

# curated by

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## **Untold Narratives**

**13.09. - 19.10.2023**

## **Crone Wien**

**curated by María Inés Plaza Lazo**

Artists: Havîn Al-Sîndy, Shilpa Gupta, Ayham Majid Agha, Pedro Maia, Marcel Odenbach, Noara Quintana, Paul Sochacki, Kandis Williams, Philip Wiegard

## **Crime as Ornament**

The exhibition refers to the essay Ornament and Crime by the Austrian architect and publicist Adolf Loos from 1908, which is considered a key impulse for the dawn of modernism. In this essay, Loos establishes his vision of reduced, unadorned form. He castigated ornamentation as an intolerable, degenerative phenomenon of the aristocracy and the upper bourgeoisie, which, like its creators, had outlived its usefulness and had to be replaced by sober, objective honesty. At the same time, he distinguishes the ornaments of “simple cultures”, which today would be categorised as belonging to the “global South”, from the exuberant, ornamental dictates of taste of the European elites, and he recognises their truthfulness and beauty.

In the exhibition Crime as Ornament, curator María Inés Plaza Lazo poses the question of the extent to which Loos' postulate was the arrogant expression of a Western cultural hegemony that marginalised foreign aesthetics and formal language - or, on the contrary, called for the differentiation that makes sincere respect and undivided recognition of the “other” possible in the first place. In this respect, she takes up the ideas in this year's Curated by impulse text by Noit Banai, which deals with cultural diversity and the subjective perception of beauty and could be understood as a counter-thesis to Loos' rigid, strict idea of aesthetics.

The works on display reveal precisely what Banai refers to and what Loos already hinted at: the complexity of the debates we are having today about

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identity, repression and paternalism. The deep roots of these debates in the distant past. And the difficult-to-resolve contradiction that arises not only from different cultural influences, but also from perspectives, perceptions, categorisations, interpretations - and misunderstandings.