

Special VIDEO WINDOW

NICOLE BACHMANN & JOHANNA KOTLARIS

MOVING WATER, BODIES & SOULS

Festivalkino Cinema Z3

Friday, 22 May 2026, 19:30, incl. Q&A in the presence of the artists

Wednesday, 27 May 2026, 21:15

Introduction

VIDEO WINDOW presents a program entitled *Moving Water, Bodies & Souls*, featuring one recent work each by Swiss artists Nicole Bachmann and Johanna Kotlaris. The works are very different in form and content: a collage-like composition of short scenes by three performers exploring the theme of migration, followed by a mythological epic about a fictional heroine in the genre of a musical film. Yet they share interesting connections, beginning with the presence of the fluid element of water, which is already evident in the titles: *There are Tides in the Body* and *Humere*.

Both artists employ the universal imagery and symbolism of water to express physical and emotional states. Furthermore, they engage in a poetic interplay of image, language, voice, sound, and music. Their work is grounded in a political self-understanding by feminist approaches and perspectives. From this foundation, they reflect on social order and power structures, norms and boundaries, social community and individuality.

Synopses

Nicole Bachmann, *There are tides in the body*, 2024

Video HD, colour, sound, E/g, single-channel, 17:50 min., 16:9

The work oscillates between two locations in England: Dungeness Beach in the county of Kent on the English Channel, opposite Calais, and the city of Coventry, situated in the industrial West Midlands with a long tradition of immigration. Three women perform a series of scenes on the beach and in the middle of iconic housing architecture, a social housing experiment from the 1960s. They combine expressive physical gestures with the fragmentary articulation of existential questions in a spoken word style. In harmony with the waves, the short sequences evoke associations of turbulent inner worlds – in keeping with the title, a quotation from Virginia Woolf's *Mrs Dalloway* (1925).

Johanna Kotlaris, *Humere*, 2024

Video HD, colour, sound, E/e, single-channel, 56 min., 16:9

The musical film tells the story of Humere, which resembles an allegorical narrative of redemption whilst remaining open to interpretation. The artist embodies the fictional heroine, a zombie woman with a fixed gaze and pale skin, wounded and constantly wet, in keeping with the meaning of her name. Humere sets off in Berlin and passes through a series of stages on her odyssey-like journey through the city. She experiences cathartic encounters with emotions, violence and traumas, until she reaches the lake where she ends up – and swims away alone. The narrative flow is carried by the protagonist's lyrical pop songs, which simultaneously create a distance from the drama and space for reflection.

Biographies

Nicole Bachmann (born 1973, Zurich) lives between Zurich and London. Studies: 2003–2007 Diploma Fine Arts, Zurich University of the Arts; 2008–2010 MA Fine Arts, Goldsmiths College, London. She works with text, video, sound, installation and performance. A special focus lies on language and the collaborative project *Dears, Write*, which has been inviting people to write together since 2020. Her work has received attention and awards, nationally and internationally.
nicolebachmann.net

Johanna Kotlaris (born 1988, Schaffhausen) lives between Zurich, Ticino and Berlin. Studies: 2009–2011 BA Visual Communication, Zurich University of the Arts; 2011–2013, BA Graphic Design, Gerrit Rietveld Academie, Amsterdam; 2016–2018 MA Fine Arts, Piet Zwart Institute, Rotterdam. She works with performance, video, film, installation, sculpture, painting, music and text. Her work has received attention and awards, nationally and internationally. The film *Humere* served as the centrepiece of the eponymous exhibition at MASI in Lugano (2024 Manor Art Prize in Ticino), accompanied by a publication.
johannakotlaris.com

VIDEO WINDOW functions as a nomadic platform with the aim of discursively presenting current video art at home and abroad. This takes place in various formats such as individual screenings, thematic series and programs or exhibitions, accompanied by artists' talks. The platform has been run by Bruno Z'Graggen, Zurich, since 2012. Since 2020, VIDEO WINDOW provides yearly a program for Videoex.
brunozagraggen.ch

Curated by Bruno Z'Graggen, VIDEO WINDOW