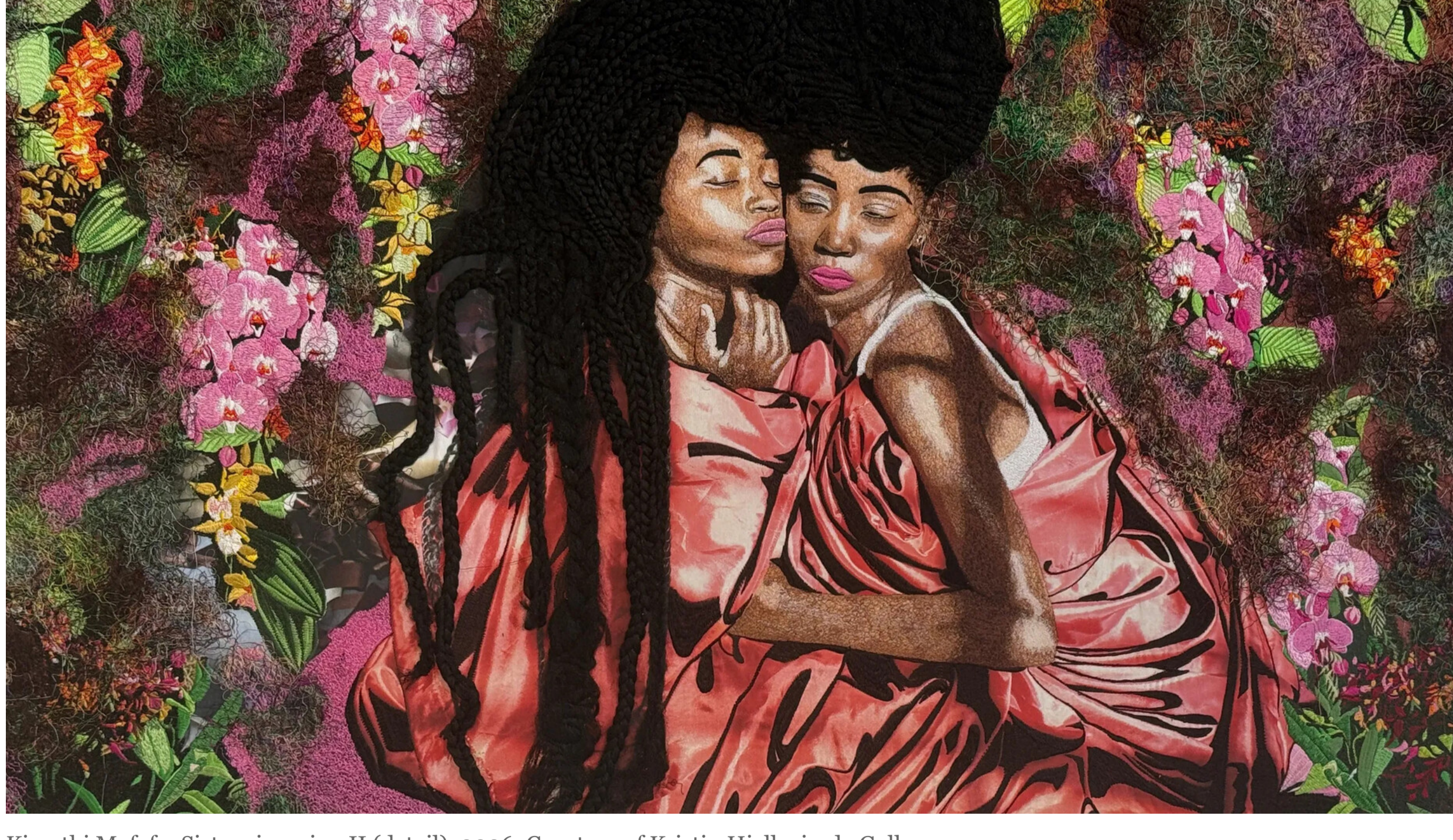


# Passion flower

4 Jun — 4 Jul 2026 at the Kristin Hjellegjerde Gallery in Berlin, Germany

18 JUNE 2026



Kimathi Mafafo, *Sisters in union II* (detail), 2026. Courtesy of Kristin Hjellegjerde Gallery

A woman wrapped in golden embroidered cloth and beads, her hair whipped across her face, sits beneath an arch of verdant leaves and blooming flowers. The night sky behind her twinkles with stars, her skin glistens in the moonlight. *Passion flower*, South African artist Kimathi Mafafo's solo exhibition at Kristin Hjellegjerde Gallery, Berlin, explores nature not just as a physical space, but as an embodied experience, shaped by sensation, connection and care.

The show's title references a specific species of tropical flower which is depicted in the works and which was first introduced to the artist by her late grandmother for its calming and restorative properties. The flower's name and form are also symbolic to Mafafo of a heightened bodily and emotional awareness. Across her works, the vivid colour of the flower's petals and tendrils evokes an otherworldly, almost cosmic presence, which is also reminiscent of antennas or satellite dishes – transmitters or receivers of messages. In the non-figurative works, in particular, they become stand-ins for the body emerging from lush, tangled foliage.

This shift away from portraiture to abstract still-lives and landscape scenes marks a broader evolution in Mafafo's practice towards more sculptural works in which the fabric itself takes on a bodily presence. This is articulated through the varied embroidery techniques that Mafafo uses, with some details – such as the flowers and leaves – precisely rendered, while elsewhere threads tangle, loop and fray.

Collaboration and exchange is central to Mafafo's process. For several years, she has been working with two women whom she trained in embroidery, and while the compositions remain her own, each collaborator contributes a distinct stitching language that asserts its own rhythm and identity. This results in richly layered surfaces that speak of feminine spaces and exchange. The artwork titled *Sisters in union* pays tribute to this unique process of making, but also to a feeling of solidarity with all women, both past and present.

Mafafo wants to evoke feelings of serenity and openness. In this exhibition, we see a more organic palette emerging, with earthy hues and velvety blacks offset by the luminous intensity of botanical forms. In the figurative works, nature both shields the woman and expands her presence, while in the still-life compositions, the botanical arrangements become meditative focal points, surrounded by flowing lines recalling both topographical formations and currents of energy, seemingly flowing beyond the fabric's edges.

The tactility and sensuality of Mafafo's work speaks to the pleasure found through immersion in the natural world, but also to a form of female empowerment that makes space for tenderness, introspection and nurturing.

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## Kristin Hjellegjerde Gallery

Kristin Hjellegjerde Gallery quickly gained recognition in the contemporary art world for showing a roster of innovative, international artists, both emerging and established, with strong theoretical and aesthetic bases.

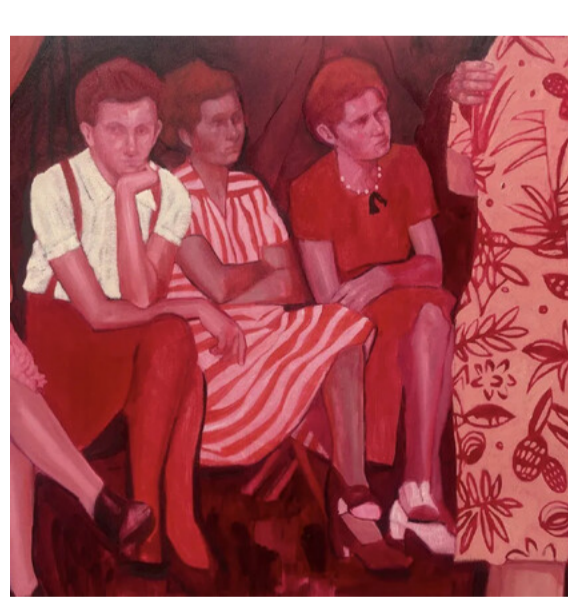
Gallery profile

Location Berlin, Germany

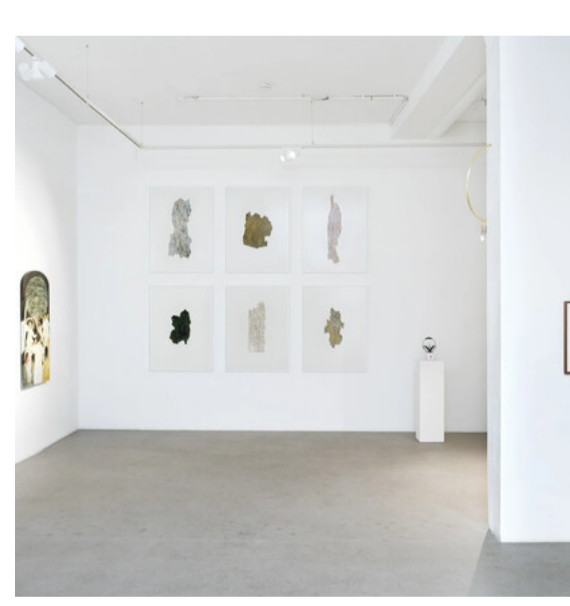


1. Kimathi Mafafo, *Personage II* (detail), 2026. Courtesy of Kristin Hjellegjerde Gallery
2. Kimathi Mafafo, *Passion flowers I* (detail), 2026. Courtesy of Kristin Hjellegjerde Gallery
3. Kimathi Mafafo, *Passion flowers III* (detail), 2026. Courtesy of Kristin Hjellegjerde Gallery

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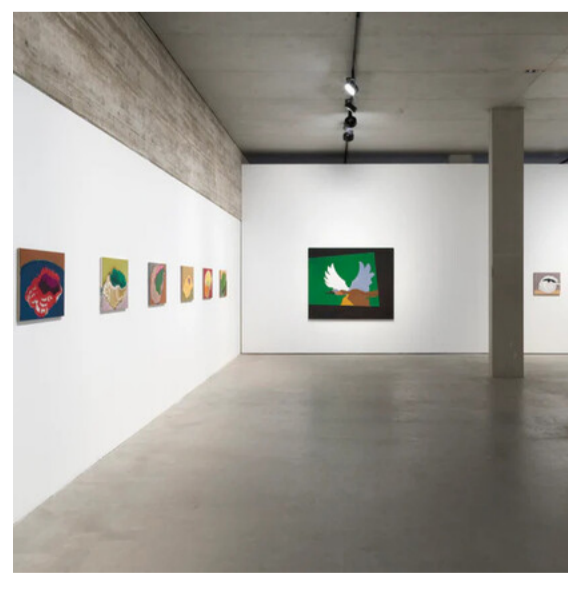
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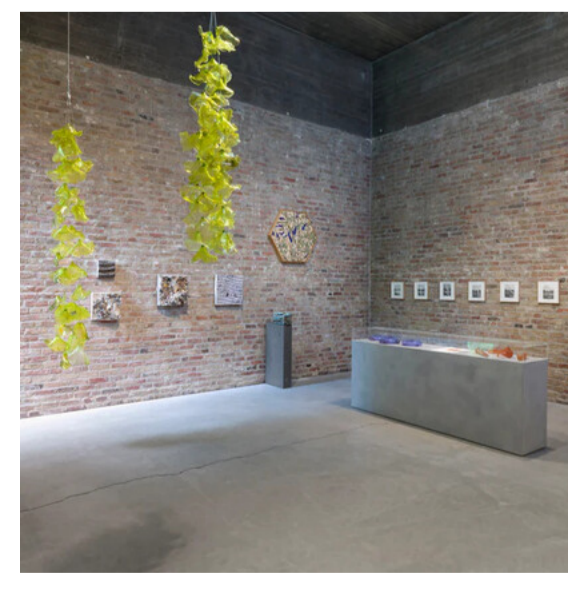
104.5°  
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Gallery



Diana Cepleanu's  
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Plan B

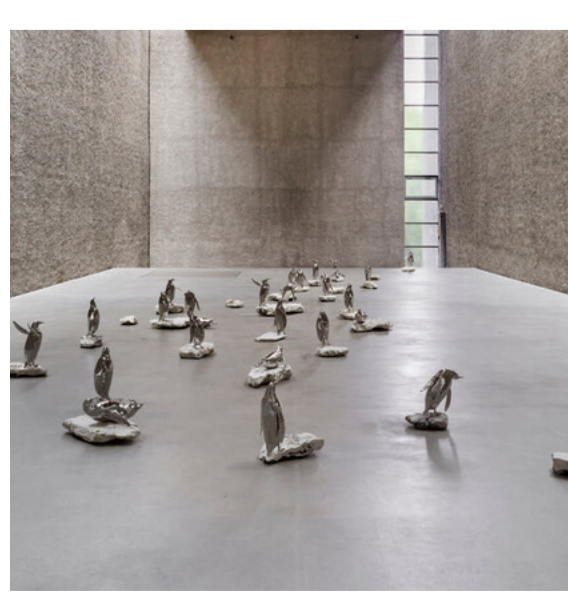


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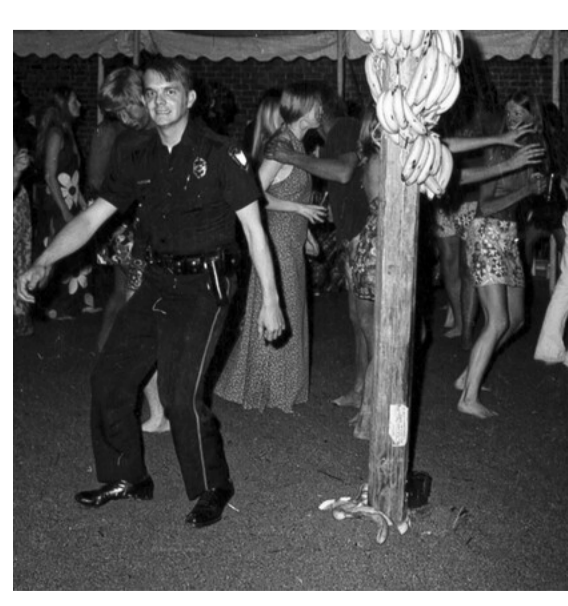
## MORE IN GERMANY



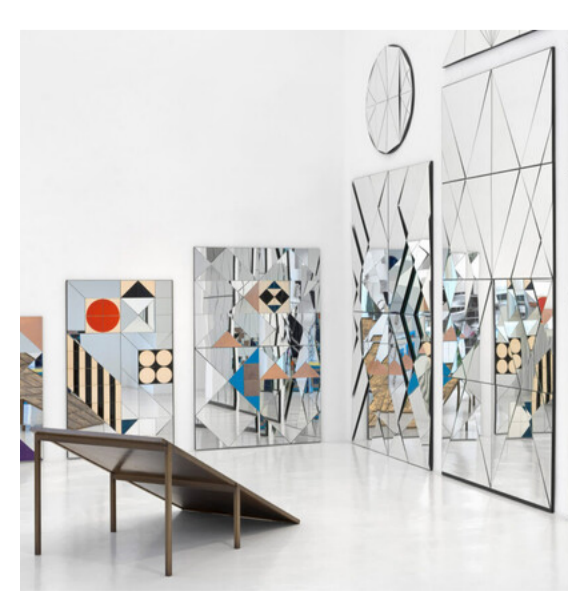
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