

Call for entries for a group exhibition in 2026

To visual artists working in the fields of printmaking, photography, artificial intelligence, painting and sculpture

The three-phase art project 'Arising – Reinterpretations' invites visual artists to engage with the following three biblical narratives, which tell of human action, divine intervention and the search for guidance, in terms of both content and design.

- **Judith shows the head of Holofernes** – Judith 13:15–16
- **The Tower of Babel** – Genesis 11 and
- **The sending out of the dove (Noah's Ark)** – Genesis 8
- **Wild Card** – upon request, a **maximum of one** other Bible passage/illustration is possible. Please provide detailed reasons for your request.

The Bible passages and accompanying illustrations by for example Gustave Doré (see images on the right) show in different ways how humans deal with power, trust, hubris, technology and hope, among other things.

In all three passages, it appears as if human action has its limits and ultimately depends on the will or order of a higher power:

- **Basic theme of violence/eros:** Judith trusts in God when she commits her bloody deed and, through her courage and faith, becomes an instrument of Israel's salvation.
- **Basic theme of hubris/technology:** In the 'Tower of Babel', human arrogance fails due to its excessiveness and disregard for divine boundaries.
- **Basic theme of hope:** After the destruction caused by the flood, Noah experiences a divine new beginning – the dove as a symbol of peace and hope.

But how do we read these millennia-old stories today? Are their messages still understandable – or how can they be reinterpreted today? Has humanity really evolved through technological, social and scientific progress, or does its basic psychological structure – between the pursuit of power, greed, fear, faith and hope – remain essentially the same?

Possible guiding questions for artistic exploration

- Can humans act independently and solve the problems of their time without a 'higher authority'?
- Will emerging 'Artificial intelligence' become a new form of God or problem solver – or does it reflect human excess, for example?
- What significance does 'violence' have in our present day: as an act of liberation, resistance or as an expression of, for example, powerlessness or complacency?
- How do 'new beginnings', 'failure' and 'redemption' manifest themselves in today's social, ecological or personal contexts?

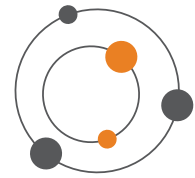
The aim of the art project is to use contemporary artistic positions to open up new perspectives on old narratives and their corresponding consequences for action – and to revive the dialogue between myth, faith and progress.

Application for participation – CV and artwork

ART-isotope is looking for approximately twelve artists (preferably with many years of experience) who are active in the art market – preferably from German-speaking countries or neighbouring Eastern European countries – **who are dedicated to these three themes.**

A maximum of two works per artist (large formats on request) from the fields of printmaking, photography, painting and sculpture are desired. **The use of artificial intelligence is permitted – but must be documented.** Submitted artworks should generally be suitable for shipment by parcel service or transported by the artists themselves.

Please submit your application with your CV and a brief outline of your project ideas by the end of 2025. Further details will follow – the exhibition is scheduled to begin in April 2026.



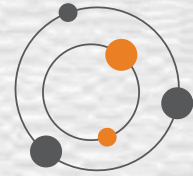
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Accompanying text for Edition 1 (continued)

Judith and the Head of Holofernes – On Power, Seduction and the Symbolism of Resistance

The story of Judith is one of the most radical and complex narratives in the Bible. She is not a gentle saint who acts in quiet humility, but a woman who, emerging from darkness, makes a decision that changes the order of her world. In a night full of tension and silence, she crosses every boundary set for a woman of her time. She adorns herself, seduces the enemy commander Holofernes – and beheads him in his sleep. Later, she returns to her city of Bethulia and shows the people the severed head as a sign of liberation. **An act that both saves and disturbs, redeems and defiles.**

This story is a parable about the power of the weak and the ambivalence of violence. Judith's actions defy any simple moral framework. She kills not out of revenge, but out of necessity, not in the heat of the moment, but with clear consciousness. Her seduction is not a frivolous game, but a strategy – a staging of intimacy to gain power. Seduction and decapitation are two parts of the same act: only through one does the other become possible. Here, beauty is not the antithesis of violence, but its tool.

It is precisely this combination of Eros and Thanatos – seduction and destruction – that makes the story so modern. It points to a deep human tension: that good cannot be achieved without violence, liberation without destruction. In an age that likes to sort its conflicts morally, Judith's actions force us to recognise that salvation sometimes comes through transgression – and that power takes many forms, not always as oppression, sometimes also as deception.

From a philosophical point of view, Judith stands at the threshold between divine mission and human freedom. She acts in the name of God, but she decides alone. Her courage is an act of faith, but also of autonomy. She does not rely on miracles, but on her mind, her body, her determination. **In doing so, she embodies a religious ethic of action – the idea that faith is not revealed in waiting, but in acting.**

When she finally raises Holofernes' head before the people, her private act becomes public truth. The severed head is not merely a sign of victory, but a symbol of the reversal of power. The woman who quietly killed in the night now steps before the community as the herald of the new state of affairs. Her gesture is ritualistic – almost priestly. She shows the enemy's head not as a trophy, but as proof that the unthinkable has happened: that the weak have defeated the strong.

But this display also has a **second, modern interpretation. It reflects the relationship between truth and staging, between deed and representation.** In a world where power often arises through visibility – through media, images, symbols – Judith's gesture seems astonishingly contemporary. Holofernes' head becomes a message, an image, a narrative that continues beyond the deed itself. She secures victory not only through murder, but through its presentation. Judith understands that power needs communication.

From a sociological perspective, one could say that Judith deprives the male-dominated system of its symbolic power. She reverses the relationship – the male body, which otherwise exercises violence, becomes the object. The female subject becomes active, no longer an observer but an actor. Judith thus becomes an early figure of female self-empowerment, but also the embodiment of the ambivalence inherent in every act of liberation. Her deed remains shocking because it reveals the paradox that liberation is often associated with guilt.

And yet this story is not only about gender or power, but about the deeper question of how justice can take shape in an unjust world. Judith represents that rare form of courage that grows not from strength but from faith – from the certainty that action is necessary, even if it appears morally impure. She combines opposites: piety and cunning, beauty and violence, guilt and redemption. >>>

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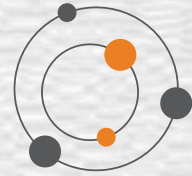


Gustav Doré

Judith and Holofernes • Jud. 13, 10

Judith shows the head of Holofernes • Jud. 13, 15–20

The illustrations are taken from the DIE HEILIGE SCHRIFT (Holy Scriptures), translated into German by D. Martin Luther, Volume Two, Fourth Edition, Deutsche Verlags-Anstalt, Stuttgart/Germany.



Accompanying text for Edition 1 (continued)

Translation by Deepl.com on 22 October 2025

Today, at a time when power relations have become more subtle – in the media, in the economy, in the digital world – Judith's deed remains a mirror. It shows that power always shifts when people refuse to remain victims. That faith does not mean obedience, but responsibility. And that what we condemn as violence can sometimes be the last resort for liberation.

When Judith shows Holofernes' head, she shows more than a gruesome piece of evidence. She shows the face of overcoming – the end of fear. Her gesture is directed not only at the people of Bethulia, but at all of us: she asks what heads we symbolically hold aloft today – what truths, what victories, what sacrifices we publicly display in order to overcome our own powerlessness.

Perhaps this is the contemporary significance of this ancient story: that it teaches us to endure the dialectic of violence and redemption, to see beauty and cruelty side by side, and indeed to recognise in a single woman a symbol of the eternal struggle between power and freedom. Judith does not remain in myth; she returns to our time – as both a warning and a possibility.

Short text for the press

Judith shows the head of Holofernes – Power, Faith, Liberation

The biblical Judith stands between beauty and violence, faith and action. With courage, cunning and divine trust, she seduces the general Holofernes – and beheads him in his sleep. But the real power of her action lies not in the bloody deed itself, but in the moment when she raises the head of the defeated man before the people: an act of liberation and recognition of power at the same time.

Judith's story remains relevant today because it reveals the tension between faith, autonomy and moral responsibility. She acts where others hesitate, crosses boundaries and transforms powerlessness into the ability to act. Her deed shows that justice never comes without risk – and that power arises not only through violence, but also through awareness.

Thus Judith becomes a timeless figure of human self-empowerment – and her raised sign a symbol of victory that still unsettles and liberates today.

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Gustav Doré • Judith shows the head of Holofernes • Jud. 13, 15–20

The illustration is taken from the DIE HEILIGE SCHRIFT (Holy Scriptures), translated into German by D. Martin Luther, Volume Two, Fourth Edition, Deutsche Verlags-Anstalt, Stuttgart/Germany.



Accompanying text for Edition 2: 'The Tower of Babel'

Translation by Deepl.com on 21 October 2025

The digital Tower of Babel – On hubris, language and the distraction of the present

The ancient tale of the Tower of Babel is one of the most powerful metaphors for human hubris. In Genesis, humans build a city and a tower 'whose top reaches to the heavens'. They want to make a name for themselves, to immortalise themselves – and in this pursuit, they cross a line. God confuses their language, and the work remains unfinished. What began as an attempt at unity ends in dispersion.

Today, in the age of digital networking, this story seems to have taken on a new form. We, too, are building a tower, larger and more invisible than ever before: the tower of the internet, social media, global data streams.

Once again, humanity is attempting to connect heaven and earth – this time through technology, communication and constant presence. And once again, the longing for unity is turning into a new form of confusion.

The 'network' was supposed to connect humanity, overcome boundaries and enable understanding. But as everything has become sayable, visible and shareable, language threatens to lose its meaning. We communicate incessantly, but understanding is becoming increasingly difficult. Words flow incessantly, but they rarely resonate. The philosopher Byung-Chul Han describes this paradoxical situation **as a state of total communication and simultaneous speechlessness – everything is shared, but nothing is really understood.**

The digital world resembles a new Babel, in which it is not God **but we ourselves who confuse language.** Every community, every platform, every algorithmic filter bubble speaks its own dialect. Memes, hashtags and forms of irony become the codes of a culture that talks constantly but only hears itself. Sociology calls this the segmentation of the public sphere – the disintegration of the shared world into countless sub-spaces. **What was once divine confusion of languages is now the result of our own technical and social dynamics.**

The old brick tower is becoming a tower of data. But the driving force remains the same: human hubris, which believes that all knowledge, every opinion and every identity can be united in one all-encompassing system. Just as the people of Babel wanted to reach the heavens, **we strive for digital omnipresence – for visibility, influence, fame. Everyone wants to 'make a name for themselves'.** Language, once a tool for encounter, becomes a currency of attention.

And so the old lesson repeats itself: the more we communicate, the less we understand each other. **The algorithms that are supposed to connect us actually scatter us – and with that scattering, we lose the ability to listen to each other.** Humankind becomes the inhabitant of a new Tower of Babel, where everyone speaks at once, but no one understands what the other is saying.

Yet in this modern confusion there is also a trace of grace. Perhaps the dispersion of Babel was never merely punishment, but also protection: a divine intervention that reminded humans that no language, no technology and no tower can force heaven. The diversity of voices brings not only division, but also possibility. It forces us to relearn what language really is – not a means to power, but a space for encounter.

When we look at the digital Babel through the eyes of the present, it becomes clear that the real danger lies not in the multitude of voices, but in the loss of shared meaning. We have the ability to say anything, but hardly any patience to listen. We are everywhere at once – and nowhere at home. The dispersion of Babel has become the dispersion of our attention.



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Gustav Doré • Der Thurmbau zu Babel • 1. Mos. 11,4

The illustration is taken from the DIE HEILIGE SCHRIFT (Holy Scriptures), translated into German by D. Martin Luther, Volume One, Fourth Edition, Deutsche Verlags-Anstalt, Stuttgart/Germany.



Accompanying text for Edition 2 (continued)

Perhaps the way out of this situation does not lie in new towers, but in new forms of listening. Through an awareness that words are more than just signals – that they create relationships, convey meaning and shape our world. Biblical mythology teaches us that every language is a gift, not a possession. And philosophy reminds us that **humans only truly speak when they are prepared to hear themselves in others.**

Thus, the Tower of Babel becomes a mirror of our times. We stand on its upper platforms, with smartphones and satellites, connected to the limits of the imaginable – and yet we often talk past each other. The challenge is not to build the tower higher, but to see through it: **to understand that communication does not lie in the quantity of words, but in the depth of understanding.**

Perhaps overcoming the new Babel begins precisely where we learn again to speak simply – and to really listen.

Here is a short form for e.g. the press

The digital Tower of Babel

The ancient story of the Tower of Babel tells of humanity's desire to reach the heavens – and of its failure due to its own hubris. God confuses the language of mankind, and the great work remains unfinished. Unity turns into dispersion.

Today, we are building another tower – out of data, images and words. The internet, social media and our constant communication are expressions of the same longing for connection and power. We want to know everything, speak everywhere and always be visible. But the higher our digital tower grows, the less we understand each other.

Language is breaking down into countless dialects: hashtags, memes, filter bubbles. Everyone is talking, but hardly anyone is listening. The confusion that was once divine punishment is now man-made. The abundance of words has replaced the depth of understanding.

But perhaps there is also an opportunity in this confusion. The story of Babel reminds us that language is not a tool of domination, but a gift – a space where encounter becomes possible. The digital tower shows how easily understanding can become an illusion. But it also reminds us that every real language begins anew: with listening.

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Julius Schnorr von Carolsfeld •
Turmbau zu Babel

The licence was acquired by
Quagga on 20 October 2025.

Further impressive artistic
interpretations have been created
by artists such as Horst Haitzinger.



Accompanying text for Edition 3: 'Arche Noah'

Translation by Deepl.com on 21 October 2025

Between Flood and Hope – Noah's Ark as a Parable for the Present Day

The story of Noah, the ark and the dove is one of the great archetypes of human existence. It tells of a world sinking into chaos and of a small ship drifting on the waters of destruction – as the last refuge of hope. This narrative condenses fear and trust, guilt and grace, end and new beginning. And perhaps today, in a world marked by crises, it reflects more clearly than ever what it means to be human.

The Flood is no longer a distant legend. It stands for the excesses that humans themselves have created: for the storm of climate change, the noise of cities, the waves of data and emotions that flood us every day. We live in a time of flood, not only of water, but of stimuli, conflicts and alienation. The earth itself has become an ark – a fragile vessel that carries all life and at the same time a symbol of our shared vulnerability.

In ancient history, the ark is a place of perseverance, of transition between destruction and rebirth. **This reflects the experience of our time: the feeling of living in an overcrowded, swaying ship in which everyone is dependent on each other, yet everyone is struggling for their own safety.** In this confinement lies a truth that we must learn today: that survival is not possible individually, but only collectively. **The ark is not a place of retreat, but of shared responsibility.** Those on board must turn to each other in order not to go under.

It is precisely in times of crisis that we see whether community endures. When certainties crumble, space is created for a new, simpler form of coexistence – not out of abundance, but out of necessity. The ark is then not a wooden ship, but a symbol of human connection: of that quiet strength that holds people together when everything else falls apart. It tells us that dignity and compassion are stronger than fear, and that solidarity is not an ideal, but a condition for survival.

But every ark also carries within it a longing for land. That is why Noah sends out the dove – not out of impatience, but out of trust. Its flight is a quiet but decisive sign of hope: that life is possible again after the flood. The dove returns (perhaps) with a fresh twig – an inconspicuous but earth-shattering sign that chaos does not have the last word. It stands for the power of a new beginning, for the moment when the heart sees land again.

This hope is not cheap consolation. It does not mean denying the flood, but enduring it without losing faith in life. **The dove does not fly because everything is safe, but because someone has the courage to let it go.** Thus, the story also tells of trust – in life, in the future, in the ability of humans to change.

Together, the ark and the dove form a parable of a world in transition: a ship that carries everyone, and a bird that flies out to explore the possibilities. Both are expressions of a profound truth – **that hope begins when people become aware of their responsibility.** For those who inhabit the ark bear not only their own destiny, but that of all creation.

Thus, the story of Noah is not a myth of the past, but a mirror of the present. The earth is our ark, and we ourselves are the flood. But the dove still flies – searching, groping, tirelessly – as a sign that amid destruction and doubt, a new beginning remains possible. Perhaps this is the real message of this ancient story: that salvation lies not in power or technology, but in trust, compassion and the courage to start life anew again and again.



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Gustav Doré • Noah's Ark – The Sending Out of the Dove • 1. Mos. 8

The illustration is taken from the **DIE HEILIGE SCHRIFT** (Holy Scriptures), translated into German by D. Martin Luther, Volume One, Fourth Edition, Deutsche Verlags-Anstalt, Stuttgart/Germany.



Accompanying ideas & text for Edition 3 (continued)

Translation by Deepl.com on 21 October 2025



1. The Ark as a metaphor for the Earth – Ecological interpretation

The ark becomes a symbol of our planet: a closed, limited system that sustains all life – vulnerable, unstable, worthy of protection. In this interpretation, the Flood is not divine punishment, but the result of human actions – climate change, environmental destruction, species extinction. The sending out of the dove, which eventually returns with an olive branch, represents the hope for ecological change: that humanity can learn to live in harmony with creation.

Key sentence: The Earth is our ark – and the dove flies to see if there is still hope for land.

2. The dove as a symbol of digital orientation – After the flood of information

In modern times, the flood resembles a relentless wave of data, images and opinions that engulfs us every day. People drift as if in an endless digital flood, searching for solid ground – for truth, clarity, meaning. The dove sent out by Noah becomes a symbol of our search for orientation in the flood of information. The image of the dove finally finding a piece of land could represent the ability to rediscover something real and reliable amid chaos and noise – a new, human dimension of knowledge.

Key sentence: The dove will return when we learn to distinguish between signal and meaning again.

3. The Ark as a refuge for the community – social and humanitarian interpretation

In a world of crises – wars, displacement, pandemics, social divisions – the ark can be seen as a symbol of solidarity. It is not a place of individual salvation, but of shared responsibility. It encompasses all forms of life, united by hardship, hope and compassion. The sending forth of the dove symbolises the risk of trusting that life is possible again beyond fear.

Key sentence: Staying in the ark is safe – sending out the dove is courageous.

4. The dove as a symbol of inner transformation – psychological and spiritual perspectives

After the flood, there is silence. Noah sends out the dove – and waits. This can be interpreted as a symbol of inner renewal: after crises, depression, upheaval. The flood represents the chaos of life, the ark a place of refuge, of survival. The dove becomes a symbol of the search for inner peace, for a new direction.

Key sentence: The dove flies to where the heart sees land again.

5. The Ark as a network for humanity – a vision for the future

Applied to global communication and technology: humanity sits in a single, gigantic ark – interconnected, interdependent. The flood here is the overload caused by our own civilisation. The sending out of the dove would then be the search for new forms of human culture, for a balance between progress and preservation.

Key sentence: Perhaps the ark is the internet – and the dove is our longing for reality.

Conclusion

In all these interpretations, the basic motif remains the same: the ark stands for protection and transition, the flood for crisis, and the dove for hope. The story thus speaks not only of divine salvation, but also of the eternal rhythm of human existence – destruction, retreat, hope, new beginnings.

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Short text for the press

Between flood and hope – The Ark as a mirror of our times

The story of Noah and the Ark is more than a biblical myth – it is a parable for the present day. The Earth itself has become an ark, a fragile vessel carrying all life while the waters rise around it: climate crisis, wars, alienation, the excessive demands of a restless civilisation.

Like Noah's Ark, our world also represents the fragile balance of survival. In its confines, all are connected – humans, animals, nature. Salvation is not individual, but collective. The ark reminds us that responsibility and compassion are not virtues of abundance, but prerequisites for life.

When Noah sends out the dove, the quiet miracle of a new beginning begins. It returns with an olive branch – a symbol that chaos does not have the last word. Today, too, we need this courage to hope: the confidence that beyond the flood, new land awaits if we are prepared to keep each other afloat.

Thus, the ancient story remains a relevant image of our time. It calls on us to preserve the ark in which we all drift – and to let the dove fly on, so that hope may find land again.