

Gašper Kunšič Portfolio



They come out of their shelters when the night falls. They move with mysterious ways. When they walk into a room, everything stops. They appear out of fog, out of smoke. The rhythm fills the space. They bring light even when it's dark. They carry the light within. They carry everything they have with them — a potion for every pain, a kiss for every wound, making homes wherever the road takes them. Tattoos on their bodies mark time and resilience — monuments to ruthless hands that tried to mold them, to suppress and squeeze their magic into a living death. They almost died. Now, they look at it as their elixir; a driving force. A credo. Out of darkness, they molded their sun. A darker light in purple rain hues. They hold that — that queer joy they found and share with those on the way, protecting their spaces and bodies from massacres. They travel by night to protect themselves — even though they are invincible now. The road made them enduring, resistant markers of singing in dark times. They bring a tender touch to a ruthless landscape — and before you know it, as the music disappears, there is smoke and a scent of a faraway place. They are gone, traveled further. But the melodies, worlds, and love linger in the space forever, as they charged it — and everything shimmers that they laid their touch upon.

Night Travelers 2025, Stadel Museum, Frankfurt, installation view



Night Traveler 2025, MDF, lacquer, polyester, thread, 190 × 90 × 90 cm



Night Traveler 2025, MDF, lacquer, polyester, thread, 190 × 90 × 90 cm



Night Travelers 2025, detail



Night Travelers 2025, detail



When the Night Falls 2025, gouache on gessoed MDF board, 50 x 35 x 3 cm



Bridge to Morning 2025, Ravnikar, Ljubljana, installation view



Evening Prayers 2025, MDF, Acrylics, 200 x 125 x 250 cm



Evening Prayers 2025, detail



Mountains in the Night 2025, mural, 3,4 x 15 m



Blossom (To Melt the Frozen) 2025, MDF, acrylics, lacquer, 26 x 36 x 2 cm



Bridge to Morning 2025, Ravnikar, Ljubljana, installation view



Bridge to Morning 2025, Ravnikar, Ljubljana, installation view



Blossom (See Sense in Senseless) 2025, MDF, acrylics, lacquer, 26 x 36 x 2 cm



Swallow 2025, MDF, acrylics, lacquer, 33 x 50 x 2 cm



Angel of Sorrow 2025, MDF, lacquer, 85 x 150 x 2 cm



Blossoms (Almost Lovers) 2025, MDF, acrylics, lacquer, 26 x 72 x 2 cm



Dawn 2025, MDF, lacquer, 100 x 100 x 2 cm



Bridge to Morning 2025, Ravnikar, Ljubljana, installation view

Three sculptures form the center around which Gašper Kunšič's exhibition Bridge to Morning unfolds. Entitled Night Travelers (2025), three nudes face the viewers: life-sized, arms raised, legs bent, heads gently tilted. Their posture makes them appear not as if they were standing in a gallery, but rather on a dancefloor in the vibrant energy of a nightclub. The varnish, shimmering in the light, and ornamented stars transform them into "creatures of the night"—protectors and companions for those who move between darkness and dawn.

Rather than working with the sculptural logic of shaping mass to create volume, Kunšič uses negative forms, outlines and cuts made from monochrome-painted MDF. Curved lines define the contours, which are adorned with ornaments and volutes. The void, the absence, becomes a central component: even without "flesh," they possess a physical presence—like ghosts. They are both static and scenic; their rigid form holds the potential for movement, as if they might, at any moment, shift their legs, find a rhythm, or change pose. Draped ribbons, machine-embroidered with symbols and syllables, embellish them with a "narrative skin" featuring signs and fragments of songs and poems that do not fade into oblivion but endure through ornament.

The Night Travelers are hybrid beings drawn from various iconographic sources: medieval and neoclassical depictions of saints are echoed in their posture and grandeur, as is the style of socialist realism with its heroic figures imbued with pathos. Representing a collision of cultures, they condense the artist's biography and memories of Christian and folkloric motifs from his childhood in rural Slovenia, the cultural heritage of the former Yugoslavia, and his time in Vienna and Frankfurt am Main. He combines these influences with the aesthetics of pop and queer culture, incorporating glitter, stars and color codes. The result are figures that hover between saint and performer, guardian and dancer, poised on the threshold between invocation and ecstasy.

The sculptures are embedded within a larger ensemble. Reliefs in the shapes of doves and hearts hang on lavender walls. Everything appears in monochrome colors. Until about five years ago, Kunšič primarily worked with red, blue, and white—colors referencing his region of origin. This palette is more than a geopolitical reference; it carries memories and emotions. In recent years, the artist has undertaken what he calls a "queering" of these colors—a blending that led to violet. Today, a darker, more melancholic scale dominates, with industrially named tones such as "magician," "freak," and "galaxy". Kunšič did not choose these colors for their names, but their tonal connotations resonated with his selection as affirmations. A large mural takes up the motif of the rainbow, but in fractured form—steeply jagged and pulsating in dark shades—a deliberate departure from overly stereotypical expectations.

A dark red sculpture sits in front of the mural, like a screen, fence, or grille. Permeable and walkable, it does not block the gaze. It is both ornamental and architectural. Where its structure comes into view, it acts as a filter over the backdrop. Patterns and shapes overlap. While ornamentation in Baroque architecture served to overwhelm and to stage power and representation, Adolf Loos, in his 1913 essay Ornament and Crime, declared it a cultural regression—excess without purpose. However, Kunšič overturns that dismissal: his re-appropriation of ornamentation is a gesture of self-empowerment. Drawing on the aesthetics of camp, which embraces exaggeration, affect, and artificiality as strengths, he uses ornamentation excessively to affirm queer identity and resistance.

The exhibition is an elegy to pain and joie de vivre, attitude and resilience—the ability to persevere in the face of darkness and transform it into beauty. The energy of queer club culture, where performance, community, and emotion converge, permeates the works. They bring to mind Félix González-Torres, whose strategies of visibility and invisibility expressed queer identity and resilience.

They also recall Tom Burr, who explores the fragility and strength of queer spaces—places where life has been threatened, yet new forms of community, desire, and self-determination emerge. For Kunšič, too, the night embodies a place for community, protection, and survival. This becomes clear in an adjacent text by the artist on the wall:

AFTER ALL THIS TIME
COUNTLESS NIGHTS
HAVE CHANGED US
VISIBLE AND INVISIBLE
STRUGGLES
YEARS AS TEARS
PARTS OF US DIED
AND YET WE STILL
CHOOSE
THE DAWN
AGAIN
AND
AGAIN

Thus, the exhibition creates a space of transformation—a place between darkness and light, between past and present. Kunšič constructs a world that offers shelter, movement, emergence, and transitions: a bridge to morning.

Text by Marijana Schneider



Star That Carries Your Name 2025, Kunsthalle Willingshausen, installation view



Star That Carries Your Name 2025, Kunsthalle Willingshausen, installation view



Star That Carries Your Name 2025, Kunsthalle Willingshausen, installation view



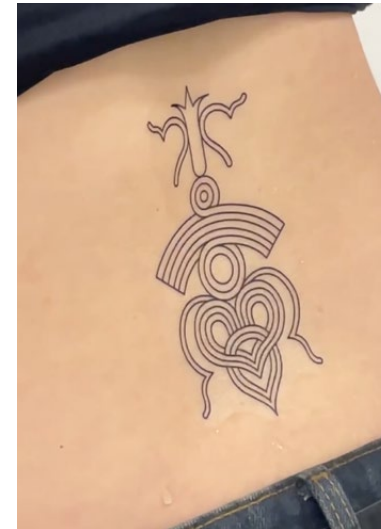
Until My Lips Burn Out 2025, gouache on gessoed MDF board, 21 × 15 cm



Stranger in the Night 2025, gouache on gessoed MDF board, 21 × 15 cm



Wand (To Hold a Dark Rainbow) 2025, MDF, lacquer, 100 × 55 × 2 cm



Wand (To Hold a Dark Rainbow) 2025, temporary tattoo, unlimited edition



Wand (To Build a Bridge) 2025, MDF, lacquer, 100 × 45 × 2 cm



Wand (To Carry Night) 2025, MDF, lacquer, 100 × 40 × 2 cm



Blossom (To Exchange a Breath) 2025, MDF, acrylics, lacquer, 26 × 36 × 2 cm



Whispered softly on purpose 2025, fffriedrich, Frankfurt am Main, installation view



Ornament 2025, MDF, lacquer, 135 × 120 × 1,6 cm



Die Gefühle haben Schweigepflicht 2025, gouache on gessoed MDF board, 21 × 30 cm



Night is falling on my hand 2025, gouache on gessoed MDF board, 21 × 30 cm



When we lay to sleep 2025, gouache on gessoed MDF board, 21 × 30 cm



I carry sun in my hand 2025, gouache on gessoed MDF board, 21 × 30 cm



Über das Neue 2023, Belvedere21, Museum of Contemporary Art, Vienna, installation view



May our life be showered with flowers 2023, MDF, lacquer, 120 x 120 x 3 cm, Belvedere21, Vienna



When we become Sky (Sunset I, Sunset II) MDF, lacquer 220 x 128, 152 cm ; 128 x 245, 152 cm, Belvedere21, Vienna



Heimat Camp 2023, Škuc Gallery, Ljubljana, installation view



Carrying a Mountain and a Scent of Lavender 2023, paint, MDF, 100 x 70 x 1,6 cm



Chest 2023, wood, lacquer, wrought iron, 62 x 160 x 65 cm



Chest 2023, wood, lacquer, wrought iron, 62 x 160 x 65 cm, detail



Heimat Camp 2023, Škuc Gallery, Ljubljana, installation view



Fearless, Loving, Soothing Guardian 2023, paint, MDF, each 200 x 80 x 1,6 cm



Fearless Guardian 2023, paint, MDF, 200 x 80 x 1,6 cm



Loving Guardian 2023, paint, MDF, 200 x 80 x 1,6 cm



Soothing Guardian 2023, paint, MDF, 200 x 80 x 1,6 cm



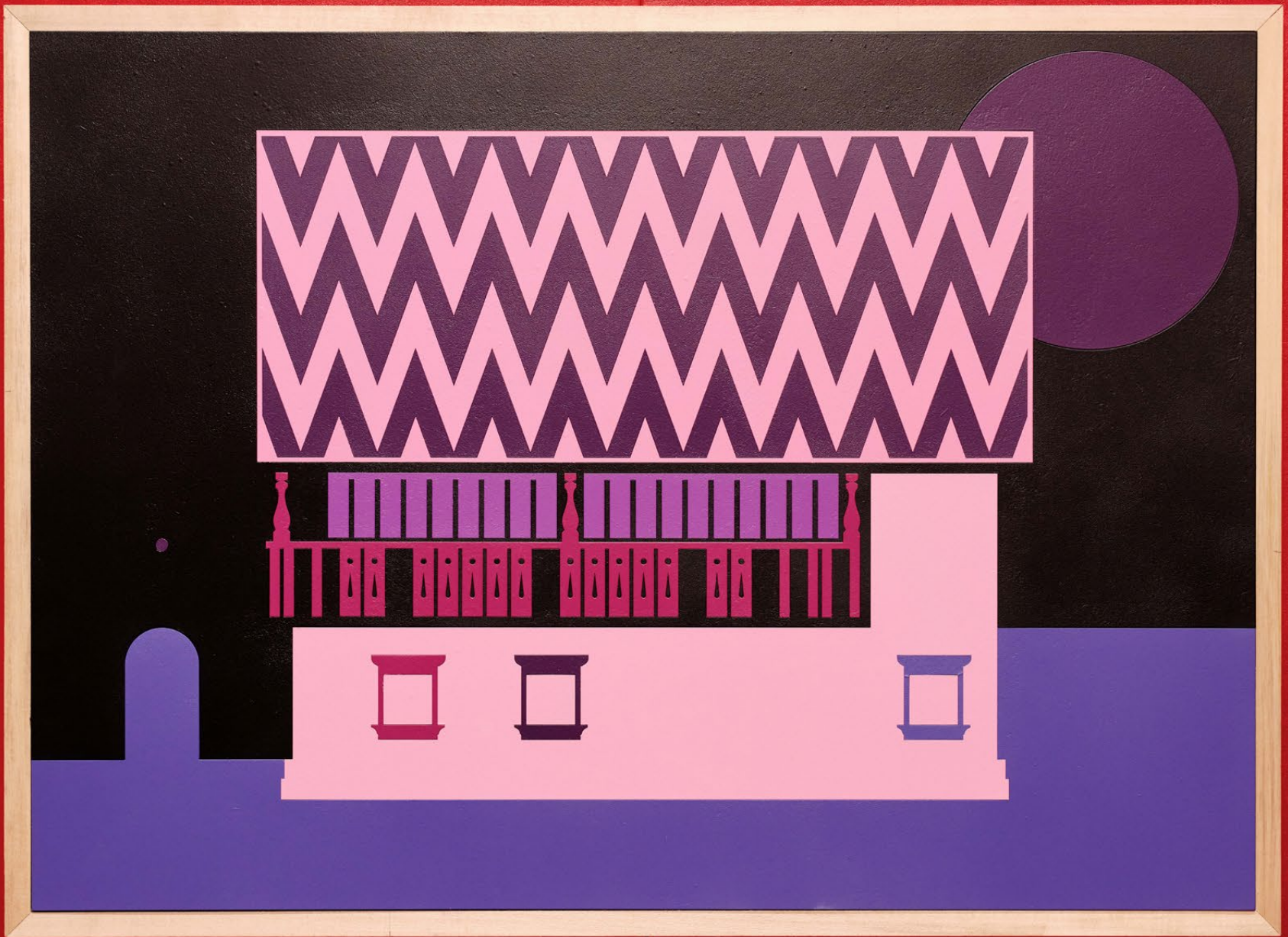
Heimat Camp 2023, Škuc Gallery, Ljubljana, installation view



Heimat Camp 2023, Škuc Gallery, Ljubljana, installation view



Heimat Camp 2023, Škuc Gallery, Ljubljana, installation view



My House has no Door 2023, MDF, acrylic paint, wood, 50 x 70 cm



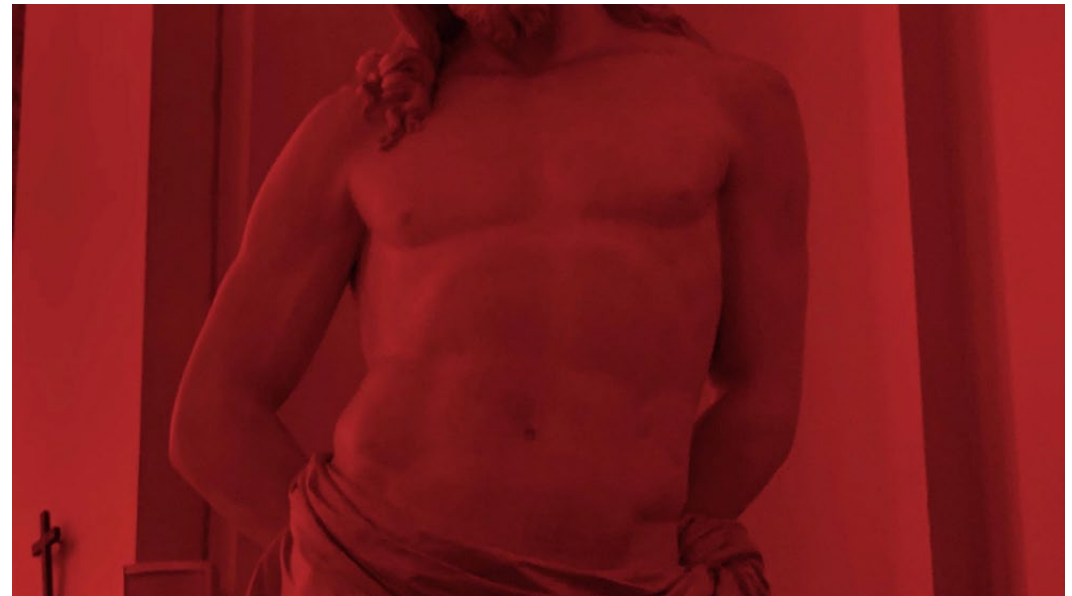
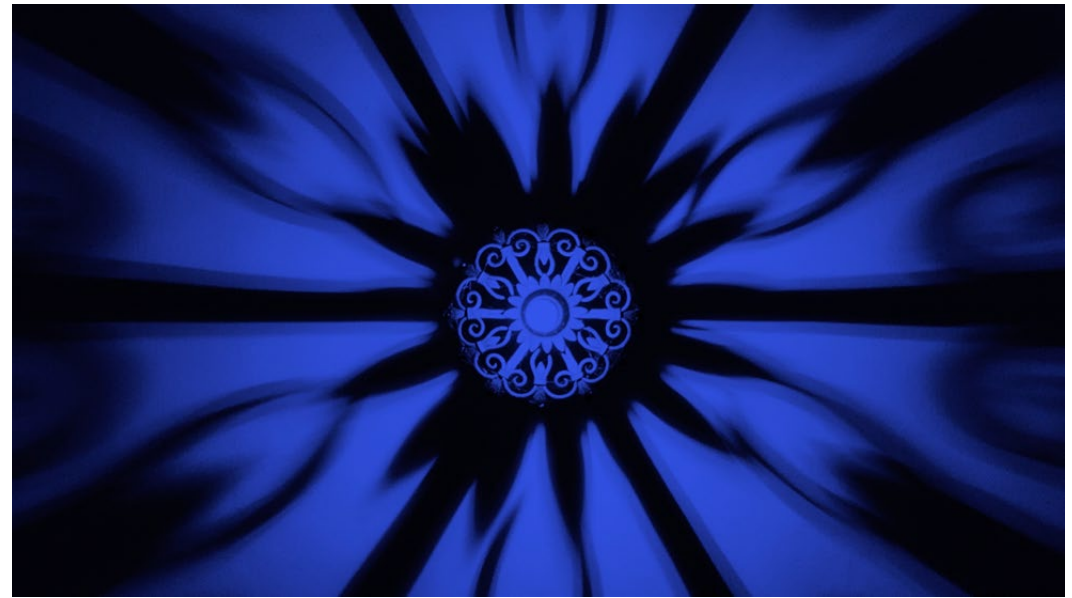
We make Love on the Hayloft 2023, MDF, acrylic paint, wood, 50 x 70 cm

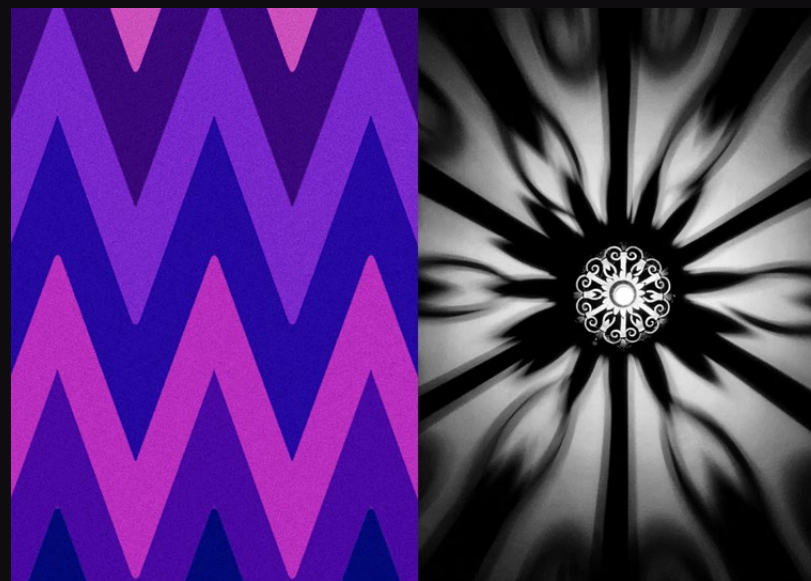


Heimat Camp 2023, Škuc Gallery, Ljubljana, installation view

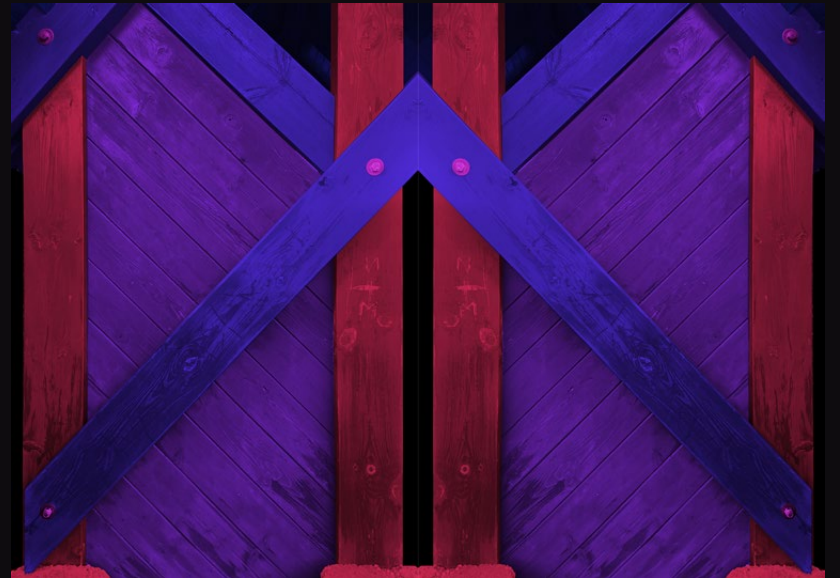


Heimat Camp 2023, Škuc Gallery, Ljubljana, installation view





Heimat Camp 2023, artist book, A4, digital print, 40 pages, edition of 300







Waves, Waterfalls 2023, polyester, dimensions variable



Warmth 2023, lacquer, iron, 275 x 145 x 145 cm,
Gallery of the Cultural Center Semberija, Bijeljina



Invisible Hand 2023, UGM Museum, Maribor, installation view



Invisible Hand 2023, UGM Museum, Maribor, installation view



I carry the Sun in my Hand
2023, colour pencil on paper, 40 x 30 cm (framed)



When We Lay to Rest
2023, colour pencil on paper, 30 x 40 cm(framed)



Die Gefühle haben Schweigepflicht
2023, colour pencil on paper, 30 x 40 cm(framed)



Endless Return 2023, Ravnikar Gallery Space, Ljubljana, installation view



Endless Return 2023, Ravnikar Gallery Space, Ljubljana, installation view



Night is falling on my Hand 2023, colour pencil on paper, 30 x 40 cm (framed)



Stranger in the night 2023, colour pencil on paper, 40 x 30 cm (framed)



Fire Bird 2023, colour pencil on paper, 40 x 30 cm (framed)



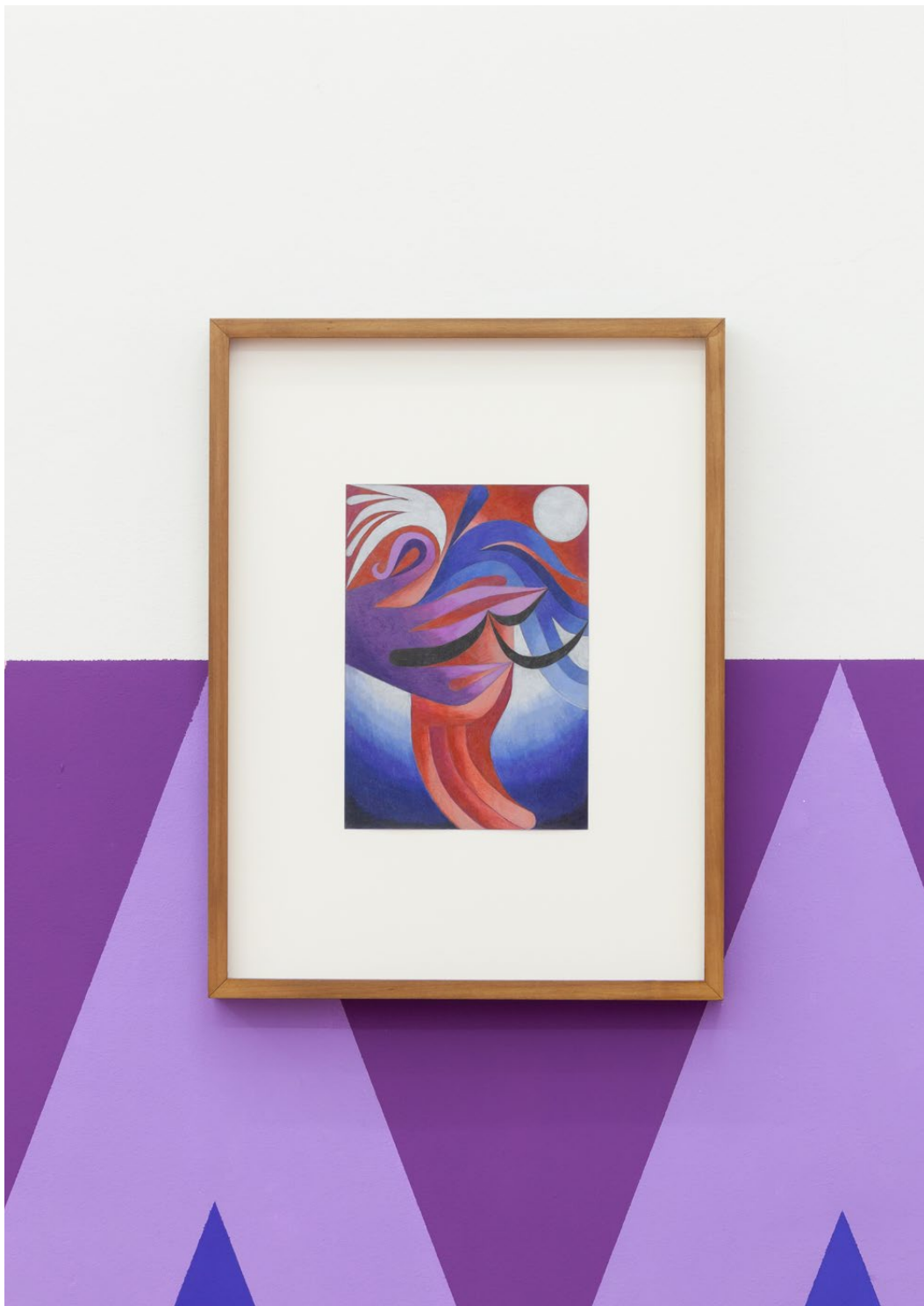
Guardians 2023, House of Spouse, Vienna, installation view



Guardians 2023, House of Spouse, Vienna, installation view



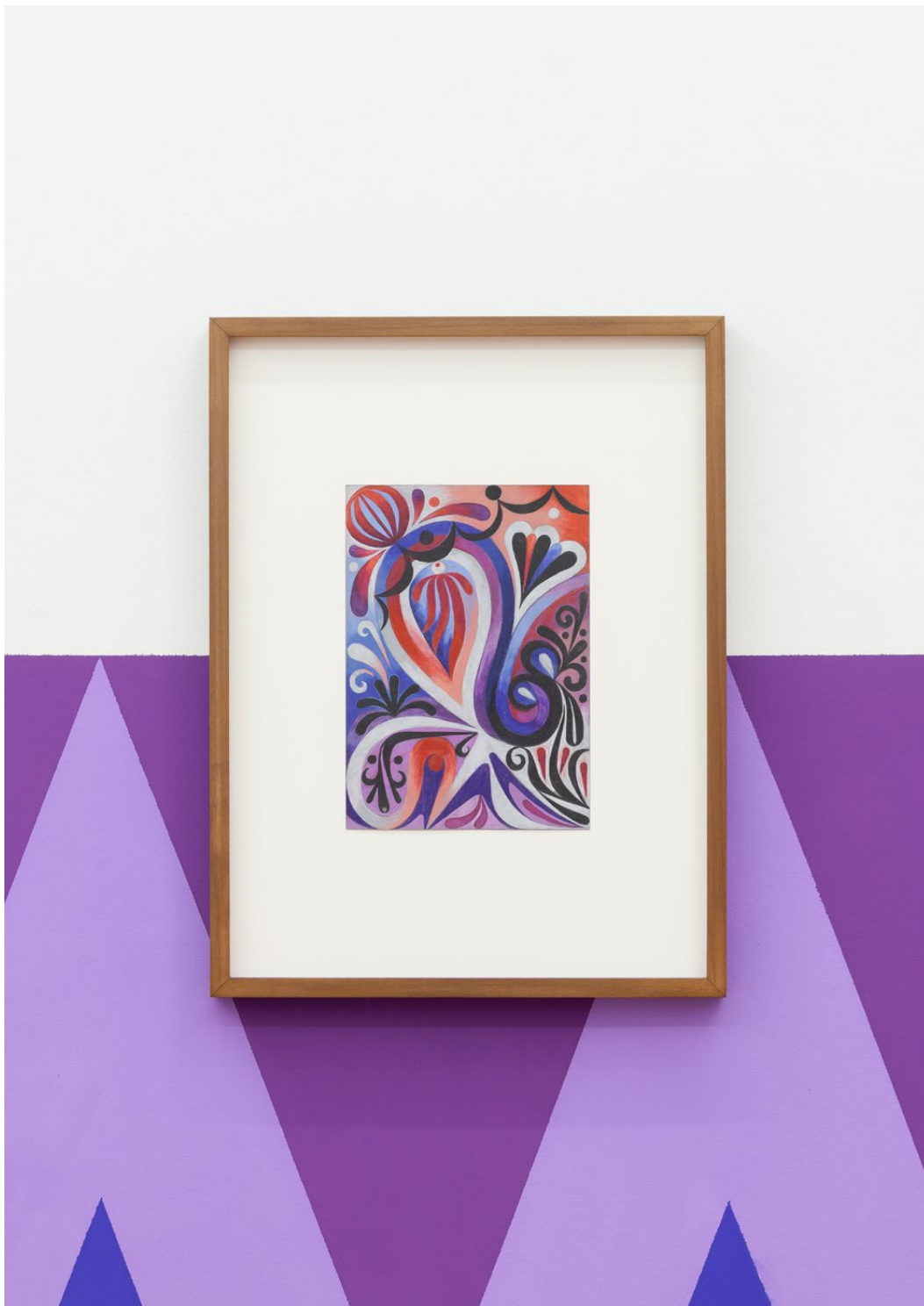
Fuchsia 2023, polyester, plywood, 220 x 340 x 53 cm



Embrace 2023, colour pencil on paper, 40 x 30 cm (framed)



Body of Feathers 2023, colour pencil on paper, 40 x 30 cm (framed)



Abundance 2023, colour pencil on paper, 40 x 30 cm (framed)

“There’s no place like home,” Dorothy repeats in *The Wizard of Oz*, hoping that this mantra will bring her back to the black-and-white world of the Kansas farmhouse she wanted to escape from at the beginning of the film. *Heimat Camp* deals with artist Gašper Kunšič’s ambivalent relationship to the notion of home, looking from home through a Technicolour rainbow to the world, and from the world through it back to home. In his works, he interprets, adapts and appropriates the archetypes of the environment he grew up in with his own queer sensibility. He incorporates figures, images and forms from the folk tradition, the legacy of monumental socialist sculpture and muralism, and Catholic iconography of angels, doves and the pierced heart. He immerses the images in a world of imaginative apparitions, emotional rawness and exuberant pathos, using geometric conception to shape them into figures that he can control as an artist and as a person. The colourful world of *Oz* is but a mirrored and enhanced reality of Dorothy’s everyday life.

For Kunšič, home is the field of the eternal struggle between being trapped in the entrenched expectations and social norms of a conservative environment on the one hand, and the dreamy world of pastoral pleasures and homesickness in a rose-coloured rear-view mirror on the other. Where is the place for a boy with a sensitive character and an artistic disposition? Kunšič counters the inner schism with the method of hyper-identification. Camp, a sensibility rather than an aesthetic category, is a way for him to detach himself from the external definitions of home and make his own construction of the meaning of home. The notion of camp can be understood as a way of seeing and a survival strategy; it comes from queer culture and was theoretically framed by Susan Sontag in her essay *Notes on “Camp”*. Camp brings social clichés and moulds to the point of sublimation through exaggeration and potentiation, thus exposing and disarming them of their repressive levers.

Sontag divides camp into the accidental, the sincere and the naïve, as well as the one that is self-aware, the one that is the means of communication. Both are a coded language that is not derived from the text or form itself, but from the reception of the text or form by the receiver, the reader, the viewer. It is a secret language within a community of like-minded people, a celebration of the fantastic, the marvellous, the extraordinary in the often mundane, the simply bad or even deplorable. Through the prism of camp, Kunšič wrenches the love of home, patriotism – an ideologically charged and politically exploited concept – from the grip of insidious traditional values and nationalist instrumentalisation and offers a different, fearless, loving and reassuring – these are also the qualities of his *Guardians* – interpretation of home. *Blut und Boden* become kin and space if we are allowed a little drama. Kunšič’s *Heimat Camp* is, to follow Sontag, both sincere and naïve, but also pointed, purposeful, at times one or the other.

The main building blocks of Kunšič’s images are the figure, the ornament and the text. He draws inspiration from the figurative, from the male figure, including his own, which oscillates between the physical strength of heroic valour and the vulnerability of corporeality and spirit. Despite the figures’ characteristic angular contours, there is a softness to them. A gaze of doe-eyed melancholy or sparkling zeal, flushing of the cheeks, a relaxed contrapposto stance, a limp wrist. The homoeroticism implicit in socialist monuments and, ultimately, in the altarpieces of martyrs, saints and angelic figures is made flesh. The figures are often framed or, in larger, spatial installations, squeezed to the edges of the space. Sometimes they are positioned front-facing like icons, other times in a contorted spasm.

A curved line is reserved almost exclusively for ornamental elements. Kunšič elevates the folk ornament – the carnation, the ivy leaf, the cockerel, the wreath, the pattern of the wooden fence – in a camp manner to an autonomous image rich in connotations. The ornament, which Adolf Loos called a crime, can be read in Kunšič’s work in terms of queer emancipation. The superfluous, the over-the-top, the kitschy, that which has no place in serious art, is brought into focus – it demands consideration. Where ornament and social structure meet – in the symbols of the state – is the source of Kunšič’s colour palette. At the beginning of the artist’s career, the colours of the Slavic, Yugoslav and Slovenian tricolour were clearly divided, while in the recent period, they have been increasingly mixed into shades of pink and purple.

The ornament also appears in Kunšič’s imaginarium through the use of music. As a recurring pattern, it sways through the motifs of Oberkrainer waltzes and polkas, and the repetitiveness of Slovenian evergreen melodies and pop songs. The lyrics and myths of the Slovenian female singers – especially that of Helena Blagne, a camp icon and a guardian of queer communities since the 1990s in her own right – touch the artist in a particularly visceral way. He reads the lyrics like poetry, like gospel. “The silver river is the memory of the happiness of our shared youth.” Who would dare deny the emotional charge of this verse and the images it evokes?

In the self-imposed exile in Vienna and Frankfurt, Gašper Kunšič reflects on home. Just as the Viennese “vesnani”, members of the Vesna art association, did more than a century before him; Gvido Birolla, Maksim Gaspari, Hinko Smrekar and others. From a distance, he can see the places, images, customs, people and stories they tell each other with more clarity, but also more romantically. He looks towards the traditionally decorated wooden chest at home, where memories, experiences, pain and skeletons are hidden. Along the way, he avoids the pitfalls of self-exoticisation and arrives at a thoughtful autopoetics that simultaneously reveals and protects him. He weaves the complexity of his own identity into an embroidered cloak under which he can invite others too, others who share – or can at least imagine – a similar experience to his own. In *Heimat Camp*, Gašper Kunšič creates the space, image and form of home after his own heart and asks the question: To whom does the love of the homeland belong?

Text by Jure Kirbiš



When Our Stars Align 2023, wallpaper, 8,9 x 10,8m



Rocking Meadows 2023, Kunstverein Wiesen, installation view



Soothing Guardian (Mirror)
2024, vinyl sticker, 200 x 80 cm, intervention in a public space



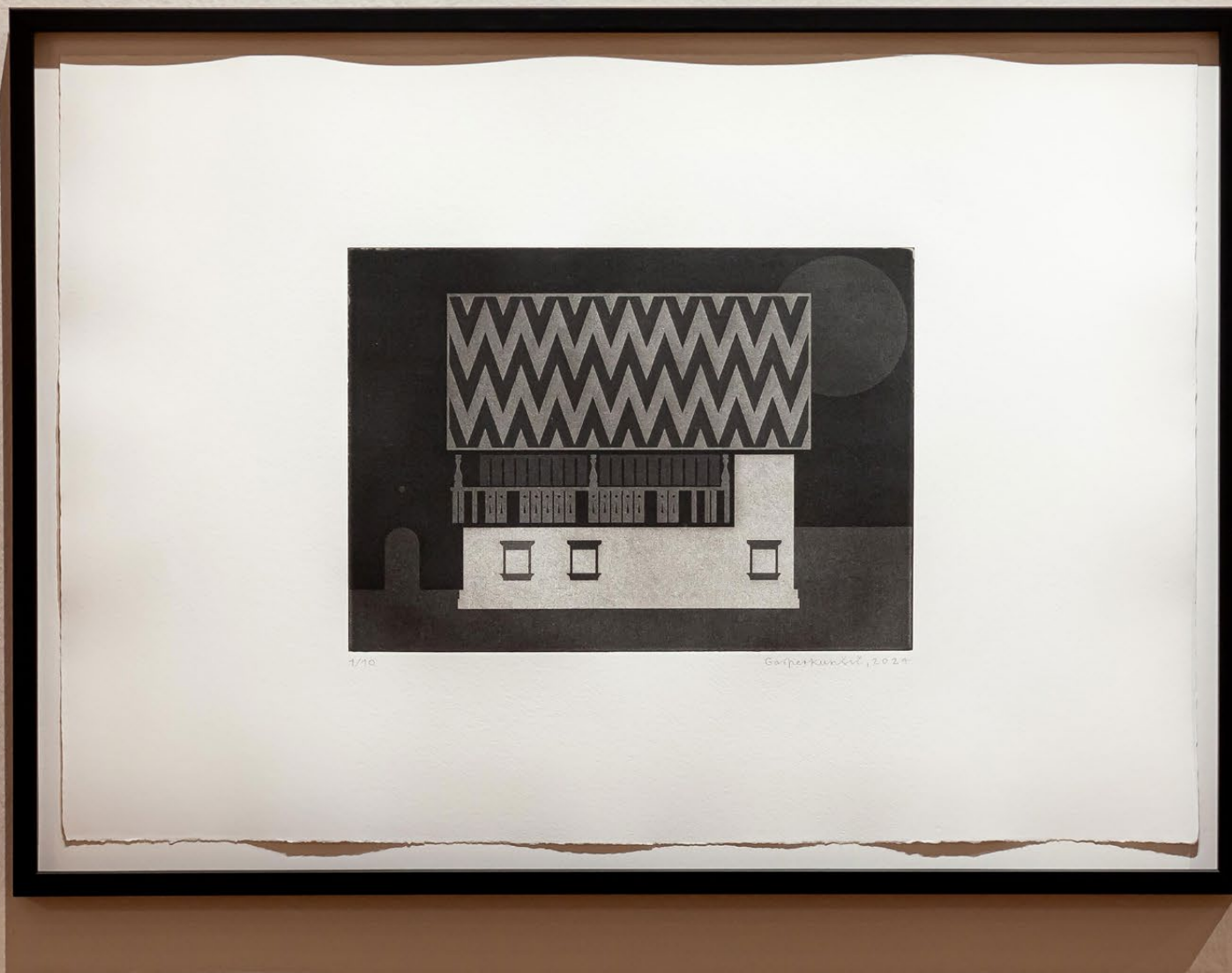
Fearless Guardian

2024, MDF, lacquer, lyrca, 42 x 16 cm, intervention in a church, installation view



Soothing Guardian

2024, MDF, lacquer, lyrca, 42 x 16 cm, intervention in a church



My House has no Door 2024, intaglio print, 42 x 63 cm (framed), edition of 10



We make Love on the Hayloft 2024, intaglio print, 42 x 63 cm (framed), edition of 10



Dress me in Fire 2022, installation view, Schiller-Museum, Weimar



Dress me in Fire 2022, paint, MDF, dimensions variable



Too heavy to carry alone 2022, textile tape, 10,9 x 3,75 m



Tired Hands 2022, paint, MDF, 120 x 76 x 1,6 cm



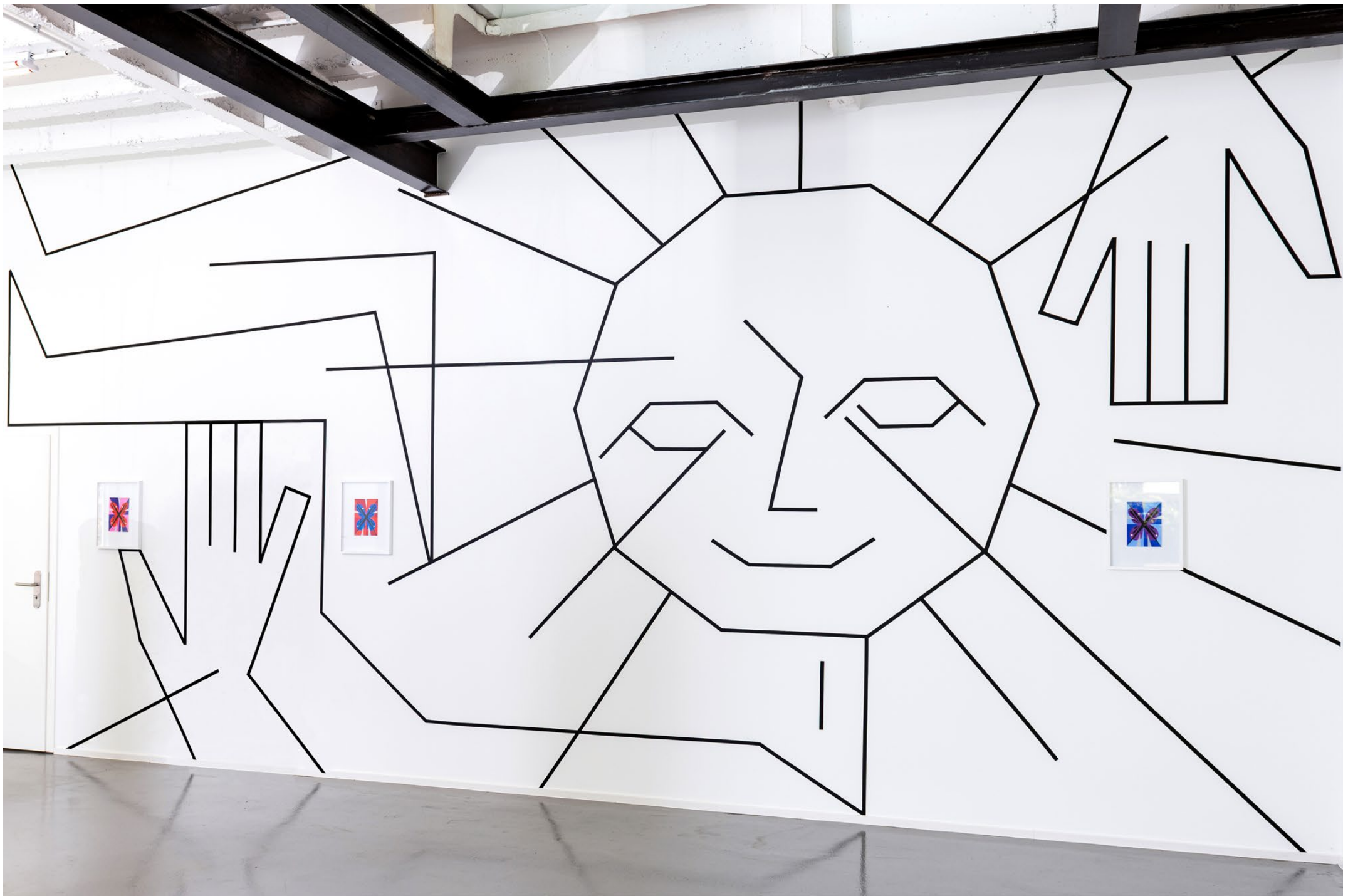
Blood Sport, 2022, paint, MDF and faux leather on frame, 120 x 80 x 6,5 cm



Wounds (Red Scissors) paint, MDF and faux leather on frame, 42 x 30 cm



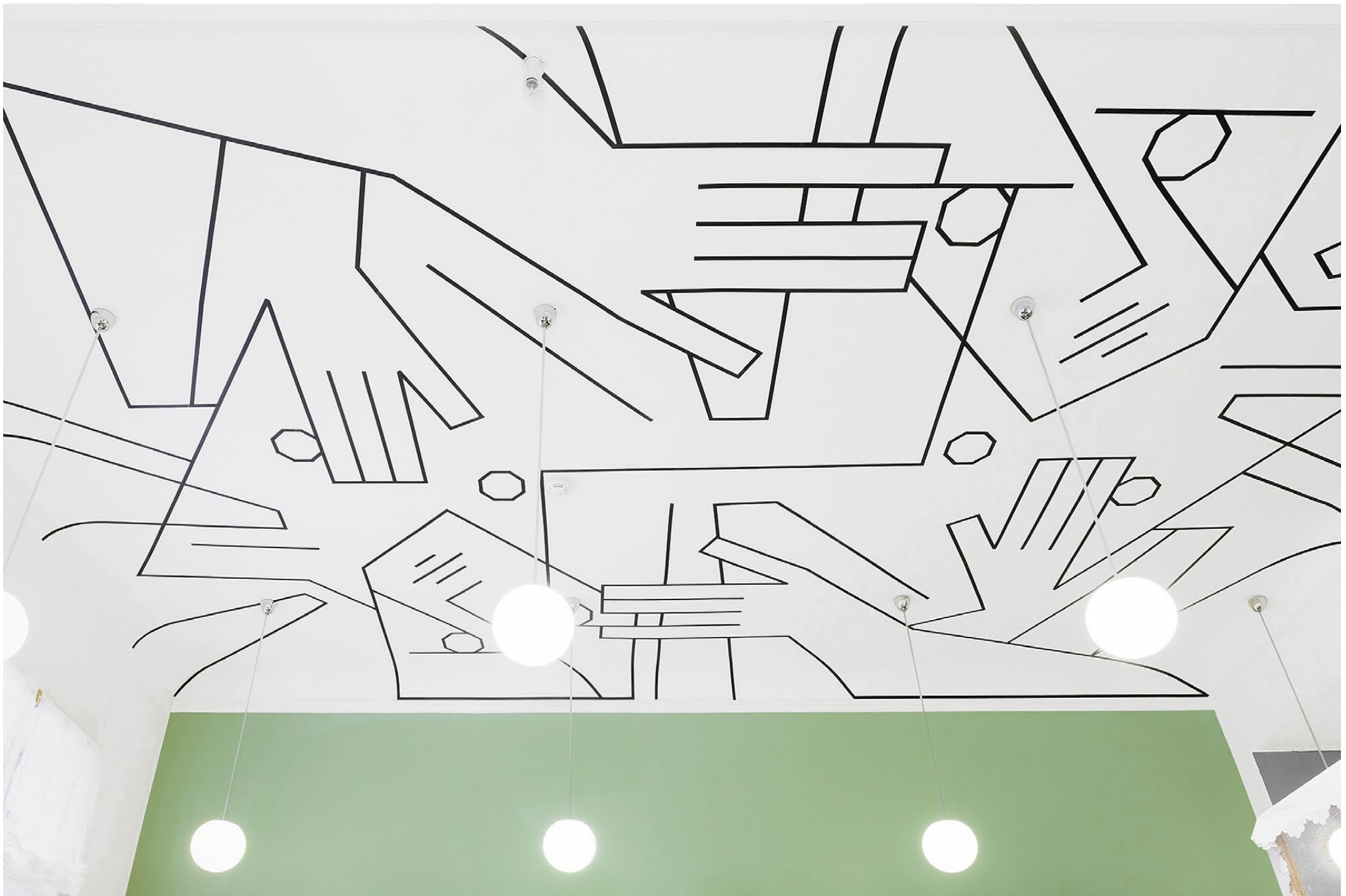
Now I live with half a Heart, 2022, paint, MDF, 35 x 33 x 1,6 cm



As the Sun wakes up 2022, textile tape, 8 x 3,7 m, Palais Kunstmarkt, Offenbach am Main



Do you hear in this noise my tears touching the floor
2021, paint, MDF and faux leather on frame, 60 x 40 cm



Dancers in the Sky 2022, textile tape, 6,6 x 4,2 m, Hotel Nizza, Frankfurt am Main



Pale Heart 2019, paint, cardboard and faux leather on MDF, 30 x 18 cm



Shepherd Boy in the Night 2022, paint, and faux leather on MDF, 30 x 21 cm

Gašper Kunšič

Born 1992 in Kranj, Slovenia.

Lives and works in Frankfurt am Main, Germany.

Education

2021 — 25 Städelschule Frankfurt am Main

2018 — 21 Academy of Fine Arts Vienna

2015 — 20 University of Applied Arts Vienna

Solo and duo exhibitions

2025 Star That Carries Your Name, Kunsthalle Willingshausen, DE

2025 Bridge To Morning, Ravnikar, Ljubljana, SI

2025 Whispered Softly on Purpose (with Weronika Wysocka), fffriedrich, Frankfurt am Main, DE

2023 When our stars align, Kino Šiška, Ljubljana, SI

2023 Endless Return (with Živa Drvarič), Ravnikar, Ljubljana, SI

2023 Heimat Camp, Škuc Gallery, Ljubljana, SI

2023 Guardians, House of Spouse, Vienna, AT

2021 Leaving Rooms (with Živa Drvarič), Galerija Gallery, Ljubljana, SI

2020 In search of a lost time, WAF Galerie, Vienna, AT

2018 Enthusiastic Gaze, Kino Šiška, Ljubljana, SI

Selected group exhibitions

2025 Kunstpreis junger westen, Kunsthalle Recklinghausen, DE

2025 unbecomings (curated by Misal Adnan Yıldız), Zilberman, Berlin, DE

2025 Overture, Städel Museum, Frankfurt am Main, DE

2025 Our Collective Limits, Mediterranea Bienale, Nova Gorica/Gorizia, SI/IT

2024 Double Agent, Biennial of Design BIO28, Museum of Architecture and Design, Ljubljana, SI

2024 Cacophony, Avu Veletržni, Prague, CZ

2024 Going Global, Cankarjev Dom, Ljubljana, SI

2024 Eyes in the Stone, Triennial of Art and Environment EKO 9, Maribor, SI

2023 Power House, Schiller-Museum, Weimar, DE

2023 Youth Biennial, Art Pavilion Cvijeta Zuzorić, Belgrade, RS

2023 Über das Neue, Belvedere 21, Museum of Contemporary Art, Vienna, AT

2023 Invisible Hand, UGM, Maribor, SI

2023 Rocking Meadows (curated by Sung Tieu), Kunstverein Wiesen, Wiesen, DE

2023 Beč Bijeljina, Gallery of the Cultural Center Semberija, Bijeljina, BA

2022 Dispatches from a Troubled City, Wien Museum MUSA, Vienna, AT

2022 Zeit, House of Spouse, Vienna, AT

2022 ZONE1, Vienna Contemporary, Vienna, AT

2022 Created in Slovenia, Palace Cukrarna, Ljubljana, SI

2022 Heritage, Dobra Vaga, Ljubljana, SI

2022 Cats & Giants, Palais Supermarkt, Offenbach am Main, DE

2022 Grand Nizza Show, Hotel Nizza, Frankfurt am Main, DE

2021 Chambre d'Amixes (Room of Friends), Laurenz Space, Vienna, AT

2021 Let it be Queer, City Gallery Ljubljana, SI

2021 Red Sun, Škuc Gallery, Ljubljana, SI

2021 School of Waters, Mediterranea, Biennial of Young Art, San Marino, SM

2021 Von Fliegenfallen und Wiener Freiheit, Heiligenkreuzer Hof, Vienna, AT

2020 The will to change, New Jörg, Vienna, AT

2020 Haus Wien, Vienna, AT

2020 Artist Statement, Parallel, Vienna, AT

2019 Propeller, Fotogalerie Wien, Vienna, AT

2019 Our Way[s] of Life, The Austrian Cultural Forum, London, UK

2018 Tomorrow is cancelled, Krinzinger Projekte, Vienna, AT

Screenings

2024 DFF – Deutsches Filminstitut & Filmmuseum, Frankfurt am Main, DE

2023 FEKK - Ljubljana Short Film Festival, Ljubljana, SI

2019 FEKK - Ljubljana Short Film Festival, Ljubljana, SI

2019 Fest Anča International Animation Festival, Žilina, SK

Prizes and Scholarships

2026 Künstlerhilfe Stipendium Frankfurt

2025 Willingshausen Stipendium

2024 R&S Daimlerstraße GmbH Filmpreis

BIO

Gašper Kunšič (1992, Slovenia) recently graduated from the Städelschule in Frankfurt am Main, having previously studied at Academy of Fine Arts and University of Applied Arts in Vienna. In his practice he reworks visual references from the countryside of his childhood, alongside folk motifs and pop culture from the former Yugoslavia and a broader diasporic Balkan context. Through spatial interventions, sculptures, paintings and works on paper he transforms exhibition spaces into emotionally charged environments that subvert the traditional, creating new folklore worlds and their imaginings for those who do not belong. He has exhibited at Städel Museum in Frankfurt, Kunsthalle Recklinghausen, Zilberman Gallery in Berlin, Belvedere21, Wien Museum MUSA, and House of Spouse in Vienna, Schiller-Museum in Weimar, the City Gallery, Škuc Gallery, and Ravnikar Gallery in Ljubljana, as well as UGM in Maribor. He has participated in the EKO Triennial of Art and Environment in Maribor, the Youth Biennial in Belgrade, and the Mediterranea Biennial in San Marino and Nova Gorica/Gorizia. He lives and works in Frankfurt am Main.

ARTIST STATEMENT

From primal memories, I draw melodies, images, and visions that intertwine into a harmonious cacophony. Referencing popular music, elements of design and popular culture, I construct bridges for reinterpretation of personal and collective memories. I shift archetypes of my upbringing through folk traditions, socialist monumentalism, and Catholic iconography, transforming them into graphic symbols and theatrical compositions that create space for queer readings. Sowing seeds of utopian ideas, I reimagine elusive realities and weighty themes into shimmering expressions of sorrow and hope. A layer of powdered sugar veils anxiety and unrest, transforming them into something sweeter and more bearable. My artistic pursuit seeks to envision a world where identities of all winds can find happiness. In my practice I aim to celebrate life, resilience, and community.

CONTACT

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