

GALLERI NICOLAI WALLNER

Cornelia Baltes

The Moon, Slightly Late
October 9 – December 23, 2026

Galleri Nicolai Wallner is pleased to present *The Moon, Slightly Late*, a solo exhibition of new works by Cornelia Baltes.

As the audience enters the exhibition, they step into a scene already in motion. Baltes' paintings form a kind of cosmic stage, populated by characters whose identities remain just out of reach. Something quietly absurd appears to be unfolding, though what set it in motion, and where it is heading, are never revealed. Each work can be read on its own terms or as part of a larger exchange, and the relations between them, orchestrated carefully by the artist, shift with each viewing.

The logic of Baltes' work skirts past direct symbolism or narrative, expressing something more subtle and intuitive. In *The Moon, Slightly Late*, discs recur throughout the new works, in pale pink, orange, and black, suspended somewhere between celestial body and botanical flesh. Around them, airbrushed gradients drift from saturated colour into raw canvas. Baltes sets dense, highly pigmented black strokes against these soft fields of colour. They lean, dangle, and prop one another up. In one work, an electric purple folds over a black support. Stalks crowd beneath a scatter of stars, their tips frayed like cut stems. Dark trunks rise beneath blue canopies as the sky shifts from red to green. A black, boxy figure impedes the foreground of a darkly green scene.

In her works, playful images come from an extensive process of looking and thinking, pondering and turning over, images flipped around, turned inside out and upside down over and over again. The apparent easiness of her works is a performance of the painting, a black box of innumerable layers and perfected techniques. This effortful irony works to illustrate the act of seeing itself – a process rarely as straightforward as it feels. The eye scans, the mind fills in what is missing, and memory and expectation shape what we take to be in front of us. Baltes' paintings make a play on this process, interrupting its easy flow. Remembered fragments of her surroundings are pared back and enlarged until they tip between the recognisable and the abstract, the particular and the metaphorical. Reducing an image to its essentials sharpens our attention rather than diminishing it.

Baltes' work, charged with a carbonated energy, invites a playful reassessment of the everyday, where the incidental can take centre stage.

Cornelia Baltes (b. 1978, Germany) lives and works in Berlin. In 2011 she earned an MFA from the Slade School of Fine Art, London; Baltes has presented her work in solo exhibitions at Fuhrwerkswaage, Cologne (DE), Andréhn-Schiptjenko, Paris (FR), Chapter Arts Centre, Cardiff (UK), rodolphe janssen, Brussels (BE), Northern Gallery for Contemporary Art, Sunderland (UK), and Kunstverein Ulm (DE), among others. She has also presented her work internationally in exhibitions at Hamburger Kunsthalle (DE), Kunsthalle Nürnberg (DE), the 7th Edition of Contemporary Sculpture Fulmer, Slough (UK), Deichtorhallen, Hamburg (DE), the Vestfossen Kunstlaboratorium (NO), Kunstmuseum Bonn (DE), and many more.