

# Kunstverein BRAUNSCHWEIG



Press Information

**06.12.2025 – 22.02.2026**

***But you, yourself, with your own hand must open this door***

**Press tour:** Thu, December 4, 2025, 11 am

**Opening:** Fri, December 5, 2025, 7 pm

**Braunschweig, November 13, 2025.** *But you, yourself, with your own hand must open this door* presents a young generation of artists from Kosovo, Albania, and the diaspora. Their works reflect a region that, despite a shared language, is shaped by complex histories, division, and geopolitical tensions.

Between nostalgia, trauma, and visions of the future, the artistic positions open up new perspectives on a European periphery that is at the same time a center of creative energy. After its premiere at the Westfälischer Kunstverein in Münster, the exhibition is now on view at Villa Salve Hospes in Braunschweig, featuring expanded contributions.

Artists

**EDONA ADEMI, DJELLZA AZEMI, ANJESA DELLOVA, ENVER HADZIJAJ, BLERTA HAZIRAJ, BRILANT MILAZIMI, LEART RAMA, ABI SHEHU, DARDAN ZHEGROVA**

Curator

**CATHRIN MAYER**

Supported by

Niedersächsische Sparkassenstiftung, Braunschweigische Sparkassenstiftung,  
Niedersächsisches Ministerium für Wissenschaft und Kultur, Stadt Braunschweig – Fachbereich  
Kultur und Wissenschaft, Botschaft der Republik Kosovo in Berlin

## Exhibition Text

*But you, yourself, with your own hand must open this door*, after a line from the poem *Dera magjike* (*The Magic Door*) written by the Yugoslavian poet, Mira Alečković in the 1940s, is dedicated to a generation of young artists who live in Kosovo and Albania or whose origins can be traced back to these countries. Although these two countries are united by a common language and shared traditions, they are also constituents of a larger geographical region with a complex and conflict-laden history characterised by ethnic, cultural and political differences. How do contemporary questions of identity and belonging play out in this geopolitical context and what can we learn from it?

The exhibition presents works by artists born in the early 1990s who strive to contribute to the shaping of the future while dealing with our fragile present, which is currently once more defined and riven by a mindset of division. Since the late 1990s, the USA have been present in Kosovo—politically, through USAID, the American development program, and numerous NGOs. This presence is also visible in daily life, for example in streets and squares named after U.S. figures. However, budget cuts at USAID have increased the risk of potential instability.

*But you, yourself, with your own hand must open this door* aims to use a range of artistic strategies to provide different points of view on a region that is equally on the periphery and at the centre. For artists in the ethnic diaspora, the region itself is associated with both a diffuse sense of nostalgia and cross-generational trauma; for the local scene, it represents an inspiring resonance chamber that – with its borders, constraints and conditions – simultaneously differs and separates itself from the permeability of a European cultural landscape.

The poetic title of the exhibition with its insistent, threefold direct address (*you, yourself, your own*) immediately sets up a mode of individualisation and invokes our shared personal

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responsibility and agency amid a host of global issues, strife and conflicts. The stories, biographies and myths collected here, in which it is often impossible to draw distinct boundaries between political and private spheres, generate narratives that are as coherent as they are contradictory, thus opening up an important arena for ambiguity and the tolerance thereof. At the same time, visitors are directly addressed and invited to approach the artists and their respective stories and thereby embark on a journey to a region that seems geographically close but often remote in our minds.

The exhibition was shown last year at the Westfälischer Kunstverein in Münster and was initiated and co-curated by Kristina Scepanski, who was then the director at the Kunstverein. The presentation in Braunschweig was adapted to the spaces of the Villa Salve Hospes and was supplemented by additional artistic positions and works.

Cathrin Mayer

## Biographies

**Edona Ademi** (\*1994, Berlin) is an artist and filmmaker. Her practice brings together cinematic storytelling, installation, and moving images to create layered narrative spaces. She explores how representations and imaginaries of power relations are constructed. Edona Ademi's work has been shown at Manifesta in Prishtina (2022); the Westfälischer Kunstverein (2024); nGbK Berlin (2023); the Autostrada Biennale (2021); the International Short Film Festival Winterthur (2022); and the New Horizons Film Festival in Wrocław (2022). She completed a Master's degree in Migration and Diaspora Studies at the School of Oriental and African Studies (SOAS), University of London, and is a member of Directing at the German Film and Television Academy Berlin (dffb).

**Djellza Azemi** (\*1998) lives and works in Lausanne, Switzerland. She obtains her BA (2020) and MFA in Ecal, Renens in 2022. Her work has recently been exhibited in group shows at TOXI, Zurich (2025); EYE, Yverdon-les-Bains (2025); EGG space, Zurich (2025); Espace Arlaud, Lausanne (2024); Suprafinit Gallery, Bucharest (2024); Westfälischer Kunstverein, Münster (2024); National Gallery, Prishtina (2023); Sonnenstube, Lugano (2022); Loaves Projects, Munich (2022); Palazzina, Basel (2022). As well as solo shows at HIT, Geneva (2024); Local-Int, Bienne (2022); One Gee In Fog, Geneva (2021), and 13Vitrine, Renens (2021).

**Anjesa Dellova** (\*1994, Kosovo) is a Swiss artist who lives and works in Lausanne. She studied Fine Arts at ECAL (BA, 2017), where she experimented with photography, video, and painting, before dedicating herself fully to painting. She graduated with a Master's degree in Fine Arts from HEAD – Genève in 2020. Her work was awarded the Kiefer Hablitzel & Göhner Prize (2022), the Alice Bailly Grant (2023), and the Cultural Grant of the Leenaards Foundation (2024). In 2025, she was nominated for the Swiss Art Awards. Recent solo exhibitions include Mayday art space, Basel (2023); Tunnel Tunnel, Lausanne (2023); Valentin61, Lausanne (2023); Musée Jenisch, Vevey (2024); Fabienne Levy Gallery, Lausanne & Geneva (2025); and Galerie Sans Titre, Paris (2025). Her works are held in public collections such as the City of Lausanne and the Swiss Post.

**Blerta Haziraj** is a filmmaker and researcher based in Kosovo. Her work explores women's histories and archives through experimental film, print, and exhibition formats. Her short documentaries center on women's lives in rural Kosovo, including *How I Failed Documenting Male Gaze*, Kino Armata (2021), *Your Eyes and Hands Must Be Seen Everywhere*, CHwB (2022), and *The Future is Better, Comrade*, Autostrada Biennale (2023), developed as part of her research and exhibition on the Women's Antifascist Front of Kosovo. She received the Prince Claus Seed Award 2023 and is currently studying Directing at FAMU International, Prague.

**Enver Hadzijaj** (\*1980, lives and works in Berlin) is an artist and designer, and runs the artist-run space Beach Office in Berlin. His work has been exhibited in solo and group shows, including XXXXXX, Glassbox, Paris (2023); *Target*, Select Berlin, Berlin (2022); *Paradis*, Claude Balls Int, New York (2022); *TV TUNED P.O.E.T.A.T.O.*, A Maior, Viseu, Portugal (2021); *Jahresgaben*, The Wig, Berlin (2021); *Cruise Collection*, Fragile, Berlin (2020); *Relax – it's all online*, Lars Friedrich, Berlin

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(2020); *Come by more often and be so tender*, Pina, Vienna (2019); *Elevator to Mezzanine*, Cleopatra's & Issue Project Room, New York (2017); and *Travel Almanach*, Schinkel Klause, Berlin (2016).

**Brilant Milazimi** (\*1994 in Gjilan, Kosovo) is an artist based in Prishtina, Kosovo. He studied at the Adem Kastrati School in Gjilan and the Faculty of Arts at the University of Prishtina. Recent solo exhibitions include presentations at Akademie der Künste der Welt, Cologne (2024); and Stacion – Center for Contemporary Art, Prishtina (2020). His work has been shown at numerous institutions, including Autostrada Biennale, Prizren (2025); Santa Lucia del Gonfalone, Italy (2023); Manifesta Biennial, Kosovo (2022); National Gallery of Kosovo (2021, 2019); Ludwig Museum, Budapest, Hungary (2020); and Stacion – Center for Contemporary Art, Kosovo (2019).

**Leart Rama** (\*1997, Kosovo) is a filmmaker, editor, and music producer whose work moves between cinema and sound. Founder of Katarzë Films and curator of DokuFest's DokuNights, he has directed several short films, including *Life After a Lifetime* and *Endless Rebirths* and *Third Time's a Charm*. His debut feature, *I Must Go Down by the Sea Again*, begins production in 2026. Beyond film, he produces and performs electronic music under his own label blissblissbliss, and his work is defined by contrasts of silence and noise, intimacy and spectacle, often exploring queer identity, grief, and transformation.

**Abi Shehu** (\*1993 Lezha, Albania) is a multi-disciplinary visual artist, whose artistic research can be described as an archeology of unconsciousness. Through a combination of visual and media art, from installation to sound art, she creates landscapes that embody the unrepresentable and unknowable dimensions of people, societies, places and historical events. Shehu's work has been exhibited at Westfälischer Kunstverein, Münster (2024); Voloshyn Gallery, Miami; Hauser & Wirth, Menorca (2023); Manifesta 14, Prishtina (2022); Zeta Gallery, Tirana (2021); *In Waves*, with Women in Covid (2022), various locations; Bazament Art Space, Tirana (2020, 2021); Galeria e Bregdetit, Vlora (2021); EMOP, Berlin (2023, 2020); Kino Rinia, Prishtina (2020); CLB, Berlin (2019); and ArtHouse, Shkodra (2019).

**Dardan Zhegrova** (\*1991, Prishtina, lives and works in Prishtina) creates object and performance based works rooted in his poetry. These pieces are told from a first-person perspective to an imaginary you, blending reality with fiction as well as time and identity layers. His queer stance is reflected in the dissolution of gender and narrative boundaries. His work has been exhibited at Manifesta 14, Prishtina (2022); MUDAM, Luxembourg (2024); The National Gallery of Prishtina (2023); Galleria Continua, Paris (2024); Meredith Rosen Gallery, New York (2020); Fragile Art Space, Berlin (2020). He participated in residency programs at the Swiss Institute in New York (2020) and the Akademie der Künste der Welt in Cologne (2024). His works are included in major collections such as MUDAM Luxembourg; the National Gallery of Kosovo; and the NLB Contemporary Art Collection in Ljubljana. In 2016, he was awarded the Artist of Tomorrow Prize, Prishtina, and in 2017 he received the Gjon Mili Prize, Prishtina.

## Selected Program

### Public Guided Tours

Thu 6 pm and Sun 3 pm

Free of charge, plus admission

Please note that the guided tour will not take place on Thu, December 25, 2025, and on Thu, January 1, 2026.

### Panels and artist talks

**Moderation: EDONA ADEMI and CATHRIN MAYER**

Sat, December 6, 2025, 1 pm

Free of charge, plus admission

In English

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## **Panel I: Passing through**

**With DJELLZA AZEMI, ANJESA DELLOVA, DARDAN ZHEGROVA**

The panel explores spaces of transition and thresholds between closeness and distance, movement and stillness, vulnerability and resistance. Together with the artists, it creates a space for exchange on identity, memory, space, and materiality in contemporary practice.

## **Panel II: Regarding the pain of self - haunted bodies, collective memories**

**With ABI SHEHU, ANJESA DELLOVA, BLERTA HAZIRAJ, LEART RAMA**

The artists explore how biographical and collective experiences—pain, grief, historical traces—are translated into materials, gestures, and spaces. They create sites where the precarious, the spectral, and the unfinished become visible, without being reduced to simple categories of identity.

## **Director's tour of the exhibition But you, yourself, with your own hand must open this door with CATHRIN MAYER**

Thu, January 22, 2026, 6 pm

Free of charge, plus admission

In German

## **Talk with ÖVÜL Ö. DURMUŞOĞLU and JOANNA WARSZA**

Sat, February 21, 2026, 1 pm

Free of charge, plus admission

**ÖVÜL Ö. DURMUŞOĞLU**, curator, author, and professor at HBK Braunschweig, and **JOANNA WARSZA**, curator, author, and editor, and since 2024 the City Curator of Hamburg, curated the Autostrada Biennale 2021 and 2023 in Prizren (Kosovo). Their approach understands art as a tool for negotiating social, political, and emotional transitions, emphasizing dialogue and collective learning. In conversation, they provide insights into the art scene and production in Kosovo and discuss its potentials and challenges.

The full program and further information are available on our [website](#).

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**Exhibition dates:** 06.12.2025 – 22.02.2026

**Curator:** Cathrin Mayer

**Venue:** Kunstverein Braunschweig e. V., Lessingplatz 12, 38100 Braunschweig

**Opening hours:** Tue – Fri 12 pm–6 pm, Thu 12 pm– 8 pm, Sat, Sun 11 am–6 pm

**Admission:** Regular € 5, Discount € 3

**Visitor service:** T 49 (0)531 49 556, Mail: [info@kunstvereinbraunschweig.de](mailto:info@kunstvereinbraunschweig.de)

**Supported by:** Niedersächsische Sparkassenstiftung, Braunschweigische Sparkassenstiftung, Niedersächsisches Ministerium für Wissenschaft und Kultur, Stadt Braunschweig – Fachbereich Kultur und Wissenschaft, Botschaft der Republik Kosovo

**@kunstvereinbraunschweig** on Instagram and Facebook // #KunstvereinBraunschweig // #MeisterschuelerInnen #HBKBraunschweig

Further information about the exhibition:

<https://kunstvereinbraunschweig.de/en/exhibitions/meistersch%C3%BClerinnen-der-hbk-braunschweig-2025/>

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## Images

Exhibition views will be available from December 9, 2025, in the [Press Kit](#).

## Contact

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