

ANKE FEUCHTENBERGER

LA CAMARADE COUCOU ET AUTRES CREATURES...

Éditions Futuropolis

29 novembre 2025 — 31 janvier 2026

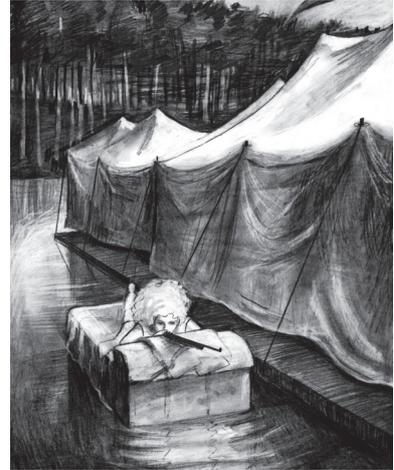
17 rue Martel | 75010 Paris

opening reception in the presence of the artist

Saturday, november 29 novembre de 11h à 20h

séance de dédicace

le samedi 29 novembre à partir de 15h



In *La Camarade Coucou*, published in 2024 and translated into French by Futuropolis, Anke Feuchtenberger revisits memories of her childhood in East Germany through an interwoven tapestry of tragic and dazzling, historical and metaphorical narratives. Galerie Martel is pleased to present, from November 29, 2025, to January 31, 2026, some of the most striking originals from this monumental book, shown alongside the artist's works beyond the page — an artist who, since the 1990s, has established herself as a major figure in contemporary art.

“Everything is a matter of the body.” For Anke Feuchtenberger, everything begins with drawing. The hand shapes meaning, corrects and challenges the obvious, erases, and perseveres in exploring possibilities — seeking until it finds precision beyond conscious intent or clumsiness. The idea takes form in the encounter between body and matter. The work is born of this spontaneous process, which — as when a graft takes — allows new life to sprout and sap to flow.

Among her influences are German Expressionism, and particularly Käthe Kollwitz, from whom she inherits the art of sculpting light and shadow. Without ever excluding other techniques, charcoal has become her favored medium — expanding the palette of greys, perfectly suited to an approach that brings images forth through trial and error, layering, and reworking.

Born in East Berlin in 1963, Anke Feuchtenberger has always been interested in the possibilities of graphic storytelling. After the fall of the Wall, she discovered the new experimental scene of comics in flux, and was inspired by American underground artists such as Marc Beyer, as well as by the works of Lorenzo Mattotti and Jacques Loustal. Her collaboration with writer and poet Katrin de Vries led to her first graphic narratives. In 1996, she began her long-term project *La Putain P* — a story of female emancipation, several volumes of which have been translated into French.

While the female condition runs through all her work — along with reflections on domination and the patriarchal pressures inscribed in women's bodies — the artist keeps her distance from militant positions, instead probing the ambivalence of symbolic polysemy. Medusa stares back, smiling and sticking out her tongue. In large format, the charcoal creature draws the viewer in, making it impossible to look away. The Gorgon bursts out of her assigned frame — her pig's head, round as the moon, screwed onto the decapitated body of the “*Chocolate Girl*”, a figure inspired

by Liotard's masterpiece, an idealized image of the well-mannered servant girl. This absurd hybrid brims with contradictory injunctions, concentrating the opposing poles of female iconography.

Marked for life by the fairy tales of her childhood and by writers such as Kafka, Anke Feuchtenberger often works with literary texts. Yet her images, infused with emotion and memory, never provide literal illustrations. Open to interpretation, they build an intimate and political mythology that shifts from the personal to the collective — synthesizing an approach that is personal but never directly autobiographical or self-fictional.

To start from oneself does not mean to close oneself off from the experience of others. On the contrary, drawing for her traces bonds of solidarity. Her work resists both narcissistic alienation and the dissolution of the individual within the collective — an experience she knew under Soviet dictatorship. This is at the heart of her latest book, *La Camarade Coucou*, in which she revisits her childhood in a small East German village near the Polish border. The creation of this masterpiece spanned from 2009 to 2023. At the crossroads of history and memory, the gaze of the child converses with that of the adult who returns to uncover family secrets.

The cuckoo lays its eggs to be brooded and raised in others' nests. At school, the lesson recited on the brotherhood of peoples. At home, the grandmother weeps, the women whisper, and the children grow up on the scorched earth left by the rapes and atrocities committed by the Red Army at the end of the war. Anke Feuchtenberger breaks the silence. Taking on taboos and repression, she draws a mycelial narrative with complex organic ramifications — a collective and individual story of women, of violence endured, and of inherited trauma.

This many-layered tale plunges into a dark forest of spellbound images. An occult residue always remains. Slugs poison themselves with blue pellets. In red ink, they come alive with a violence filtered through the enchanted imagination of a child playing with the painted figures on a teapot. In black, they regain their majesty and physical presence, rendered in charcoal that elevates the viscous and the repulsive. Like a cry, *La Camarade Coucou* connects human and animal suffering, giving voice to an animist call for a nature martyred and privatized, claiming the abolition of boundaries between the symbolic and the biological worlds.

Art transfigures and transforms. Likewise, melancholy darkness takes on a consoling beauty. For Anke Feuchtenberger, the practice of drawing is inseparable from life itself. Thus, in the heart of a *Rauhnacht* — one of those nights around the winter solstice when, in the North more than anywhere else, darkness seems to have swallowed the light — the artist, alone and confined, still has her brushes to celebrate the present moment, ward off anxiety, and enjoy a moonlit walk with her dog.

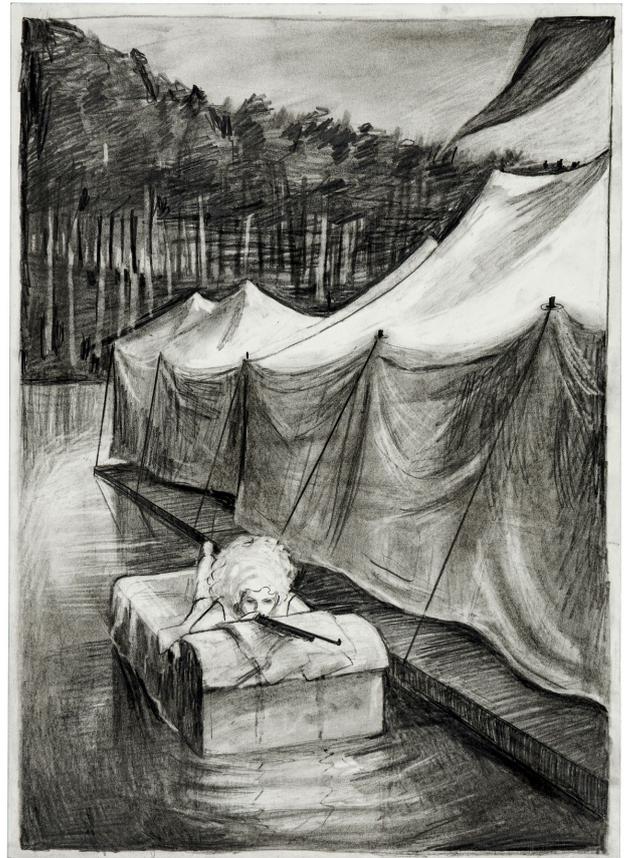
Lucie Servin, journalist

Press contact : Galerie Martel | +33 6 10 19 30 02, contact@galeriemartel.fr

MARTEL PARIS | 17 rue Martel, 75010 Paris, France | +33 1 42 46 35 09
MARTEL BXL | Chaussée d'Ixelles 337, 1050 Bruxelles, Belgique | +32 2 721 79 57
contact@galeriemartel.fr | www.galeriemartel.com | mar - sam 14h30 - 19h



Anke Feuchtenberger, *Der Spalt (La Fissure)*, 2025, 42 x 60 cm, pencil and charcoal on paper © Courtesy of the artist and the gallery



Anke Feuchtenberger, *La Camarade Coucou*, 2024, 29,7 x 42 cm, pencil and charcoal on paper © Courtesy of the artist and the gallery



Anke Feuchtenberger, *Perle. Renarde*, 2015, 40 x 40 cm, pencil and charcoal on paper © Courtesy of the artist and the gallery



Anke Feuchtenberger, *La Camarade Coucou*, 2024, 42 x 29,7 cm, pencil and charcoal on paper © Futuropolis / courtesy Galerie Martel