

KULTUR RAUM ASIEN



Exhibition texts



17.07²⁵
03.08



ENGLISH VERSION

Welcome to the exhibition “Cultural Space Asia” at the BBK Kunstforum!

Under the title *Cultural Space Asia*, the BBK Kunstforum presents an exhibition featuring works by twelve members of the German Association of Visual Artists (BBK), District Association Düsseldorf.

The exhibition showcases artistic positions that engage with Asia as a cultural space – as a geographical, social, and individual point of reference. Central to the exhibition are questions of identity, cultural imprint, and the relationship between art and society. The exhibited works offer diverse perspectives on personal and collective experiences.

Participating artists are Karn Karnjanamai, Eunjeong Kim, Schirin Kouhzad, Tahmineh Mirmotahari, Hyesug Park, Jae Jin Park, Yi Sun, Karin Templin-Glees, Qunyuan Wang, Linge Xiao, Gaoyi Yin, and Jiayi Zhao. Their works span a wide range of media and forms of expression – from painting, drawing, and installation to photography and sculptural approaches.

The exhibition, conceived and curated by artists Oliver Christensen and Thomas Klingberg, runs from July 17 to August 3, 2025, at the BBK Kunstforum on Birkenstraße 47 in Düsseldorf-Flingern. Opening hours are Fridays from 5–8 pm and Saturdays and Sundays from 3–6 pm. Admission is free on all days.

We would like to thank all those who have contributed to the realisation of this exhibition.

Sincerely

The entire exhibition team of BBK Düsseldorf

Overview of participating artists

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Karn Karnjanamai

In his work, Karn Karnjanamai combines materials that are usually kept separate: the inner lining of Western men's suit jackets and the decorative outer fabric of Japanese obi belts. Both elements carry cultural significance – one symbolizes structure, discipline, and invisibility; the other stands for representation, ceremony, and tradition.

Through deliberate combination – with visible seams, unfinished edges, and a resistant volume – Karnjanamai questions notions of gender, origin, and belonging. His work resists clear categorization and opens up a space in between: between inside and outside, tradition and transformation, expectation and intimacy.

In continuation of his earlier tie series, in which human hair penetrates textile surfaces, Karnjanamai once again focuses on what often remains hidden – particularly the tensions between cultural role models and individual experience.



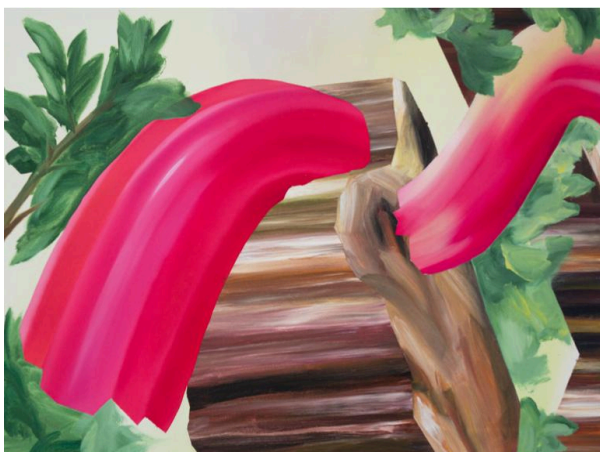
Ties, Textile Object, 2025

Eunjeong Kim

Eunjeong Kim explores the intersections between the materiality of painting and the immateriality of digital media – between reality and virtuality, surface and space. Drawing from everyday observations in both Germany and South Korea – images of nature, architecture, food, news, or personal moments – she creates digital collages that combine photography with analog and digital brushstrokes.

In this process, the original meanings of the images dissolve into abstract forms and colors. A free visual language emerges, interweaving cultural influences from both worlds and raising questions about identity in a transcultural context.

In recent works, Kim constructs digitally rendered, physically impossible spaces using VR and 3D animation. These compositions, based on abstract forms she has previously developed, are sometimes transferred back into the painted surface. Through enlarged details, expansive formats, and thick layers of paint, she creates a sense of immersion that links the smooth texture of digital surfaces with the tactile materiality of painting. Kim expands the concept of painting: in her digital works, painterly elements unfold in space and time – as moving forms in VR or augmented extensions that reach into physical space. Her hybrid image-making fuses traditional and digital forms of perception and interaction.



Floating 5
Acrylic & oil on canvas
60×80 cm
2023

Schirin Kouhzad

The Silence of the East in the West

Between the threads of memory, stories from distant lands begin to flow – not tied, but carried like a quiet treasure. Persian signs, foreign cities, a boat on the sea – united in a gaze that connects East and West.



The Silence of the East in the West
Paper collage, 40×50 cm, 2025

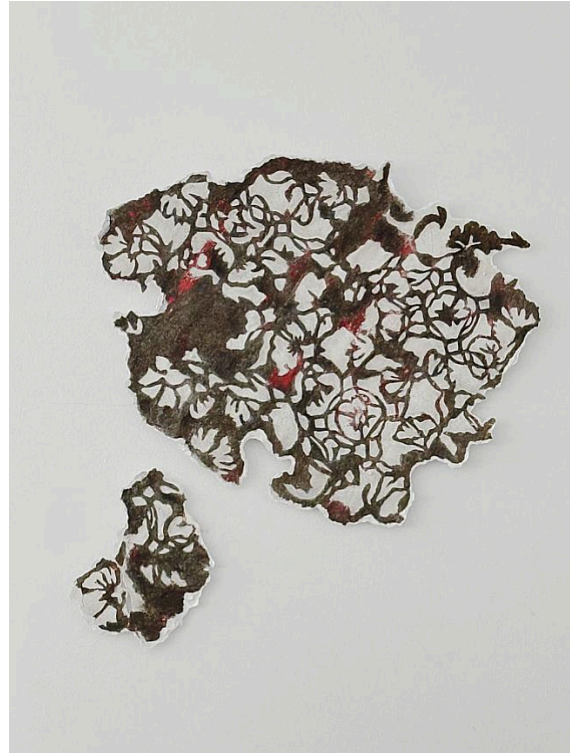
Tahmineh Mirmotahari

“The Interpretation of Sleep” begins with a moment of silence — a dream, followed by an act of removal. When Shah Tahmasb ordered the destruction of the palace wall paintings, more than just painted images were lost. It marked a turning point — from figuration to ornamentation, from presence to absence.

For Tahmineh, this historical gesture becomes a metaphor: How does power shape what is remembered and what is allowed to be forgotten? Her work explores memory as an unstable force — porous, shifting, and continually reconstructed through fragments.

She is drawn to what disappears, and to what remains — not as complete forms, but as traces that invite reinterpretation.

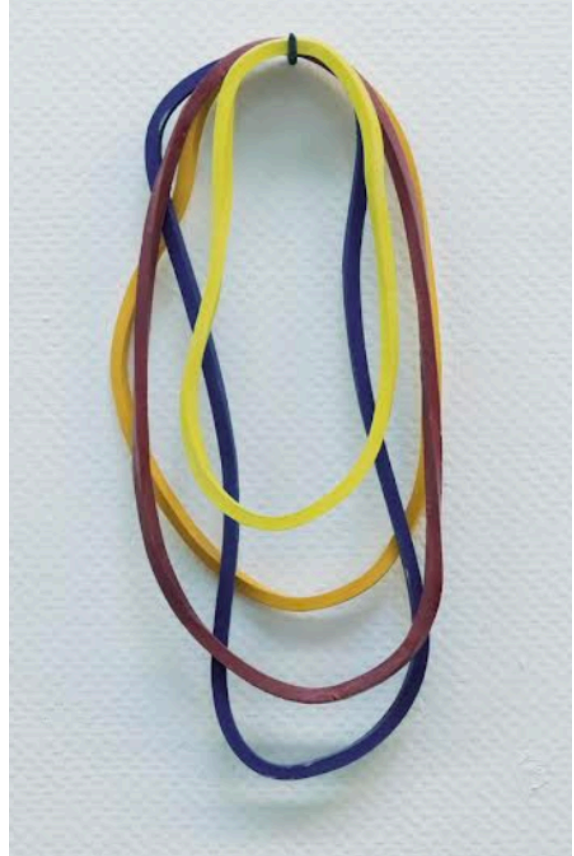
Through fragile materials and layered processes, Tahmineh creates space for these ruptures, where personal memory and collective history quietly resonate with one another.



The Interpretation of Sleep
Paper object, 55×50 cm
2025

Hyesug Park

Hyesug Park finds meaning in the everyday – and explores how beauty and value can emerge from simple objects. Her series *Gomusul* focuses on the rubber band: a symbol of connection, bundling, flexibility, and order. She transfers its elastic properties to a contrasting material – clay. Although clay is soft and malleable when shaped, it becomes hard, cracked, and brittle once fired. In *Gomusul*, Park attempts to capture the idea of elasticity in a rigid medium. The resulting forms appear lively and tense, revealing how closely flexibility and rigidity can exist side by side.



Gomusul, Ceramic object
ca. 50×35×8 cm, 2022

Jae Jin Park

Jae Jin Park explores the interaction between light and space. In her work "Lichtraum (Cocoon)", she transforms discarded packaging boxes into small, hidden spaces. Through the influence of natural light, these spaces become visible, changed, and animated.

For Park, light stands not only for visibility but also for inner life – it makes space perceptible and at the same time points to the spiritual within us. The installation responds to the course of the day: spaces fill with light and empty again – a play of vitality and transience.

The repeated, almost meditative working process resembles the spinning of a cocoon – a place of transformation in which what was once considered worthless gains new meaning.



Lichtraum, Kokon0522
Objekt, 50x50x20 cm, 2022

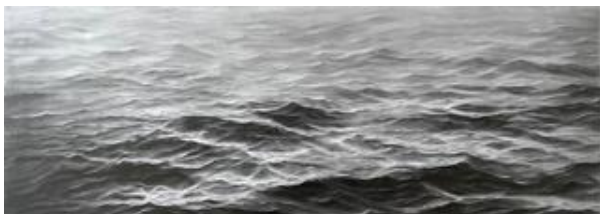
Yi Sun

Yi Sun was born in Qingdao, a coastal city in eastern China. The proximity to the sea continues to shape her artistic language – its depth, vastness, and silence recur as motifs in her drawings and paintings.

Her work develops slowly, through a meditative process. With pencil or brush, she moves layer by layer through memories, as if walking through fog. The sea becomes an inner space: a symbol of peace, freedom, and the gentle flow of time.

In this silence, Sun finds something universal – a feeling beyond origin or language. Her images resemble quiet meditations in which time slows down and the invisible becomes visible.

The tension between "I and We" appears in her work as connection: between her Asian heritage and her European present emerges a space where personal experience meets collective feeling.



The Sea Within Me
Drawing, pencil on paper
25x66 cm
2025

Karin Templin-Glees

Karin Templin-Glees explores and reflects on the interconnectedness, fragility, dependency, and transience of social and cultural processes. A formative experience in her artistic development was her engagement with traditional Chinese ink painting under Professor Dr. Qi Yang.

The encounter with the foreign and unfamiliar became a constructive challenge that led her to reconsider her understanding of duality, balance, and polarity, and to integrate these concepts more consciously into her painting.

The reduction to the essential—a core principle of Chinese ink painting—aligns with her own artistic philosophy: only through abstraction and simplification can the fullness of the whole be intuitively grasped.

In order to make processes of change and transformation visible, the artist works with concepts of repetition, contrast, and the deconstruction and reconstruction of line drawings, linear structures, and rhythmic patterns.



Told Repetition 2
Acrylic on wooden panel
50x175 cm

Qunyuan Wang

Whale Circus is a digital image series developed in 2024 by Qunyuan Wang, presenting a fictional circus scene featuring whales and mannequins. At the center is the absurd "whale circus", where AI generates images of so-called "folk spectacles" from various regions and cultures. These visuals are filled with stereotypical representations of regional traditions and outdated clichés – including figures in specific political uniforms, perpetually smiling plastic faces, and theatrical, surreal stage-like settings.

Using AI tools like MidJourney and DALL·E, the artist exposes the visual folklore that is embedded in the internet's image archives. Whale Circus intentionally exaggerates these mechanisms to make visible the cultural biases, colonial perspectives, and data politics hidden within AI training sets.



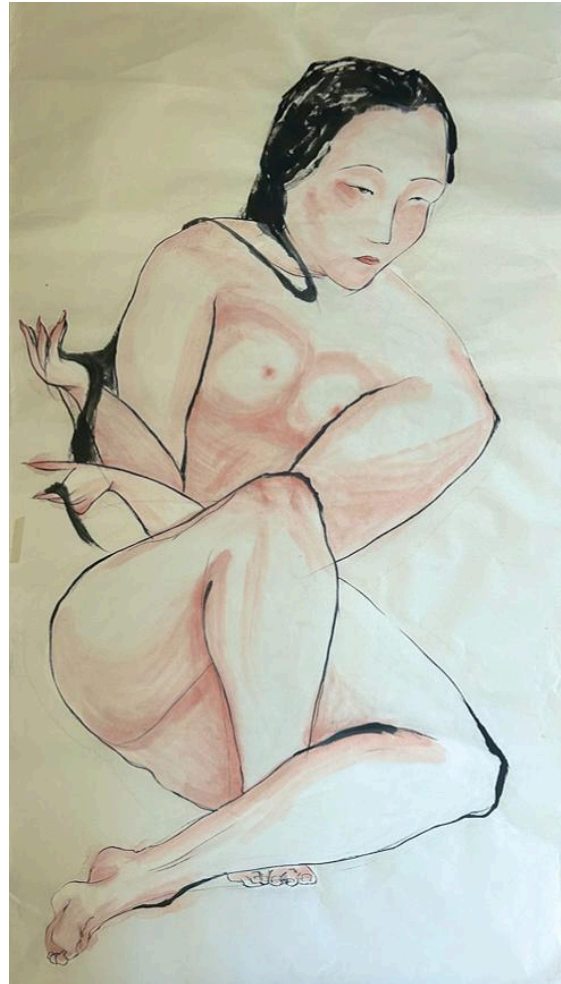
Whale Circus
AI-generated image
29x42 cm, 2024

Linge Xiao

Linge Xiao's artistic practice focuses on transcultural memory and hybrid identities – themes directly related to the exhibition. In her works, she examines whether Chinese women in Germany ever truly experience integration, or whether this is merely an illusion created by the majority society.

At the same time, she reflects on what happens when traditional Chinese painting migrates to Europe: Is it integrated into art history or reduced to exotic decoration? By linking these perspectives, Xiao addresses the complex dynamics between cultural belonging, perception, and representation.

Xiao lives and works in Odenthal. She studied Art Education at Soochow University (2011–2015), then worked as a teacher. From 2019 to 2022 she studied Photography at the University of Fine Arts Essen, followed by a Master's in Art and Cooperation (2022–2023).



Living in Germany, Traditional Chinese painting on Xuan paper
120×70 cm

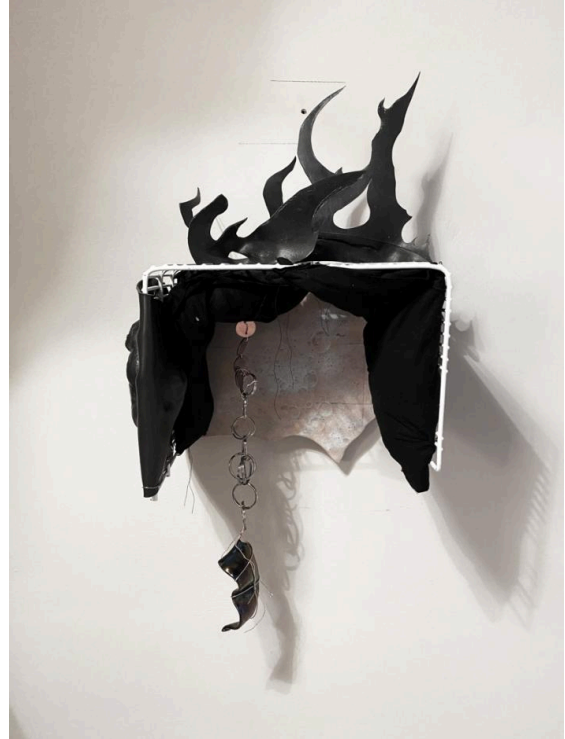
Gaoyi Yin

Gaoyi Yin describes being constantly accompanied by a vague, persistent whisper – as if it came from deep within, without a clear origin, yet always present. She sees the installation as both a container and a boundary – opening outward while at the same time collapsing inward.

She aimed to create a space that is quiet, pressed, and soft – a space that carries this voice. The curved black forms and the tangled material evoke, in her view, a sense of unstable balance.

The flame-like structures at the top appear to her like an unfolding of emotion or the burning of a thought, while the hanging metal pieces resemble slow, falling thoughts that tremble in the air and produce almost inaudible sounds.

For Gaoyi Yin, this work is a quiet resonance. From her perspective, it does not need to be understood – rather, it invites one to come closer. Viewers do not need to hear anything, but they might sense the atmosphere that cannot fully be put into words – a soft, heavy whisper that sways back and forth in the darkness.



Whisper Structure
Objekt, 25x55x20
2025

Jiayi Zhao

Jiayi Zhao explores the traces that time, experiences, and emotions leave in our lives. Her paintings shift between figuration and abstraction – visible textures stand for invisible memories, feelings, and thoughts.

A central tool is the palette knife: its textured surfaces resemble scars or imprints of past events. They echo experiences that may fade but still leave marks – like the memory of birth pain, which diminishes but leaves its trace.

Zhao's work addresses impermanence and vulnerability without relying on narrative. Recently, she has increasingly integrated references to Chinese cultural heritage into her contemporary visual language.

For her, art is a bridge – connecting people, cultures, and inner worlds. Her works are dialogues between material, technique, and content – attempts to make the invisible visible and the transient tangible.



Companion, Oil on canvas
200×250 cm, 2024

Exhibition venue:

BBK Kunstforum Düsseldorf
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Exhibition period:

17 July to 3 August 2025

Opening hours

Fri. 17:00-20:00

Sat./Sun. 15:00-18:00

Admission is free