

KUNSTVEREIN GARTENHAUS

20 Mar – 4 Jul 2026

REY AKDOGAN act I

Prologue

It's almost dark outside, and when I look out, I am never sure what time it is. The half-open curtains of my room, thick pastel velvet, reveal a blurry image of the outside as if it were the well-chosen background of a magazine, where contours disappear to induce a sense of calm. Featurelessness was what I craved. Instead, the room, its coded interior, and the few pieces of furniture—designed to look like design pieces, but they are not— are conjuring a sense of estrangement. The walls, a soft sage green, envelop the space, making it cold. I close my eyes, and a series of colored shapes overlap in the back of my mind. I open them again. The soft yellow light coming from a metal arm table lamp is the only source of illumination, and I think I should switch on another one, but I cannot find it. I wonder why ceiling lamps were created, as they have such a hierarchical feeling, illumination as a form of power, visibility as power. I finally find another floor lamp in a corner I had somehow missed. I meditate on how our cognitive attention functions, why we notice certain elements, colors, or motives rather than others, and if the free will we so strongly have fought to exercise is actually free. Perhaps, we live in a fiction, made of things constantly enhanced to our liking. As if our vision would be constantly filtered by capitalistic means. I look outside again, it's dark now, a visual absence, and all feels sharper, aware.

Silence.

AFF

KUNSTVEREIN GARTENHAUS is pleased to present Rey Akdogan, act I, and Valentina Triet, act II, an exhibition opening across two distinct moments.

Rey Akdogan examines how moods and atmospheres are created, and in particular how certain materials, colors, or light levels influence our perception of surroundings. She repurposes display materials commonly used for stage design, commercial photography, and industrial manufacturing—such as theatrical lighting gels, cinefoil, neutral density filters, PVC curtains, and fluorescent rods—employing them against their intended use. Moving between projection, sculpture, and installation, the work responds sensitively to spatial conditions, unfolding its cinematic potential.

Works from Akdogan's ongoing series Subtractions and Clip-ons expand the artist's engagement with questions of structure, chance, control, visibility, and attention. Subtractions inhabit and elaborate the peripheral visual zones of recent magazine advertising. With acute attention to the details that structure spatial experience, the series directs us to a more diffuse sense of space and the constructed ambiances of commercial

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marketing. By engaging the materiality of print to reconfigure texture and pliability, Akdogan subverts subject and object: through coating, tinting, cutting, folding, abrading, and covering, she alters image borders and disorients standardized recognition templates. The Clip-on series takes its starting point from materials used for display, which she alters through operations such as peeling, folding, and subtracting, revealing their substrata and their inherent structure. Akdogan lays hold of the unseen experience as opposed to a standardized way of viewing things. The residues—pigments, hooks, metal clips, remains of foam and velvet—that survive her precise, almost archaeological removals reconfigure the display supports into unexpectedly painterly forms that reveal the tensions between visibility and invisibility, surface polish and manual labor.

Central to act I, are the carousel works, presented across the darkened spaces of KUNSTVEREIN GARTENHAUS. A set of eighty handmade slides, assembled from theater lighting gels and transparent packing materials held within 35-mm slide mounts, is projected onto the walls using a standard Kodak carousel. Akdogan opens the mounts, arranges the fragile materials without adhesive, and closes them again. The images do not result from photographic processes but from material superimpositions and transmitted light. As the slides change, shifting colors, rhythms, and projector sounds create a performative, cinematic atmosphere.

This approach continues with a direct intervention in KUNSTVEREIN GARTENHAUS' architecture. The space is converted into a viewing apparatus: windows facing the courtyard are blurred and tinted, softening the clear perception of the outside. Like blurred backdrops in advertising, the intervention redirects attention to the visual periphery, functioning, in effect, as a subtraction.

Evolving over time, the presentation will transform through presence and absence as Akdogan's and Triet's practices act as successive, overlapping scenes that fade into one another.

Valentina Triet's act II, will premiere on the 13th of May 2026 and, together with act I, will be open until the 4th of July 2026.

List of works

1

clip on (u), 2026

Linen, acrylic, print on paper

35 x 24 x 3 cm

2

Substraction #80, 2026

Aluminium coated mylar, polyester

approx. 174 x 8 x 7 cm

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3

Substraction #79, 2026

Print on paper, acrylic, archival varnish

21 x 8 x 7 cm

4

Substraction #36, 2023

Print on paper, acrylic, archival varnish, epoxy resin

28 x 5 x 5 cm

5

Substraction #34, 2023

Print on paper, acrylic, archival varnish, epoxy resin

31.5 x 3 x 4.5 cm

6

Carousel #5, 2011

Slide projection

Lighting gels, light correction gels,
assorted colored packaging material held
together by slide frames

13 min. loop (80 slides)

7

Carousel #2, 2010/2019

Slide projection

Lighting gels, assorted colored packaging material held together by slide frames

13 min. loop (80 slides)

8

Backdrop #001, 2026

Courtyard, plants, windows, transparent vinyl

Dimensions variable

9

Substraction #60, 2023

Fiberglass, archival varnish, epoxy resin

17.5 x 11 cm

10

clip on (s), 2026

Display board, aluminized Mylar, faux velvet, synthetic foam, acrylic, print on paper, metal

41 x 29.7 x 2 cm

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Rey Akdogan

Rey Akdogan completed the Whitney Independent Study Program in 2004 after receiving her MA from Central Saint Martins College of Art and Design, London in 2001. Recent solo exhibitions dedicated to her work include: *Carousels*, Haus am Waldsee, Berlin (2026), Galerie Anke Schmidt, Cologne (2025), *Subtractions*, Miguel Abreu Gallery, New York (2023), *Lost Record*, Commercial Street, Los Angeles (2022), *Subtractions*, Galerie Anke Schmidt, Cologne (2021), *Rey Akdogan*, Hannah Hoffman, Los Angeles, (2017), *Faction*, Miguel Abreu Gallery, New York (2017), *Rey Akdogan*, Radio Athènes, Athens (2016), *Crash Rail*, Miguel Abreu Gallery, New York (2015).

Akdogan was included in the 15th Baltic Triennial at CAC Vilnius, Lithuania (2024); the XIV Bienal de Cuenca (2018). *Plant Light Curtain*, a limited-edition artist book, was published by Minerva Projects in 2023, and *#46*, a book of the artist's work, was published by PPP Editions in 2012.

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