

Galerie Mezzanin is pleased to present an exhibition that brings together three artists – Etti Abergel (*1960, Tivon, Israel; lives and works in Jerusalem), Miriam Cahn (*1949 Basel, Switzerland; lives and works in Basel and Bergell) and Marzena Nowak (*1977 Piaseczno, Poland; lives and works in Warsaw) – and a selection of works that revolve around the external projection of a hidden fragility and vulnerability, works that contradict the title’s demand to ‘stay inside’. As a result, the exhibition seeks to analyse cultural transfer between the transcendent and the immanent, the inner and the outer, and the affective in images and symbols.

Etti Abergel’s organic sculptures often hang or emerge from ceilings or walls. If, as a result, these structures appear animated, the sensation is magnified by the emotional charge (often drawn from the artist’s biography) that they contain. In this way Abergel’s works become poetic symbols able to alter a viewer’s perception of both material and space. They also introduce epistemological elements that urge us to question the tools of knowledge, the experience of art, the act of remembering and of memory, and thus the relationship between subject and object.

Since the 1970s Miriam Cahn has been creating work that both incorporates and departs from feminist ideals. Evading traditional classifications of method and material, body and mind, Cahn shifts fluidly between media and styles. Her enigmatic forms, innocent and raw, with a hint of violence, form like ghosts – androgynous creatures that become totems of beauty, violence and sexuality – emerging from her blind sketches. For Cahn the process of making is intensely physical. “I draw lying down,” she says, “creeping, crouching, with black chalk, dancing on white paper, and afterwards I wash the dust off my body.” It is this combination of metaphysicality and physicality that intensifies Cahn’s recurring play on themes of experience and memory.

With subtle gestures, Marzena Nowak uses a variety of media to render the sensual and the sensitive conceptual, drawing out the ambiguity of emotion via everyday historical and socio-cultural references. The artist abstracts and minimises, orienting herself toward intermediate and empty spaces in order to expose the uncertain, the inaudible, the ephemeral and, ultimately, the inner self. The resultant work often hinges on a balancing act between the psychologically ephemeral and the physically tangible. This might manifest itself in an audio work that tracks unconscious movements of the body or in the reductive alienation of the real in objects and installations. In this way, Nowak deliberately invites an open play between the psyche and the unconscious.

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