



PRESS INFORMATION

Premiere for "Freedom" at the Global Media Forum

Bonn, 23 May 2019 – Pakistani artist Arshia Sohail presents her work *Freedom* for the first time in Germany. The installation can be seen at the Global Media Forum exhibition in Bonn on 27 and 28 May. The authorities had denied the young artist an earlier exhibition attempt – and thus ironically confirmed her work: it bears the name "Freedom".

The meaning of the word "freedom" is subjective

Sohail's installation consists of seven letters formed from metal bars that represent the word Freedom and harbor living sparrows. While the metal cages include their surroundings, they also illustrate the dependency of the term on its particular situation. "The meaning of the word freedom is subjective," says Arshia Sohail. "We all have an individual understanding of the term based on our individual experiences." Freedom is defined differently by individuals, countries, their laws and rules. But "freedom exists if it is the same for you and the others," says the artist.

The journey to Germany was denied

In 2017, the Pakistani artist (*1989) won second place in the Bloom Award by Warsteiner with *Freedom*. As the runner-up, Arshia Sohail was invited to travel to Düsseldorf to present her work at the special exhibition of the Bloom Award by Warsteiner. However, the authorities refused her a visa to visit Germany. Sohail's artwork could also not be brought to Germany and exhibited for legal reasons. At the Bloom Award by Warsteiner special exhibition only a video of *Freedom* could be seen and at the award ceremony Arshia Sohail had to receive her prize through a video message.

Freedom now for the first time in Germany

At Deutsche Welle's Global Media Forum in Bonn, the artist now has the opportunity to present her work to a broad audience – and to confront them with the question of what individual freedom means. The sparrows held in the bird cages, which are actually part of the installation, may not be shown in Germany for reasons of animal welfare. That's why the artist plays birdcalls on her installation at the Global Media Forum.

Arshia Sohail

- *1989 in Faisalabad, Pakistan
- 2015 M.A. (Hons.) of Visual Art at the National College of Arts, Lahore
- together with her husband Arshia Sohail lives and works in Lahore, Pakistan
- in 2017 the young artist won second place with *Freedom* at the Bloom Award by Warsteiner

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Warsteiner Supports Art

The Warsteiner Brewery has been closely linked to art for 30 years – beginning with Andy Warhol, who immortalized the Warsteiner pilsner glass, and extending to the Bloom Award by Warsteiner and the Art Collection, which appeared for the first time in 2013. The Warsteiner Brewery has already been honored with a nomination for the cultural branding award in the category "European Cultural Investor of the Year" for its engagement with the Bloom Award by Warsteiner.