

Kunstverein Siegen

Haus Seel, Kornmarkt 20, Siegen

 www.kunstverein-siegen.de

Öffnungszeiten Di-Sa 14-18 Uhr
So 11-13/14-18 Uhr

Press Release

Artists: Peles Duo

Location: Kunstverein Siegen

Kornmarkt 20, 57072 Siegen

Exhibition Title: *h₁ésh₂r*

Duration: April 12 – June 22, 2025

Curator: Jennifer Cierlitza

Photographer: Simon Vogel

www.kunstverein-siegen.de

info@kunstverein-siegen.de

With *h₁ésh₂r*, Kunstverein Siegen presents an exhibition by the Berlin-based artist duo Peles Duo, complemented by a sculptural intervention and an open-air public programme.

The artist duo Peles Duo (formerly Peles Empire), consisting of Barbara Wolff and Katharina Stöver, takes both its material and its name from the Romanian castle of Peleş, built in 1883. The interior of the castle is characterised by a non-hierarchical juxtaposition of copied furniture and spatial designs from different stylistic periods. The artists draw from this historicist interior, making postmodern techniques of reproduction, sampling and quotation the basis of their artistic practice. They merge different times and spaces with different media, deliberately blurring the boundaries between original and copy, historical and contemporary, refined and mundane, and between the two- and three-dimensional. This process of abstraction constantly challenges the notion of the 'original'.

The exhibition *h₁ésh₂r* explores hybrid spaces and the themes of transformation and transience. The title refers to the Proto-Indo-European word for 'blood', symbolising life and sacrifice, as well as the connection between body, earth and metal - central motifs that permeate the mythology, materiality and artistic practice of Peles Duo.

At the historic excavation site of Gerhardsseifen, an Iron Age smelting site in the Siegerland region, the artists will bury a sculpture - an inverted object that remains hidden from view. This gesture questions the traditional understanding of sculpture as a visible monument and addresses time, memory and archaeological processes. The burial will be filmed by Rob Crosse and the film will be shown at the exhibition at Kunstverein Siegen from 7 to 22 June. A central element of the exhibition is also the premiere of the film *ashes within me*, also produced in collaboration with artist Rob Crosse.

The exhibition revolves around metamorphosis, the dissolution of boundaries and rhizomes - concepts described by Gilles Deleuze as "unlimited finitude". Points of reference include the mythological figure of Cybele, rituals of transformation and burial, and the pomegranate as a symbol of transition and duality. Artistic reflections on bodies and traces extend the discourse on materiality, reproduction and hybridity, creating a dynamic tension between past and present.

The exhibition *h₁ésh₂r* at Kunstverein Siegen and the sculptural intervention will be accompanied by an extensive artistic programme in public space. This includes screenings and artist talks at the Reinhold Forster Erbstollen in Siegen-Eiserfeld with international artists such as Lucy Beech, Phillip Zach, Maria Loboda and Rob Crosse, whose work explores physicality, historical narratives, media transformations and collective memory.

Peles Duo is currently based in Berlin. Both artists studied at the Städelschule in Frankfurt am Main, the Slade School of Art in London, and the Royal Academy in London. Since 2005, they have also run various exhibition spaces under the same name—initially in London and Cluj, Romania, and now in Berlin, where they showcase the work of other artists.

Selected solo exhibitions by Peles Duo include Stiftung St. Matthäus (2024), Kunstverein Pforzheim (2022), E-Werk Luckenwalde (2021), Kunsthaus Graz (2019), Wilhelm-Hack-Museum in Ludwigshafen (2015), Kunstmuseum Stuttgart (2013), and Glasgow Sculpture Studio (2013). Their work has also been featured in numerous group exhibitions, including *NOW* at the Scottish National Gallery of Modern Art in Edinburgh (2019), Art Encounters, Timisoara Biennale, Romania (2019), Skulptur Projekte Münster (2017), *Made in Germany III* at Kunstverein Hannover (2017), *Salon of Hybrid Things* at KW Institute for Contemporary Art in Berlin (2015), *Remote Control* at ICA London (2011), and *Frieze Projects* in London (2011).