



PRESS RELEASE

Justine Otto: hyder flares

Leading contemporary German painter's works open with The Phillips Collection's Vesela Sretenovic

August 20 – September 4, 2015

**Goethe-Institut Washington
812 7th St. NW
Washington, DC 20001**

www.goethe.de/washington

Download Dropbox images [here](#).

(Washington, DC, July 23, 2015) – Leading German contemporary figurative painter **Justine Otto** (b. Poland 1974) won The Phillips Collection's second annual [Emerging Artist Prize](#) following Washington's 2014 (e)merge art fair. Otto's exhibition *hyder flares*, on display at the Goethe-Institut Washington August 20 – September 4, 2015, borrows its name from this cosmic phenomenon as it focuses on such peculiar constellations, incidents and connections in human interactions.

Her representational pictures burn themselves into the viewer's retina, simultaneously fascinating and disturbing. Justine Otto has received a number of stipends and other prizes, including the 2011 Lüneburg Region Culture Advancement Award and a 2013 Frankfurt Lions Club Prize.

**Opening on Thursday, August 20,
6 – 9 pm with artist Justine Otto
and Vesela Sretenovic,
Senior Curator of Modern and
Contemporary Art at The Phillips
Collection**

Followed by a concert at 7:30 pm
with jazz trio:

Michael Formanek – bass (USA)

Eric Kennedy – drums (USA)

And surprise guest from Germany
(alto saxophone)

RSVP at www.goetheinstitutwashington.eventbrite.com



About *hyder flares*:

Following *things behind the sun* (Kunstverein Duisburg) and *pink moon* (Kunsthalle Lüneburg), the exhibition *hyder flares* continues Justine Otto's use of cosmic or planetary phenomena for naming her exhibitions. Cosmic constellations don't play a direct role in her work. However, Otto utilizes them to point to occurrences and incidents which can affect and shape human relations, similar to T.C. Boyle's short stories in the volume *Tooth and Claw*, in which wild nature fiercely recaptures its space or meteorite impacts are fastidiously listed in chronology with their accompanying death tolls.

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Human life is just as unpredictable as natural phenomena. Incidents which at first glance appear irrelevant can prompt someone to follow a new path, or can destroy entire lives. These moments flare up and disappear just like hyder flares, and no one knows when they will recur.

Couples from another time, people holding gatherings or conspiratorially brewing something in a Petri dish - and time and again eyes, both human and animal, interspersed between the other images. On the one hand, these eyes look at the world; on the other hand, they enable introspection. Observing and being observed, they ask the question: what is painting and how does it function?



Made possible with support from Friends of the Goethe-Institut.

Gallery hours: M-Th 9-5; F 9-3

About the Goethe-Institut:

Mutual understanding among nations by promoting international cultural dialogue: this is the ambitious mission of the Goethe-Institut. On behalf of the Federal Republic of Germany, cultural institutes around the world provide cultural programs, language courses, support to educators, and up-to-date information on Germany in the context of Europe.

Founded in 1990, Goethe-Institut Washington, DC is a center for German culture and language. From its location in the lively Downtown, the Goethe-Institut Washington reaches out to both individuals and organizations in the community, bridging the past, present, and future with a variety of high-quality events.

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