

Ekrem Yalçındağ

Location: Dorfstrasse and in front of the Gemeindehaus [community centre]

The earliest flags we know of in Europe were military field signs. Even today, flags are still carriers of information, they signal an affiliation—whether to a country, a city, a club or a religious denomination. With Ekrem Yalçındağ's sea of flags stretched across the village street and in front of the community centre in Engelberg, you can safely forget all that. The community that the artist has in mind for *Backstage Engelberg* is a free gathering of strollers.

One can imagine a cheerful summer day. Printed on the flags are colors and shapes from the repertoire of Yalçındağ's painting. His pictures merge Western art movements such as color field painting and Op Art with the Arabic concept of ornamentation. In many of Ekrem Yalçındağ's works, the pictorial surface is organized by the smallest units of a white-outlined color form, whose shape is based on flowers and leaves. The artist developed this basic vocabulary in the early 1990s by studying nature in Frankfurt's Palmengarten. As in the paintings, the forms on the flags are multiplied and combined into geometric units—and here they also combine with the sky. It is therefore possible to see a utopia realized in these flags that reconciles West and East and makes us people who are free to go here and there. *(ah)*

Ekrem Yalçındağ, born in 1964 in Gölbaşı, Turkey, lives and works in Istanbul, Turkey, Frankfurt a. M., and Berlin, Germany. Yalçındağ studied in Izmir, Turkey, and at the Städelschule in Frankfurt. His works have been shown internationally in solo and group exhibitions, including at Kunstforum Wien, Austria (2023), Museum Franz Gertsch, Burgdorf, Switzerland (2023), Museum of Modern Art, Dubrovnik, Croatia (2023), Kreuzherrnsaal Memmingen, Germany (2021), and Torrance Art Museum, USA (2016).