

**Press release**  
**Munich, 5 June 2024**

**Lukas Heerich, Brigitte Kowanz, Rosanna Marie Pondorf, Jeremy Shaw**

***night of uncertainty***  
**6 June – 19 July 2024**

*night of uncertainty* with Lukas Heerich, Brigitte Kowanz, Rosanna Marie Pondorf and Jeremy Shaw shows works in which the artists depict a fragmented reality where unknown states create new and open perspectives where certainty yields to ambiguity. They allude to an era of ambivalence where ecstasy, sensory overload, and power dynamics distort traditional frames of reference. The exhibition focuses on the overwhelming abundance of information and stimuli and emphasizes their effects on human consciousness and the body.

Drawing on the media theories of French philosopher Paul Virilio (1932-2018) – whose texts from the 1970s and 1980s were a significant point of reference for Kowanz – the exhibition brings together works that engage with instability, boundlessness and transience. In his essay “The Aesthetics of Disappearance”, Virilio describes the social impacts of an accelerated world through media and the resulting changes in the perception and distribution of power. As early as 1980, he argued that the increasing speed of information transmission and the development of new technologies would lead to a dematerialization and decentralization of physical presence.

**Brigitte Kowanz** (1957-2022) appropriates these fluid characteristics by using light as the medium and carrier of her works to examine the speed and perception of the world. The fleeting and intangible become the content of her art and the focus of her wall works (2020), where she highlights the painterly quality of light. The effect of the highly reflective surface changes depending on the surrounding illumination. The materiality of the canvas and the immateriality of light refer to an increasingly digitized world where the relationships between absence and presence are being renegotiated. Kowanz moves away from the notion of the hermetically sealed image, emphasizing the active role of light and viewers in a new culture of accelerated images. *tmi* (2021) is a work from Kowanz's series of installative cubes, designed as small mirror cabinets. Kowanz illustrates how digital progress also changes language with the acronym *tmi* – too much information, a common abbreviation used in everyday digital exchanges. The acronym symbolizes the speed and internationality of today's communication and is further encoded by the handwritten text. Thus, she combines linguistic elements – political statements and news transmissions – with formal aesthetics, demonstrating that light is not merely a neutral vehicle for information but actively shapes it.

**Rosanna Marie Pondorf** (\*1993) also deals with codes by addressing invisible power structures and reflecting on emojis as a universal visual language. In her two works from the series *Wertschöpfungspapier* (2024), a silver coin and a broken chain are printed, which, through their oversized scaling and pixelation, appear to be taken from their digital context and now stand as symbols of power on the papers. By making paper from shredded euro banknotes, the artist explores the complex question of how value is generated. The devalued banknotes point to the constructed nature of economic systems where currency is not tied to the value of its actual materiality. Attached to BDSM tools like spreader bars and nipple clamps, the *Wertschöpfungspapiere* refer to the interplay of sex, money, media, and consumption. Pondorf continues this exploration in the sculpture *1 Night in Paris* (2024), referencing Paris Hilton's viral amateur porn video from 2004. The artist combines a server rack with a laser-engraved marble slab, featuring screenshots of online articles and Instagram profiles documenting the significant impact of the

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leak on Hilton's fame and the subsequent professional marketing of the video. Pundorf shows how deeply pop phenomena affect and how bodies are intertwined with media and finance by transferring the fleeting image flows of internet data into tangible material, thus immortalizing them. Virilio anticipates in his theory the media streams we are confronted with today, describing the dissolution of spatial and temporal boundaries, resulting in dematerialization and loss of corporeality.

**Lukas Heerich** (\*1989) captures the absence of the body in his series *Untitled (Peel)* (2023-) through photography by arranging used and subsequently dried beauty face masks against a black background. They are intimate imprints of individuals whose physical presence is inscribed in the remnants of past self-care moments. The possibility of physical renewal and change simultaneously reveals the social and media construction of bodies and the empty promises of optimization. Heerich is interested in these in-between moments, where uncertainty allows for questions of protection, presence, and identity to be negotiated. *Untitled (Peel)* are almost tactile inkjet prints that contrast Virilio's assumption that the acceleration of society leads to a decrease in corporeality and sensory experiences. Instead, the works provoke a moment of identification, with the gaze moving from within the mask outward, inviting a comparison to one's own existence. In the sculpture *Glocke* (2020 (2022)) made of black rubber, Heerich examines ambivalences and tension dynamics. For millennia, bells have accompanied humans as warning signals as well as ritual objects rung for spiritual retreat and meditation. The artist transfers the stylized image of the resonant body, based on the theoretical construction of the ideal sound body, into the insulating material rubber, thus inverting its functionality.

Like Heerich, **Jeremy Shaw** (\*1977) investigates the properties of sound and its effects on emotions and the body. In the series *Aesthetic Capacity* (2016-2022), the artist follows the human longing to approach the world in a more comprehensive manner, beyond purely cognitive and quantifying ways of seeing. *Aesthetic Capacity* consists of photographs in which Jeremy Shaw uses his own body to test and visually record the effects of music on himself. The artist listens to the "Billboard Hot 100" US charts from 1969 or the "UK Top Ten - New Romantic" from 1982 and places his finger on a new Polaroid at a specific point in each song, which is exposed to a brief electric shock. In this way, both the artist's fingerprint and the invisible electric discharge around him are captured. Shaw uses Kirlian photography, a contact-based darkroom technique that visualizes naturally occurring energy fields and is also used in pseudo-scientific experiments to make the aura of people or objects visible. Shaw's fingerprints in *Aesthetic Capacity* convey, as visual recordings of each song, the impact on his emotional state and aura. Thus, Shaw's photographic process does not lead to a loss of senses, as Virilio describes, but rather to the visualization of the unknown through the combination of haptics, sound, and technology.

Opening

Thursday 6 June 2024

6 - 9 pm

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