

Press Information



Attilia Fattori Franchini and Birke Gorm, Photo: © Lea Sonderegger

Birke Gorm selected for Austrian Pavilion at 16th Gwangju Biennale 2026 in South Korea

Birke Gorm has been selected to represent Austria at the 16th Gwangju Biennale 2026 in South Korea. The exhibition will be curated by Attilia Fattori Franchini and marks the second national presentation of Austria at the Gwangju Biennale.

Phileas – The Austrian Office for Contemporary Art invited artists and curators to submit joint proposals through an Open Call, which were assessed by its International Advisory Board comprising Lisa Gersdorf (Publisher, frieze, Berlin and London), Max Hollein (Director and CEO, The Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York), Tessa Praun (Curator and writer, Stockholm), Hans Schabus (Artist and professor, University of Applied Arts Vienna), Jasper Sharp (Curator and writer, Vienna) and Simone Subal (Gallerist, New York). The jury chose the winning project from a total of 35 submissions.

“The concept of Birke Gorm and Attilia Fattori Franchini impressed with its clear artistic vision and its critical examination of relevant issues such as the use of resources or the consequences of capitalism. By repurposing everyday, seemingly worthless materials in her work, Birke Gorm brings the repressed and overlooked to the forefront, creating a space for collective memories. The jury was particularly struck by how her work inscribes itself into the local context, thus opening a dialogue between place, material, and history. Addressing some of the complex questions related to the human condition within a fragile socio-economic framework, Birke Gorm’s mesmerizing installations convey a highly impactful and persuasively engaging visual language,” said Max Hollein on behalf of the jury.

Birke Gorm’s works reveal hidden narratives while hinting at possibilities of survival, revival, and upheaval. In line with Gorm’s artistic production, the exhibition at the Austrian Pavilion will consist largely of discarded and repurposed materials, collected by the artist in Vienna and on site in Gwangju. Under the title *the evening and the morning and the night*, Gorm transforms the exhibition space of the Austrian Pavilion at the Eunam Museum of Art both physically and conceptually into an attic – a place that is used for storage, mainly left undisturbed. In the exhibition, the attic is regarded as the “mind of the house.” Just as an attic stores old, forgotten, or hidden objects, it can symbolise the mind’s storage of repressed memories, unprocessed emotions as well as the societal influences that command our identities. In particular, the often-overlooked stories of women, frequently marginalised or only passed down informally, take centre stage as a source of resistance, resilience, and creativity, opening new perspectives on collective history and identity.

“Through careful attention, re-appropriation, and the use of traditional craft and domestic production techniques, I explore how care, time, and manual labour can reframe what seems disposable as something that carries valuable information. It is an honour to represent Austria – which has been my home for more than a decade – at the Gwangju Biennale, and I deeply value the opportunity to take part in the exchange between Austria, South Korea and the international art scene,” said artist Birke Gorm.

“Working with Birke Gorm on the Austrian contribution *the evening and the morning and the night* is a wonderful occasion to engage with the practice of an artist I have been deeply admiring. Gorm will investigate the life cycle of local common objects while interrogating their ideological framework around the narration of history and changing attitudes to social representation, gender, and industrialisation, and I look forward to the opportunity of working together in the exciting context of Gwangju,” said curator Attilia Fattori Franchini.

“I am delighted that artist Birke Gorm and curator Attilia Fattori Franchini have been selected to realise Austria’s contribution to the 16th Gwangju Biennale and to continue Austria’s presence with their artistic concept, following the pavilion’s successful debut in 2024. With the renewed realisation of the Austrian Pavilion in Gwangju, we are sending a clear signal that it is a central concern of ours to showcase the variety and quality of the Austrian art scene on major international platforms,” said Andreas Babler, Vice-Chancellor and Federal Minister for Housing, Arts, Culture, Media and Sport.

The 16th Gwangju Biennale will take place from September to November 2026, curated by curator, media artist and filmmaker Ho Tzu Nyen. The Austrian Pavilion in Gwangju will be hosted by the Eunam Museum of Art. In addition to Austria, the venue will also present the Swiss Pavilion, commissioned by the Swiss Arts Council Pro Helvetia.

The Austrian Pavilion is commissioned by Phileas - The Austrian Office for Contemporary Art and co-financed by the Federal Ministry for Housing, Arts, Culture, Media and Sport.

You can find detailed **press material and press images** at: www.phileas.art/birkegorm-press

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Team

Birke Gorm (born 1986 in Hamburg, Germany) is a visual artist based in Vienna. Her approach to working with materials reflects the information that they carry and their immediate impact on society, some of which remains visible until today. She sets the autonomy of these materials in relation to traditional production techniques and the gender roles assigned to them, which in turn shape issues such as labour, self-optimisation, and societal processes of equality. She holds a master's degree from the Academy of Fine Arts, Vienna, and a BA in Fashion and Textile Design from the Design School Kolding, Denmark.

In recent years, her work has been presented in solo exhibitions at O-Overgaden, Copenhagen; MQ Art Box, MuseumsQuartier Wien, Vienna; Croy Nielsen, Vienna; MAK – Museum of Applied Arts, Vienna; Museum Sønderjylland, Tønder; Politikens Forhal, Copenhagen; Vestjyllands Kunstpavillon, Videbæk; and in group exhibitions at Kraupa-Tuskany Zeidler, Berlin; Kunsthalle Wien; Martina Simeti, Milan; mumok – Museum moderner Kunst Stiftung Ludwig Wien, Vienna; the National Gallery of Denmark, Copenhagen; and Schirn Kunsthalle, Frankfurt. The artist is represented by Croy Nielsen, Vienna.

Her works are held in the collections of Kunsthau Bregenz; Dom Museum, Vienna; Kunstmuseum Brandts, Odense; Lentos Kunstmuseum Linz; MAK – Museum of Applied Arts, Vienna; mumok – Museum moderner Kunst Stiftung Ludwig Wien, Vienna; Museum der Moderne Salzburg; Museum Sønderjylland, Tønder; and the National Gallery of Denmark, Copenhagen.

Attilia Fattori Franchini (born 1983 in Pesaro, Italy) is an independent curator and writer based in Vienna. In her work, she creates experimental spaces for the production and presentation of contemporary art and addresses topics such as technology, post-capitalism, language, and femininity. She is the director of the festival curated by, the founder and director of KUNSTVEREIN GARTENHAUS in Vienna, and the founder and editor of the publishing house Wild Seeds.

Fattori Franchini has conceived and established the initiative BMW Open Work by Frieze (2017–2023), realizing solo presentations by Sara Sadik, Nikita Gale, Madeline Hollander, Camille Blatrix, Sam Lewitt, and Olivia Erlanger. Since 2018, she has been the curator of the Emergent section of the art fair miart Milan. She has recently curated the exhibition *Rebecca Ackroyd: Mirror Stage*, a collateral event of the 60th International Art Exhibition – La Biennale di Venezia (2024), and has worked as a researcher at the Institute for Art Theory and Cultural Studies at the Academy for Fine Arts, Vienna (2021–2024) and at the Università degli Studi di Urbino, Carlo Bo, Urbino, IT (2022–2024).

Her writing has appeared in publications such as Mousse, Artforum, CURA., Flash Art International, Camera Austria, Spike Magazine as well as authoring catalog essays for monographs on the work of Birke Gorm, Jakob Lena Knebl & Ashley Hans Scheirl, Hervé Guibert, Diego Marcon, Tatjana Dannenberg, Rosa Rendl, Andreia Santana, Anaïs Horn, Superflex.

About the 16th Gwangju Biennale

The Gwangju Biennale in South Korea was founded in 1995 and is considered the oldest and most renowned biennial for contemporary art in Asia. Since 2018, the biennial has hosted national pavilions and satellite exhibitions by international art institutions at cultural venues across the city alongside the main exhibition. Each edition brings together artists, curators, and audiences from around the world to explore new ideas, foster dialogue, and engage with urgent social, political, and cultural issues and the changing conditions and crises of our time – from climate change and unpredictable pandemics to democratic backsliding. The 16th Gwangju Biennale will take place from September to November 2026, curated by curator, media artist, and filmmaker Ho Tzu Nyen.

About Phileas – The Austrian Office for Contemporary Art

Phileas – The Austrian Office for Contemporary Art supports artists, curators, galleries and institutions in Austria and works to strengthen their international presence through long-term partnerships, dialogues and exchange programs. From its office and exhibition space at Opernring 17 in Vienna, Phileas works with museums, biennials and art institutions around the world to enable the production and exhibition of new artworks and their donation to public collections. Phileas was founded in Vienna in 2014 as an independent philanthropic organisation and is funded by contributions from its private members and the Federal Ministry of Housing, Arts, Culture, Media and Sport. Additional support is provided by the City of Vienna.

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