

## Capture Captures

September 8 – October 22, 2022

Universitätsgalerie der Angewandten im Heiligenkreuzerhof, Sala Terrena

Anahita Asadifar, Linda Bilda, Ellen Cantor, Demian Kern, Jonida Laçi, Jusun Lee, Elliott Jamal

Robbins, Ben Rosenthal

Curated by Lucie Pia

The exhibition traces the nexus of internalized relations of violence and personal structures of desire through concepts of love, family, race, sex, and gender and how these are ideologically, legally, and culturally shaped by various institutions and industries.

To capture can either designate a violent, forceful act of winning control over someone or something, taking someone/something into your possession or it can simply describe an act of recording, representing something or expressing a feeling. When captures are being captured an analytical distance might be generated. However, such an event might just as well allow the development of affective bonds and the accompanying stages of ambivalence, vulnerability, and empowerment.

The formally very distinct works are linked by a (supposedly) affective treatment of external imprints, fixations, and markings.

For instance, there are references to heteronormative identification figures from childhood and their transformation into adult life: Using Disney's animated character Snow White, Ellen Cantor negotiates ideologies of love with notions of sexual desire and gender in her works *Prince/Snow White* (1996) and *Snow White will come* (1996). Snow White is depicted eroticized and given a sex life while diary-like notes reveal "her" intimate emotional world to the prince. These revelations seem as personal as they are generic, alternating between irony and seriousness.

In Elliott Jamal Robbin's video work *Masterstudy: Snow White Clapping* (2017), Disney's Snow White is placed in relation to queerness and stereotyping of race. The body of Snow White is now doubly occupied by a racialized stereotypical representation of a Black figure as it emerged at the time of Snow White's release and the onset of mass media.

In *The Otherside* (2019) Anahita Asadifar mounts from footage of war and fake reality shows a music video for Tiny Tim's supposed children's song *The Other Side* (1968). The night-vision shots, some in the form of point-of-view shots that appear punctuated to the rhythm of the song, convey a form of complicity that makes it difficult to maintain a distance from the audiovisual information, which constantly alternates between entertainment and terror.

Other works feature figures produced explicitly for the adult entertainment industries, such as the Swarovski cat portrayed from different perspectives in Demian Kern's paintings. Reminiscent of a child's toy, the figurine is integrated into adult life as a fragile, "dead" collectible whose flat opaque projection Kern generates with an overhead projector and captures in painting.

In the three works by Linda Bilda, *Was Denken die Waren*, (n.d.), *Keine Polizei* (1999) and *Die Denkerin nach Rodin* (2005) a (young) woman functions as (anti-)heroine. Here it is already inherent in the materiality of the artwork and in its conditions of presentation that we are dealing with projections, illuminations, or shadows of images of women.

As captures of already existing or new captures, the abstraction of the identification offers is once again underlined. Despite this reflexive distance, an affective bond doesn't need not be entirely dissolved. In some cases, such as Linda Bilda's or Ben Rosenthal's, it can additionally strengthen it.

In contrast to the clearly identifiable captures, however, there are also works in the exhibition that function without clear representation. Here, similar questions are directed to the material. Jusun Lee's amorphous

sculptures are populated by innumerable figurines and objects from craft supplies. Here, a whole cosmos is held up to the viewer and yet nothing is clearly represented - a "capture on its own right" the glittering things shine back, "capturing" our reflection in many ways and, as it were, withdrawing again.

Questions of fixation are negotiated on multiple levels in Jonida Laçi's work. The series *In Transit, At Ease!* (2022) consists of white T-shirts transformed into geometric sculptures with transparent tape. Although they have been transformed into a new standardized geometric form, the different clothing sizes (S, M, L) of the T-shirts enclosed in them can still be guessed at due to the slightly varying depths of the sculptures. This hole, all too familiar to us, through which one slips at least twice a day, and which promises a universal fit thanks to its stretchy materiality, becomes a plasticized, stiff surface - slipping through it is now impossible. Just as the sculptures allow the violence of clothing sizes to be reflected, the idea of how the artist pressed and glued the T-shirts into their new "solid" form also reproduces a form of violence. The title, which alludes to a military command (to dissolve rigidity and stir again), can be related to both the former flexibility of the T-shirts and its new form. In this respect, an examination of Laçi's sculptures as captures does not lead to more clarity but allows for new problems to be posed. And it seems to me that in this sense the sculptures function as a capture for that space and this exhibition.

With great thanks to: Anahita Asadifar, Linda Bilda, Ellen Cantor, Demian Kern, Jonida Laçi, Jusun Lee, Elliott Jamal Robbins, Ben Rosenthal as well as Felix Zabel, Birgit Schlarmann, Theodor von Oppersdorff, Nicola von Senger, Ann-Kathrin Eickhoff, Marei Buhmann, Sveta Mordovskaya, Johanna Müller, Catharina Wronn, Ralf-Bodo Kliem, Valentina Triet and especially to Anette Freudenberger.