

The exhibition features film interviews, an independent video work, a sound collage and photographs:

Celina Basra	59 Min	„Did you know that most artists’ incomes are below the subsistence level?“
Heidi Sill	36 Min	Video, 47 sec, colour, sound
Natascha Ungeheuer	23 Min	
Camila Paz Araya	18 Min	
Wiebke Löper	32 Min	
Sonya Schönberger	29 Min	„What advice would you give to female artists who are just starting their careers?“
Alice Dittmar	23 Min	Video, 14 min, colour, sound
Justina Moncevičiūtė	18 Min	
Frauke Boggasch	29 Min	
Daniela Friebe	38 Min	
Mireille Moga	20 Min	‘The Brutal Truth’
Maria Vedder	23 Min	A collage of American self-help titles for artists
Bettina Scholz	23 Min	Audio 2:30 min
Julio Paradise	27 Min	
Malika Chalabi	16 Min	
Käthe Kruse	45 Min	Studio views
Sabine Dehnel	31 Min	Heidi Sill, 2024
Caroline Schnitzer	42 Min	Käthe Kruse, 2024
Anna Fiegen	24 Min	Frauke Boggasch, 2024
Irina Novarese	25 Min	
Video, colour, sound		

Friederike von Rauch (b. 1967) lives and works in Berlin. Trained as a silversmith and industrial designer at the Berlin University of the Arts (UdK Berlin), today she works as a visual artist with a focus on photography. Her reduced, atmospherically dense works have been widely exhibited, including at the Deichtorhallen in Hamburg, Berlinische Galerie in Berlin, and i8 Gallery in Reykjavik. Her work is represented in renowned collections (e.g. at Deutsche Bank and the German Bundestag). She has been developing socio-cultural projects with Stefanie Schweiger since 2021.

Stefanie Schweiger (b. 1979, lives in Berlin) is a visual artist with a focus on photography. Her work is rooted in transcultural contexts between Asia and Europe, operating in the field of tension between the familiar and the foreign, knowledge and the lack thereof, and representation and projection. She studied art history in Frankfurt and photography at Lette Verein in Berlin. Her photographic work has been exhibited internationally and combines documentary approaches with a poetic, narrative visual language.



The videos will be available online to everyone interested until the end of September.
www.vonrauch.com/disruptive-realities

Haus am Kleistpark Projektraum
29 August - 28 September 2025

Information
July 2025

Friederike von Rauch Stefanie Schweiger DISRUPTIVE REALITIES

About artistic work, its conditions -
and the resilience of female artists

In the exhibition *DISRUPTIVE REALITIES – On working in the arts, its conditions – and the resilience of female artists*, Friederike von Rauch and Stefanie Schweiger deploy artistic and documentary perspectives to examine the effects of contemporary crises on the realities of life and work of female artists. The exhibition opens up a space for reflection: on structural inequality, the relationship between art and society, and about what resilience can mean today.

Today’s global crises are multilayered. Climate catastrophes, war, political instability, and social polarization are the marks of our times. As public discourse sways between feelings of defensiveness and being overwhelmed, the field of art is coming under pressure as well. The idea that art exists outside of social framework conditions is an illusion. When funding structures collapse, institutions react from a place of uncertainty, and the economic basis of cultural practitioners remains fragile, artistic freedom can no longer be taken for granted.

Female artists are especially affected by this. They operate in a field of tension shaped by structural inequality, family obligations, invisible labor, and economic instability—often within an art industry that is largely opaque and selective.

DISRUPTIVE REALITIES sees itself as an open, living project where voices and data, biographies and statistics, art and analysis are in conversation with one another. Aside from slogans of perseverance, what might resilience look like? How can we engage with the topic of structural inequality without being reductive towards individual experiences?

The exhibition rejects simple narratives. Instead, it focuses on moments of ambivalence, fracture, and tension. Resilience is not understood as a strength but as a practice—as an ongoing negotiation of one’s position, stance, and visibility. Thus, *DISRUPTIVE REALITIES* is also a statement: for artistic autonomy, structural visibility, and the right to complexity. It is aimed at artists, institutions, funding organizations, the media—and at a broad audience. For the political dimensions of artistic work are not just evident in the artwork itself, but also in the conditions of its creation. For this project, Friederike von Rauch and Stefanie Schweiger conducted interviews with twenty female artists from various backgrounds, disciplines, and age groups, exploring themes of labor, resistance, exhaustion, and hope. These conversations form the basis for a polyphonic archive of the present that connects personal experiences with socio-political issues. The exhibition presents filmed interviews, video art, a sound collage, and photographs. In addition, it displays recent statistical data on the social and economic state of female artists in Berlin.

Exhibition
29 August - 28 September
2025

Panel discussion
Thursday 18 September
7 pm
with Klaus Lederer, Heidi Sill
and Hergen Wöbken
Moderated by
Dr Dorothea Schöne

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Free admission
No barrier-free access
Tue-Sun 11am-6pm

An exhibition of the Department of Art, Culture, Museen Tempelhof-Schöneberg. The project is funded by the Bezirkskulturfonds, of the Alfred Töpfer Foundation and the Burger Collection



DISRUPTIVE REALITIES

On working in the arts, its conditions – and the resilience of female artists

How does art come about? And at what price?
How does it feel to be a female artist?

Art does not just happen.
What you see is just a fraction of it:
You do not see the unpaid rehearsals. Nor the rejected proposals. Nor the research without pay. Nor the side job that pays for the studio and oftentimes the art itself too.

We are female artists.
We work with light and language, with the body, with sound, color, and installation.
We live with question marks--usually without fixed contracts, reserve assets, or security.
We navigate through structures that are meant to include us, but seldom support us.

The freedom of art we hear so much about?
A story that we tell.
Its price: exhaustion. Instability. Dependency.
It clashes with economic realities:
unpaid care work, lack of time, structural pressure--
and the fear of not being enough.

The glittery surface of the art world conceals this:
Many of us are living on the edge.
Production budgets? The exception.
Pay? A stroke of luck.
Pension plans? An unfulfilled wish.
The gender pay gap in the arts: nearly 30 %.

The conditions under which art is created are fragile as well.
Funding mechanisms, committees, and budgets are subject to political changes.
They react to situations of crisis, they shift priorities, they can be cut or even discontinued.
Reliable structures are rarely guaranteed.
A system that feigns openness--yet causes marginalization.

Yet this is rarely spoken about.
To show weakness is to put visibility and opportunities at risk.

This is about shame and silence--
and about a culture that facilitates this silence.
Twenty female artists spoke with us--
about what remains when attributions, roles, and expectations drop away.

“I will torture you with my work until I die.”
“To make a living off of your art--that is a narrative.”
“You achieve nothing, you are not systemically relevant, and you make no contribution to the gross national product.”

This exhibition shifts one’s attention away from the finished work--
focusing instead on that which is not readily visible but determines everything.
It is an invitation to perceive structures--and to question them.

The female artists’ voices lead us through these rooms.
They contradict, call into doubt, argue, remain strong--
and remain here.
These voices are not notes on the margin.
They shape our present.

We would like to thank all the artists--
for their trust, their courage to acknowledge ruptures, and for showing how politics seeps into biographies.

Resilience--here, it means agility.
Not adaptation, but attitude.
Not retreat, but positioning.

This exhibition is not the end of the story.
It is a space for different perspectives.

For how might art change if its conditions were visible?
It is an attempt to contextualize art.
A space in which the personal becomes political.

And it is an appeal to society:
Creative spaces are not a matter of course.

Friederike von Rauch, Stefanie Schweiger

„Culture costs money. Above all, it costs money because access to it must not be determined primarily by your wallet. A few years ago, here in Berlin, I said in a speech to the German Stage Association that culture should not be something that the public sector can support or not support as it pleases. Promoting culture should be as much of a compulsory component of public budgets as, for instance, road construction, public safety, and paying public sector salaries. It is grotesque that we speak of “subsidies” when referring to expenditure in the cultural sector, whereas no one would think of calling spending on a railway building or a playground a subsidy. The term points us in the wrong direction. For culture is not a luxury that we can indulge in or simply do without. Rather, it is the spiritual foundation that ensures our inner ability to survive. And culture also depends on the people who bring it to life. It is a key public interest that people who can do this and who live in Berlin retain or are granted the necessary opportunities to develop their potential. And it is also in the public interest that the greatest possible density and quality of such people feel welcome in Berlin, if they are willing to commit and put their creativity, knowledge, and cosmopolitanism at the service of the culture of the city and the entire country.“
from Federal President Richard von Weizsäcker’s speech on culture in Berlin, September 11, 1991

Average annual income by sector and gender and in the visual arts by gender:

