

Plate 34. Bunch of Asparagus. 1880.
Oil on canvas, 18 1/8 x 21 5/8 in.
Wallraf-Richartz Museum, Cologne



Punch Viratmalee, *Bunch of Asparagus*, 7.5.2026 - 6.6.2026
Opening 7.5.2026, 7-10 PM then by appointment
Jean-Claude Maier, Münchener Straße 38, Frankfurt am Main*



Plate 35. Asparagus. 1880.
Oil on canvas, 18 1/8 x 21 5/8 in.
Musée d'Orsay, Paris; Gift of Sam Salz

"I started painting because I wanted to and wanted to know if I could paint. I don't have anything in particular that I wanted to paint at that moment, but I love that anecdote about Manet and his collector and a bunch of asparagus, and it goes like this:

One day, Charles Ephrussi, a scion of a prominent Jewish banker family in fin-de-siècle Paris, commissioned a still life of a bunch of asparagus from Edouard Manet. He sent the sum of 1000 francs for the painting, then Manet said '*But Monsieur Ephrussi, that said painting only costs 800 francs! Let me send back the change!*' For Edouard is a proud man, and he surely can paint the hell out of those vegetables. But Monsieur Ephrussi, himself also a proud man, and an immensely wealthy one, said '*Nononon, don't return the money, it's ok!!! I'm ok! Thank you dearest Edouard. P.S. Those asperges of yours are très mignon, most delighted to own them!*' Edouard did not know what to do, so he does what he does best. A week later, a small package arrived at M. Ephrussi's mansion at No. 11 Avenue d'Iéna with a note, '*There was one missing from your bunch.*'

So I start painting asparagus, green ones, because those are the only ones I know from childhood, for we don't have white ones in Thailand. I paint them, one by one, over and over again."



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DEUTSCHLAND

Bunch of Asparagus by Punch Viratmalee

May 7 - June 6, 2026 (by appointment)

ARTIST BIOGRAPHY

Punch Viratmalee is an artist and writer, working with text, performance, and conceptual gestures. She graduated from Städelschule in Frankfurt in 2025. She currently lives and works between Frankfurt am Main and Bangkok.

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