



SHORT BIOGRAPHIES OF THE PARTICIPATING ARTISTS

And This is Us 2025 – Young Artists Based in Frankfurt 10 May – 17 August 2025

La Caoba (Larry Bončhaka and Sopo Kashakashvili)

La Caoba is an off the grid global movement initiated by Larry Bončhaka (b. 1994, Accra, GH) and Sopo Kashakashvili (b. 1994, Tbilisi, GE). It is dedicated to environmental restoration, sustainable community development, and economic empowerment. By integrating large-scale afforestation projects with community-led initiatives, La Caoba aims to create self-sustaining ecosystems where people and nature thrive together.

Bončhaka and Kashakashvili collaborate as an artistic duo, blending culinary practices, theoretical research, and improvisation at the heart of their work to create immersive, participatory experiences. Both are founding members of the artist and architects collective “commune6x3” and graduated at Städelschule in Frankfurt, Bončhaka in 2023 and Kashakashvili in 2024.

Their performances and interventions have been presented at Nassauischer Kunstverein Wiesbaden e.V., Wiesbaden (DE), Opelvillen Rüsselsheim (DE), Theater der Welt, Frankfurt am Main (DE), Kressmann Halle, Offenbach am Main (DE), Diamant Museum of Urban Culture, Offenbach am Main (DE), Documenta 15 with „commune6x3“, Kassel (DE), Künstler*innenhaus Mousonturm, Frankfurt am Main (DE), and Royal Parade Grounds, Kumasi (GH). They have also created interventions in public spaces, hosted dinner performances, worked on fashion shows, and in 2024, initiated a mobile sculpture park project in Kumasi (GH).

Elisa Deutloff

Elisa Deutloff (b. 1998, Lich, DE) has been studying at the Hochschule für Gestaltung Offenbach (DE) since 2019, under the guidance of Prof Alexander Oppermann. Her focus is on sound, performance, artificial intelligence, and digital systems, exploring the interplay between humans and technology to reflect on themes such as identity, surveillance, and media representation. As a research assistant, she has contributed to several projects, including "KITEGG - Making AI tangible: Connecting technology and society through design" at the Hochschule Mainz (DE), "Algorithms In

Context", and "RAISE – Research on Artificial Intelligence in Sound and Musical Expression" at the Hochschule für Gestaltung Offenbach (DE).

Her works have been exhibited in venues such as the saasfee* pavilion, Frankfurt am Main (DE), the Martin Asbæk Gallery, Copenhagen (DK), the Slowclub Freiburg (DE), and the Museum für Angewandte Kunst, Frankfurt am Main (DE). She has also presented her performances at events like the Riviera Festival in Offenbach am Main (DE), Tanzhaus West, Frankfurt am Main (DE), and Studio Naxos, Frankfurt am Main (DE). In 2023/2024, she was awarded a scholarship from the Citoyen Foundation, and in 2021/2022, she received one from the Dr. Marschner Foundation.

Simon Gilmer

Simon Gilmer (b. 1997, Pirmasens, DE) has been studying at the Hochschule für Gestaltung Offenbach (DE) under Prof Heike Schuppelius since 2021. Previously, he completed his bachelor's degree in architecture at the Frankfurt University of Applied Sciences (DE). His work operates at the intersection of sculpture, photography, and spatial design. Through his sculptural practice, Gilmer explores the aesthetic and spatial impact of functional objects by abstracting their formal structures into model-like constructions and recontextualizing them.

Gilmer has presented his work in various institutions and off-spaces, including the Museum Angewandte Kunst in Frankfurt am Main (DE), Arbeitsamt Offenbach (DE), Kunstverein Ludwigshafen (DE), Zollamt in Offenbach am Main (DE), G10 Projektraum in Darmstadt (DE), Kunstraum Potsdamerstraße in Berlin (DE), and Magma Maria in Offenbach (DE). In 2021, he founded the association raumfahrt e.V., dedicated to critical engagement with space. He has received several awards in both architecture and art and is currently a recipient of the Deutschlandstipendium.

Paul Haas

Paul Haas (b. 1992, Eilenburg, DE) studied Fine Arts in the class of Prof Gerard Byrne at the Städelschule in Frankfurt am Main (DE), graduating in 2024 as a master student. Previously, he studied Media Art at the Bauhaus University Weimar (DE). In his film and video works, Haas uses both documentary and fictional techniques.

His works have been shown in group exhibitions at the Museum of Odesa Modern Art, Odesa (UA), ACUD, Berlin (DE), and the Goethe-Institut Dublin (IE). He has had solo exhibitions at the Nassauischer Kunstverein Wiesbaden e.V., Wiesbaden (DE) in 2020, the Ausstellungshalle 1A, Frankfurt am Main (DE) in 2023, and the 1822-Forum of the Frankfurter Sparkasse, Frankfurt am Main (DE) in 2024. In 2023, he won the Städelschule Rundgang Film Award, and in 2025, he will be an Artist in Residence at Art Hub Copenhagen (DK). Since 2025, he has been part of the HAP studio program at basis e.V. in Frankfurt am Main (DE).

Nelly Habelt

Nelly Habelt (*2001, Frankfurt am Main, DE) has been studying at the Hochschule für Gestaltung Offenbach (DE) since 2023 under Prof Heiner Blum with a focus on performance. By using urban space as a film and theater stage for her performative video works, she explores its perception in contrast to inner thoughts, desires, and longings.

Together with Len Oswald, she founded the atelier collective Tschatsch77 in September 2024. The collaborative project activates an abandoned industrial building in Offenbach am Main (DE), providing it as a workspace for art students. In March 2025, she will participate in the projection project Off World at the Diamant Museum of Urban Culture, Offenbach am Main (DE).

Nazanin Hafez

Nazanin Hafez (b. 1991, Shiraz, IR) is a visual artist living in both Iran and Germany. In 2024, she completed her diploma in Fine Arts at the Mainz Academy of Fine Arts (DE), where she is currently pursuing her master's degree under Prof Judith Samen. Previously, she earned her bachelor's degree in Media Art and Design in 2022 at the Hochschule der Bildenden Künste Saar in Saarbrücken (DE). In her artistic work, Hafez critically engages with social and political injustices, particularly the effects of the repressive regime in Iran. In doing so, she employs various media, ranging from photography and collage to video and installation.

Hafez has exhibited her work at several renowned institutions, including HELLERAU – European Center for the Arts, Dresden (DE), the Museum für Angewandte Kunst, Frankfurt am Main (DE), Montée du Château Clervaux, Luxembourg (LU), the Modern Gallery of the Saarland Museum, Saarbrücken (DE), and the Museumsquartier Osnabrück (DE). She has received several international scholarships and awards, including the Wüstenrot Foundation Fellowship for Documentary Photography, the HELLERAU Dresden Residency Award, the City of Saarbrücken Grant for Emerging Artists, and the Prix de la Photographie Clervaux Luxembourg.

Oscar Kargruber

Oscar Kargruber (b. 1999, Sulzrain, DE) has been studying sculpture at the Hochschule für Bildende Künste – Städelschule in Frankfurt am Main (DE) under Prof Tobias Rehberger since 2022. Prior to that, he studied at the Staatliche Akademie der Bildenden Künste, Karlsruhe (DE) from 2021 to 2022. Between 2016 and 2021, Kargruber completed an apprenticeship as a master wood sculptor at the Städtische Berufs- und Meisterschule für das Holzbildhauerhandwerk in Munich (DE). In his work, he primarily focuses on traditional artistic techniques such as sculpture, painting, and drawing. While his motifs are usually created in intuitive moments, their symbolism and formality consciously build up references to art history, literature and film.

Kargruber has presented his work at the following institutions: Galleria Fuocherello, Turin (IT), Halfsister, Berlin (DE), Delphispace, Freiburg (DE), Kornhäuschen, Aschaffenburg (DE), Art Basel in Paris (FR). Since 2024, he has been a scholarship holder of the Studienstiftung des deutschen Volkes.

Sargon Khnu

Sargon Khnu (b. 1991, Assyrian) has been studying at the Hochschule für Gestaltung Offenbach (DE) under Prof Alexander Oppermann since 2018. He works with sculptures in both physical and digital forms addressing taboo topics and fostering dialogue on sexual minorities, gender, and the modification of the human body.

He has exhibited at venues such as B3 Biennial of the Moving Image, Frankfurt am Main (DE), Haimney Gallery, Barcelona (ES), La Montgolfière, Paris (FR), Domicile Tokyo (JP), Spruce Gallery, Manila (PH), Gr_und Gallery, Berlin (DE), and Untitled Gallery, Berlin (DE). In 2019, he was awarded the Samsung Rundgangpreis für Bewegtbild und Digitale Medien. He has also received several scholarships, including the Deutschlandstipendium (2020, 2024) and the Hessen Abschlussförderung grant from the Ministry of Science and the Arts in Darmstadt (2022). His work and interviews have been featured in numerous publications, including Harper's Bazaar, Tunica Magazine, Metal Magazine, and Coeval Magazine.

Franziska Krumbachner

Franziska Krumbachner (b. 2002, Altötting, DE) has been studying at the Hochschule für Gestaltung Offenbach (DE) since 2022. She was admitted based on her outstanding artistic achievements. She focuses on experimental spatial concepts under Prof Heiner Blum and painting with Prof Gunter Reski.

In 2024, she won the Rundgangpreis of the Hochschule für Gestaltung Offenbach am Main, awarded by Künstlerhilfe Frankfurt e. V., and received a Deutschlandstipendium. Since 2020, Krumbachner has presented her works in various exhibitions, including at the Stadtgalerie Altötting (DE), in Burghausen (DE), at the Stadtgalerie in Bad Soden am Taunus (DE), and at Schloss Fasanerie in Fulda (DE).

Gregor Lau

Gregor Lau (b. 1995, Karlsruhe, DE) has been studying at the Hochschule für bildende Künste – Städelschule in Frankfurt am Main (DE) in the class of Prof Monika Baer since 2022. Previously, he studied at the Karlsruhe Academy of Fine Arts (DE) under Prof Marcel van Eeden, Prof Vivian Greven, and Prof Sophie von Hellermann, and completed an apprenticeship as a plasterer. In his artistic practice, Lau places geographical and social spaces into new contexts. The starting point for his sculptural works and installations, which often sit at the intersection of painting and sculpture, are political or historical events as well as social occurrences and structures.

Lau won the Rundgangpreis of the Städelschule in 2023 as well as a prize from the Albig Foundation. He has presented his works at venues such as Sies+Höke in Düsseldorf (DE), the Opelvillen Rüsselsheim (DE), the Museum Kurhaus, Kleve (DE), and numerous offspaces.

Thuy Tien Nguyen

Thuy Tien Nguyen (b. 1993, Hanoi, VN) lives and works in Hanoi (VN) and Frankfurt am Main (DE). In 2024, she completed her studies at the Hochschule für Bildende Künste – Städelschule as a masterclass student in the class of Prof Haegue Yang. Previously, she graduated with a BA from the Hanoi Academy of Theater and Cinema (VN) in 2015. In her artistic practice, she explores materiality and perception by staging contrasts such as hardness and softness, or dryness and moisture. Her works often create atmospheric scenes that bear traces of past actions and challenge the viewers' senses.

Her works have been shown in numerous international institutions, festivals, and off-spaces, including Stiftung BINZ39, Zurich (CH), Hanoi Creative Festival Weekend 2024, Hanoi (VN), RAY Triennale at the Museum für Angewandte Kunst, Frankfurt am Main (DE), Nova Contemporary, Bangkok (TH), Delfina Foundation, London (GB), Documenta 15 at the Stadtmuseum Kassel (DE), and Nassauischer Kunstverein Wiesbaden e.V., Wiesbaden (DE). She has been nominated for several prestigious awards and has won numerous prizes, including the Young Generation Art Award by Monopol Magazine x Degussa (2025), the Städelschule – Portikus e.V. Graduate Prize (2024), the McKinsey Award (2023), the Deutschlandstipendium (2021), the DAAD Prize (2020) and the Ernst & Young Rundgang Prize (2020). Her residencies include the V.A.C. Residency Program in Hanoi, VN (2025), Salonul de proiecte in Bucharest, RO (2024), Koganecho Bazaar in Yokohama, JP (2018), and Mutual Unknow by CuratorsLab in Jakarta, ID (2017).

Kora Riecken

Kora Riecken (b. 1997, Frankfurt am Main, DE) has been studying since 2019 at the Kunsthochschule Mainz (DE) in the Media Arts class under Prof Dieter Kiessling. Her work encompasses video, installation, and a literary-text-based practice. She explores themes such as female melancholy, intimate spaces, and the discomfort that permeates these realms. By using her body as a narrative element, her artistic work investigates the role of autofiction and the boundary between person and personal, self- and external perception.

Her short stories have received awards and been published in various anthologies. In 2022 and 2023, Kora Riecken was a finalist for the hr2 Literature Prize. Her works have been shown in institutions such as documenta Halle, Kassel (DE), Basis Projektraum, Frankfurt am Main (DE), Kunstverein Trier Junge Kunst (DE), and Galerie Hafemann, Wiesbaden (DE). In 2024, Riecken was a fellow of the "Summer Summit" Residency at the Stiftung Insel Hombroich, as well as the Deutschlandstipendium.

For further information please visit our website <https://www.fkv.de/en/press/>.

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