# »Malplaquetstraße 33 - Jugend einer Monteurin« Ahu Dural

GW

## Curated by **Eylem Sengezer**
## **27.02.2026** until **10.05.2026**

The exhibition Malplaquetstr. 33 – Jugend einer Monteurin (Malplaquetstr. 33 – Youth of a Female Assembly Worker) stages a sculptural landscape of memory: the starting point is the family biography of Ahu Dural, whose artistic practice intertwines architecture, design, and migration history.
The title refers to a specific address in Wedding: the first apartment her mother lived in for seven years as an 11-year-old after migrating from Eastern Anatolia in the 1970s, together with her aunt's family. This apartment becomes a space of memory, a social and political sounding board—and the starting point for an artistic exploration of work, housing, solidarity, and appropriation. The subtitle Youth of a Female Assembly Worker refers to the working reality of the mother and many migrant women who worked in Berlin factories on a group and individual piecework basis. Assembly appears not only as an industrial activity, but also as an aesthetic and biographical principle: the joining together of parts, times, places, and roles.

Her sculptures are not finished objects, but consist of basic forms—often made of wood or industrial aluminum strips—combined with photographs, textiles, or everyday objects. Assembly thus becomes an artistic method of appropriation.

The photographs on display were originally carefully archived, labeled, and preserved by her father. In the exhibition, they are removed from their private context and transferred to the exhibition space. This shift—from the private album to the wall, from memory to the public sphere—is central. The images are not used illustratively, but are understood as aesthetic and content-related material that is further processed, translated, and transformed.

Ahu Dural develops her sculptures based on details in the photographs. Symmetrical shapes of work coats are traced geometrically and transferred into the space. These forms are also reminiscent of architectural elements – such as wooden slats from the kindergarten in Siemensstadt that the artist herself attended, or room dividers, windows, and facades. Personal memories, photographic details, and architectural references overlap. Color also becomes a carrier of memory. The central photo in the exhibition shows the mother at the age of fifteen at a family celebration in Wedding. In conversation, the mother remembered all the personal details. She paints her sculptures in exactly these colors. Color thus becomes a bridge between narrative, image, and object.

Malplaquetstr. 33 – Jugend einer Monteurin (Malplaquetstr. 33 – Youth of a Female Assembly Worker) is an exhibition about arriving and working, about migrant life worlds, about industrial rhythms and domestic ways of life, about memory as a fragmentary, assembled process. The exhibition does not tell a complete story, but opens up a space in which individual biography and collective history are intertwined. It becomes a landscape of memory that reveals how migration, work, and architecture are inscribed in bodies, spaces, and objects—and how artistic practice can reorder, question, and transform these inscriptions.

**Narrated Forms – Micro-Stories About the Sculptures of Ahu Dural**

**1. Each of these photographs tells an unforgotten story | Açılan her sayfa mazide bir günü hatırlatır.**

My father calligraphed this sentence – freely translated – in Turkish on 24.03.1983 on the endpaper of one of our family albums, in sweeping, beautiful letters, with red and blue ballpoint pen as a metaphor for the alternation between light and shadow, or fire and ice. I decided to associate "light" with red and searched exclusively for photographs with a reddish tint. One image reveals an exuberant moment full of joy for life, shared among women, relatives and close acquaintances from the Wedding Iğdır community, in which the cramped living situation, homesickness and lack of agency of a young woman coming of age seemed, for a moment, to fade away. The other image shows the proud gaze of a shy yet self-assured woman who takes her fate into her own hands through her work. A shift between light and shadow.

**2. Room Divider: Youth of an Assembly Worker (Variation 2)**
Originally, this white work coat of my mother's – introduced by the department only in 1984 for the workforce of approximately 200 assembly workers – was nothing more than a uniform to me. But the combination of a geometric yet feminine silhouette suddenly took on a fascinating quality when I looked through the family albums. It was the sight of the group photos in their lab coats that genuinely stopped me in my tracks. The brilliant white, the stately cut, and alongside it the many different shades of permed or naturally wavy hair, made-up faces, jewellery and belts flashing out from beneath the coats – all of this stripped the functional clothing of its intended uniformity.

**3. Lunch Break, End of Shift, Tables Dancing to the Rhythm**
The shape of this functional "table," viewed from above, is based on the angles of the aerial perspective of the 1970s prefabricated apartment block in which my family and I lived for around 20 years. This "form of my unconscious" shaped me through the childlike gaze I cast at the sky. The ochre and brown housing estate at the northern end of Siemensstadt was thoroughly and playfully geometric. Yet, due to its partly overcrowded apartments – still inhabited predominantly by migrants to this day – it stood in contrast to the bourgeois buildings from the 1920s and 30s nearby, which I would often pass in wonder on my way to school, the subway, or the park. I frequently experienced this compelling ambivalence not as unfair, but as enriching.

**4. The Assembly Workers (Variation 16)**
When my mother received her school-leaving certificate in early summer 1980, her sole focus – the one that concerned her future and would bring her the necessary step toward imminent material and emotional independence – was on the job application. Her interview at Siemens AG for a position as an assembly worker took place on a Friday in early August 1980. The following Monday, she started work. Among relatives and friends in the Turkish community, women would say above all: "Apply – it's well paid, Siemens urgently needs assembly workers in the fitting department at the plant on Siemensdamm."I

**5. Aluminium Window Diptych**
These two aluminium objects – roughly matching the dimensions of the courtyard-facing windows on the fourth floor, left, of Malplaquetstraße 33 – represent for me an attempt to bring the act of dwelling (the private) and the dimensions of that apartment into the gallery space (the public). As a child I visited Aunt Feride there quite often, and there was always a sociable atmosphere: much coming and going, constant visitors, and a lively yet positive energy in the air alongside the cigarette smoke. My mother spent around six years in that apartment together with her cousins, and must surely have stood many times at one of those three west-facing windows, lost in thought.

**6. + 7. Nezaret's Hand + "Suitcase Heart"**
Together in the tightest of spaces – the three-room apartment measured 20 shoe-lengths wide and 42 shoe-lengths deep – a playground near the Nazarethkirche was one of my mother's favourite places, which she visited with the younger cousins in her care. She also liked to walk her school route alone, at least during the two years of her compulsory schooling. Yet because she was very shy and missed the familiarity of the mother, eight siblings and rural surroundings she had left behind, it was often too much for her to constantly fulfil the understandable need for closeness of her young cousins. And so she longed for a room of her own and space to breathe. Instead, lying at night on the sleeping mat spread out each evening, she would whisper the given names of her sisters (one of them named Nezaret) – S-E-V-E-R ("loving") – while staring up at the boxy suitcases resting high on top of the wardrobes.

**8. Fatma's (Little) Sculpture**
For me, Fatma was a neighbour – a beautiful woman with very long, glossy dark hair of L'Oréal-advertisement quality, always a warm and heartfelt smile on her face. She lived just around the corner from me, no more than 300 metres as the crow flies. I would see her either on Dresdner Straße in Kreuzberg or at "ours," on the corner of Waldemarstraße and Adalbertstraße. We always exchanged a few words when we met: often, or as a farewell, it would be: "Please give my regards to your mother – she is, to this day, my Abla (older sister)!" Fatma B. is my mother's cousin, one of six children of her aunt, former residents of Malplaquetstraße 33. It was only in recent years, and in particular in recent weeks, that I learned the full extent of her renown under the name Devran in Antifa Gençlik. (See the Devran booklet in the exhibition space or online: https://kontrapolis.info/16708/)

**9. I had a mouth, but no tongue. | Ağzım vardı ama dilim yoktu.**
After roughly two years in the care of her Aunt Feride, it became possible for my mother to see and speak again with her widowed mother and her siblings in Iğdır. Before that, like the majority of Berliners, she had no way of making a spontaneous phone call to them. As a makeshift solution to this seemingly insurmountable communication barrier, one would record one's own voice using a cassette recorder and a standard cassette, then give the cassette to a relative travelling to eastern Turkey at the next opportunity, with the promise that it would be delivered to the family. I'm doing well, I miss you, let me know if you need anything, when will we see each other again?

1 **Jede dieser Fotografien erzählt eine unvergessene Geschichte,** 2026
Variable
Print on paper

2 **Raumteiler (Jugend einer Monteurin Var. 2)**, 2026
450 x 210 x 100 cm
Wood, lacquer

3 **Mittagspause, Feierabend, im akkord tanzende Tische**, 2026
120 x 100 x 80 cm
Wood, lacquer

4 **Die Monteurinnen (Var. 16)**, 2025-6
185 x 180 x 180 cm
Wood, brown-red lacquer, various materials

5 **Aluminiumfenster Dyptichon**, 2026
2 á 160 x 80 x 8 cm, 1 á 160 x 20 x 8 cm
Aluminium

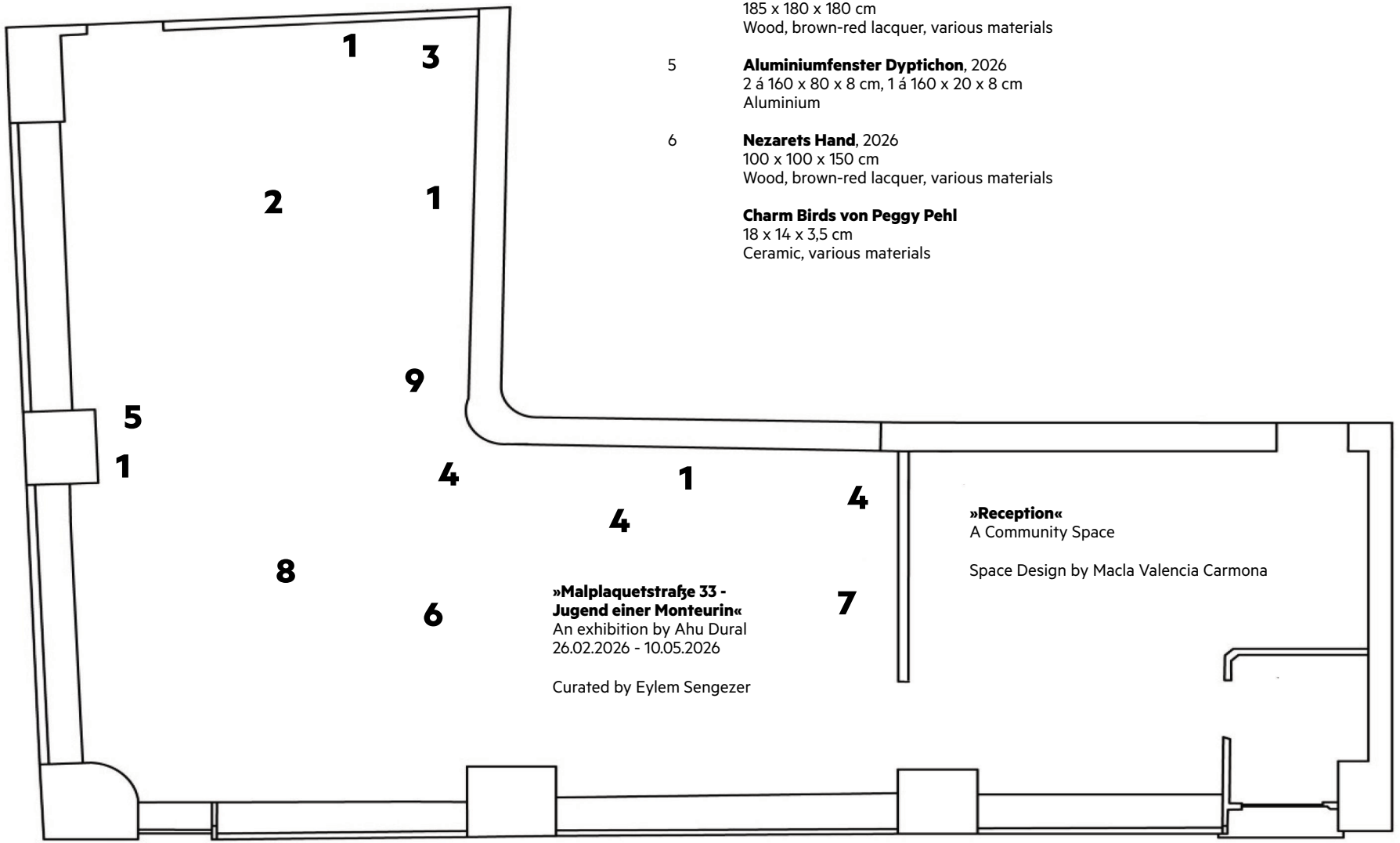
6 **Nezarets Hand**, 2026
100 x 100 x 150 cm
Wood, brown-red lacquer, various materials

**Charm Birds von Peggy Pehl**
18 x 14 x 3,5 cm
Ceramic, various materials

7 **Kofferherz**, 2026
243 x 50 x 150 cm
Wood, lacquer

8 **Fatmas (kleine) Skulptur**, 2026
100 x 40 x 40 cm
Wood, lacquer, various materials

9 **Ich hatte einen Mund, aber keine Zunge | Ağzım vardı ama dilim yoktu**, 2026
178 x 50 x 100 cm
various materials




**»Malplaquetstraße 33 - Jugend einer Monteurin«**
An exhibition by Ahu Dural
26.02.2026 - 10.05.2026

Curated by Eylem Sengezer

**»Reception«**
A Community Space

Space Design by Macla Valencia Carmona

GW

GW

**Biography of Ahu Dural**

Ahu Dural, born in Berlin in 1984, lives and works with her two children in Berlin. As the eldest daughter of Turkish immigrants, she grew up in Siemensstadt, a factory settlement of Berlin Modernism. In her multidisciplinary work, she explores the interplay between biographies (with a focus on female migrants), architecture, and productive work. The works or groups of works often revolve around the relocation and reinterpretation of biographical history and biographical architecture. The fusion of these two components—mostly in sculpture, installation, and increasingly in text—forms the basis of her intensive investigations into the relationship between body, object, and memory.

After completing her studies in illustrative drawing at the Berlin University of the Arts, Dural expanded her artistic research in Vienna and studied performative art and sculpture at the Academy of Fine Arts under contemporary artist Monica Bonvicini. She has won several awards, including the prize for best Austrian animated film (2014) and the Gustav Peichl Prize for architectural drawing (2016). Her solo exhibitions include Her Shattering Room, exhibited at Bildraum 07 Vienna, She Sees Nothing, presented at the Friedrichshof Collection Vienna, Zwischen den Laken (Between the Sheets) at SOX and neues bauen 13629 at Scharaun, both in Berlin, as well as Frau Monteurin / Kadın Montajcı (Ms. Assembler) at the Kunstpavillon Innsbruck of the Künstler*innen Vereinigung Tirol (Tyrol Artists' Association).

**Biography of the curator**

Eylem Sengezer studied modern German literature, art history, and film studies in Berlin and Rome. Since May 2024, she has been working for the Department of Art, Culture, and History at the Mitte District Office. There, she heads the Contemporary Art Division and the municipal galleries in Mitte. She previously worked for Diversity Arts Culture (2018-2024), advising Berlin cultural institutions on diversity and art. At the Haus der Kulturen der Welt (2009-2018), she was responsible for various exhibition and discourse projects as a research and project coordinator, most recently “Neolithic Childhood” (2018).

As a freelance curator, she co-curated numerous exhibitions, online projects, and discourse events at venues including nGbK, the Goethe-Institut Mexico City, and Kunstraum Kreuzberg, as well as accompanying publications and essays. A one-year working scholarship and a residency at the Goethe-Institut took her to Mexico City and Naples. Her curatorial interests lie at the intersection of memory and urban culture, migration, and diversity. From 2021-2024, she was a member of the nGbK's executive committee. She is also a trained mediator.

# »Reception«
# A Community Space

Space Design by Macla Valencia Carmona

With **»Reception« – A Community Space**, Galerie Wedding is continuing to develop its outreach program in 2026. As a physical space, the Community Space sees itself as a dialogical meeting place between art, neighborhood, and urban reality – a third place that invites visitors and interested parties to linger. The space will be activated over the coming months with a changing program: screenings, radio broadcasts, concerts, workshops, and educational formats invite active participation, exchange, and shared learning. The focus is thus on presence and co-creation and an approach that understands art as a social and memory-political practice – together with and for the neighborhood.

The program will be announced on our website, social media, and in upcoming newsletters.

**Opening with "Atafrava"**

13.03.2026, 7 pm

For the opening of our new community space, we welcome "Atafrava," a genre-fluid, Afro-diasporic trio from Weimar, consisting of Adama, Valerie, and Tara. Born out of their shared love of Afrobeats, the three friends founded their band in 2023. In their hybrid set, they combine DJ art with live elements such as vocals, saxophone, and viola.

**Biography of Macla Valencia Carmona**

Macla is a social and product designer from Medellín, Colombia, currently living in Hamburg. Her practice is characterized by translating people's needs and stories into objects and spaces. Her focus is on empathy and sustainability—both ecological and social—with the guiding question: What could spaces and contexts look like if they were designed for everyone? This attitude shapes projects such as "Period. Hamburg" and her bachelor's thesis "Proactive Design in the Context of Homelessness." Care—in work, in collaboration, in life—is her way of getting involved. She understands design as something that has its strongest impact when it is created collaboratively.

**Galerie Wedding - Raum für zeitgenössische Kunst**

Galerie Wedding is a facility of the Department of Art, Culture and History at the District Office of Mitte, Berlin.

**Opening Hours**
Monday – Sunday, 10 am – 6 pm
The gallery is wheelchair accessible.
Admission is free.

**Contact**
(030) 9018-42386
post@galeriewedding.de

**Department Head**
Dr. Ute Müller-Tischler

**Lead Curator | Head of Contemporary Art**
Eylem Sengezer

**Exhibition Production & Infrastructure**
Katrin Winkler

**Programme Coordination and Curatorial Assistance (CAMPI Fellows)**
Philipp Hennch, Kaya Peters

**Artistic Production Management**
Solvejg Hockings

**Installation Team**
Alexandra Gaul, Katja Stoye-Cetin, Pablo Herrmann

BERLIN
Bezirksamt Mitte
Senatsverwaltung für Kultur und Europa

Kultur Mitte

CAMPI PUBLIC CURATING IN INSTITUTIONS AND MANAGEMENT

Kommunale Galerien Berlin

KoGa
Ausstellungsfonds Kommunale Galerien Berlin

FABiK
Fonds Ausstellungsvergütungen für bildende Künstler*innen Berlin