Capitain Petzel

Leyla Yenirce
Core
30 October – 19 December 2026

Capitain Petzel is pleased to present *Core*, Leyla Yenirce's second solo exhibition at the gallery. Alongside two large-scale paintings from her series *Chor der Frauen* (women's choir), which were first shown in 2026 in the exhibition Werdegang (pathway) at Landesmuseum Oldenburg, the exhibition features new works and a sound installation.

The title *Core* functions as a linguistic play on words. The English term for "Kern" (core) sounds like the German word "Chor" (choir), thus articulating the exhibition's central premise: the act of raising and searching for one's own voice. In Yenirce's work, this voice manifests itself not through vowels or linguistic codes, but through wild painterly gestures and electronically generated sound.

Inspired by a quote from painter Charlotte Salomon's seminal work *Leben? oder Theater?* (*Life? or Theatre?*) — "The gold in the throat – the expression of the soul" — Yenirce uses screen printing in her two large-scale paintings to stage a fictional women's choir. It brings together companions from the artist's life and iconic figures from music, art history, and politics: Christiane Haselier, the artist's German teacher, who supported her along her path in life; Helîn Bölek, a Kurdish musician who went on hunger strike and eventually died in protest against a ban on performing; and Leyla Zana, who tirelessly advocated for the rights of Kurds in Turkey through her political work and was imprisoned for a decade as a result. The screen-printed portraits are repeated and overlaid with gestural traces of paint, entering a shared, polyphonic pictorial space in which individual points of reference and collective memory intertwine.

The new works focus on gold, the precious metal that plays a fundamental role in Kurdish culture as a traditional wedding dowry and is often passed down across generations and borders. This finds expression in her works. Photographs of gold jewelry — broad collars, rounded bracelets, and delicate coin necklaces — emerge as islands of imagery from the multilayered, intense, and vibrant fields of color. At times buried beneath paint, they assert their clear contours elsewhere.

The eponymous sound installation *Core* can be heard in the gallery's lower level. For the composition, Yenirce used two analog Korg synthesizers: one on loan, the other a gift. In the process of composing, she found her own artistic voice through a deliberate act of transgression using sound. The work articulates an overwhelming feeling, which the artist describes as follows: "The moment I first connected a distortion pedal to a synthesizer and produced noise, I was profoundly overwhelmed. I had found a medium through which to express myself." For Yenirce, the five-minute, visceral composition, interrupted by moments of silence, functions much like an urgent painterly gesture: brush or keyboard, both serve equally as means of creating through movement.

Leyla Yenirce (b. 1992, Qubîn, Kurdistan) lives and works in Berlin. She is a recipient of the 2026 Finkenwerder Art Prize, the 2024 Berlin Art Prize, and the 2023 ars viva Prize. Yenirce has participated in exhibitions Landesmuseum Kunst & Kultur Oldenburg; Museum Brandhorst, Munich; Haus der Kunst, Munich; Museum Folkwang, Essen; Deichtorhallen / Sammlung Falckenberg, Hamburg; Kunstmuseum Magdeburg; Mudam Luxembourg; and Galerie für Zeitgenössische Kunst Leipzig, among others.
Her work is held in the collections of Mudam Luxembourg; the Detroit Institute of Arts Museum; Kunstmuseum Magdeburg; Landesmuseum Kunst & Kultur Oldenburg; and Kistefos Museum, Norway.

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