

Lentos Kunstmuseum Linz

Kyiv Biennial 2025 Vertical Horizon

With the exhibition *Vertical Horizon*, opening on 12 November 2025, the Lentos Kunstmuseum Linz presents one of the key contributions to this year's Kyiv Biennial, which celebrates its 10th anniversary. Conceived as a transnational project, the Kyiv Biennial brings together artistic, political and social perspectives, fostering reflection, solidarity and critical exchange. The exhibition at Lentos has been developed in collaboration with tranzit.at.

The Kyiv Biennial 2025 responds to a world marked by war, occupation and genocide – from Russia's invasion of Ukraine to the violence in Gaza and the global resurgence of authoritarian and nationalist movements. Aware of the ongoing injustices and power structures that define contemporary imperial and colonial systems, the Biennial reflects with historical consciousness on failed solidarities and internationalisms, asking how new forms of responsibility and collective imagination might emerge amid today's crises. As one of the most significant cultural projects in Eastern Europe, the Kyiv Biennial interweaves artistic practice with social analysis and political thought. In 2025, it takes place simultaneously across several European venues: the Museum of Modern Art in Warsaw, M HKA – Museum of Contemporary Art in Antwerp, the Dnipro Center for Contemporary Culture, the Dovzhenko Centre in Kyiv, and the Lentos Kunstmuseum Linz.

"It is a great pleasure and honour for us to be part of this international project", says Lentos Director Hemma Schmutz. "The Kyiv Biennial represents an open and solidaric art scene—one that does not shy away from current conflicts but places them within a global context. Having *Vertical Horizon* at the Lentos Kunstmuseum Linz as one of the Biennial's key venues sends a strong and meaningful signal."

The exhibition *Vertical Horizon*, conceived specifically for the Lentos Kunstmuseum Linz, was developed on the initiative of tranzit.at – an organisation dedicated to promoting contemporary, transdisciplinary and internationally connected art projects that link local contexts with global perspectives. Founder Georg Schöllhammer: "It was a time of both hope and disillusionment when Hedwig Saxenhuber and I, ten years ago, detached the Biennial from a difficult context and re-established it in collaboration with the young intellectuals of the VCRC. Russia had just occupied Crimea shortly after the Maidan movement had risen against the corrupt regime. Today, in times of war, it stands as an important sign of the undiminished vitality of the Ukrainian art scene. We are all the more pleased that this international event is making its third stop in Austria – at one of the country's most important institutions for contemporary art."

12.11.25 to 06.01.26



Vertical Horizon

Vertical Horizon

Curated by Sarah Jonas (Lentos Kunstmuseum Linz) and Serge Klymko (Kyiv Biennial), *Vertical Horizon* approaches land and landscape as both political and poetic agents. The exhibition explores how war, extractivism and technological control inscribe themselves onto the terrain—and how geopolitical conflicts increasingly unfold along vertical axes, descending into geological depths and reaching into atmospheric heights where resources are extracted, data gathered and territories surveilled. The historical site of Linz, once a centre of the Nazi armaments industry, becomes a resonant space for reflecting on power, control and artistic resistance. “*Vertical Horizon* conceives of landscape as a political terrain—one in which questions of power, belonging, memory and resistance are inscribed in both material and symbolic form,” says Serge Klymko. “The Kyiv Biennial seeks new, solidaric ways of thinking and acting together—beyond geopolitical and institutional boundaries.” Sarah Jonas adds: “Art has always been a sensitive seismograph of social upheaval. In this exhibition, it becomes tangible how artists respond to current developments and, through their works, pose pressing questions of responsibility, care and the relationship between humans and the Earth amid geopolitical shifts and ongoing conflicts.”

Covering around 300 m² of the Lentos collection galleries, the exhibition brings together international and Ukrainian positions that, through planetary thinking, artistic research and collective imagination, open up alternative ways of seeing. Mayor Dietmar Prammer emphasises: “Linz’s participation in the Kyiv Biennial reflects the city’s international and forward-looking cultural orientation. Such collaborations not only enhance cultural visibility but also strengthen our shared awareness of global and social interconnections.”

Councillor for Culture Doris Lang-Mayerhofer states: “The Kyiv Biennial stands for an international dialogue that brings together artistic and social perspectives, fostering exchange across borders. Especially in times of global crisis, it demonstrates the unifying power that art can generate.”

Artistic Positions

The exhibition presents nine artistic positions that powerfully explore themes of earth, memory, destruction, and transformation, with several works created specifically for the Biennial. **Kateryna Aliinyk**, in *What the Heroine Wants Is the Main Question*, reflects on the disappearance of the human figure from the landscape—fragile paintings on glued paper made at a time when direct contact with Ukrainian soil had become impossible. **Anca Benera & Arnold Estefán** intertwine military choreography with rituals of resistance in their video installation *Rehearsals for Peace*—a cinematic allegory on body, myth, and power. **Stefaniia Bodnia & Jack Dove** create a sound and sculptural landscape in *Echoes on Porous Ground*, where layers of geology, metal, and trauma converge. **Sergey Bratkov** presents a perforated object that evokes emptiness, vulnerability, and the loss of orientation. **Olia Fedorova**, in *Land and Sky of Kharkiv*, reflects on the darkness that engulfed her city during the war—and the paradoxical light of a sky oscillating between beauty and danger. **Daria Koltsova**, with *Witnesses*, transforms black glass sunflowers

Vertical Horizon

into mourning sentinels of a scorched earth. **Elena Kristofor's** *As a Geranium Red* addresses the double meaning of the geranium—symbol of home in Austria, yet in Ukraine the name of a Russian attack drone. **Ihor Okunieiev** combines field recordings of nature with sounds of warfare in *Fields*, creating a minimalist yet ominous soundscape. **Lesia Vasylchenko**, with *Night* and *Tachyones*, bridges technology, memory, and the cosmos—poetic archaeologies of images drawn from a century of Ukrainian nights and sunrises.

The exhibition *Vertical Horizon* is a collaboration between the **Lentos Kunstmuseum Linz**, the **Kyiv Biennial**, and **tranzit.at**. It is supported by the Federal Ministry for Housing, Art, Culture, Media and Sport, ERSTE Foundation, the DAAD Artists-in-Berlin Program with funds from the German Federal Foreign Office (AA), and RIBBON International. In parallel, **Kunstraum Memphis** presents the exhibition *Hollow Earth* (12 November – 5 December 2025), which expands on the themes explored at Lentos.

Vertical Horizon will be on view at the Lentos Kunstmuseum Linz until 6 January 2026.

Exhibitions Kyiv Biennial 2025

Near East, Far West

3.10.2025 – 8.1.2026

Museum of Modern Art Warsaw

Homelands and Hinterlands

9.10.2025 – 11.1.2026

M HKA – Museum of Contemporary Art Antwerp

Everything for Everybody

23.10.2025 – 07.02.2026

Dnipro Center for Contemporary Culture

In a Grandiose Sundance, in a Cosmic Clatter of Torture

24.10.2025 – 28.12.2025

Dovzhenko Centre

Vertical Horizon

12.11.20205 – 06.1.2026

Lentos Kunstmuseum Linz

Hollow Earth

12.11.2025 – 05.12.2025

Kunstraum Memphis, Linz

Artists

Kateryna Aliinyk

*1998 in Luhansk, lives in Kyiv

What the Heroine Wants Is the Main Question from the series *We Got Front-Row Tickets*
2023, Acrylic on glued paper, On loan by KRUPA Art Foundation, Wrocław

The work is part of the *We Got Front-Row Tickets* series, in which the theme of the absence of the human figure in landscapes is further developed. At the time of its creation, it marked the fourth year of being unable to have direct and pure contact with Ukrainian land. However, distance can also be beautiful and fruitful. We observe the war-affected landscape and the war itself from different distances. The landscape simultaneously serves as the backdrop for our actions, the actions themselves, and the protagonists. Now, with the complete impossibility of setting foot on these lands, all that remains is to closely observe the slow and brutal unfolding of a plot in which we no longer play a part.

For this series, Kateryna Aliinyk used thin, old, glued paper, which is fragile and temporary. This contrasts with the thick canvas, representing artists' previous stronger relationship with the Ukrainian terrain.

Anca Benera

*1977 in Bucharest, lives in Vienna

Arnold Estefán

*1978 in Bucharest, lives in Vienna

Rehearsals for Peace

2023, 2 channel video installation, color, stereo sound, 16:26 min

hay, recycled wooden boards, tree branches, textiles, fur, military tripod, whip, and other found materials

Imagine a pastoral landscape where the rhythmic grazing of animals seamlessly accommodates the military training schedule, resulting in a surreal coexistence of sheep and armored vehicles. This peculiar juxtaposition characterizes the daily life of Cincu, a Transylvanian village nestled in central Romania.

A tale from the 16th century narrates the story of Ursula, a female figure disguised as a man, who successfully chased away occupying intruders (at that time, the Ottomans) using the supersonic sound of a whip. This account purportedly originated in Cincu, which today houses one of NATO's key combat training zones in Romania.

Rehearsals for Peace breathes life into Ursula's legend within the present-day occupied pastoral landscape, employing the sonic might of whip-cracking as a spell. The film portrays a contemporary Ursula facing the modern armored vehicles, and harnessing the potential of the local ritual. She assimilates elements from the military's choreographic lexicon, like tactical hand signals, and intertwines them with the ancient practice of whip-cracking.

Artists

Stefaniia Bodnia

*2001 in Mariupol, lives in Den Haag

Jack Dove

*1983 in London, lives in London

Echoes on Porous Ground

2025, Steel plates, audio-installation

Like the layers of sediment peeled back during precious metal and mineral mining, war operations leave behind a perforated landscape, resulting in a porous structure with voids and encapsulated spaces within the layers of the land. Bodnia and Dove draw parallels between personal trauma and geotrauma, where the layers of geological formations intersect with vectors of power, embodying the violence of extractive practices and war.

The imagery combines satellite views of the mining area in eastern Ukraine, where military operations take place above and below ground, engravings of mineral porosity, and performative drawings of landscape. These layers reveal the vertical continuum connecting the subterranean and the digital realms, linking mines to the cloud.

The project gives a voice to materials, including minerals, land, non-human entities and human labour. All of these are seen as resources for the operations of power. Synthesized sounds and processed samples are constructed to move and distort the metal, placing reconstructions of unspoken memory into the steel while metal plates and sculptural elements are transformed into resonant instruments, allowing matter to speak.

Sergey Bratkov

*1960 in Charkiw, lives in Berlin

Untitled

2025, Kunstschaum, Foam, acryl

The hole creates a space that exists between the viewer and the presumed event—neither recognizable nor unknown, neither familiar nor strange. The violence committed upon the object evokes a multitude of associations. A visual trap that is a physical (or visual?) experience of losing balance for the viewer, touching upon both physical and social vulnerability. Geometric order is interrupted by emptiness; the human striving for rationality is cut short by the force of erosion and destruction. Against the backdrop of the ongoing war in Ukraine, viewers' backgrounds play a key role in how they perceive the hole. Do they see it as a mark of shelling or a drone attack on the wounded landscape, or is it just an everyday object with traces of accidental damage?

Artists

Olia Fedorova

*1994 in Charkiw, lives in Graz

Land and Sky of Kharkiv

2022, Paper rolls, permanent marker

When Russia launched a full-scale war against Ukraine, the artist's home city of Charkiw plunged into darkness due to a blackout. For over a year, one could see the stars at night, which is quite rare for a city of 1.5 million people that was always full of electric lights. However, any visible light in the sky could actually be a rocket or an enemy drone.

The second piece is based on a children's hopscotch game, where the ground is divided into sections. Players must jump from section to section without stepping beyond the lines. Ukraine's land is now divided the same way, but by sappers who go through it square by square, doing their demining work. There are no safe squares in this hopscotch.

Daria Koltsova

*1987 in Charkiw, lives in Paris

Witnesses

2024, Stained glass, metal

By addressing the relationship between memory, the built environment and imagined space, the work continues the artist's practice of highlighting the fragility of landscapes and objects in their coexistence with the human one.

Witnesses sculptures inhabit the space in a synecdoche of a lost land, creating a dried, burnt landscape to wander through. The incompleteness of the landscape creates a powerful poetics of memory, able to capture the grieving of the Earth through these subtle fragmentations. The black glass is deprived of its main function, namely light shining through, this opaque state unravels the trauma and displays it under the shape of these defined sculptures. By shattering the light, the sunflowers turn into mourning sentinels. Outraged about the Ukrainian burnt sunflower and wheat fields in the current Russian invasion, the artist's desire to commemorate nature turned into spiky and eerie sunflowers, like shadows of multigenerational traumas, histories of subjugation that brutally reverberate into the present.

Artists

Elena Kristofor

*1983 in Odessa, lives in Wien

As a Geranium Red

2025, Installation (canvas, paper, ink, glass, photography)

The work of artist Elena Kristofor examines human intervention in the landscape, a central theme of the Anthropocene. Her own personal history of migration, together with the related questions of home and belonging, forms the starting point for her artistic exploration.

Geraniums play a significant role in the new project she has created for the exhibition. This homonymous flower is common in Austria, and for many people symbolises home, tradition and family comfort. And yet in Elena Kristofor's homeland, Ukraine, 'Geranium' has a completely different and more serious meaning: it is the name of a Russian attack drone employed in bombing and destroying the country. Her work considers the ambivalence of the geranium, and combines aerial photographs from her own archive with cartography while the drones themselves write poetry.

Ihor Okunieiev

*1989 in Kyiv, lives in Kyiv

Fields

2024, Sound Installation, 10 Min.

Ohne Titel

2024, Photographs on aludibond

Ohne Titel

2023, Photographs on aludibond

As part of an evolving body of work, *Fields* aims to evoke the atmosphere of the landscape surrounding the artist during the war. Field recordings of frozen forests and the "cold" sounds of winter nature complete the synthesized rhythms of the composition. It is a trace of symbolic and personal memory that becomes a vibrant fragment in the vortex of history. Ihor Okunieiev creates a minimalist soundscape of a Ukrainian winter, intertwining the sounds of rain and wind with sounds of bomb shelling.

Accompanied by two photographs taken by the artist in eastern Ukraine, the piece underscores the materiality of the landscape and offers a lower vantage point perspective. The earth is depicted as a habitable environment, almost endowed with agency and serving as provisional shelter for human bodies. The captured place has no distinct features, demonstrating the universality of the situation, regardless of location: civilization going underground in the face of war.

This sound work was commissioned for the "Against Sun and Dust 5th Edition: Cyprien Gaillard" exhibition.

Artists

Lesia Vasylchenko

*1990 in Kyiv, lives in Oslo

Tachyones

2022, HD Video, 8 Min / Footage from archives, photos, YouTube, CCTV, drone footage, news clips

Night

2025, HD Video, 6 Min. / Footage from the H.S. Pshenychnyi Central State Cinema, Photo and Phono Archive of Ukraine and the artist's family archives, postcards, YouTube, CCTV, drone footage, news clips, videos from the frontline

The stars we observe may have long disappeared, yet their light still reaches us after millions of years. Information, like this light, transcends technical, temporal, and political barriers. *Night* and *Tachyones* unfold as a media archaeology of the image, where each technological era leaves its own trace of time.

Night reconstructs a century of Ukrainian night, combining video recordings of the night sky from 1918 to 2025. Vasylchenko transforms linearity into simultaneity: the video embodies one continuous night in which an entire century unfolds in a constant flow. Through footage of blackouts and shelling, the work shows how war turns night into a space of fear and vulnerability, reflecting the generational continuity of trauma.

Drawing on Jacques Derrida's notion of hauntology, the artist reveals how night erases dominant knowledge systems and conceals within itself all that is unwritten and undocumented—the hidden voices of those who have witnessed history but remain unheard, waiting for their moment to emerge. The night exposes a past that never fully disappears and continually returns as a ghost of history, shaping both the present and the future.

Tachyones takes its title from “tachyon,” a hypothetical particle that travels faster than light. The work presents sunrises from 1990 to 2022, condensing thirty years of history into a single event. It merges hundreds of photographs collected by the artist from various sources into a machine-generated memory of dawn. The video reflects on predictive technologies and the influence of artificial intelligence on the construction of memory. *Tachyones* lasts eight minutes—the time it takes for sunlight to reach the Earth and the human eye.

Kunstraum Memphis

Hollow Earth

12.11.25 to 05.12.26

Parallel to the exhibition at the Lentos Kunstmuseum, the Kunstraum Memphis — located in close proximity to the museum — presents the collaborative exhibition *Hollow Earth*.

Artists:

Anatoly Belov

Dana Kavelina

Lada Nakonechna

Victoria Pidust

Olia Sosnovskaya

Vova Vorotnirov

Curators: Serge Klymko, Jakob Dietrich

Kunstraum Memphis

Untere Donaulände 12, 4020 Linz

Opening Hours: Mo, Tue, Thu, Fr, 2–6 pm

www.memphismemph.is



Programm

Tue. 11.11.25	Opening	7:00 pm	free admission
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Welcome: Hemma Schmutz (Director, Lentos Kunstmuseum Linz)
Greetings: Vasyl Khymynets (Ambassador of Ukraine to the Republic of Austria)
Introduction: Serge Klymko, Sarah Jonas (Curators)
Opening: Dietmar Prammer (Mayor of the City of Linz)

With a performance by Olia Sosnovskaya and music by Vova Vorotniiov.

From 8:00 p.m., the cooperative exhibition at Kunstraum Memphis will open.

Wed. 12.11.25	Artist Talk	5:00 pm - 6:00 pm	free admission with exhibition ticket
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Artists featured in the exhibition discuss their works with the curators
Sarah Jonas and Serge Klymko (in English).

Thu. 04.12.25	Curator's Tour	6:00 pm - 7:00 pm	free admission with exhibition ticket
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Serge Klymko and Sarah Jonas guide visitors through the exhibition (in English).

Tue. 09.12.25	Baby-Tour	10:30 am - 11:30 am	museum admission only
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A relaxed tour of the exhibition, specially tailored to the needs of visitors with babies.

Credits

exhibition title	Kyiv Biennial 2025 Vertical Horizon
Ausstellungsdauer	12.11.25 to 06.01.26
Speakers press conference	Hemma Schmutz (Director, Lentos Art Museum) Serge Klymko & Sarah Jonas (Curators) Georg Schöllhammer (Founder, tranzit.at) Dietmar Prammer (Mayor)
Venue	Lentos Kunstmuseum
Credits	Curators: Serge Klymko (UKR), Sarah Jonas (AT) The exhibition is a cooperation between Lentos, the Kyiv Biennial, and the association tranzit.at. Supported by the Federal Ministry for Housing, Arts, Culture, Media and Sports, ERSTE Foundation, the Berlin Artists' Program of the DAAD with funds from the Federal Foreign Office (AA), and RIBBON International. The work Echoes on Porous Ground by Stefaniia Bodnia and Jack Dove was created with the support of Atelierhaus Salzamt.

tranzit.at

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VISUAL CULTURE RESEARCH CENTER

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