

THE UNBOXING EXPERIENCE

Phase 2: Resonating Voices
27.06. – 28.09.2025

FOYER

[from left to right]

Anna Bochkova (*1995 in Rostov-on-Don)
Further Knowledge, 2025, cardboard, glass beads, paper, pencil, loan from the artist

Anna Bochkova (*1995 in Rostov-on-Don)
Shelter Shell, 2025, cardboard, glass beads, paper, pencil, steel chain, loan from the artist

Anna Bochkova (*1995 in Rostov-on-Don)
Amoured Concrete, 2024, glazed ceramics, cardboard, loan from the artist

Sofia Doclean (1931 Uzdin–unknown)
Self-portrait Overjoyed, 1970, oil on canvas, Clemens Sels Museum Neuss, purchase 1973

2. OG

1. **Carolín Israel** (*1990 in Chemnitz)
Wallpaper (Toolkit), 2023, smooth non-woven wallpaper, loan from the artist
2. **Carolín Israel** (*1990 in Chemnitz)
Blush, 2023, acrylic, airbrush, aluminum, loan from the artist
3. **Carolín Israel** (*1990 in Chemnitz)
Zunder [engl. Tinder], 2024, carpet fabric, airbrush, loan from the artist
- 4.–8. **Katharina Grosse** (*1961 in Freiburg i. B.)
Untitled (3023 S, 3028 S, 3033 S, 3060 S, 3075 S), five sheets from the series *Untitled*, 2001, acrylic on Arches laid paper, Clemens Sels Museum Neuss, purchase 2004
9. **Camille Dumond** (*1988 in Évreux)
Prospect Center, 2024, HD video, 25 min., loop, main casts: Grace Seri, Flo Schlessmann, Claude Cherel, DP: Romain Rampillon, camera assistant: Myriam Guyénard, sound: Ilù Seydoux, 1st AD: Arthur Miserez, script: Manon Mariette, editor: Noémie Ruben, loan from the artist
10. **Sara De Brito Faustino** (*1999 in Lausanne)
Livingroom from the series *Constructed Memory*, 2023, fine art print on aluminum, loan from the artist
11. **Sara De Brito Faustino** (*1999 in Lausanne)
Kitchen from the series *Constructed Memory*, 2023, fine art print on aluminum, loan from the artist
12. **Sara De Brito Faustino** (*1999 in Lausanne)
Bedroom from the series *Constructed Memory*, 2023, fine art print on aluminum, loan from the artist
13. **Irma Christiansen-Lippert** (1906 Gelsenkirchen–1997 Paris)
Salon with Round Table, undated, oil on cardboard, Clemens Sels Museum Neuss, donation 1989

14. **Sara De Brito Faustino** (*1999 in Lausanne)
untitled, from the series *A House With No Roof*, 2023–2024, fine art print on aluminum, loan from the artist
15. **Irma Christiansen-Lippert** (1906 Gelsenkirchen–1997 Paris)
Doll with Mirror, 1974, oil on canvas, Clemens Sels Museum Neuss, donation 1989
- 16./17. **Sara De Brito Faustino** (*1999 in Lausanne)
untitled, from the series *A House With No Roof*, 2023–2024, fine art print on aluminum, loan from the artist
18. **Vivian Ellis** (*1933 in New Orleans/Louisiana)
Still Life with Chair, 1969, oil on canvas, Clemens Sels Museum Neuss, purchase 1971
19. **Vivian Ellis** (*1933 in New Orleans/Louisiana)
Vegetable Cart, 1969, tempera and oil on cardboard, Clemens Sels Museum Neuss, donation 2011
20. **Maria Korsak** (1908 Pogórze–2002 Warschau)
Small Houses by the Forest, undated, oil on canvas, Clemens Sels Museum Neuss, purchase 1973
21. **Anna Bochkova** (*1995 in Rostow am Don)
Amoured Concrete, 2024, glazed ceramics, cardboard, loan from the artist
22. **Anna Zomer** (1899 Houten–1970 Bunnik)
Pentecost, oil on canvas, undated, Clemens Sels Museum Neuss, purchase 1973
23. **Ludmila Procházková** (1903 Slavkov–1984 unknown)
Going to Church, 1968, oil on canvas, Clemens Sels Museum Neuss, purchase 1973
24. **Ludmila Procházková** (1903 Slavkov–1984 unknown)
Wedding Celebration, undated, oil on canvas, Clemens Sels Museum Neuss, purchase 1974
25. **Shannon Sinclair** (*1994 in Bielefeld)
constant headache, 2023, epoxy resin, acrylic, loan from the artist
26. **Katarzyna Gawłowa** (1896–1983 Zielonki)
Baptism of Christ, 1978, tempera on hardboard, Clemens Sels Museum Neuss, purchase 1978
27. **Shannon Sinclair** (*1994 in Bielefeld)
Mimir, 2023, epoxy resin, ink-jet print, loan from the artist
28. **Shannon Sinclair** (*1994 in Bielefeld)
Your Name on a Grain of Rice, 2025, MDF, aluminum, mirror, cardboard, soundbox, loan from the artist
29. **Florica Puia** (1920–1994 Uzdin)
Happiness and Sadness, 1971, oil on canvas, Clemens Sels Museum Neuss, purchase 1972
30. **Alicja Wysocka** (*1985 in Silesia)
Solstice/Equinox, 2018–ongoing, video, loop, loan from the artist



INTRODUCTION

The history and present of the Clemens Sels Museum Neuss have primarily been shaped by women – from the founder Pauline Sels to its long-serving female directors. But what about the collection itself?

Phase 1, Do You See Her?, of the exhibition project *The Unboxing Experience* by guest curators Lara Bader and Marlene Kurz, revealed which works by female artists had long been hidden in the museum's depot. This exhibition was a first inventory, a look at forgotten and overlooked positions within the collection. Two main focuses of the collection emerged: the so-called naïve art from the 1960s/1970s – works featuring simplified, often childlike visual language by self-taught artists – and Color Painting spanning from the 1970s to the 2010s.

Building on this, new questions arise in *Phase 2*: Are there thematic focuses within the collection, and do emerging, contemporary artists share these interests? What do they have in common, and how do they differ? As a result, the second exhibition of this work-in-progress project, titled *Resonating Voices*, explores the theme of space by presenting selected works. Space appears as a recurring motif and thread throughout the collection of the Clemens Sels Museum Neuss: as place, as concept, and as a social projection surface. The focus lies on its different dimensions: the institutional museum space, the private space of home, the public space as well as spiritual spaces. Within this framework, questions of identity, belonging, and home are explored.

The curators invited international, emerging artists to enter into dialogue with the museum's collection. They expand existing discourses and establish new focal points, creating equal counterparts and resonating voices. Resonance, understood as echo, reflection, contradiction, or continuation, needs space to be heard. Ideally, the museum itself can become a resonance space. Since women's voices have historically been given less space, this second part of the exhibition remains true to the original concept: only works by female-identifying individuals are shown.

FOYER

The presentation begins in the foyer with a first juxtaposition of two positions. **Sofia Doclean's** self-portrait shows her proudly between rural origins and social advancement "on the rooftops of the world." **Anna Bochkova's** installation *Amoured Concrete* subtly addresses interpersonal relationships in the city while referencing her own childhood in Russian prefabricated housing blocks. The frames of her drawings are made from shredded correspondence and official documents regarding her residence permits. Both artists create emotional resonance by translating personal experiences into forms that make memory, belonging, and identity tangible.

STAIRWELL

For many years, the museum has been using the foyer and stairwell to present Color Paintings. In numerous exhibitions, these works entered into a dynamic dialogue with the building's architecture. In the exhibited works, color is understood not only as a formal element but as a sensually perceptible material that alters space – and is simultaneously shaped by it. Color Paintings can evoke emotional and even spiritual-transcendent experiences.

A central example is **Katharina Grosse**, one of the most internationally renowned contemporary German artists. Since the late 1990s, she has been known primarily for her large-scale spray-painted spatial installations that fully transform both indoor and outdoor environments. In the *untitled* series shown here, Grosse confines herself to paper as a medium. Yet even in smaller format, the color radiates intense presence. Diffuse gradients, dripping streaks, and traces of the spraying process reveal the work's creation and let the color extend beyond the sheet. Despite the rigid boundaries of the paper, the works appear part of an infinity. Which tones dominate? How do they react to one another? Even before conscious analysis, the color creates immediate resonance.

Carolín Israel also engages in abstract painting. While she studied under Grosse at the Art Academy Düsseldorf and employs similar techniques – such as spray paint and the dissolution of boundaries between canvas and space –, she follows a distinctly individual approach. Israel focuses more on the materiality of color and the role of contour. By combining wall works with spatial elements, she raises questions about the relationship between work, materiality, space and viewer. Through its contour and painted shading, a carpet becomes a flowing color spilling into space. The layered arrangement of colors and forms in space recalls classical pictorial compositions from background to foreground while expanding into real space. Depending on the viewpoint, the relationship of elements changes. The glitch effect – a digital image error caused by system malfunction – here enlarged onto wallpaper becomes an intentionally used aesthetic element linking digital and physical space. The museum's white cube is thus opened up and activated by color, form, and movement – the painting becomes an experiential relational structure.

ROOM 1

The experimental, fictional short film *Prospect Center* by **Camille Dumond** addresses many questions that also preoccupied the curators during *The Unboxing Experience*. The protagonist (starring Grace Seri) ventures into an archival searching for traces of her deceased artist friend. However, none of his works can be found. The originals are supposedly buried underground to protect them. Instead of finding clues, she encounters a strange institution: a registration system, a uniform dress code, and a mysterious archiving process. Only sounds and echoes of voices hint at what once was.

Dumond extensively researched the home of British filmmaker, artist, and gardener Derek Jarman (1942–1994) for this film. Jarman spent his final years in a converted fisherman's hut with a stone garden on England's south coast, featured in the opening scenes of *Prospect Center*. It was a place of retreat, creativity, and domestic life, but also surveillance due to proximity to a nuclear plant – elements Dumond weaves into her film.

The guest curators also searched for traces of forgotten artistic positions in the museum's depot and archive, aiming to make women artists' works visible. This raised questions about representation and the care of artistic estates in institutional contexts. The film explores ideas of collective and personal memory, questioning processes of tangible and intangible archiving. It opens a complex discussion about collective spaces, memory cultures, and social dynamics. But it also thematizes the concept of home as a shaped, intimate place and the transition from private to public sphere – linking to the overarching exhibition theme of "space."

ROOM 2

How can home be more than just a place to live, an emotional echo, a memory archive, a site of friction and resonance? The second exhibition room is dedicated to home as a multifaceted experience between security and threat, intimacy and isolation, lived community and vulnerable privacy. Works by naïve painters Irma Christiansen-Lippert, Vivian Ellis, and Maria Korsak from the collection engage with contemporary positions by Sara De Brito Faustino and Anna Bochkova. They open perspectives on memory processes, identity spaces, and architectural resonators. In a world of increasing isolation and urban anonymity, the artists explore intimate interiors alongside social exterior worlds, portraying home as a mirror of our relationships, hopes, and vulnerabilities.

Sara De Brito Faustino's photographic works initially appear as harmless private home snapshots – scenes with remnants of daily family life: an ironing board, a breakfast table, familiar details of cohabitation. Upon closer look, these scenes become worlds of threat, hostility, and repulsion. Long, torn hair lies beneath the iron on the board; a grubby bed in a spartan room feels unsettling – hints at the unspoken. In her photographic series *A Home With No Roof* and *Constructed Memory* Faustino stages the ambivalence of home, which promises security but can also be a place of unease and dysfunction. The starting point is a miniature model of her parents' house at a 1:15 scale. She uses ceramics and everyday objects – packaging, household items – turned into tiny pots and plates to create these miniature worlds, which she then photographs. By playing with scale and perspective, Faustino questions visual habits and the reliability of memory reconstruction. The series title *Constructed Memory* refers to the psychological concept of false memory.

The self-taught painter **Irma Christiansen-Lippert**, known as Moucky, lived and worked in Paris, a city she frequently depicted in her art.

Street scenes, squares, and especially interiors form the core of her work. Yet, these urban streets and interiors are mostly devoid of people, appearing like silent stages where the action is over or never happened. The painting *Doll with Mirror* shows a mannequin hovering between object and person, addressing questions of femininity, gaze, and identity – topics familiar to Christiansen-Lippert from her time as a fashion photographer and reporter.

Despite different media and contexts, Faustino's and Christiansen-Lippert's works share a profound interest in interiors as psychological mirrors. Both explore home not merely as a place of dwelling but as bearer of memories, projections, and hidden narratives.

How does architecture influence social interaction? In *Armoured Concrete*, **Anna Bochkova** combines fragile ceramic figures with gray cardboard models of prefabricated housing – symbols of anonymous residential architecture and social hotspots. Yet, between the hard facades bloom flowers, tender gestures, and quiet utopias. Bochkova plays with stereotypes and contrasts: amid the dreariness of uniform architecture, intimacy, care, and hope arise. The installation's title, a wordplay on "armoured concrete" and French "l'amour" [engl. love], captures this tension: hardness meets vulnerability, mass meets individual, decay meets new beginnings.

Raised in a post-Soviet apartment block in Eastern Europe, Bochkova is familiar with the ambivalence of these places. Her works explore the intertwining of identity, migration, and memory and create poetic future spaces where human and non-human beings persist against adversity. The installation engages in a dialogue with the museum's own brutalist concrete architecture, designed in 1965 by Harald Deilmann, and points to the question of what kinds of resonant spaces architecture can create or deny.

In **Maria Korsak's** work, interactions between people, even with outstretched arms, seem less connecting and more marked by distance and alienation. The dark windows of the buildings reinforce the impression of social isolation, and the figures in the image encounter each other only from a distance.

A different tone is set in *Vegetable Cart* by the naïve painter **Vivian Ellis**, who – like Bochkova – explores the longing for peaceful, communal coexistence. Among other scenes, a couple sits on a bench in front of a house, holding hands and watching the activity on the street. What unites both artists, is the idea of hope, living together, and exchange. At first glance, Ellis's paintings, with their simple forms, appear as naïve idylls. Although motorization was already well established, Ellis's vegetable cart is still horse-drawn. In her works, Ellis processes memories of her childhood and youth as the daughter of a Baptist pastor in an African American community in New Orleans, shaped by community, faith, and social tensions. Only after moving to Germany in 1961, she began to capture these impressions in painting.

Like Bochkova, Ellis focuses on in-between

spaces: on life between houses, on neighborhood, care, and everyday gestures. Both artists create spaces of connection in their works – not nostalgic retreats, but quiet alternatives to social isolation.

ROOM 3

Shaped by their own life experiences, naïve paintings commonly depict domestic and urban everyday life, with religious motifs being particularly widespread. While religion and ritual practices were increasingly pushed out of the public sphere in Western society in the 1970s, naïve artists seem to have remained closely connected to them. Depictions of religious festivals, processions, and biblical scenes are a significant part of the collection at the Clemens Sels Museum Neuss.

In her two works on display, **Ludmilla Procházková**, portrays wedding celebrations and a church procession. In her meticulous depiction of the traditional costumes, she reveals not only a deep connection to her Czech culture and its crafts but also a strong desire to preserve and perhaps document these traditions in the face of increasing globalization and modernization. Notably, she plays with scale: some figures appear enormous compared to others. The viewer's eye is intentionally guided, wandering through the painting along these size contrasts. In the procession-like scenes of both works, the public act of religious faith is depicted without needing additional symbols or gestures; simply in the communal walk and attire of the figures, their belonging is made visible.

This historical position is contrasted with a work by **Alicja Wysocka**. Her video *Solstice/Equinox* documents the performative reclaiming of pre-Christian harvest and equinox rituals in the Polish village of Nowogród. Before the region's Christianization, the equinox festival was one of the most significant celebrations of the pagan Slavic culture but was gradually overlaid by Christian customs. Today, the elaborately decorated straw harvest wreaths recall the former tradition. These wreaths were integrated into Christian festivities and are now part of a popular folk festival. Based on macramé workshops with a women's group from Nowogród, Wysocka's work evolved into an annual performance program at the equinox, documented over the years through video. Her practice merges social engagement with art, blending documentary elements rooted in local research with performative aspects that explore the role of rediscovered traditions in shaping collective identity and female knowledge. It's a lasting example of how Polish folk art and its traditions can find their place in a contemporary context.

Naïve artist **Katarzyna Gawłowa** is recognized for her reinterpretations of biblical scenes, which she painted directly to the walls of her home, transforming the domestic space into a devotional environment. It was only at the urging of art collector Jacek Łodziński that she began creating her works on conventional painting supports for sale. Characteristic are not only the two-di-

mensional Christian motifs, but also her painted frames, which were integrated into the overall composition. She began her artistic career very late, almost at the age of 80. While she was labeled a Polish naïve artist in Germany, no such category existed in Poland, where her work was presented in ethnographic and cultural-historical museums, aligning it closely with Polish folk-art traditions.

While Gawłowa draws on traditional symbols like the cross, dove, or angel figures in depictions of the Baptism of Christ, **Shannon Sinclair** transfers the question of divine representation into the digital 21st century. Her epoxy-resin series *Mimir* resulted from a conversation with an artificial intelligence about consciousness, creation, and power in the context of philosophy, morality, and religion. Could AI be interpreted as a new form of deity, and what does it think of itself? The AI-generated visualizations have not yet freed themselves from human traditions of divine depiction. Encased forever in epoxy resin (which visibly ages), the AI's self-presentations as a divine being become artifacts. The echo of that resonance is also palpable in *constant headache* and *Your Name on a Grain of Rice* – as a physical fragment, a mirror of memory, a subtle critique of normative gazes and patriarchal power gestures. In *constant headache*, Sinclair incorporates a cast of the seal ring designed by Markus Lüpertz, a symbolic object awarded to all professors at the Art Academy Düsseldorf. Evoking the Pope's Piscatory Ring, it symbolizes patriarchal and conservative authority, a system in which the predominantly male professors were revered as artistic geniuses. There is no version of the seal ring sized for a woman. In her work, Sinclair finely critiques the persistence of gender discrimination in the art world.

In the mirror of the shrine, where an Irish counting rhyme is whispered, viewers are invited to self-reflect – not only on their own image, but on the societal frameworks that shape it. While naïve artist **Anna Zomer** portrays herself in her work *Pentecost* among the apostles as the Holy Spirit descends upon her in the form of a dove, in Sinclair's opposing shrine, between vanitas symbolism and biographical traces, an intimate dialogue emerges about femininity, transience, and visibility. Inspired by the tradition of Greek Orthodox votive tablets – public offerings of gratitude for received grace – Sinclair's home shrine, constructed from pizza boxes, becomes a testament to the human longing for a responsive counterpart. Sociologist Hartmut Rosa identifies this longing, in his theory of resonance, as the most essential feature of religion. Sinclair's works reveal contemporary understandings of religion: not as a rigid system, but as a space for resonance – where questions of meaning, power, and humanity arise.

The importance of resonance in the context of ritual mourning is also evident in the works of naïve painter **Florica Puia**. Like Sofia Doclean, she belonged to a women's collective of painters from the Serbian village of Uzdin. While other naïve art colonies at the time were mostly male-dominated, Uzdin was the only known village where only women painted. As with Procházková, her works are marked by depicting the craftsmanship of

their folk traditions. Between renditions reminiscent of folk embroidery of church architecture, angel figures, offerings, and mourning people, an everyday connection between religious practice and cultural, identity-forming traditions becomes clear – echoing also Alicja Wysocka's video.

The exhibition is curated by Lara Bader (GER) and Marlene Kurz (CH) and part of Residence NRW⁺ a fellowship programme for artists and curators. Residence NRW⁺ is a programme of the Kunsthalle Münster, an institution of the City of Münster. www.residencenrw.de

PROGRAM

Thursday, 26 June 2025, 6–8 pm

Opening

Sunday, 6 July 2025, 11:30 am

Doppelpack: Cuddle Blanket, Magic Castle & Dream Island – Colorful Favorite Places

Workshop for children aged 6 and up (in German)

Monday, 4 August 2025, 10 am–1 pm

Thursday, 7 August 2025, 10 am–1 pm

Friday, 8 August 2025, 10 am–1 pm

Holiday Fun: The Unboxing Experience – Phase 2

Workshop for children aged 6 to 12 (in German)

Sunday, 21 September 2025, 11:30 am

Curators' tour with Lara Bader & Marlene Kurz (in German)

Wednesday, 24 September 2025, 3:00 pm

Curators' tour with Lara Bader & Marlene Kurz (in German)

Saturday, 27 September 2025, 5 pm–midnight

Closing Event & Neuss Culture Night

To close the exhibition and as part of Neuss Culture Night, **Thi My Lien Nguyen** will present her video work *Bellies to Fill* (2023) and bring the space to life with a live food performance engaging all the senses. Her works take up central exhibition themes – care, memory, and cultural appropriation in the domestic context. How is home experienced, remembered, constructed – and who does it belong to? In both video and performance, the artist negotiates the home as a space of feminine experience, intergenerational care, and cultural negotiation. The private becomes political: the kitchen and dining table turn into places of memory, resistance, and collective belonging.

For additional dates of guided tours and events related to the exhibition, please visit:
www.clemens-sels-museum-neuss.de

A cooperation of:

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Ein Programm der Kunsthalle Münster.
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