



EXHIBITION TEXTS

Greenland – Not For Sale – Kalaallit Nunaat Forever 19 June – 11 October 2026

Introduction

Greenland – Not For Sale – Kalaallit Nunaat Forever sets the beginning of a cycle of political exhibitions at Frankfurter Kunstverein extending until 2028. Through the means of visual inquiry and art, the major upheavals of our time are examined and points of rupture made visible.

This exhibition is a journey into a country surrounded by the Arctic Ocean, six times the size of Germany, and which in recent years has unwillingly become the focus of global powers. Its strategic position at the intersection of Canada, the U.S., Russia, and Europe has sparked desires for dominance over maritime routes and access to its vast natural resources. The country reflects all the geopolitical challenges currently affecting people in many regions of the world in similar ways: the consequences of global warming, the interests and growing lack of solidarity of transnational corporations at the expense of local economies. Rising tensions between states and citizens, as well as identity-political conflicts within societies, are intensifying. What do we know about the people of Greenland, about its nature, and about the interconnections between economy, environment, and culture? What do we know about the history of colonial violence? Which political forces lay claim to a land that longs for independence?

Greenland – Not For Sale – Kalaallit Nunaat Forever is an exhibition presented in collaboration with the ALPS Swiss Alpine Museum, Bern. Over the course of four years, striking panoramic images, intimate cinematic testimonies, and video interviews have been created. They offer a sensory journey into the kaleidoscopic narratives of a complex country and its people. For the first time in Germany, Julie Edel Hardenberg and her political art are being presented. This is the first comprehensive exhibition dedicated to one of Greenland's and Scandinavia's most influential artists.

Greenland – Not For Sale – Kalaallit Nunaat Forever

Multiscreen installation with found-footage material about key topics of the exhibition

9 monitors in various sizes, stereo sound

6 min

Courtesy ALPS Swiss Alpine Museum, Bern

Greenland's ice masses are melting. But climate is just one amongst many drivers of change. The world's largest island is on the way to independence from Denmark, its former colonial ruler. Greenland has the world's largest deposits of rare earth elements, which are needed for the transition to renewable energy, and it will soon be ready to participate in this market. Greenland is investing in new airports to further promote the rapidly growing tourism sector. Greenland's economy needs more labour and is finding it in Thailand and the Philippines. New beginnings and a pioneering spirit, but also contradictions and dilemmas characterise Greenland today. We show how Greenlanders are shaping and experiencing these changes and discover parallels to the part of the world we live in.

1 Foyer***Climate change in an ice lab***

1-channel video

8:30 min

3 screens with interviews with:

Chantal Zeppenfeld, Climate researcher, PhD student;

Thomas Stocker, Professor emeritus, Former Head of Climate and Environmental Physics Division of the Physics Institute;

Prof. Hubertus Fischer, Head of the Climate and Environmental Physics Division of the Physics Institute.

4-6 min each

Courtesy ALPS Swiss Alpine Museum, Bern

Greenland ice is studied at the Division of Climate and Environmental Physics, part of the University of Bern's Physics Institute. The ice samples come from drill cores taken by international teams from the ice sheet over many years. The oldest ice is over 120 000 years old. This makes Greenland the most important climate archive on Earth alongside the Antarctic - a hotspot for international climate research. The ice samples provide insights into the climate of the past and a

glimpse of the climate crisis today and in the future. How politics and society react to these findings is another challenge.

1

Julie Edel Hardenberg (Paneeraq)

Project Ikioqatigiilluta (language project), 2008

6 prints on rigid foam board, 28,5 cm x 28,5 cm each

10 foil prints on acrylic glass, 40 x 40 cm each

Nuan` (great), 2011

Print on rigid foam board, framed

180 x 180 cm

Unmask, #10, 2017

Unmask, #6, 2017

Unmask, #1, 2017

3 prints on rigid foam board

119,7 x 100 cm each

Nipangersitassaanngitsut (Those who can't be silenced), 2017

Fabric, human hair

227 x 300 cm

Meant to meet, 2024

Fabric, human hair

100 x 140 cm each

Whitewashed - heritage, 2021

Wood, human hair

3,5 x 70 cm each

Made in, #1, 1995

12 prints on paper, framed

30,5 x 40,5 cm each

Courtesy Julie Edel Hardenberg

"My mother was born under the Danish flag – Dannebrog, while Greenland was a colony.

I was born under the Danish flag – Dannebrog, while Greenland was a Danish county.

My children were born under the Greenlandic flag – Erfalasorput, while we had Greenland Home

Rule Government.

Three generations. Three paradigms.” – Julie Edel Hardenberg

Julie Edel Hardenberg, called Paneraaq in Kalaallisut, was born in Nuuk in 1971. Her work engages with the history, Inuit cultures, and colonial experience of Greenland. Language plays a central role in this: Julie Hardenberg speaks Inuit Kalaallisut, Danish, Norwegian, English, and Swedish. This multilingualism enables the artist to understand diverse identities, as demonstrated in her early photographic work *Made in, #1* (1995). In it, the artist portrays herself twelve times from the front in a passport photo format, altering her clothing and hairstyle. As a result, the viewer reads the same body through twelve entirely different cultural affiliations.

Hardenberg explores language as an expression of dominance and state power in the relationship between Greenland and Denmark. For her project *Ikiqatigiilluta*, Hardenberg places herself in everyday situations where she speaks exclusively in Kalaallisut and logs people's reactions. Although Kalaallisut has been declared the sole official language in Greenland since 2009, Danish still prevails. The history of the Danish language in Greenland is inextricably linked to Danish colonial policy, the assimilation of the indigenous Inuit population, and the subsequent pursuit of cultural independence.

Denmark regularly occupies top positions in international rankings regarding quality of life, happiness, and friendliness. What remains unsaid is the colonial past and its impact on the people of Greenland. Consequently, this violent colonial history is downplayed, and Denmark is described as a "nice coloniser." Hardenberg addresses and humorously condenses this fact in her work *Unmask* (2017). In this series, a traditional Inuit mask takes center stage on the poster. The mask always has its mouth bandaged. Hardenberg adds handwritten comments or calls to action in Kalaallisut—such as “Tamatta” (all together) or “Eqqartortigu” (let's talk about it)—to individual political terms like “democracy” or “internal coloniser.”

In the work *Those who can't be silenced - Nipangersitassaannigitsut*, Julie Hardenberg sews black hair around the outlines of the white cross of the Danish flag. In postcolonial politics, black hair is a fiercely contested bodily feature. It reflects the struggle against the historical enforcement of Eurocentric beauty standards—a symbol bound up with power, identity, and resistance.

In Meant to meet from 2024, the binary division between black and white is at the heart of Hardenberg's work. Black hair stands out against a white textile, and conversely, blonde hair against a black one. The stark divisions into colour zones symbolize political policies of exclusion and demarcation.

The 2021 work *Whitewashed – heritage* consists of two dish brushes lying side by side, one with black hair and one with blonde hair. Each brush contains a lock of the other hair color: black for Inuit and blond for Danish hair. Brushes are everyday objects used for cleaning. The cultural practice of whitewashing stems from a Western perspective and pressures non-white people to assimilate and to “cleanse” and alter their physical characteristics. By using the word *Heritage*,

Hardenberg acknowledges the fact that people adapt culturally over time and adopt characteristics of other cultures. Sharp divisions and categories are not natural realities but human-made, ideological constructs.

Alongside her artistic work, Julie Hardenberg is a doctoral candidate and researcher at the University of Copenhagen and the Royal Danish Academy of Fine Arts. In addition to her academic texts, she writes literary works for children, which focus on narratives that strengthen cultural awareness and are written in the Kalaallisut language.

Julie Edel Hardenberg (*1971 Nuuk, GL), also known as Paneeraq, is an Inuk-Kalaaleq artist and researcher. She lives and works between Copenhagen (DK) and Nuuk (GL), and her artistic practice spans visual art, multimedia, and practice-based research. She is a PhD candidate at the Royal Danish Academy of Fine Arts, where she also completed her MA in Art Theory and Communication. She also studied art in Finland, Norway, and England. Hardenberg has published five books; her work has been exhibited internationally and has received several awards and nominations, including for the Nordic Council Literature Prize, the Carnegie Art Award, and the Anna Norlander Prize. In 2022, her contribution to the project *Voices in the Shadows of Monuments* was awarded a prize by the Danish Arts Council. Her works are held in the collections of Carlsberg Fonden (DK), the World Museum (NL), Statens Kunstfond (DK), Christiansborg (DK), Museet for Fotokunst (DK), Dansk-Grønlandsk Kulturfond (DK), the Greenland National Museum (GL), the Nordic Investment Bank (FI), and Musée de l'Élysée (CH).

Greenland becomes 'Green Land'

1-channel video

10:02 min

3 screens with interviews with:

Ellen K. Frederiksen, teacher, B&B proprietor and sheep farmer;

Kim Neider, agronomist and director of the Experimental in Upernaviarsuk;

Tupaarnaq Kreutzmann Kleist, sheep farmer, hunter and ex-ski racer.

4-5 min each

Courtesy ALPS Swiss Alpine Museum, Bern

On the approach to Narsarsuaq, the lush green meadows of Qassiarsuk stand out of the fjord landscape. It was here in the 10th century that the Vikings gave Greenland its name (which means 'grassland') and it has stuck to this day. Greenland's agriculture is expanding: sheep farming for meat production and the cultivation of vegetables without the use of pesticides, like potatoes, cabbage and beets. Even strawberries and tomatoes are grown in the greenhouses of the state-run Experimental Farm. Greenland wants to become less dependent on expensive food imports. Climate change is working to its advantage.

Village Life

2-channel video projection

23:10 min

6 screens with interviews with:

Atsiannguaq Olsen, student and musician;

Justine Olsen, Garment maker;

Jonas Kristinsen, hunter and champion dog sled racer;

Martin Olsen, Municipal worker, hunter;

Meko Jensen, school principal and teacher;

Birgitta Kammann Danielsen, a social worker and teacher who has moved to Greenland from Germany.

4-7 min each

Courtesy ALPS Swiss Alpine Museum, Bern

The village of Kullorsuaq lies far north of the Arctic Circle, 200 kilometres from the nearest hospital. Life revolves around fishing and hunting as well as the village with its shop, school, community and family work. During the ice-free period, the supply ship comes every two weeks. It brings groceries and consumer goods and takes the locally caught, frozen fish. Those who want to pursue higher education move away and usually never come back. Leave or stay? Live the tradition or give it up? These are questions that particularly young villagers ask themselves.

City life in the capital

2-channel video projection

17:50 min

9 screens with interviews with:

Seqininnguaq Qitura Hansen, artist and activist;

Nivi Christensen, curator and former director of the Nuuk Art Museum;

Qupanuk Olsen, mining engineer, influencer;

Arny Mogensen and Mala Johnsen, entrepreneurs of the streetwear brand "Bolt Lamar";

Kim Jakobsen, rap artist and life coach;

Aka Niviâna Mørch Pedersen, actress and Greenland returnee;

Inunnguaq Petrussen, musician and political adviser;

Svend Hardenberg, entrepreneur, politician and actor;

Merete Lindstrøm, media spokeswoman for the fishing company "Royal Greenland".

4-6 min

Courtesy ALPS Swiss Alpine Museum, Bern

Nuuk is growing rapidly. Soon 20.000 people, more than a third of Greenland's population, will be living in the capital. Housing is scarce and expensive. Nuuk is home to a shopping mall, Thai restaurants and start-ups. The old properties of the Danish colonial era stand alongside new building complexes that house the Greenlandic administration and parliament. Nuuk is home to the campus of Greenland's only university and one of the many state fish factories of 'Royal Greenland'. Many creative artists also live here and showcase their work in theatres, cinemas, galleries, museums and concert venues.

3

Connecting sounds

Playlist created by Inunnguaq Petrussen, musician

Multi-screen installation featuring music video clips and songs with subtitles in Kalaallisut and English, organised into three categories (pop and hip-hop / rock and classical / folk)

27 min / 33 min / 49 min

Courtesy the artists and ALPS Swiss Alpine Museum, Bern

The Inuit on the east and west coasts do not speak the same language. But music, with lyrics mostly sung in Kalaallisut, brings together the people on the world's largest island. Making music is popular in Greenland. Song lyrics are a medium for vocalising Greenland's issues and a forum for being heard. The playlists in this room represent the best of Greenlandic music including pop, rock, rap, reggae, country and classics, selected by the Greenlanders who contributed to the exhibition and supported by Inunnguaq Petrussen, the lead singer of the band 'Inuk'.

Greenland in short

30 Panels featuring brief explanatory texts, illustrations and graphics relating to the exhibition's themes

Courtesy ALPS Swiss Alpine Museum, Bern

Alcohol consumption, fishing, global warming, Inuit, independence, forced contraception. These are just 6 of 29 key phrases that provide an insight into the facts and perspectives of Greenland today. This room explores in more detail the themes that shape everyday life in Greenland. The exhibition magazine goes into even more detail. It is available at the ticket office.

Mining on the ice-free coast

1-channel video projection

4:15 min

5 screens with interviews with:

Hans Hinrichsen, director of the Greenland School of Minerals and Petroleum in Sisimiut;

Mariane Paviassen, politician and activist;

Malik Vahl Rasmussen, Greenland ice exporter;

Naaja H. Nathanielsen, Minister of Mining in the Greenlandic government;

Greg Barnes, geologist, investor, instigator of the Tanbreez project.

4-6 min each

Courtesy ALPS Swiss Alpine Museum, Bern

Greenland is rich in mineral resources: metals, gemstones, coal, graphite, uranium, oil, gas and rare earth elements. Around 120 mining projects with international investors are currently awaiting approval. With his Tanbreez project near Qaqortoq, Australian entrepreneur Greg Barnes is planning to mine one of the largest deposits of rare earth elements. Rare earth elements are used in the manufacture of smartphones, LEDs, electric motors and wind turbines. Mining in Greenland will make Europe and North America less dependent on production from China, which currently dominates the market. However, mining projects are controversial.

The ice fjord – a tourist hotspot

2-channel video projection

17:50 min

6 screens with interviews with:

Matthias Burkert and Matthias Hütter, German outdoor tourists;

Flemming Bisgaard, logistics entrepreneur;

Nukaaka Lund-Mathæussen, student of building services engineering;

Looqi Schmidt, hunter and lecturer at the College of Social Pedagogy;

Ulrik Amdi Sørensen, Chief Operating Officer at the four-star hotel “Arctic”;

Zhiling Xiong and Lu Jiao, tourists from Boston, USA.

3-6 min each

Courtesy ALPS Swiss Alpine Museum, Bern

The ice fjord is world-famous and has been a UNESCO World Heritage Site since 2004. The icebergs that glide into the ocean here attract tourists from all over the world. They arrive by plane and cruise ship. And the numbers are increasing. Ilulissat is now building a new airport where large aircraft from Paris and New York will be able to land. Hotels are upgrading, but there is no shortage of critical voices. They warn against hasty development. Who will benefit? Who will miss out? What kind of tourism does Greenland need?

-1

Stella Polaris Ulloriarsuaq

Film, 2016

85 Min.

Directed by: Yatri N. Niehaus

Producers: Yatri Niehaus, Laali Lyberth, Nomi Baumgartl, Sven Nieder

Stella Polaris Ulloriarsuaq by Yatri N. Niehaus is a contemplative journey into the soul of Greenland. The film follows an extraordinary art project in which massive icebergs and glaciers are illuminated at night through large-scale light installations. These luminous interventions become the starting point for a reflection on the relationship between humanity, nature, and impermanence.

Niehaus combines breathtaking landscape cinematography with the voices of Greenlandic residents, who speak about their lives, traditions, and the profound changes brought about by climate change. Ice emerges not merely as a natural phenomenon, but as a cultural and spiritual point of reference. While the glowing ice formations reveal an almost magical beauty, the film is permeated by the awareness that this very world is under threat and may ultimately disappear. Behind *Stella Polaris Ulloriarsuaq* stands an interdisciplinary team of filmmakers, photographers, artists, and Greenlandic cultural mediators. Director Yatri N. Niehaus accompanied the project over many years, shaping it into a film that intertwines art, nature, and social concerns. The project originated from the vision of photographer Nomi Baumgartl and photographer Sven Nieder, who sought to make the Arctic ice landscape visible through artistic light installations while drawing attention to its vulnerability. A key role was played by Laali Lyberth, who coordinated collaboration with local communities and fostered cultural exchange. The team was further enriched by musicians, sound designers, and other creative contributors whose work helped create the film's distinctive atmosphere.

The result is a production that goes beyond documentation, bringing together diverse artistic perspectives and offering an intimate and deeply human view of Greenland and the transformation of its environment.

Please visit our website www.fkv.de/en/press/ for further information.

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