

Press Release, Spring 2021

Spring at Grazer Kunstverein
16 April – 11 June 2021

Bianca Baldi
Cameo

Opening hours: Wednesday–Sunday, 11am–6pm



Image courtesy of the artist

The title of the exhibition *Cameo* alludes to the mechanisms at play when a person is passing* as an identity outside of their own. The term 'cameo' describes the short appearance of a well-known person in a film or play. The person is expected to appear as themselves, when ultimately he or she is playing a fictionalized version of themselves. Similarly, when a person is passing they are themselves, but at the same time also appear as an almost fictionalized version of themselves. Casting her lens out into the animal kingdom, artist Bianca Baldi looks to examples of creatures who use the mutability of their skin pigment as a method of passing, for the explicit purpose of self-preservation. To explore the phenomenon of 'versipellis' (one who changes skin or shape-shifts) Baldi presents a portrait of the cuttlefish as both a chimeric creature, and the source of sepia (a pigment often used in photography in the context of archiving) in her poignant and humorous video work *Play-White*. Combining personal stories and literary characters, in a study of radical transgressions, camouflage, unspoken sadness and survival, Baldi draws on historical and zoomorphic research to present a compelling meditation on perception, embodiment, self-presentation, and the aesthetic thresholds of identity.

*In sociology the term 'passing' refers to the phenomenon whereby an individual may be identified as belonging to an identity group or category other than their own. This may include racial identity, ethnicity, social class, gender, sexual orientation, religion, age and/or disability status.

Bianca Baldi (born 1985 in Johannesburg, South Africa) is based in Brussels. In her work she deals with the role of narrative as a means of knowledge production in both fictional and historical contexts. She is interested in the staging of identity and history and explores these themes in photography, film, writing and publishing, which she often combines in the exhibition format as

installations. She obtained a Bachelor of Arts in 2007 from the Michaelis School of Fine Art in Cape Town, South Africa and completed her studies at the Städelschule in Frankfurt. Her work has been featured in large international exhibitions such as the 11th African Biennial of Photography (Bamako), the 11th Shanghai Biennale, the 8th Berlin Biennale of Contemporary Art and group exhibitions at Kunsthalle Bern, Extra City Kunsthall Antwerp, Kunstverein Braunschweig and Kunstverein Frankfurt. Recent solo exhibitions include Versipellis at Superdeals in Brussels (2018), Eyes in the Back of Your Head at Kunstverein Harburger Bahnhof (2017) and Pure Breaths at Swimming Pool in Sofia (2016).

Cameo by Bianca Baldi is co-produced by Grazer Kunstverein and Netwerk Aalst, with additional support from the Hessische Kulturstiftung and Flanders State of the art. An accompanying forthcoming publication is published by K Verlag and co-edited by Netwerk Aalst and Grazer Kunstverein.

Grazer Kunstverein is open Wednesdays to Sundays, 11am–6pm. In order to ensure the safety of visitors and employees in accordance with the regulations of the Austrian Federal Government, we uphold hygiene and protective commitments. Read more about our pandemic related precautions [here](#).

For print ready images, interviews, or any further information please contact:

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Grazer Kunstverein is structurally supported by the city of Graz, the province of Styria, Federal Ministry for Arts, Culture, Civil Service and Sport, legero united – the shoemakers | con-tempus.eu, and its members. *Grazer Kunstverein is moving!* is supported by Graz Kulturjahr 2020 with additional support from the Mondriaan Fund.