

Press Release

Martha Jungwirth

1 February—13 April 2025

The Long Museum (West Bund)
3398 Longteng Avenue, Xuhui District, Shanghai



Der Tod des Architekten, 2020. Oil on paper on canvas. 158.5 x 235 cm (62.4 x 92.52 in).
© Martha Jungwirth / Bildrecht, Wien 2025. Photo: Ulrich Ghezzi. Courtesy Thaddaeus Ropac gallery.

My pictorial reality is charged with passion, a language tied to the body, to dynamic movement. Painting is a matter of form, and then it receives a soul – through me.

— Martha Jungwirth

The Long Museum is pleased to present Martha Jungwirth's first museum exhibition in China to date. Born in 1940 in Vienna, the artist has garnered international acclaim for her singular approach to painting and critical role in Austria's post-war art scene. Poised between abstraction and figuration, she draws upon a wide range of 'pretexts': from personal encounters, memories and travel to literature, current affairs, and art history. In her first exhibition of 2025, the Long Museum will show 21 recent oil paintings, bringing together multiple bodies of work that have been widely exhibited across major European institutions, including the artist's acclaimed retrospective at the Guggenheim Museum Bilbao in 2024.

The works in the exhibition reflect the breadth of Jungwirth's visual references. Scenes from ancient Greek mythology – the Trojan Horse emerges from gestural brushwork in one painting and the story of Atalanta and Hippomenes is reimagined across a series of three monumental works – form a dialogue with painted depictions of recent global events. In her series of paintings titled *Rubymar*, the artist's subject is the ill-fated British cargo ship that sank in the Red Sea in 2024. Elsewhere, Jungwirth pays homage to art history and the Old Masters who have been influential to her own practice. Two groups of works on view in the exhibition are inspired by Francisco de Goya's famous *Still Life of a Lamb's Head and Flanks* (c. 1808–12) and *The Dog* (c. 1819–23). Jungwirth also references

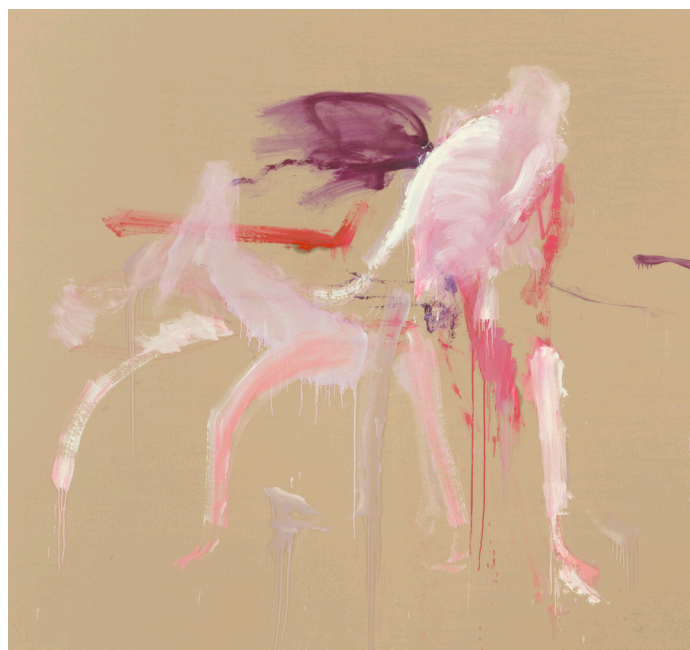
French Modernist painter Édouard Manet with two large works based on his iconic painting *Asparagus* (1880) held in the Musée d'Orsay, Paris.

In contrast to the rational principles of Minimalism and Conceptualism that emerged in the 1960s and 1970s, Jungwirth's paintings are grounded in the body and close observation of both her interior and exterior worlds. She describes her painting process as an 'adventure' during which images unfurl, grow and reveal themselves. Each work begins with a single 'blotch' of colour. At times brushstrokes accumulate rapidly in a 'cascade' of passionate streaks, smears and splatters to produce a 'constellation of blotches'. Jungwirth adopts a corporeal palette of fleshy pinks, blood reds and bruised magentas, and her paintings bear traces of her movement: finger marks, scratches and even shoeprints are an intimate index of her presence. The physical intensity of Jungwirth's surfaces and eruptions of colour are balanced by her delicate sensitivity and restraint. Negative space plays a crucial role in her compositions. Paper is her chosen surface on which to work, and since the beginning of her career, she has enjoyed leaving large expanses of ground bare and untouched. 'Paper is a sensual material,' she explains. 'Smooth or rough, its tactile quality often resembles skin.'

'My art is like a diary, seismographic,' Jungwirth says. 'That is the method of my work. I am completely

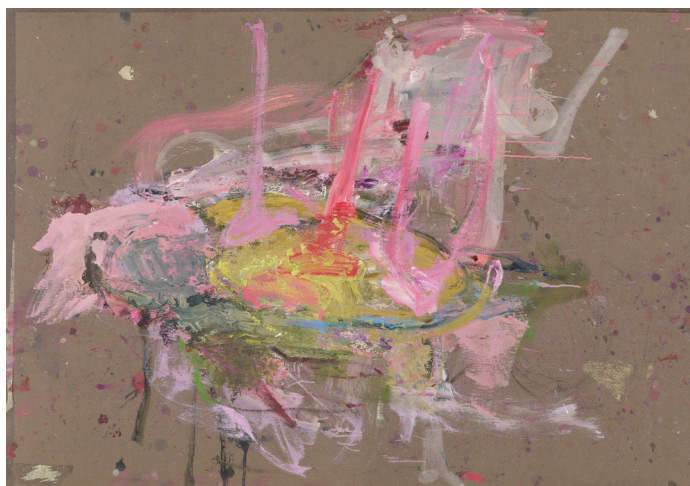


Atalanta und Hippomenes III (nach Guido Reni), 2023. Oil on paper on canvas. 242.2 x 239.4 cm (94.49 x 95.67 in). © Martha Jungwirth / Bildrecht, Wien 2025. Photo: Ulrich Ghezzi. Courtesy Thaddaeus Ropac gallery.



Atalanta und Hippomenes I (nach Guido Reni), 2023. Oil on paper on canvas. 242 x 261 cm (102.76 x 95.67 in). © Martha Jungwirth / Bildrecht, Wien 2025. Photo: Ulrich Ghezzi. Courtesy Thaddaeus Ropac gallery.

related to myself. Drawing and painting are a movement that runs through me.' The artist's mark-making is automatic, spontaneous and cathartic, seeming to function like writing or a language of its own. She uses wide paintbrushes that facilitate quick, fluid movements, and through a pictorial vocabulary of lines, daubs and colour, she expresses her ease or frustration, euphoria, anger or despair. 'What's important to me are the emotions,' she says, 'and what happens during the painting process.' Chance and discovery lie at the heart of Jungwirth's practice. Whether surrendering to spontaneity or control, impulse gives way to revelation.



Der Freiermord, 2019. Oil on paper on canvas. 105 x 155 cm (41.34 x 61.02 in). © Martha Jungwirth / Bildrecht, Wien 2025. Photo: Ulrich Ghezzi. Courtesy Thaddaeus Ropac gallery.



Portrait of Martha Jungwirth, 2024. Photo: Markus Huber.
Courtesy Thaddaeus Ropac gallery.

About the artist

Martha Jungwirth was born in 1940 in Vienna, where she continues to live and work. In 2010, her work featured in a major exhibition curated by Albert Oehlen for the Essl Museum, Klosterneuburg. This was followed by exhibitions at institutions including Kunsthalle Krems (2014); Kunstmuseum Ravensburg (2018); Albertina Vienna (2018); Museum Liaunig, Neuhaus (2020); Kunsthalle Düsseldorf (2022); Fondazione Giorgio Cini (2024) and Guggenheim Bilbao (2024). In 2021 Jungwirth was awarded the Grand Austrian State Prize, the Republic's highest commendation for an outstanding life's work in the field of art.