

Personal Diary

22 April – 11 July 2026

Press release

Personal Diary at **In-Gate Gallery** gathers three distinct artistic voices — *Mylinh Nguyen*, *Danja Akulin*, and *Gérald Dederen* — whose practices engage deeply with material presence, memory, and introspective narrative. Across sculpture and drawing, the exhibition traces a nuanced atlas of inner life, where form and facture serve as conduits for reflection.

The exhibition's title, *Personal Diary*, signals a space of introspection and revelation — a sequence of mark-making, sculptural gestures, and contemplative surfaces that resonate like entries in an inner journal. Rather than illustrating specific autobiographical moments, the works evoke the rhythms of thought, sensation, and remembrance.

Mylinh Nguyen — Sculptural Poetics of Presence

French sculptor **Mylinh Nguyen** brings to *Personal Diary* a body of work that is quietly magnetic. Trained in metal sculpture and textile design and recognized with prestigious craft awards, Nguyen works through an exacting yet visceral manipulation of material. Her sculptures — frequently combining turned metal with subtly modeled surfaces — occupy a space between the organic and the ambiguous.

Nguyen's forms suggest living entities: limbs, buds, or seeds poised on thresholds of animation. Their surfaces — alternately smooth, cold, and softly curved — evoke a paradoxical sense of warmth and distance. Rather than narrate, her works *invite* contemplation, becoming focal points for open-ended interpretation. What feels at first like figuration gradually dissolves into a meditation on form, space, and presence itself.

Danja Akulin — Drawing as Landscape of Mind

In contrast to sculpture's three-dimensional presence, **Danja Akulin** operates within the disciplined realm of graphite, pencil, and charcoal drawing. Born in Saint Petersburg and based in Berlin, Akulin elevates monochrome drawing into an immersive visual language — one in which light and shadow become existential territory.

His works on paper, often mounted onto canvas to give them a commanding physical presence, bridge the territories of landscape and inner terrain. Akulin's signature approach juxtaposes razor-fine hatching with areas of soft blur, creating images that seem to shimmer between focus and dissolution. Motifs of water, sky, and vegetation recur, but always through a distilled, meditative lens.

These black-and-white compositions feel like states of being rather than specific places: silent seascapes, fields under shifting light, or trees suspended between day and dusk. In *Personal Diary*, Akulin's drawings evoke an inner geography — where perception itself becomes the site of inquiry and reflection.

Gérald Dederen — Material Resonance and Organic Memory

Brussels-based artist **Gérald Dederen** anchors the sculptural dimension of the exhibition with works that are materially rooted yet conceptually open. Best known for his monumental wood sculptures, Dederen's practice encompasses drawing, sculpture, and objects that explore the thresholds between organic growth and artistic intervention.

Dederen's sculptural language is tactile and grounded: wood, with its intrinsic grain and history, becomes a bearer of memory and time. His works in *Personal Diary* read like excavated fragments — elements that seem both emergent and archaeological, as if unearthed from a personal archive of forms. The physical presence of these sculptures — their



weight, texture, and scale — confronts the viewer with an immediacy that contrasts with Akulin's atmospheric drawings and complements Nguyen's elegant biomorphic forms.

Across his work, Dederen balances tension and repose, suggesting narratives of growth, erosion, and renewal. He treats material not just as medium but as record — a site where the past and present meet through touch and form.