

Temple and Kitchen**Albrecht/Wilke, Marlene Zoë Burz & Manuel Kirsch, Grapebattleships**

Opening: October 10, 2025, 18:00 – 21:00

Exhibition: October 11 – 25, 2025

Mariannenstrasse 33, 10999 Berlin

Curated by Linhan Yu

Between the two extremes of life, there always exists a subtle confrontation: on one side, the grand “Temple,” encompassing the cosmos, society, war, ideology, philosophical reflection, and the perception of time; on the other, the mundane “Kitchen,” bearing the weight of daily trifles, moments of humor, and fleeting awareness. Much like the moment when Marcel Proust tasted the madeleine in *In Search of Lost Time*, small yet capable of awakening the resonance of an entire life, it is within the dislocation and juxtaposition of these two realms that new narrative spaces emerge.

The exhibition “*Temple and Kitchen*” brings together three duos of artists from different backgrounds. Some collaborate so closely that the duo becomes their sole creative identity; others maintain independent practices while also working together; still others bridge the fields of art and design. Collaboration differs fundamentally from the isolated expression of a single artist. It dissolves the notion of “pure independence” within collectivism while simultaneously highlighting individual differences. As Wassily Kandinsky once wrote, “*Art is the externalization of inner necessity.*” Each work carries the personal sensibilities of its creators, yet generates new vitality within collective collaboration. It is in this tension, between conflict and fusion, that artistic cooperation provides us with new paths of understanding—precisely the working model this exhibition seeks to explore.

The three duos demonstrate distinct trajectories. Although they all take painting as their primary medium, their artistic orientations reflect very different thought processes and perspectives. Painting itself possesses multiple attributes: it can be a practical process, a medium for conceptual transmission, or a catalyst for other media. In this sense, the three duos not only represent three directions of practice but also embody three independent artistic logics.

Albrecht and Wilke, who began working together as students, share formative experiences that gradually shaped them into an inseparable whole. Yet their works often display a divided visual effect: foreground and background are treated independently, creating tension and contradiction. Their motifs often derive from everyday German life—sausages, cheese, ketchup—which allow viewers to easily enter the context while also evoking a romantic or even surreal sensibility. Since Galerie Met’s site was once a small corner shop, the duo took this as an opportunity to create a series of paintings based on shop items. Works such as “*Snickers*” highlight painting’s unique function: beyond producing three-dimensionality on a two-dimensional plane, they embody an object-like quality akin to installation, situating painting in a subtle zone between image and object.

The collaboration between Marlene Zoë Burz and Manuel Kirsch is based on the combination of their independent works. For this exhibition, they worked with desert ecology images drawn from a Walt Disney natural history picture book. The 1953 film *The Living Desert* is well known, unlike the book from which the image is taken. The two artists employ this unexpected reference to connect their practices, allowing experimentation to unfold within the exhibition itself and generate new narratives. Burz works on the sustainability of images and their impact on her perception of nature and the environment, while Kirsch pursues conceptual explorations that attempt to go beyond perception and seek the unpredictable in everyday life. Their collaboration relies not only on studio discussions but also on the generative process of exhibition-making. Although they have been working and living together for over ten years, they rarely produce joint work. The collaborative piece

“*Fata Morgana*” was created specifically for this exhibition.

Quite different is the duo Grapebattleships, whose collaboration is founded on extensive preliminary dialogue. Their different identities bring inspiration from disparate fields, and their themes, while highly social, often unfold in surreal ways. Only after repeated discussion and careful agreement do they proceed to actual production, working together through alternating acts of painting. The shared framework of realism, with its consistent technical standards, serves as their common ground. Within this framework, they use humorous appearances to carry serious content, responding to the world around them. The four works on view span personal experiences, political events, life attitudes, and philosophical reflections. Details such as the gaze of a cat, the imprint of sticky notes, the posture of a doll, or the words on a torso offer viewers endless possibilities for discovery and provoke broader associations.

Through the study of these duos, the exhibition reveals how such collaborations can transform the subconscious judgments of individual artists into rational and visualized expressions. Their exchanges resemble both the electrical currents within independent minds and the tangible flows of spoken language and embodied communication between two people. This mode of working recalls Umberto Eco’s depiction of the monastery in *The Name of the Rose*: beneath soaring Gothic vaults and austere stone walls, monastic life quietly unfolds with meals, farming, and the copying of scriptures. Grand religious order and mundane daily routine intersect and overlap in the same space, inseparable, embodying both solemnity and warmth.

So it is with artistic collaboration. The criteria for “good” collaboration are dialectical in nature. Whether it results in a unified visual identity or in the juxtaposition and clash of distinct styles, both can be ideal outcomes. What matters is that collaboration is not only the dialectical unity of form and content but also depends on the care and commitment of each participant. Both the solemn “temple façade” and the pragmatic “kitchen foundation” are indispensable. Only in this way can the collaborative whole become complete and abundant.

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Text by Linhan Yu

Albrecht/Wilke

Albrecht/Wilke, born in 1992 in Berlin and 1991 in Stade, studied at HBK Braunschweig and HfbK Hamburg. Since 2016, they have been working together as a duo, sharing brushes, canvases, and more. Their works have been widely exhibited both nationally and internationally, including at the Sprengel Museum Hannover, the Neuer Aachener Kunstverein, Feinkunst e.V., and Kunstverein Arnsberg, as well as at La Bibi+Reus in Spain and Roberta Keil in Austria. Further exhibitions have taken place at Galerie Judith Andreae in Bonn, Weserhalle, Misa Art in Berlin, and Galerie Noah in Augsburg. They have also received significant support for their artistic development through various scholarships and grants, such as the 2024 YARW Residency in Weidingen, the Kunststiftung Kunze Grant in 2023, and the Berlin Project Fund for Urban Practice in 2022.

Marlene Zoë Burz & Manuel Kirsch

Marlene Zoë Burz born in Stuttgart in 1990, lives in Berlin. She studied at the Berlin Weissensee School of Art. Selected exhibitions include 'Leftover Love' solo exhibition at Jenaer Kunstverein 2023, 'Ausleben', Schulstraße 11, Freiburg im Breisgau 2023, 'The Alien Everyday', Spoiler Aktionsraum, Berlin 2022, 'Intimate Matter' Bärenzwinger, Berlin 2019, 'in futura mergere' solo Reflector Gallery, Bern 2018.

Manuel Kirsch born in Freiburg im Breisgau in 1986 lives in Berlin. He studied at Kunsthochschule Kassel and Berlin Weißensee. Selected exhibitions include 'shame' Schöne Felder Augsburg 2025, 'Vom Knie Zur Kehle Vorfrühling' with Andreas Burger, KA32, Berlin 2024, 'Haushalt' Philipp Pflug Contemporary, Frankfurt a.M. 2023, 'It's just a phase' curated by Rhea Dall and Elmgreen & Dragset KUK Trondheim Norway 2021. 'Feste' solo at Brandenburgischer Kunstverein, Potsdam 2014.

As an artist couple, Burz and Kirsch showed at 'Late breakfast', Künstlerhaus Palais Thurn und Taxis, (composed by Alexander Moosbrugger with free counterpoint by Gerd de Vries), Bregenz, Austria 2017, 'Decken' Kaufhaus Jandorf, Berlin 2016, 'New Wallwork and Last Drink', Atelierhaus Köpenickerstr. 36, 'Walllust' (Aura an Aura aus), Kunsthalle am Hamburgerplatz, Berlin 2014. From 2016 to 2024, they organised the SOX Berlin project space together with Björn Streeck.

Grapebattleships

Grapebattleships is an artist duo founded in late 2022 by two Chinese artists based in Berlin. The name "Grapebattleships" reflects their creative process, characterized by a struggle for artistic dominance on the canvas. This confrontational approach imbues their works with a distinctive tension, where contradictions and oppositions form the central theme of their art. The duo engages with contemporary social issues, often reflecting on them from their own perspective. They draw on phenomena from pop culture to pose questions—such as the rapid integration of artificial intelligence into daily life or the nature of social structures and relationships, which they often approach with a touch of humor. Rooted in classical painting, their works redefine imagery through creative reimagining. The result is abstract puzzle-like pieces that bear little resemblance to the original source, yet vividly capture the essence of modern life. This approach offers viewers new visual and emotional experiences.