

## Sophie von Hellermann

### *Letters to a young painter*

**Opening:** May 1<sup>st</sup>, 2026

**Exhibition:** May 1<sup>st</sup> – June 6<sup>th</sup>, 2026

Wentrup presents Sophie von Hellermann's fourth solo exhibition at the gallery, *Letters to a young painter*. Sophie von Hellermann's works combine her interest in history, mythology, literature, and film with the theme of memory. The artist 'weaves' these diverse narrative threads together, translating them into her spontaneous painting style without sketches or preliminary drawings. In doing so, she links contemporary events with classical antiquity, literature with painting, blending imagination and reality both stylistically and thematically.

Sophie von Hellermann's new paintings were inspired by an ongoing engagement with the life and work of Rainer Maria Rilke, whose 150th birthday and 100th anniversary of his death will coincide in 2026. Rainer Maria Rilke continues to fascinate to this day because his texts look deep into the human soul and express existential feelings such as loneliness, love, and the search for self. Sophie von Hellermann's painting and Rainer Maria Rilke's literature are united by their openness and ambiguity: both work with suggestion rather than clear statements. Instead of telling concrete stories, they primarily create moods and inner spaces of experience.

Both von Hellermann's fleeting figures and Rilke's searching self portray human beings as something unfinished, in a state of flux. Thus, in both works, a poetic, dreamlike effect emerges that straddles reality and imagination.

**Sophie von Hellermann** (\*1975 in Munich) currently lives and works in London and Margate. She is a Professor of Painting at the State Academy of Fine Arts in Karlsruhe. In 2025/2026, the artist had solo exhibitions at Sixi Museum in Nanjing (CHN), Kunsthalle Wien (AT), and Space K in Seoul (KR). Previous institutional solo exhibitions include Kunstverein Hannover, DE; Turner Contemporary, Margate, GB; Neuer Aachener Kunstverein, DE; Kunstverein Konstanz, DE; Le Consortium, Dijon, FR; and Saatchi Gallery, London, GB. She

has also participated in group exhibitions at notable venues such as Hayward Gallery, London, GB; Brücke Museum, Berlin, DE; Milwaukee Art Museum, US; Elmhurst Art Museum, US; Dortmunder Kunstverein, DE; Bonner Kunstverein, DE; Kunsthalle Bielefeld, DE; The Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York, US; Tate Britain, London, GB; Centre Pompidou, Paris, FR; Hall Art Foundation, Schloss Derneburg, DE; and Museum van Hedendaagse Kunst, Antwerp, BE.

Works by Sophie von Hellermann can be found in the collections of the Berger Collection, Hong Kong, HK; Collection of Alaia Cheng, Hong Kong, HK; Glenbow Museum, Calgary, CA; Hall Art Foundation, North Adams, US; Los Angeles County Museum of Art, Los Angeles, US; Neuberger Museum of Art, New York, US; Rachofsky Collection, Dallas, US; RISD Museum, Rhode Island, US; Saatchi Collection, London, GB; Wemhöner Collection, Berlin, DE; Start Museum, Shanghai, CN; The Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York, US; X Museum, Beijing, CHN; Pérez Art Museum, Miami, US; M Art Foundation, Singapore; Carnegie Museum of Art, Pittsburgh, US