

MINDA ANDRÉN
(& DOMINIKA BEDNARSKY)
Primal Instinct

PRIMAL INSTINCT

Unsettling Flesh / Dissecting the Gaze. On the Simultaneity of the Contemporary

The present happens without us being able to stop it - all that remains and that is constant are images. We are confronted with the ever-changing images, moving or statistical, human or android, digital or analog, which affect us visually and whose power of effect hardly anyone can escape, since they structure our everyday modes of perception. At the beginning of the development of this Western present was the emergence of transport infrastructures that detached time from its cosmological order and organized it capitalistically by linking it to space (the movement from a start to a destination). Instead of the planets determining time, the desire for productivity and profit now guided time and placed it under their service. To recount this seems anachronous and simplistic in light of what seems today to be the degenerate state of this history: everything simultaneously and always everywhere. Time and space dissolve completely. Our conditions of existence are constantly in radically differently weighted relationships, the worlds of feeling ambiguous. Living in the simultaneity of temporal and spatial axes, in an image overload, our attention economies are in a state of permanent overload. In their works, artists Minda Andrén and Dominika Bednarsky confront this constantly complicating world by critically situating our material reality.

Where can places of retreat from this overturning present lie? Nature no longer forms a place of retreat. In this consequence, the body appears as the ultimate mystery that can never be fully understood, contrary to all attempts at taxonomization. We are not only permanently surrounded by images, reflections, disciplining of the body, but also - and precisely because of this - permanently thrown back on our own body. Minda Andrén's paintings offer a projection or reflection surface for this paradoxical overload. Layer by layer, she encounters images of corporeality in her painting - that of the artist encountering the canvas, and at the same time with the cultural-historical facets of the topos body. At the edges of the canvases, the surface of the

first layer flashes through; a rough painterly gesture arranges the first color surface of the canvas. Starting from this structure, Andrén develops her body paintings. She draws the motifs from a wide variety of sources. The branching structure on the canvas, an abstract system of fibers, or almost a cortex?, become the materiality of painting made flesh and dissects the motifs lying on it. By singularizing the motifs and integrating them, they return to the body of painting. The simultaneous existence of the layers and their formal-aesthetic incorporation of arbitrary images dissect the viewer's gaze, but also allow a dissecting gaze through the disclosure of the layers.

The motifs of Dominika Bednarsky ceramics borrow from everyday culture. They achieve their absurdity through the central subject that is part of each sculpture: minced meat. The yellow horse has a mane made of minced meat, the hen is covered with eggs made of minced meat, the cake is not a cream cake but a minced meat cake. The ceramics obviously cite the German phenomenon of *Mettfiguren*. Forming large figures out of meat is only conditionally a sign of humor, but rather of excessive consumption, if not medieval gluttony. Not entirely unironically, however, Bednarsky combines cute motifs (little mice, bows, little birds) with the easily perishable food. Being cute or cuteness, as an aesthetic feeling and object description of the contemporary, always stand in an ambiguous relationship. That which is cute attracts and appears to be positive in the first instance; however, something is cute only because it appears powerless or impotent to the judging subject. Cuteness is likewise a leading commodity aesthetic; as an aesthetic feeling, it is closely associated with convenient consumption. Bednarsky's ceramics open up the space for the named ambiguous feelings to take place simultaneously, overlapping and denying an absolute aesthetic judgment.¹ The glossy and ultra-precise surfaces draw the eye, the incorporation of the sculpted mincemeat repels. They hurl the viewing subject into a constantly actualizing situation with no

clear end. In this way, Bednarsky plays with the viewer's voyeuristic desire by defamiliarizing familiar motifs that belong to collective social memory and are overlooked in shop windows. It only becomes clear how ambiguous contemporary aesthetic feelings can be.

Rather than a way out, or a redemptive response, both positions offer a mirror to the visual complexity of the present. Their materialities and fleshy surfaces have a disquieting effect; they reorganize modes of perception by appropriating them and shattering them again. In this way, Andrén and Bednarsky's works create a visual in-between space that stands apart from the present, yet can only take place with and within it. Artistic practice does not seem to be a way out, but certainly a brake on the present taking place in and with constant simultaneity - despite unclear aesthetic feelings, it situates us in the here and now, encloses time and space in its dimensions for a moment, and ultimately throws us back on ourselves again and again.

Seda Pesen, April 2023

Minda Andrén (*1990, Gothenburg) lives and works in Vienna, where she studied with Daniel Richter at the Academy of Fine Arts.

Andrén's work has been included in institutional exhibitions at Belvedere 21, Vienna (2023), MUMOK, Vienna (2022), Kunstverein Kärnten, Klagenfurt (2021), and Museum of Contemporary Art, Sydney (2018). Solo exhibitions have been held at Callirrhoë, Athens (2023), Zeller van Almsick, Vienna (2021, 2018, 2017) and Memphis, Linz (2019), among others. Group exhibitions have taken place worldwide, including at Short Corners (PT 1-3), Australia (2022), Setareh Gallery, Berlin (2021), and Palazzo Lancia, Turin (2017). The exhibition *New Ambitions*, curated by Severin Dünser and featuring, in addition to Minda, eight young female artists living in Austria, will open at the Federal Chancellery in early May.

Dominika Bednarsky (*1994, Schweinfurt) lives and works in Frankfurt am Main. She studied sculpture at the Hochschule für Gestaltung Offenbach with Heiner Blum and Mike Bouchet.

Bednarsky's work has been shown in institutional exhibitions at Künstlerhaus Palais Thurn und Taxis, Bregenz (2022), Nassauischer Kunstverein, Wiesbaden (2020, 2021), Kunstverein Frankfurt (2021), and Kunsthalle Offenbach (2019). Solo exhibitions included Robert Grunenberg, Berlin (2022) and G2 Kunsthalle, Leipzig (2021). Group exhibitions have been held throughout Europe, including at Diamant, Offenbach (2023), Art Cologne (2022), Anton Janizewski, Berlin, Institut für Zukunft, Leipzig (both 2021), and Zollamt Galerie, Offenbach (2017).

¹ Sianne Ngai, *Our Aesthetic Categories. Zany, Cute, Interesting*, Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 2012.



Minda Andrén (& Dominika Bednarsky)
Primal Instinct
Installation View



Minda Andrén
X-ray rotation, 2022
Oil, pigmented gesso on canvas
42h x 30w cm



Minda Andrén
The other trunk, 2023
Oil, pigmented gesso on canvas
80h x 60w cm



Minda Andrén

Do you know where your second heart is?, 2023

Oil, pigmented gesso on canvas

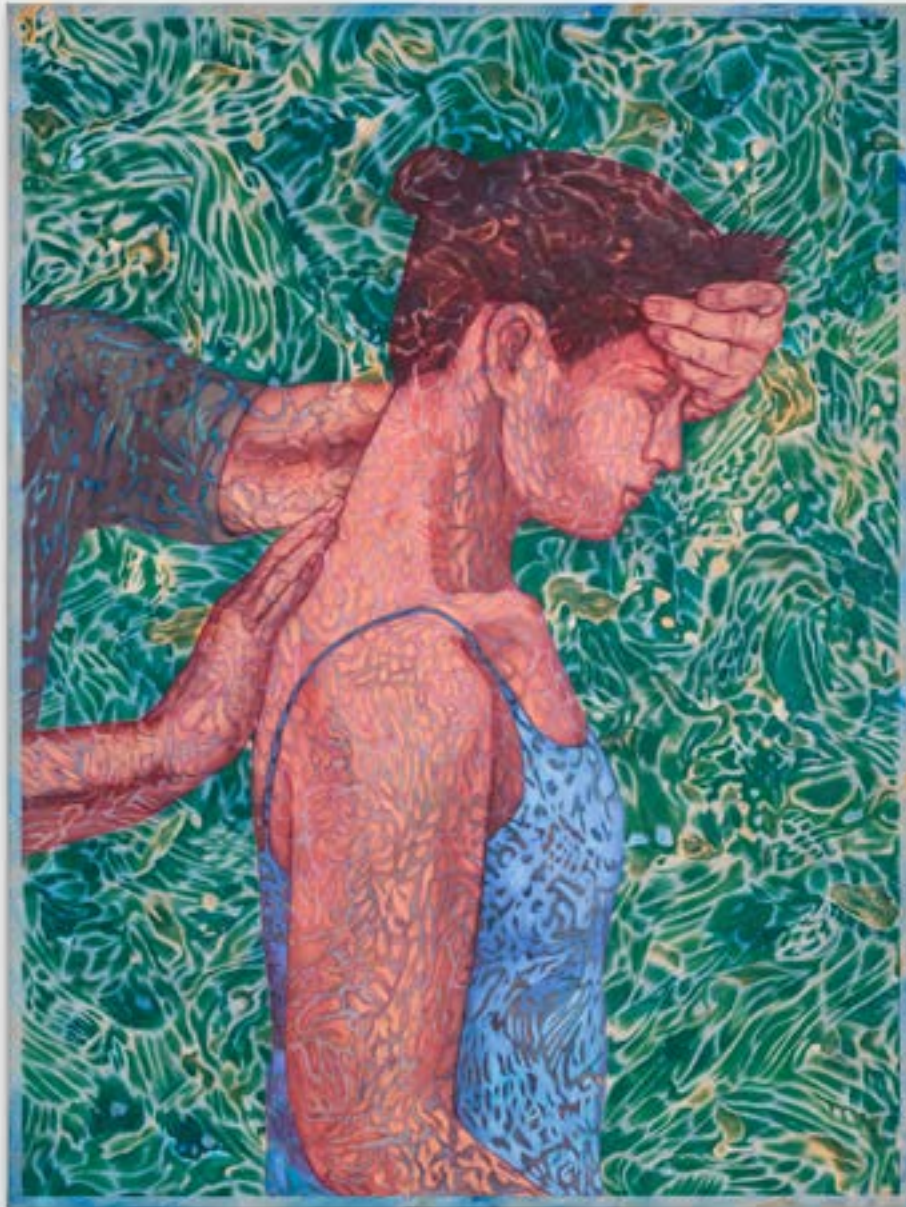
120h x 90w cm



Minda Andrén
Unidentified organ III, 2023
Oil, pigmented gesso on canvas
120h x 90w cm



Minda Andrén
Primal Instinct
Installation View



Minda Andrén
Remaining in light, 2023
Oil, pigmented gesso on canvas
120h x 90w cm



Minda Andrén
AICA, 2023
Oil, pigmented gesso on canvas
120h x 85w cm



Dominika Bednarsky
It's Chow Time (Nest), 2023
Glazed ceramics
26.50h x 22w x 14.50d cm



Dominika Bednarsky
It's Chow Time (Maulwurf), 2023
Glazed Ceramics
24h x 24w x 31d cm



Dominika Bednarsky
It's Chow Time (Maulwurf), 2023
Detail



Dominika Bednarsky
Primal Instinct
Installation View



Dominika Bednarsky
It's Chow Time (Kranz), 2023
Glazed Ceramics
38h x 38w x 10.50d cm



Dominika Bednarsky
It's Chow Time (Geschenk), 2023
Glazed Ceramics
26.50h x 26.50w x 30d cm



Dominika Bednarsky
It's Chow Time (Hochzeitstorte), 2023
Glazed Ceramics
26h x 26w x 48d cm



Dominika Bednarsky
It's Chow Time (Hendl), 2023
Glazed Ceramics
46h x 27w x 33d cm



Dominika Bednarsky
It's Chow Time (Pferd), 2023
Glazed Ceramics
20h x 40w x 50d cm



Dominika Bednarsky
It's Chow Time (Schwan), 2023
Glazed Ceramics
46h x 32w x 57d cm

MINDA ANDRÉN

*1990 in Gothenburg (SE)

Lives and works in Vienna (AT)

Academic

2012 - 2021 Academy of Fine Arts, painting, Prof. Daniel Richter, Vienna (AT)

Solo Shows (Selected)

- 2023 Primal Instinct (with Dominika Bednarsky), Zeller van Almsick, Vienna (AT)
Tongue Gloves Trick Trees, Callirrhoë, Athens (GR)
- 2022 Zeller van Almsick (with Kay Walkowiak), Vienna Contemporary, Vienna (AT)
- 2021 Stones Grow Soft, Zeller van Almsick, Vienna (AT)
Split Juncture, A core of Worms and Mud, Lehargasse 8, Vienna (AT)
- 2019 Lean, Memphis Memphis, Linz (AT)
- 2018 Der Tag trägt die Träume der Nacht (with Agneta Andrén), Zeller van Almsick, Vienna (AT)
- 2017 Cuirass, Zeller van Almsick, Vienna (AT)
- 2016 Andrén (Private View), Crone Gallery, Vienna (AT)
- 2014 Andrén at Bon, Gallery Bon, Stockholm (SE)

Group Shows (Selected)

- 2023 *upcoming* New Ambitions, curated by Severin Dünser, Federal Chancellery, Vienna (AT)
Über das Neue, Belvedere 21, Vienna (AT)
- 2022 Short Corners (PT3), Working at Heights, Melbourne (AU)
Short Corners (PT2), Sydenham International, Marrickville (AU)
Short Corners (PT1), Knulp, Sydney (AU)
The Disorganized Body, Zeller van Almsick, Vienna (AT)
Kollaborationen (Dollhouse of a Poem), mumok, Vienna (AT)
Kites and f*ckups, Kunstverein Kärnten, Klagenfurt (AT)
- 2021 Feeling the temperature, curated by Claudia Rech, Setareh Gallery, Berlin (DE)
- 2020 AA, Zeller van Almsick, Art Athina Virtual, Athens (GR)
- 2019 Andrén @ Galeri NOS, Stockholm (SE)
Stafett at Kargl Permanent, Vienna (AT)
Mirage III, Vienna (AT)
Palaschinken, Pimlico, London (GB)
Captivity, the Flattening, Knulp gallery, Sydney (AU)
- 2018 Dreamin' Wild, Alaska projects, Sydney (AU)
Art Bar invited by Jonny Niesche, Museum of Contemporary Art, Sydney (AU)
Glass Jaws, Gomo, Vienna (AT)
- 2017 Parallel Hotel, Schweizerhof, Vienna (AT)
Scamming, Palazzo Lancia, Turin (IT)
Dollhouse of a Poem, Vienna (AT)
Mirage II, Donauinsel, Vienna (AT)
- 2016 The High Wire Act, Zeller van Almsick Projekte at K&K Telegrafentamt, Vienna (AT)
Mirage, Vienna (AT)
Parallax - Georgi Stransky University Hospital, Pleven (BG)
Stafett, Raum D at Museumsquartier, Vienna (AT)
Prisoners of Venus - a video exhibition, Semperdepot, Vienna (AT)

Dominika Bednarsky

b. 1994 Schweinfurt (DE)

Lives and works in Frankfurt am Main (DE)

Education

2015 Hochschule fuer Gestaltung Offenbach

Solo / Duo Shows (Selection)

- 2023 (with Minda Andren), Zeller van Almsick, Wien (AT)
- 2022 Up to no Gouda, Robert Grunenberg, Berlin (DE)
he wants to be the worst, cause he can't be the best, gaagallery, Köln (DE)
Bitten by a love bug, 68 Projects, Berlin (DE)
- 2021 Nicht Fleisch, Nicht Fisch, Kunstverein Wiesen, Wiesen (DE)
Pussy-Cat, Pussy-Cat, Where Have You Been?, CK Offspace at G2Kunsthalle, Leipzig (DE)
(online) hijacked2, Carole Baskin Private Collection, Tampa (US) (Instagram)
- 2020 (online) hijacked, Castello di Rivoli, Rivoli (IT) (Instagram)
A Sitting and A Slurping and A Spitting and A Thinking, 1822 Forum, Frankfurt (DE)
- 2019 Snap Competition, Schleuse in den Opelvillen, Rüsselsheim (DE)

Group Shows (Selection)

- 2023 DIAMANT 11, Diamant, Offenbach (DE)
water bound, gaagallery, Köln (DE)
ASAP: As Slow As Possible, Studio Hanniball, Berlin (DE)
- 2022 Art Cologne, gaagallery, Köln (DE)
Paper Positions, Galerie Kornfeld, Berlin (DE)
Ora Forma, Ora Ora, Frankfurt (DE)
Im Namen der Hose, Galerie Anita Beckers, Frankfurt (DE)
Liminal Creatures, Künstlerhaus Palais Thurn und Taxis Bregenz, Bregenz (AT)
- 2021 (Performance): Feelings are real (it's true), Galerie Anton Janizewski, Berlin (DE)
Wiederaufnahme: Kunst für Tiere, Opelvillen, Rüsselsheim (DE)
Direkte Auktion, McLaughlin Galerie, Berlin (DE)
Wiederaufnahme: Alles im Wunderland, Nassauischer Kunstverein, Wiesbaden (DE)
(co-organized) +1, TOR Art Space, Frankfurt (DE)
Dosis II, Institut für Zukunft, Leipzig (DE)
The Things Forever Speaking, ArtHouse Jersey, Jersey (UK)
Frankfurter Kunst Vertrieb, Kunstverein Frankfurt, Frankfurt (DE)
Window Smooches, Magma Maria, Offenbach (DE)
- 2020 (co-organized) DOCH!, Galerie Anita Beckers, Frankfurt (DE)
Kunst für Tiere, Opelvillen, Rüsselsheim (DE)
Alles im Wunderland, Nassauischer Kunstverein, Wiesbaden (DE)
If you can dream it, you can build it, Galerie Anita Beckers, Frankfurt (DE)
I never meant to lie, Multimadeira Gallery, Madeira (PT)
- 2019 endless summer, Kunsthalle, Offenbach (DE)
a whole isle, Basis Projektraum, Frankfurt (DE)
If you build it, they will come, Zollamt Galerie, Offenbach (DE)
- 2018 Neue Abstraktion, Kunsthalle, Offenbach (DE)
7 pieces, Basis Projektraum, Frankfurt (DE)
- 2017 Mach dein Problem nicht zu meinem, Zollamt Galerie, Offenbach (DE)
Illustration, Zollamt Galerie, Offenbach (DE)
A Highly Dazed World, Daily Lazy Projects, Athens (GR)

Scholarship

2022 Artist in Residency Gmunden, Austria
2020 Deutschlandstipendium