

Press release, 19.05.26

Kyiv Biennial

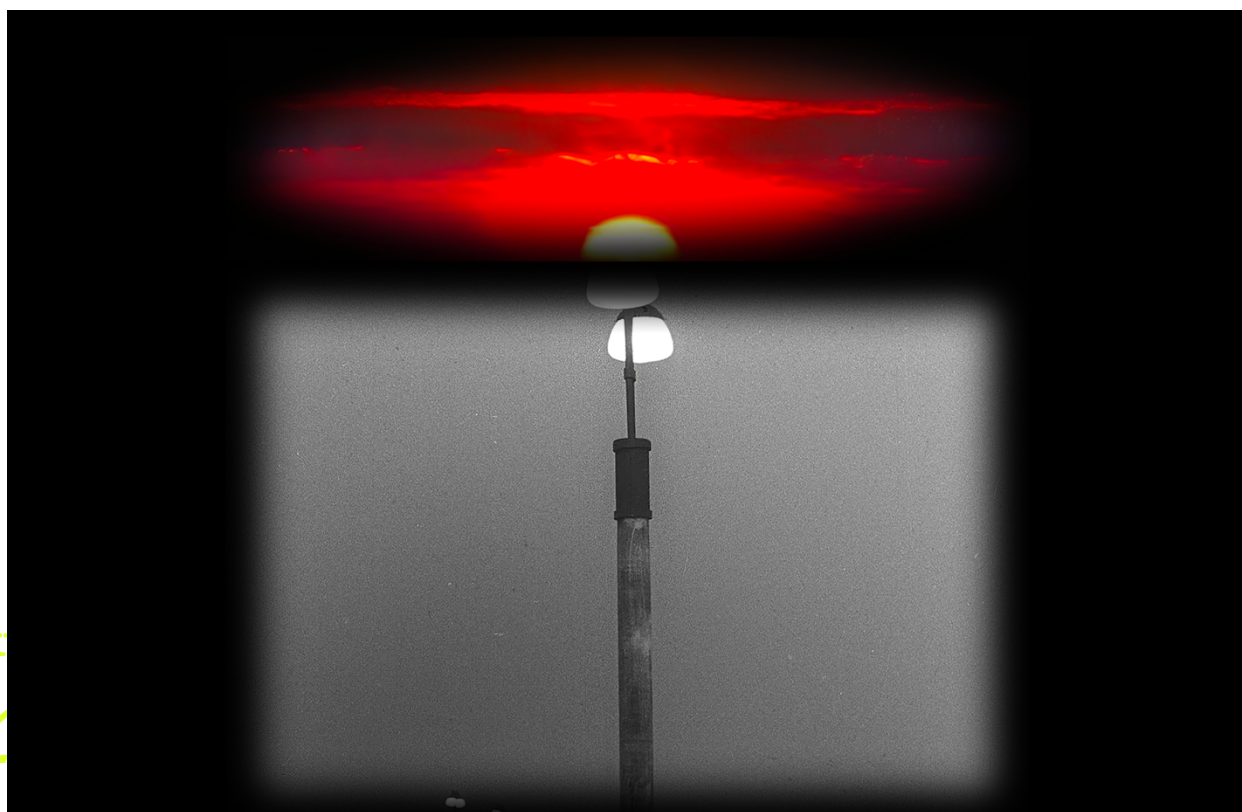
A Bird That Cannot Land

KW
DIMENSION

On Wednesday, 10.06.26, KW Institute for Contemporary Art will open a chapter of the Kyiv Biennial, an expansive exhibition, live and discursive program that takes place across all floors of the building and throughout the summer months.

This chapter is curated by KW's curatorial team and organised in close collaboration with the Visual Culture Research Center, the founders of the Kyiv Biennial.

– Emma Enderby, Director



Lesia Vasylenko, *Night Without Shadows and Light Without Rippling of Waves*, 2025. Courtesy the artist © the artist.

Exhibition 11.06.–13.09.26

Opening 10.06.26

Kyiv Biennial

A Bird That Cannot Land

“The sense by which we take our bearings in the real world [...] is being destroyed.”

– Hannah Arendt, *Truth and Politics*

The Kyiv Biennial is a nomadic, international project that interweaves artistic, political, and social issues. *A Bird That Cannot Land*, its chapter at KW, takes shape as an extensive live and discursive program and a large-scale exhibition spanning the entire building, contributing to the biennial's reflections through contemporary art, sound, and exchange.

Situated in shifting political realities, *A Bird That Cannot Land* centers on the notion of a “Middle-East-Europe” and its histories of dispute, coloniality, and imperialism. Recurring conflicts reopen the wounds of those preceding them and challenge our sense of shared experience, language, and imagination. By linking post-Soviet Eastern Europe with Central and Southwest Asia, and the Mediterranean, the exhibition and its live and discursive events turn to questions on how we make meaning and experience belonging in times marked by war, uncertainty, and estrangement. Moving through realities where the continuity of meaning is broken, the biennial understands exile in and from the world as a central condition of contemporary life.

Amid this landscape, *A Bird That Cannot Land* aims to open spaces for listening to interconnected pasts and presents, and for rethinking how geographies, histories, and realities are told and perceived. The biennial features over 40 intergenerational and international voices from Berlin and beyond. The works featured are shaped by lived experiences echoing rupture, migrant memories, their affective architectures, and the historical traces that persist both in bodies and in the spaces we inhabit.

The Kyiv Biennial's live program unfolds through a range of formats, foregrounding Berlin's diasporic communities in dialogue with translocal artistic practices. At its center, KW's main hall hosts a week of concerts and performances exploring music's affective force across diverse sonic practices and vocal traditions. This is extended through a series of listening sessions that explore different geopolitical dimensions of sound. Throughout the program, process-based practices approach polyphony as both an aesthetic and social practice of resilience.

Participants: Abdullah Miniawy, Adam Hanieh, Alona Karavai, Anna Ehrenstein and Yara Mekawei, Anna Zvyagintseva, Anton Kats and the Grounded Outer Space People, Assaf Gruber, Aykan Safoğlu, Azar Mahmoudian, Bulgarian Voices Berlin, Dana Kavelina, Eda Aslan, Farahnaz Sharifi, Fehras Publishing Practices, Flaka Haliti, Geta Brătescu, Gulnur Mukazhanova, Heinali and Andriana-Yaroslava Saienko, Hito Steyerl, Hiwa K, Ihor Tsymbrovsky, Ivan Krastev, Joyce Joumaa, Julia Cimafiejeva, Katarina Gryvul, Lesia Vasylenko, Lida Abdul, Lucia Kagramanyan,

Madina Tlostanova, Majd Abdel Hamid, Mona Hatoum, Nazanin Noori, Neda Saeedi, Nour Sokhon, Oleksiy Radynski, Philipp Goll, Samia Halaby, Saodat Ismailova, Sattar Stas Shärifullá and Ziliä Qansurá, Seyyare – Anatolian Women's Choir, Stefaniia Bodnia and Jack Dove, Tjan Zaotschnaja, Tolia Astakhishvili, Ulrike Herrmann, Wafaa Saied

In 2025, the Kyiv Biennial took place across Europe through a series of exhibitions and events, including at the Museum of Modern Art in Warsaw, M HKA in Antwerp, the Dnipro Center for Contemporary Culture, the Dovzhenko Centre in Kyiv, and Lentos Kunstmuseum Linz. *A Bird That Cannot Land* expands on the themes from the biennial's various 2025 iterations.

KW Curatorial Team:

Curator: Sofie Krogh Christensen
Assistant Curator: Linda Franken
Exhibition Assistant: Radia Soukni
Live Curator: Lorena Juan
Live Assistant Curator: Nikolas Brummer
Live Program Assistant: Saba Bagheri
Discursive Program Curator: Vasyl Cherepanyn
Discursive Program Assistant: Triin Metsla

Expanded Curatorial Team:

Vasyl Cherepanyn, Visual Culture Research Center (VCRC), Kyiv
Emma Enderby, KW Institute for Contemporary Art, Berlin
Nav Haq, M HKA – Museum of Contemporary Art Antwerp
Sarah Jonas, Lentos Kunstmuseum Linz
Serge Klymko, Visual Culture Research Center (VCRC), Kyiv
Magda Lipska, Museum of Modern Art in Warsaw



In collaboration with

ЦЕНТР ВІЗУАЛЬНОЇ КУЛЬТУРИ
VISUAL CULTURE RESEARCH CENTER

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Der Beauftragte der Bundesregierung
für Kultur und Medien

che Bildung (German Federal



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Live Program

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Sun, 14.06.26, 16:00–17:00, Concert

Bulgarian Voices Berlin

Sun, 14.06.26, 18:00–19:00, Performance

Anna Ehrenstein and Yara Mekawei

The Cloud Is Still Balkanized

Thu, 25.06.26, 19:00–20:30, Listening Session

Stas Shārifulla and Ziliā Qansurá

Qosh yul: On birds and stars as feathers

Wed, 08.07.26, 19:00–20:00, Concert

Heinali and Andriana-Yaroslava Saienko

Гільдегарда (Hildegard)

Wed, 08.07.26, 21:00–22:00, Concert

Abdullah Miniawy

The evens, Rahma

Thu, 09.07.26, 19:00–20:00, Concert

Nour Sokhon

Beirut Birds

Thu, 09.07.26, 21:00–22:00, Concert

Wafaa Saied

Fri, 10.07.26, 19:00–20:00, Concert

Katarina Gryvul

SPOMYN

Fri, 10.07.26, 21:00–22:00, Concert

Ihor Tymbrovsky

Sat, 11.07.26, 20:00–21:00, Performance

Nazanin Noori

A LETTER TO EUROPE

Thu, 16.07.26, 19:00–21:00, Concert / Participation

Seyyare – Anatolian Women's Choir

Open Rehearsal

Thu, 23.07.26, 19:00–21:30, Listening Session

Lucia Kagramanyan

Panorama Yerevan: On Armenian Lullabies

Tue, 25.08.26 / Wed, 26.08.26 / Thu, 27.08.26, 19:00–20:00, Residencies

Grounded Outer Space People

Open Studio

Fri, 28.08.26, 20:00–21:00, Concert

Grounded Outer Space People

Thu, 03.09.26, 19:00–21:00, Listening Session

Fehras Publishing Practices

Fayrouz: On musical production in 60s Lebanon

Discursive Program

The Kyiv Biennial's discursive program invites academic debates on matters of migration, exclusion, and co-existence, as well as extractivism and petrocapiatalism. Through a series of keynote lectures by political scientists, decolonial researchers, and feminist thinkers, it examines contemporary conditions and interconnected histories of different regions of a “Middle-East-Europe” shaped by imperialism, war, economic crises, and their aftermath. The program also features panel discussions reflecting on personal experiences of displacement and resettlement, as well as gatherings tackling the ecological implications of colonial infrastructures and the situation of Indigenous peoples, also embracing the therapeutic formats.

Fri, 12.06.26, 19:00–20:30, Talk

From Here to There: Practice, Distance, and Self-Positioning

with Julia Cimaſiejeva, Hiwa K, and Farahnaz Sharifi, moderated by Azar Mahmoudian

Sat, 13.06.26, 19:00–20:30, Talk

Leak. The Other Side of the Pipeline

with Oleksiy Radynski, Hito Steyerl, and Tjan Zaochnaya, moderated by Philipp Goll

Sat, 13.06.26, 20:30–22:00, Screening / Talk

Special Operation

with Oleksiy Radynski

Sun, 14.06.26, 14:00–15:30, Lecture

Feetless Birds Die in the Air? Or Unsettlement as a Generative Condition

with Madina Tlostanova

Sat, 20.06.26 / Sun, 21.06.26, 19:00–21:00, Participation

Cafe Death

with Alona Karavai

Mon, 29.06.26, 19:00–20:30, Lecture

Migration is the 21st Century Revolution

with Ivan Krastev

Wed, 15.07.26, 19:00–20:30, Lecture

The Middle East in an Age of War and Climate Breakdown

with Adam Hanieh

Fri, 04.09.26, 19:00–20:30, Lecture

Money as a Weapon

with Ulrike Herrmann

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Titles and Dates are subject to change