

About Ulrich Pester

Ulrich Pester (b. 1980, Hanover, Germany) is a painter and multidisciplinary artist whose practice resists fixed methods or styles, unfolding through layering, process, and playful experimentation. Drawing from the banalities of daily life—such as kitchen utensils, clothing patterns, and street observations—his works transform the familiar into uncanny compositions that hover between figuration and abstraction. Employing trompe-l'œil effects, irony, and art-historical references, Pester questions the logic of images and the act of painting itself.

He studied graphic design and fine arts at the Hochschule für Bildende Künste (HBK) Braunschweig, where he became a master student of Walter Dahn. He later returned to HBK as a lecturer, teaching painting and overseeing foundational studies in the discipline. His academic grounding informs a practice that engages the semiotics of painting and the tension between material presence, language, and narrative.

Pester's work has been exhibited widely in Europe and beyond, with solo exhibitions at Haus Mödrath (Kerpen), Kunsthalle Nuremberg, Sommer Contemporary Art (Tel Aviv), DEAR FUTURE ME (Brussels), and Thomas Rehbein Gallery (Cologne and Brussels). His group exhibitions include presentations at Sprüth Magers (Berlin), Marta Herford, Kunsthalle Recklinghausen, Bonner Kunstverein, Temporary Gallery Cologne, and Museum van Bommel van Dam (Venlo).

He has been awarded the Marianne Defet Painting Scholarship (Nuremberg, 2012) and the Advancement Award for Fine Arts from the Federal Ministry of Education and Research (2009). Pester lives and works in Cologne.



Ulrich Pester



CV

Education

2004

Studied Fine Arts, Hochschule für Bildende Künste (HBK), Braunschweig, Germany

2002

Studied Graphic Design, Hochschule für Bildende Künste (HBK), Braunschweig, Germany
Master student of Walter Dahn

Teaching

Lecturer, Painting Class (substitute for Walter Dahn), HBK, Braunschweig
Administration of Professorship: Basic Studies in Painting, HBK, Braunschweig

Scholarships & Awards

2012

Marianne Defet Painting Scholarship, Nuremberg

2009

Advancement Award for Fine Arts, Federal Ministry of Education and Research

Solo Exhibitions

2025

Let the Distance Keep Us Together, Haus Mödrath, Kerpen

2024

Grüße zurück, Thomas Rehbein Gallery, Cologne
Smiles for an unfinished picture, Micro Galerie, Cologne

2022

heizen, Thomas Rehbein Gallery, Cologne

2018

heute afk, Thomas Rehbein Gallery, Cologne

2017

Kitchen Semiotics, Sommer Contemporary Art, Tel Aviv

2016

Ulrich Pester – Café & Schnaps, DEAR FUTURE ME, Brussels
Ulrich Pester, Thomas Rehbein Gallery, Cologne
I was told there'd be a cake, Thomas Rehbein Gallery, Brussels
Goodbye Old Paint, Kunsthalle Nuremberg
Erde, Du Liebe, Ich Will, Thomas Rehbein Gallery, Cologne
Peanuts, Remscheid City Gallery, Remscheid
Even the Good Wood Gone, Künstlerverein Malkasten, Düsseldorf
Hidden Tracks, Strange Fruits, Purple Skies, Thomas Rehbein Gallery, Cologne

CV

Group Exhibitions

2024

Dear Future Me, Thomas Rehbein Gallery, Cologne

2023

Does the moon exist when no one is looking?, Thomas Rehbein Gallery, Cologne

2020

Hunger for Pictures, Thomas Rehbein Gallery, Cologne

Sculpturale Annuale / la prima, Conzenhof, Cologne

Secret of Things. Paintings, Kunsthalle Recklinghausen

Secret of Things. Paintings, Beck & Eggeling, Düsseldorf

Green II, Klaus Gerit Friese Gallery, Berlin

Exhibition of Marianne Defet Painting Scholarship Recipients, Kunsthalle Nuremberg

2015

salondergegenwart 2015, Hamburg

Oh, of course, you were berry picking, DREI, Cologne

The Casualness of Things, Overbeck Gesellschaft Kunstverein Lübeck

2014Sic, Presidential Building, New Frankfurt School Campus, Frankfurt

I Can't See Anyone Else Smiling In Here, DREI, Cologne

On View, Stalke Galleri, Kirke Saaby (DK)

2013

Corridor Plateau IV, The Northern Charter, Newcastle (UK)

Ulrich Pester. Ralph Schuster. Anna Virnich, Sprüth Magers, Berlin

VISIONS – Atmospheres of Change, Marta Herford

17/13 – Art Group, Cologne

Wet Hands, Thomas Rehbein Gallery, Cologne

2012

CURT, Galerie Vom Zufall & Vom Glück, Hanover

2011Panorama 2011 – Beautiful Perceptions, Temporary Gallery, Cologne

Five Friends in Zurich, SCHAU ORT, Zurich (CH)

Here Comes Curt, Ringstube, Mainz

2010

ALL IN TOGETHER NOW, Mai 36 Galerie, Zurich (CH)

Van Bommel Van Dam Prijs, Museum van Bommel Van Dam, Venlo (NL)

Fred Rapid GLASSWORKS, ZERO FOLD, Cologne

La Bonne Horse II – Class Walter Dahn, Bonner Kunstverein

2009

La Bonne Horse I – Class Walter Dahn, Municipal Gallery Delmenhorst

19th Federal Competition. Art students exhibit their work, Bundeskunsthalle, Bonn

2008

We Are Ugly But We Have The Music, Galerie Michael Janssen, Berlin

2000 Lightyears from home, HBK Braunschweig

2007

Young Colleagues, Association for Original Etching Munich, Munich

2006

Platform II, Kunstverein Hannover