

Esther Schipper

Dominique Gonzalez-Foerster
Panoramism and the Abstract Sector
October 28–December 23, 2022



Image: the artist

Esther Schipper is pleased to present **Panoramism and the Abstract Sector**, Dominique Gonzalez-Foerster's tenth solo exhibition with the gallery. On view will be a captivating environment that includes a 30-meter long 180°-degree curved panorama, especially conceived for the exhibition, its imagery spilling over onto a custom-printed carpet, with printed pillow books.

Panoramism and the Abstract Sector continues the artist's creation of an artistic, emotional and intellectual genealogy, begun at the Vienna Secession in 2021 and at the Serpentine Galleries this past summer. Comparable to an act of media archeology, Dominique Gonzalez-Foerster (DGF) has reimagined the panorama as a medium that transcends contemporary image culture and reconnects to the legacy of early 19th century formats (this also includes, the diorama, a form the artist chose for her 2009 presentation at the Dia Art Foundation in New York). DGF reinvents these still precursors to early cinema, restoring their visual splendor and excavating their discursive power as storytelling devices.

The artist described her first panorama, conceived for her solo exhibition at the Secession, as a vision. Taking Diego Rivera's giant 1947 mural **Dream of a Sunday afternoon in the Alameda Central** as point of departure, DGF produced her own equivalent: "a huge transfeminist and antiracist excursion... an eruption of life, protest, activism, desire, in a period of control, fear, isolation and screen time..." In this **Volcanic Excursion**, as the work was called, more than 230 characters inhabited a fantastic landscape, alongside representations of alien life. The second panorama at the Serpentine Galleries, **Alienarium 5**, focused more specifically on this notion of the extraterrestrial. Posing the question "What if aliens were in love with us?," the artist created a speculative environment that condensed her decades-long interest in science fiction and imagined an otherworldly site of human, nonhuman and extraterrestrial connection.

The new 180°-degree panorama draws on the history of Berlin in the 20th century. A central motif of **Panoramism and the Abstract Sector** is the Berlin Wall. Covered in lyrical abstractions in one section, abstract expressionist in others, the wall forms the backdrop for a myriad of figures—artists mingling with actors (in character and as themselves), dancers, fashion designers, musicians, philosophers, theorists, and writers—quoting from photographs, paintings and drawings. Along a temporal arc—from scenes of crowds atop the wall in November 1989 to later images of toppled sections of graffitied concrete—other locations in Berlin and protagonists from earlier moments, especially the Weimar years with its lively, transgressive, and genderbending art and theatre scenes, are interlaced. Another emphasis, signaled in the title, is abstraction, in particular abstract

painting. Thus, **Panoramism and the Abstract Sector** includes a wide range of reference to 20th century abstraction, especially Color Field Painting and Abstract Expressionism, paying tribute to artists such as Helen Frankenthaler and Lee Krasner but also actress and film maker Musidora (from Irma Vep) and transformative art world protagonists Bonaventure Soh Bejeng Ndikung and Okwui Enwezor.

Altered realities and quotations from art, image and film history have been a major theme in DGF's practice. Thus, **Roman de Münster**, her 2007 contribution to Skulptur Projekte Münster, and **TH.2058**, her 2008 solo presentation at the Tate Modern, modified existing works by other artists. The former included thirty-eight miniatures of art works from different iterations of the decennial in Münster, assembled in a theme-park-like parcours, while at the Tate, works were enlarged and their transformation integrated into a dystopian narrative. Historical figures and their representation are central to DGF's series of apparitions, part of her larger ongoing project **TH.2062** (a fragmentary opera), begun in 2012. Likened by the artist to inhabiting a character "séance-like," DGF's apparitions have included among others Maria Callas, Bob Dylan, Emily Brontë, Véra Nabokov, Lola Montez, Marilyn Monroe, Fitzcarraldo, and, most recently, Foxyne, based on a character from the 1922 novel **Lady into Fox**. And since 2017, through **Exotourisme**, her collaboration with Julien Perez, the artist has made manifest her interest in music, combining staged concerts with appearances as "replicant" characters from **Blade Runner**. The first album is coming out on October 21 and on the occasion of a "replicants tour."

Visitors can explore the dense web of associations while seated on pillows printed with the covers of books, adding another layer of intellectual context, and continuing DGF's longstanding inclusion of books into her environments, often creating veritable bibliographies alongside her works.

Concurrent with the exhibition, Paul B. Preciado and Gonzalez-Foerster's **Une Valise Transféministe** will be on view in the bookstore.

Dominique Gonzalez-Foerster was born 1965 in Strasbourg, France. She studied at École des Beaux-Arts, Grenoble, L'École du Magasin, Centre National d'Art Contemporain de Grenoble and Institut des Hautes Études en Arts Plastiques, Paris. The artist lives and works in Paris and Rio de Janeiro.

She participated in the Venice Biennale in 1990, 1993, 1999, 2003, 2009, and 2019. Gonzalez-Foerster participated in Documenta 11 in 2002. The artist received the Mies Van der Rohe Award in Krefeld in 1996 and the prestigious Marcel Duchamp Award in 2002. In 2008, she created **TH.2058** as part of The Unilever Series in the Turbine Hall at Tate Modern, London. In 2022 Dominique Gonzalez-Foerster together with Ange Leccia, directors of the film **Christophe... définitivement**, was included in the Official Selection of 75th Festival de Cannes. Selected solo exhibitions include: **Alienarium 5**, Serpentine Galleries, London (2022); **OPERA (QM.15)**, Bourse de Commerce – Pinault Collection, Paris (2022); **VOLCANIC EXCURSION (A VISION)**, Secession, Vienna (2021); **Martian Dreams Ensemble**, Galerie für Zeitgenössische Kunst, Leipzig (2018); **Costumes and Wishes for 21st Century**, Dominique Gonzalez-Foerster in collaboration with Manuel Raeder and BLESS, Schinkel Pavillon, Berlin (2016); **Pynchon Park**, MAAT Museum of Art, Architecture and Technology, Lisbon (2016); **Opera-House**, Huis Sonneveld, Rotterdam (2016); **Dominique Gonzalez-Foerster. 1887–2058**, K20, Kunstsammlung Nordrhein-Westfalen, Düsseldorf (2016) and Centre Pompidou, Paris (2015).

The artist's work is represented in the collections of 21st Century Museum of Contemporary Art, Kanazawa; ARC/Musée d'art Moderne de la Ville de Paris, Paris; Fondation Louis Vuitton, Paris; Fonds National d'Art Contemporain, France; The Israel Museum, Jerusalem; La Caixa Foundation, Barcelona and Madrid; Inoithim, Belo Horizonte; Musée d'art moderne et contemporain (MAMCO), Genève; Museo Nacional Centro de Arte Reina Sofia, Madrid; Centre Pompidou, Paris; The Museum of Modern Art, New York; Dia Art Foundation, New York; Tate Modern, London; Moderna Museet, Stockholm; Museu de Arte Contemporânea, Rio de Janeiro; Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum, New York; M+ Museum, Hong Kong, Van Abbemuseum, Eindhoven; Samdani Foundation, Dhaka; Sammlung Goetz, Munich.

ESTHER SCHIPPER GMBH
POTSDAMER STRASSE 81E
D-10785 BERLIN
TEL: +49 (0)30 374433133
FAX: +49 (0)30 374433134
OFFICE@ESTHERSCHIPPER.COM
WWW.ESTHERSCHIPPER.COM