

**NINA E. SCHÖNEFELD**



**Nina E. Schönefeld, *The Anatomy of Political Scandals* (2025), HD video (1920 x 1080), 16:9, b/w & color, sound, 17'27**

**World Premier**

**Edition: 5 + 3 AP**

**Price: € 9,000 Euro + VAT**

**ARTIST STATEMENT:**

“The video work THE ANATOMY OF POLITICAL SCANDALS takes its starting point in the sociopolitical research of the artist's father, “Die Anatomie des politischen Skandals” (Rolf Ebbighausen, 1989). The anatomy of political scandals is the anatomy of bourgeois society. Political scandals reveal structural problems in representative democracies and, like a magnifying glass, reflect a country's cultural landscape, public discourse, and long-term social processes.

The story of the video work revolves around the artist Henri Michael Blum, who is having his first major solo show in an important museum. One of his video installations revolves around the theme of “justice at any price, even through the use of violence,” which was already addressed by Heinrich von Kleist in his work “Michael Kohlhaas.” This arouses the disapproval of the museum director, who threatens to cancel the entire exhibition if the artist does not withdraw his

work. The artist Blum tries to come to terms with giving up his censored work, but he can't. Blum believes that if he gives up this work, he will have lost the fight for freedom of art in general. The story of the film takes its tragic course and culminates in a dramatic duel between the artist and the museum director.

The right of citizens to consistently enforce justice is often rejected by those in power, even though rights of freedom and equality exist for the individual. The FREEDOM OF ART stands as a legitimate instrument for the restoration of justice and individual dignity as a last resort.”

- Nina E. Schönefeld

Premiering in *Art from Elsewhere: DEEP THROAT*, Nina E. Schönefeld's *The Anatomy of Political Scandals* is both a thriller and an autopsy — an alluring dissection of democracy's glossy surfaces and the rot beneath. Drawing on the 1989 study *Die Anatomie des politischen Skandals* by her father, sociologist Rolf Ebbighausen, Schönefeld translates academic analysis into pop-noir cinema. What he exposed through theory — scandal as the mirror of bourgeois democracy — she exposes through image: power stripped bare, outrage sold as entertainment, the corrosive mechanisms of institutional power, and the price of freedom.

Schönefeld situates this work within her ongoing cinematic inquiry into social and environmental resistance, where dystopian near-futures often serve as allegories for present realities. Here, the battlefield shifts from ecological survival to cultural control - the silencing of dissent, the sanitizing of institutions, and the commodification of artistic expression. Like much of her work, *The Anatomy of Political Scandals* merges documentary realism with speculative fiction and surreal AI generated fantasies, creating a world that feels both viscerally heightened and disturbingly plausible.

Shot with the slick precision of a fashion shoot and the narrative intensity of a political drama, *The Anatomy of Political Scandals* follows a contemporary artist whose museum show is threatened with cancellation after his work is deemed “too dangerous.” What unfolds is part duel, part downfall — a choreography of censorship. When the museum director demands that the artist remove an artwork from his exhibition, the artist faces a moral reckoning: to comply would mean betraying the very principle that art must remain free from coercion. In refusing to comply, he becomes an emblem of integrity in a world where freedom of expression is increasingly recast as provocation, and dissent mistaken for deviance. His refusal leads to a tragic confrontation, echoing the violent dialectic between power and conscience that underpins both history and art.

Amongst numerous visual and thematic citations, Schönefeld draws upon Ray Bradbury and François Truffaut's *Fahrenheit 451* - themselves allegories of Nazi book burning. This intertextual reference links the film's fictional crisis to historical reality, where the suppression of art signals not moral order but the collapse of democracy. The reference is not nostalgic; it's prophetic. The Nazi branding of “degenerate art,” the purges of culture through moral panic, find their digital echo in today's algorithmic censorship and the global rise of the far right. What begins as a story

of one artist's moral crisis becomes a mirror of our collective one — a world where free expression is recast as provocation and justice itself perverted into performance.

Schönefeld's work thrives in this tension. By adopting the seductive grammar of pop culture - the jump cut, the slow pan, the slick hyperreal AI animations - she weaponizes its tools against itself. The result is as intoxicating as it is unsettling: a world where the aesthetics of control are indistinguishable from those of desire. When those in power demand the erasure of dissenting voices, the perversion of justice is already complete - a kind of moral pornography in which repression becomes arousal and domination masquerades as virtue. Politics, in Schönefeld's vision, has become the new porn: a spectacle where truth is choreographed, outrage is aestheticized, and every act of silencing becomes a performance of power.

Within the context of *Art from Elsewhere: DEEP THROAT, The Anatomy of Political Scandals* becomes a keystone - a film about censorship in an exhibition that exposes censorship as the invisible architecture of our age. The film is a sharp indictment of the perversions of power that turn culture into propaganda and politics into theatre. It speaks to the exhibition's broader exploration of how truth, justice, and freedom - once ideals of democracy - are increasingly weaponized, censored, and bought. The "anatomy" of scandal thus reveals itself as an anatomy of our times: a system where visibility and morality are negotiated through media, where outrage replaces ethics, and where the artist becomes both witness and target.

Stylish, furious, and defiantly political, *The Anatomy of Political Scandals* transforms the aesthetics of scandal into a manifesto. It's not just a film about freedom of art — it is the act of freedom itself. Schönefeld's work insists on the necessity of risk - the courage to speak, to show, to refuse complicity. In a moment when the freedom of art is again under siege worldwide, *The Anatomy of Political Scandals* is not only a film about censorship; it is itself an act of resistance - a cinematic protest affirming that to remain silent is to surrender the possibility of truth.

**ARTIST BIO:** [www.ninaeschoenefeld.com](http://www.ninaeschoenefeld.com)

**NINA E. SCHÖNEFELD (born 1972 in Berlin, Germany. Lives and works in Berlin and Ibiza, Spain.)**

Nina E. Schönefeld is a Berlin-based interdisciplinary artist of German/Polish descent, and PhD scholar in art theory, whose practice spans video, installation, sculpture, light, electronics, and AI-driven media. With influences ranging from the early-20th-century avant-garde to urgent contemporary crises, her cinematic works confront the seductive aesthetics of consumer culture with a sharp political edge. Rather than offering escapism, Schönefeld's immersive narratives expose the cracks in the glossy surface of capitalist modernity. Her work grapples with the most pressing dilemmas of a hyper-mediated, hyper-consumerist West—where environmental collapse, authoritarianism, and algorithmic control are too often obscured by distraction and spectacle. Central to her practice are stories of abrupt societal rupture: digital surveillance, nuclear threat, ecological devastation, and the fragile illusions of freedom under neoliberal

systems. Her protagonists—frequently women—navigate dystopian near-futures where rebellion becomes survival, and where the cost of complacency is laid bare.

A selection of Schönefeld's recent major museum and institutional exhibitions includes: 2025 – *Landscapes of Futures Past*, Jiayuanhai Art Museum, Shanghai, China. 2024 - *RIDE OR DIE* (solo), KINDL Center for Contemporary Art, Berlin, Germany; *NO FUTURE* (solo), Lothringer 13 & Münchner Kammerspiele & Habibi Kiosk, Munich, Germany; MSU Museum (CoLab Studio, Michigan State University), Michigan, USA; GDM Contemporary Gallery, Ostrava, Czech Republic. 2023 - *FUCK THE SYSTEM* (solo), Diskurs Berlin, Germany; Kunsthalle Osnabrück, Germany; Ikono TV, COP28, Dubai; Gong Gallery, with Goethe-Institutes Prague & Bratislava, Ostrava, Czech Republic; Aleš South Bohemian Art Museum, Czech Republic; GDM Contemporary Gallery, Ostrava, Czech Republic; Kultursymposion Weimar, Goethe-Institute & Galerie Eigenheim, Weimar, Germany; LAGOS Gallery, Mexico City, Mexico. 2022 - *Enemy Within* (solo), Berlin Weekly Gallery; Haus am Lützowplatz, Berlin, Germany; Ikono TV, COP27, Egypt; Diskurs Gallery Berlin, Germany; Artspring-Festival, Berlin, Germany. 2021 - Heidelberger Kunstverein, Heidelberg, Germany; MOMENTUM, Kunstquartier Bethanien, Berlin, Germany; Alte Münze, Berlin, Germany; CICA Museum, Gyeonggi-Do, Korea; Kunstverein Familie Montez, Frankfurt, Germany; Seoul International ALT Cinema & Media Arts Festival (NeMaf), Seoul, Korea; Art Life Foundation, Hong Kong, China; ARTSPRING-Festival, Berlin, Germany; Roppongi Art Festival, Tokyo, Japan. 2020 - Heidelberger Kunstverein, Heidelberg, Germany; Weltkunstzimmer, Düsseldorf, Germany; Kunsthalle Bratislava Museum, Slovakia; Galerie la Pierre Large, Strasbourg, France; MOMENTUM, Kunstquartier Bethanien, Berlin, Germany; Contemplatio Art, Germany. 2019 - Aram Art Museum, Seoul, South Korea; Alternative Culture Making Art Space, Shenzhen, China; Federation Square, Melbourne, Australia; MOMENTUM, Kunstquartier Bethanien, Berlin, Germany; Anima Mundi Festival 2019, Palazzo Ca' Zanardi, Venice, Italy; Bamhaus Luxembourg, Luxembourg; Mitte Media Festival 2019, Berlin, Germany; Made In NY Media Center by IFP, New York City, USA; Villa Heike, Berlin, Germany. 2018 - Berlinische Galerie, Berlin, Germany; Goethe Institut, Beijing, China; Kühlhaus, Berlin, Germany; BBA Artist Prize 2018 Berlin, Germany; Ex Pescheria Centrale, Trieste, Italy; Mitte Media Festival, Berlin; Palazzo Ca' Zanardi, Venice, Italy; THE ROOM Contemporary Art Space, Venice, Italy. And many others.