



# Katharina Arndt

Born in Germany, 1981.  
Lives and works in between Berlin and Barcelona.

He makes  
his own bed.





Katharina Arndt (b.1981) is a painter from Germany who lives and works between Berlin and Barcelona. She studied Fine Arts at Braunschweig school of art and later on obtained her Master of Fine Arts by John Armleder. Her fast and colorful paintings ironizes the contemporary mass consumerist aesthetic of a decadent, abundant society in picturing her everyday life in the digital age.

Symbol for this is the topic 'surface' - social, cultural, material. In the hyperreal and at the same time immaterial online world, only the visual appearance dominates - of ourselves and the products we are supposed to buy.

We stroke the glossy screen of our smartphone countless times a day, the bodies are hairless, the corners round, the sunglasses mirrored. The smooth appears as a metaphor for resistance, eternal youth, as artificial, uncritical, superficial, conformist. She transfers this topic material and content wise into painting. She works on artificial media such as Latex canvas, lacquer fabric and Plexiglas with glossy acrylic paint and markers. She sees her work as a psychogram of a positivist consumer society that tries to escape its own mortality.

"I really enjoy profane culture," confided Berlin-based artist Katharina Arndt in a conversation about her practice. "I like how the techno girlies dress at the beach in Barcelona, wearing shitty tattoos and drinking cheap mojitos from plastic cups." Arndt's artistic gaze is often drawn towards such scenes of playful indulgence and ephemeral excess: a nude woman smoking a cigar and lounging in a loosely draped fur coat, a couple enjoying a post-coital movie while drinking wine and distracting themselves with social media, and a club full of young and beautiful party-goers reveling in the intoxicating buzz of dim lights, pulsing music, and plentiful drinks. "I really like to look. Is the word voyeur?"

Arndt's perceived role as an outside observer looking in at moments of indulgent abundance is a familiar one to her. Growing up in East Germany, she recalls the thrilling kaleidoscope of consumerism that followed the fall of the Berlin wall. Recounting her first childhood visit to the Western side, she said, "I remember all the colors, and I don't know how many different kinds of chocolate bars."

But if Arndt started as an outsider, she didn't stay that way for long. In the years following that experience, she has developed a painting and sculpture practice that explores the workings of consumerist escapism and cheap thrills from the perspective of a critically engaged participant, embracing the joy they can bring to an, often, bleak world, while gently tugging at the tangled knots of desires, contradictions, and tensions that underlie these endeavors.

In her brightly colored scenes of instagrammable extravagance, Arndt hides lingering vestiges of an unfiltered reality. Deep tan lines foreshadow painful sunburns, legs, groins, and armpits are dotted with stubble, and glossy magazine advertisements declare: "You don't smell good." In doing so, she simultaneously acknowledges the pleasure of these experiences, while subtly reminding the viewer of the inherent unevenness of real-life encounters through her reimagining of moments that are often captured out of context, meticulously cropped, smoothed out, and ultimately shared for mass consumption.

Perhaps even more powerful than the "real" life Arndt smuggles into her paradisaal scenes, are the painful realities lurking beyond the frame. In the same warm Mediterranean water where many of her subjects play, refugees struggle and suffer in unprecedented numbers.

Plastic cups for cheap mojitos find their way into oceans or landfills. A devastating war is waged on the same continent as the sunbathing European tourists she depicts. In Arndt's paintings, life's fleeting pleasures are met with enthusiasm, joy, and gratitude, but always held in tension with the uneven way they are experienced, both in our personal lives and in respect to our broader privilege. Paradise is now, but for whom and for how long?

Arndt's acknowledgment of the contradictions built into hedonistic escapism shouldn't be read as a dismissal of its value nor a criticism of those who engage in it. By inserting herself as a subject in many of her paintings, she implicates herself in the same complex dynamics she interrogates in her work. Rather sitting in judgment, she sits with the tensions, soaking them up like sun rays, finding a way to acknowledge both the fraught and frivolous nature of leisure in a troubled world, and the possibility that engaging with the apparent triviality of beauty, pleasure, and play, even if fleeting and artificial, may be one of our best tools for making the world liveable, in spite of the pain that often accompanies living.

The use of a naive painting style in Arndt's work reflects the intentional naivete with which many people, from diverse backgrounds and varying degrees of privilege, find relief from the worrisome realities of life. By finding brief moments in which we can unburden ourselves of our quotidian anxieties, great or small, we make room for restorative moments of child-like play and wonder. As a young Arndt once found herself enraptured by rows of brightly packaged chocolate bars, we too can allow ourselves to be comforted by embracing the simple joys of a carefree youth.

There is a limit to this, of course. A moment in which healing escapism transforms into harmful avoidance. "The exciting Insta-moments are something extraordinary and special, not normal life," Arndt says. "Nobody can stand this all the time." But she hopes that, through her work, others can find their own balance within the tension. To see both the joy and the irony that are woven into the little moments of silliness, kitsch, and levity that act as islands of respite in our, often, tempestuous lives, and to find a way to embrace it all in its dissonant fullness.

"My hope for my work is that people smile and have the opportunity to reflect about the superficiality of it all. That's my goal."



Denia in the sea  
Acrylic paint on canvas  
90cm x 65cm  
2023



Elafonisi last Sunday  
Acrylic paint on canvas  
140cm x 190cm  
2023





Morning coffee Friedrichshain  
Acrylic paint on canvas  
125cm x 180cm  
2023

## Katharina Arndt

Born in Germany, 1981.

Lives and works in between Berlin and Barcelona.

## Education

|             |  |
|-------------|--|
| 2000 - 2005 | Study of Fine Arts at HBK Braunschweig |
| 2006        | Master of Fine Arts by John Armleder   |

## Solo Exhibition

|      |  |
|------|--|
| 2023 | Artual gallery "Don't call me Babe", Beirut, Lebanon<br>Station gallery "Divas after work", Bratislava, Slowakei<br>Mott Projects "while waiting for death", NY, US<br>Redd gallery "hot guys, hot chicks, hot pants", Chania, Greece<br>Vin gallery "Whoop Whoop", Saigon, Vietnam<br>Kanya Kage "Welcome tot he Pleasure Dome", Berlin |
| 2022 | Unit 1 Gallery "you look so good at night", London   |
| 2021 | Gallery Uxval Gochez "forever young", Barcelona<br>SommerFrischeKunst "private BEACH", Bad Gastein<br>Fang Studio "Never not pretending", Leipzig<br>Framed "EASY EASY", Berlin  |
| 2020 | Strayfield Gallery "Faye Dunaway on Mondays", Kopenhagen   |
| 2016 | ARD-Hauptstadtstudio „VIRTUAL REALITY“, Berlin<br>FB69 "FINAL GIRL", Münster<br>FB69 "E V E + A D A M", Köln<br>Larry Show "NOT CRY IN PUBLIC", Berlin   |
| 2014 | Gallery Hüsstege "Bored to death in Paradise", Hertogenbosch<br>Hornsleth Gallery "NO HELL – NO HEAVEN", Kopenhagen  |



## Group Exhibition

|      |   |
|------|---|
| 2023 | Galleria Patricia Armocida "Pelle", Milan, Italy<br>GÄRNA ART "Summer time", Madrid, Spain<br>Collectors Room "Jupiter II", Hamburg   |
| 2022 | artual gallery "Unprecedented Reality", Beirut, Lebanon<br>Garden of the Zodiac "Animals", Omaha, US<br>Museum bread and Art "From still life to food porn", Ulm  |
| 2021 | Weserhalle "Art Auction", Berlin<br>BODE Projects "29 at Reinbeckhallen", Berlin<br>Collectors Room "Höhenrausch #2", Hamburg<br>Kulturquartier "3 Wünsche frei 2.0", Erfurt<br>Räume XS meets Wilhelmshallen "Hallen #2", Berlin<br>Gallery Uxval Gochez "needful things", Barcelona |
| 2020 | Neues Kunsthaus "PAGANISMUS", Ahrenshoop  |
| 2019 | Arte Aurora Galeria "Futura", Barcelona<br>Espronceda "Dark & Stormy", Barcelona<br>O-O LA "GIFC (get it for cheap)", Berlin<br>Galerie 21.06 "bildSchön", Ravensburg<br>Schaufenster "I like it real", Berlin  |

## Collections

|             |  |
|-------------|--|
| 2020 - 2021 | Ulrich Dietz collection, Stuttgart         |
| 2018        | Aeroplactic, Brüssel<br>Saatchi Collection |
| 2016        | Collection Haupt, Berlin                   |

2023

art magazin | Cover and part of the title story "naive painting" | August 23

2024

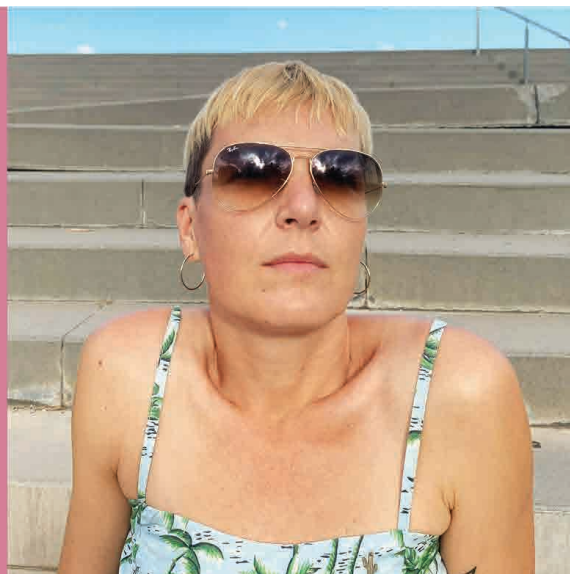
## Fame in Spain

April 18, 2021



KATHARINA ARNDT

UTOPIC FANTASIES  
OF ETERNITY





BERLIN ART

## Interview with Katharina Arndt

Katharina Arndt, who lives between Berlin and Barcelona, creates paintings and neon signs that address consumer culture and offer an ironic look and a new perspective on the world around her.

INTERVIEW: DANIEL LICHTERWALDT

published on October 21, 2021.



## SOLID GOLD #11 Katharina Arndt

INTERVIEW

29. Juli 2021 • Text von [Barbara Green](#)

Der Sommer ist da! Was liegt da näher, als euch an eins der beliebtesten Urlaubziele zu entführen? Wir besuchen die Künstlerin Katharina Arndt in Barcelona. Sie spricht mit uns über die katalanische Kunstszene, berichtet von den Kontrasten der Stadt, die sich in ihren aktuellen Werken widerspiegeln und verrät uns, welche Rolle Faye Dunaway in ihrem Werk einnimmt.



(Studioist: Barbara Green bei Katharina Arndt. Foto: Alexandra Pieper)



## GALLERY INFORMATION

### HO CHI MINH CITY

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Monday - Saturday, 10:00am - 5:00pm

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