

Brave New World

27.09. – 31.10.2025

Julia Frey & Nicholas Grafia

Curated by David Riemer and Maximilian Biagosch

In Aldous Huxley's dystopian novel *Brave New World*, the human body is reduced to a regulated resource: functionalized, disciplined, and stripped of individuality. Memory is erased, intimacy surveilled.

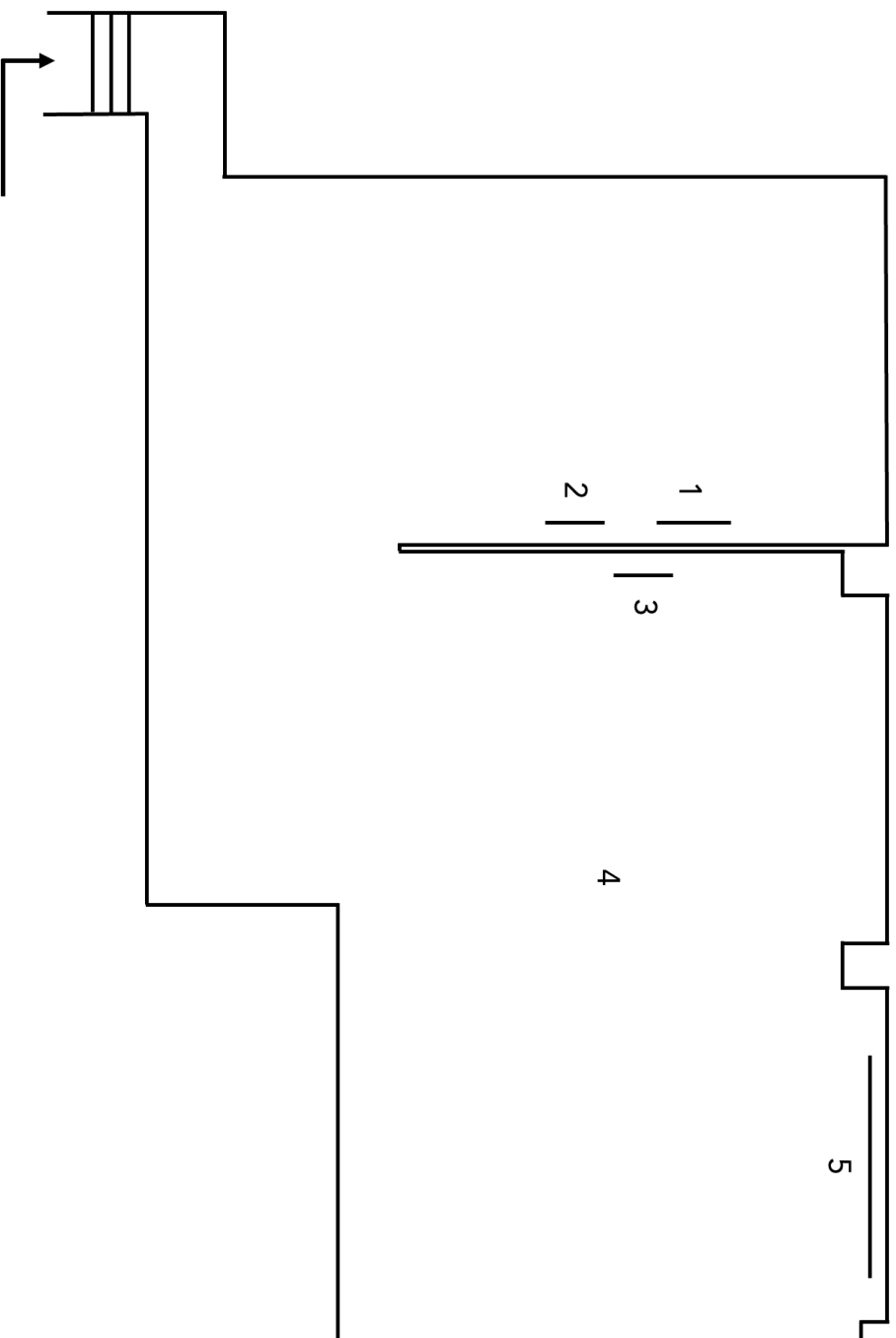
The exhibition *Brave New World* draws on these motifs and stages a dialogue between two artistic positions that, through distinct aesthetic and conceptual strategies, probe the mechanisms of control, structural violence, collective memory, and the politics of remembrance.

Julia Frey presents sculptural installations in which implements from livestock farming – branding irons, heat detectors, tilt tables – are reconfigured as mute witnesses to physical and emotional thresholds. The body remains absent, yet its spectral presence resonates through the altered context, prompting viewers into an inner act of reflection.

Nicholas Grafia contributes new figurative paintings that engage directly with the history of the site, the former Düsseldorf slaughterhouse, and the complex echoes of its past. His figures unfold as projection surfaces where identities and temporalities intersect and collide. A live performance extends these inquiries into an embodied register: language, gesture, and movement become means not simply to recount history but to renegotiate its narratives in the present.

Brave New World frames the body as medium, as bearer of traces, as a contested site of social inscription, and as a surface onto which political and historical orders are projected.

The former slaughterhouse is not merely a backdrop but a resonant space and living archive. The site itself is marked by a dual history of violence: inaugurated in 1899 as an industrial facility for the mass processing of animals, it was later exploited under National Socialism as a collection point for the deportation of Jewish citizens. Following the cessation of operations in 2002, much of the complex was redeveloped into the campus of Düsseldorf University of Applied Sciences (HSD), while the *Kulturschlachthof* has, for over three decades, remained a place for artistic exchange, concerts, and cultural events.



- 1 – Julia Frey, *Ich hab dich lieb [I love you]*, 2024, embossing with pig stamps on aluminium, 157 x 100 x 5 cm
- 2 – Nicholas Graña, *Joy Division*, 2025, acrylic, pigments, crayon, graphite, and charcoal on canvas, 100 x 80 cm
- 3 – Julia Frey, *Bruntfndikatoren [Breeding Indicators] (series)*, 2023, etching on breeding indicators, 10,8 x 4,4 cm each (framed: 20 x 13 cm each)
- 4 – Julia Frey, *Mängelexemplar*, 2025, galvanized steel, 90 x 66 x 132 cm
- 5 – Nicholas Graña, *Kleist-Kasino*, 2025, acrylic, pigments, crayon, graphite, and charcoal on canvas, 300 x 180 cm