

EN



KH

13.9. –
8.11.26

Nina Emge In der Wiederholung beginnen wir

In autumn 2026, Künstler:innenhaus Bremen presents the solo exhibition **In der Wiederholung beginnen wir** [In repetition, we begin] by Swiss artist Nina Emge. Her body of work spans sound works and sculptures, with her practice engaging with different methods of hearing and listening.

“Hearing,” writes American composer Pauline Oliveros, “happens involuntarily, listening, on the other hand, is a voluntary process that produces culture through training and experience.”¹ Sound as a medium alters our perception and attunes us to worlds that would otherwise remain hidden from us. It invites us to experience the invisible and leads us beyond anthropocentric narratives. Sound and music play a central role in Nina Emge’s practice as she seeks to capture those moments in which words are insufficient and a noise or sound offers a possibility of expressing the complexity of being human.

The exhibition is structured around a four-part score written by four different musicians, including Emge herself, in response to her sculptural work. Drawing on a passage by Edouard Glissant from *Introduction to a Poetics of Diversity*² the individual musical pieces repeatedly introduce the exhibition anew, repeating its beginning and first encounter. “I believe repetition is a way of getting to know our present world; in repetition, we begin to discover a small beginning of something new in its emergence.”³ Sound in the exhibition thus functions not only as a medium, but as a spatial and temporal invitation, encouraging visitors to linger and to engage with the exhibition. Emge herself becomes a listener within her exhibition, partially handing over authorship: to the invited musicians,

to the collaborators of the workshops who use the space, or to the audience, who collectively activate the exhibition through listening. Instead of moving quickly through the exhibition, visitors are invited to spend time within the sound, to move through it and allow themselves to be affected by it. In lingering, listening itself inevitably becomes a form of activating the exhibition. Methodologically, these elements integrate listening as a collective practice and sound as an artistic, time-based practice. Music has long been used as a tool of communication: to pass on stories through song, as an auditory space of belonging, or as a vehicle for political resistance. What all these forms have in common is that community and listening always play a central role.

The idea of music as a means of expressing something that touches us beyond rational understanding is deeply rooted in Emge’s artistic practice. Her approach to working with sound on an emotional level draws on a tradition of writers and theorists such as James Baldwin, Toni Morrison, Richard Wright, JJJJJerome Ellis and Saidiya Hartman. Rather than poets who work with music to experiment with the presentation of their written texts, Emge commits herself to music as a way of moving beyond the research-based and listening to the words, moods and collective approach underlying the spatial choreography. At the centre of Nina Emge’s work is an effort to deconstruct dominant canons and reconstruct alternative genealogies, amplifying and bringing into resonance the voices that have previously gone unheard.

The artist uses sound as a medium to deepen stories and convey forms of knowledge. The ideas of storing, preserving and remembering are themes that Nina Emge has been engaging with for some time. They are also inherent to Künstler:innenhaus itself, formerly a storage space for high-grade woods and a spice factory in the 1990s. In her sculptural practice, Emge continues this storytelling through objects. She engages with practices that have almost been lost today and with traditions of transferring knowledge through collective craft, incorporating these into her sculptural works. We see dyed fabrics with embroidered surfaces that only allow us to imagine how they were made. In Emge’s exhibition, traces or impressions of what has been created collectively are left behind, to be remembered collectively by visitors. These works, *Kuck, was die Zeit aus uns macht V–VIII* [Look what time does to us], 2026, move away from the conventional understanding of painting as being bound to the picture plane, instead embracing spatial, installation-based configurations that engage with metal sculptures. Following the dyeing of the fabrics with mallow, black beans and iron sulphate, storing and hanging to dry, what remains are only traces of painterly gestures that enter into a relationship with the steel objects formed within the space. The embroidered fabrics function as remnants that have absorbed, stored and transformed the memory of their making – a site of a community of stories, voices and social inscriptions. By approaching the preservation of stories and craft traditions in her sculptural works

through sound, Emge looks beyond the conventionally visible and sharpens her senses for those affective frequencies through which these works and practices articulate themselves.

The varying energy of the soundtrack expresses their individual responses and introduces multiple, potentially contradictory narrative voices into the exhibition. Emge's reflections on simultaneity provide the conceptual framework, raising the question of how spaces can be shaped through the coexistence of different times, materials and meanings. These reflections are informed by the character of a place defined not by unity or consensus, but by encounter, difference and the ongoing negotiation of relationships.⁴ In her exhibition, Emge translates this formally through modes of viewing and experiencing that repeatedly begin anew, underscored by her sound practice. For her, the scores form a polyphonic choir resonating throughout the exhibition space: an open score that visitors can attune themselves to and engage with. A choir whose voices we can not only hear, but also feel when we truly listen. Experiencing the exhibition requires spending time within it, together or alone, allowing new relations to emerge and considering oneself as part of the exhibition's activation. Sound workshops, listening sessions, collective listening and performative formats are therefore understood not merely as accompanying programmes, but as integral components of the artistic work.

Curator: Marie Oucherif
Curatorial Assistant: Johanne Jordan

Nina Emge (born in Zurich in 1995, lives and works in Zurich) is a sculptor and sound artist. Emge's works have been exhibited at venues including the Halle für Kunst in Lüneburg, the Lagos Biennale, WAF Vienna, the Kunsthalle Zürich, the Kunsthalle Bern, the Istituto Svizzero in Rome, the Istituto Svizzero in Palermo, the Frac Bretagne and the Centre culturel suisse de Paris, the Uferhalle Berlin, the Kunstverein Braunschweig, the Helmhaus Zürich and other national and international institutions. Nina Emge is part of the Art in Space and Time Chair at ETH Zurich and an active member of the Transnational Sound Initiative.

ART MEDIATION PROGRAMME

13.9. 3.30 pm

Listening Session by Nina Emge

17.9. 5–6 pm

Listening & Needle Work:
collective listening in the exhibition

19.9. 3–6 pm

Can Art Convey Art? Workshop with
Clara Kramer & Marisa Müller (DE)

1.10. 5–6 pm

Listening & Needle Work:
collective listening in the exhibition

8.10. 5–6 pm

Listening & Needle Work:
collective listening in the exhibition

17.10. 2–6 pm

Wellen/Geschichtung: Improvisationen und Wiederholung im Raum: Sound workshop for adults with
Norman Neumann and Henrik Nieratschker (DE/EN)

20.10. 10 am–2 pm

Ruck-Zuck Gellidruck! Workshop with
Elfin Açar for kids aged 6–10 (DE)

23.10. 7 pm

sudorağ presents: TURVIS – Tactics of Transition, a performative reading, with: Abd Tammaa, Farzad Golghasemi, Gabriela Valdespino, Pablo Somonte Ruano, Vicc Repasi (EN)

29.10. 5–6 pm

Listening & Needle Work:
collective listening in the exhibition

More info at www.kh-bremen.de/en/events

Thanks to

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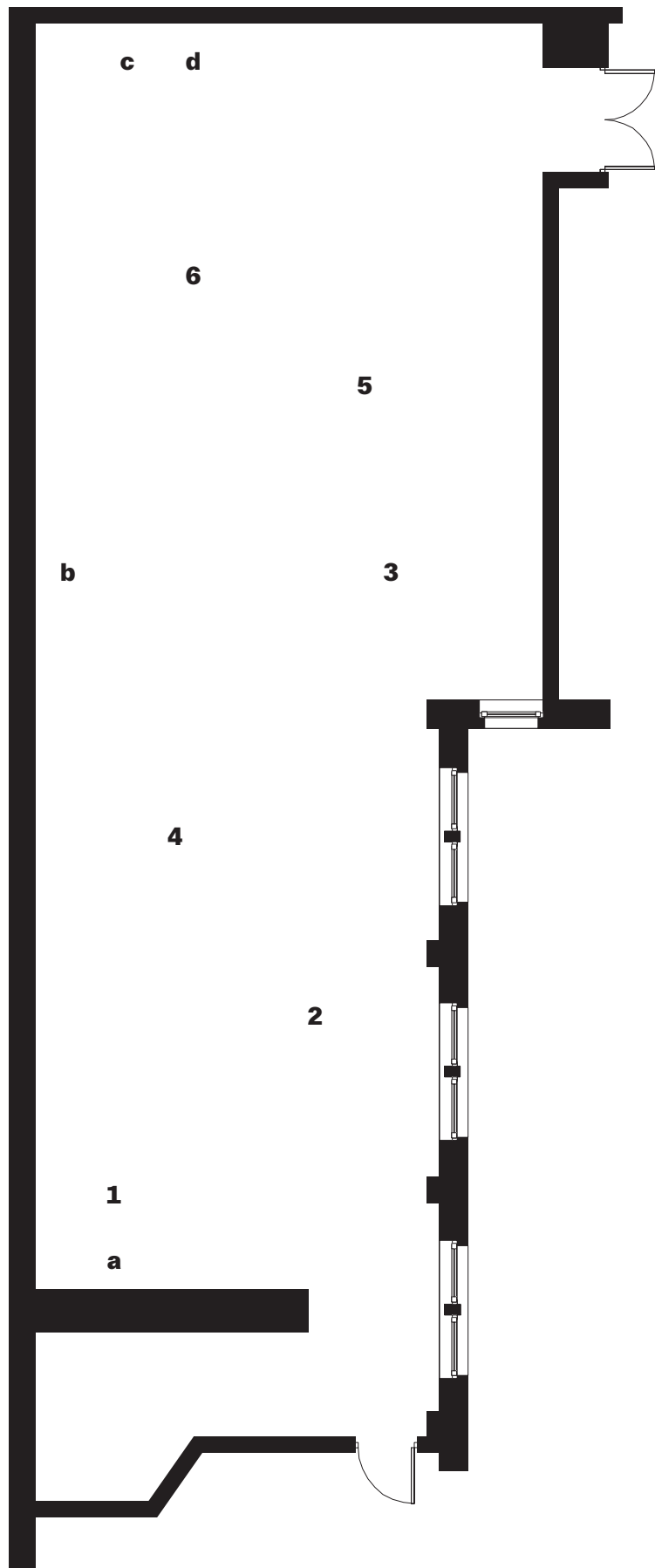
1 Pauline Oliveros, *Quantum Listening*, London 2022.

2 Edouard Glissant, *Introduction to a Poetics of Diversity*, Liverpool 2020.

3 Ibid. [Translated by the author from the German version]

4 Cf. *Common Place*, in: Ann Arbor [Hg.], Edouard Glissant, *Poetics of Relation*, Michigan 2010.

FLOORPLAN



- 1 Nina Emge**
***Dort hinten hängt was gerade passiert ist*, 2025**
Iron
- 2 Nina Emge**
***Da hängt alles was meinem Herz zu schwer ist*, 2025**
Dyed cotton, iron, ratched strap, glass beads
- 3 Nina Emge**
***Dort hängt was wir schon fast vergessen haben*, 2025**
Dyed cotton, iron, ratched strap
- 4 Nina Emge**
***Speaker I*, 2026**
Speaker, dyed cotton, ratched strap, glass beads, audio
- 5 Nina Emge**
***Speaker II*, 2026**
Speaker, dyed cotton, ratched strap, glass beads, audio
- 6 Nina Emge**
***Speaker III*, 2026**
Speaker, dyed cotton, ratched strap, glass beads, audio

Audiotrack by: chukwumaa (*Lagos, Nigeria, lives in New York, USA), Julian Zehnder (*Switzerland, lives in New York, USA), Nina Wakeford (*United Kingdom, lives in London, UK) and Nina Emge (*Zurich, CH, lives in Zurich, CH)

The audio track starts at every full hour.

- a Nina Emge**
***Kuck, was die Zeit aus uns macht V*, 2026**
Dyed cotton, stretcher frame, glass beads
- b Nina Emge**
***Kuck, was die Zeit aus uns macht VI*, 2026**
Dyed cotton, stretcher frame, glass beads
- c Nina Emge**
***Kuck, was die Zeit aus uns macht VII*, 2026**
Dyed cotton, stretcher frame
- d Nina Emge**
***Kuck, was die Zeit aus uns macht VIII*, 2026**
Dyed cotton, stretcher frame, glass beads

All works:
Courtesy of the artist

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Der Senator für Kultur



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