

Marie Munk

A Nice Day for a Run

10 01 – 11 02 2019

MÉLAGE is humbled to invite Marie Munk (*1988, lives and works in Copenhagen) for her first solo show in Germany. Her exhibition titled 'A Nice Day for a Run' invites the visitor and leave those dark days behind and take a stroll in the greenery. A sunny day in the park and while soft lullabies hum along would be perfect to escape the daily grind. But what Marie Munk has created is a synthetic simulation that inevitably seeks to outpace the moment of possible leisure into a tool of self-discipline and drill.

Wallpaper of sunny skies and fake grass harbour a series of new animated sculptures by Munk. Her sculptural work is based around an ambiguous aesthetic resembling newly born creatures, looking and feeling like real organic material. Animated by massage engines – some of which are for actual usage - they perform rhythmic, if not joyful movements. At the same time a sport instructor soundtrack is pounding to an insisting beat and each sculptural creature desperately seems to keep up with the demands blowing out of the speakers. Toying with the human desire to live forever the sculptures represent our threatening human inability to keep up with the exponential development of technology.

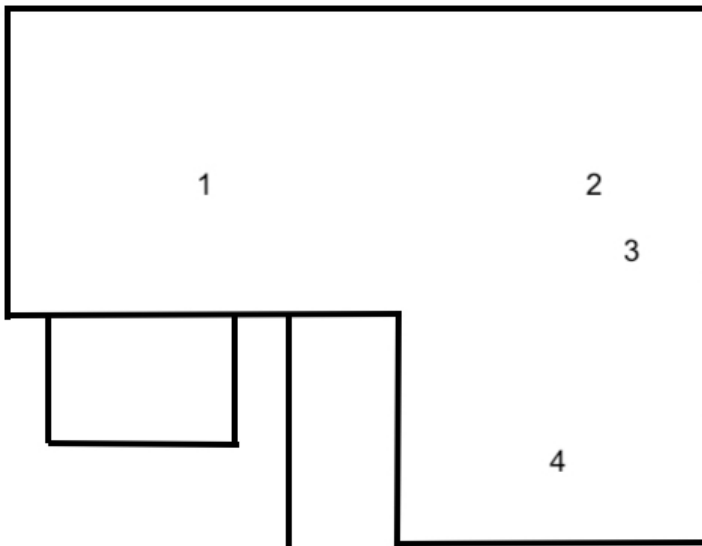
Marc'o Connor examines in his book 'To Be a Machine' the movement 'transhumanism' whose idealists seek to transform humanity into machines in the belief of "survival of the fittest". Machines are just stronger and more intelligent than us. As Rey Kurzweil describes, *"We will no longer be helpless and primitive creatures, meat machines limited in our thoughts and actions by the flesh that is our current substrat ... The Singularity will allow us to transcend these limits of our biological bodies and brains."* The body feels heavy and flabby in an ever more digitalized world. AI pioneer Marvin Minsky refers to people as like computers built from protein. He expresses our intelligence's ability to function in an alternative medium; "The brain happens to be a meat machine". Our carnal substance is increasingly alienated and awkward for us.

'A Nice Day for a Run' explores how technology is increasingly pushing humans to perform beyond our biologically prescribed abilities. Society is experiencing an increasing awareness of the maintenance of the biological machine in which our intelligent brain is encapsulated. Many seek escape from the carnal ballast and the ineffective bodily instincts by further letting their bodies connect with the wonders of technology. They use sensors and apps to keep track of the body's mechanisms, responses, performance, and needs. When you go for a walk, it's not to absorb the birds' twig and the wind in the trees. We humans go out with running shoes to pulsate to high techno rhythms with fat burning in mind.

With a chip in the shoe, the heart rate monitor is tightened around the waist and the exercise app is carefully set, so you can push yourself the extra, strengthen the meat machine even more and perhaps fight the biological inadequacy. As Kurzweil writes, we will in the future, the so-called Singularity, finally become unfleshed. The mechanical cultivation of the body may be seen as a terrestrial and tangible extension that the trans-human desire to live forever. We desperately strive for Singularity's promise that *"Our mortality will be in our own hands"*.

One can experience the increasing functionalistic view of cognition and an instrumentalistic view of human life, where it is seen as human duty to make sure we as machines run as efficiently and for as long as possible.

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1. ***My Morality in my Own Hands, 2019***
silicon, pigment, flocking, electronics, wadding
2. ***Working out (my Survival), 2019***
silicon, pigment, flocking, electronics, wadding, sponges
3. ***Breath, 2018***
silicon, pigment, flocking, electronics, wadding, nylon
4. ***Hold Hands, 2018***
silicon, pigment, flocking, electronics, wadding