

Opening hours: Fri 1 – 6 pm, Sat 12 – 5 pm and by appointment:
welcome@partresidency.at

Curator's Tour:
28.09.2026, 5 pm
16.10.2026, 5 pm (Finissage)

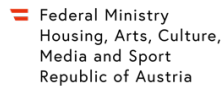
Supported by the Embassy of Estonia Vienna, the Polish Institute and Lenox-Trading.



THANKS TO

Sebastian Haaf, Maximilian Hauptstummer, Constantin Lhotka, Simon Lindenthaler,
Philipp Krummel, Maximilian Prag, Michael Strasser, Julius Zeitlmann

PART International Art Residency Austria is a programme on behalf of the Federal Ministry
for Housing, Arts, Culture, Media and Sport.



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THE HALL. PART International Art Residency Austria PERSONA. FRAGMENTS OF IDENTITY

05.09.2026 – 16.10.2026

Welcome to *Persona*.

There is one sentence that has stayed with me throughout the making of this exhibition.
It comes from Ingmar Bergman's 1966 film *Persona*. Alma says to Elisabet:

"I think I could turn into you if I really tried."

This sentence also gave the exhibition its title. For me, it captures something at the heart
of *Persona*: the unsettling yet intimate possibility that, by looking closely at another
person, observing them, imitating them, or trying to understand them, we might begin to
become them. Where does one person end and another begin?

This question became one of the starting points for the exhibition.

Persona is not really about masks in the literal sense. It is about the moments when we put
on a form, inhabit a role, become someone else, or discover that we have already been
doing so without realizing it. It is about the distance, sometimes very small, between who
we are, who we think we are, and what other people see when they look at us.

And perhaps this is why **Edith Karlson**'s sirens were the right place to begin. Edith takes a
familiar mythical figure and turns it around. Instead of the traditional woman with a fish
tail, we encounter human bodies with fish heads, strange beings that seem to have
emerged from somewhere beneath the surface of the human. They are unsettling, but
also strangely tender.



They made me think of another sentence, this time by the Argentinian author Jorge Luis Borges:

"The first to awaken shall be the Fish. (...) Then, other forms will begin to awaken. Gradually they will become different from us; gradually they will no longer imitate us."

Edith's creatures seem to exist in precisely this moment of transformation. They are no longer entirely human, but they have not become something entirely other. Their transformation does not feel like a loss of identity. Instead, it feels like another identity coming through.

This question continues in Edith's collection of self portraits. Since 2020, people from different backgrounds have made portraits of themselves from Estonian clay in her studio. Looking at them, I was struck by how different a person can become when they try to reproduce themselves. A portrait can look like us and still not be us. It can reveal something precisely through the things it gets wrong.

Yein Lee's sculptures seem to belong to a world that has not yet been given a proper taxonomy. They are somewhere between bodies, machines, organisms and imagined creatures. And then they are given names: *Dispatcher*, *Watcher*, and other functional identities. Suddenly, something amorphous becomes a role. A creature becomes a character. Naming becomes a way of giving an identity to something that was previously unknown.

Jakob Lena Knebl takes this idea into the territory of performance. In their work, identity can be dressed, arranged, inhabited and rehearsed. A body can become a role, an object can become a prop, and the boundary between who we are and who we perform becomes wonderfully unstable. Ashley and Lena. Lena and Ashley.



Temporary on view at THE HALL:

Jonas Morgenthaler

Light Laundry II, 2025

Found curtain rails and rings, clipper, steel whistle, key chain, found earring, hair band, found bangle, thread, found chains and strings, spray paint, clear varnish
60 x 190 x 18 cm

Jonas Morgenthaler's series Light Laundry (2022–ongoing) comprises sculptural pieces that nestle into their exhibition spaces. His work is mounted close to the ceiling and stands in dialogue with existing architectural features.



Paulina Semkowicz *1980 (Kraków, Poland), lives in Vienna

<https://paulinasemkowicz.tumblr.com/>

Paulina Semkowicz is a visual artist primarily working with painting, extending into installation and site-specific projects. She graduated from the Academy of Fine Arts in Kraków and the Faculdade de Belas Artes at the University of Porto. Her practice uses painting to construct immersive narrative spaces in which absence and presence become central to the viewer's experience. Informed by her background in theatre painting, she transforms pictorial backgrounds into active scenarios of contingency, exploring themes that remain elusive yet deeply resonant. Her work has been presented in solo exhibitions at institutions and galleries including TRAFO Center for Contemporary Art, Szczecin (2026); Spiritvessel, Catalonia (2025) and VIN VIN Gallery, Vienna (2025). She has also exhibited at Belvedere 21, Vienna; Forum Stadtpark, Graz and the Museum of Contemporary Art, Skopje. Upcoming projects include a solo exhibition at the Gdańsk Centre for Contemporary Art (GCCA), Poland, and a group exhibition at Galerie Stadt Sindelfingen, Germany.



This brings us back to Ingmar Bergman's *Persona*. The film follows Elisabet, an actress who suddenly stops speaking, and Alma, the nurse assigned to care for her. As their relationship develops, the distinctions between the two women begin to collapse. One observes while the other performs. They imitate each other. They begin to speak through one another. Perhaps they are merging. Perhaps they are revealing themselves as two manifestations of the same divided self.

The word *persona* originally referred to the theatrical mask worn by an actor. Later it came to mean the character represented on stage, and eventually, in Carl Gustav Jung's psychology, the social face we present to the world. I find this history fascinating because the *persona* is not simply a false version of ourselves. We need it. We use it to enter the world, to communicate, to play our roles. But at the same time, the mask can become so familiar that we no longer know where the mask ends and the person begins.

With **Paulina Semkowicz**, the question shifts from the body to the space around it: can a room, too, take on a *persona*? Her painted interiors feel like places we might remember without ever having visited them. They are rooms, stages, fragments of architecture caught somewhere between inhabitation and disappearance. Their surfaces carry moisture, moss, mold, patina and decay. And because the work is situated within this historic building, the painting seems to enter into a conversation with the architecture itself.

Odie Lap Chun Chow approaches identity from yet another direction: through absence. His work connects to the long history of casting and reproduction. But instead of being interested only in the surface of an existing body, he turns our attention toward the mold, toward the empty space that makes another form possible. I find this idea particularly moving: that absence is not necessarily emptiness. That a negative space can contain a possibility. That what is missing can also be what allows something new to appear.



And this is perhaps also what the architecture of the exhibition tries to do. The silver grid turns THE HALL into a kind of stage. The works inhabit it like actors, bodies, characters or provisional *personas*. They appear to be performing for one another, but also for us.

Ultimately, *Persona* is about the fact that identity is never quite as fixed as we like to believe.

We are constantly being named, interpreted, dressed, photographed, remembered, performed and imagined by others. And we do the same to ourselves. We construct ourselves from fragments. We try on identities. Sometimes they fit. Sometimes they don't. Sometimes we grow into them. Sometimes they begin to grow beyond us.

So perhaps the *persona* is not something that hides the real self underneath. Perhaps the *persona* is the place where the self is continually being made. And perhaps this is what has stayed with me most from Bergman's sentence: *"I think I could turn into you if I really tried."*

Text by **Barbara Horvath**



Jakob Lena Knebl *1970 (Baden, Austria), lives in Vienna

<https://meyerkainer.com/artist/jakob-lena-knebl/>

Jakob Lena Knebl studied Fashion at the University of Applied Arts Vienna and Textual Sculpture at the Academy of Fine Arts Vienna. She has taught at both of these institutions, as well as the Art University Linz, and runs the class Transmedia Arts at the University of Applied Arts Vienna since 2021. As an artist working across media, Knebl engages with themes and facets of identity through art history and contemporality, fashion, religion and mythology. Gender as a reoccurring topic is looked at through the crossing of art and design, finding its output in textile work, sculpture, performance, installation, film or photography. Recently she has exhibited in Landesmuseum Linz (2026); Stedelijk Museum Schiedam (2025); Palais de Tokio, Paris (2024); Austrian Pavillion at the 59th Venice Biennale (2022) and Belvedere 21, Vienna (2021-2023).

Yein Lee *1988 (Incheon, South Korea), lives in Vienna

<https://yeinlee.com>

Yein Lee studied Traditional Asian Painting at the Hongik University, Seoul, and Object Sculpture at the Academy of Fine Arts Vienna. Working across sculpture, installation and performance, she explores processes of transformation, instability, and becoming. Her practice investigates the relationship between materiality, subjectivity, and space, creating works that exist in states of emergence and dissolution. Through fragile, provisional forms, she examines vulnerability, resistance, and the potential of impermanence as a site of critical reflection. Yein Lee's work has been presented internationally, including at Cukrarna, Ljubljana (2026); Den Frie Udstilling, Copenhagen (2026); Frankfurter Kunstverein (2026); 15th Gwangju Biennale (2024); Belvedere 21, Vienna (2022) and Centre Culturel Suisse, Paris (2021). In 2026, her works will be presented at the Songeun Art and Culture Foundation in Seoul and in Podium Gallery in Hong Kong.



Odie Lap Chun Chow *1996 (Hong Kong, China), lives in Tallinn, Estonia and Hong Kong

<https://www.chowlapchun.com/>

Odie Lap Chun Chow graduated from the Academy of Visual Arts, Baptist University in Hong Kong in 2019 and the Estonian Academy of Arts in 2026. He works on research topics surrounding spatial analyses and architectural structures which further extend to questions on construction of identity and its interrelationship between urban landscapes and historical contexts, making conversations through creation with ceramics, photography, installation and performance. He recently presented a solo exhibition in Tallinn (2026), and participated in exhibitions in Hong Kong (2026) and Mondovi (2025). Odie Lap Chun Chow is a resident at PART from August to September 2026.

Edith Karlson *1983, lives in Tallinn, Estonia

<https://cca.ee/en/artists-database/edith-karlson>

Edith Karlson studied at the Estonian Academy of Arts. Among other awards, she won the Estonian Academy of Arts Young Artist's Prize (2006) and has been among the recipients of the Estonian national artists' salary. In Edith Karlson's sculptural practice, animals and people are the main protagonists. Her often large-scale sculptural pieces produced by means of mixed techniques show a variety of characters, from ceramic dogs to cement dinosaurs and Neanderthals, composed into intricate installations. Her recent exhibitions among many others include solo shows at The Douglas Hyde Gallery, Dublin (forthcoming, 2026); Kiasma, Helsinki (2026) and the Estonian Pavilion Hora Lupi, 60th Venice Biennial (2024). She has collaborated with the art collective Gelitin and British artist Sarah Lucas at the British Pavilion at the 56th Venice Biennial (2015); Belvedere 21, Vienna (2013) and Kunsthalle Krems (2011).

Edith Karlson will be a resident at PART from December 2026 to January 2027.

LIST OF WORKS

- 1 Paulina Semkowicz, *not seeming, but being*, 2026, Acrylic paint and pigment on wall, 6 x 15 m
 - 2 Edith Karlson, *Return to Innocents*, 2023-2024, Terracotta, Variable dimensions
 - 3 Odie Lap Chun Chow, *Fragmented Borders*, 2026, Plaster, Variable dimensions
 - 4 Edith Karlson, *Can't see 4 (Johanna)*, 2026, Concrete, 185 x 65 x 90 cm
 - 5 Edith Karlson, *Can't see 5 (Liisa)*, 2026, Concrete, 185 x 65 x 90 cm
 - 6 Edith Karlson, *Can't see 6 (Eva)*, 2026, Concrete, 175 x 75 x 85 cm
- All works: Courtesy of the artist & Temnikova & Kasela Gallery, Tallinn
- 7 Yein Lee, *Scavengers, you are crying for you. how sweet*, 2024, Electrical cables, epoxy putty, dried moss, polymer gypsum, fiberglass, repurposed plastic waste, steel spray, 235 x 80 x 130 cm; *Hand 1*, 2023, Electrical cable, polymer gypsum, acrylic paint, epoxy putty, fiberglass, repurposed plastic waste, treated wood, 7 x 7 x 27 cm
 - 8 Yein Lee, *감시자 Gamsija (Watcher)*, 2026, Steel, polymer gypsum, fiberglass, cables, epoxy, 220 x 140 x 140 cm
 - 9 Yein Lee, *파견자 Pagyonja (Dispatcher)*, 2026, Steel, polymer gypsum, fiberglass, cables, twigs, epoxy putty, lacquer, acrylic paint, 130 x 290 x 80 cm
 - 10 Jakob Lena Knebl, *Ashley & Lena*, 2023, 3D print high-gloss lacquered, wood, fur, plastic, div. materials, ca. 155 x 75 x 120 cm
Courtesy of the artist and Galerie Loevenbruck, Paris
 - 11 Odie Lap Chun Chow, *Fragmented Borders*, 2026, Clay and sand, Variable dimensions
- JM Jonas Morgenthaler, *Light Laundry II*, 2025, Found curtain rails and rings, clipper, steel whistle, key chain, found earring, hair band, found bangle, thread, found chains and strings, spray paint, clear varnish, 60 x 190 x 18 cm

