

Sofiia Yesakova

Born in Kyiv / UA (*1998)
Lives and works in Berlin / DE

‡ Frontviews member / curatorial board

EDUCATION

2021 — MA in Fine Arts. National Academy of Fine Arts and Architecture, Kyiv, UA
2019 — BA in Fine Arts. National Academy of Fine Arts and Architecture, Kyiv, UA
Studied at the Department of Monumental and Sacred Painting, named after Professor Mykola Storozhenko

SOLO & DUO EXHIBITIONS

2026 — “Phantom. Chapter II”, Georgen-Parochial II Cemetery House, curated by Iana Pitenko, Berlin, DE
2026: — “The Solemity of the Repulsive”, ROAM e.V., Project Space, Berlin, DE
2025 — “Vanitous Spectre”, Iron House (Nymphenburg Castle), Munich, DE
2025 — “A line that penetrates matter”, Chemnitz Art Space, Chemnitz, DE
2025 — “Black wall”, Umbrella | west coast exhibitions Gallery, curated by Jan Wawryzniak, Nebel, DNK
2025 — “O dark dark dark”, spazio DISPLAY, curated by Ilaria Monti, Parma, IT
2024 — “Ugly scenes, nuances”, Super Bien. Berlin!, curated by Elisabeth Sonneck, Berlin, DE
2024 — “Recollecting the emptiness”, Prima Kunst e. V., Kiel, DE
2024 — “People in Paradise will enjoy the spectacle of hell’s torment”, Antwerp art box, Antwerp, BEL
2022 — “Rauschen”, Kunstraum R52L, curated by Sued Blankenburg, Berlin, DE
2022 — “Cargo 200”, frontviews at HAUNT Gallery, curated by Nicola E. Petek, Berlin, DE
2022 — “Heteronomy of freedom”, Prenzlauer Studio Showroom, Berlin, DE

SELECTED GROUP EXHIBITIONS

2026 — “ESC 2035. We never changed”, 0_1 gallery, The Hague, NL
2026 — “Echoes that refuse to fade”, FaVu Gallery, curated by Massimiliano Maglione, Brno, CZE
2026 — “Piegato Una Sola Volta”, Spazio relativo | Villa Davia, curated by Iside Calcagnile, Sasso Marconi, IT
2026 — “Better Version of You”, Jergon Gallery, curated by Evgeniya Kiseleva-Afflerbach, Berlin, DE
2025 — “B_LA_M”, super bien! and CROMA, Project Space, curated by Justina Los, Mexico City, MEX
2025 — “Doubled presence in a disembodied space”, Trost, Project Space, curated by René Stiegler & Markus Sworcik, Graz, AT
2025 — “The big Fatigue”, Factory building at Hermann-Blankenstein-Straße 20, Berlin, DE
2025 — “Third space”, frontviews at HAUNT Gallery, Berlin, DE
2025 — “Light bent backward, waiting to be forgotten”, curated by Anzhelika Palyvoda, arka arka, Vienna, AT
2025 — “Moin, Jean Gabin”, Area 35 Art Gallery, curated by Pietro Finelli, Milan, IT
2025 — “There is Hope”, frontviews at HAUNT Gallery curated by Erika Schlessinger-Koeltzsch, Berlin, DE
2024 — “Fatmah”, Contemporary Cluster Gallery, curated by Giacomo Guidi, Rome, IT
2024 — “After the dust settles”, TSA GVL, curated by Kathrin Koester & Aline Schworer, Atlanta, USA
2024 — “Analysis of Anger”, Zentrale für Kunst, Werkschauhalle Spinnerei, Leipzig, DE
2024 — “I only work with lost and found”, Kunstraum Kreuzberg/Bethanien, curated by Mona Mousse, Berlin, DE
2024 — “Fight or Flight — An Exhibition About Fear”, Adlerhalle, curated by Evelina Reiter & Julie Legouez, Berlin, DE
2024 — “The inner Insularity of Utopianism”, Untergeschoss der Pandora Gallery, Berlin, DE
2024 — “A promise of tomorrow”, frontviews at HAUNT Gallery, curated by Nicola E. Petek, Berlin, DE
2024 — “Traces of Timelessness”, Künstlerhaus Sootböern, Hamburg, DE
2024 — “Memories we have forgotten”, The Address Gallery, curated by Riccardo Angossini Brescia, IT
2023 — “Round Trip Fluidum 2”, Fabbrica del Vapore, curated by Elisabeth Sonneck, Milan, IT
2023 — “When the firebird flies”, Kunstverein Meissen e.V., curated by Nicola E. Petek, Meissen, DE
2023 — “Polifoniia”, ZIRKA Space, curated by Jan Struckmayer & Nastia Stemenko, Munich, DE
2023 — “Visual Dominance”, AS/EM space, curated by Lukas Schleupner, Leipzig, DE
2023 — “Homöostase”, FRAPPANT gallery, curated by Maxime Chabal & Stina Stühmer, Hamburg, DE
2023 — “MoNo”, HB55 Kunstfabrik, curated by Tim van den Oudenhoven, Berlin, DE
2023 — “et cetera pp”, as part of Begehungen Festival, Palais Lichtenstein, Chemnitz, DE
2023 — “The future is not ours to see”, Upstairs - Gallery, Oldenburg, DE
2023 — “The soft and the hard”, Showroom at Potsdamer Str. 93, Berlin, DE
2023 — “Förderpreis Junge Kunst”, Rathaus Galerie Reinickendorf, Berlin, DE
2023 — “Quicky - why not?”, gallery Mazzoli, Berlin, DE
2022 — “Art Biesenthal”, Wehrmuehle, Biesenthal, DE

RESIDENCIES / SCHOLARSHIPS / GRANTS

2024 — Residential fellowship, Kebbel Villa, International Künstlerhaus, Schwandorf, DE
2024 — Participant & scholarship holder, Goldrausch Künstlerinnenprojekt, postgraduate professional program, Berlin, DE
2023 — Residential fellowship, ZIRKA Space, Munich, DE
2023 — Residential fellowship, Begehungen, Palais Lichtenstein, Chemnitz, DE
2023 — Förderpreis Junge Kunst (Fine Art Award), Kunstverein Bagatelle, Berlin, DE
2021 — Residential fellowship & development course, Soshenko 33, Kyiv, UA
2018 — Residential fellowship & scholarship holder, Veliky Pereviz, Poltav’ska Oblast, UA

CURATION

>upc. 2027: — “When every Path is a Crossroad”, ACUD Gallery, Berlin, DE
>upc. 2027: — “The Fragility of Eternity in Every Vanishing Gesture”, frontviews at HAUNT Gallery, Berlin, DE
2024 — “The inner insularity of utopianism”, Untergeschoss der Pandora Gallery, Berlin, DE
2020 — “Review (of) the academy”, exhibition co-curated with Daria Maier, Showroom, National Academy of Fine Arts and Architecture, Kyiv, UA

ABOUT

Sofia Yesakova (*1998) lives and works in Berlin. In 2024 she participated in the Berlin postgraduate program **Goldrausch Künstlerinnen**. Yesakova is a member of **Frontviews at HAUNT Berlin**, where she is also part of the curatorial board. Central to Yesakova’s artistic practice is the research into the increasing role of information in regulating and controlling human behaviour—being able as it is to rapidly adapt to any situation and reduce everything to statistics. A search for truth in a stream of interference.

Yesakova uses diagrams or engineering-like schematic drawings to arrive at an alternative form of artistic narrative. Bureaucratically consistent, dry and lifeless. She often refers to theoretical concepts like Gilles Deleuze’s layering approach of thinking, Jacques Lacan’s analysis of society’s structures and Giorgio Agamben’s biopolitical concepts. In recent years, she has been inspired by the idea of ciphering and creating a certain structure of visual storytelling, often inspired by engineering drawings. Using spatial interventions in order to create certain emotions and sensations, she deals with the intertwining of reality and illusion, the boundary between the emotional and the rational, or the tension between softness and hardness. The theme of war memorials has also become an important part of Sofia’s artistic practice in recent years. In her work, she turns to monuments as historical markers and as sites of collective memory, trauma, and identity. By examining their forms, materials, and symbolism, Sofiia explores how societies choose to remember or to forget the past. War memorials give the impression of something depressing and coldly detached, yet they have regained relevance in the context of disputes among various groups over history, over who is remembered, and how. Her practice resonates with the writings of Paul Virilio, who explored the relationships between memory, war, and the built environment. Virilio emphasized how monuments and memorials embody both remembrance and erasure: they preserve traces of loss while simultaneously shaping narratives of power and identity. Sofiia engages with this paradox, highlighting the way a single memorial can inspire reverence in one era, yet provoke doubt or resistance in another. Yesakova foregrounds the fragile, shifting meanings inscribed in these sites. A memorial may stand as a site of reverence for one generation, yet provoke estrangement or resistance for another. Her work reveals this instability, the way monuments can obscure as much as they commemorate. In Yesakova’s work, the symbolism and imagery of the Renaissance may intersect with rigid constructivist forms, and plans and drawings from concentration camps contrast with the clean idiom of minimalism. A lot of her works make reference to the formerly religious context of art. They use iconology or resemble frescoes from a temple, like a part of a wall taken from its original context and moved into the gallery space. This gesture of “dislocation” reinforces the tension central to her practice: the confrontation between the permanence implied by stone or monument, and the fragility of memory when uprooted from its context. Working with materials like gesso, wood and layers of gelatine, Yesakova uses different techniques such as woodcarving, icon painting, blueprint-like drawings and site-specific installations in regard to the history of the place and with respect for its architecture.

Sofiia Yesakova earned her MA in Fine Arts from the National Academy of Fine Arts and Architecture (NAFAA) in Kyiv, UA. Her recent exhibitions include a duo show *“Black Wall”* at Umbrella | West Coast Exhibitions Gallery in Denmark; *“Phantom. Chapter II”*, Georgen-Parochial II Cemetery House, curated by Iana Pitenko, in Berlin; and another duo exhibition *“Vanitous Spectre”* at Iron House, located within Nymphenburg Castle, Munich, DE.



Sofia Yesakova. *Cargo 200. Experimental projections on surfaces.*

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I only work with lost and found – Goldrausch
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Sofia Yesakova & Sascha Kregel:
Black Wall, Umbrella – West Coast Exhibitions

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Ikonens tomme tvilling

Sofia Yesakova og Sascha Kregel:
Black Wall, Umbrella – West Coast Exhibitions

Af Egil Hvid-Olsen
EHO@KM.DK

Et ældgammelt
spørgsmål
Teodicéproblemet er et
gammelt begreb indenfor
teologien. Ørtdet teodicé er

dannet af de græske ord for
Gud og retfærdighed. Skåret
ind til benet stiller begrebet
spørgsmålet om, hvorfor der
findes ondskab i verden,
hvis Gud er god. Der findes
mange forsøg på svar, men
ikke alle finder dem brug-
bare. Det skulle da lige
være, hvis man abonnerer

på forestillingen om, at Gud
er ond, eller at Gud ikke
eksisterer. Disse to svar
opløser det spørgsmål, som
begrebet stiller, men efterla-
der et let mennesket i en
dystopi.
Billedkunstneren Sofia
Yesakova er født i 1998 i
Kiev. Kort efter Ruslands
angreb på Ukraine i februar
2022 flyttede Yesakova til
Berlin, hvor hun bl.a. har
skabt det værk, der kan ses
i det lille, men særdeles
ambitiøse udstillingssted
Umbrella i den lille
vestjyske by Lydm.

**Tilstedeværelse
og fravær**
I den ortodokse kristendom
er ikoner fremtredende. De
 gengiver kendte bibelske
personer eller hændelser.
Ofte er det Kristus eller
Jomfru Maria, der er por-
trætteret på ikonen. Det

særlige ved ikonerne er, at
man anser dem for at gøre
den, der findes på maleriet,
nærværende. Den portræt-
terede er således til stede,
ligesom beskueren er det.
Det iøjnefaldende ved
Yesakovs værk er ikke, at
hun har skabt 98 næsten
ens paneler, der umiskende-
ligt minder om de rammer
og baggrunde, en ikons
motiv bliver malet på. Det
iøjnefaldende er, at der
intet motiv er, blot en sort
flade på hvert eneste panel.
Her er intet guld, intet lys
og ingen bibelsk person.
Således har Yesakova malet
Guds fravær med en henvis-

ning til den uretfærdighed,
det overgreb, den rædsel og
den lidelse, der præger
Ukraine i disse år. Værket
kunne for så vidt lige så
godt have været lavet på
baggrund af andre invasi-
onskrige, for når våbnene
taler, er det svært for Gud
at få ørenlyd, og så bliver
teodicéspørgsmålet igen
påtrængende: Hvis Gud er
god, hvorfor findes der så
ondskab i verden?

De 98 sorte ikoner er
Yesakovs bidrag til det
samlede værk, der også
nummer en lydside. Tyske
Sascha Kregel har lavet en
slags komposition, der –

uden at blive egentlig uhyg-
gelig eller voldsom – under-
støtter Yesakovs værk og
dermed bliver en del af det.
Lydene er kraftige, men
ikke enerhverende. De er
dystre, men ikke skræm-
mende. Umelodiske og dog
iørefaldende. Det sidste
måske netop, fordi de flet-
tes sammen med de 98
paneler, så der opstår en
helhed af billedkunst og lyd
i rummet.

umbrella
Lydmvej 95, Nørre Nebel
Frem til 9. november



Fotos: Jacob Friis-Holm Nielsen

Catapult Contemporary. *Complicity Begins in the Act of Looking*. Brno, CZ. 2026
Daily Lazy. *Echoes that Refuse to Fade*. Brno, CZ. 2026
Saliva Live. *Echoes that Refuse to Fade*. Brno, CZ. 2026
CULT. *The Gaze has a History: Yesakova, Struger & Palyvoda at FAVU Brno*. Brno, CZ. 2026
FAKEWHALE.LOG. *Doubled presence in a disembodied space*. Review, Graz, AT. 2026
KUBAPARIS. *Black Wall, Umbrella* | west coast exhibitions Gallery, Nørre Nebel, DNK. 2025
Contemporary Art Library. *Black Wall, Umbrella* | west coast exhibitions Gallery, Nørre Nebel, DNK. 2025
Art Viewer. *Vanitous Spectre*. Munich, DE. 2025
FAKEWHALE.LOG. *Vanitous Spectre*. Review, Munich, DE. 2025
KUBAPARIS. *Vanitous Spectre*. Nymphenburg Palace, Iron House, Munich, DE. 2025
Contemporary Art Library. *O, dark dark dark*. Spazio DISPLAY, Parma, IT. 2025
Saliva Live. *Light bent backward, waiting to be forgotten*. Vienna, AT. 2025
Saliva Live. *O, dark, dark, dark*. Parma, IT. 2025
Saliva Live. *Third Space*. Berlin, DE. 2025
Insideart. *Fatmah* and the Good Wishes of the Contemporary Cluster. Andrea Bardi. Rome, IT. 2024
Exibart. *Unexpected Dialogues and New Proposals*. Francesca de Paolis. Rome, IT. 2024
Esport. Contemporary art magazine. The new Contemporary Cluster venue opens with "Fatmah".immersing yourself in memory. Ilaria Introzzi. 2024
O FLUXO. Solo exhibition *Ugly Scenes. Nuances*. Super Bien!, Berlin, DE. 2024
Nasty Magazine. *Fatmah*. Contemporary Cluster. Rome, IT. 2024
Goldrausch Künstlerinnen Projekt. Interview with Beate Scheder. 2024
Artribune. *La galleria Contemporary Cluster a Roma cambia sede*. Intervista a Giacomo Guidi. 2024
KUBAPARIS. *Traces of timelessness*. Hamburg, DE. 2024
KUBAPARIS. *Memories we have forgotten*. The Address gallery, Brescia, IT. 2024
Saliva Live. *People in paradise will enjoy the spectacle of he'lls torment*. Antwerp, BEL. 2024
Saliva Live. *The inner insularity of utopianism*. Berlin, DE. 2024
Art Viewer. *Memories we have forgotten*. Brescia, IT. 2024
DAZED. Summer issue 2022. *The art of conflict*. 2022

<https://sofiayesakova.com/publications/>
Instagram: @sofiia.yesakova