

PRESS RELEASE

**ELISA GIARDINA PAPA**

**“U Scantu”: A Disorderly Tale**

3. OCTOBER–30. NOVEMBER 2025 | OPENING: 2.10.2025, 7 pm

PRESS PREVIEW: 2. OKTOBER 2025, 11 am

With *“U Scantu”: A Disorderly Tale*, Künstler:innenhaus Bremen presents the first institutional solo exhibition in Germany by Italian artist Elisa Giardina Papa. At the heart of the exhibition — both conceptually and formally — is the eponymous video work, first shown in 2022 at the 59th Venice Biennale. Elisa Giardina Papa works with film, drawing, and ceramics, to explore how hegemonic demands for order and legibility strain radical forms of knowledge, desire, and embodiment. Her work questions how images shape our understanding of history, and the role archives, narratives, and rituals play in forming identity, power structures, and collective belonging.

The works in the exhibition are based on the Sicilian myth of the *donne di fora* — supernatural female figures described in local folklore as both healers and witches. These ambivalent beings exist between genders, species, and worlds. According to oral traditions, they were said to alleviate “u scantu” — a specifically Sicilian term for fear — and often left physical traces such as monstrous feet or excessively long hair. Giardina Papa first encountered the *donne di fora* in the stories told by her grandmother. For the artist, however, they are not dusty relics of the past, but fluid, queer projections, where history, fantasy, and resistance converge. Her research into archives on the *donne di fora*, the related Inquisition trials, and Sicilian history informs a practice that blends collective historical narratives, systematic marginalization, and speculative mythology.

The central video work “U Scantu”: A Disorderly Tale reimagines the myth of the *donne di fora* as a contemporary queer allegory through the street-culture phenomenon of Biketuners, a youth subcultures modifying and parading their vehicles. In the film, memories and archival fragments move through the desolate cityscape of a postmodern planned town in Italy, oscillating between documentary research and speculative imagination.

The video is accompanied by sculptural ceramic works: braided strands of hair (*trizzi di donna*) emerge from the gallery walls, while moldy lemons — specially produced for the exhibition — are scattered across the space. These elements break with idealized notions of cultural identity and underscore Giardina Papa’s transformative, queering approach.

Her visual language assigns new relevance to the magical, the ritualistic, and the disorderly — not as irrational or folkloric, but as productive forces and spaces of possibility beyond normative order, linear time, and fixed identity. This gives rise to images of a being outside and beyond itself, whose contradictions are not resolved but made visible as a utopian potential.

Curated by Marie Oucherif

**Elisa Giardina Papa** (b. 1979 in Italy) lives and works in Sant'Ignazio, Sicily and New York. Her work has been exhibited at the 59th International Art Exhibition of La Biennale di Venezia (The Milk of Dreams, 2022), the Museum of Modern Art (MoMA's Modern Mondays, 2013), the Whitney Museum (Sunrise/Sunset Commission, 2017), the Seoul Mediacity Biennale (2018), the 6th Buenos Aires Bienal de la Imagen en Movimiento (2022), the XVI Quadriennale di Roma (2016), Rhizome (Download Commission, 2016), at Flaherty (NYC, 2016), Union Docs (2017), ICA London (2023), at the BFI London Film Festival (2022), at the Centre for Contemporary Art Tashkent, Uzbekistan (2021), M+ Hong Kong (2023) and the Martin-Gropius-Bau (2023).

**Marie Oucherif** has been the new artistic director and curator at Künstler:innenhaus Bremen since May 2025. With the start of her tenure, she wants to continue promoting and developing the gallery at K:H Bremen as a place for active engagement with contemporary art. She convinced the board, the management, and external jury members with her career background and her proposed program of ongoing performances that will take place alongside the exhibitions. In addition, she will continue to focus on the practices of artists who deal with a feminist perspective on history and historiography, inviting internationally established and emerging artists to Bremen.

**Marie Oucherif** studied Comparative Literature in Vienna and Paris and Curatorial Studies in Frankfurt am Main. She has worked at the Kunsthalle Wien and in the curatorial department of the Museum MMK für moderne Kunst and was most recently assistant curator and project-based curator at the Schirn Kunsthalle Frankfurt. There she worked on the exhibitions Cosima von Bonin – Feelings (2024), Elizabeth Price – Sound of the Break (2023), Niki de Saint Phalle (2023), Carlos Bunga (2022) and WALK! (2022) and curated the exhibition Maruša Sagadin – Luv Birds in toten Winkeln (2023). For the monthly video art platform DOUBLE FEATURE, she has collaborated with artists Peng Zuqiang, Maeve Brennan, Lydia Ourahmane, Pınar Öğrenci and Belinda Kazeem-Kamiński. In addition to her institutional roles, Marie Oucherif also works on independent projects, including the solo exhibition Thick Skin, Yet I'm Cold by Maruša Sagadin at Kunstraum Lakeside (2025).

## ACCOMPANYING PROGRAM

**OPENING** Exhibition opening of "*U Scantu*": *A Disorderly Tale*. The artist will be present.  
October 2, 2025 | 7 pm

**ARTIST TALK** Elisa Giardina Papa joins curator Marie Oucherif for a conversation as part of the *IN CONVERSATION* series, discussing the works and themes of the exhibition, as well as the upcoming second installment of her trilogy, *She Flickers In and Out of History*, which will premiere in 2026.

The event will be held in English. Admission is free, and no registration is required.

October 3, 2025 | 3 pm

**GUIDED TOUR WITH CURATORIAL ASSISTANT CLARA KRAMER** Curatorial assistant Clara Kramer provides insight into the making of the exhibition and shares her background knowledge with visitors. Admission is free, registration at [galerie@kh-bremen.de](mailto:galerie@kh-bremen.de)

October 16, 2025 | 6 pm

**PUBLIC GUIDED TOUR IN TURKISH WITH ELFIN AÇAR** Overview tour in Turkish with information about the works and concept of the exhibition. Admission is free, registration at [galerie@kh-bremen.de](mailto:galerie@kh-bremen.de)

October 23, 2025 | 6 pm

## CAN ART CONVEY ART? WORKSHOP WITH CLARA KRAMER AND MARISA MÜLLER

In this workshop, Clara Kramer and Marisa Müller invite participants to become artistically active themselves in the current exhibition "*U Scantu*": *A Disorderly Tale*.

Through small exercises, we will approach the works through drawing, observing, questioning, and exchanging ideas. Admission is free, registration at [galerie@kh-bremen.de](mailto:galerie@kh-bremen.de)

November 9, 2025 | 3–6 pm

**CURATOR'S TOUR WITH MARIE OUCHERIF** The exhibition's curator, Marie Oucherif, provides insight into the creation of the exhibition and shares her background knowledge with visitors. Admission is free, registration at [galerie@kh-bremen.de](mailto:galerie@kh-bremen.de)

November 13, 2025 | 6 pm

## FOR CHILDREN AND FAMILIES

**SKATEWORKSHOP FOR FLINTA\* AND GIRLS** The workshop provides participants a safe space to test themselves, try things out, and work on their skating skills outside of the male-dominated skate scene.

The workshop begins with a two-hour skateboarding training session led by L in Hall P5 of the Sportgarten, followed by a group visit to the exhibition "*U Scantu*": *A Disorderly*

*Tale* by Elisa Giardina Papa. The skating experience gained beforehand can thus be directly related to the works on display in the exhibition. What connections can we find between Papa's works and skating? Participation is free, minimum age 12, registration at [galerie@kh-bremen.de](mailto:galerie@kh-bremen.de)

**November 15, 2025 | 11 am–2:30 pm**

**ADRESS** KH KÜNSTLER:INNENHAUS BREMEN, AM DEICH 68/69, 28199 BREMEN  
**DURATION** 3. OCTOBER 2025 – 30. NOVEMBER 2025 **INFORMATION** KH-BREMEN.DE  
**E-MAIL** GALERIE@KH-BREMEN.DE **TELEPHONE** +49.421 508 598 **ADMISSION** FREE  
**OPENING HOURS** THUR TO SUN 2-6 PM **CURATOR** MARIE OUCHERIF **CURATORIAL ASSISTANT** CLARA KRAMER **KINDLY SUPPORTED BY** KARIN UND UWE HOLLWEG STIFTUNG, WALDEMAR KOCH STIFTUNG, GUT FÜR BREMEN STIFTUNG DER SPARKASSE IN BREMEN **ADDITIONAL SUPPORT FROM** SENATOR FÜR KULTUR BREMEN **MEDIA PARTNER** WESER KURIER

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