

*Tales from Fractured Minds*

Curated by Matteo Giovanelli

Dissociation is a psychological state of separation from reality among different aspects of consciousness, such as memory, identity, emotions and perceptions. It serves as a protective or refuge mechanism. The spectrum of its manifestation is broad. Beyond the most common ones – such as losing track of time or getting distracted while driving or walking – dissociation is a survival tactic: a response to stress or trauma.

It can thus be associated with disorders such as psychogenic amnesia, depersonalization and dissociative identity disorder. However, it can also manifest itself as a collective response to the bewilderment caused by global events including warfare, climate and political crises, identity and humanitarian crises, and therefore as a fracture, resistance or surrender to the power structures at play.

It is an altered state, subtle and imperceptible, whereby one is simultaneously present and unreachable, in a specific place and elsewhere: distracted, absorbed, absent.

It is a disconnection from physical reality we live in, towards an imaginative dimension that postulates and creates multiple identities and perspectives: the image not as fiction, but as a component of the real.

Dissociation is a functional and veridical act: a continuous oscillation between the surrounding reality and the imaginary, placing the sensation of the inner self as its center.

Entering the gallery means dissecting one's own brain to observe dissociative and traumatic states. The space transforms into a layering of thoughts and images, a distorted, muffled journey within memory, caught between intimacy and exteriority, recollections and suffering.

Here, private places and public spaces – recurring in several works as well as sounds, voices and reminiscences – are merged, forming an invisible and incommunicable bubble.

Dissociation takes shape in our lived experience, blending personal events and global issues, generating new images that are the hazy product of a conscious post-production. Like an editing montage, it unites languages, desires and emotions.

## *Tales from a Fractured Mind* – ARTISTS SECTION

The metaphorical opening of the mind coincides with a sudden rupture, an accident – an abrupt shock triggered by Hanna Antonsson's installation (Göteborg, Sweden, 1991). The artist scatters fragment of car and animal parts on the floor: a windshield, on which lie the wings and feathers of a taxidermized pidgeon – a dead body reanimated through mechanical motors that replicate its movements. The results is a mirrored simulation, an exploration of the fragile balance between decay and metamorphosis.

Displayed in the first and second rooms, the works of Ant Łakomsk (Warsaw, Poland, 2001) and Polina Sokolova (Tver, Russia, 1999) enter into dialogue with the sculptures of Hanna Antonsson.

Ant Łakomsk produces soft-edged canvases characterized by layers and overlays that evoke casual disposable-camera snapshots taken while wandering through a city. At the center appears a silhouette of a long-haired figure (an echo of ourselves) reflected in the windowpane of one of those abandoned urban spaces marked by graffiti. They conjure a kind of loneliness woven into everyday life, one that threads through many moments and many days.

It is a familiar feeling, a construct that makes up the real.

Polina Sokolova invites us into a direct confrontation with the judging gaze – both others' and our own – and with the persistent feeling of being watched. Her textural, mark-based paintings convey a sort of manic, obsessive sense of persecution. The artist tackles political and ethical issues, rooted in contemporary turmoil: from power regimes and warfare to forms of internal surveillance that feed a genuine impostor syndrome.

Next are the works by Bartosz Kowal (Poland, 1995) who enacts a cinematographic analysis of the individual, deconstructing the figure through dilated, distorted and replicated portraits – and self-portraits. The cold, cynical gaze of the camera is mitigated by the filter of a murky green lens, sometimes water green, which compels the viewer to observe the same subject under a light charged with heightened emotion and a subtle restlessness. The result is a spatial and temporal dissociation: a dreamlike, yet tangible and real, elsewhere.

Memories seem to resurface in the works of Tatjana Danneberg (Vienna, Austria, 1991). Memories that are near and distant, palpable yet distorted. Confusion is the symptom of a dissonance between the past event — an everyday moment of sharing with friends or a partner — and its reconstruction in the present. The snapshot captures the instant without being able to return it except as deformation or simulation. The artist reworks a fragmented and remote archive through a ritual use of materials — plaster, paint — from which anonymous, disoriented figures emerge.

The final room, the vault, is shrouded in mystery, expressing both origin and end through a dialogue between love, identity, and unease, articulated in a work by Bartosz Kowal in relation to the wall-

mounted sculptures of Linda Lach (Warsaw, Poland, 1995) and Alexander Adamau (Paddub'e, Belarus, 1996).

Linda Lach addresses themes of memory, pathological care, physical exhaustion, and the experience of isolation. The artist works with materials such as aluminum, resin, and synthetic fabrics, drawing inspiration from medical forms and symbols to develop a practice that combines political resistance and poetic reflection on the body and the individual. Her work delves into childhood trauma and amnesia, moving from personal experience toward an understanding of fragility as a collective phenomenon.

In a similar vein, Alexander Adamau explores the intersection of care, control, and physical vulnerability at the center of contemporary protection and disciplinary systems. Through sculpture, Adamau investigates the aesthetics of everyday security devices and the psychological and physical fragility they produce. His works reveal the mechanisms of control and surveillance underlying the relationship between individual and refuge, demonstrating how every choice determines support or resistance to dependency and alienation.