

• neue  
galerie

**A Creator of Epic Pictures**  
**Janine Weger**

**23.05.–09.08.2025**

**[ENGLISH]**

curatorial support: Bettina Siegele

## Content

- 3 *Visitors Text*
- 9 *Room Plan*
- 10 *List of Works*
- 12 *Filmcredits*
- 13 *Biography*
- 14 *Credits*
- 15 *Dates*

• **neue  
galerie**

Rennweg 1, Großes Tor, Hofburg, Innsbruck  
Tel. +43 512 57 81 54, [office@kuveti.at](mailto:office@kuveti.at), [kuveti.at](http://kuveti.at)  
**Mi–Fr 12.00–17.00 | Sa 11.00–15.00**

# *A Creator of Epic Pictures*

## Janine Weger

By the time of the presidential election campaign in the United States of America back in 2016 at the latest, our present day is understood as a post-factual era. An era of post-truth, in which the boundaries between fact and fiction not only seem to be blurring but have already become irrelevant. The Brexit referendum, the US presidential election campaign, the COVID-19 pandemic and the climate crisis have shown us that emotional presumptions and opinions generate more publicity than objective facts.<sup>1</sup>

Visitors Text

What is fact? Where does fiction begin? Buzzwords such as 'fake news' have been an integral part of the public debate in politics and the constantly changing media environment for several years now. Following the 'alternative facts' when Trump was president for the first time as well as conspiracy theories about the COVID-19 pandemic and climate change, new forms of political communication in the context of populism and propaganda are posing challenges to society.<sup>2</sup>

Not even the visual arts have been safe from being instrumentalised by populist currents. For her solo exhibition *A Creator of Epic Pictures* at the Neue Galerie of the Künstler\*innen Vereinigung Tirol, Janine Weger has already been looking at various examples of chronopolitical phases in which art and culture become a tool of populism

---

<sup>1</sup> Nele Wynants, „Documentary Art in the Post-Truth Era. An Introduction“, in *When Fact Is Fiction: Documentary Art in the Post-Truth Era*, ed. by Nele Wynants (Amsterdam: Valiz, 2020), 10.

<sup>2</sup> Steffi Hobuß, Simone Jung, and Sven Kramer, Ed., *Öffentlichkeiten zwischen Fakt und Fiktion: Zur Wissensproduktion in Wissenschaft, Medien, Künsten*, (Berlin: Verbrecher Verlag, 2023), 7.

## Visitors Text

and propaganda. There are plenty of examples in which art has been used by states, church leaders, influential families, etc., specifically to market a self-image to the public. Every populist movement knew how to skilfully use artists and their works for their own agendas. The methods used are manifold - they range from prescribing an official national dogma to a downright art doctrine that imposes taste by decree, to playing the victim through the loss of former 'classics' due to a so-called 'woke cancel culture', to the appropriation of individual works or entire artist characters. The affected artists' standing seems to be of little to no importance. Well-known examples from the recent past can be found in election campaigns in which right-wing populist politicians, such as Donald J. Trump or the party leaders of the FPÖ, appropriated well-known songs as anthems for their election campaigns.

In her work, Weger adopts the tools of various manipulation techniques and illustrates parallels between the present and the propaganda machinery of the Cold War, in which the CIA deliberately misused art and culture for its purposes in its propaganda campaign against communism.<sup>3</sup>

The CIA's secret funding of the Congress for Cultural Freedom (CCF), which in turn financed anti-communist art in the form of congresses, magazines and exhibitions<sup>4</sup>, established the American idea of freedom and individualism as a

---

<sup>3</sup> Christian Erll, „Die CIA und die Kunst“, detektor.fm, downloaded on the 20th of Mai 2025, <https://detektor.fm/kultur/was-wichtig-wird-cia-kunst>.

<sup>4</sup> A detailed list of the CCF's best-known events can be found in the publication *Parapolitics. Cultural Freedom and the Cold War*, edited by Anselm Franke, Nida Ghouse, Paz Guevara and Antonia Majaca, pp.22.

counterpart to communist collectivism. In the visual arts, this endeavour was embodied above all by Abstract Expressionism, which was emerging in the USA then, and Jackson Pollock as one of its main representatives. In addition, he could be excellently marketed as a cowboy from Wyoming<sup>5</sup> and thus as a 'typical' American. Major and ambitious travelling exhibitions, such as *The New American Painting* (1958-1959) by the Museum of Modern Art (MoMA) in New York City, financed by the CCF, which successfully toured Europe<sup>6</sup>, helped Abstract Expressionism and thus also the American art scene to achieve great recognition, immense significance and global influence.

In the exhibition at the Neue Galerie, Janine Weger focuses on the production and origin of images, the truthfulness of what is seen and the manipulative power of images. She questions painting as a medium and our relationship to reality amid the flood of images in which we find ourselves.

Right at the beginning of the exhibition *A Creator of Epic Pictures*, visitors encounter the cover image ***Between Seeing and Knowing*** (#1). The graphic-like photograph is characterised by its ambiguous motif, which is an optical illusion caused by the refraction of light. The picture was taken by the artist with her smartphone at an exhibition, where she photographed directly and without the necessary distance through the edge of a display case. The result is a

5 cf. Frances Stonor Saunders, *The Cultural Cold War. The CIA and the World of Arts and Letters* (New York: The New Press, 1999).

6 Alastair Sooke, „Was modern art a weapon of the CIA?“, *BBC*, 5. Oktober 2016, <https://www.bbc.com/culture/article/20161004-was-modern-art-a-weapon-of-the-cia>.

#### Visitors Text

distortion of reality in the form of an aesthetically pleasing symmetry. An image that appeals to our viewing habits and is therefore, according to the artist, less scrutinised.

It is both an allusion to the CIA's approach and its art of manipulation, as well as a questioning of the media-inherent characteristics of photography and painting and the transition between the two media.

In the painting to the right, ***Brushwork Memory III*** (#2), Weger has tried to imitate the rhythm and effect of the photography with a brush, only to paint over it again and erase the original approach - the initial result of this transfer, may have similarities but can never achieve the same effect, it was too direct. For Weger, photography is more deceptive than painting. Painting is more genuine and honest, as it allows less distance and emerges directly from the gesture. As a result, smaller photos repeatedly appear in the exhibition, which at first glance seem to portray everyday life. In fact, these everyday scenes are distortions of reality.

To generate a certain distance between the artist's own body and the canvas and thus allow the gesture to recede into the background, Weger has built her own brushes for the large-format paintings, whose canvases are applied directly on the gallery wall. The painting itself thus becomes more mechanical, bidding farewell to the 'ingenious' gesture and thus also to the craftsmanship, in order to focus more on an idea instead. The title of the multimedia work, which also functions as the exhibition title, *A Creator of Epic Pictures*, is, therefore, to be understood as an ironic commentary on the culture of the genius. The title is also a reference to

the golden age of film. The dimensions of the constructed brush instruments correspond to the radius of the circles and allow a stop-and-go movement that breaks through and dissolves the circle as a symbol of temporality and totality. The painting leaves the circles unfinished as semi-circles, which are only completed by a projection. This overlapping of analogue and digital images on a mutual surface opens up a metaphorical space. The projection shows a video that compiles archive films, propaganda films and current online videos that went viral.

A blurring between physical reality and digital space and the boundaries of the tangible can also be found in the centre gallery space in the work ***Soft Touch Flesh*** (#14). At a quick glance barely visible, the painting blurs into a grotesque face - an uncanny illusion that casts doubt upon reality.

Weger also attempts to achieve the effects of blurring and dissolving in the two other works in this space, ***Brushwork Memory I*** (#12) and ***Brushwork Memory II*** (#13). Layer by layer, - alternately with and without primer - colour is again applied with a self-made brush to comprehend how the different materials and layers behave and what visual effects are created as a result.

Finally, in the last room of the Neue Galerie, the front wall mirrors the opposite wall of the first room by projecting a manipulated view. A large-format painting leaning against the wall is doubled by its projection; image carrier, painting, projection, projection surface and architectural space overlap and dissolve. The result is an illusion that plays with

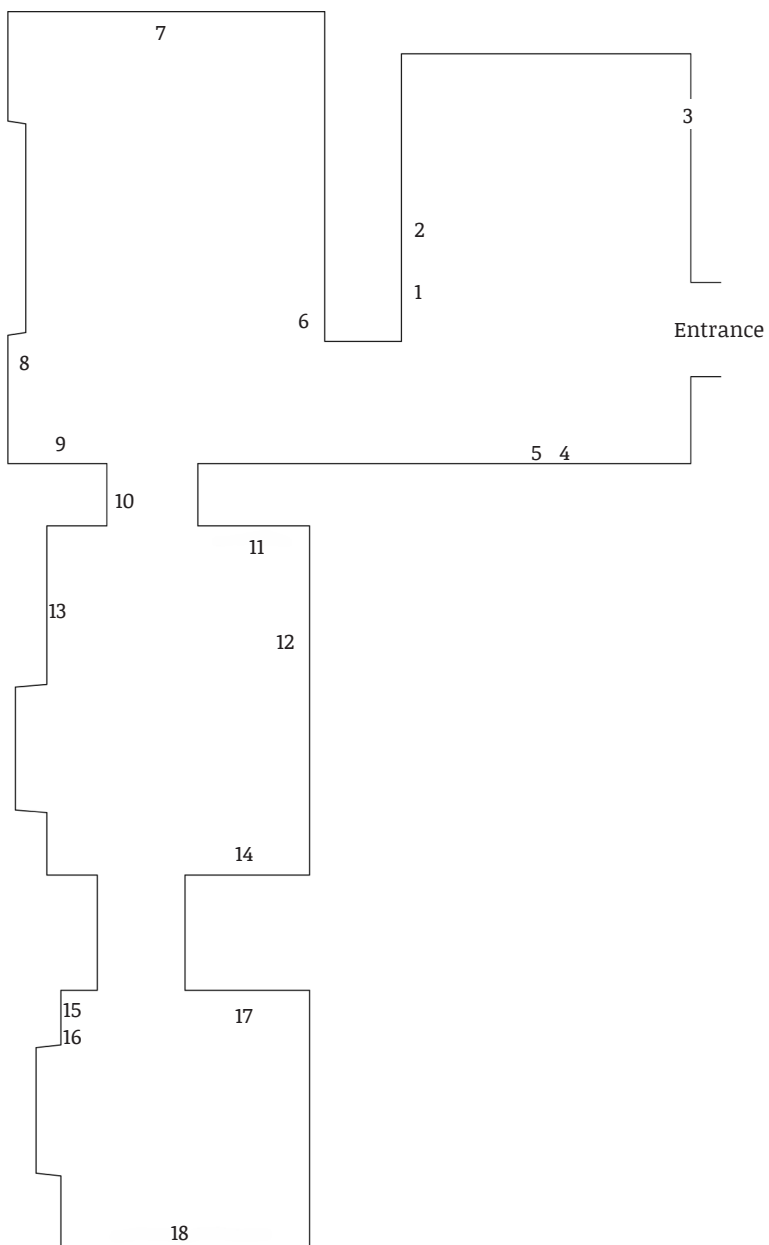
**Visitors Text**

the viewer.

What is real and what is fake? Who and which media (in several aspects) can we trust? How can we sharpen our gaze and learn to decipher illusions, or to perceive them in the first place? In the exhibition *A Creator of Epic Pictures*, Janine Weger experiments with the viewing habits of her audience and encourages them to critically question learned aesthetic perceptions.

Bettina Siegele





## List of Works

### List of Works

- 1 *Between Seeing and Knowing*, 20 x 27 cm, photo transfer on cotton on MDF, 2025.
- 2 *Brushwork Memory III*, 90 x 200 cm, oil on canvas, 2025.
- 3 *Untitled*, 21 x 29,7 cm, pigment print on Hahnemühle paper, 2025.
- 4 *Untitled*, 21 x 29,7 cm, pigment print on Hahnemühle paper, 2025.
- 5 *Untitled*, 21 x 29,7 cm, pigment print on Hahnemühle paper, 2025.
- 6 *A Creator of Epic Pictures #2*, oil on canvas, 99 x 220 cm, 2025.
- 7 *A Creator of Epic Pictures*, painting / videoinstallation, video: colour, sound, 09:35 min; painting: dyptich, oil and acrylic on linen, 406 x 220 cm, 2025.
- 8 *Untitled*, 21 x 29,7 cm, pigment print on Hahnemühle paper, 2025.
- 9 *A Creator of Epic Pictures #1*, oil on canvas, 169 x 220 cm, 2025.
- 10 *Untitled*, 21 x 29,7 cm, pigment print on Hahnemühle paper, 2025.
- 11 *Untitled*, 21 x 29,7 cm, pigment print on Hahnemühle paper, 2025.

- 12** *Brushwork Memory I*, 120 x 168 cm, acrylic on canvas, 2024.
- 13** *Brushwork Memory II*, 220 x 150 cm, acrylic and oil on canvas, 2025.
- 14** *Soft Touch Flesh*, painting / video installation, video: colour, sound, 1 min; painting: oil on canvas, 170 x 220 cm, 2025.
- 15** *Untitled*, 21 x 29,7 cm, pigment print on Hahnemühle paper, 2025.
- 16** *Untitled*, 21 x 29,7 cm, pigment print on Hahnemühle paper, 2025.
- 17** *Untitled*, about 40 x 40 cm, acrylic und gesso on canvas 2016.
- 18** *Projection Field*, painting / video / installation, 2025.

# Filmcredits

## Filmcredits

### **A Creator of Epic Pictures**

2025 | 09:35 min

#### **Sources of film material used:**

***Mission to Moscow:*** Direction: Michael Curtiz | 1943 | 124 min. | Warner Bros. | Source: <https://vimeo.com/343814305> (accessed on: 20.05.2025)

***Law and Social Controls:*** Coronet Instructional Films | 1949 | 9:37 min. | Source: *The Internet Archive* <https://archive.org/details/LawandSo1949> (accessed on: 20.05.2025)

***Control your Emotions:*** Coronet Instructional Films | 1949 | 13:17 min. | Source: *The Internet Archive* <https://archive.org/details/social-guidance-film-control-your-emotions-1950> (accessed on: 20.05.2025)

***Crusade for Freedom:*** National Archives | 1956 | 14:09 min. | Source: *The Internet Archive* <https://archive.org/details/gov.archives.arc.648946> (accessed on: 20.05.2025)

***Trump & The Press:*** Last Week Tonight with John Oliver (HBO): Last Week Tonight | 18.05.2025 | 28:29 min. | YouTube: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=07JQr5W3970> (accessed on: 20.05.2025)

***Jon Stewart on Which Speech Is Free and Which Will Cost You in Trump's America:*** *The Daily Show* | 24.03.2025 | 19:35 min. | YouTube: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=sNMdRzK9Nj0> (accessed on: 20.05.2025)

# Biography

In her interdisciplinary artistic practice, **Janine Weger** sees painting as a performative act and space for reflection in which analogue and digital visual worlds meet. Her works reflect personal memory as well as today's social politics of images, in which truths become post-facts.

## Biography

Weger uses video and photographic elements as well as painted fragments and installations, in which the digital realm overlaps with painted image sequences and subsequently interacts with each other. This creates spaces that oscillate between documentary precision and poetic traces: The exhibition field itself becomes a theme in which power relations and institutional attribution become visible.

Weger studied painting at the University of Creative Arts in Canterbury, England (2014-2017) and at the TransArts class (Transdisciplinary Arts) at the University of Applied Arts Vienna (2020-2024).

Group exhibitions in Vienna (Kunsthalle Wien, Masc Foundation, flat1), Innsbruck (Kunstpavillon, Plattform 6020), Linz (Turm 9), Margate (Turner Contemporary, CRATE Project Space), Folkestone (Triennial 2017), London (Copeland Gallery), Tokyo (3331 Arts Chiyoda), and China.

Solo exhibitions at the Klocker Museum (Hall in Tirol), Plattform 6020 (Innsbruck), Tokyo (AIR3331 Chiyoda), CRATE Project Space (Margate), Organhaus Chongqing (China).

Prizes awarded include the *Josef-Franz-Würlinger Prize* and *Turner Contemporary Platform Graduate Award*.

The artist lives and works in Vienna.

# Credits

## Credits

**Curatorial Support:** Bettina Siegele

**Exhibition Technique:** Paul Irmann, Lukas Klestil

**Production:** Cornelia Reinisch-Hofmann

**Exhibition Booklet:** Milena Thurner

**Exhibition Booklet Editorial:** Bettina Siegele & Cornelia Reinisch-Hofmann

**Graphic design Booklet:** Marille. Büro für Grafik und Text

The exhibition ***A Creator of Epic Pictures*** is part of the annual programme ***Chronopolitical Explorations*** curated by Bettina Siegele.

**Jury for the programme 2025:** Andrea Popelka (curator and researcher, Vienna), Johanna Tinzl (artist and board member of the Künstler\*innen Vereinigung Tirol, until autumn 2024, Vienna) and Bettina Siegele (artistic and managing directress of the Künstler\*innen Vereinigung Tirol, Kunstpavillon, Neue Galerie & Interessenvertretung)

# Dates

## Opening

## Dates

Thursday 22.05.2025, 19.00

Welcoming: Milena Meller (member of the board)

Introduction: Bettina Siegele

**04.06.2025 | 17.30**

Curator's tour with Bettina Siegele

**26.06.2025 | 19.00**

Artist talk with Janine Weger

**09.08.2025 | 11.30**

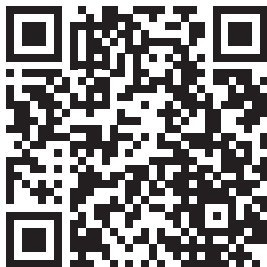
Exhibition tour Art & Coffee

Current information on the events and outreach in the realm of the exhibition can be found on our website:

**[www.kuveti.at](http://www.kuveti.at)**

Link to the digital version of the **exhibition booklet**:

[www.kuveti.at/en/exhibition/a-creator-of-epic-pictures/](http://www.kuveti.at/en/exhibition/a-creator-of-epic-pictures/)



Link to the exhibition text as **audio**:

<https://www.kuveti.at/wp-content/uploads/2025/04/A-Creator-of-Epic-Pictures-curatorial-text-as-audio.mp3>

