

THERE IS NO THERE THERE





Abed Abdi
Alexis Akrithakis
Gülden Artun
Akbar Behkalam
Cecilia Boisier
Vlassis Caniaris
Rimer Cardillo
Teresa Casanueva
Ali Rıza Ceylan
Santos Chávez
Guillermo Deisler
Grazia Eminente
Eulàlia Grau
Getachew Yossef Hagoss
Azade Köker
MARWAN
César Olhagaray
Jannis Psychopedis
Núria Quevedo
Sohrab Shahid Saless
Manuela Sambo
Navina Sundaram
Dito Tembe
Rıza Topal
Drago Trumbetaš
Chetna Vora
Hanefi Yeter
Serpil Yeter
Hamid Zénati
Želimir Žilnik

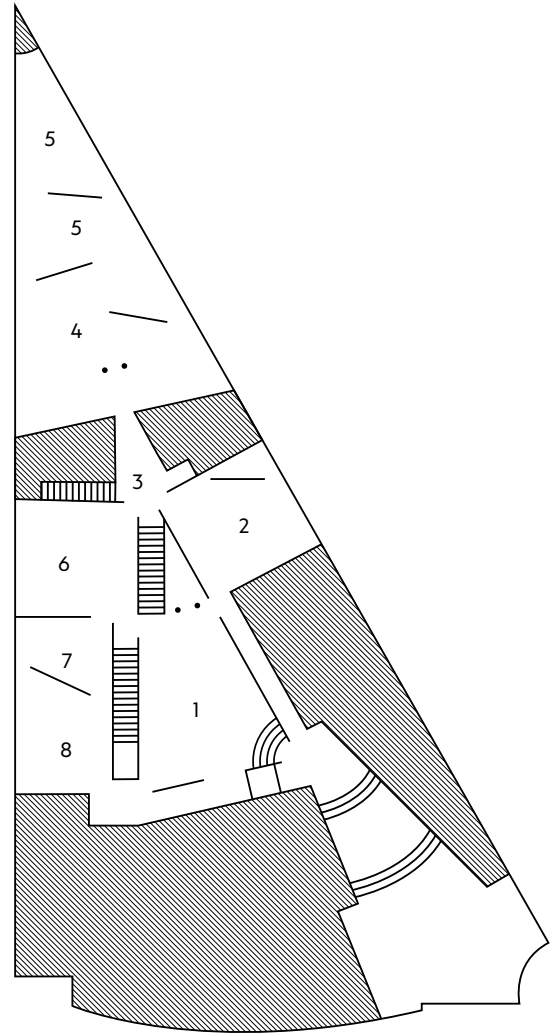
In the 1960s, '70s, and '80s, numerous artists from abroad were working in both the German Democratic Republic and the Federal Republic of Germany. Within the framework of grants and bilateral cultural agreements, and alongside migrant workers, exiles, refugees, and 'foreign workers,' they came to a divided Germany during the Cold War to continue working on their art and to collaborate and exchange with other artists. Some were themselves migrant workers who only later became artists.

Memories of people and landscapes, colors, forms, and visual traditions found their way into their works. Fleeing their native countries and living in exile in their new homeland, political conditions as well as daily work and life became their new pictorial themes.

Marginalized within the institutionalized art world due to structural exclusions, the artists nevertheless decisively expanded the discourses on art in both post-National Socialist Germanys. In doing so, they opened up the possibility of seeing different things and, hence, seeing differently.

The exhibition *There is no there there* testifies to the richness of their artistic work and the transformative power that works of art can unleash. While what they left behind inevitably changes, the artists directly change the present.

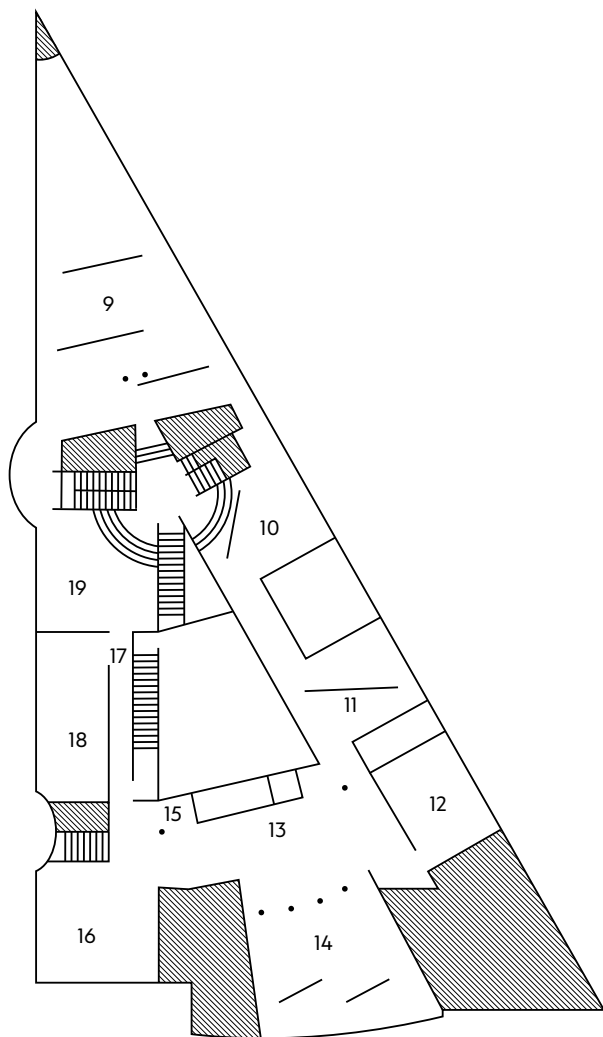
Level 1



1. Vlassis Caniaris
2. Želimir Žilnik
3. Alexis Akrihakis
4. Serpil Yeter

5. Hanefi Yeter
6. Azade Köker
7. Grazia Eminente
8. Akbar Behkalam

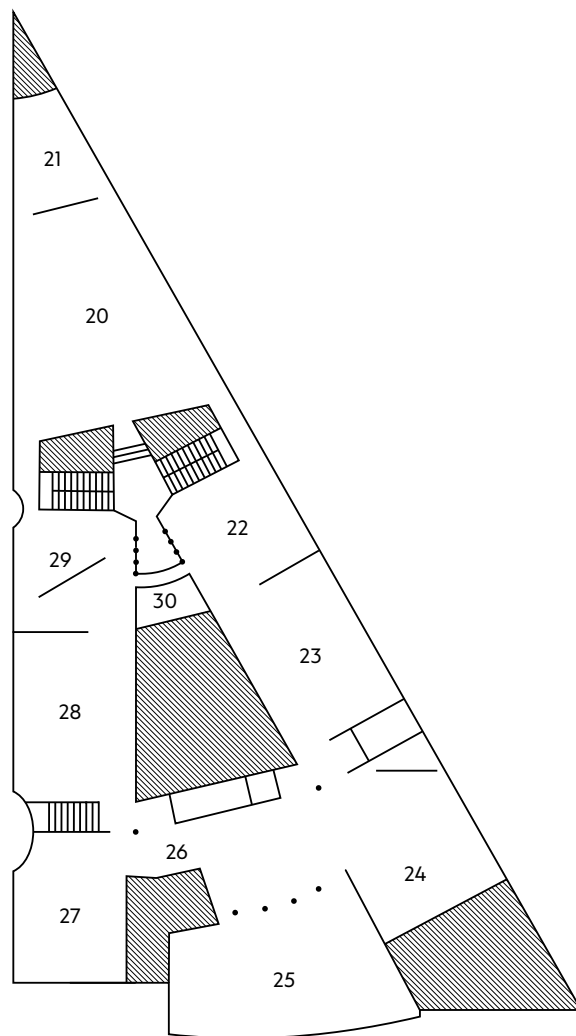
Level 2



- 9. Drago Trumbetaš
- 10. Sohrab Shahid Saless
- 11. Núria Quevedo
- 12. Jannis Psychopedis
- 13. Eulàlia Grau
- 14. Navina Sundaram

- 15. Gülden Artun
- 16. MARWAN
- 17. Ali Riza Ceylan
- 18. Abed Abdi
- 19. Cecilia Boisier

Level 3



- 20. Riza Topal
- 21. Guillermo Deisler
- 22. Rimer Cardillo
- 23. Manuela Sambo
- 24. Chetna Vora
- 25. Hamid Zénati

- 26. Getachew Yossef Hagoss
- 27. César Olhagaray
- 28. Teresa Casanueva
- 29. Santos Chávez
- 30. Dito Tembe

1. Vlassis Caniaris

Vlassis Caniaris (1928–2011) produced works that reflected the realities, dreams, situations, and potential viewpoints of economic migrants who moved to western Europe in search of a better life in the 1960s and '70s. Even before his scholarship in West Berlin from 1973 to 1975, funded by the German Academic Exchange Service (DAAD), the artist addressed the theme of migration while living in Paris.

Caniaris created environments with life-sized dolls that he made himself. He used wire frames, plaster, and glue to form their bodies and clothed them in worn-out fragments of garments held together with pins. The figures are missing human characteristics: some have no hands while the head is absent from others, or some have cans of food forming their shoulders.

One example of this kind of environment is the work titled *Hopscotch* (1974). Hopscotch is a traditional outdoor children's game that requires nothing more than a simple flat surface. The hopscotch court is often marked out on paths or paved surfaces as a sequence of numbered boxes arranged in a particular shape. This hopping game is typically played with a small stone or other such object, which is thrown and marks the space where it lands. Players aim to hop onto all the spaces in the correct order without losing their balance. When a player makes a mistake, their turn passes to the next player. In Vlassis Caniaris' installation, however, there are words in the spaces rather than numbers, such as "Ausländerpolizei" (Immigration police), "Wohnsituation" (Living situation), "Akkordarbeit" (Piecework), or "Konsulate" (Consulates), which describe the various steps and mechanisms involved in economic migration policy.

The artist's socio-critical environments presenting scenes concerning migration address issues such as exploitation, discrimination, national affiliation, and the removal of fundamental rights in the Federal Republic of Germany. The social and political structures of migration and identity permeate Caniaris' work, reflecting the desire for dialogue.

2. Želimir Žilnik

Želimir Žilnik (b. 1942) introduces his film *Hausordnung* (House Orders, 1975) with a shot of an elaborately painted house façade in Munich. But the calm of the static shot is quickly interrupted when the people behind the façade, who are forced to work in cramped rooms with strict rules, express their anger loudly. Companies were initially legally obliged to provide accommodation for the workers they recruited, who were thus placed in a double relationship of dependency—if they lost their job, they also lost their accommodation. Detailed house rules were also intended to ensure that the residents, who were well aware of the undignified conditions of their living situation, behaved in accordance with the rules.

Želimir Žilnik had been making films since the late 1960s, which were the result of careful observations of his surroundings. During this time, a number of filmmakers opposed the doctrine of socialist realism and took a critical look at the real social and political conditions in Žilnik's native country, then-Yugoslavia. The political functionaries of Yugoslavia defamed this movement as the "Black Wave." The directors were accused of portraying socialist reality in a false light. Many of the films were banned from the beginning of the 1970s due to Yugoslavian head of state Tito's restrictive cultural policy. As a result of increasing repression, Žilnik went into exile in the FRG in 1973.

There, he focused in particular on the living conditions of the so-called 'guest workers.' Since the labor-recruitment agreement with Yugoslavia in 1968, around 600,000 people had already come to the Federal Republic of Germany by the mid-1970s. The ambivalent relationship to the country to which they had gone in the hope of better working conditions is also reflected in their statements in Žilnik's film *Hausordnung*. Some express their disappointed expectations very directly; others remain silent or gloss over their situation. As a result of his critical portrayal of the difficult living conditions of 'guest workers,' Želimir Žilnik also came under increasing scrutiny by the authorities in the FRG. After his house was searched by the police and his residence status was denied, he had to leave the country in 1977 and return to Yugoslavia.

3. Alexis Akrithakis

In 1968, the Greek artist Alexis Akrithakis (1939–1994) traveled to West Berlin on a DAAD scholarship, where he eventually spent more than fifteen years of his life. His wife, Fofi Akrithaki, opened the restaurant Estiatóron—known also as Fofi’s—which soon became a meeting place for artists.

The image of the suitcase occupies an important place in Akrithakis’ practice. His suitcases often burst into flames, drown in deep waters, or can be found balancing on the edge of a cliff. A recurring motif, they have taken on different forms and repetitions over the years: some carry hidden fragments of barely legible text within them, while others float on the surface of the sea. The use of bent metal or saws symbolizes the poignancy of their story; for example, one of these works is made with metal grids reminiscent of prison bars, behind which are empty beer cans and rusted metal parts.

Part of countless migratory lives, the suitcase becomes a metonym for the stories and movements of people forced to flee their home country under constantly changing economic and political conditions.

4. Serpil Yeter

When the artist Serpil Yeter (b. 1956) came to West Berlin in 1980, she was one of only a few artists from Turkey. She describes migrating to the Federal Republic of Germany as a turning point in her life. Yeter painted whatever she observed in her surroundings: lonely Berlin women with their dogs, blue-collar workers riding the subway after work, and punks. Her painting *Es ist 9 Uhr!* (It’s 9 O’Clock, 1981) depicts an everyday scene: a radio covers the entire surface, its aerial extended in a right angle around the edge of the painting. In the middle of this enormous radio, where the speakers are usually found, there is a group of people assembled to listen to the radio program—a situation that migrants would be very familiar with.

Public broadcasters in the FRG initiated foreign-language radio broadcasts at the time, primarily to familiarize migrant workers with the conditions in the Federal Republic and to counteract political influences from outside during the Cold War—also in the interests of the sending countries. This was intended to minimize the impact of the so-called ‘Eastern broadcasts,’ which could also be received in the FRG; Radio Budapest, for example, broadcast radio programs for the Turkish-speaking population.

In November 1964, a radio program was launched that quickly became one of the most important Turkish-language sources of information for migrant workers living in the FRG—at least until the introduction of satellite television. “Köln Radyosu” (Radio Cologne) became a crowdpuller, attracting a large proportion of Turkish-speaking people to the radio every evening. Migrants from Turkey used this radio program to find out about news from their home country, as well as from the FRG and around the world in their native language. In addition to the news, music and comedy provided the entertainment they so longed for. “Köln Radyosu” also offered social counseling and guidance. The broadcasters received countless letters and calls from people hoping for answers to their everyday problems, such as difficulties at work or family reunification. The program was geared towards the needs of its listeners and became a witness to an era of migration for decades—it was closely interwoven with its challenges, moods, and discourses.

Today, Serpil Yeter still believes that her role as an artist is to show people options for coexisting and promote

respect for the differences between cultures. Unlike many of her male counterparts, she was not able to devote all her energy to her art in the early 1980s because, as a young mother, she was also responsible for raising her children. As someone who was involved in the intersectional feminist struggles of that era, Yeter's works depict the political themes of these movements.

5. Hanefi Yeter

Hanefi Yeter (b. 1947) started studying art at Istanbul's Academy of Fine Arts in 1967 and continued his education at Berlin's Hochschule der Künste in 1973. His 1978 painting *Analphabeten in zwei Sprachen* (Illiterates in Two Languages) is representative of Yeter's oeuvre in its exploration of social themes that affect the lives of economic migrants. Two people stand in front of a blackboard, facing the classroom. Grammatically incorrect sentences in German and Turkish are written on the blackboard, along with their corrections. One of them reads "Ayşe darf nicht nach Schule [kommen]" (Ayşe is not permitted [to go] to school), and underneath we see "Ayşe okula gelemior."

In the 1960s, the children of economic migrants were simply not considered in planning undertaken by West German politicians and authorities; for many years, they received no schooling at all. The resulting inequality of opportunity was only noticed by the relevant bodies at a very late stage. At the end of the 1970s, there were over a million children under the age of sixteen from migrant families in the FRG (Federal Republic of Germany). One statistic from 1979 records that 28.1 percent of these children attended a *Hauptschule* (aimed at students who were set to work in manual, blue-collar jobs), while only 3.6 percent were at a *Gymnasium* (the most advanced form of schooling for those planning to go to university). Of those 28.1 percent, 70.5 percent did not graduate with a final qualification.

In choosing the title *Analphabeten in zwei Sprachen*, Hanefi Yeter is referring to lessons in the children's own mother tongue—an educational measure initiated in 1971 that saw teachers coming from Turkey to Germany—and the situation in Turkey itself: in 1970, the rate of illiteracy stood at 48.6 percent. Particularly in rural areas, which is where most of the economic migrants came from, attending school was by no means guaranteed, even though universal education had been mandatory since 1931.

Other subjects tackled by Hanefi Yeter include the crumbling façades of buildings in Kreuzberg, the district where he lived in Berlin; families from Turkey having a picnic in the park surrounded by trees full of colorful birds; and people waiting in government offices or demonstrating on the streets. The artist's use of form and color in this

socially critical painting deviated from the dominant art style of the time in Berlin. It was while living in an “alien” culture that he began to hark back to traditional Turkish arts such as Ottoman miniatures and book illustration. His works adopted their intense colors, combining text with images, and abandoned visual illusions from a central perspective, creating the style and visual idiom that is so typical of Yeter.

6. Azade Köker

Azade Köker’s (b. 1949) work focuses on the role of women in patriarchal structures and capitalist economies in various societal contexts. One example of this is the two-meter-tall terracotta *Akkordarbeiterin* (Female Pieceworker, 1987). The subject’s upper body comprises stacked fragments of body parts in a manner that is reminiscent of ancient sculptural relics from Mesopotamia and pieces of machinery. Her face is averted, turned to look at something her hand is doing. Azade Köker created this work as a monument to the women working in factories, specifically to women migrants from Turkey.

Payment for piecework depends on how much work has been produced rather than the hours of labor, with the aim being to increase productivity. Piecework bonuses are paid if a minimum quantity is exceeded. However, this form of work can jeopardize workers’ health as they often push themselves to their limits and call in sick for minor illnesses, which in turn affects their income and sickness absence rates. The use of piecework has gradually declined, less out of consideration for the workers than because the quality of the products suffered and quality control measures generated additional costs.

Azade Köker’s works combine formal exploration with a commitment to social themes. They challenge viewers to think beyond conventional representations of gender and power, offering a critical perspective on the social structures that shape these roles. In 1973, she left Istanbul to study ceramics and industrial design at the Hochschule für Bildende Künste in West Berlin. She specialized in sculpture between 1976 and 1979 in the master class taught by Lothar Fischer. Forty years after arriving in Germany, she became a professor at and director of Technische Universität Braunschweig’s Institute for Architecture-Related Art, a position she held for eleven years.

7. Grazia Eminente

A huge photograph of an airplane is affixed to the window of Reisebüro Imperial, a travel agency in Kreuzberg, with the words “Aktarmasız Direkt Berlin Istanbul Berlin” written underneath. A woman stands in a shop surrounded by numerous price tags, her face framed by a headscarf, and her eyes lowered. “Sucukları” is written in capital letters on a sign on the wall, while the counter is fully stocked with meat products. Her incredibly beautiful profile, her high cheekbones, and her sensual mouth are all hallmarks of the reception of the Egyptian Queen Nefertiti. The photographs by Italian artist Grazia Eminente (b. 1937) show how differently aspects that are foreign and unknown are received. While one woman is revered in the museum, the other is ignored in everyday life.

Eminente left Spain in 1974 after her husband—the painter and set designer Eduardo Arroyo—was imprisoned, lost his Spanish citizenship, and was recognized as a political refugee in France. Grazia Eminente taught herself photography and film processing while staying in West Berlin from 1975 to 1976.

8. Akbar Behkalam

The figures in Akbar Behkalam’s (b. 1944) paintings have coalesced into a dynamic crowd, extending out to the edges of the image and beyond. Each person is situated somewhere between taking flight and seeking confrontation, their individuality absorbed into the protective group. In his cycle of paintings *Berlin Kreuzberg* (1981), Behkalam addresses the protests in West Berlin in the early 1980s, a period when members of the citizens’ initiative SO 36 and other activist groups reacted to the housing crisis and social grievances by occupying empty and dilapidated residential buildings. Initially largely ignored, the situation grew more critical over time when the police carried out evictions and countered this particular form of civil disobedience with violence.

The housing situation was particularly precarious for migrants living in West Berlin. In 1975, the ban on immigration prohibited migrants from seeking accommodation in neighborhoods such as Kreuzberg, Tiergarten, and Wedding. As a result, family members who joined their relatives at a later date often had to live separately from them. Thus, in November 1980, a group of migrants, the majority of whom were Turkish and Kurdish women, organized the first squat in Kreuzberg. The peaceful protest led to the squatters being given a tenancy agreement for the property, with some of them continuing to live there until 2016.

Protest movements and political upheavals are recurring themes in Akbar Behkalam’s work. The situation in his native country, Iran, also plays an important role in his art. Behkalam grew up as a member of the minority Azerbaijani community in the north of the country, but after receiving threats, he was forced to flee from the Persian Shah’s regime in 1976. Even after the overthrow of the Shah in 1979, Behkalam was unable to return to his birthplace. Following the Iranian Revolution, opposition activists were brutally persecuted, and secular ideas were suppressed under the rule of Ayatollah Khomeini. After arriving in West Berlin, Akbar Behkalam’s works combined Persian traditions, such as miniature painting, with influences from European art history. “Leaving Iran changed my life. [...] I would have painted completely different pictures in Iran. Above all, you couldn’t paint political pictures there. [...] When you’re abroad, you have more time to think about your home country.”

9. Drago Trumbetaš

“When I draw, it is important for me to have an effect on the viewer. I want to make people fully aware of a problem that they have pushed aside or not noticed in the past,” said the artist Drago Trumbetaš (1938–2018), explaining his working method. His drawings are “very realistic, as only life is,” and therefore have a “shocking effect,” he emphasized.

In various work cycles, Trumbetaš documented the early days of the so-called ‘guest workers’ in Frankfurt am Main in drastic detail. He himself arrived in Frankfurt from Zagreb (in former Yugoslavia) in February 1966, and initially he worked there as an ironer and packer. Among Trumbetaš’ work cycles, the portfolio of twenty prints from 1975 titled *Gastarbeiter* (Guest Workers) is one of the more famous. In it, he captures everyday scenes of the fictional migrant worker Tonček in the FRG, such as his time in the barracks with his colleagues, at train stations, and in bars. “Tonček” is a nickname in Croatian, derived from Anton, similar to the German “Toni.” The sheet *Tonček na poslu* (Tonček at Work) shows him on a building site holding a shovel. Together with his colleagues, Tonček is working on the construction of a tunnel for the C Line of Frankfurt’s public transport system. In a satirical way, one of the buildings behind them advertises a bank, a school, an insurance company, and a theater specifically for ‘guest workers.’ The “Gastarbeiterheim” uses a hand gesture suggestive of a sexual act as an advertising motif. Around the construction, in front of the workers, is a fence, on which insults such as “Fucking guest workers!!!” are daubed. In a study conducted by the German Institute for International Educational Research in Frankfurt am Main at the time, only 25 percent of respondents were in favor of equal rights for migrant workers. In comparison, the acceptance rate in the Netherlands was 49 percent, and in the UK, it was as high as 63 percent. With his concise depictions, Trumbetaš raised awareness of the structural discrimination against migrant workers in Germany.

This room, of around twelve square meters, is furnished with a closet atop of which suitcases and bags are placed, a bed, table, chair, and hot plate. Various books and newspapers are stacked around the room or stowed away in plastic bags, including his own books and publications containing articles written by him as well as daily newspapers such as the *Frankfurter Rundschau*, where

he worked as a typesetter from 1973, and materials for his artistic work. “The room, with its dimensions of three by four meters, forced me to collect ideas,” is how he describes this experience. He actually used newspaper articles and pictures from newspapers and magazines, as well as his own photographs, as models for his extremely detailed drawings.

10. Sohrab Shahid Saless

The movie *In der Fremde / Dar Ghorbat* (Far From Home, 1975) depicts the monotonous life of the factory worker Husseyin in Kreuzberg, a district in what was then West Berlin. His life is played out doing piecework at a punching machine in an industrial manufacturing facility, in the subway, in the streets of Berlin, whose building façades still bear the scars of war, and with the other people sharing his apartment: a family, other male migrant workers, and a student. Various circumstances have brought them all from Turkey to the Federal Republic of Germany. In this social critique, the director Sohrab Shahid Saless (1944–1998) employs long, unhurried takes that allow the viewer to observe the quiet and open-minded protagonist Husseyin as he searches for familiarity and social warmth in a setting that is foreign, dreary, forbidding, and sometimes racist.

In der Fremde is the first film that Sohrab Shahid Saless produced in the FRG. According to the director himself, he wrote the Persian screenplay in just twelve hours and shot it in ten days between 2 and 12 December 1974. The characters from Turkey, speak Turkish in the film. Shahid Saless only got to know the film's non-professional actors in Kreuzberg, with the exception of the Turkish 'guest worker' Husseyin, who is played by the famous Iranian actor Parviz Sayyad. In a newspaper article about the film, Shahid Saless said: "I wanted to shoot the film from the perspective of foreigners; after all, I am a foreigner too."

Sohrab Shahid Saless left Iran in the 1960s to study film direction in Vienna and Paris. He then made films in Iran and ultimately took up residence in the FRG from 1974 to 1994. Although he realized thirteen feature films and documentaries during this period, Shahid Saless' work has been ignored by film historians and, hence, by the canon of New German Cinema. In his 1981 polemic *J'accuse: Notes in Exile*, Shahid Saless criticizes the institutionalized racism of the German film industry and its structural funding. He could not see a future for himself in Germany and consequently moved to the USA in 1994.

11. Nùria Quevedo

Three women and three men are gathered behind a table. They are squashed up close to each other, as if they were all trying to squeeze within the camera's viewfinder. At first, it is difficult to interpret their facial expressions, which vary from a thoughtful to a worried to a shy smile. One of the men is looking up over his right shoulder at another man, as if he expects that something is about to happen. Just like the photos in a family album, the drawing *Studie zum Thema Exil* (Study on the Theme of Exile, 1968) shows time at a standstill, allowing what happened before and after to fade behind the moment that has been captured.

Nùria Quevedo (b. 1938) came to East Berlin with her family in 1952. Following the Spanish Civil War, the deteriorating political situation forced many of the opponents of the Francoist dictatorship to leave their home country in the late 1930s and live in exile. The fascist government of the Spanish general had set out to "cleanse" the country of the influences of the Second Spanish Republic. Due to massive waves of arrests, murders, and torture, many people took the last resort and fled into exile. The experience of being transplanted somewhere else strengthened the exiles' family ties, which provided an important social network in their new surroundings. At the same time, close acquaintances disappeared from their everyday lives and became static memories.

Nùria Quevedo majored in graphic art at the Hochschule für angewandte und bildende Kunst in Weißensee, Berlin, from 1958 onwards, and her subsequent work included book illustration and poster art. She uses the term *Unferne* (un-distance) to describe the sensations inherent to the experience of migration and exile, which are also evident in her close observation of social structures and relationships. The artist's works generate a feeling of alienation and of waiting for an indeterminate period—to return to places of remembrance and to an era that is long gone.

12. Jannis Psychopedis

The *Seminars* is a group of works on paper that combine text fragments with photographic imagery. Jannis Psychopedis (b. 1945) worked on the *Seminars* between 1979 and 1981 while staying in West Berlin with a grant from the German Academic Exchange Service (DAAD). Before that, he studied at the Academy of Fine Arts in Munich, where he remained until 1976. The series depicts a variety of scenes, ranging from newspaper advertisements, anatomical drawings commonly found in medical textbooks, birds, and ancient Greek sculptures, to photographs of workers and headless politicians, representatives of the extreme right-wing military dictatorship of April 21 (1967–74). A large body of handwritten text encloses the images, accompanied by small side notes, smudges, and annotations. Some words are circled to point out their significance, while others are entirely crossed out, making it impossible for the reader/viewer to decipher.

Upon closer inspection, it becomes clear that the text consists largely of a selection of passages from Karl Marx's seminal work *Das Kapital*. A striking image of a woman kneeling next to a dead body stands out. The origin of this scene is a photograph taken during the bloody riots that unfolded following the workers' strike in the city of Thessaloniki in May 1936. Tasos Tousis, a twenty-five-year-old driver from the nearby city of Asvestochori, was the first victim shot by police forces. Ever since, the photograph of the mourning mother beside her dead son's body has become an important political document in the histories of workers' rights in Greece while serving as a symbol for the political instability that would in the same year lead to the dictatorship of Ioannis Metaxas (1936–41). In the large-format print *Migrants* (1978), people stand patiently in line. A Greek sculpture hangs above them. The artist gives space to the stories of the numerous people who have sought better living and working conditions abroad since the late 1960s.

Jannis Psychopedis removes images, events, and texts from their original context, opening them up to new associations and critical reflections.

13. Eulàlia Grau

The work of Eulàlia Grau (b. 1946) is situated in uncovering the functioning mechanisms of repressive regimes. Beginning in the early 1970s, she started manipulating press images and bending them her way so as to crack open their operative logic. Using photomontage, the Catalan artist created a body of work that wholeheartedly denounced the paradoxes of the Franco regime and its role in solidifying capitalist economic structures in post-war Spain.

In *El règim capitalista crea cada dia situacions com aquesta en la classe obrera* (The capitalist regime creates situations like this every day in the working class, 1976), Grau juxtaposes candid images of US President Jimmy Carter and his family walking down the street framed by bodyguards with a portrait of the family of Diego Navarro. Navarro, an unemployed Andalusian construction worker and father of a large family, is a quite obscure figure. After participating in a demonstration, during which he was severely wounded, he was wrongfully imprisoned and subsequently committed suicide. The portrait of his family was most likely taken right after. There is almost no available information about the true story and course of events leading up to this picture, culminating to Navarro's passing. The artist operates with a direct and astute gesture: she simply borrows two existing images from the press and begins to draw connections, rendering visible the inequities and contradictions.

Discriminació de la dona (Discrimination against Women, 1977) probes into a feminist critique of the situation facing many women assigned a role that keeps them dependent and subordinate. A prominent issue in Grau's entire practice, the images the viewer encounters are evidence of the countless inequalities women face at home, at work, on the street, or in the justice system. This time, the prison cells are invisible to the naked eye and yet equally powerful.

Eulàlia Grau deconstructs the logic of images as they attempt to serve systemic power. She highlights how control, whether outspoken or silent, persists and becomes a common thread—something running through everything: family portraits, commercial advertising, and the early stages of today's information society.

14. Navina Sundaram

Binationale Ehen (Binational Marriages, 1982) explores the perspectives of three *white* German women married to men from Iraq, Portugal, and Nigeria. Public insults, anonymous letters, damaged cars, and threatening phone calls are daily assaults targeting transcultural couples. The women in these cases are confronted with accusations of treason and of betraying a sense of national identity, grounded in racist imaginaries still alive in post-National Socialist Germany.

Operating through migrant-situated knowledge, Navina Sundaram's (1945–2022) commentary highlights the personal struggles of women who decided to marry outside their nationality while pointing out the collective responsibility and public setup of such violence.

In *Asyl in der BRD* (Asylum in the FRG, 1982), the treatment of refugees from Africa, Asia, and Latin America stands in stark contrast to that of people from the Eastern Europe when it comes to deciding who gets the right to stay. The background and human impact of restrictive public policies expose a system of inequality and adversity. Against the backdrop of rising numbers of asylum seekers, the debate about reforming asylum law from the mid-1980s on in Germany grew increasingly polemical. The goal of the public state is to make staying in the FRG as unappealing as possible for those deemed the most undesirable.

Sundaram, who studied English literature before heading to Hamburg in 1964 for a two-year internship at public radio and television broadcaster NDR, worked as a journalist, political commentator, and presenter for programs such as *Weltspiegel*, *Gesichter Asiens*, *Panorama*, and *extra drei*. Upon leaving NDR, she continued working as an active independent documentary director and author.

15. Gülden Artun

The painting *König* (King, 1983) by Gülden Artun (b. 1953) was created shortly after she studied painting at the Hochschule der Künste in Berlin. Artun came to the Federal Republic of Germany from Turkey in 1976. "When I came to West Berlin in 1976," she writes, "I felt the city was like a paradise ... Great freedom ... I think this feeling of being free is the first requirement if you want to make art." In 1977, she began her art studies with Professor MARWAN (also an artist in the exhibition) and graduated with a master's in 1983.

The painting is difficult to grasp at a glance. On the one hand, figurative elements as well as linear and geometric motifs are combined with abstract forms on the picture surface, and on the other hand, the color rhythms move against each other. The contours sometimes merge into one another, defying any clarity and creating a certain restlessness. *König* is a painting based on the playing card of the same name. Unlike the card game, the king is not repeated on both halves of the card, as here he is sometimes a worldly ruler and sometimes the prince of darkness. Gülden Artun's *König* can therefore not be pinned down to a single figure but tells of complementary and shifting power relations because, as in the game, which is characterized by both chance and strategy, power is not static but in constant motion.

16. MARWAN

In the early 1950s, MARWAN (1934–2016) studied Arabic literature at the University of Damascus before moving to West Berlin in 1957 to study at the Hochschule für Bildende Künste. He would later work there as a professor for almost twenty years.

In the 1970s, MARWAN began to reduce his paintings progressively to the figures depicted. Gradually, he concentrated more closely and precisely on the human face in his works, dispensing with any backdrop. Using only a limited palette of colors, he applied his motifs in numerous layers of oil and tempera.

A hand pokes through the artist's eye; a couple with their hands buried in their trouser pockets stands awkwardly before us; the face of someone lying down. MARWAN's subjects rarely look at us eye-to-eye—you have to make an effort; you have to remain attentive to meet their gaze.

Behind discreet and clear signs and subtle and direct hints—the tactility of hands, the meeting of two pairs of eyes, a quick whisper in the ear when no one is looking—lies a sexual obsession that is often unexpected or, for many, remains completely invisible. The moment the artist's obscure stories seem to emerge from behind the curtain, they simultaneously slip back again. Where a linear narrative appears, the world breaks apart and one begins anew.

17. Ali Rıza Ceylan

Shapes, figures, and scenes shine like crystals in the invariably small-format works by Ali Rıza Ceylan (b. 1963). With their reduced color palette of black, white, and gray, they are reminiscent of the classical grisaille painting technique. Ceylan's pictures are created on the rough side of fine-grade sandpaper sheets, with motifs that come from rubbing away abrasive grit to expose a white, smooth surface, combined with the intact areas of the paper that retain their densely packed gray grit. The artist sees not only faces and animals in the uneven distribution of the abraded surface but also landscapes, which he refined in the drawings completed in the early years of his career. In some pictures, traces of red or blue automotive paint are also visible. His characteristic artistic style has changed over the decades. In 2020, he started using colored pencils to add the finishing touches to the existing shapes and figures in his portraits.

For decades, he has been creating his pictures during breaks at the Ford Body and Assembly Plant in Cologne, transforming the breakroom into a studio as a gesture of resistance. The substrate he uses for his artwork is the worn-out sandpaper from the production line.

Ceylan has been working in Ford's sanding department since 1981, polishing the cars' paintwork by hand to remove small imperfections, dirt, and blisters. Some of the pictures contain the imprints of his hand, as he does not wear gloves during the sanding process. Ford hired him at a time when the company was facing a new round of labor shortages due to largely relocating the 1976 Fiesta model to Cologne. When Ceylan moved from Turkey to the FRG in the late 1970s, thanks to the family reunification program, he took a job at the Ford plant, just as his father had done in 1974. Although production of the Fiesta was discontinued on 7 July 2023, because the company has switched over to manufacturing electric models, Ceylan continues to make art.

Over more than four decades, Ceylan has created numerous works, some of which he has given to close relatives, coworkers, and friends. Some of the pictures in this exhibition are owned by the artist, while others are on loan from DOMiD—an archive and museum in Cologne that documents migration in Germany. DOMiD preserves, safeguards, and exhibits records and testimonies of migration

stories that, despite their complex influence on Germany's migration-shaped society, have largely remained untold. Ceylan's work was presented to the public for the first time in August 2023 by the initiative Herkesin Meydanı—Platz für alle (Space for all). The venue was Raum für alle (Room for all) in Cologne's Keupstrasse, a meeting point where survivors of racist and antisemitic violence can come together and present their perspectives on remembrance, resistance, art, culture, and empowerment. Those affected get the opportunity to express their political and emotional strength and highlight their own personal attitudes as migrants by participating in a wide range of solidarity projects and events. Featuring around 100 pictures by Ceylan, the exhibition was timed to coincide with the fiftieth anniversary of the Ford strike, which took place from August 24 to 31, 1973. The strikers, mainly workers from Turkey, were fighting for better working conditions by declaring "wildcat" strikes, which took place without union support.

18. Abed Abdi

During his time in the GDR, Abed Abdi (b. 1942) created a group of works, mainly drawings, gouaches, and prints, some works on canvas and cardboard, as well as wall paintings. People demonstrating or gathering on the street, fishermen on the beach, and again and again people fleeing—all seeming to stand still for a brief moment.

In 1964, with the help of the Israeli Communist Party, the Palestinian artist received a scholarship to study in Dresden at the Hochschule für Bildende Künste. There, Abdi studied mural painting and graphic art under Lea Grundig, an artist whose work was to play an important role in Abdi's artistic practice. Grundig was a painter and graphic artist who, as a Jew and communist, had to flee Nazi Germany. Finding refuge in Haifa, Israel, she returned to Dresden in 1948–49 and took up a professorship at the school a few years later.

Abed Abdi became an educator himself and worked for several years as a teacher in both schools and community centers in his home town Haifa. From 1985 to 2009, he taught fine arts and art history at the Arab College of Education in Haifa.

19. Cecilia Boisier

Cecilia Boisier (b. 1943) was a high school art teacher and a teaching assistant at the Universidad de Chile in Santiago until the military coup in 1973. She first immigrated to Buenos Aires and then ultimately moved to West Berlin in 1975, where she worked as an artist, translator, Spanish teacher, and curator. Looking back at that time, Boisier wrote that “exile destroyed my feeling of belonging.” Her works express the experience of living on the move, being a foreigner, waiting, encounters, as well as isolation, loneliness, separation, and imprisonment. As Boisier explained, “My main aim as an artist was to accurately reproduce these situations and feelings and counter the manipulation of human tragedies.”

One of these pictures is *Waggon* (1981): a dark-haired, mustachioed man sits alone in a railroad car, having set his beige coat down on the seat next to him. We can see his reflection in the window as he gazes out into the night from the moving train.

Train stations frequently appear in migrant artists’ works as places of arrival, departure, reunion, yearning, mourning, and surprise. Cecilia Boisier utilizes these familiar themes without reducing the human tragedies that lie behind them to mere stereotypes.

In addition to her work as an artist, Boisier also organized cultural activities in West Berlin: she cofounded the Chilean cultural center and the mural painting group *El Frente*, which aimed to continue the tradition of Chilean muralist brigades in the era of *La Unidad Popular*; these made accusations against the regime of Augusto Pinochet on large murals in public spaces. As a curator, Cecilia Boisier exhibited works by Chilean artists in the FRG.

20. Rıza Topal

A young woman in a pale dress is standing delicately on a branch, barefoot. She is holding onto a second branch with one hand, and with the other, she is reaching out for a piece of fruit. The dense green leaves frame the subject in the image like a vignette, allowing her to shine through. The painting *Maulbeeresserin* (Mulberry Eater, 1977) by Rıza Topal (b. 1934) was created two years after he graduated from his fine art degree at the art academy in Munich. He was already a qualified teacher and practicing artist with numerous exhibitions under his belt when he traveled to the FRG and enrolled as a student at Munich’s *Akademie der Bildenden Künste* in 1968.

His pictures depict the everyday life of village people from the Kurdish regions of Turkey. He himself grew up in the small village of Hülüman (now renamed Doğucak) in the east of the country. After completing his teacher training in 1957, he often worked in provinces such as Bingöl and Hakkâri, with large Kurdish populations. It was in the 1960s that Topal, far removed from the established art centers of Central and Western Europe, devised his own “ism,” namely Archaism. Inspired by the works of the ancient Egyptians, Hittites, Sumerians, and Assyrians who had lived in the region long ago, he created paintings that adopted their relief-like style with figures shown predominantly in profile. One example of this is the painting *Sumerer und ihre Tiere* (Sumerians and Their Animals, 1964), with its colorful detailed patterns and appliqués on the clothing and headgear worn by the two figures, who might be peasants or priests. At their side, we see three sheep with stripes in various colors. Perhaps the animals are placed in front of the people to express a hierarchy; equally, they could be referring to mythical animals who were used to transmit cultural and spiritual values that can no longer be reconstructed.

Rıza Topal is also a poet who composed poems in *Kurmancî* (one of the Kurdish languages). This was a risky endeavor at a time when speaking or writing any of the Kurdish dialects was forbidden in Turkey. The Turkish state repressed the Kurdish population and even waged war against them as a means of enforcing its doctrine that every citizen of the country was a Turk. This radical assimilation policy also meant that Kurds continued to define themselves as “Turks” even after they came to the FRG via the labor

recruitment agreement. They experienced multiple forms of discrimination in Germany, from ethnic Turks, among others. Rıza Topal has not been back in Turkey since 1975.

21. Guillermo Deisler

After the military coup that unseated Chilean President Salvador Allende in 1973, Guillermo Deisler (1940–1995) was imprisoned and had to immigrate to Paris on a French visa obtained by friends. After a short stay in France, he decided to move with his family to the GDR, from where Deisler was forced to continue his journey due to an agreement between the so-called ‘brother countries.’ Resettled in Bulgaria as a quota refugee, that is, people from crisis areas who are accepted from a country without applying for asylum, he was allowed to return to the GDR in 1986.

Part of an international network of artists, Deisler principally made mail art. Forced to be constantly on the move, this artistic form allowed him to express himself in new ways but also to exchange ideas. In the early 1980s, the artist began exchanging mail art with Ruth Wolf-Rehfeldt and Robert Rehfeldt. Postcards with smudged side notes, lines by Pablo Neruda, letters with personal stories, small drawings, as well as train and museum tickets formed the resulting correspondence. During this time, Deisler dealt intensively with the political instability at home in Chile and empathized with the people living under Augusto Pinochet’s regime.

His exchange with the Rehfeldts also includes works of Visual Poetry. Text elements, treated less as written language to convey content, transcend their communicative function as forms. His own experiences of constantly having to adapt to and deal with new and foreign languages strongly influenced his examination of the limits of the linguistic sign. As Deisler stated, “Languages are only a means of separation and not an international codex of signs that support each other.” He saw the aim of his work as “striving for sign systems that function beyond language and help to understand and express a thought or a message.”

22. Rimer Cardillo

Lined up behind one another in veneration of an individual, carried towards the sky on oversized wings, or in secret dialogue, the moths and cicadas in Rimer Cardillo's screen print series *Chicharras y Mariposas Nocturnas* (Cicadas and Night Butterflies, 1972–73) are symbolic of human coexistence.

Rimer Cardillo (b. 1944), who grew up in Uruguay, first studied at the National School of Fine Arts Montevideo and later at the Weißensee Kunsthochschule Berlin and the Hochschule für Grafik und Buchkunst in Leipzig. Shortly after he returned to Uruguay in the early 1970s following his graduation, then-President Juan María Bordaberry dissolved parliament, paving the way for many years of military dictatorship. Censorship prevented free artistic expression and also massively restricted Cardillo's work. In this context, the motif of the singing cicada takes on a further level of meaning: the animals remain underground for several years. Only at the end of their lives do they leave the protection of the underground passages and come to the surface in large numbers in synchronization with their development cycles. Prints with titles such as *El Elejido* (The Chosen One, 1973) or *El Conciliábulo* (The Secret Meeting, 1973) thus become a subtle expression of political resistance.

23. Manuela Sambo

Vogelmaske (Bird Mask, 1988) exudes a bird-like quality, featuring round eyes and an elongated beak in line with traditional mask-making in Angola. As Manuela Sambo (b. 1964) started out in her artistic practice, she created masks such as these, which are integral to religious and social rituals and often symbolize the wearer embodying the characteristics of the depicted animal. It's fitting that Sambo, having recently left her birthplace, Angola, would create this bird, symbolizing flight.

Sambo came to the GDR in 1984 on a scholarship and studied at Leipzig University between 1985 and 1993. By the time of her departure, the Angolan Civil War was happening, a protracted conflict deeply intertwined with the geopolitical dynamics of the Cold War era. Emerging in the aftermath of Angola's struggle for independence from Portuguese colonial rule in 1975, the Civil War quickly became a battleground for rival factions backed by competing superpowers. The Cold War context heightened the stakes of the Angolan conflict, transforming it into a proxy battleground between the ideological rivals of the United States and the Soviet Union. Angola established treaties with the so-called 'socialist brother states' in order to strengthen its political, economic, and cultural relations. It is estimated that about 20 percent of Angola's current leaders in business and politics studied in the GDR.

For the first decade of her practice, Sambo made sculptures of large-scale masks, referencing the art she grew up surrounded by in Angola. *Kranzmaske* (Wreath Mask, ca. 1988) has what looks like a crown of hair, a face with eyes half closed, and an exaggerated mouth. Manuela Sambo's works from that period take on the form of the mask, which perhaps points to a desire to explore her own heritage first before integrating aspects of cubism and expressionism that European artists borrowed from Africa. Sambo takes this influence into her paintings, and the figures in her work often have mask-shaped heads. "Only when I was abroad, I realized that I also have a culture," is how Sambo describes her experience in the GDR. In this way, she has come to situate her work neatly between where she was born and the place she has come to call home.

24. Chetna Vora

In the film *OYOYO* (1980), the residents of the international student dormitory (which no longer exists) in Karlshorst, the GDR, talk in a highly personal manner about themselves, their relationship to their country of origin, and occasionally about the situation in East Germany. They get together in the bedrooms and corridors of their dorm to spend time with each other, chat, listen to or make some music, and dance. *OYOYO* is the debut film by Chetna Vora (1958–1987), a student from India who was enrolled at the Hochschule für Film und Fernsehen, a film and TV school in Babelsberg, Potsdam. We do not see Vora herself in this film about students from ‘socialist brother countries’ in East Germany and their sense of community, friendships, and political struggles, but her voice can be heard quietly in the background during interviews with the students. “Where are you now?” she asks Carmen Maria Barbosa e Sá from Bissau, for example. The student replies that she is currently attending a German language course and would then like to study medicine in Halle or Leipzig. She talks to economics student Tungalag Sodnomgombyn from Ulaanbaatar about the breadth of the perception of time and about the tight schedule at university and the conflicts it creates. The students repeatedly talk about colonialism; Theodros Alemu from Addis Ababa, for one, talks about how the emperor of Ethiopia allowed himself to be cheated by France when railway lines were being laid across his country.

The music heard in *OYOYO* acts like another protagonist in the film. In the hallway of the dorm, the students sing the Cape Verdean Creole song “Forti Trabadja P’alguém” by the group Os Tubarões and dance along to it, accompanied by a guitar and drum. The protagonist of the song is protesting against hard labor and rejecting the submissive attitude that he is expected to adopt in (former) colonial powers such as the Netherlands and Portugal. It is the refrain of this song that gives the documentary its title. At the end of the film, we see some students talking about love as they listen to pieces from Cuban singer-songwriter Silvio Rodríguez’ debut album *Días y Flores* (1975) and the LP *Dez Anos Depois* (1971) by Brazilian actress and singer Nara Leão. In the dorm rooms, which are only visible from the outside in the first and last shots of the film, the

students have created an intimate, familiar setting where tender and utopian moments can also occur.

In addition to *OYOYO*, Chetna Vora also made *Frauen in Berlin* (Women in Berlin, 1982) for her graduation film. However, the university banned it on account of its realistic and critical portrayal of women in the GDR, and later it was confiscated by the police and the Stasi state security force. In 1983, Vora left the GDR with her family and moved to India, which is where she died in 1987.

25. Hamid Zénati

Hamid Zénati was born in Constantine, former French Algeria, in 1944. His artistic journey began in the 1970s in Algeria, where he embarked on a path of self-discovery while working as a translator. Faced with long hours of waiting for jobs, he turned to drawing and painting as a means of passing the time. Dissatisfied with the limitations of traditional paper, Zénati ventured into painting on clothes and everyday textiles, transforming them into wearable forms that challenged conventional notions of art. Embracing an anarchic creative drive, Zénati adorned fabrics with exuberant patterns and bright hues, transcending the traditional boundaries of canvas and paint. The textile paintings therefore epitomize a dynamic fusion of color, pattern, and materiality. His “all-over” aesthetic principle unites diverse materials, techniques, and cultural inspirations into singular artistic visions. Despite their visual allure, Zénati’s textile paintings resist easy interpretation, bearing the enigmatic traces of his deliberate obscurity.

Zénati’s restless creativity found expression in works imbued with a sense of perpetual motion, reflecting his nomadic existence between Algiers and Munich. On his move to the Federal Republic of Germany in the 1960s, he studied photography in Munich at the former Bayerische Staatslehranstalt für Photographie from 1971 to 1973. Having grown up in Algeria while the nation was undoing French colonialism, he dealt with uncertainty about his residency status while in the FRG. Zénati occupied this liminal space with a liberated approach to form and technique, encompassing an inexhaustible abundance of geometric shapes, patterns, and colors. As a keen observer of social, cultural, and artistic movements, Zénati developed a unique perspective that challenged the established boundaries between styles and genres. Each creation bears the imprint of Zénati’s playful yet powerful aesthetic sensibility, reflecting his unwavering commitment to artistic experimentation and innovation.

Throughout his six-decade career, Zénati traversed the realms of painting, textiles, interior and fashion design, photography, and other artistic media, driven by an anarchic impetus to create. Hamid Zénati passed away in Munich in 2022.

26. Getachew Yossef Hagoss

The self-portrait *Life in the Concrete Jungle* (1987) shows the artist Getachew Yossef Hagoss (b. 1957) against a geometric background. Oblique lines and acute angles jut upwards. Light falls from a bright polygonal form, illuminating the green-brown structures with a golden glow. The artist, positioned in a kind of white robe in the center of the picture, looks down at an angle. Like a broken pane of glass with even cracks, the spider’s web in front of him blends into the geometries of the composition, while at the same time the spider’s threads, which suggest a kind of stasis, contrast with the dynamic world behind him. The painting, *Life in the Concrete Jungle*, created one year after the artist’s return from Leipzig to Addis Ababa, seems to look between the prefabricated buildings in Leipzig back to 1981–86, to the time he was studying art there at the Hochschule für Grafik und Buchkunst (HGB).

The winter semester of 1981/82 was exceptional for the HGB because Getachew Yossef Hagoss was beginning his studies along with a further twenty-five students from Ethiopia, Bulgaria, Czechoslovakia, Jordan, the Mongolian People’s Republic, Poland, the USSR, and Hungary. This meant that international students made up a quarter of all those enrolled at the university at the time, and, unlike at the universities where students from abroad often formed their own tight-knit national groups, they were fully integrated into the HGB’s seminar groups. Cultural agreements between these countries and the GDR made it possible to travel to the German Democratic Republic to study on a scholarship. And a similar agreement was concluded between the People’s Socialist Republic of Ethiopia and the GDR in 1977, three years after the monarchy was deposed. The following year, in the spirit of diplomatic relations between the two countries, the group exhibition *Junge Kunst aus Äthiopien* (Young Art from Ethiopia) with the three artists Demmelash Adal, Martha Ketsela, and Ejigayehu Tesfaye opened in the pavilion of the Neue Berliner Galerie in East Berlin.

Political issues already shaped Hagoss’ initial art studies at the Allé Faculty of Fine Arts at Addis Ababa University (1974–79). During this time, for example, he read the novel *Roots* (1976) by the American writer Alex Haley about the Atlantic trade in enslaved people and studied the colonization of the continent. He asked himself: Why was there

slavery, why was there apartheid in South Africa, and why do people in Africa suffer so much in their own countries? The posters he created in Leipzig with political slogans such as *Apartheid, No!* (1984) or *Mandela for Freedom* (1984) are attempts at an answer. Some of the posters—such as *Demands of Africa* (1984), which features a sculpture from the former Kingdom of Benin paired with stipulations concerning “Freedom,” “Equality,” “Human Rights,” “Justice,” and “Independence”—have not lost their topicality to this day.

The demands of Africa are also linked to the adoption of Resolution 3187 by the United Nations General Assembly on 18 December 1973, to which the German Democratic Republic (GDR) and the Federal Republic of Germany (FRG) acceded in the same year. The resolution advocated the return of cultural assets to the former colonies. The GDR and its allied Eastern European states supported this resolution, while the FRG and other Western states abstained from voting. Nevertheless, demands for the return of cultural objects on the part of the GDR remained mostly unfulfilled.

27. César Olhagaray

Following the 1973 military coup led by Augusto Pinochet and a short period of imprisonment, César Olhagaray (b. 1951) was forced to leave his home country, Chile, and flee to Europe. After a short stay in France, he arrived in the GDR, where he began his studies in painting and graphic arts in Dresden at the Hochschule für Bildende Künste. In the late 1980s, he continued his studies at the Humboldt-Universität zu Berlin. Several solidarity measures were enacted by the GDR shortly after Pinochet came to power, including the acceptance of numerous refugees who were targeted and persecuted by the dictatorship.

Human bodies, mythical creatures, and fantastical beings are often tethered to each other in Olhagaray’s work. They swim down a yellow river, rush along a purple street, lie under an orange sun, or dance under the pink moonlight. However, his fictional stories have a strong political undertone. These fantastical scenes become a sharp commentary in which Olhagaray addresses his own experiences of imprisonment while remaining rooted in the collective.

Over the years, the artist has created an extensive body of work consisting of large murals in public spaces, such as on the façade of an East Berlin club in the 1980s or on the occasion of the National Festival of Mozambican Youth in Maputo to commemorate Mozambique’s independence from Portugal in 1975. Both, like numerous other public murals in Dresden, London, or Paris, are clear signs of opposing war and racism. None of these works exist today.

28. Teresa Casanueva

In August 1985, Teresa Casanueva (b. 1963) began studying textiles at Hochschule für industrielle Formgestaltung Halle – Burg Giebichenstein, an art school in Halle. The university made it possible for her to take an interdisciplinary approach to textiles as materials, media, and metaphors. Her graduation pieces *Luftwiderstand* (Air Resistance), *Aufrecht im Wind* (Upright in the Wind), and *Lianen* (Lianas) in 1991 bring together fabric, sculpture, natural and synthetic fabrics, and industrial and artisanal production techniques. Casanueva's abstract objects seem to float weightlessly in space like wind chimes moving with the breeze. The lightweight materials are closely interwoven with the textile industry, whose relationships with international trade are deeply rooted in the colonial past—both globally and in Cuba's own history—and exhibit postcolonial continuities. The artist herself reflects: "The university was governed by a spirit of blending art and design, and that gave me a broad outlook on what constitutes visual art."

Teresa Casanueva came to study in Halle as a consequence of the cultural agreement that the GDR concluded with Cuba in 1961. The GDR collapsed two semesters before the end of Casanueva's studies, and the following year saw the reunification of the two Germanies. She received legal assurance that she would be allowed to continue her studies in Germany even under these new political circumstances. "For me personally, this period of the *Wende* [turn] was one of the most moving moments and the most intense time of my life," she said in an interview. "Two opposing emotions fought within me then and still do now: great joy and deep sadness. On the one hand, there was the joy and celebration at the end of a divided Germany, the end of socialism, and the Cold War; on the other hand, there was the rejection of the Cuban government and the reprisals I was subjected to at the time." The artist shifted the main focus of her life to Berlin and became a German citizen in 1997.

29. Santos Chávez

Three people are lying on the grass, nestled closely together. Their closed eyes and facial expressions make it appear as if they are all fast asleep. A blue celestial body, set against a black background, floats above them. The woodcut *Homenaje a mi pueblo* (Homage to My People, 1978) refers to a central point of reference in the work of Santos Chávez (1934–2001). As a member of the largest Indigenous group in Chile, the artist grew up in Mapuche territory. In the cosmivision that is specific to the Mapuche, things are situated in dual relationships with one another. Chávez also chooses colors and shapes that connect elements such as light and shadow, the Earth and the Sun, and stillness and movement. The Mapuche referred to themselves as "people of the earth" to distinguish themselves initially from the Spanish colonizers and later from the Chilean majority in society, then also using this term to describe their special and collective relationship with nature, which they live alongside.

After studying at the Sociedad de Bellas Artes in the Chilean city of Concepción, Chávez moved to the capital, Santiago de Chile, in 1960. It was here that he joined Taller 99, a printmaking workshop that played a significant role in the growing popularity of the medium in Chile at that time. On an extended trip to Mexico, he also studied the traditional *murales*, and after returning to Santiago, he started creating his own murals. Santos Chávez adopted a critical stance when the dictator Augusto Pinochet came to power in 1973 as a result of a military coup. The seemingly peaceful scene in *Homenaje a mi pueblo* is actually a depiction of three women on hunger strike. This was how the Mapuche protested against the massive wounds that the dictatorship inflicted on their rights and culture.

In 1977, the fascist presence forced Santos Chávez to flee the country, many of his murals in public spaces having already been destroyed. After spending time in Sweden, Spain, and West Berlin, the artist settled down in East Germany in exile from 1981 to 1994. Living in East Berlin, he produced prints, paintings, book illustrations, and murals. Chávez expressed the difficulties of finding his way in new surroundings by using his works to preserve a connection to the places, culture, and landscapes he remembered: "When you're far away from your homeland, you have to bring it closer. The landscape is so different in other

countries; everything is flat; so, I took my tools and brought the mountains of Arauco with me; I brought the people from the south, the rain, the green, and the wind from Chile.”

30. Dito Tembe

“The objective was to go where everybody could have food and clothes,” Dito Tembe described his move to the GDR in 1985 as a ‘foreign worker.’ Born in Mozambique in 1960, Tembe’s early years were characterized first by the country’s struggle for independence from Portuguese rule and then by the Mozambican Civil War, whose dynamics were exacerbated by the Cold War. Lasting from 1977 to 1992, the war was a brutal conflict between the ruling Marxist Frente de Libertação de Moçambique (FRELIMO) government and the anti-communist Resistência Nacional Moçambicana (RENAMO). The GDR sent military assistance and trained soldiers of FRELIMO. Additionally, the GDR welcomed Mozambican students and workers, offering scholarships, training programs, and employment opportunities, which served as a means of fostering diplomatic ties and exerting influence in the region.

It was in this context that twenty-five-year-old Tembe left a war-ravaged economy with 150 other laborers to work at the Lederwaren Suede Factory in Schwerin, Mecklenburg. There, he negotiated with the Mozambique Embassy to attend a three-year visual arts course at the Russia and Germany Friendship House in Schwerin, from 1987 to 1989. In the summer of 1987, Tembe created a mural on one wall of his residence. Using only curved lines, the mural depicted a woman with outstretched hands, like a savior on the cross, a book on her lap, and a gun and sun above her head. Beside her are two figures that seem to be held in her bosom. Tembe meant it as a tribute to the strong women of the Civil War. Recreating this work, which was destroyed with the demolition of the building, from fragmented memories and photographs gestures to the complexities of displacement and migration.

With the accession, migrant workers like Tembe were forced back to their home countries without having realized the training or studies they had hoped for. Tembe was only able to take one drawing with him. As a member of a large group of returnees from the GDR, the so-called ‘Madgermanes,’ he is fighting for the payment of outstanding wages, pension reserves, and social benefits. The monthly withheld portions of their salaries were used to pay off Mozambique’s national debt to the GDR. They became aware of this exploitation after their return. To this day, they continue to hope in vain for payments.

Tours

On the following days, there will be free public guided tours at MUSEUM^{MMK}, ZOLLAMT^{MMK}, and TOWER^{MMK}:

Elizabeth Catlett

at TOWER^{MMK}

Guided tours in German:

Tuesdays at 4 pm

Sundays at 2 pm

Guided tours in English:

Sundays at 4 pm

Christelle Oyiri

AN EYE FOR AN "I"

PONTOPREIS MMK 2024

at ZOLLAMT^{MMK}

Guided tours in German:

Sundays at 4 pm

Guided tours in English:

Saturdays at 11 am

There is no there there

at MUSEUM^{MMK}

Guided tours in German:

Wednesdays at 5 pm

Thursdays at 4 pm

Saturdays at 12 noon and 3 pm

Sundays at 12 noon and 3 pm

Guided tours in English:

Saturdays at 4 pm

Guided tours for visually impaired people (German): every 2nd Sunday of the month at 2 pm

Guided tours in easy language (German): every 3rd Sunday of the month at 11.30 am

Guiding tours in German including German Sign Language: every 4th Sunday of the month at 3 pm

More information on guided tours, workshops, and events can be found at: www.mmk.art

The public guided tours are included in the admission price. For children and young people under 18 years of age, admission is free. On every last Saturday of the month admission is free for everyone.

Imprint

This booklet is published in conjunction with the exhibition

There is no there there

MUSEUM^{mmk}

13 April – 29 September 2024

OPENING HOURS

Tue–Sun: 11 am–6 pm

Wed: 11 am–8 pm

CURATORS OF THE EXHIBITION

Gürsoy Doğtaş, Susanne Pfeffer

PUBLISHER

Susanne Pfeffer

MANAGING EDITOR

Haris Giannouras

TEXTS

Gürsoy Doğtaş, Haris Giannouras,

E.N Mirembe, Susanne Pfeffer,

Jana Pfort

COPY EDITING

Haris Giannouras, Amanda Gomez,

Jana Pfort

PROOFREADING

Amanda Gomez, Tina Wessel

EXPERT EDITING

Bengü Kocatürk-Schuster, Ellen

Pupeter, Eric Otieno Sumba

TRANSLATIONS

Nicola Morris

GRAPHIC DESIGN

Zak Group, London

Anna Sukhova, Frankfurt am Main

PRINT

Druck- und Verlagshaus Zarbock

GmbH & Co. KG, Frankfurt am Main

COVER

Riza Topal, *Untitled*, 1964, courtesy

the artist, photo: Axel Schneider

INSIDE FRONT COVER

Hamid Zénati, *Untitled*, n. d.,

© Hamid Zénati Estate, Foto:

Maximilian Geuter

IMAGE PAGES

Vlassis Caniaris, *Sliced Cucumber*, 1974,

courtesy the artist's estate and Galerie

Peter Kilchmann Zürich/Paris, photo:

Axel Schneider

Chetna Vora, *OYOYO*, Filmstill, 1980,

© Hochschule für Film und Fernsehen

der DDR, „Konrad Wolf“, Potsdam-

Babelsberg, unterstützt durch das /

with the support of Förderprogramm

Filmerbe, BKM, Länder und / and

FFA (DE).

MUSEUM^{mmk} FÜR MODERNE KUNST

MUSEUM^{mmk}

Domstraße 10, 60311 Frankfurt am Main

mmk.art

The exhibition is funded by

