

Sylke von Gaza

Portfolio

About Sylke von Gaza

Curriculum Vitae

Born *1966 in Hamburg, Germany as Sylke von Gazen genannt Gaza.

The Hamburg-born artist Sylke von Gaza was first taken to Italy as a three-year-old by her great-grandmother, whom she accompanied on long journeys to Venice and the Emilia-Romagna. During those childhood visits to the churches of Ravenna and Venice, to name but a few, she first came to appreciate painting and architecture. The experience made a lasting impression and continues to inspire her work to this day.

After her engineering degree in Hamburg, as a student of painting at the **Academy of Fine Arts in Munich** from 2002 to 2007 under the Irish painter Sean Scully, she found herself drawn to Abstract expressionism and the Old Masters again. She completed her studies at the Academy of Fine Arts in Munich in 2007, graduating with a **Meisterschüler** diploma ("summa cum laude"). Artist residencies in New York (2000 & Art Students League 2005), Venice (2011-2019) and Zurich (2016).

In Sylke von Gaza's creative practice, **the veil**, the metaphor for interstices and permeability, plays a central role. Half hidden, half visible. The ability to disclose by concealing, to render visible by shrouding – the artist has internalized this fundamental potential of painting and made it central to her work. *'I am intrigued by transformations and their manifold forms and effects. What is the universal essence of transformation? Transformation and transubstantiation have a sublime, lofty quality and imply a form of enrichment or enhancement. The process is usually shrouded in secrecy, hidden from sight as if by veils. It is this invisible process that interests me. I want to **make the invisible visible.**'* Her work thus far can be divided into different strands. Her principal body of work consists of *Early Works*, individual works, themed groups of works, site-specific works and the series of *Veil Paintings*, among them the *Grey Veil Paintings* and *Red Veil Paintings*.

Most recent **museum show** in **Sprengel Museum Hannover: BIG!**, 2021, curated by Director Dr. Reinhard Spieler and in **Museum Kunstpalast Düsseldorf: Behind the Curtain**, 2016/17, curated by General Director Beat Wismer and Prof. Dr. Claudia Blümle. Among **exhibitions** since her graduation are shows in **Munich, London, Venice, Düsseldorf, Palermo and Zurich.**

Since 2013 Sylke von Gaza has been painting in several churches in **Venice**. In 2015 the Patriarchal Curia of Venice commissioned a permanent **work contribution to the Gussoni Renaissance chapel** in Chiesa San Lio, Venice. At the invitation of the Diocesan Seminary Sylke von Gaza was creating the project *Il Nido* in the **Basilica Santa Maria della Salute** for the *Padiglioni Paralleli* to coincide with the 57th International Art Exhibition La Biennale di Venezia 2017. In spring 2019, the installation *Il Nido* travelled on to **Gedächtniskirche in Berlin.**

Works Selection 2005 - 2021

Please find below a small selection of works to illustrate the diverse range of Sylke von Gaza's abstract body of works. For a more detailed and structured insight with a price range as well as for works in other media, please contact studio@vongaza.com.



Sylke von Gaza
© Bildrecht der Sylke von Gaza

Bright White on Grey 2
oil on canvas, 160 x 160 cm, 2005



Sylke von Gaza
© Bildrecht der Sylke von Gaza

Bright White on Grey 1
oil on canvas, 160 x 160 cm, 2005



Sylke von Gaza
© Bildrecht der Sylke von Gaza

Grey Veil Painting 13
oil on canvas, 130 x 130 cm, 2006



Sylke von Gaza
© Bildrecht der Sylke von Gaza

Small Grey Veil Painting on Red 1
oil on canvas, 60 x 60 cm, 2008



Sylke von Gaza
© Bildarchiv Sylke von Gaza

Red Veil Master Painting 5
oil on canvas, 180 x 180 cm, 2008



Sylke von Gaza
© Bildarchiv Sylke von Gaza

Transparent Purple Aurora Master Painting 1
oil on canvas, 180 x 180 cm, 2009



Sylke von Gaza
© Bildarchiv Sylke von Gaza

Small Green Veil Master Painting 1 Velvet
oil on canvas, 160 x 160 cm, 2009



Sylke von Gaza
© Bildarchiv Sylke von Gaza

Small Yellow Veil Painting 1
oil on canvas, 60 x 60cm, 2010



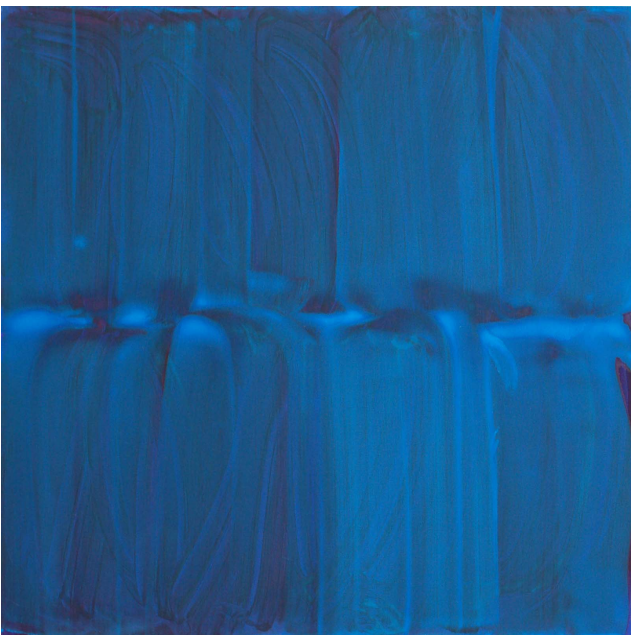
Sylke von Gaza
© Bildarchiv Sylke von Gaza

Purple Sky
oil on canvas, 180 x 180 cm, 2010



Sylke von Gaza
© Bildarchiv Sylke von Gaza

Purple Aurora
oil on canvas, 130 x 130 cm, 2010



Sylke von Gaza
© Bildarchiv Sylke von Gaza

Mangaan Veil Painting
oil on canvas, 110 x 110 cm, 2012



Sylke von Gaza
© Bildarchiv Sylke von Gaza

Barena
oil on canvas, 130 x 130 cm, 2013



Sylke von Gaza
© Bildarchiv Sylke von Gaza

Roth Painting
oil on canvas, 180 x 180 cm, 2010



Sylke von Gaza
© Bildarchiv Sylke von Gaza

Bridget
oil on canvas, 160 x 160 cm, 2010



Sylke von Gaza
© Bildarchiv Sylke von Gaza

Daedalus
oil on canvas, 180 x 180 cm, 2010



Sylke von Gaza
© Bildarchiv Sylke von Gaza

Ikarus
oil on canvas, 180 x 180 cm, 2010



Sylke von Gaza
© Bildarchiv Sylke von Gaza

Gabriel
oil on canvas, 180 x 180 cm, 2012



Sylke von Gaza
© Bildarchiv Sylke von Gaza

Lucifero
oil on canvas, 180 x 180 cm, 2013



Sylke von Gaza
© Bildarchiv Sylke von Gaza

Louis
oil on canvas, 180 x 180 cm, 2014



Sylke von Gaza
© Bildarchiv Sylke von Gaza

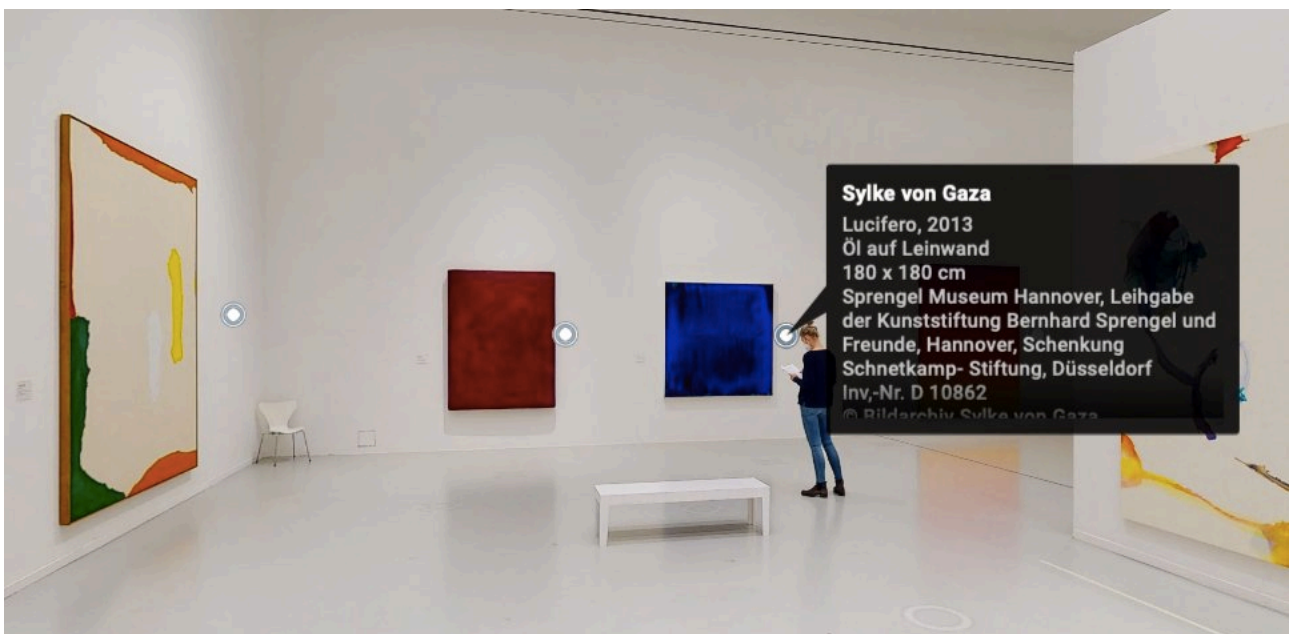
Earthly Delights
oil on canvas, 180 x 180 cm, 2014

“BIG!” with Sylke von Gaza’s *Lucifero*

The Sprengel Museum Hannover is showing a selection of spectacular large-scale works from its own collection. The thematic arc ranges from Color Field Painting and Geometric Abstraction over Expressive Figuration and Photorealism to Landscape Paintings. Many works, including several new acquisitions, are being shown for the first time ever or have not been seen for many years.

The presentation includes more than 30 works by artists such as Helen Frankenthaler, Cory Arcangel, Georg Baselitz, Sylke von Gaza, Katharina Grosse, Dieter Froelich, Franz Gertsch, Per Kirkeby, A. R. Penck, Laure Prouvost, Niki de Saint Phalle, Thomas Scheibitz, Rosemarie Trockel and Gerhard Richter.

Virtual Tour: Exhibition "BIG!" at Sprengel Museum Hannover ▶



Exhibition View “BIG!” at Sprengel Museum Hannover, 2021: Works by Helen Frankenthaler, Gotthard Graubner, Sylke von Gaza and Bernd Koberling (left to right).

Of the **30 artists** involved, **only eight are female**. This disparity is no accident but reveals the fact that male artists are more likely to assert themselves in a bold sweep, while their female counterparts often shun the grand gesture. In recent years, this has changed noticeably and is reflected accordingly in the most recent additions to the Sprengel Collection, which now increasingly focuses on large formats by such female artists as **Sylke von Gaza**, Katharina Grosse, Charline von Heyl, Florentina Pakosta and Laure Prouvost.

Sylke von Gaza follows the **tradition of colour field painting** between purely painterly concerns and spiritual fields of meaning. From 2011 to 2020, she lived and worked in Venice, the undisputed capital of colour in the history of painting. There she developed a basic form for her paintings in which parallel broad brushstrokes come together in the centre of the picture to create a horizontal gap, thus creating the impression of a curtain or veil serving as a membrane for a layer behind it. “**Lucifero**” revolves around the incomparably powerful effect of ultramarine - in the Venetian Renaissance the most precious pigment, extracted from lapis lazuli, brought to Venice from Afghanistan. As the counterpart to the twin painting

“Gabriel” in the same format, Lucifero opens up a field of associations between heaven and hell, between the phenomenon of light and the dark abyss, and between sin and purgation.

In passing, the exhibition affords insights into major painting movements in modern and contemporary art, with the spectrum ranging from geometric abstraction and colour field painting to gestural-expressive approaches, pop art and photo-realism to conceptual positions that take the discourse on painting into new media and techniques.



"BIG! Grossformat aus dem Sprengel Museum Hannover" ▶

Curator: Dr. Reinhard Spieler, Museum Director

29 May - 12 September 2021

[Catalogue Exhibition “BIG!” \(PDF, 1.5 MB\) ▶](#)

Dr. Reinhard Spieler (Curator & Museum Director) with Sylke von Gaza (Artist) in front of Lucifero, Sprengel Museum Hannover 2021.



BIG! GROSSFORMATE AUS DEM SPRENGEL MUSEUM HANNOVER

29.5. - 12.9.2021

The Sprengel Museum Hannover is showing a selection of spectacular large scale works from its own collection.

The thematic arc ranges from Color Field Painting and Geometric Abstraction over Expressive Figuration and Photorealism to Landscape Paintings. Many works, including several new acquisitions, are being shown for the first time ever or have not been seen for many years.

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Curator: Dr. Reinhard Spieler

www.sprengel-museum.de

Sylke von Gaza, Lucifero (Detail), 2013
Oil on canvas, 180 x 180 cm
Sprengel Museum Hannover
© Bildrechte Sylke von Gaza

Peter Halley, Here and Now (Detail), 2018
Fluorescent acrylic and Roll-A-Tex on canvas
Sprengel Museum Hannover
© Peter Halley



Solo Exhibition, Venezia April/May 2018

Palazzo Contarini Polignac: "*Gabriel & Lucifero*"

Sylke von Gaza's solo exhibition *Gabriel & Lucifero. The most precious Pigment of Renaissance Venice* took place at **Palazzo Contarini Polignac** in Venice in April and Mai 2018. Working with the ultramarine pigment, Sylke von Gaza created a series of abstract oil paintings that reference the tradition of the Old Masters and their use of this very precious pigment for the iconic blue veil and mantle of the Madonna, which symbolized the Virgin's purity and status as the eternal Queen of Heaven.

The exhibition revolves around two large-scale works, *Gabriel* and *Lucifero*. Named after the archangels, the two paintings make their first public appearance at Palazzo Contarini Polignac. The visitor is invited to take her/his time, to sit in an armchair and contemplate and experience the pigment's alchemical power and its effect on the subconscious. The text "Mysterium Coniunctionis. Gabriel & Lucifero di Sylke von Gaza" by the Italian philosopher and professor of aesthetics Guido Brivio (Università di Torino) is part of the setting and offered to the visitor to complement her/his own inner dialogue.

The final days of the exhibition *Gabriel & Lucifero* coincided with the "**Berührungspunkte**", a communication initiative for architects, hosted in the same palazzo for the preview days of the Biennale d'Architettura 2018.

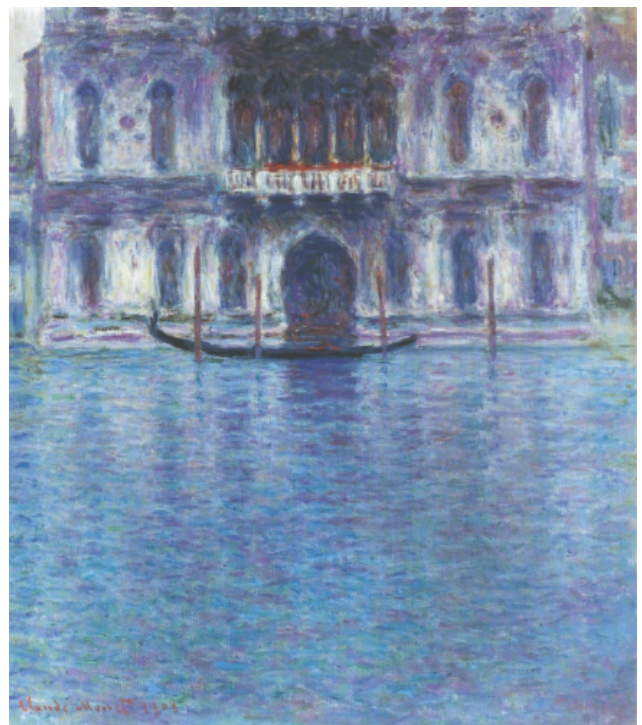
Exhibition Description "*Gabriel & Lucifero*" (PDF) ▶

Where: Dorsoduro 874, Venezia ▶

11 April - 30 May 2018



Above: Canal Grande View of Palazzo Contarini Polignac.



Right: Claude Monet, *Le Palais Contarini*, 1908.

© Kunstmuseum St. Gallen

Museum Kunstpalast Düsseldorf

In 2016/17 Sylke von Gaza was invited to participate with two large-scale *Veil Painting* works in the exhibition *Behind the Curtain. Concealment and Revelation since the Renaissance. From Titian to Cristo* at Museum Kunstpalast Düsseldorf. General Director Beat Wismer and Claudia Blümle, Professor at the Institute of Art and Visual Studies of Humboldt Universität in Berlin, curated the exhibition.

Set against the background of the legend of the origin of mimetic painting – the tale of the contest between the ancient painters Zeuxis and Parrhasios – this thematic exhibition takes a look at the motifs of veil and curtain, thus illuminating fundamental issues of painting and fine art in general. The exhibition demonstrates the interplay between showing and concealing, revealing and veiling with a range of exclusive loans of art. The works range from Renaissance and Baroque paintings to modern and contemporary art. Alongside the key work of the exhibition, Titian's "Portrait of Cardinal Filippo Archinto" from the Philadelphia Museum of Art, Museum Kunstpalast presents a variety of loans from international museums and private collections, including works e.g. by Giovanni Bellini, El Greco, Peter Paul Rubens, François Boucher, William Turner, Max Beckmann, Arnold Böcklin, Robert Delaunay, Morris Louis, Francis Bacon, Lucian Freud, Maria Lassnig, Sigmar Polke and Gerhard Richter. Von Gaza's two large-scale *Veil Painting* works represented a contemporary non-figurative approach to the theme of concealment and revelation, working with the metaphor of the veil in an abstract, metaphorical way.

Accompanying the exhibition, a richly illustrated catalogue was published by Hirmer. Contributions by eminent art historians such as Horst Bredekamp, Georges Didi-Huberman, Wolfgang Kemp, Roland Krischel, Klaus Krüger, Oskar Bätschmann, Patrik Reuterswärd, Barbara Schellewald, Beate Söntgen, Victor I. Stoichiță & Gerhard Wolf elaborate on the topic of the highly frequented exhibition.



[Exhibition Website Museum Kunstpalast Düsseldorf ▶](#)

[Exhibition Description \(PDF\) ▶](#)

[Exhibition Catalogue ▶](#)

[Exhibition Trailer ▶](#)

[Press WZ \(Helga Meister\) ▶](#)

1 October 2016 - 22 January 2017

Exhibition Catalogue:

Hinter dem Vorhang. Verhüllung und Enthüllung seit der Renaissance - von Tizian bis Christo

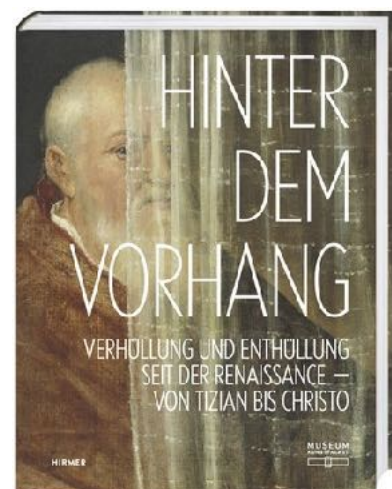
Hg. Beat Wismer & Claudia Blümle

Contributions by H. Bredekamp, G. Didi-Huberman, W. Kemp, R. Krischel, K. Krüger, O. Bätschmann, P. Reuterswärd, B. Schellewald, B. Söntgen, V. Stoichiță, G. Wolf

340 Seiten, 297 Abbildungen in Farbe, 24 x 30 cm.

Hirmer Verlag, München 2016

ISBN 978-3-7774-2646-4 [More ▶](#)



Facts and Figures

Exhibitions (selection)

- 2021: *BIG! Large-format Works from the Sprengel Museum Hannover* [More ▶](#)
- 2019: *Early Works*, Palazzo Martinengo Fortuny, Venice (solo) [More ▶](#)
- 2019: *Il Nido* at **Gedächtniskirche**, Berlin (solo) [More ▶](#)
- 2019: *Velvet & Paper*, **Gallery Biedermann**, Munich (solo) [More ▶](#)
- 2018: *Gabriel & Lucifero. The most precious Pigment of Renaissance Venice*, **Palazzo Contarini Polignac**, Venice (solo) [More ▶](#)
- 2018: *BIAS Biennale Internazionale di Arte Contemporanea Sacra e delle Religioni Dell'Umanità 2018*, **Museo Riso**, Capella dell'Incoronazione, Palermo [More ▶](#)
- 2017/18: *Il Nido. A Pilgrimage towards Equilibrium*, project for **Padiglioni Paralleli** of Curia Patriarcale di Venezia and glasswork with **Berengo Studio**, Murano, during 57th Venice Biennale, at **Basilica Madonna della Salute** at Punta della Dogana, Venice (solo) [More ▶](#)
- 2017: *Summertime: Brüning, Erben, von Gaza, Huidobro, Merschmann, Münch*, **Gallery Hans Strelow**, Düsseldorf
- 2017: *52th Art Cologne*, Gallery Hans Strelow, Cologne [More ▶](#)
- 2016/17: *Behind the Curtain. Concealment and Revelation since the Renaissance. From Titian to Cristo*, curated by Beat Wismer & Prof. Dr. Claudia Blümle, **Museum Kunstpallast Düsseldorf** [More ▶](#)
- 2016: *Private View Villa von Schulthess-Bodmer*, **Zürich** (solo) [More ▶](#)
- 2016: *Fabrica Ecclesiae*, **Museo Diocesano d'Arte Sacra Sant' Apollonia**, San Marco, Venice
- 2015: *Beyond the Veil*, project with and commission for Curia Patriarcale di Venezia during 56th Venice Biennale, **Chiesa San Lio**, Venice (solo) [More ▶](#)
- 2014: *Power of Glass*, Hofglasmalerei Gustav van Treeck, Munich [More ▶](#)
- 2013: *Handwerk und Kirche*, Gallery Handwerk of Chamber of Commerce of Munich and Upper Bavaria in collaboration with Erzbischöfliches Ordinariat München, **Carmelite Church of St. Nicholas**, Munich [More ▶](#)
- 2013: *Spirituality in Painting*, Gallery Art Consult, Munich (solo)
- 2011: *Light & Painting*, **Palazzo Ca' del Duca**, Venice (solo)
- 2009: *The Process of Creation*, **Rich Gallery**, London (solo)
- 2009: *Malerei*, **Gallery Biedermann**, Munich (solo)

Public collections

- Städtische Galerie im **Lenbachhaus**, Munich
- Museo Diocesano d'Arte Sacra Sant' Apollonia, San Marco, Venice
- Collezione Seminario Patriarcale di Venezia, Venice
- **Sprengel Museum Hannover** [More ▶](#)

Timeline

- 2020: *Decamerone*, Berghütten-Atelier am Heimgarten, **Murnau**
- 2012 - 2019 : Studio San Gregorio, Palazzo Martinengo Fortuny, **Venice**
- 2017: Participation in *Padiglioni Paralleli* of Curia Patriarcale di Venezia for 57th Venice Biennale
- 2017: Atelier in Osservatorio del Seminario Patriarcale di Venezia, Basilica della Salute, Punta della Dogana, Venice; Glass work, Studio Berengo, **Murano**
- 2016: Atelier in Cappella Santissima Trinità, Seminario Patriarcale di Venezia, Basilica della Salute, Venice; Atelier in Villa von Schulthess-Bodmer, **Zurich**
- 2015: Atelier in Cappella Gussoni, Chiesa San Lio, Venice; permanent work contribution to the Gussoni Renaissance Chapel in Chiesa San Lio, commissioned by the Curia Patriarcale di Venezia
- 2013 - 2014: Atelier in Chiesa San Fantin, Venice
- 2013: Glass work, Hofglasmalerei Gustav van Treeck, **Munich**
- 2011: Artist-Residence in Palazzo Ca' del Duca, **Venice**; Glass work, Fornace Mattiello, **Murano**
- 2007: Graduated from the Akademie der Bildenden Künste München, awarded title “**Meisterschülerin**” ("summa cum laude")
- 2005: Artist-Residence in **New York**
- 2002 - 2007: Studied painting at the Akademie der Bildenden Künste München (Academy of the Visual Arts in Munich, Germany) under Prof. Sean Scully
- 2000: Art Students League, New York
- 1989 - 1990: Wirtschaftsingenieurwesen at Christian-Albrechts-Universität zu Kiel
- 1985 - 1989: Diplom-Ingenieurin (Dipl.Ing.) at Hochschule für Angewandte Wissenschaften HAW Hamburg
- 1966: Born Sylke von Gazen genannt Gaza in **Hamburg**



Sylke von Gaza painting in Chiesa San Fantin, Venezia 2014.