

KLOCKER MUSEUM

THE GRAND KLOCKER ART PRIZE 2025 GOES TO JAKOB LENA KNEBL AND ASHLEY HANS SCHEIRL

Jakob Lena Knebl and Ashley Hans Scheirl stand for an open, transdisciplinary art practice in which genre boundaries are permeable and consciously expanded. Painting, sculpture, installation, design, fashion, performance, film and theory are not separate disciplines in their work, but enter into a productive and cheerfully inspired interrelationship with one another. This permeability of media is not an end in itself, but an expression of an interest in the construction and deconstruction of identity, desire and corporeality in the field of tension between social standardization and individual experience.

Both artists work both in joint and individual work complexes. Jakob Lena Knebl focuses primarily on questions of design, materiality and the social constitution of spaces – always with a view to their staging potential. Knebl's installations often seem like inhabitable stage sets in which objects, colors, fabrics and forms are aimed at an intellectual as well as physical experience. Ashley Hans Scheirl, on the other hand, develops pictorial worlds primarily from painting, inspired by cinematic, performative and autobiographical elements. Here, too, the focus is on criticism of traditional systems of order – be it through image quotations, hybrid figures or a deliberately fragmented vocabulary of forms.

The concept of transgression is decisive for both artistic positions, understood as the crossing of boundaries on a material, mental and medial level. This transgression concerns not only the crossing of genre boundaries in the sense of a transdisciplinary practice, but also the dissolution and recoding of social orders – particularly with regard to gender, sexuality, social role models and cultural hierarchies. Knebl and Scheirl work with an expanded concept of identity that is not based on essence, authenticity or biographical coherence, but rather understands identity as something processual, narrative and fluid – as something that is constantly recreated in a play with images, surfaces, references and contrasts. In doing so, they incorporate their own bodies into their works without reducing them to an individual medium of expression. Rather, the body serves as an interface between self and society, between desire and attribution, between intimacy and public staging.

These logics have been visibly and convincingly implemented in their most recent exhibitions – for example at the Palais de Tokyo in Paris in 2023 and at the Deichtorhallen Hamburg in 2024, as well as in their contribution to the Biennale di Venezia 2022, where they transformed the Austrian pavilion into a multi-layered, walk-in ensemble of spaces between surreal film set, baroque sculpture and queer fantasy.

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Despite the high degree of condensation and theoretical reflection, Knebl and Scheirl's works remain accessible, visually direct, spontaneous and sensual. They are characterized by a visual diversity and even intentional overload, in which irony, glamour, camp, baroque abundance and transformative strategies mutually enhance each other. Her art invites the audience to recognize themselves in the mirrors and fractures of her spaces – as part of a multi-layered game between identity and representation, between desire and politics.

The jury of the Klocker Foundation honors Jakob Lena Knebl and Ashley Hans Scheirl for a consistent, open and socially highly relevant artistic practice that leaves conventional ideas behind and creates new forms of subjectivity, community and aesthetic articulation.

JAKOB LENA KNEBL

Jakob Lena Knebl (*1970, Baden) studied fashion under Raf Simons at the University of Applied Arts Vienna and textual sculpture under Heimo Zobernig at the Academy of Fine Arts Vienna. In her practice, she combines the language of fashion with art-historical argumentation. Her works engage with the compositions of other historical and contemporary artists and play with objects of contemporary European culture. Her work has been exhibited internationally, including at the Venice Biennale in 2022, the Palais de Tokyo in Paris in 2023 and the Deichtorhallen in Hamburg in 2024.

ASHLEY HANS SCHEIRL

Ashley Hans Scheirl (*1956 in Salzburg, lives in Vienna) studied at the Academy of Fine Arts Vienna (diploma 1980). Between 1978 and 1986, Scheirl was involved in the performative music experiments of the groups 8 oder 9 and Ungünstige Vorzeichen. Between 1979 and 1996 he made over 50 Super-8 short films. From 1981-82 Scheirl lived in New York and worked for Arleen Schloss' weekly art and performance evening Wednesdays @ A's. Scheirl became known for the two experimental feature films Rote Ohren fetzen durch Asche aka Flaming Ears (1992) and Dandy Dust (1998). Scheirl lived in London for 16 years, where she became part of a scene of queer and transgender artists. In 2003, Scheirl completed a postgraduate degree in Fine Art (M.A.) at Central Saint Martins College of Art & Design. After Scheirl's return to Vienna in 2005, he*she received the Austrian State Scholarship for Fine Arts in 2006, the Art Prize of the City of Vienna in 2012 and the Austrian Prize for Fine Arts of the Federal Chancellery in 2019. 2006-2022 Scheirl was head of the 'Contextual Painting' department at the Academy of Fine Arts in Vienna. 2018-19 Artist-in-Residence of the DAAD (German Academic Exchange Service) in Berlin. In 2022 Scheirl represented Austria at the Venice Biennale

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together with Jakob Lena Knebl. In preparation: Palais de Tokyo, Paris 2023,
Deichtorhallen 2024.

JURY

Benedikt Erhard, Sabine Gamper, Martin Gostner