

SARAH VAN RIJ

HUMMING FROM THE SHADOWS

OCTOBER 31, 2025 – JANUARY 4, 2026

AUDITORIUM/HALL FOR CONTEMPORARY ART

With a sensitivity to detail, Dutch photographer Sarah van Rij (*1990) creates fragmentary, timeless, and mysterious compositions that reveal the poetic potential of everyday life. Her shadow theater unfolds through a play of light and dark, form and color, in which silhouettes and recurring objects set the rhythm of a visual score. »HUMMING FROM THE SHADOWS« at the auditorium of the Hall for Contemporary Art is van Rij's first solo exhibition in Germany and features more than twenty works, some of them large formats, from the last seven years.

Van Rij playfully transcends the documentary role of photography, transforming reality into dreamlike, surrealistic images: disembodied hands, martini glasses, and abandoned pumps drift through her pictures like fleeting echoes. Fragmented figures intertwine with floral compositions for evocative and symbolic images to emerge. Deeply embedded in our collective memory, they cast long shadows into the exhibition space.

Whether captured with her iPhone or on camera, in her work everyday life becomes a film set of overlooked traces and hints. When reflections in windows or on water surfaces shimmer with cinematic melancholy, suggestive, fragmentary narratives emerge. Van Rij herself also becomes part of her compositions: she appears in shadows and obscured reflections, repeatedly breaking down the distance between viewer and photographic image. Viewing and reassembling characterize van Rij's work as an open process, a form of collage in which she continually fragments and reconstructs her world anew—whether in urban landscapes, still lifes, or self-portraits.

The exhibition was curated by Nadine Isabelle Henrich, Curator at the House of Photography, together with Viktoria Weber, Curatorial Fellow at the House of Photography, in close collaboration with Sarah van Rij. The photographs were produced by WhiteWall as high-quality fine art prints to mark the fifth anniversary of the partnership with the Deichtorhallen.

ABOUT THE ARTIST

Self-taught photographer Sarah van Rij (*1990) lives and works in Amsterdam and Paris. Starting in 2018 with street photography, she gradually expanded to landscape, still life, portraiture, and collage. Her work has been published in renowned magazines such as The New Yorker, i-D Magazine, The New York Times, Vogue, and ZEITmagazin. Without defining herself a fashion photographer, she is frequently commissioned, producing work for Louis Vuitton, Jacquemus, Adidas, Dior, Rapha, Chanel, and Hermès. In 2025, her works will be on display in several solo exhibitions, including the Maison Européenne de la Photographie (MEP) in Paris and the Chiba Prefectural Museum of Art in Japan. At the same time, her first monograph, entitled »Atlas of Echoes« is being published, featuring black-and-white and color photographs.

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CURATORS

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OPENING

On Thursday, 30 October 2025, at 7 pm in the Hall for Contemporary Art. The artist will be present.

PRESS MATERIAL

Press photos and texts are available for download at www.deichtorhallen.de/presse.

For interview and press enquiries, please contact Astrid Umbreit on +40 (0)40 32103-250 or Caroline Huzel on -262 at presse@deichtorhallen.de.

OPENING HOURS

Tuesday to Sunday, 11 am to 6 pm. Every first Thursday of the month, 11 am to 9 pm, with free admission from 6 pm to 9 pm

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