Sabīne Vernere’s solo exhibition at Kogo Gallery presents empowering examples of women

Femme Forte, a solo exhibition by Latvian artist Sabīne Vernere, is currently on view at Kogo Gallery in Tartu, Estonia. The exhibition imagines empowering forms of women’s self-realisation, rarely visible in recent Baltic history. The show is curated by Estonian curator and critic Maria Helen Känd.

With her new solo exhibition, Femme Forte, the artist Sabīne Vernere – previously known for working primarily with black pigments – turns toward vivid colour, taking inspiration from the sun itself. She invites us to imagine empowering examples of women’s self-realisation – stories that are scarce in recent Baltic history. There have undoubtedly been women in this region who led successful creative and professional lives despite the obligations and constraints placed upon them. Yet these successes often came at the expense of personal well-being.
The representations of the female in Vernere’s new works are imbued with an energy captured in the braided anatomy of joints and tissues and ready to burst out. Alongside them, enlivened figures are already moving, striving forward and upward. And there are also supple, tender hand- or budlike forms tentatively exploring the surface. Both Vernere’s earlier practice and her new, hopeful visions shape our understanding of free women. We witness figures who move forward with purpose to carve out lives of creativity and beauty.

Femme Forte is on view at Kogo Gallery from 12 February to 11 April 2026. Kogo Gallery is located in Tartu, Estonia, at Aparaaditehas, Kastani 42. The gallery is open for visits Wednesday to Friday from 12:00–18:00 and on Saturdays from 12:00–16:00.

The exhibition is funded by the Cultural Endowment of Estonia, the State Culture Capital Foundation of Latvia and the City of Tartu.

BIOGRAPHIES

Sabīne Vernere (b. 1990, Kuldīga, Latvia) is a Latvian artist living in Riga. She is known for her expressive Indian ink paintings depicting anthropomorphic, gender-fluid beings. There is a strong presence of beauty, sensuality and emotion in the artist’s works, but also disturbance and violence, a juxtaposition that correlates with the complexities of the dynamics between humans and nature.
Vernere holds a doctorate in Visual Art and Design from the Art Academy of Latvia (2025), as well as a Master’s (2018) and a Bachelor’s degree (2016) from the Painting Department of the same institution. She has furthered her studies at the Academy of Fine Arts in Zagreb and the Royal Academy of Fine Arts in Antwerp.
Her recent solo exhibitions include *BESTIARIES* at the Lithuanian Artists’ Union Gallery, Vilnius, Lithuania (2025), *FEMALE MONSTERS* at ASNI Gallery, Riga, Latvia (2025), *Dealing Temptations. Sirēnas* at MABOCA Gallery, Visuma Center 2, Madona, Latvia (2024); *ANGLES MORTS* at the Artists’ Union of Latvia Gallery, Riga, Latvia (2023); *Sirens, Medusa and the Isle of Lotus-Eaters* at Kuldīga Artists’ Residence, Kuldīga, Latvia (2022).
Recent group exhibitions include *To Collapse or to Collaborate* at the New Garden Gallery, Paris, France (2024), *In the Name of Desire* at the Latvian National Museum of Art, Riga, Latvia (2024); *Don’t Cry! Feminist Perspectives in Latvian Art: 1965–2023* at the Latvian National Museum of Art, Riga, Latvia (2023); *Triquetra* at Kogo Gallery, Tartu, Estonia (2023).

Kogo Gallery has presented Vernere's works at contemporary art fairs ArtVilnius'25 and viennacontemporary 2024. She was chosen as the Best Young Artist of ArtVilnius'25.
Her works are part of the collections of the Latvian National Museum of Art, VV Foundation, the Zuzāns Collection, Signet Bank and SEB, as well as private collections in Estonia, Latvia and elsewhere in Europe.
Sabīne Vernere is represented by Kogo Gallery.

Maria Helen Känd is a curator and critic whose work engages with socio-psychological themes, inviting audiences to reflect on the subtle agreements that underpin social structures and the complexities of identity. In recent projects, she has adopted a more intuitive curatorial approach, creating poetic constellations of works by artists who share formal affinities and explore mythological and archetypal motifs.
Känd currently works as a project manager at Tallinn Art Hall and was previously a curator and project manager at the Contemporary Art Museum of Estonia (EKKM). In 2021, she was awarded a scholarship in art criticism by CCA Estonia and the Estonian Association of Art Historians and Curators.
Her recent exhibition projects include *Trigger* (2024, co-curated with Evelyn Raudsepp), *The Laugh of the Medusa* (2023) at EKKM, and *ars viva – agents of perception* (2022) at Kai Art Center. Känd studied film, theatre and media science at the University of Vienna and received her bachelor's in cultural theory and comparative literature from Tallinn University. She is currently studying for a master's in curatorial studies at the Estonian Academy of Arts.

EXHIBITION PAGE

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Femme Forte
Sabīne Vernere
Curated by Maria Helen Känd
Kogo Gallery, Tartu, Estonia
12.2.–11.4.2026