

Anatomy of an artwork Culture

## Amelie von Wulffen's Untitled, 2016: a witty exploration of post-postwar guilt

**The German artist's cutesy image is rife with oblique references to her country's past and the acts committed by her parents' generation**

Skye Sherwin



### Hello kitty

Who couldn't love the kitten, nestled safely in the lap of its perfectly made up mother? The other baby is a cuckoo in the kitschy nest. He recalls the Jewish golem, a monster fashioned from clay, reimagined here as a giant turd.

### Guilt trip

Born in 1966, the German artist uses dark wit in her paintings to deal with the anxieties of a post-postwar generation growing up in the shadow of cultural guilt.

### Dark web

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### **The outsider**

You sense though that Von Wulffen's sympathies lie not with the preened, sugar-white (read Aryan) duo, but the sad-eyed outsider. It's an approach that runs deep in her paintings, which juggle various references from Goya to Franz Defregger, whose vision of folksy German rural life was beloved by the Third Reich. Instead of virtuoso imitation, however, her appropriations are deliberately off, like the unschooled outsider artists, vilified as degenerate by the Nazis.

*Part of Amelie von Wulffen: The Misjudged Bimpfi, Studio Voltaire, SW4 to 2 April*