

**PF25**

**Summer 2025  
Exhibition  
BASEL**



**Window | Windows  
Copa & Sordes + Violette Fassbaender + Arnold Annen  
Curated by Angelika Li**

Two windows of Atelier K3  
Klingelbergstrasse 5, 4056 Basel

29 August – 28 September 2025  
Daily from 11am – 10pm

Presented by PF25 cultural projects  
As part of the Kunsttage Basel Programme 29-31 August 2025

Press Enquiries: [connect@PF25.org](mailto:connect@PF25.org)

Image above: Courtesy of Copa & Sordes + Violette Fassbaender + Arnold Annen

## About the Exhibition

Over the past years, the four artists — Copa & Sordes, Violette Fassbaender, and Arnold Annen — as well as curator Angelika Li, have each spent periods working or presenting at ein fenster inmitten der welt (a window in the middle of the world) in Murrhardt, Germany, an art platform founded and run by Copa & Sordes. This shared, though time-separated, experience forms a subtle thread connecting their practices.

In response to the current global climate and the uncertainties that shape our time, they reunite in 'Window | Windows' — an exhibition presented across the two street-facing windows of Fassbaender and Annen's Atelier K3 in Basel. This return to the windows of artist-run spaces signals not only a continuity of shared values, but also an ongoing exchange, as each artist's work interacts with, balancing with and responding to one another, creating an ensemble that forms the installation.

The exhibition turns toward vulnerability, fragility, and perishability — not as signs of weakness, but as conditions that open space for reflection, tenderness, and the possibility of renewal. Through installations of video and ceramic works with meditative qualities, positioned at the porous boundary between inside and outside, visibility and intimacy, 'Window | Windows' invites a reconsideration of healing — not as a linear act of restoration, but as a quiet process shaped by presence, sensitivity, and care.

## Right Window

### Copa & Sordes, 'zeit' (2025), HD video, 9 min

Created for this exhibition, Copa & Sordes's video work 'zeit' (2025) takes us on a journey through nature and its intersections with human presence. The work opens with a polyporus mushroom, giving birth to a new, juicy fruiting body from the stem of a fallen tree. Its tears are not a signal of sadness but of youth and growth — a beginning, from the mushroom's perspective in time. For the insects swarming around it, however, the same scene belongs to another temporality: one of routine, continuity, and the daily rhythm of survival. From here, animated plant drawings from the artist duo's ongoing 'Digital Ornamental Library' (2008–2025) are montaged into the flow, unfolding into shifting images. The narrative continues in the landscapes of Murrhardt, where an iconic tree stands as a silent sculpture shaped by the mechanisms of climate warming — weakened by drought, attacked by beetles that destroyed the cambium beneath its bark, and finally broken by storm. Its exposed trunk, stripped of bark and life, tells a story of dehydration and collapse.

From this stillness, the image slowly emerges into the vital element of moving water — visually spilling into Arnold Annen's glowing vessel in front of the screen — from a cascading stream to a vibrant pond where frogs trace ripples of life during their mating season, reflecting the cycle of renewal. The work culminates in the haunting presence of plastic 'ghost waste' swirling in the rivers of Glasgow — a vision of nature's vulnerability, and its enduring will to survive.

**Arnold Annen, 'Floating' (2020), translucent porcelain, 20 x Ø 28 cm**

Here, fragility and resilience intertwine, capturing and reflecting the light — intermingling with the moving image by Copa & Sordes. Swiss ceramist Arnold Annen's 'Floating' (2020), a finely thrown porcelain vessel in parabolic form, rests on a found piece of wood. What appears so fragile has, in fact, undergone a radical intervention where Annen directed a handheld gas burner onto the paper-thin vessel, triggering sudden explosions on the surface of the clay that ruptured its thinnest points. The fire acted like a chisel, shearing off shards and leaving delicate holes across the surface. Light pours through the ruptures in the translucent bowl, shifting with the changing light of the day. The glowing perforations appear almost like constellations scattered across the cloudscape, or could be a body of water on the vessel.

What began as defects was transformed by the artist into a new aesthetic and a groundbreaking technique. Does this transformation reflect what humans and nature most deeply hold in common: the will to persist, and the capacity for renewal?

**Left Window**

**Violette Fassbaender, 'Vulcanoid' (2020), black stoneware, 68 x 36 x 36 cm**

The sculpture 'Vulcanoid' (2020) by Violette Fassbaender appears as solid as rock, reminiscent of fossils, ancient mosaics, or relics, its patterns evoking roots and branching traces of trees, set in dialogue with the old nut tree in Copa & Sordes' video 'spirits 230625' (2023/2025), presented alongside the sculpture. Yet, while its geological form evokes permanence, the work balances on a single point, poised in a state of lightness and instability — a deliberate equilibrium shaped by the artist. A rhythm emerges between its contours and volumes, their shifting positions generating dialogue and tension, embodying both possibility and transformation.

In her practice, balance arises through a dialogue with tension: fire brings hidden layers to the surface, and her techniques probe the fragile meeting point of the organic and the shaped. By making movement perceptible in stone and confronting the disquiet of hollowness, Fassbaender draws the viewer into the slow rhythm of making — a continual negotiation between order and chaos that opens space for balance, courage, and reflection on the human-nature equilibrium.

**Copa & Sordes, 'spirits 230625' (2023/2025), video tableau, HD video, 20 min**

Centred on the notion of regeneration and restoration, this work observes a troop of ants colonising an old nut tree in Murrhardt, which becomes both a home and a food source for their new colony. The ants settle only in the rotting parts of the trunk, profiting from the injuries to its integrity. What emerges is a delicate balance between decay and renewal — a fragile ecosystem where insects, fungi, and the enduring strength of the old tree coexist in a cycle of survival and transformation.

## About the artists

### Copa & Sordes

Since 1995, **Birgit Krueger (b.1967, Munich)** and **Eric Schmutz (b.1962, Zofingen)** have worked together as the artist duo Copa & Sordes. Krueger, trained in medicine in Lausanne and Basel before studying at the Academy of Fine Arts Vienna, later taught there and was Professor at the Bern University of the Arts (2003–2008). Schmutz studied at the School of Arts Bern and in linguistics, language and history at the University of Basel.

Their recent solo exhibitions include 'mit Huhn... – tableau vivant et nature morte' (Markthalle Basel, 2023), 'Newton's Archives of Time' (Kunstraum Aarau, 2022), and 'schwere Arbeit' (Städtische Galerie Murrhardt, 2018). Recent group exhibitions include 'Barriers and Distances' (Gallery Dotwalk, Delhi, 2024), 'Flower Power' (Videocity, Art Busan and Songeun Seoul, 2023), 'Homeland in Transit: Through the Clouds' (PF25 cultural projects, Basel, 2022), 'Srinagar Biennale Basel' (2018), and shows at Kunstmuseum Olten, tête Berlin, Westwerk Hamburg, and Aargauer Kunsthau Aarau. They have received numerous grants and residencies, including Kuratorium Aargau and iaab-studio Marseille.

**Violette Fassbaender (b. 1958, Basel)** trained in ceramics in Japan under the guidance of Takako Araki and has shared a studio with her partner Arnold Annen in Basel for over 30 years. A member of the International Academy of Ceramics (IAC), she has undertaken residencies in Germany, Hungary, and Japan.

Recent selected exhibitions include 'Cancel Culture' (Schloss Thun, 2024), 'Melting Pot. Céramique Suisse Actuelle' (Château de Nyon, 2022), 'Agrégats' (Galerie Marianne Brand, Carouge-Genève, 2020), and '30 Jahre Ateliergemeinschaft mit Arnold Annen' (Galerie Marianne Heller, Heidelberg, 2020).

**Arnold Annen (b. 1952, Gsteig bei Gstaad)** trained as a potter in Saanen, at the School of Design in Bern, and with Jean-Claude de Crousaz in Geneva, later working with P. Mestre in La Borne, France, and with the Sakakibara brothers in Bizen, Japan. Since 1989 he has shared a studio with his partner Violette Fassbaender in Basel.

In the past five years his exhibitions include 'Cancel Culture' (Schloss Thun, 2024), 'Formes Vivantes' (Manufacture et Musée Nationaux, Sèvres, 2023), 'Melting Pot. Céramique Suisse Actuelle' (Château de Nyon, 2022), 'Schloss Lustheim' (Bayerisches Nationalmuseum, Germany, 2022), 'Jeux de Transparence' (Galerie du Don, Le Fel, France, 2021), and 'Translucence and Solidity' (Galerie Marianne Heller, Heidelberg, 2020, with Violette Fassbaender). Annen has received major awards in Switzerland, Europe, Asia, and the United States, including 'Best of Show' at SOFA Chicago and First Prize 'Poisson d'Or' at the International Porcelain Triennial in Nyon.

## About the Curator

**Angelika Li (b. 1975, Hong Kong)** is a Hong Kong curator based in Basel, dedicated to exploring place, culture, heritage, and storytelling. She is co-founder of PF25 cultural projects, a non-profit organisation bridging Hong Kong and Basel and extending to Switzerland, Europe, and beyond, fostering ongoing dialogue across international communities. Her research centres on diaspora, identities, colonial ideologies, and displacement, themes integral to the long-running exhibition series 'Homeland in Transit' (2019–2025), which has unfolded in twelve editions in Berlin, Freiburg, Murrhardt, Hong Kong, Zurich, Ishigaki, and Helsinki.

Recent curatorial projects include Isaac Chong Wai's performance 'Difference / Indifference' at the Basler Münster (2022); the public programme for 'Brice Marden: Inner Space' at Kunstmuseum Basel (2022); Ellen Pau's Basel debut 'Speculative Generations of Flora Zero' (Basel, 2023); Dorothee Sauter's solo show 'Tumbling through Time' (Villa Renata, 2024); Hedy Leung's 'Menhir Tapestry I' (Radio X X\_ARTS FESTIVAL, Basel, 2023); 'Ethno-Botanic Resonance' (London, 2023); 'Assemble: Hong Kong in Helsinki' (Galerie Augusta, Helsinki, 2024), and Oscar Chan Yik-long's 'To Sleep and Wake Unafraid' (Basel, 2025).

## About PF25 cultural projects

PF25 is a Basel-based non-profit arts and cultural organisation dedicated to fostering mutual understanding, cultivating intercultural networks, and weaving collaboration through diverse, site-specific and community-engaged cultural exchanges. Rooted in research into the everyday, its activities take shape through exhibitions, residencies, performances, screenings, community workshops, publications, and conversations. With a focus on Hong Kong and Basel — while extending to other cities and regions across Switzerland, Europe, and beyond — PF25 seeks to expand the spectrum of imagination and explore emergent possibilities for future ways of living. Its initiatives continue to extend through a growing community of places and partners.