

Manuel Gnam

Osiris

January 25 – February 22, 2015

Opening reception: Sunday January 25th 7 – 10 PM

It is too simple to holler the war cry of WW3 or Cold War 2 - the rise of the far right in Europe, the disenfranchisement of the Black community with Ferguson, the sanctions heavily punishing the ruble because of the Ukraine, the repeated threat of Islamic extremism - what is actually happening is a cultural shift, a generational conflict from older values to newer more evolutionary ones.

The evolutionary humans, the ones that can adapt to the strains of capitalist realism and the dominance of political economy over aesthetics, will be the ones that will survive. The rest will unfortunately be suppressed, monitored, controlled and unable to transmutate into the next genus of human beings from homo sapiens. They will either self destruct, be destroyed or subdued - because their extreme, even emotive freedom of expression will be nullified by the political economy that demand humans merge more towards the machine-like computational power of technology.

The myth of Osiris says those who bear the cost can assimilate with him and inherit the world with eternal life. The promise that technology has given us for radical life extension means that assimilation will be possible through, amongst other things, gene therapy, cell replacement and intelligent prosthetics - human enhancement that will give humans a greater chance to live for 100 to 150 years within the next 20 years. For those with more ideological fantasies of a utopia born upon meritocracy, equality of opportunity, norms outside of political economy - they will be relegated to historical artifacts such as the death of communism and socialism.

The cull will be huge and expansive. Why this is so is because whereas the hive mind protects communities by e.g. the sharing of common values that for instance bring about greater trade and exchange, individual nervous systems are physiologically unconnected. In other words, people do not feel each other's pain (of course there are rare exceptions that are far from the norm). If an individual does not feel the pain of others or their environment, they will have no problem seeing them lost even if there are dire global consequences. Therefore, if an individual chooses to drop out of the main flow of ideas and exchange, the hive mind will let them drop - only dealing with them if they threaten the peace with coercion. However this peace is a peace predicated on conformity rather than freedom of expression. It is a peace predicated on submission - a public mourning.

Osiris will not exclude anyone who wants to participate. Within the remits of the technological afterlife there will be a hierarchy in motion i.e. the wealth gap will not lessen, there may be greater rights for women, the gay and trans communities, disadvantaged groups but we are only free to join under the conditions of political economy i.e. as representations or reproductions rather than embodiments.

Aesthetics then will be an historical relic as well - it will be a symbol of a time when human communication could be purposeless, useless, to no end which warranted its own extinction. The test of time will decide all matters about longevity but the chances will be the same. In this light, criticality is not a position of privilege, it is actually an evolutionary atavism.