

Kunsthhaus Bregenz

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Austria



Bregenz, May 2025

Invitation to the Press Conference

Dear media representatives,

We look forward to welcoming you to
the press conference for the exhibition

KUB 2025.02

Małgorzata Mirga-Tas

Tęte Ćerhenia Jekh Jag

07 | 06 – 28 | 09 | 2025

on Thursday, June 5, 2025, 11 am

at Kunsthhaus Bregenz.

The exhibition can be visited before the
press conference, starting at 10 am.

Małgorzata Mirga-Tas will be present.

Best regards,

Martina Feurstein

Head of Communications & Sponsoring

Kunsthhaus Bregenz

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KUB 2025.02 | Press Release

Małgorzata Mirga-Tas

Tęte Ćerhenia Jekh Jag

07 | 06 – 28 | 09 | 2025

Press Conference

Thursday, June 5, 2025, at 11 am

Opening

Friday, June 6, 2025, at 7 pm

**Artist Talk with Małgorzata Mirga-Tas,
Anna Mirga-Kruszelnicka, and Thomas D. Trummer**

Saturday, June 7, 2025, at 4 pm

Press photos available for download at

www.kunsthhaus-bregenz.at/en/press/malgorzata-mirga-tas



Małgorzata Mirga-Tas's art is dedicated to the world of Roma culture. In her detailed, realistic depictions, she portrays everyday scenes – people smoking a cigarette, playing cards, or hanging up laundry. At Kunsthaus Bregenz, she is also presenting sculptures created especially for these rooms. They draw on mythical narratives and are at the same time symbols of the contemporary human condition.

Mirga-Tas gained international recognition in 2022 at the Venice Biennale, where she lined the Polish Pavilion with large-scale textile works. The three registers of images quote representations of months inspired by a famous Italian Renaissance fresco cycle: the calendar in the Palazzo Schifanoia in Ferrara. The zodiac signs in the center of her work are flanked by near life-size portraits. The top, colorful frieze tells the story of the Roma and their exodus to Europe. It is a narrative of migration and nomadic life, brought to life in a depiction of historical clothing, animals, and expansive landscapes. The bottom register shows scenes of contemporary daily life – community, femininity, friendship, and family.

By reclaiming their own narratives, the Roma community breaks with the centuries-old images of the other projected onto them by sections of society. The technique of fabric collage picks up on Roma craftsmanship. Yet Mirga-Tas's textile art is much more than a tribute to traditional women's work. She elevates sewing to the rank of political practice. One of her pictures shows a self-portrait of her sewing outside with other women. These female figures are not passive actors, but protagonists of their own lives. In Mirga-Tas's art, work appears not as a burden, but as a source of identity and community.

Exhibited on the **first floor** are the *Jangare*, large wax figures that, as Mirga-Tas explains, "radiate charm but also protect people." In contrast to the colorful fabric works, these sculptures are monochrome. Their bodies appear massive and leaden, although they are made of soft, malleable material. Their abstract muscular structures are reminiscent of archaic statues from ancient times or the idols of propaganda art. But the *Jangare* are not heroic

figures. They are faceless, silent companions with a slightly hunched posture. Their expressive style suggests their vulnerability. In the background, hanging textile pictures depict houses, but also women who sew and weave *Jangare* – a magical combination of textile art and sculptural presence.

On the **second floor**, Mirga-Tas focuses on the image of the blacksmith, inspired by a poem by the Roma poet Jan Mirga. “My grandfather was a blacksmith,” she says, “so there is a portrait of him and my uncle Augustin here.” The poem not only describes the blacksmith’s craft but uses it as a metaphor for the fate of the Roma. It speaks of a lump of expressionless iron from which a new form is forged in the fire – an allegory of the Roma culture’s resilience. Despite adverse circumstances, poverty and exclusion, strength and renewal arise. The tools – hoes, axes, horseshoes – represent craftsmanship, but also symbolize the art of survival and adaptability. The poem also draws on other, classically poetic motifs, such as dance, the moon, longing, and melancholy, as well as freedom and intoxication. Last but not least, it also mentions the peregrine falcon, a recurring symbol of freedom, pride, and energy in many of Mirga-Tas’s works.



The **top floor** leads visitors into a world of magic. Here we encounter three monumental bears made of wax. These mythical creatures can also be found in other works, embedded in landscapes or, as animal friends, even in the vicinity of humans. Nature appears simultaneously as an idyll and as a resonance chamber for stories in which dream, ritual, and memory join together.

The exhibition is titled *Teļe Ērhenia Jekh Jag* (Under the starry heavens a fire burns).



Małgorzata Mirga-Tas (b. 1978, Zakopane) lives and works in Czarna Góra. Her portrayals adopt the perspective of “minority feminism,” consciously advocating for women’s strength while also acknowledging the artist’s own cultural roots. She was the official Polish representative at the 59th Venice Biennale in 2022, the first Romni artist to represent any country. Her works have been presented in numerous solo and group exhibitions, including the Kunstmuseum Luzern in 2025, at Tate St Ives, Bonnefanten in Maastricht, both in 2024; the Centro Andaluz de Arte Contemporáneo in Sevilla, Barbican in London, the Brücke Museum in Berlin, and Göteborgs Konsthall, all in 2023; the International Cultural Centre in Kraków, 2023; the Polish Sculpture Center in Oronsco and the Museum of Modern Art in Warsaw, both in 2020. Additionally, she participated at the Kortrijk Triennial in 2024, at the 14th Gwangju Biennale in 2023, at documenta 15 in Kassel in 2022, at the Guangzhou Triennale in China in 2021, at the 3rd Autostrada Biennale in Prizren in 2021, at the Art Encounters Biennale in Timișoara in 2019 and 2021, as well as at the 11th Berlin Biennale in 2020.

KUB Billboards

Małgorzata Mirga-Tas

Tete Ćerhenia Jekh Jag

07 | 06 – 28 | 09 | 2025



The Billboards on Bregenz's Seestrasse, the city's busiest street, are an integral part of the KUB program, extending the current exhibition into public space.

Małgorzata Mirga-Tas is displaying on the six panels a selection of images of her textile works and sculptures created between 2016 and 2023. Mirga-Tas's works address the history, culture, and traditions of the Roma communities in her native Poland. The illustrations show traditional stories, everyday scenes, and landscapes that have become pictures here.



The publication *Małgorzata Mirga-Tas – Tete Ćerhenia Jekh Jag* traces the cultural-historical aspects of the exhibition and offers personal insights into Mirga-Tas's collaborative practice. In it, large-format reproductions of the new works she produced for Bregenz are combined with photographs documenting the collaborative process in the artist's studio near Zakopane, creating an intimate series of images. Poems written by Jan Mirga are integrated into the exhibition as a sound work and published for the first time in the volume. In a conversation with Anna Mirga-Kruszelnicka and Thomas D. Trummer, Mirga-Tas discusses her working method. The essay by Wojciech Szymański focuses on the artist's culturally specific background and that by Ethel Brooks sheds light on the interweaving of art and political activism in Mirga-Tas's oeuvre.

Edited by Thomas D. Trummer, Kunsthaus Bregenz
With texts by Ethel Brooks and Wojciech Szymański,
poems by Jan Mirga, as well as a conversation between
Małgorzata Mirga-Tas, Anna Mirga-Kruszelnicka, and
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