

9/3-11/13/2022

"The Never Never"

Jeremy Hutchison

Curated by Evelyn Simons

- 9/2 7:00 PM | Opening
- 9/9 6:00 PM | Guided Tour
- 10/26 6:00 PM | Guided Tour

EN "*Did you know - there are more Porsches in Athens than anywhere else in Europe?*"
(from a phone conversation between the artist and his father)

The Never Never was triggered by a piece of fake news. It was produced in Athens by UK artist Jeremy Hutchison and Belgian curator Evelyn Simons, in collaboration with Nova Melancholia - an Athenian performance troupe. This new body of work comprises a short film, photographic series, collage paintings, performance and sculpture.

In this work, a Porsche 911 is divided into eight parts and worn as a costume by Athenian performers. Like hybrids from ancient mythology, these farcical creatures emerge from the sea, navigate a series of epic landscapes before arriving at a photo studio. All this is documented by an advertising film crew, who in turn become actors in the performance.

The Never Never explores contemporary myths: fake news, luxury branding, national stereotypes and global capitalism. It examines how right-wing media used ownership of Porsches to make false and xenophobic allegations about the Greek debt crisis. Indeed, the project's title is slang for debt: it refers to the apparently never-ending number of payments on a loan.

Collapsing incongruous visual languages - from luxury branding, museology, social media and the carnivalesque - *The Never Never* explores how myths circulate through culture and commercial media. In the process, it embeds itself in those same channels of circulation, albeit as a wrong-headed interloper. Financed by the Prada Foundation, the work hijacks the structure of a commercial shoot - fusing objects and bodies, Athenians and Porsches, ancient myths and marketing myths.

The Never Never has been conceived as an itinerant show. Adopting the spirit of the travelling caravan (a historic tradition within live performance), each chapter functions as a site-specific response to the situation of the gallery; each response bolstering the same ridiculous myth. Through continual repetition, it parrots the rituals of corporate marketing and capitalist spectacle: a touring show that performs the logic of a brand campaign. For the first stop on its journey, *The Never Never* lands in Hamburg - the advertising capital of Germany. The Kunstverein Harburger Bahnhof is transformed by an installation that dissolves ordinary distinctions between contemporary art, luxury retail and museum display. Fragments of Porsche are presented as archaeological artefacts, absurdist commercials

continually advertise the show on a looped projection, and human / machine hybrids invade billboards across Hamburg. In this city of myth production, the artwork becomes indistinguishable from its publicity. The audience is offered an enigmatic, troubling and profoundly ridiculous contemporary Greek myth.

The exhibition is kindly supported by Hamburgische Kulturstiftung. The program of the Kunstverein is made possible by the Ministry of Culture and Media of the Free and Hanseatic City of Hamburg, and the Liebelt-Stiftung, Hamburg.

Jeremy Hutchison (b.1979) is a British artist based in London. Working across performance, sculpture, text and video he intervenes in systems of production and consumption, perverting norms to produce crisis and absurdity. His institutional shows include the ICA, Modern Art Oxford, V&A, Z33, Prada Foundation, EVA Biennale, Nassauischer Kunstverein Wiesbaden, SPACE, Raw Material Company, Southbank Centre and Jerwood Space. He has completed residencies with Delfina Foundation, Arts Catalyst, Raw Material Company and Hospitalfield. He received a distinction from the Slade School of Fine Art and was a member of the Whitney Museum Studio program. He is the founder of Kunsthalle - a project space in London.

www.jeremyhutchison.com/@jeremyhutchison

Evelyn Simons (b.1989) is a curator and writer based in Brussels. Her activities centre around social practice and the mediation of contemporary art in public space. She runs the visual arts and performance programming at Horst Arts & Music - an initiative blending art and electronic music on an abandoned military site in Brussels. She programs the artists in residence for the Fondation CAB Bruxelles and Saint-Paul-de-Vence, and acts as curator for the Collective Ballon Rouge. Winner of the Curate Award, Fondazione Prada & Qatar Museums in 2014, she curated *Driftwood, or how we surfaced through currents* (2017) Athens, of which *The Never Never* is the second chapter.

[@evelyn_simons](https://twitter.com/evelyn_simons)

Nova Melancholia has been active in theatrical and visual arts performance since 2007. The collective follows non-linear narratives and open dramaturgies, using poetry, essays and other non-theatre literature as material for its work. The aesthetic strategies often include camp and/or gender identities as means of queering the viewers' experience of the work. Performances have been presented in Athens Festival, Onassis Stegi, Greek Opera House, the Athens Biennial, Santarcangelo Festival, BIOS, Panta Théâtre, UM Gallery, Lofft, Societaetstheater, Fivizzano 27, Teatro Rasi, Festival Primavera dei Teatri. The feature film *The Lair* co-produced with the Greek Film Centre premiered at the Thessaloniki International Film Festival 2019.

www.novamelancholia.gr/en