Press Release

Lin May Saeed
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In her work, German Iraqi artist Lin May Saeed (1973–2023) explored the relationship between humans and animals, critically examining the hierarchies between human and non-human creatures. In Saeed's drawings and sculptures, animals do not play a symbolic or decorative role but are shown as active protagonists. In doing so, Saeed critically examined Western thought traditions, which generally place humans at the center and instrumentalize animals. Saeed's artworks take their cue from historical thinkers who investigated how animals shaped human societies long before the emergence of modern states and nations. This raises a fundamental question: Why do we humans feel the need to distinguish ourselves from nature and all other living beings?

In Saeed's work, humans and animals inhabit a shared world defined by solidarity rather than domination. Her artworks offer a glimpse into what coexistence might look like: An alternative form of cohabitation, with care instead of control. Through her practice, the late Saeed made a significant contribution to contemporary debates on ethical issues relating to speciesism. In her work, animals are encountered neither with sentimentality nor with violence, but as equal beings.

LIN MAY SAEED (1973–2023) was a German Iraqi artist and animal rights activist. The question of coexistence between humans and animals also found its way into Saeed's artistic practice. She worked primarily with sculptures, often made from simple materials such as Styrofoam, and developed a visual language that intertwined mythological, religious, and activist narratives. Her works and writings proposed a compassionate re-conception of the relationships between species and depicted liberation and reconciliation as sculptural and social acts.

In 2023, the artist passed away shortly before the opening of her solo exhibition *The Snow Falls Slowly in Paradise* at the Georg Kolbe Museum in Berlin. Her first and only museum exhibition during her lifetime was presented in 2020 at the Clark Art Institute in Williamstown, Massachusetts. Posthumously, her work was presented in solo exhibitions at GAMeC (Bergamo, 2024), Sapieha Palace in Vilnius (2025), and Buitenplaats Kasteel Wijlre (2025). Her work was

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also on view at Manifesta 15 (Barcelona, 2024), Biennale Gherdëina 9 (Ortisei, 2024), and the 9th Berlin Biennale (Berlin, 2016). Her group exhibitions include presentations at the Schirn Kunsthalle Frankfurt (2018), Museum of Contemporary Art Antwerp (2021), and Museo Castello di Rivoli (2018). Her works are included in major collections, including the Centre Pompidou Paris, the National Museum of Art in Oslo, the Museum Folkwang in Essen, the Westfälisches Landesmuseum, and the Collection of Contemporary Art of the Federal Republic of Germany.

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