

PRESS RELEASE

Berlin, Jun 25, 2024

C/O BERLIN TALENT AWARD 2024

Silvia Rosi . *Artist* + Katrin Bauer . *Theorist*

C/O Berlin is delighted to award the **C/O Berlin Talent Award 2024** in the **Artist** category to **Silvia Rosi** (b. 1992, IT) for **Protektorat**. This exceptional work will be shown in a solo exhibition at C/O Berlin in Amerika Haus in Hardenbergstraße 22–24, 10623 Berlin from **Feb 1 to May 16, 2025**. The **Shortlist 2024** artists are **Salih Basheer** (b. 1995, SDN), **Hiền Hoàng** (b. 1990, VNM), **Sheida Soleimani** (b. 1990, USA), and **Yao Yuan** (b. 1988, CHN).

The C/O Berlin Talent Award 2024 in the **Theorist** category goes to curator and author **Katrin Bauer** (b. 1992, GER). She will write the first art historical essay on the winning project. This essay will appear alongside an interview with Silvia Rosi in an artist monograph published by Spector Books for C/O Berlin on the occasion of the artist's solo show.

In *Protektorat*, Italian artist Silvia Rosi examines her Togolese roots and illuminates systems of communication and signs in colonial and hegemonial structures of power. Beginning with archival material from the National Archives of Togo, she highlights the extensive spread of Western systems during the colonial occupation of Togo by the German Reich, and by British and French forces. Her artful storytelling is conducted using multiple visual forms and sensory levels: static and moving images with sound let us see and hear how local languages, traditions, and visual culture became overwritten and repressed under colonialism. Rosi is always the protagonist of these works, and she embeds her personal experiences within the collective story in a powerful manner. The entire jury was won over by Rosi's complex aim of questioning "the documentary" in photography in postcolonial discourse using varied and innovative approaches.

Katrin Bauer's research practice is grounded in a knowledge of postcolonial themes. One of her areas of focus is colonial structures of power in photography, which makes her the perfect complement to this year's award-winning Artist. Moreover, she displays a broad understanding of diverse media practices and image forms in photography. Bauer won over the jury with her ability to contextualize artistic works in social, political, and aesthetic terms as well as conveying them vividly.

The jury for the *Artist* category is comprised of Veronika Epple (Junior Curator, C/O Berlin Foundation), Sophia Greiff (Co-Head of Program and Curator, C/O Berlin Foundation), Alexander Hagmann (Founder and Editor-in-Chief, dieMotive), Renée Mussai (Freelance Curator), Andrzej Steinbach (Photographer), and Tanzim Wahab (Curator, Spore Initiative). They drew up the shortlist and selected this year's winner. Over seventy nominated emerging artists submitted their work. The shortlisted candidates' work will be shown online in cooperation with *Der Greif* magazine.

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The jury for the *Theorist* category is comprised of Veronika Epple (Junior Curator, C/O Berlin Foundation), Doris Gassert (Research Curator, Fotomuseum Winterthur), and Sophia Greiff (Co-Head of Program and Curator, C/O Berlin Foundation), who unanimously selected the winner from a number of international entries sent in response to the open call.

Since 2020, the C/O Berlin Talent Award has been made possible by the Alexander Tutsek-Stiftung.

Silvia Rosi (b. 1992, IT) is an artist living between Lomé (Togo) and London (UK). In her practice, she uses photography and moving images to explore the space of memories, oral histories, and (self-)representations. She received a BA in photography from London College of Communication, University of the Arts, London, in 2016. Her work has been exhibited internationally at institutions including Collezione Maramotti (2024), Brooklyn Museum (2024), Camera – Italian Center for Photography (2023), MAXXI (2022), MA*GA (2022), LACMA (2021), Les Rencontres d'Arles (2021), Autograph ABP (2021), and National Portrait Gallery in London (2020).

Katrin Bauer (b. 1992, GER) is a curator and author living and working in Munich. Her research focuses on the intersection between phottheory and decolonial strategies in contemporary art production. She most recently worked as a research associate at the collection of photography and time-based media at Bayerische Staatsgemäldesammlungen. Previously, she was an assistant curator at Fotomuseum Winterthur. She studied photography and design in Freiburg, and art education, curatorial studies at Zurich University of the Arts.

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SHORTLIST 2024

Salih Basheer's (b. 1995, SDN) work *Blue: Children of January* ties in with his photographic practice and expands it by including further visual materials. On June 3, 2019, the political crisis in Sudan escalated when security forces loyal to the government violently cleared the protest camp in front of the army headquarters in Khartoum. This led to numerous deaths and injuries among the demonstrators. Basheer combines documentary photographs of the protest with more ambiguous images of photographed screens, documents, and seemingly incorrectly exposed motifs. His work does not claim to explain the conflict which continues to this day, in a few images or to make it tangible, but rather to find a way of using photography to recalibrate perceptions of unambiguity and complexity.

– Andrzej Steinbach

The strong scent of precious agarwood is said to heal the soul and bring humans closer to the gods: *Scent of Heaven* by **Hiền Hoàng** (b. 1990, VNM) is a project that illuminates the lore of this “holy wood” in a multi-perspectival manner. Hoàng works across media, integrating photography, performance, and tools for image-making and documentation such as virtual reality and CT scans. The jury was impressed by how her concept allowed her to successfully challenge traditional documentary strategies and the scope of the photographic image as well as introducing new possibilities for the documentary.

– Veronika Epple and Sophia Greiff

In *Ghostwriting*, **Sheida Soleimani** (b. 1990, USA) depicts her parents' flight and emigration from Iran. In doing so, she translates her parents' orally recounted memories in photographic images. The colorful photographic arrangements are characterized by repeated symbolic visual motifs. They speak to the setbacks and stumbling blocks Soleimani's parents had to face during their journey. The project is also an attempt to capture a piece of undocumented family history. Moreover, *Ghostwriting* examines important questions around authorship and memory culture, presenting a unique photographic genre which, for the first time, stages ephemeral memories in documentary imagery.

– Veronika Epple and Sophia Greiff

In the work *1 2 3 2 1*, **Yao Yuan** (b. 1988, CHN) has created something wholly special and unique. This mixture of possible past, present, and future finds a unique mood between melancholy and objectivity. The work takes the form of a 304-page photonovel. The story moves from the start of the pregnancy of Yuan's friend Nagakura Nami, the birth of her first child, and the real-life world of Yao Yuan. The beautiful, warm-hearted combination of melancholy out-of-focus portraits and sharp, focused gazes provides unmistakable proof of the way in which photographs not only contain meanings, but also may create meaning. This is world creation and visions using the example of human existence. Yuan deserves the highest praise.

– Alexander Hagmann

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Shortlist 2024

Exhibition Feb 1 – May 16, 2025
Press Tour Jan 31, 2025 . 11:00
Opening Jan 31, 2025 . 20:00

Opening Hours Daily . 11:00–20:00

Admission 12/6 euro

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Made possible by Alexander Tutsek-Stiftung