

8 November 2025 to 1 February 2026

Sympoiesis

Strategies for Worlding-With

“Sympoiesis is a simple word; it means ‘making-with’. Nothing makes itself; nothing is really autopoietic or self-organizing. [...]”

Sympoiesis is a word proper to complex, dynamic, responsive, situated, historical systems.’ It is a word for worlding-with, in company.” Haraway 2018

For several years now, the cultural scientist Donna Haraway has been using the term ‘sympoiesis’ to promote a paradigm shift in art and society. It refers to the ambitious attempt to no longer view artworks as merely a result of individual experiences and creations, but as the product of diverse processes of exchange. Artworks bring many things together: technologies, instruments or materials, memories, archives, texts and narratives, people and places with stories and experiences. All of these elements contribute to the creation of meaning, a process in which viewers are also involved.

Institutions play a central role in the collaborative creation of art. Even more than academies or exhibition venues, galleries influence artistic paths. They accompany artists over the long term and can significantly facilitate their working conditions. Galerie Isabella Bortolozzi in Berlin occupies a special position among galleries with a consistent program. Without regard for market expectations, the gallery represents artistic positions that challenge normative assumptions, negotiate power, intimacy and fluid body images, and pursue collaborative and multidisciplinary strategies to this end. Through her gallery, Isabella Bortolozzi

creates a place and context in which performative and dissonant works appear and become established. Moreover, the gallery’s artists repeatedly involve each other in the realization of their artistic projects and publications. The exhibition **Sympoiesis** revolves around this gallery as a place of creation. It is dedicated to examining artworks in terms of their diverse creative contributions and reflecting on the potential of partnered artists. That Isabella Bortolozzi not only accepted my invitation to collaborate but also worked with the spaces of Villa Coburg on site is evident in many parts of the exhibition. With Alain Badiou, I would like to describe this presentation as a genuine thought-event. It is an opportunity to encounter both painful and pleasurable memories and emotions. I would like to express my sincere gratitude to Isabella Bortolozzi for her openness, and curiosity.

Among the partnerships that an exhibition venue needs to realize an ambitious program are sponsors. Without the financial support of the Lower Saxony Ministry of Science and Culture, the Lower Saxony Foundation, and the Waldemar Koch Foundation, this thought-event and the opportunity for reflective exchange would not have been possible.