf Academy of Art 2020

February 12 – March 21, 2021

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For the third time in a row, the Kunstsammlung Nordrhein-Westfalen is cooperating with the Düsseldorf Academy of Art. The exhibition *Coming to Voice* presents works by roughly seventy recent graduates of the internationally renowned art academy and asks: Which themes preoccupy the young generation of artists and how do these manifest themselves in their works?

Susanne Gaensheimer, Director of the Kunstsammlung Nordrhein-Westfalen, emphasizes how important it is—especially at K21, the venue for contemporary art—to offer the next generation of artists a platform and thus “to keep a wakeful eye on the new. We are therefore all the more pleased to present in the exhibition *Coming to Voice* at K21 current works by the approximately seventy graduates of the year 2020 of the internationally renowned art academy. For many of the young artists, this is their first institutional exhibition, and we can thus give them a wonderful kickoff at the beginning of their careers.”

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“This is the third time that the graduates of the academy have been given the great opportunity to present their works to a wide audience through this exhibition in the Kunstsammlung,” explains Karl-Heinz Petzinka, Rector of the Düsseldorf Academy of Art, and continues: “This year, like last year already, has been a very difficult year for all artists! I am thus all the happier that, despite everything, this exhibition can take place in a digital form, for which I am very grateful to the Kunstsammlung and Susanne Gaensheimer. In addition, the Friends and Patrons of the Düsseldorf Academy of Art have made the first graduate catalog for this exhibition series possible through their generous support. In addition to Provinzial Rheinland, which has supported this exhibition series from the beginning with a very important scholarship, the academy was able to win the Düsseldorf-based company von Rundstedt for another graduate scholarship, which is so important at the moment. For this, I would like to express my sincere thanks to all the awarders and sponsors.”

Based on discussions with the artists, a concept of allocation and distribution of the individual works in the exhibition space of K21 was developed, which reflects the interests and motivations of the artists and is divided into five thematic blocks: Intuition, Relation, Destination, Formation, and Innovation.

Under the heading *Relation* are works that deal with human interaction and communication and examine the status of artists in relation to society. The approaches brought together in the section *Destination* strive for diagnoses of the present and the future which oscillate between dystopian and utopian designs.

*Intuition* focuses on works that aim to challenge one’s own imagination. Here, it is a matter of a conscious attitude towards indeterminacy and of avoiding direct social statements in the works. In numerous conversations, intuition was cited as the driving starting point for the artists’ own creative work. Many of the works do not formulate a clear position, do not

deal with a superordinate concept, and do not make any socio-political statements. Rather, they are designed to challenge viewers and their imagination. One could speak of a conscious attitude toward indeterminacy, which is reflected in both the young artists' working methods and the works themselves. In this context, the traditional pictorial media obviously still offer the best possibilities of expression.

The term *Formation* refers to conceptual works that reflect and analyze the artistic medium. The section *Innovation* presents works that explore the digital possibilities for art in various media in terms of both form and content.

This thematic orientation is, however, not intended to force the artists' works into conclusive formats, but rather to function as a guide of sorts to map out the young graduates' multifaceted understanding of art in generous, fragmentary sketches.

The title of the exhibition—*Coming to Voice*—is borrowed from a work submitted by Luki von der Gracht for the exhibition. It expresses something that can be related to all the participants in the exhibition: After graduation and in art in general, it is about finding one's own voice with which one wants to speak, and which should be heard.

For the Kunstsammlung, the exhibition offers the opportunity to enter into an exchange with a young generation of artists and to promote them at the beginning of their careers. Within the frameworks of the exhibition, the Provinzial Rheinland insurance company is awarding an art scholarship for the third time. This year, the "Stiftung Junge Kunst" (Young Art Foundation) of the Friends of the Kunstsammlung Nordrhein-Westfalen will again support the graduates of the academy by purchasing works of art presented in the exhibition. This year, for the first time, the von Rundstedt Promotional Scholarship will be awarded to one of the graduates.

**With works by:**

Felix Adam, Julia Adelgren, Sebastian Bathe, Jonas Bechtloff, Johannes Becker, Johanna Clara Becker, David Ben-Benjamin, Rebekka Benzenberg, Sven Raik Bernick, Carl Brandt, Lea Buratovic, Jennifer Delhasse, Rike Droescher, Lika Dzhalagoniya, Omar El Lahib, لؤي دلاحيه, Laura-Helene Förster, Johannes Freitag, Stephanie Friedrich, Paul Galas, Josephine Garbe, Harm Gerdes, Michel Gomm, Aljoscha Gößling, Eva Haupt, Lukas Heerich, J. Philipp Hohl, Melanie Höhn, Max Pimperelli, Sophia Hose, Tristan Ulysses Hutgens, Dennis Kauzner, Vera Keckstein, Hagen Keller, Yaël Kempf, Alesha Klein, Björn Knapp, Jonas Kohn, Dimitrij Kozakov, Verena Langenberg, Feng Li, Pia Litzenberger, Harkeerat Mangat, Katerina Matsagos, Vivien Mohamed, Sean Mullan, Leonore Müller, Helena Münch, Jongmin Oh, Lukas Panek, Yoor Park, Lasse Peters, Marleen Rothaus, Lara Rottinghaus, Lex Rütten & Jana Kerima Stolzer, Peter Schlegel, Sabine Schmidpeter, Kathi Schulz & Steven A. Bjornson, Insa Schülting, Paul Schwaderer, Malte Schwiddessen, Nils Levin Sehnert, Dahye Son, Daphne Stahl, Malwina Steinhoff, Eric Ventker, Klara Virnich, Luki von der Gracht, Di Yang

*Curators: Florentine Muhry, Cécile Huber*

**Publication**

A catalog is being published for the first time to accompany the exhibition. Published by the Kunstsammlung Nordrhein-Westfalen and the Düsseldorf Academy of Art. With a foreword by Susanne Gaensheimer and Karl-Heinz Petzinka, an introduction by Cécile Huber and Florentine Muhry, and contributions by the participating artists. Designed by Florence Meunier / John Morgan Studio, London. Approx. 159 pages, € 16.

**Digital Program Accompanying the Exhibition**

Due to measures to contain the Corona pandemic, the exhibition can be experienced digitally in the form of an extensive documentation of the works on the website of the Kunstsammlung as of February 12, 2021.

Also as of February 12, 2021, a **tour with the curators** Florentine Muhry and Cécile Huber provides insight into the exhibition on site.

A **mini-series** with contributions by the artists can be viewed on **Instagram TV**. It will be broadcast at regular intervals throughout the duration of the exhibition on the Kunstsammlung's Instagram channel. The videos range from interviews and online performances to artistic contributions.

**K21****UNTITLED. The Young Accompanying Program for Everyone under 30**

The participants of "UNTITLED" discover modern and contemporary art in an atmosphere characterized by openness, experimentation, and lateral thinking. To accompany the exhibition *Coming to Voice*, two students at the University of Düsseldorf developed so-called SWAPS—online talks with an informal character. As part of the mediation program, they take up contemporary discourses thematized in the exhibition and discuss them with young graduates of the art academy and other protagonists, with the involvement of the audience in an open round of talks via Zoom. The links to the individual SWAP Talks will be published shortly.

On March 3, 2021, as part of the regular **KPMG Evenings**, there will be a digital artist talk with this year's award winners and the young art critic Chloe Stead.

A **Spotify playlist** with favorite songs of the young artists invites listeners to discover the musical preferences of a whole graduate class.

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**Partners and Sponsors**

In cooperation with the Düsseldorf Academy of Art

Provinzial Rheinland Versicherung

Friends of the Kunstsammlung Nordrhein-Westfalen

Rundstedt & Partner

Media Partner: Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung

Supported by the Ministry of Culture and Science of the State  
of North Rhine-Westphalia

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## The Award Winners of this Year's Graduate Exhibition at K21

Within the frameworks of the exhibition *Coming to Voice. Graduates of the Düsseldorf Academy of Art 2020* at K21, the Provinzial Rheinland insurance company is awarding an art scholarship for the third time. This year, the "Stiftung Junge Kunst" (Young Art Foundation) of the Friends of the Kunstsammlung Nordrhein-Westfalen is again supporting the graduates of the Art Academy by purchasing works of art presented in the exhibition. This year, for the first time, the von Rundstedt Promotional Scholarship will be awarded to one of the graduates.

The prestigious juries justify their decisions as follows:

### Stiftung Junge Kunst

**Jury statement of the "Stiftung Junge Kunst" regarding the acquisition of the work by Yoora Park** (b. 1991 in Ulsan, South Korea): *Untitled, 2020–21*, sound installation

"Yoora Park's multi-layered sound composition fascinates by combining various immersive tonalities and individual mythologies."

**Jury statement of the "Stiftung Junge Kunst" regarding the acquisition of the work by Lukas Heerich** (b. 1989 in Düsseldorf, Germany), *Rise / Fall, 2021*, aluminum, stainless steel, compression driver, bass driver, amplifier, software, transducer, cable

The sound installation convinces by its sculptural quality in combination with a minimalistic composition and the acoustic effect. Both appear in a clearly thought-out form.

**Jury statement of the "Stiftung Junge Kunst" regarding the acquisition of the work by Björn Knapp** (b. 1988 in Bensheim, Germany), *Bust (#3), 2020*, oil on canvas

"The jury was fascinated by the photographically founded finding of form within the painterly process, which reflects the role of the fragmented body in a digitized world."

### Members of the jury appointed by the "Stiftung Junge Kunst" of the Friends of the Kunstsammlung NRW

Susanne Gaensheimer, Director of the Kunstsammlung Nordrhein-Westfalen  
Anna Pfau (Advisory Board of the Friends of the Kunstsammlung Nordrhein-Westfalen, Member of the Board of Trustees of the Stiftung Junge Kunst, Head of the Julia Stoschek Collection Düsseldorf)  
Thomas Ruff and Rebekka Seubert

The Friends of the Kunstsammlung Nordrhein-Westfalen generate funds from the endowment assets of the “Stiftung Junge Kunst” (Young Art Foundation), which was established from the bequest of the founder Helme Prinzen. The aim of the foundation is to support eligible artists. Since 2008, works of art by young artists have been acquired and handed over to the Kunstsammlung as permanent loans in accordance with the foundation’s statutes. The foundation has a Board of Trustees composed of members from the Board of Directors and the Advisory Board of the Friends of the Kunstsammlung. The members are Robert Rademacher (Chairman of the Board of the Friends of the Kunstsammlung), Susanne Gaensheimer (Director of the Kunstsammlung), Leopold Freiherr von Diergardt (Member of the Board), and the two Advisory Board members Anna-Alexandra Pfau and Gabriel Sulkowski.

## von Rundstedt Promotional Scholarship

**This year’s winner of the von Rundstedt Promotional Scholarship is:**

**Luki von der Gracht** (b. 1992 in Aachen, Germany), *Coming to Voice, 2020*, inkjet prints on Dibond, video, sound, Plexiglas stool

### Jury statement:

“The artist sees his work as a manifesto for responsibility, change, and healing, and a place for searching, questioning, pausing, and hope. What drives us? That which gives us the power to be, to formulate, to stand for something? That which tries to make us what we can be? What do you call that which pulls us down? That which pulls us forcefully in the other direction?”

His work convinced the jury with its intense, sensitive, cross-media exploration and questioning of identity. The incredibly broad spectrum of his artistic work ranges from texts, poems, drawings, objects, video and sound works, photographs and collages, spatial installations and performance to his own band ‘Die hässlichen Vögel.’”

### Members of the jury:

Dorothee Achenbach (art consultant and art journalist), Isabelle von Rundstedt (art consultant and curator), Robert Fleck (Prorector of the Düsseldorf Academy of Art), Gregor Jansen (Director of the Kunsthalle Düsseldorf), and Rupert Pfab (gallerist and art historian)

This year, for the first time, the von Rundstedt Promotional Scholarship in the amount of 10,000 EUR will be awarded to one of the graduates of the Düsseldorf Academy of Art. The long-standing tradition of supporting artists from the academy, which began in 2007, is being continued here. What is new is that these are now artists who have already graduated from the academy in the previous year.

“We are pleased to be able to award the first von Rundstedt Promotional Scholarship to a graduate in these difficult times and to give them something back that they give us every day: color in the dreariness of everyday life. Because especially now, when everything is closed, society needs art and people who work creatively,” explains Isabelle von Rund-

stedt, Art Consultant for von Rundstedt. "Actually, all participating artists deserve a prize. In the current situation, it takes special courage to give your best, despite all the limitations. Precisely because it is not possible right now to present art and award ceremonies to the public, it is important for us to set an example and support the artists."

### **Provinzial Art Scholarship 2021**

**Rebekka Benzenberg** (b. 1990 in Duisburg, Germany), *actually, i'm not like that 2, 2020*, rollable steel frame, 12 pressure chamber loudspeakers, power amplifier, mixer, MP3 player, floodlights, steel, fur, bleaching agent

#### **Jury statement regarding the Provinzial Art Scholarship 2021**

"Rebekka Benzenberg creates sculptures that expose alternative structures of meaning with personal and performative references and refuse unambiguous interpretations. She combines materials such as fur, chains, steel, and nylon with sound, light, and text to create physically present installations. The striking contrasts of fur and steel, pop and slogans create immediate tensions and a harsh poetry. With these powerful realignments, she clearly stands out and is, in our eyes, absolutely worthy of distinction."

#### **Members of the jury of the Provinzial Art Scholarship:**

Eva Birkenstock (Director, Kunstverein Düsseldorf), Julia Höner (Artistic Director, KAI 10), Gereon Krebber (artist and professor, Düsseldorf Academy of Art), Astrid Legge (Curator, Provinzial Rheinland Versicherung), Maria Müller-Schareck (Curator, Kunstsammlung NRW)



### Artists' Biographies:

#### Rebekka Benzenberg

1990 born in Duisburg  
2013–2020 studies Fine Art at the Düsseldorf Academy of Art in the classes of Rita McBride, Franka Hörnschemeyer, and Ellen Gallagher  
2020 master student in the class of Franka Hörnschemeyer

#### Luki von der Gracht

1992 born in Aachen  
2019–2020 class of Dominique Gonzalez-Foerster (master student), Düsseldorf Academy of Art  
2016–2018 class of Trisha Donnelly, Düsseldorf Academy of Art  
2014–2016 class of Rita McBride, Düsseldorf Academy of Art  
2013–2014 studies English Literature and Gender Studies, Humboldt University, Berlin  
2013 Abitur, Gymnasium Zitadelle, Jülich

#### Lukas Heerich

1989 born in Düsseldorf  
2019–2020 studies Fine Art at the Städelschule, Frankfurt am Main  
2016–2020 studies Fine Art at the Düsseldorf Academy of Art  
2018 master student in the class of Andreas Gursky, Düsseldorf Academy of Art  
2013–2016 studies Media Arts at the Academy of Media Arts Cologne  
2010–2013 studies Sound & Image at the Robert Schumann Conservatory, Düsseldorf

#### Björn Knapp

1988 born in Bensheim  
2012–2015 studies at the State Academy of Fine Arts Karlsruhe in the classes of Gustav Kluge and Marcel van Eeden  
2015–2020 studies at the Düsseldorf Academy of Art in the classes of Andreas Schulze and Thomas Scheibitz (master student)

#### Yoora Victoria Park

1991 born in Ulsan, South Korea  
2020 Media & Fine Art Diploma 2, Academy of Media Arts Cologne  
2014–2020 studies at the Düsseldorf Academy of Art in the classes of Trisha Donnelly, Peter Doig, and Rebecca Warren  
Akademiebrief (Diploma)

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2016	master student in the class of Rebecca Warren
2012–2014	studies at the University of Fine Arts Münster in the class of Asye Erkmen
2011–2012	DSH 2 / Sprachenzentrum, University of Münster
2004–2010	The Purcell School for Young Musicians, Bushey, UK
2003–2004	Putney High School GDST, London, UK

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