

Frankfurt Celebrates International Contemporary Art

Discovery Art Fair | 29 October – 1 November 2026 | Messe Frankfurt, Hall 1

From 29 October to 1 November, Hall 1 at Messe Frankfurt will once again become a meeting place for contemporary art from around the world and the Rhine-Main region. More than 120 exhibitors from 20 countries will present painting, photography, sculpture, urban art and much more. What makes Discovery Art Fair special is its combination of the international art world and the regional scene, established names and emerging talents, galleries and independent artistic voices. The result is a fair where the familiar sits alongside the unexpected and a wide variety of artistic approaches come together.

There is more to the experience than simply looking at art. In a relaxed atmosphere, the fair brings art and its audience into direct contact: visitors can talk to gallery owners and artists, experience works at close quarters and purchase them on site. The fair sees itself as a place where art is readily accessible and a first encounter with an artwork can develop into a personal connection.

Spectacular Large-Scale Installations and Powerful Artistic Statements

What looks from a distance like a landscape of shimmering golden dunes is in fact around two million spent rifle cartridge cases. With “Paradise Circus”, Wesseling-based action artist Dennis Josef Meseg brings 15 tonnes of them to Discovery Art Fair. The unsettling beauty of this metallic landscape contrasts with its origins. Meseg asks what we accept as normal simply because we have grown accustomed to it, and what foundations our supposed paradise actually rests on.

Very different, yet equally impressive, is the joint presentation by Kunst & Kultur im Herrenhaus from Niddatal and Berlin’s gallery LeonART25. A group of life-size sculptures by Berlin sculptor Joachim Schmettau will be arranged so that the figures enter into a relationship both with one another and with the audience. Schmettau’s works combine precise observation, subtle humour and a quiet sense of unease. He is one of the defining figures of Berlin Critical Realism.

Peter Lindenberg’s “Ikarus” reaches for the skies: a 4.60-metre-high Cessna wing, tilted steeply upwards, becomes a monumental symbol of human aspiration and daring. Partially covered in gleaming brass leaf, this unusual work inevitably draws the gaze upwards while also reminding us of the fragility of every great dream.

Art from Around the World Comes to Frankfurt

The exhibition hall brings together international artistic worlds that, at first glance, could hardly be more different. Vienna’s Galerie Dantendorfer presents Kurt Hüpfner, a long-underestimated outsider whose expressive work probes the darker depths of post-war society. From London come the luminous, memory-rich paintings of Mexican-British artist Gabriel Alvarez. Copenhagen’s Gallery Poulsen presents Jean-Pierre Roy’s futuristic landscapes, poised between surrealism and post-apocalyptic visions.

Art history also meets pop and street art: Croatian-born Dante Galic combines influences from Goya and Francis Bacon with surrealism and comics. Danish artist Alf Pedersen

transforms old posters and urban found objects into exuberant neo-punk pop art, while Argentinian artist BNS builds his works layer by layer using acrylic, spray paint and collage. His fusion of street art and fine art has also won over celebrity collectors such as Paris Hilton, Macaulay Culkin and NAS.

The Region Showcases Its Talent

For all its international reach, the regional scene remains a central pillar of Discovery Art Fair. More than 20 galleries and artists from the Rhine-Main area showcase the diversity of the local art scene.

Following its successful fair debut, KAS Kunstraum-Dreieich returns with works by iconic artists such as Tony Cragg, Markus Lüpertz, Willi Siber and Jörg Immendorff. Galerie am Dom, based in Wetzlar and Bad Nauheim, presents an exclusive bronze edition by Stephan Balkenhol, created to mark his impressive installation in Salzburg this year, among other works.

Kunstgalerie Wetterau makes its fair debut with a stand dedicated to the fine art photography of Helmut Haase and Alexander Basta. Marniok Art Gallery from Hochheim am Main, also exhibiting for the first time, brings together contrasting styles: Isabelle Breitkopf's intuitive abstract painting meets the material-based explorations of Thorsten Poersch, who incorporates charcoal, ash and sand into his works.

Showroom Astrid Bierschenk from Mainz shows fleeting moments of urban life to Frankfurt through Susanna Storch's "Facades" series. Kronberg's Kunstsalon Trashland also presents distinctive individual artistic voices. These include the iconic "Augenmädchen" by Kerstin Lichtblau, who is based at Atelierfrankfurt and whose screenprints question social roles.

Special Formats: From Talent Award to Art Auction

Bringing new artistic voices into the spotlight is central to Discovery Art Fair's identity. This commitment is particularly evident in the "Discover a Talent" programme. From the numerous submissions, an independent jury selects artists for their own sponsored booths, giving them a prominent platform. This year's distinguished panel comprises Silke Hohmann (editor at the art magazine Monopol), Jörk Rothamel (gallerist), Dr Gregor Jansen (former director of Kunsthalle Düsseldorf) and Raimund Stecker (founding director of the Arp Museum Bahnhof Rolandseck).

The five winners demonstrate the diversity of contemporary art today: German-Mongolian artist Gan-Erdene Tsend combines precisely observed spaces with illusory apparitions. David Luca Muth turns houses and walls into surfaces onto which loneliness and belonging are projected. South Korean artist Hanna Kim translates personal experiences into atmospheric paintings. British street artist Perspicere creates complex portraits with a three-dimensional appearance from individual threads. Swiss artist Christoph Eberle combines photography, digital image editing and traditional oil painting to create astonishingly realistic visual worlds.

For art lovers and collectors, "Discover a Talent" offers a special opportunity to discover works selected by recognised art-world experts. Works by the award recipients can be purchased directly at the fair. Anyone who falls in love with a piece can therefore take their discovery a step further.

The Silent Auction offers another way to engage with art. Many participating galleries and artists make works available specifically for the auction. The principle is simple: visitors can submit sealed bids on selected works throughout the bidding period. This adds a playful element to the fair experience while offering the chance to find a genuine art bargain. What makes it special is that all proceeds go to the respective exhibitors. Bidders thus directly support artists and, with a little luck, can acquire an original work at an attractive price. The successful bidders are only announced on the final day of the fair.

See Art, Experience It and Take It Home

An art fair thrives on more than what is displayed on its walls and plinths. Personal interaction is an integral part of the experience at each of the more than 120 stands. Anyone interested in a work can speak directly with the exhibitors, ask questions and learn more about its background. Free daily curator-led tours also offer visitors the chance to discover selected works and their contexts from a new perspective.

And because the fair team wants to make art accessible to as many people as possible, a special offer returns this year: admission to Discovery Art Fair is free on Friday. It is an easy opportunity to drop by, wander at leisure and explore contemporary art without feeling intimidated.

Perhaps a particular painting will fascinate, a sculpture will spark curiosity or a previously unfamiliar name will leave a lasting impression. Visitors may even discover a work that finds its way home with them. Because that is what Discovery Art Fair is all about: not simply looking at art, but truly engaging with it.

Discovery Art Fair Frankfurt 2026

Hall 1, Messe Frankfurt

30 October – 1 November 2026 | Opening 29 October 2026

Friday – Saturday: 11 am to 8 pm | Sunday: 11 am to 6 pm

Tickets & Information: discoveryartfair.com

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