

## sexy...

basel al-bazzaz | johann garber | julia hanzl | helga sophia goetze |  
johann korec | hannes lehner | karl vondal

**OPENING: Wednesday, Februar 19, 2025, 7 pm**

**Exhibition duration: February 20 until May 11, 2025**

In our spring exhibition “sexy ...”, seven unique artists come together at the *galerie gugging* and whisk us away into their erotic worlds. From the sexy works of the *Gugging Artists* Johann Garber, Johann Korec and Karl Vondal, to the fascinating universe of Helga Sophia Goetze, the oriental women of Basel Al-Bazzaz & the naked men of Hannes Lehner to the extraordinary ceramics of Julia Hanzl.

The depiction of naked bodies has a long tradition, from the earliest cave paintings to the present day. Many *Gugging Artists* and their national and international colleagues have also taken up the theme since the beginning, which is why we want to ring in the new year with seven different sexy positions.

We begin with the colourful oeuvre of **Basel Al-Bazzaz**. The artist, who was originally born in Baghdad, has been working in a print workshop in Vienna since 2000, where he creates fine, detailed works on paper that have a special effect on the viewer. Using watercolours, pencils and coloured pencils to create works of art is **Al-Bazzaz's** passion. His playful, erotic depictions of women also reflect his longing for the Orient. While he often uses models for his depictions of plants and animals, the inspiration for his depictions of naked women comes from his own imagination, as he revealed to us.

Next up is the exceptional, versatile German artist **Helga Sophia Goetze**. Born in Magdeburg, **Goetze** was a feminist icon who loved to break through boundaries and boldly share her views with the world. The artist left behind a fascinating universe of painted pictures, embroidered carpets, sketches, collages and an extensive written legacy, including numerous poems. She was best known and notorious for her "vigil" at the Berlin Memorial Church, where she stood for an hour every day for over 20 years from 1983 to proclaim her message: "*Fucking is peace!*" The *galerie gugging* is delighted to show a tapestry and sketches by the artist & poet, who was an investigative, sharp observer and chronicler of her time, as part of the **sexy...** exhibition. **Helga Sophia Goetze's** works can also be found in the **Collection de l'Art Brut** in Lausanne.

The *Gugging Artist* **Johann Garber** is the next in our sexy round. He is best known for his dense ink drawings. A recurring theme in his work are his so-called “Sexi papers”. These have

even adorned the renowned **Museum of Sex** on 5th Avenue in New York. *“If you ask **Johann Garber** why he keeps drawing naked people, his answer is because that is how we are born! – We come like this ... and we leave like this”*, says *galerie gugging* director **Nina Katschnig** with a smile. **Garber** was born in Wiener Neustadt and has lived in the *House of Artists* in Gugging since 1981.

The next artist is **Julia Hanzl**. An innovative ceramic artist from Vienna, who has already made a name for herself beyond the borders, especially in the United States, and grew up in a family of artists. The self-taught artist, whose works usually have a provocative sexy-erotic touch, is appreciated for her unmistakable ceramics, mixed media sculptures, porcelain & bronze editions and ceramic sculptures in combination with taxidermy. **Hanzl** lives and works in Mödling.

For the *Gugging Artist* **Johann Korec**, the nude depiction of couples in his sexy works was the predominant favourite theme, which he celebrated extensively. **Korec** lived in the *House of Artists* in Gugging from 1981 until his death in 2008. While he began his artistic career by tracing figures, drawing and painting lovers later became his preferred motif. The protagonist was almost always the artist himself. He usually added a description of the subjects at the bottom of the picture, making the works appear like a diary. His depicted partners did not come from his imagination but were often actual girlfriends from the time. In 1990, he was awarded the **Oskar Kokoschka Prize**, as was **Johann Garber** with the group of the *Gugging Artists*.

Born in Vienna in 1986, **Hannes Lehner** loves muscular bodies, enjoys going to the gym and wanted to become an underwear model himself. The artist's creative career includes central themes such as landscapes, architecture, automobiles, space, fantastic animal figures and now also male nudes. Over the years, he has created an extensive oeuvre that includes drawings, paintings and three-dimensional objects. The lively artist, who is always up for a joke, uses mixed techniques such as acrylic, coloured pencil, gouache or paperboard for his works. **Lehner's** sexy, well-trained men, usually staged in bright colours, are the logical continuation of his popular houses and cars, already presented at our exhibition ***simplicity | complexity***, and are now being shown for the first time at the *galerie gugging*. **Hannes Lehner** is currently active as an artist at the Jugend am Werk facility in Im Werd.

Of course, the *Gugging Artist* **Karl Vondal**, whom *galerie gugging* director **Nina Katschnig** describes as the *“master of eroticism from Gugging”*, should not be missing from a **sexy...** exhibition. **Vondal** lived in the *House of Artists* in Gugging from 2002 to 2024 and had a particular fondness for erotic depictions, which he worked on tirelessly day and night. His nude women and loving couples usually appear with him in the role of the prince – in delicate pastel tones, which became more vibrant towards the end of his career. The protagonists of his works are often found on islands under palm trees or above the roofs of towns and villages. Similar

to **Johann Korec**, his works are usually accompanied by illustrious stories. In **sexy...** you can see both small and large works, some of which have been elaborately and very vividly staged with matchsticks.

We look forward to welcoming you in the presence of the artists **Basel Al-Bazzaz, Johann Garber, Julia Hanzl** and **Hannes Lehner** at our **sexy...** opening on **February 19, 2025, at 7 pm in Maria Gugging.**

**Yours Nina Katschnig & the *galerie gugging* team**

Our gugging twingy (the digital twin) – a forgery-proof certificate of authenticity based on CO2-neutral blockchain technology that guarantees permanent preservation of ownership for generations – is also entering a new round. When you purchase an original work, we will be happy to produce a digital twin for you for a small surcharge.