

With their show *zeitmatt perplex*, Kienzle Art Foundation brings together two non-representational painters — Franziska Hufnagel and Erika Krause — who at first glance, couldn't be more different, both regarding their methods and the visual appeal of their paintings. 1 Franziska Hufnagel's works often revel in lush 'all-over' compositions of colourful forms and varied patterns, or explicitly use text as a pictorial motif, while Erika Krause's works — executed on canvas, MDF, or wood panels — are quieter, revealing themselves more slowly.

Erika Krause describes her creative process as follows: “I prime the canvas with rabbit-skin glue, which makes the fabric robust, but still absorbent. To the eye, the applied paint appears translucent, while blending firmly with the undercoat.” 2 Lines or calligraphic-looking tags float on these matte, velvety surfaces, or emerge from deeper layers like traces of memory revealing themselves slowly over time. These deeper traces are the result of a careful process of removal and addition manifested in the scarcely applied lines and marks on the picture surface. As part of her painterly practice, Erika Krause responds to imperfections of the material, picks up formations from previous painting processes, or discards them, thereby arriving step by step at her intense images.

While Krause emphasizes the slowness of the creative process and its translucent aesthetic, Hufnagel's works, by contrast, emerge from a rapid flow. 3 Her typographic paintings present a dense web of words and short sentences (sometimes legible and comprehensible, occasionally referential) that rarely reveal their meaning, poised between an intellectual tease and a delightful aesthetic experience. 4 In other works, featuring brightly coloured oil paints on white canvas, the paint takes on tactile qualities and bears witness to a quasi-performative procedure, in which multiple pictorial structures emerge from processes of expansion, addition, or erasure. In one of her most recent works a shimmering layer of paint slides over an underlying spiral-shaped image executed in permanent marker. However, it must be emphasized here that the next painting may look quite different, as it reflects Franziska Hufnagel's distinctive approach of freely exploring the possibilities of painting in a constantly fresh and unadulterated way. 5

The encounter between these two artists — which could not be more different in gesture and temperament — results in an exciting, worth seeing exhibition, precisely because their paintings do more than just coexisting harmoniously; they actively engage with one another and enter into a vivid dialogue. As Clemens Krümmel states: “There is at least one level on which the painterly approaches of Franziska Hufnagel and Erika Krause [...] communicate with one another—they present their audience with unusual challenges. For they are less (or more) ‘pictures’ than most people would expect in abstract painting, and they invite viewers to engage unreservedly with their structures and qualities [...].” 6

Both artists ultimately draw on a vocabulary of non-representational painting, which, beyond all differences, presents a broad field of analogies and connections, but there also seems to be a fundamental commonality in the ways in which both artists, through their highly individual approaches, raise questions about the relevance of non-representational painting ‘today’. Given the rise of AI generated contents in all areas — including culture — the question of authorship

takes on a new urgency. “What’s interesting about art is not an accumulation of a majority’s opinion, but rather the fact that it challenges us with unsettlingly different, surprising individual statements. [...] I believe that in art today, materials and techniques are becoming more important, whereas previously perhaps the message or aesthetics used to be of greater interest. There is now a new focus on seeing how something was made, ensuring it was not produced by AI.”⁷

Beyond any specific content, *zeitmatt perplex* offers a wonderful chance to experience an encounter between these authentic, yet highly disparate bodies of work. This experience arises not only from the confrontation with individual works — ‘handmade’ pieces that can be perceived as challenging or alluring — but is further intensified by the way the works are displayed alongside one another. In this way, the exhibition incidentally reveals how the individual paintings — which ought to be foreign to one another — get in touch with each other, actually enhancing each other through their oppositions. In the end, we, as observers may realize that understanding can emerge also, and precisely, through differences.

Elke Keiper, 2026

1 In 2025, Franziska Hufnagel and Erika Krause realized their first joint exhibition project, *Hula Hoop*, at the Städtische Galerie Waldkraiburg.

2 Erika Krause in conversation with the author, January 2026.

3 “Furthermore, the concept of ‘time’ is inscribed in both working processes—processes of conscious emptying, or exuberant filling.” Elke Keiper, in: *Hula Hoop*, magazine accompanying the exhibition of the same name by Franziska Hufnagel and Erika Krause, Städtische Galerie Waldkraiburg, 2025.

4 „In the medium of the image, as almost nowhere else, there are countless possibilities to control legibility or reading behaviour, to stimulate the imagination, or to linger in enigmatic ambiguity.“ Schwarz, Dominique: *Schrift als Kommunikationsmedium in der Malerei des 20. Jahrhunderts*, Hamburg, disserta Verlag, 2019, S. 23.

5 Franziska Hufnagel in conversation with the author, February 2026.

6 Clemens Krümmel, *Um die Taille der Wahrnehmung*, in: *Hula Hoop*, a. a. O., S. 8.

7 Ulrich Pfisterer in an interview on February 23, 2026, regarding the congress of the German Association for Art History. <http://www.lmu.de/de/newsroom/newsuebersicht/news/kunst-und-wissen-ich-vor-mona-lisa-6895cf90.html>