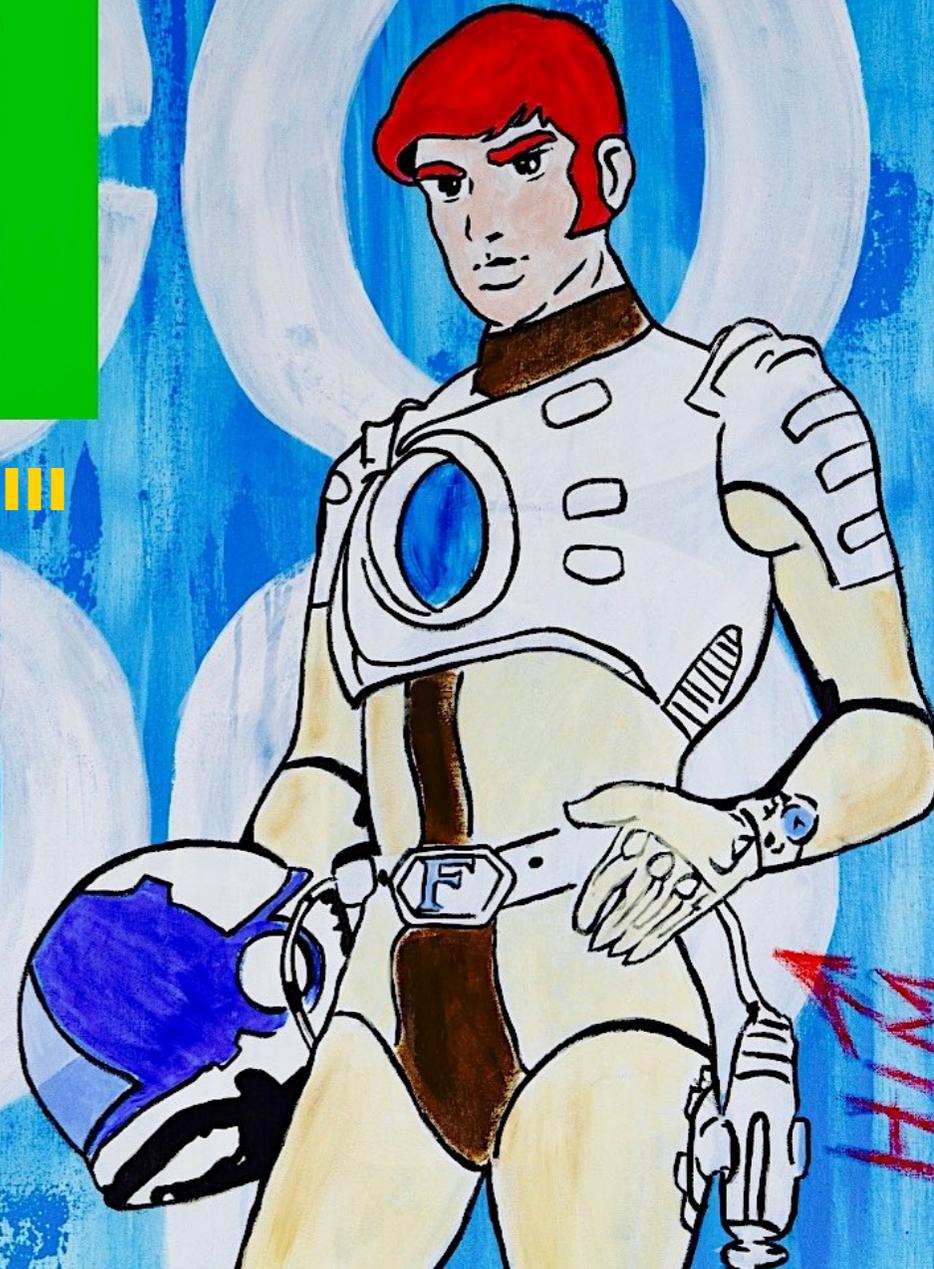


ME

MM

Malte

SONNENFELD III



HAHA

# IN FRONT OF MY SHOPWINDOW

*by Malte Sonnenfeld*



Almost everyone who comes to me in my studio, whether I know this someone or not, has an opinion on art in general and on my art in particular, even people who stray to me only by chance or driven by curiosity.

Artists are generally fond of interpretation. It is almost irrelevant whether these interpretations have to do with the work or not. The work is charged interpretatively by the viewer, which increases the value. Basta. This is not much different in Unkel where my studio is located or in my hometown Cologne.

As a painting artist, you have to listen to new creative outpourings all the time. Whether you want to or not.

Since I took part in the art weekend "Unkeler-Höfe" for the first time six years ago, I have been drawn there. Actually, I only need four places in this world: Cologne, Pellworm Unkel and

Mönchengladbach, the city with that certain nothing. But maybe more about that later.

More than four years ago, I moved into my studio in the „Pützgasse number two“ in Unkel and, together with Jochen Seidel, the organizer of the "Unkeler Höfe", I also founded a cultural workshop there, where we invite well-known artists to exhibit here.

Curious people often drop in and want to engage me in expert conversation, usually while I'm sitting at the canvas and painting:

"You know Bob Ross, don't you? The painter from America! The one on Channel 9, ARD Alpha?!"

"Yes, I know him!"

"Well, HE is a real painter."

"Thank you..."

or

"My sister-in-law paints too...but

she also works at the insurance company."

And already they are leafing through the smartphone and I have to endure some unattractive photos showing the smartphone owner in garish Bermuda shorts. Then finally we arrive at the 40 or so pictures of the sister-in-law, which her relative presents to me applaudingly like a trophy. I try to escape in my mind and try to think of something else, but always get back to the picture: Adult Education Center watercolor class, second lesson.

The classic artist's question, though a bit aged, is still relevant:

"That's all well and good what you're doing...but what do you actually do for a living?"

or

"You've actually sold paintings already? Then you've been lucky."  
...Well, being an artist doesn't have the same status as other trades.

While I sit behind my large shop window and paint at the easel, they pass by: hurried locals on their way to the Doc, workers from the Greenfield Office, Peter, the landlord of the Wine Tavern „Im Lämmlein“ (*In the Little Lamb*), who gives me a friendly wave and will later bring me

an espresso, and strolling tourists. These on average middle-aged, some of them actually still equipped with Nordic walking sticks, belly belt bag, new hiking boots and with wide hips. They stop briefly in the Pützgasse to take a photo. Not of my studio of course. They take photos of the Pützgasse itself: this picturesque, beautiful escape towards the Rhine. With cobblestones, half-timbered houses with hanging baskets and with the tables in front of the wine tavern "Im Lämmlein".

And now and then my studio glass door squeaks and a tourist couple stands in the room.

After I have then told a little about my work, she says:

"I prefer to read... historical novels." I'll have to remember that! Soon I will go to a bricklayer and ask him what he does for a living. And when he answers "Bricklayer!", I will tell him: "Bricklayer. Aha! Well, I for my part prefer to live in log houses!" and will walk away with my head held high ... in the meantime I continue to paint and watch the people in front of my shop window and will report again in the next catalog.

Best regards,

Malte Sonnenfeld

„fast so etwas wie prousts eclair“

acrylic, mixed media,

120cm x 80cm





A F R A I D  
O F  
A R T



**A F R A I D  
O F  
A R T**

acrylic, mixed media, 70cm x 100cm



„It started in the cities“ ,acrylic, mixed media, 60cm x 60cm

## ... AND A LOT OF CREATIVITY

by Dr. Thomas Ebers

A studio visit in the rhenish Unkel, which was obviously not in the sense of the 2019 acting weather god: thunder, lightning as well as raining streams lined the way. Despite the divine goings-on, nevertheless arrived and immediately felt at home at the sight of the pictures. (*The person Malte Sonnenfeld supports this congenially, by the way.*) A visual language that works with well-known pop-cultural memes, mostly placed in original pictorial contexts and encompassing meaning-creating and -disfiguring word and sentence formations. Here Willy Brandt, Kurt Georg Kiesinger, Goethe, Max and Moritz, Mr. Rossi, Uncle Sam, Super Mario, Superman, Salvador Dali and many more cavort in differently collaged environments.

A first drawer:

Neo Pop Art; colorful, comic-like pictorial landscapes that create meaning between the lines and depicted elements, which often only presents itself to the second or third glance. A wonderfully successful use of aesthetic and intellectual sense. In reference to Karl Marx's famous eleventh Feuerbach thesis, the following motto could be added to Malte Sonnenfeld's works when viewed from the outside: "Artists have only represented and imagined the world in different ways. What matters is to comment on it."

The second drawer:

In these artistic commentaries, however, no unreal or even logically contradictory sceneries come into play. Rather, they simply do not correspond to the expectations and expectation of the viewer. Malte Sonnenfeld's art can therefore be called "paradoxical art" in the best sense of the word, for paradox etymologically denotes something contradictory to ordinary expectations. This art is far from surrealism, symbolism, and from behind-the-scenes, though not from behind-the-scenes. Rather, Malte Sonnenfeld's art draws attention to the contradictory, the illogical, or even the usual that should not be usual.



In the drawers:

Malte Sonnenfeld's civil name is Michael Koslar. Under this name he already practices the not very civil professions of tv-speaker, author and host. Under the pseudonym Malte Sonnenfeld, he has been visible to the public as a visual artist since 2010. Good for the public.

*(The title is based on a quote by Malte Sonnenfeld, which can be found on his website [www.maltesonnenfeld.de](http://www.maltesonnenfeld.de): "to make money with art you need: ideas, contacts, persuasion, patrons, contacts, courage, contacts again and possibly creativity.")*

**Dr. Thomas Ebers** studied philosophy, sociology and comparative religion at the Rheinische Friedrich-Wilhelms-Universität in Bonn. In 2009, he was awarded his doctorate there with the dissertation "Schreckliche Freiheit und Verantwortung. Reflections on the Recovery of a Philosophical Concept of Guilt," earning him his doctorate. He lives and works in Bonn.

„Fuck Deko“

acrylic, mixed media, 30cm x 100cm



„Schauen Sie schnell

woanders hin“

acrylic, mixed media, 60cm x 80cm



**DAS  
WIRD  
BÖS  
ENDEN**

acrylic, mixed media, 80cm x 60cm



„Ja, aber...“ acrylic, 40cm x 100cm

# MANY THX!

by Robert Reschkowski

Malte Sonnenfeld is not only a dazzlingly versatile personality and appointed Pop Art artist, but also a very likeable and endearing person. Born in Cologne, he skilfully uses the visual language of Pop Art and tells stories and tales from everyday life in a critical, poetic

and subversive-provocative way, which he medially transposes with the heroes, icons and ciphers of the global media universe. Thereby he reaches into his immense memory fund of his personal media-visual "socialization"! His pictorial inventions and visual-thematic condensations are carried by irony and wit.

In the best "cologne-rheinish sense" Malte

Sonnenfeld succeeds in "jecke (*id est: cologne saying for crazy*) works" and an original-original art, which are able to inspire us and last not least to entertain us in the best way.

Many thanks Malte!

RR

**Robert Reschkowski** - German Artist,  
Performer, Life Coach

**KUNST  
DU  
SAU**



acrylic, mixed media, 80cm x 100cm



**„Pablo who?“**  
acrylic,  
mixed media,  
100cm x 75cm



**„Kunst muss gar nix“**  
acrylic, mixed media,  
100cm x 80cm

**AJANABEE**  
**- A FEW**  
**THINGS**  
**I KNOW**



acrylic, mixed media, 60cm x 80cm

# SINCE HIS REINVENTION...

by Dr. Axel Wendelberger

...as a painter, Malte Sonnenfeld always came up with such funny ideas...

One could philosophize wonderfully about the paintings of Malte Sonnenfeld. The studied philologist gives the knowledgeable viewer indeed plenty of material to analyze, explain and talk shop. I would rather talk about my personal encounter with the artist and his work, because I notice that my opinion of the human being is increasingly creeping into my judgment of contemporary art. I no longer seek the much vaunted "objective view."

Michael Koslar, the man behind the picturesque pseudonym, is no stranger. He has long since made a name for himself as an author, TV announcer and "presenter with cult potential". The fact that he is "ne Kölsche Jung" (id est: a guy from Cologne) may be given little significance outside our region. However, it explains the lightness and irony that make Malte Sonnenfeld's pictures so distinctive. In variation of one of his so typically enigmatic work titles one could say: Since his reinvention as a painter Malte Sonnenfeld always came up with such funny ideas...

His extraordinary pictorial ideas fascinated me immediately when I came into contact with Sonnenfeld's work. In one painting, Japanese director and actor Takeshi "Beat" Kitano holds a revolver to his temple with a cynical laugh in the famous final scene of his gritty yakuza flick "Sonatine," pulls the trigger, and : N o brain sputters after the shot, but flowers bloom from his head, borrowed from one of Kitano's flower paintings, who began painting himself after a moped accident. Through his laconic, comic-like painting style, Sonnenfeld even manages to do justice to the monumentality of the cinematic moment - enriched with fine humor, of course.

"Contradictio in adiecto" is what this mental technique is called, the contradiction in the enclosure. In many of his works, Malte Sonnenfeld surprises the viewer with unexpected combinations of very different pictorial elements that stimulate reflection and decipherment. What began as montages in acrylic became a pictorial atlas of visual memories of an entire generation. Comic book heroes, pictures of historical personalities, film stills, images of old



„ways to make you talk I“

acrylic, mixed media,

60cm x 80cm

works of art, fragments of newspaper photos, stickers, collectible pictures are the material from which the artist draws, which he assembles into enigmatic pictorial compositions, which he likes to give no less enigmatic titles.

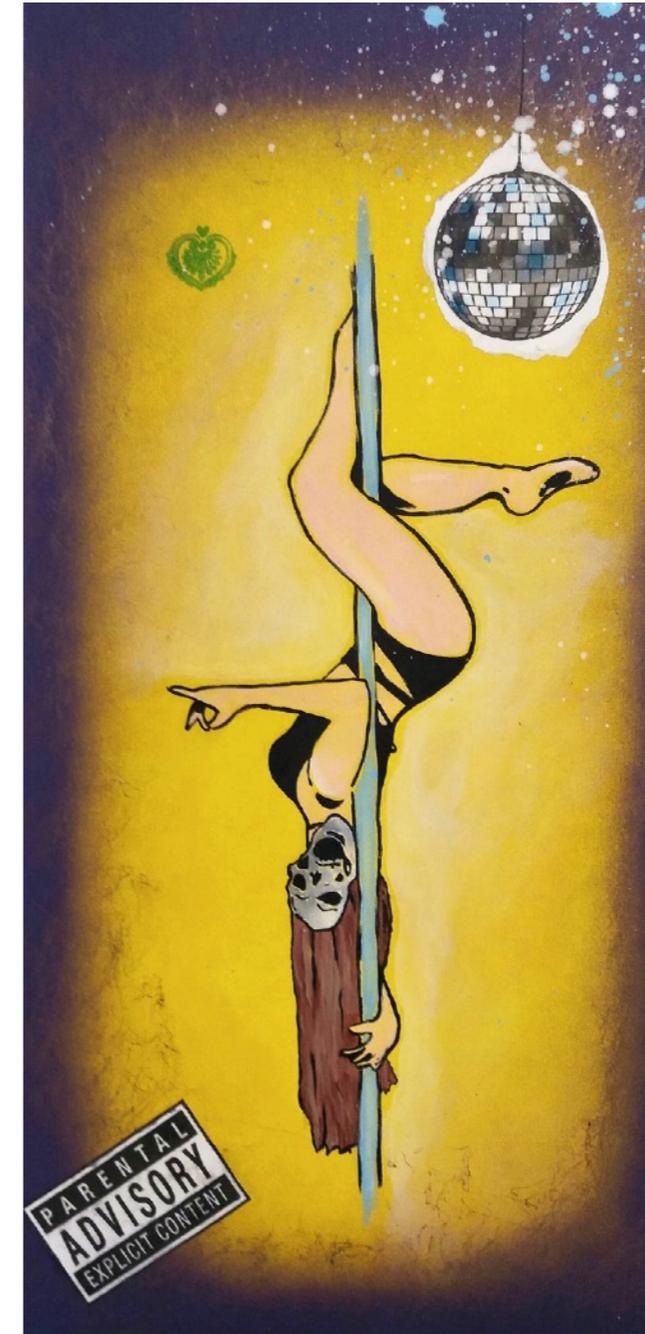
Sometimes in the morning I hear a music title on the radio that reminds me of situations from times past and that does not leave me throughout the day. Then I often think to myself, "This is part of the soundtrack of your life." I feel the same way about Malte Sonnenfeld's paintings. They evoke memories, memories of those born in the 1960s. That's what makes them so valuable. The American writer Kurt Vonnegut, whose novel *Breakfast of Champions* was the inspiration for the title of a Malte Sonnenfeld painting, commented on this phenomenon in a 1968 conversation:

"It's certainly not bad just to be a terrific writer for your own generation... To achieve that is something!" He cited Ernest Hemingway as an example of such an author, "because he inspired his contemporaries and he did it well!" Vonnegut's interlocutor pointed out that he, Vonnegut, is read by all ages, however: "It may have to do with the writing itself, Kurt. It may have to do with the subjects..."

Malte Sonnenfeld has expanded his artistic spectrum. The "Icons" and "Stills" series (works inspired by 17th-century Dutch still lifes) were followed by "Neo Pop meets policy," "Street art for your home," "Pellworm," "International Proverbs" and "Famous first words." Increasingly, he also thinks about purely painterly tasks. His art becomes more differentiated. He has long since left the subject areas of his own generation. Nothing more stands in the way of international recognition.

The aforementioned Takeshi Kitano began his career as a comedian and had achieved cult status far beyond Japan's borders in the 1980s with his madcap game show "Takeshi's Castle". When he suddenly came to the public eye with serious feature films as a director and actor, audiences were disconcerted. A whiff of such irritation may also have been exuded by Michael Koslar - a man of words known from television and the stage - when he presented the painter Malte Sonnenfeld and his paintings, which had already matured from the start.

"Why a pseudonym?" he wrote in the introductory text of his first exhibition catalog. "Pseudonym is actually the wrong term. More like a second identity."



I see far more than just two identities and observe with admiration how he reconciles the loving family man, (with his wife from Finland, which is also an artist) the TV announcer, showmaster, author, entertainer and painter - a professional, in fact. Bravo, Malte! Bravo, Michael!

**About Dr. Axel Wendelberger:** After studying art history and aesthetics, Axel Wendelberger worked for eight years as a curator at various museums before becoming a freelance editor and graphic designer and art historian in the publishing industry in 1992.

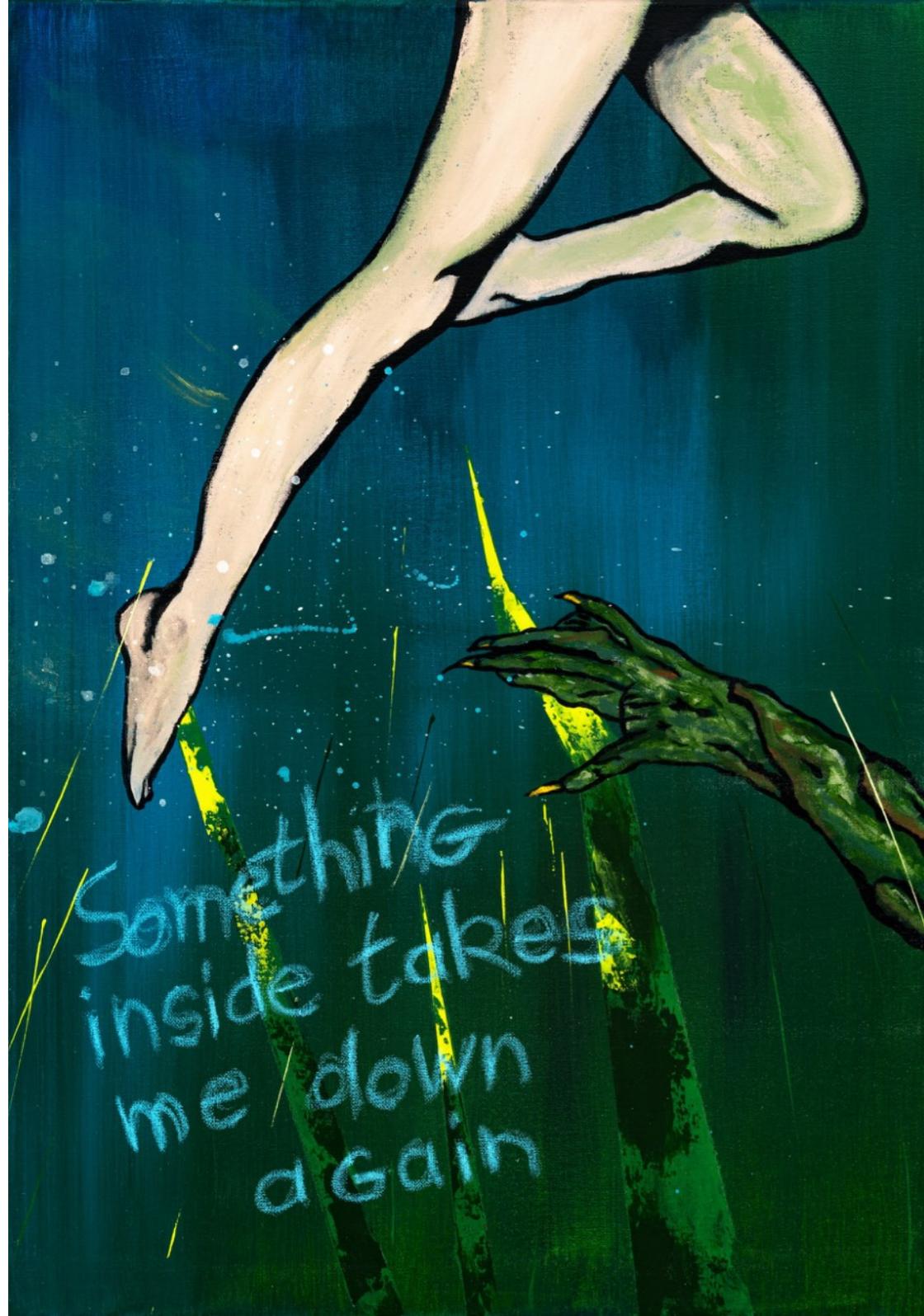
„Dead can dance“

acrylic, mixed media, 50cm x 100cm



# LA PESTE

acrylic, mixed media, 120cm x 80cm



**„Der Griff des Wassermannes  
oder Something inside takes  
me down again“**

**acrylic, mixed media,**

**60cm x 80cm**



**„Tu Perdi“**

**acrylic, mixed media,**

**100cm x 120cm**

# AIRFIX PEACE ACTIVISTS

acrylic, mixed media, 100cm x 140cm



# WHAT DOES POP ART MEAN HERE?

by Andreas Cordes

When people talk or write about the works of Malte Sonnenfeld, the term Pop Art comes up again and again in order to trace his stylistic roots and his models in terms of content. He is also often compared with the artist Sigmar Polke with the remark that both draw on the formal characteristics of this art movement.

Yet Sigmar Polke saw himself more as a critical German answer to American Pop Art and coined the term "Capitalist Realism" as early as 1963, together with Konrad Lueg and Gerhard Richter. An allusion to the official GDR designation "Socialist Realism" as the predominant art movement there. What connected these artists to Pop Art was less a bond over formal features than a critical view of mass consumption and unquestioning optimism about progress.

What does all this have to do with Malte Sonnenfeld's art?

If we look closely, quite a lot: for just as little as Sigmar Polke's works, his art cannot be reduced exclusively to stylistic aspects or variations on the meaning of Pop Art in terms of content. The reference to the artist's preference for comics also falls short of a characteristic classification.

Rather, Malte Sonnenfeld seems to have worked out his painting style in the artistic

confrontation with the works of Sigmar Polke. Thus, as with Polke, his multi-layered works encompass a broad spectrum in the use of different painting techniques and painterly means of expression: in the ambivalent play of transparency and opacity, in the setting of contours between the development of form and dissolution, or in the contrasting interplay of spherical pictorial background and painterly brushwork, his pictorial worlds appear like fragments put together at random, which repeatedly condense into multi-layered ensembles.

This impression is reinforced by the technical artifice of collage, with which the spectrum in Malte Sonnenfeld's mode of expression extends far beyond classical painting. Thus, the pictorial grounds in his works are often covered with wallpaper, product packaging, or excerpts from poems and quotations on paper. A technique that makes us think not only of Sigmar Polke, but also of Nouveau Réalisme, which emerged as a European parallel phenomenon to Pop Art in the early 1960s. In particular, the painterly treatment of the image carrier, consisting of the most subtle layers of color and vehement brushstrokes, is sometimes reminiscent of the pictorial



„Pharao der Postmoderne“

acrylic, mixed media,

90cm x 70cm



„MAARE“ acrylic, mixed media, 100cm x 100cm

quality of the poster tear-off pictures of the French artist Jacques Villeglé, a co-founder of New Realism.

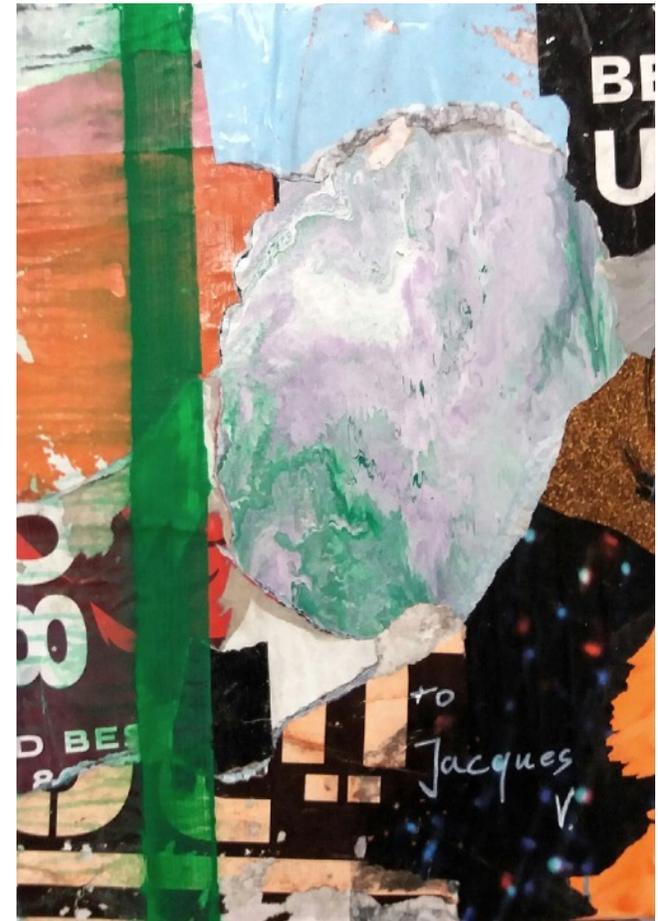
The quintessence From all these formal derivations in the pictorial design, Malte Sonnenfeld has developed his very own, very personal as well as complex and heterogeneous style. With his seemingly infinite cosmos of signs, his pictorial spaces appear to us more like search images or pictorial puzzles that allow the viewer to open up ever new spaces of memory.

Thus, Malte Sonnenfeld's works are neither to be understood as a pure examination of the consumerism of the masses, as in Pop Art, nor can they be interpreted as mere criticism of mass culture, despite the use of strongly ironic elements, as in Sigmar Polke's work. Nor do his works seek to close a gap between art and life, as the representatives of Nouveau Réalisme or Neodada demanded in their elitist-seeming "revolution of the everyday."

Rather, the artist brings icons from culture and politics as well as motifs, symbols, and signals from our world of media consumption and commodities into multifaceted contexts that tell his view of the world, but without moralizing or lecturing. With his typical and unmistakable wink, Malte Sonnenfeld keeps the viewer guessing, participating, and challenges us to perceive and recognize the images of the everyday cultural and media world as the collective memory of a real existing parallel world. Or, to conclude in the words of Pierre Restany, who announced the end of Nouveau Réalisme in 1963: "In the future,

everyone can draw their own insights from this historical situation and bring their ideas together with the facts."

**Andreas Cordes** studied art history and philosophy in Osnabrück. He is a founding member of the Kunstverein Nordhorn e.V. and works as an art historian.



„Hommage to Jacques Villeglé“

acrylic, mixed media, 50cm x 70cm



„Genius seldom pays“

acrylic, mixed media,

60cm x 80cm



„feelin' strange“

acrylic, mixed media,

40cm x 60cm

SOME LIKE



#PEEP

TO WATCH

**SOME  
LIKE  
TO  
WATCH**



„beuys - phatt“

acrylic, mixed media,

wooden slice,

ca. 33cm x 22,5cm

„des hasen tod“  
acrylic, mixed media,  
wooden canvas,  
48cm x 40cm



**KUNST  
IST  
MEINE  
MASKE**

acrylic, mixed media, 90cm x 60cm





„Tante Eusebia mit Hermelin“

acrylic, mixed media,

60cm x 90cm



„le douanier“

acrylic, mixed media,

wooden canvas,

40cm x 50cm

# PRESS

## MALTE SONNENFELD...

"...by now he is known all over Germany for his colorful, comic-like and cryptic acrylic paintings..." (*Kölnische Rundschau*)

"The high-flyer" (*Aachener Zeitung*) has "made his mark on more than 50 exhibitions and various art fairs." (*Focus online*) and produces "colorful pop art" (*WAZ*) - "but his philosophical and philological insights have also flowed into his pop imagery" (*Weser-Kurier Bremen*).

"Sonnenfeld's work has established him as a new force in the German art world." (*RP*)

"Sonnenfeld is one of the best known German neo-pop artists and is already counted among the important German artists." (*Rhein-Zeitung*) Furthermore, "...art connoisseurs consider (*him...the ed.*) a trailblazer with his Neo Pop Art." (*Rheinischer Spiegel*)

"...by now he is known all over Germany for his colorful, comic-like and cryptic acrylic paintings..." (*Kölnische Rundschau*)

In Germany, Malte Sonnenfeld has firmly established himself in the art scene. Now it's Belgium's turn. Eupen makes the start. (*BRF*)

"The high-flyer" (*Aachener Zeitung*) has "made his mark on more than 50 exhibitions and various art fairs." (*Focus online*) and produces "colorful pop art" (*WAZ*) - "but his philosophical and philological insights have also flowed into his pop imagery" (*Weser-Kurier Bremen*).

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"...art connoisseurs consider (*him...the ed.*) a trailblazer with his Neo Pop Art." (*Rheinischer Spiegel*)

"The Schwabach altar is..one of the largest late Gothic winged altars in Germany. Now a new, no less impressive colorful, albeit secular, exclamation point of art has been added to this imposing church: The painter and artist Malte Sonnenfeld..." (*Blick aktuell*)

"Art with humor, precision and history (...) New works in the country gallery Dellarte in Südarle (...) The drawing card of this fifth summer exhibition represents the Cologne Malte Sonnenfeld." (*Ostfriesischer Kurier*)



"die anthropogene kybernetische mutation der arten"

acrylic, mixed media, 100x100cm



**PAULI  
UND DER  
SCHULDEN-  
BERG**

acryl, mixed-media, 120cm x 100cm

# MALTE SONNENFELD

„...by now he is known all over Germany for his colorful, comic-like and cryptic acrylic paintings...“  
Kölnische Rundschau

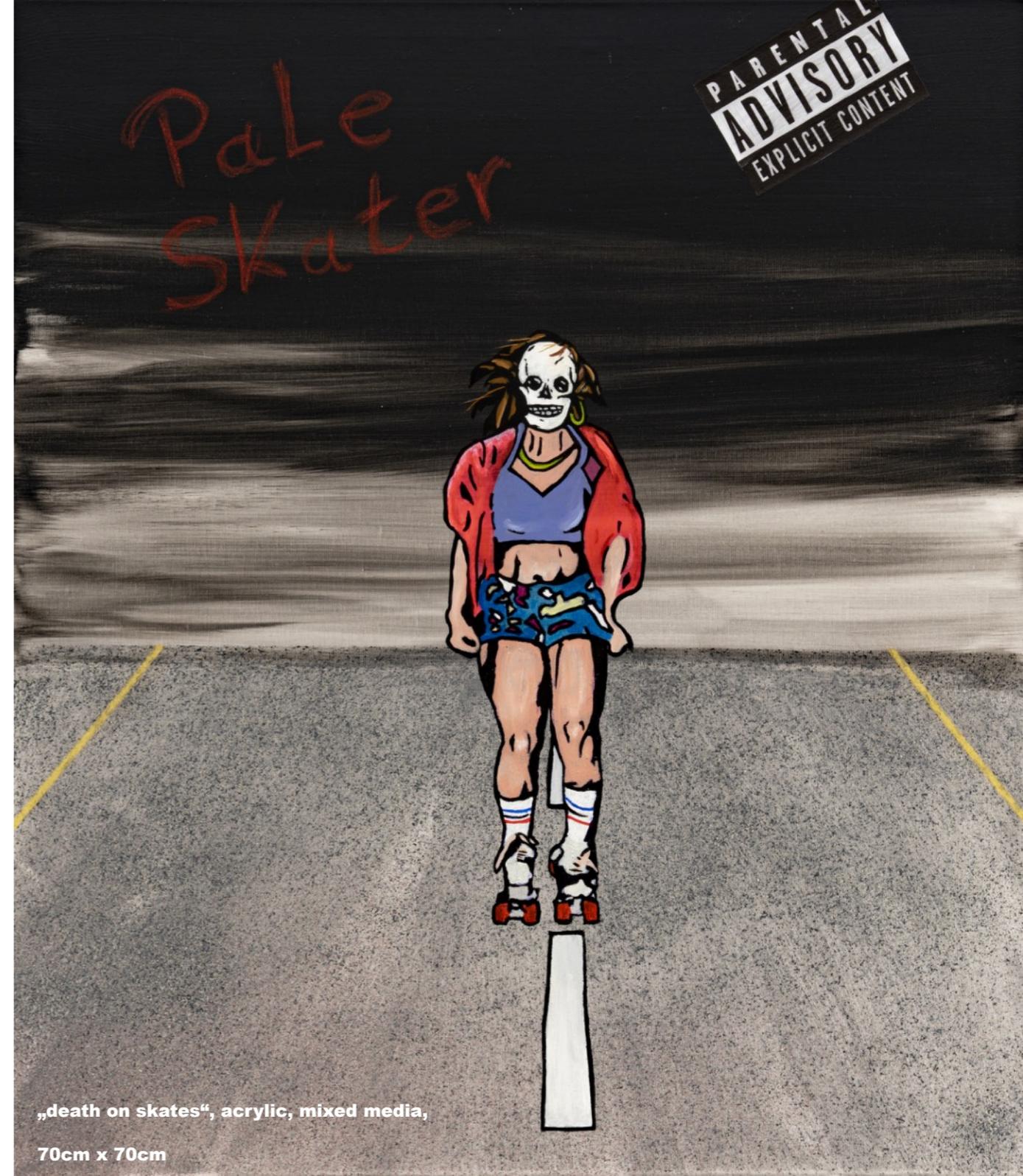


„Sonnenfeld is one of the best known German neo-pop artists“  
Rhein-Zeitung

style: neo pop-art, pop surrealism  
national und international solo- & group exhibitions,  
numerous art fairs, museums; university of cologne,  
artist, painter, studio in unkel/rhine

## Exhibitions (Selection)

- 21 GA "33. KunstTage Rhein-Erft", historische Abtei Brauweiler
- 21 EA Stadtkirche St. Johannes & St. Martin; Schwabach, 12.6. - 18.7.
- 21 EA „Gewächshaus“ Stadt Viersen, Dauerhängung
- 21 EA Galerie Fox, Eupen/Belgien, 22.Mai - 27.6.21
- 21 EA Kanzlei Kniebaum Bocks & Partner, Denkmal Lohmühle, Mönchengladbach, Dauerhängung
- 20 GA Kunstverein KLIO, Linz, „Landschaft in der Kunst/19. - 21. Jhd.“
- 20 EA Gesellschaft der Freunde junger Kunst e.v., Baden-Baden Vernissage 23.8.20
- 20 GA Kunstverein mehrkunst e.V., 1. Koblenzer Kunstsalon, 11.7.-26.7.20
- 19 GA "Festival zeitkritischer Kunst", Kunstverein KLIO, Linz, Stadthalle, 9.11. - 24.11.
- 19 EA "malte sonnenfeld - cooperations", Galerie Eyegenart, Köln
- 19 GA "Unkeler Höfe", Unkel, 31.8./1.9.
- 19 GA "losgelöst"; Q18 im Quartier am Hafen, Köln, Vernissage am 17.1.
- 18 EA Galerie H.O.Schmidt; kunstsalon, Remscheid (Lennep)
- 18 GA Biennale Kunstmomente Rhein-Erft, Schloss Paffendorf, Bergheim
- 17 EA Galerie Kunstmix, "icons & stills - final chapter", Bremen
- 17 GA "29. KunstTage Rhein-Erft", historische Abtei Brauweiler
- 17 EA "kollektive memorabilien", Königswinter, Atelier Meerkatze
- 17 GA "ARTenvielfalt", Bonn, Forschungszentrum CAESAR, 9.4.
- 17 GA Kulturkirche Ost, Köln-Buchforst, 7.4.
- 16 Messe art 'pu:l - 30.9.-3.10., PAN Museum Niederrhein/Emmerich
- 16 EA, Museum zur Zeitgeschichte/Willy-Brandt-Forum, Unkel
- 16 GA Kunstkreis Gräfelting e.V., 22.6., "Männer"
- 16 EA, Galerie Daneben, Köln, 8.4., "icons&stills"
- 16 EA, Flurgalerie Eisenbart, Magdeburg, "icons&stills"
- 15/16 GA, "theRED", Kunsthalle Schaffhausen, Schweiz
- 15 GA, The New Yorker Boyer Foundation, Art in Loco, USA
- 15 GA IMAGETICA - Poesia Visual, Rio de Janeiro/Brasilien
- 15 GA, 4. Revierkunst, Museum Ostwall Dortmund
- 15 EA, Kreishausgalerie Bergheim, 19.4., "icons&stills"



„death on skates“, acrylic, mixed media,

70cm x 70cm