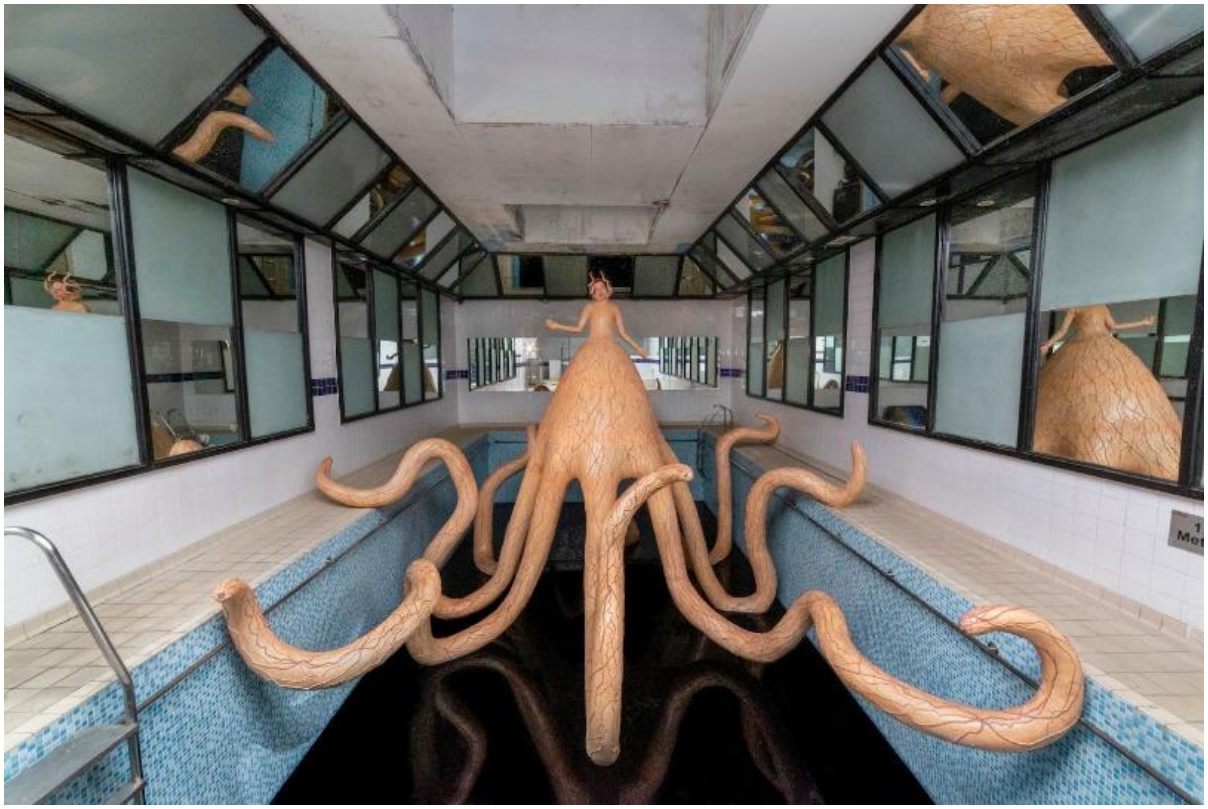
PRESS RELEASE

# Bodytalk: Enthusiasm at the 16th International Forum for Contemporary Sculpture in Berlin

**Sculpture Network's sold-out flagship event: around 100 artists, curators and collectors enjoyed three days packed with inspiration, discussion and forward-thinking ideas.**



Agnes Questionmark, Transgenesis, 2021 at Harlesden High Street, London © the artist

**Berlin, 9 November 2026** – A full house, open discussions and an atmosphere that will be felt for a long time to come: the 16th International Forum organised by **Sculpture Network**, the largest non-profit organisation dedicated to promoting 3D art, brought together the European sculpture scene in Berlin from 29 to 31 October 2026. The forum, entitled "***Bodytalk – The Return of the Human Figure in Contemporary Sculpture***", was completely sold out. Participants were delighted by the talks and presentations given by internationally renowned experts and artists, by the discussions held on an equal footing, and by the personally guided tours of Berlin's most important sculpture sites.

**Sculpture at eye level**

The ***Bodytalk*** forum, curated by **Anne Berk** and **Anemone Vostell**, was dedicated to conceptual figuration. Today, the human figure is no longer merely a representation, but a conceptual model. It becomes a vehicle for questions that go beyond the mere depiction of the figure. Through gestures, posture and materials, artists convey their questions about identity, love, power, technology and our

relationship with nature. In contrast to the monumental statues of the past, which dictated meaning from their pedestals, contemporary sculptures now meet us at eye level.

### Forward-looking ideas at the PalaisPopulaire

On the day of the lecture, 30 October, participants gathered at the PalaisPopulaire on Unter den Linden, right in the heart of Berlin, to enjoy stimulating talks and in-depth discussions. **Anne Berk**, Chair of the Sculpture Network, curator and author of "*In Search of Meaning. Mensbeelden in Globaal Perspectief*" (2015, NL), demonstrated how silent figures speak to our own bodies through body language, and explained why the human figure is making a comeback. At a time when there are no blueprints for life, it serves as a means of posing existential and ethical questions about the body and life. **Dr Susanne Kähler**, Professor of Museology at HTW Berlin and Director of the online platform Bildhauerei-in-Berlin.de, traced the "body language of sculpture in public space from the 1980s onwards" against the backdrop of the divided and later reunified city, and demonstrated how Berlin's statues bear witness to the transition from totalitarian regimes to democracy. **Anna Mustonen**, chief curator at Kiasma in Helsinki, provided an insight into the Nordic Pavilion she is curating for the 2026 Venice Biennale, in which bodies, myths and matter intertwine to form worlds, reflecting the transitions we are experiencing today between collapse and renewal.



Installation view, Nordic Countries Pavilion, Venice Biennale 2026 · Photo: Finnish National Gallery / Pirje Mykkänen.

The highlight of the day was the presentation by the multidisciplinary artist **Agnes Questionmark** (IT), who captivated the audience. Inspired by her ongoing experience of gender transition, she creates hybrid figures from flowing and soft materials that hover between the human and the transhuman.



Agnes Questionmark presenting at Sculpture Network International Forum *Bodytalk* in Berlin. Photo Jürgen Baumann

Agnes Questionmark conceives of the body as a living archive and an unstable interface between science, power and the self. Her artistic approach, which engages with current developments in the fields of AI and robotics, visibly moved the audience. In spring 2027, she will take part in the New Museum Triennial in New York. **Andros Foros** (CZ), on the other hand, combined with great humour the sanctity of Gothic sculpture – which is omnipresent in the Czech Republic – with the grotesque nature of the present day, offering an insight into the reflections of a young sculptor from Prague on an increasingly fragmented world. The presentations by ten network members also added a lively touch, including the recipients of the *SN Emerging Artist Recommendation*: **Dries Celis** (BE), **Emilio Timp** (NL) and **Julie van Riel** (NL).



The day concluded with a first: the inaugural ***Sculpture Network Collectors' Talk***. Moderated by the art adviser **Natasha Bergmann**, the collectors **Teresa Calbo** (ES) and **Kateřina Havrlant** (CZ) offered insights, from a female perspective, into the values, intuition and motivation behind the acquisition of figurative works, as well as the role of female collectors in raising the profile of art.

Sculpture Network Collectors Talk, Natasha Bergmann, Teresa Calbo and Katerina Havrlant. Anemone Vostell .

**Berlin locations that tell a story**
The forum opened on 29 October at the Kunsthaus Dahlem, the former studio of Arno Breker, the Nazi regime's commissioned artist, which lent the theme *Bodytalk* a historical dimension. On 31 October, guided tours followed at the Hamburger Bahnhof – National Gallery for Contemporary Art, including tours of the "*Endless Exhibition*" and the exhibition by the Leipzig collective [materialistin]. The event concluded at the Noack Foundry on the banks of the River Spree: **Hermann Noack IV** recounted how his family, now in its fourth generation, has been creating bronze sculptures throughout Germany's turbulent history. During the festive dinner at Bar Brass, there were lively discussions, laughter and networking – all of which embody what Sculpture Network is all about: connections, friendships and the wonderful feeling of being part of this international community of sculptors.

## An energy that lingers

"The atmosphere was wonderful," summarises curator **Anne Berk**. Participants appreciated the talks by renowned experts and international artists just as much as the cross-border exchange. Thanks to the speakers, the dedicated team, the local coordinators from across Europe, and the Executive Board and Board of Trustees led by founder **Hartmut Stielow**, the forum developed a truly magical energy, as co-curator and cultural manager **Anemone Vostell** puts it. The next **Sculpture Network International Forum** will take place in 2028.

## About Sculpture Network



Sculpture Network was founded in 2004 by the steel sculptor Hartmut Stielow and the entrepreneur Ralf Kirberg. The not-for-profit organisation brings together artists, art professionals, organisations, art lovers and collectors of sculpture in Europe and beyond – via its digital platform, which features an online magazine, a newsletter, live and online events, and the International Forum as its flagship event. The Sculpture Network International Forum is always held in collaboration with leading art institutions; most recently it was organised in partnership with the Centre Pompidou and the Museo Picasso Málaga (ES) on the theme of "*Sculpture and the Climate Emergency*"; previous venues have included, amongst others, the Verbeke Foundation (BE), Ars Electronica (AT), the Kröller-Müller Museum (NL) and the Yorkshire Sculpture Park (UK).

Welcome Reception im Kunsthaus Dahlem. Photo: Yevheniia Havrlenko © Kunsthaus Dahlem

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