

Esther Schipper

PRINTEMPS 2026

Saâdane Afif, Lotus L. Kang, Tuan Andrew Nguyen, Celeste Rapone, Rafa Silvares

February 13 – April 4, 2026

Esther Schipper, Paris



Esther Schipper Paris is pleased to present **Printemps 2026** with works by Saâdane Afif, Lotus L. Kang, Tuan Andrew Nguyen, Celeste Rapone, and Rafa Silvares.

The turning of the seasons brings the awe-inspiring energies of spring, which break through the fierce grip of winter every year. Paradoxically, its power, promise and sweetness never fail to surprise. **Printemps 2026** celebrates these forces of renewal and features the work of five artists who have recently joined the gallery. Building on the gallery's pioneering program, **Printemps 2026** represents a continued commitment to supporting practices that push the boundaries of a given medium and redefine exhibition formats.

Suffused with poetry and humor, Saâdane Afif's neo-conceptual practice draws on a rich network of collaborators from diverse fields. Using an acute sensitivity towards process and space, Lotus L. Kang's practice reflects on impermanence, inheritance, memory, and time. Tuan Andrew Nguyen's sculptural practice is deeply attached to material anchors of remembrance, in which objects intended for destruction come to assume a new life and beauty. Celeste Rapone's domestic interiors are populated with eccentric figures that allegorize the generational unease, anxiety, and ennui peculiar to her generation. In Rafa Silvares's paintings, metal is a recurring motif that exerts symbolic power; its hard, lustrous, reflective shell knowingly evokes the promises of modernity.

The exhibition opens with Saâdane Afif's installation **Vingt mille millimètres d'infinis possibles** (2018 – 2026). Bright measuring sticks are placed across two walls, painted in the same color, their linear slats folded to create a simple figure or symbol. Configured anew for the space, the work derives from an earlier sculptural edition, which also allows their owners to create everchanging constructions. Throughout his career, Afif has collaborated with interdisciplinary artists, many long associated with the gallery program. In an ongoing project, he invites visual artists, musicians, and writers to contribute poetic texts, which he refers to as "lyrics", and which accompany his works. Complementing the **Lyrics**, here one by Dominique Gonzalez-Foerster and another by Jeanna, is an additional longstanding element of Afif's practice: an exhibition poster uniquely designed and printed for the occasion.

Executed in oil on linen, Rafa Silvares's **Flowers** (2026) depicts a close-up of a torchlight standing upright. Painted in theatrical hues of yellow and orange, a beam of light seizes the composition, pushing against the cold reflections of an otherwise metallic palette characteristic for Silvares's style. Extending the gallery's embrace of emerging currents in contemporary painting, the artist examines how reality is shaped and abstracted, making plain the influence of Brazilian modernism within a global context.

Onlooker (2026) by Celeste Rapone is dominated by a dusky palette, blending shades of vermillion, coral and scarlet. Inspired by the radical practice of Lee Lozano, the artist leans into the gallery's engagement with postmodern feminist discourses. Known for blending art historical nods with niche codes clocked by millennials, Rapone's paintings combine surreal montage, dissociated looks, and crammed bodies.

Tuan Andrew Nguyen's tondo **Light Scars** (2026) is composed of hundreds of small discs crafted from repurposed artillery shell casings. Nguyen skillfully manipulates oxidation and patina to introduce a rich palette of turquoise and gold, punctuated by Day-Glo orange, used to mark unexploded ordnance buried across Viet Nam. The artist's practice takes the material anchors of remembrance and repression as a point of departure. Regarding the gallery's bedrock dedication to center art that questions how meaning is constructed, Nguyen's project – as resistance sedimented in materiality – scrutinizes the symbolic order under the aegis of imperial warfare.

Tract XXXI (2025) by Lotus L. Kang is suspended from the gallery's ceiling. The work consists of cast brass-bronze kelp knots attached to a nylon string, akin to seaweeds caught in fishing nets. Part of the artist's **Mesoderm** series, the collages **Mesoderm (Born Inside Death II)** and **Mesoderm (Empty Full IV)** (both 2025) are rendered in a color palette associated with marrow and flesh, blush and bruise. Another work by Kang, a luminogram titled **Synapse 18:13** (2026), is loosely suggestive of bodily forms and functions, sinuous tendons, firing neurons, branching networks of nerves. Kang's materially dense works enrich the gallery's engagement with an aesthetic marked by collaboration across temporal, social, organic, molecular, or technological distinctions.

Saâdane Afif was born in 1970 in Vendôme. Afif received an MFA from the École des Beaux-Arts in Bourges. The artist lives and works in Berlin. Afif was awarded numerous grants and residencies, among them the 2009 Marcel Duchamp Prize, Paris. He was the artistic director of the 4th edition of the Bergen Assembly triennial: **Yasmine and the Seven Faces of the Heptahedron** (2022). His solo exhibition **Five Preludes** is currently on view at Hamburger Bahnhof, Berlin. Selected international festivals, biennials, and exhibitions, among them the 15th Gwangju Biennale, Gwangju (2024); the 10th Taipei Biennial, Taipei (2016); the 56th Venice Biennale, Venice (2015), and the 5th Marrakech Biennale, Marrakech (2014).

Lotus L. Kang was born 1985 in Toronto. Kang studied fine arts at Concordia University in Montreal (2004-2008) and completed an MFA at the Milton Avery School of the Arts at Bard College, New York, in 2015. The artist lives and works in New York. Selected solo exhibitions include **Already**, 52 Walker, New York (2025); **In Cascades**, CAG Vancouver, Vancouver (2023); **In Cascades**, Chisenhale Gallery, London (2023); **Molt**, MCA Chicago, Chicago (2023). Selected institutional group exhibitions: **Does the flower hear the bee?**, 15th Shanghai Biennial, Shanghai (2025); **What is Parasite and What is Kin?**, Museum of Modern Art, New York (2025), and **After Images**, Julia Stoschek Foundation, Berlin (2024).

Tuan Andrew Nguyen was born in 1976 in Saigon. In 1999, Nguyen graduated from the Fine Arts program at the University of California, Irvine, and completed a Master of Fine Arts in 2004 at the California Institute of the Arts, Valencia. The artist lives and works in Ho Chi Minh City. Nguyen has received numerous awards, including the 2025 MacArthur Fellowship. The High Line announced the selection of Nguyen's **The Light that Shines Through the Universe** as the next High Line Plinth commission. The 27-foot-tall sculpture will be installed in spring 2026.

Celeste Rapone was born 1985 in New Jersey. Rapone graduated from the Rhode Island School of Design in 2007, and in 2013 she completed an MFA at the School of The Art Institute of Chicago. The artist lives and works in Chicago. Selected institutional exhibitions and projects include: **Atrium Project**, Museum of Contemporary Art Chicago, Chicago (upcoming); **Presence as a Pause: Interiority and Its Radical Immanence**, Bemis Center for Contemporary Arts, Omaha (2023); **Odalisque**, Bunker Art Space, West Palm Beach (2023), and **A Place for Me: Figurative Painting Now**, The Institute of Contemporary Art, Boston (2022).

Rafa Silveiras was born in 1984 in Santos. He studied fine arts at FAAP (Fundação Armando Álvares Penteado), São Paulo, and received a BA in Language and Literature from the Faculty of Philosophy, Languages, and Human Sciences (FFLCH) at the University of São Paulo. The artist lives and works in Berlin. Recent exhibitions include: **Ensemble**, Esther Schipper, Berlin (2025); **Ganz konkret 2**, Kunstpalais, Erlangen (2025); **L'Almanach 23**, Le Consortium, Dijon (2023); **Real Fake Door**, Arsenal Contemporary Art, New York (2023), and **The Artists Contemporary Atelier**, London (2021).

ESTHER SCHIPPER SAS
16 PLACE VENDÔME
75001 PARIS
TEL : +33 1 42 33 17 67
PARIS@ESTHERSCHIPPER.COM
WWW.ESTHERSCHIPPER.COM