

## **ars viva 2026. Ryan Cullen, Nazanin Noori, and Prateek Vijan present new works at Marta Herford**

**Berlin, February 19, 2026 – The Cultural Committee of German Business and Marta Herford will open the exhibition ars viva 2026 on March 13. Representatives of the press are invited to an exclusive preview the day before. The press conference will take place on Thursday, March 12, 2026, at 11 a.m. at Marta Herford in the Lippold Gallery.**

The exhibition presents the three **ars viva award winners for 2026, Ryan Cullen, Nazanin Noori, and Prateek Vijan**, focusing on a young generation of artists. The contributions, which were developed and selected specifically for the show, comment on cultural, social, and political interrelationships in different and impressive ways.

**Ryan Cullen** addresses political and ideological structures in his paintings and sculptures. In an interplay of surfaces, images, and material presence, the value system of a capitalist present unfolds. **Nazanin Noori** explores the connection between spatial architecture, sculpture, and sound, creating multisensory narratives that combine intercultural poetic and musical sources. **Prateek Vijan** examines who is granted access to which systems and in what way. With his installations, he confronts visitors with situations of exclusion and barriers, which he makes spatially tangible.

Since 1953, the Kulturkreis has awarded the annual *ars viva* prize for visual arts to outstanding young artists under the age of 35 living in Germany. Since then, over 350 artists have been honored, including Rosemarie Trockel, Candida Höfer, Wolfgang Tillmans, Omer Fast, Cemile Sahin, and Sung Tieu. The jury focuses on artistic positions that develop an independent formal language and reflect on social and cultural issues. The *ars viva* prize is sponsored by the **Péter Horváth Foundation**.

The exhibition at **Marta Herford** is the first stop for *ars viva* 2026 and runs from **March 14 to May 25, 2026**. The second exhibition will follow at the end of the year: from December 5, 2026, to February 21, 2027, the artists' works will be on display at the Kunstverein Braunschweig.

### **DATES**

#### **Thursday, March 12, 2026, 11 a.m., press conference**

The press conference will take place in the exhibition in the Lippold Gallery at Marta Herford. The artists will be present and will provide insight into their work. Min-young Jeon (curatorial director, Kulturkreis der deutschen Wirtschaft), Friederike Korfmacher (assistant curator, Marta Herford), and Jana Mareike Lehnert (public relations, Marta Herford) will also be available to answer questions. The press tour will be conducted in English and German.

#### **Friday, March 13, 2026, 7 p.m., opening at the Marta Forum**

With welcoming remarks by Marta Director Kathleen Rahn, Dr. Daniel Teubner (First Deputy Mayor of the Hanseatic City of Herford), and Ulrich Sauerwein (Chair of the Visual Arts Committee, Cultural Committee of German Business). Friederike Korfmacher, Assistant Curator at Marta Herford, will give an introduction to the themes of the exhibition. The Lippold Gallery will be open from 6 p.m. with free admission; Marta art speakers will be available from 6 to 9 p.m. for questions and discussion.

#### **Saturday, March 14, 2026, 2 p.m., Artist Talk**

With Nazanin Noori, Ryan Cullen, and Min-young Jeon (Culture Circle of German Business). The discussion will be moderated by Friederike Korfmacher, assistant curator at Marta Herford.

## THE ARS VIVA 2026 AWARD WINNERS

**Ryan Cullen** (born 1992 in Boston, USA) focuses on the production of images and objects that feature elements of larger political and ideological structures. In a process in which painting and sculpture often overlap, the artist creates images that reflect Western society's tendencies toward self-destruction. Cullen studied at the Städelschule in Frankfurt am Main and at the Cooper Union in New York.

His works have been shown in solo and group exhibitions, including Briefing Room, Brussels; The Meeting, New York; CLEARING, Brooklyn; Etablissement d'en Face, Brussels; Nassauischer Kunstverein, Wiesbaden; Portikus, Frankfurt am Main.

**Nazanin Noori** (born in Wiesbaden in 1991) is an interdisciplinary artist focusing on sound, composition, performance, installation, directing, and text. In her work, Noori explores the fusion of sound, space, sculpture, and post-dramatic poetry, concentrating on atmospheric narratives. Her hypnoacoustic compositions are primarily in the realm of ambient hardcore, but also in the realm of doom electronics.

Her works have been shown at Transmediale, Haus der Kulturen der Welt, EIGEN + ART Lab, CCA Berlin, the Academy of Arts, the CTM Festival, the Kunstmuseum Stuttgart, and the Eye Filmmuseum in Amsterdam, among others. In addition, she has realized two productions at the Maxim Gorki Theater in Berlin.

**Prateek Vijan** (born in 1991 in New Delhi, India) lives and works in Berlin. The starting point for his artistic practice is his personal history, which he understands and reflects upon as a web of political, bureaucratic, and social influences. His work focuses on the arbitrary claims to ownership made by colonial powers, their consolidation in society, and their continuing influence in institutions and their colonial historical structures. Vijan studied in New Delhi and Hamburg. He has received several scholarships, including the working scholarship for visual artists from the Free and Hanseatic City of Hamburg.

His works have been exhibited mainly in Germany, currently at the Kunstverein in Hamburg, in 2024 at the Kunstverein Neue Kunst in Hamburg e. V., in the scholarship exhibition at the Falckenberg Collection, and in 2021 in "Proof of Stake" at the Kunstverein in Hamburg. In 2025, he was represented with "BPA// Exhibition 2025: A place never fully held" at the KW Institute for Contemporary Art. Starting February 20, 2026, the Khoshbakht Gallery in Cologne will show a solo exhibition of his works.

### Catalog

ars viva 2026 was published by DISTANZ Verlag, edited by Min-young Jeon, Kulturkreis der deutschen Wirtschaft. The bilingual book (German/English) presents the works of the three prize winners: Ryan Cullen, Nazanin Noori, and Prateek Vijan. It is supplemented by texts by Nikita Dhawan, Bitsy Knox, Nora O'Murchú, and Skye Arundhati Thomas. Design: Berlin studio Shortnotice. Further information on the catalog can be found at: [ars viva 2026](#)



## PARTNER INSTITUTIONS

### About Marta Herford

With its curved shape, red brick façade, and striking stainless steel roof, Marta Herford, designed by star architect Frank Gehry, is an architectural landmark far beyond the East Westphalia-Lippe region. The internationally oriented museum of contemporary art, with a special focus on architecture and design, offers space for diverse artistic explorations and multisensory art experiences. With a café, event rooms, and an education floor, Marta also creates an open framework for exchange, education, and cultural practice.

### About the Cultural Circle of German Business / Kulturkreis der deutschen Wirtschaft

The Cultural Circle of German Business was founded in 1951 and is the most traditional institution for corporate cultural promotion in Germany. As an independent network of committed companies, it promotes artistic freedom as a central pillar of democracy. For over 70 years, its work has focused on promoting young talent in the fields of architecture, visual arts, literature, and music. Thanks to membership fees and donations, the Cultural Circle has already been able to support numerous artists at the beginning of their careers, including outstanding personalities such as Heinrich Böll, Ingeborg Bachmann, Günter Grass, Georg Baselitz, Sabine Meyer, Katharina Sieverding, Tabea Zimmermann, Rosemarie Trockel, Candida Höfer, Robert Menasse, and Thomas Demand.

### About the Péter Horváth Foundation

The Péter Horváth Foundation serves to promote science, art, and culture, as well as international understanding. Specifically, it focuses on promoting application-oriented research in the field of economics, supporting art and cultural projects, and fostering relations between Germany and Hungary. In all three areas, special emphasis is placed on supporting young talent. The Péter Horváth Foundation was established in 2002 by Univ.-Prof. Dr. Dr. H.c. mult. Péter Horváth (1937-2022). His life was marked by courageous decisions, infectious passion, and entrepreneurial spirit. His life's work is being continued by the Péter Horváth Foundation.

#### Further information is available at:

<https://arsviva.kulturkreis.eu>

#### Press photos:

<https://www.kulturkreis.eu/presse/>

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