

PRESS RELEASE**19 November 2025****New exhibitions from 28 November as part of the annual programme Family Matters****Family is never just private: Contemporary artists
and four Hohenzollern electresses open up hidden
family histories at the Humboldt Forum**

How might care and community be imagined beyond standardized images of family? Three new exhibitions—Nothing as Our Ground, Making Kin, and All Under Heaven—present works by renowned international contemporary artists including Sunil Gupta, Haegue Yang, and Jane Jin Kaisen. Shown at the Ethnological Museum and the Museum of Asian Art, these exhibitions create new spaces for negotiating relationships and kinship across cultures, histories, and generations.

On the third floor of the Humboldt Forum, four historical electresses move into the dynastic display. Life-sized portraits of Hohenzollern women from different centuries are positioned alongside the monumental statues of the Brandenburg electors. This intervention, titled Relevant to the System: Women in Ruling Families, breaks open the male-dominated self-representation of the dynasty.

Nothing As Our Ground

3rd floor, Room 312

28 November 2025–3 August 2026

The exhibition brings together eleven artistic positions that deal with family and connectedness. The title *Nothing As Our Ground* refers to the reality of queer and migrant experiences. Relationships often arise where there are neither social structures nor political safeguards for a stable foundation.

Photographs, videos, and installations show how diverse and contradictory life can be across generations, borders, and beyond traditional family images. They demonstrate that family is not fixed, but is constantly being renegotiated.

Curated by Minh Duc Pham and Hai Nam Nguyen

With works by George Demir, Sunil Gupta, Rana Nazzal Hamadeh, Nhu Xuan Hua, Iden Sungyoung Kim, Jaewon Kim, Cheryl Mukherji, Su-Ran Sichling, Leonard Suryajaya, Sarnt Utamachote, and Vuth Lyno

Making kin

3rd Floor, Room 304

28 November 2025–3 August 2026

The exhibition *Making Kin* brings together the works of artists from Canada, South Korea, Nigeria, Ghana, Myanmar, Germany, Estonia, Uzbekistan, and the US. Their various practices are interconnected by the understanding that we are all woven into a dynamic fabric of relationships: not only with other people, animals, plants, spiritual beings, and the cosmos but also with our office chairs. This relational world view is linked to criticism of (colonial) regimes of violence and exploitation as well as state ideologies that reduce the diversity of relationships to models based on the nuclear family and to rigid forms of belonging. The artists resist the loss of connections, knowledge, biodiversity, languages and aesthetics and counter it with an exploration of marginalized forms of knowledge and relationship.

There are four central themes: belonging and community; entanglements between human and non-human collectives; the revitalization and passing on of devalued knowledge cultures; and cultural memory and intergenerational exchange.

The transcultural diversity of the artistic approaches turns the exhibition space into a pluriverse and invites visitors to weave their own connections.

Participating artists: Catherine Blackburn, Aziza Kadyri, Mae-ling Lokko, Meryl McMaster, Caroline Monnet, Katja Novitskova, Soe Yu Nwe, Odun Orimolade, Judith Raum, Cara Romero, Zina Saro-Wiwa, Haegue Yang

The exhibition was curated by: Kerstin Pinther, Curator for Modern and Contemporary Art in Global Context & Ute Marxreiter, Research Associate for Education and Outreach, Ethnologisches Museum and Museum für Asiatische Kunst, Staatliche Museen zu Berlin – Preußischer Kulturbesitz

All Under Heaven. Harmony in Family and State

3rd Floor, Room 318 and 319

28 November 2025–25 May 2026

How deeply does the state intervene in private life? The exhibition focuses on the tension between family and state in 20th-century China and Korea – between ideology, welfare, and control. It presents photographic works by Chinese artist He Chongyue, which make historical propaganda slogans on the One-Child Policy in rural regions visible, alongside striking perspectives on adoption and gender politics in North and South Korea from the museum's own collection. A central work is Family by Mao Tongqiang, a photographic series that compellingly illustrates the transformation of Chinese family structures: from collective production units of the past to more mobile, consumption-oriented and often smaller households. Jane Jin Kaisen's poetic-political video The Woman, The Orphan, and The Tiger addresses transgenerational trauma experienced by Korean women between colonial domination, military violence, and transnational adoption. A related theme is explored by Mirae Kate-Hers Rhee in a work K-Orphan Style, developed specifically for this exhibition, in which she autoethnographically reflects on her own adoption from South Korea to the United States. Prints by Siren Eun Young Jung question traditional gender roles and open queer perspectives on memory, belonging, and identity.

With works by: He Chongyue, Siren Eun Young Jung, Jane Jin Kaisen, Mirae Kate-Hers Rhee, Mao Tongqiang

An exhibition at the Museum für Asiatische Kunst at the Humboldt Forum

Curated by Maria Sobotka, Co-curated by Lu Tian

Relevant to the System: Women in Ruling Families

3rd Floor, Stair Hall

28 November 2025–3 August 2026

The Hohenzollerns are a quintessential example of the dynastic family model, where power rested on customary law. At the end of the 17th century, Elector Frederick William commissioned a series of statues depicting eleven generations of Brandenburg electors. Yet half the story remains hidden, as the women of the family are completely absent. The dynasty's international networks also remained invisible, since the electresses came from far-reaching dynasties and actively cultivated and expanded these ties. For *Beziehungsweise Familie*, four Hohenzollern women from different centuries are now being added to the marble electors to open new perspectives on the role of women in ruling families: Anna (1487–1514), who became Duchess of Schleswig and Holstein; Sophia (1568–1622), Electress of Saxony; Sophie (1630–1714), the well-connected mother-in-law of the first Prussian king; and Marie Auguste (1898–1983), the last dynastic consort of the Hohenzollerns. This intervention was created as part of the joint project WIRKSAM – Women's Networks of the Hohenzollerns, which highlights exemplary Hohenzollern women in ten different museums in Germany and Italy.

Curators: Katja Gimpel, Alfred Hagemann, Stiftung Humboldt Forum im Berliner Schloss, History of the Site

As part of the programme *Family Matters*

(Almost) everyone belongs to a family – and no two families are alike. That much is obvious. Yet only on closer inspection does the true diversity of family life reveal itself. With the annual programme *Family Matters*, the four stakeholders of the Humboldt Forum, together with international partners, are for the first time dedicating the entire building to a single theme. Exhibitions, contemporary perspectives, and artistic interventions within the collections explore family relationships across the present, past, and future.

Overall curatorial direction: Laura Goldenbaum

Ein Haus, vier Akteure: Die Vielstimmigkeit ist bereits in der Zusammenarbeit der Partner*innen angelegt. Im Humboldt Forum kooperieren die Stiftung Humboldt Forum im Berliner Schloss, die Stiftung Preußischer Kulturbesitz mit den Sammlungen des Ethnologischen Museums und des Museums für Asiatische Kunst der Staatlichen Museen zu Berlin, die Humboldt-Universität zu Berlin mit dem Humboldt Labor sowie das Stadtmuseum Berlin mit der Berlin Ausstellung.

Information: humboldtforum.org/en/contemporary-perspectives

Press Images: humboldtforum.org/en/press

One building, four partners: This diversity is founded on the collaboration of our partner institutions. The Humboldt Forum is a collaboration between the Stiftung Humboldt Forum im Berliner Schloss; the Stiftung Preussischer Kulturbesitz for collections from the Ethnologisches Museum and the Museum für Asiatische Kunst of the Staatliche Museen zu Berlin; the Humboldt-Universität zu Berlin for the Humboldt Lab; and the Stadtmuseum Berlin for the BERLIN GLOBAL exhibition.

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