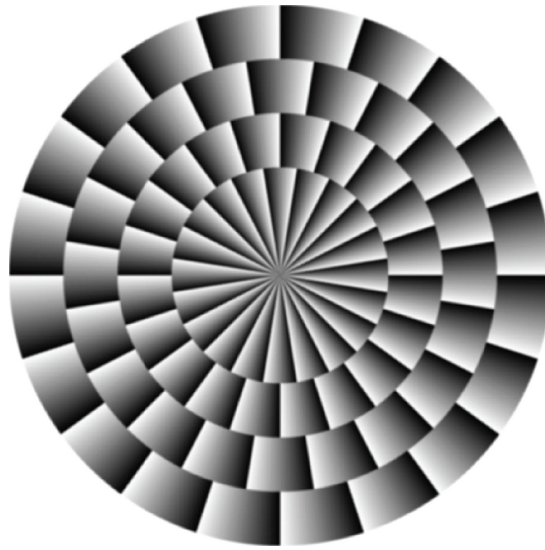


hyper (hyper)

14 September – 05 November 2022

With works by
Lenora de Barros
Sine Hansen
Lena Henke
Selma Köran
Panayiotis Loukas
Angelo Plessas
Siggi Sekira
Zoe Spehr
Yorgos Stamkopoulos
Julija Zaharijević

Curated by
Olympia Tzortzi



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Hyperreality versus surrealism equals hypersurreality. Shapes sculpted much larger or smaller than life, colors more vivid than expected, subjects that include an enigmatic imagery compose a hyper-surreal condition to be observed. Shifting from the notion of the “superior reality” of the subconscious – surrealism – and its overflow into society to the inability of consciousness to distinguish reality from a simulation of reality – hyperrealism – the exhibition is creating a mirrored world of spectacle of realisms. Shape and color as representations fulfill two basic functions. One connects things belonging together and separates the ones that should be apart and the other one serves identification, that through working in reverse enables simultaneously a basic reflection of reality and an abstraction of reality as well.

The urge to desire a different reality from the one that we are facing now is undeniable. The attempt to achieve a condition, in which what is real and what is fiction are seamlessly blended together, is self-evident. Neither an illusion is suggested nor an imagination of a fantastic past. A fiction of the real is being introduced. A selection of artworks that present living, tangible objects, emphasizes on mundane everyday imagery, where the human emotions, the political values and narrations of our time are not being omitted. Other works focus more on abstract reality which in fact cannot be seen by the human eye but implies the physical presence of a living being. In between the exhibits, questions emerge: Has our reality become a hall of mirrors? And if so, are we happily entertained by the reflections and distortions, or are we desperately searching for a glimpse behind the looking-glasses and a way out?

Wanted by Myself by Lenora de Barros elevates these questions. The issue is not anymore our surrounding, but ourselves. In the search of the projected ideal, humanity reaches in fact a stage where we are “wanting by ourselves”. Lenora de Barros in her practice entangles the body and the self, in both material and conceptual consideration. Our body and our existence are confronted with a mirror multiple.

An irrational system of order in imaginary spaces is the carrier of certain information. Color, form and clarity create the perfect tension in *Herztod* (cardiac death) of Sine Hansen. Under the motto to paint things as we experience them and not as they are known, Sine Hansen with her emblematic iconography combines an outward appeal that reaches the viewer's sensitivity. The glimpse of surreal impetus gains a great intensity.

An elegant juicer in yellow color showcases our need to not be out of sight anymore. Henke emanates from the MPZ 2 “Citromatic” citrus press by Braun. Designed in 1972, the appliance added a modern touch to the kitchen, where cisgender women were responsible of all needs of the household’s members at that time. Henke attains a balance between the genders. In the end the machine is enlarged to one and a half times the original to disappear on a kitchen shelf and our contemporary self is to complete and overgrown to be hidden.

The fragmentary existence of a surrealistic, grotesque and animated cut in half head of Selma Köran functions as a perpetuating force of a similar narrative. Using the visual language of an archaeological excavation, the open mouth arises on the surface to experience catharsis. The question of the traditional power structures and gender relations emerges and an alternative narration is up to us to be spoken.

In the blink of an eye, domestic objects adapt anthropomorphic features and walk the line between strange and familiar in *Mistakes were made* by Panayiotis Loukas. The implication that the scenery was surrounded by a living being is uncertain as the subconscious takes over the reality. Blended elements of psychedelia, folklore, horror, and popular culture compose the suggested hypersurreality.

The notion of continuity between all entities possesses a crucial function in <http://lifeonthemandala.com/> by Angelo Plessas. Through interactive engagement, an imagery from various realities and continuities between our planet and the rest of the universe, humans and animals, plants and machines are being revealed. *Noospheric Mandala: Growth* obtains the symbolism of mandala to achieve healing and blessing and to form a peaceful continuum.

Both drawings by Siggi Sekira refer directly to the erotic horror film “Trouble Every Day” (2001) by Claire Denis. The works are inspired by a side role named Core, a young cisgender woman, who is daily imprisoned by her neuroscientist husband. She initiates sex with cisgender men, while literally devouring them during the sex act. The scenes are gory and almost surreal. The drawings, therefore, follow this dangerous sexuality and the sensuality of the protagonist, while creating a new, imagined world for her to inhabit.

Second Touch by Zoe Spehr is trying to substitute the human intimacy. The interaction with the machine object is creating a possibility for a new form of intimacy by touching the object that evokes a vibrational response, originated from voicemessages dealing with intimacy. The anthromorphization of inanimate objects/robots/computers often draws from the fetishization of cisgender female characteristics produced by the imagination of white cisgender males. Here, platonic intimacy is presented opposed to overly sexualized cisgender female attributes.

One big colorful abstract landscape consisting of vivid existential colors is teared apart. The five small painting by Yorgos Stamkopoulos actually were a unity that disjoined itself. The color impregnates the space. The lines and the gestures themselves are acting as the agent of illusionism. It is a different type of landscape. Dense with motion the artworks swarm with gestures that range from wispy to bold. They evoke in a way a very natural environment that could exist somewhere.

In *White Cabbage*, Julija Zaharijević recreates imitatively a cabbage head. But to what is a cabbage head referring to? A symbolic conflation between mind and vision directs us to simple “anatomy”: a head refers to a body, a corpus shaped roundly with a minimum weight and if cut open it circuitous patterns are not unlike to those of a brain. A humanized vegetable leading us either to our reincarnation or to the termination of the gaze.

Is hypersurreality the new comedy or tragedy of our times?