

LKHAM

The
**ENDLESS
KNOT**

**МӨНХИЙН
ХОЛБОО**

**Aryuna Bulutova
Baatarzorig Batjargal**

**Bulgantuya Dechindorj
Nomin Bold**

**Nomin Zezegmaa
Odmaa Uranchimeg**

The ENDLESS KNOT

14.01–28.02.2023

The Endless Knot brings together works by artists from Mongolia and Buryatia to explore the imaginaries formed by shared culture and spirituality. For Lkham Gallery's first group show, we have drawn inspiration from one of the Eight Auspicious Symbols of Buddhism and invite viewers to consider the entangled nature of our world.

The exhibition features the work by Aryuna Bulutova (in collaboration with Davaajargal Tsaschikher), Baatarzorig Batjargal, Bulgantuya Dechindorj, Nomin Bold, Nomin Zezegmaa, and Odmaa Uranchimeg. Through their unique perspectives, the artists delve into the notion of interconnectedness and the endless cycles of life, death, and rebirth.

Illuminating the entrance to the exhibition is *The Gap*, an installation by the Mongolian artist Baatarzorig Batjargal that features wax candles cast in the shape of Zanabazar, the first Bogd Gegeen, arranged on a wooden altar. Cast from a damaged antique statue, the partially-melted wax sculptures evoke the ephemerality of the physical world. However, for Baatarzorig, their flames represent the Buddhist belief in reincarnation—and the gap through which the soul can enter a human at the moment of conception.

Adjacent to the wax sculptures is the textile work *Sav Shim*, by Mongolian artist Nomin Bold. A number of interlinked skulls, handsewn in pink, white, and black fabrics, translate a nineteenth-century poem by the fifth Bogd Gegeen into a hanging tapestry of Morse code. The poem illuminates an all-encompassing universe, an ongoing exchange between the living and the non-living. As the artist explains, «the human soul is not only one, but can be divided into many people...the making of many skulls means that human beings are born in bones and flesh, and reborn many times in mind, spirit, and consciousness.» Whether a viewer decides to decipher the text or ponder the visual and textile rhythms of work, she will encounter a message of impermanence and the cyclical regeneration of human life. Nomin continues this exploration of human rebirth in three other paintings on view, *Infinity*, *Level*, and *Untitled*, which render the image of the skull in vibrant colors and textures.

Juxtaposed with Nomin's textile piece are two abstract paintings, *Desire* and *Cycles*, by Bulgantuya Dechindorj. Born in Ulaanbaatar, the artist has made formal and semantic analogies of human emotions, shapes, and textures central to her practice. Deep blues and warm yellows seep into and out of each other, forming overlapping circles that evoke the waxing and waning of the moon.

For the artist, these dynamics express an individual's opportunities to discover her own desires through life's seasons of abundance and death.

For *The Land of Jambu Trees*, Baatarzorig Batjargal has painted the Buddhist protector deity Jamsran in the realm of humans to address the social and political problems endemic to our present moment. Working in the style of *Mongol Zurag*, the secular painting tradition derived from Buddhist thangka, he thickens the bottom half of the canvas with figures, while the top half abstracts into formulas and geometric shapes. Themes of perdition and paradise, and of virtue and corruption, have long fascinated Baatarzorig. Here, he depicts otherworldly creatures and mystifying scenes in a captivating compositional dance between order and lawlessness, with Jamsran anchoring the scene's action.

Baatarzorig's textile installation *Ulzii* is a direct reference to the Endless Knot, one of the Eight Auspicious Symbols of Buddhism. Among its many meanings are the interconnectedness of everything, the union of wisdom and compassion, as well as happiness and longevity. The large-scale knot made of intricately-linked textile serpents biting each other also alludes to an ancient symbol of eternal renewal or a cycle of death and rebirth.

Aryuna Bulutova, a new media artist from Buryatia, has created a video work titled *Dying*. Inspired by a lecture by Venerable Samdhong Rinpoche, the artwork interprets the process of dying from the perspective of Buddhism. Colors and shapes morph and pulsate along with the meditative rhythms of Mongolian sound artist Davaajargal Tsaschikher—and the presence of viewers within the installation.

A pair of iron rod sculptures by Mongolian artist Odmaa Uranchimeg suspend fragmented, ceramic faces within the shape of a seated Buddha. Trained in ceramics, Odmaa's inspiration for the current work, *Dot...Zero*, stems from being asked to repair a broken face of a Buddha statue. Transforming solid mass into an outline in a manner that echoes her original drawn sketches, Odmaa asks viewers to ponder what remains when everything tangible passes away.

On Bogd Khan Mountain: The Bared Below by Berlin-based artist Nomin Zezegmaa is an ongoing series of conceptual works created in collaboration with the sacred Bogd Khan mountain. With the intention to capture and replicate lightning-struck tree stumps while respecting and leaving their original and natural state untouched, she draped and wrapped them in linen and then brushed them over with ink. These ripped-out-of-the-earth tree stumps bring to light a fragment of an endless underground net of roots, reaching far beyond imagination.

Nomin's other project *Writing without Writing* amplifies the pure act of writing itself. Reminiscent of traditional Mongolian script, the visual language of these works subtly traces the genealogical point of departure and reflects on an amalgamated lineage of writing systems.

Axis mundi is a universal symbol across various cultures, cosmologies, and mythologies. Nomin's latest work *Axis Mundi: Paradigm* aims to depict this universal connection between the psyche, the microcosmos and the macrocosmos, and the movement of energy and matter.

Curators: Dr. Christianna Bonin and Timur Zolotoev

Aryuna BULUTOVA



1



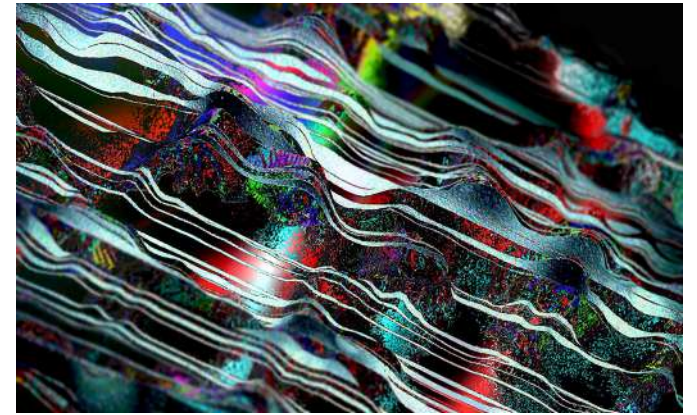
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Aryuna Bulutova (b. 1993) is a new media artist from the Republic of Buryatia, Russia. In her multidisciplinary practice, she explores Buryat culture and its Buddhist and Shamanist heritage through the lens of digital and generative art. A motion designer by training, Aryuna also frequently collaborates with other artists, musicians, and fashion designers. The audiovisual performance she did for the Buryat fashion brand ABZAEVA has been shown at the Mercedes-Benz Fashion Week Moscow 2022 and Moscow Fashion Week 2022. She also participated in the Golden Bee Graphic Design Biennale and ArtMasters 2022 competition.

1, 2 – **Dying**
Interactive video installation
featuring *Alarm From the Desert*
by Davaajargal Tsaschikher, 2023



3



4



5

6

7

3, 4, 5 – *Dying*
Interactive video installation
featuring *Alarm From the Desert*
by Davaajargal Tsaschikher, 2023

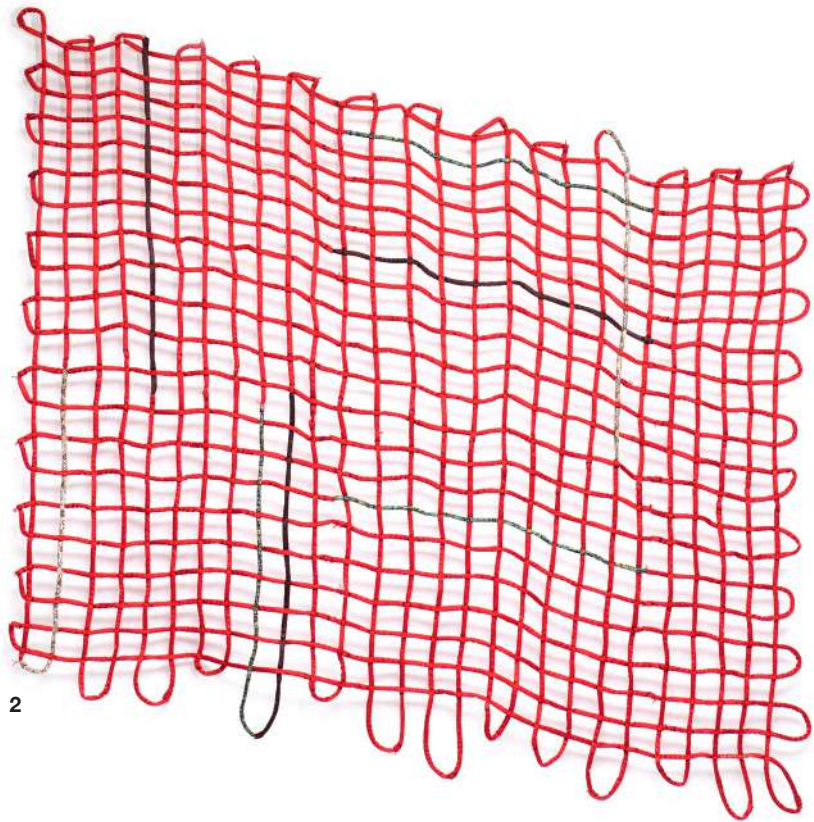
Baatarzorig BATJARGAL

Baatarzorig Batjargal was born in 1983 in Ulaanbaatar, Mongolia. He studied Mongol Zurag, the secular painting tradition derived from Buddhist thangka, at the University of Arts and Culture, Ulaanbaatar and graduated in 2005. He is a member of Union of Mongolian Artists (UMA), Mongol Zurag Society and Global Artist Pension Trust. His work has been exhibited globally at art biennales, museums, and galleries, among them Jack Bell Gallery (London, 2022), the Spirit of Gobi Festival (2021), the Seventh Mediations Biennial (Lodz, 2020), the Bangkok Art Biennale (2020), and Second Yinchuan Biennale (Yinchuan, 2018). Baatarzorig's art is recognizable in its intricate, mysterious intertwining of figures and colors. His images often take a self-consciously critical turn, juxtaposing contemporary politics, social issues, and symbols of pop culture alongside references to Buddhist spirituality and Mongolian visual culture. The result is a mesmerizing tangle that keeps viewers curious, piquing not only our imagination but also our conscience.

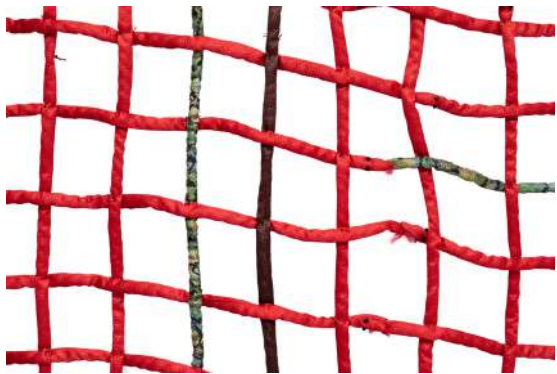


1

1 — *The Land of Jambu Trees*
150x200, Acrylic on canvas,
2023



2



3

2, 3 – *Ulzii*
230x210, Textile installation,
2021

4 – *The Gap*
Installation, paraffin wax,
2023



4

Bulgantuya DECHINDORJ

From Ulaanbaatar, Bulgantuya Dechindorj (b. 1975) studied painting practice at the city's Institute of Fine Art. She then earned a Master's degree in Art from the Mongolian State University of Education, where she is currently a lecturer of painting. The artist has made formal and semantic analogies of human emotions, shapes, and textures central to her practice. Many of her canvases feature overlapping circles, evocating changing lunar and solar patterns, and ancient symbolism. Her work has been shown in galleries and museums internationally, including NordArt exhibitions in Germany (2022, 2019), the Beijing Biennale (2018), and the Zanabazar Museum (Ulaanbaatar, 2004).



1

13

1 — Cycles
110x180, Oil and acrylic on canvas,
2021



2

I4

I5

2 – Desire
100x150, Oil and acrylic on canvas,
2021

Nomin BOLD

Nomin Bold (b. 1982) is a multidisciplinary visual artist and one of the leading practitioners to emerge from the school of Mongol Zurag, the secular painting tradition derived from Buddhist thangka. Nomin works nimbly across painting, sculpture, collage, and textiles, using her meticulous drawing skills and sensitivity to color to create surprising combinations of spiritual and secular symbols. While the artist often considers the intrinsic Buddhist meaning that she selectively brings into her works, it is rather her inquiry into the nature of the tradition itself and how it can be juxtaposed, superimposed, or envisioned in the present world that inspires her unusual compositions and commands a viewer's attention. Born in Mongolia, Nomin studied visual arts at the Mongolian University of Arts and Culture in Ulaanbaatar. Her work has been exhibited in the 14th edition of Documenta, Kassel, Germany, 2020-2021 Bangkok Art Biennale, The 14th International Biennial of Contemporary Art, Oscar Niemeyer Museum in Curitiba, Brazil, 8th Asia Pacific Triennial of Contemporary Art in the Queensland Art Gallery and Gallery of Modern Art in Australia, and the 2nd International Art Biennial in Bodrum, Turkey.



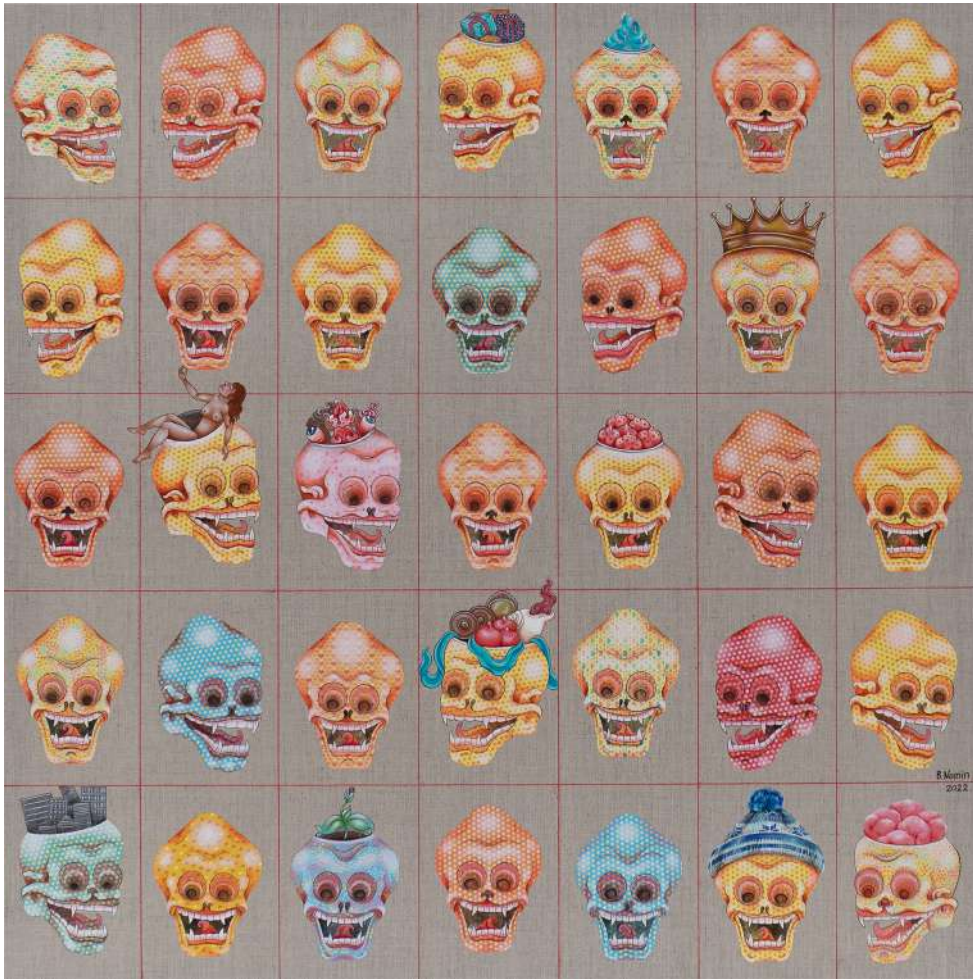
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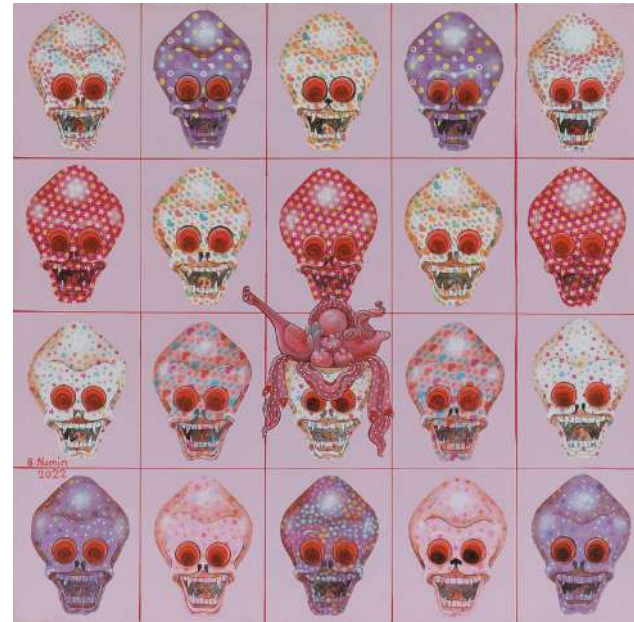
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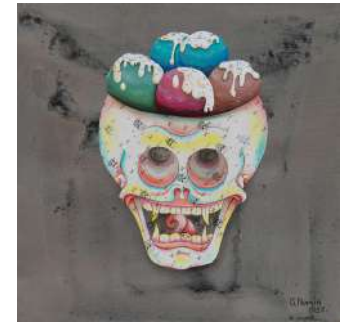
1, 2 — *Sav Shim*
Textile installation,
2022



3



4



5

3 – *Infinity*
100x100, Acrylic on canvas,
collage, 2022

4 – *Level*
40x40, Acrylic on canvas,
collage, 2022

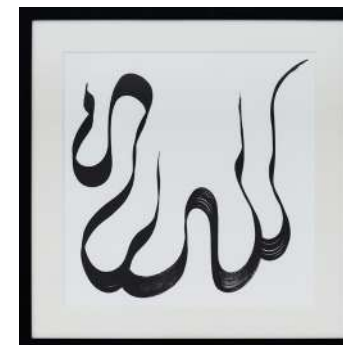
5 – *Untitled*
40x40, Acrylic on canvas,
collage, 2022

Nomin ZEZEGMAA

Nomin Zezegmaa (b. 1992) is a Berlin-based multidisciplinary artist, designer, researcher, and writer. Born and raised in Germany, she graduated from the Rietveld Academy in Amsterdam. In her work, she operates as a mediator and connector between realms of the ancient past, diasporic non-localities, and Mongol cosmology. The often sculptural and tactile works find fluid expression in an amorphous multiplicity of medium and material, where applied and unapplied arts meet on equal ground—with the urgency to blur and diffuse the rigid borders and boundaries between art, design, crafts, and histories. Working between Germany, the Netherlands, and Mongolia, Nomin is fascinated with archaic imagery, metal-smithing, book-making and the genealogy of writing systems, semiotics of (multispecies) mankind, and alchemy.



1



2



3



4

1 — *Writing without Writing #1*
39x39, Ink on paper,
2023

3 — *Writing without Writing #3*
39x39, Ink on paper,
2023

2 — *Writing without Writing #2*
39x39, Ink on paper,
2023

4 — *Writing without Writing #4*
39x39, Ink on paper,
2023



5

6

5 – *On Bogd Khan Mountain:
The Bared Below, 25.11.22, -30°C*
138x170, Ink on linen,
2022

6 – *On Bogd Khan Mountain:
The Bared Below, 13.12.22, -27 °C*
138x170, Ink on linen,
2022

7 – *Axis Mundi: Paradigm*
74x127, Acrylic on canvas,
2023



Odmaa URANCHIMEG

Odmaa Uranchimeg was born in Ulaanbaatar in 1980. She received a degree in ceramic arts from the Institute of Fine Arts, Mongolia, and subsequently completed a printmaking residency in Daejon, Korea. Odmaa's work skillfully weaves together references to Buddhist imaginaries, organic materials, and modernist abstraction. Her background in ceramics and printmaking prompts her method of combining diverse material in her sculptures, and playing with forms that allow her to reference eastern and western cultures. Her work has been featured in several biennales and solo exhibitions, including the Ulaanbaatar International Art Festival (2018), the Nakanojo Biennale (2019, Nakonogo, Japan), and the Land Art Mongolia Biennale (2018).

1 – *Dot... Zero*
Iron, wire, clay, glaze,
2019



2, 3 — *Dot... Zero*
Iron, wire, clay, glaze,
2019



2



3

About Lkham Gallery

Based in Ulaanbaatar, Mongolia, Lkham Gallery strives to promote contemporary art and culture of the Mongolian-speaking world and the broader Central Asian region. Lkham represents both emerging and mid-career artists working in a wide range of media.

As the first gallery of its kind in Mongolia, Lkham envisions itself as an open door. Through regular exhibitions, publications, and a dynamic public program, the gallery aims to facilitate dialogue between local artists and the public, and to galvanize patronage of local artists throughout its community, the region, and beyond. Lkham also regularly hosts lectures by experts working in a variety of fields and will provide residency opportunities for local and international artists.

Founded in 2022 by entrepreneur Natsagsuren Mangalam, the gallery bears the name of her grandmother.

Lkham Gallery Team

Natsagsuren Mangalam
Founder

Dr. Christianna Bonin
Creative Director and Curator

Timur Zolotoev
Curator

Ariunaa Byambajav
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Lkham Gallery



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