

The Untranslated

You Hyeonkyeong, Linhan Yu

Curated by Yeni Ma

Opening: May 01, 2026, 18:00 – 21:00

Exhibition: May 02, 2026 – May 30, 2026

Mariannenstrasse 33, 10999 Berlin

There are things we experience and sense that cannot be fully rendered in ordinary language or visual images—the longing for someone, the loneliness of a foreign city, or what lies beyond what the eye can capture when looking at an object: the time spent with it, the feel of it. *The Untranslated* brings together the works of two painters, You Hyeonkyeong and Linhan Yu, who seek to make visible through painting what cannot be wholly translated into any language or visual form.

In *The Way to Understand an Apple – Coldest Mode*, the apple Linhan Yu depicts is not the apple we know. Captured through thermal imaging, it is perceived not by light but by heat—revealing not its appearance or color, but its internal structure, its external conditions, the traces of time inscribed upon it. The artist does not reproduce this captured image directly. Instead, he paints over it, redrawing its form with rough, deliberate brushstrokes. In this process, what the machine's eye seized in its coldest mode is returned by the artist's hand to something unstable and mutable. Through this, Yu asks how deeply our vision is shaped by the conditions through which it operates. If Cézanne unsettled the illusion of a single viewpoint by looking at one apple from multiple perspectives simultaneously, Yu poses the same question through technological mediation, in the language of today. The same logic extends to his practice of assembling multiple canvases into a single image without fixing their arrangement. The meaning of a subject does not reside in any completed form; it is generated within relationships and regenerated each time those relationships shift. In *Rock*, human hands are placed alongside an abstract geometric grip. The two images share no direct connection, yet our perception moves between them and fills the gap, conjuring a third image that exists in neither. What our vision cannot capture—temperature, time, the relations between things—he draws into the language of painting.

You Hyeonkyeong's painting sets out from the opposite direction. Rather than looking outward, she waits for something within. The brushwork that appears fast and rough is in fact something that has long been gathering—bursting forth only after sustained stillness. For You, the figures and landscapes that appear on her canvases are not there to be depicted; they are vehicles for an interior state. *One Two One Two Toddler*, painted in Berlin shortly after her move there, belongs to a period when homesickness drew her back to childhood as a subject. The vast scale of the canvas and the sweeping gestures of its marks carry something else: a kind of defiance, a will toward bodily possibility, in the wake of an accident in Korea that had left her body impaired. In *Should Work Hard*, painted in a windowless studio in Lewisham, London, the gridded brushwork and racing rabbits produce a space where absence, frustration, and pressure are folded together. *Where I Hang Around*, depicting an unnamed cathedral encountered on a walk through Berlin, and *Ganga*, depicting the landscape of the Ganges, are not landscapes seen with open eyes but landscapes recalled with eyes closed. She speaks of what becomes visible in that waiting darkness as abyss—as abstraction. The dark forms that appear on these canvases are what she has drawn up from that quiet depth. In this way, she gives form to what could not be spoken, to what has accumulated without ever being translated into words.

Where Linhan Yu borrows the cold gaze of technology to point toward what vision cannot reach, You Hyeonkyeong begins from where language cannot go—through feeling and gesture. From outside in, from inside out: the directions differ, but both artists attend to what resists full translation, and neither treats the image as a finished result. This exhibition invites us to suspend, for a moment, the familiar frameworks of vision and language we take for granted. In that space of indeterminacy, we may find ourselves rethinking how images and meanings come to be formed at all.

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Text: Yeni Ma

Artist:

You Hyeonkyeong is a painter currently based in Berlin. She received her MFA in 2011 at the Seoul National University Graduate School for Painting and her BFA in Painting at Seoul National University. YOU's work has been shown internationally with solo exhibitions at Iseurrat, Seoul, Korea; Parkseobo Foundation, Seoul, Korea; Asia Now, Paris, France; Spacemom Museum of Art, Cheongju, Korea; Doosan gallery, New York, USA; OCI Museum of Art, Seoul, Korea; SeMA Seoul Museum of Art, Insa Art Center, Seoul, Korea et al. In Addition, her work has been shown in numerous group shows as Space Supernormal, Seoul, Korea; Hippiie Hannam, Seoul, Korea; Schloss Plüschow, Plüschow, Germany; Nook Gallery, Seoul, Korea; Sejong Museum of Art, Seoul, Korea; Hangaram Art Museum, Seoul Arts Center, Seoul, Korea; Mimesis Art Museum, Paju, Korea; Chung Mun Kye Museum, Ansan, Korea; Gallery Artvera's, Geneva, Switzerland; Seoul Olympic Museum of Art, Seoul, Korea; Seongnam Arts Center Cube Museum Bandal Gallery, Seongnam, Korea; Ligak Museum of Art, Cheonan, Korea; Chosun University Museum of Art, Gwangju, Korea; OCI Museum of Art, Seoul, Korea; Jeonbuk Museum of Art, Wanju, Korea; National Museum of Modern and Contemporary Art, Korea, Gwacheon, Korea. YOU has received awards for her work as the 8th Chongkundang Yesuljisang and the Ha dong chul Scholarship, and is included in notable collections as of MMCA Government Art Bank, Korea, the Seoul National University Museum of Art, Korea and the OCI Museum of Art, Korea.

Linhan Yu is an artist and curator, and a member of the art collective Grape Battleships. Born in Beijing in 1990, he currently lives and works between Berlin and Beijing. He graduated from the Central Academy of Fine Arts (CAFA) and later obtained his Meisterschüler degree from the Hochschule für Künste Bremen (HfK Bremen), Germany. As an artist, he has held solo exhibitions worldwide, with venues including Hive Center for Contemporary Art, Beijing; Nadan Berlin; Supermarkt Gallery, Tokyo; Galerie Herold, Bremen; Künstlerhaus Sootbörn, Hamburg; Migrant Bird Space, Berlin and The Cargo, Shenzhen, etc.. His works have also been presented in a wide range of international group exhibitions and have received several awards. As a curator, Yu has organized numerous exhibitions, including More News at Spoiler Berlin, The Situation Is Excellent at Glue Berlin, Wandeln at Nadan Berlin, and 1+1 at Galerie Met Berlin, as well as Sugar Control at Double Double Gallery and Triumph Gallery in Beijing.

Curator:

Yeni Ma is a curator and researcher based in Berlin. Her practice centers on the ephemeral and intangible—the traces left by what disappears, and the conditions through which we perceive and make sense of the world. Working across Germany, Korea, and beyond, she has pursued her practice through curatorial residencies in Almería and Berlin, collaborating primarily with artists from Asia and the Asian diaspora whose work engages questions of migration, memory, and belonging. Her recent project Communal Kitchen: Kkaennip used food and the space of the kitchen as a site for sensory encounter, tracing the entangled histories of nature, labor, migration, and colonial legacies.