

The image of the Noonday Demon appears in European tradition thanks to a translation error, a mere coincidence. In the Psalm 91 of the Torah it is said: «you will not fear night fright, nor the arrow that flies from the day, nor the plague that is in darkness, nor the scourge that strikes at noon» It would be the formal resemblance between the Hebrew word "scourge" (yashûd), and the word "demon" (yeshed), which made the Vulgate translate that daytime laziness as the meridian demon.

Since then, and given the solar nature of the southern European territories, it is not surprising that the northern cultures have disqualified the Mediterranean culture for its apparent neglect and laziness, perpetuating the stigmas of that southern demon. This entity appeared precisely at the most luminous hours, around lunchtime, when the sunlight does not project shadows and bodies seem to have ceased their existence; when the spectres of digestion, sleep or fatigue confuse the imagination with perception.

Amie Siegel (1974, Chicago) has been suspending for nearly two decades that fine line that separates the conscious from the unconscious, exploring the potential of an image that expands through space and folds it, making it coincide with memory. For Siegel, the time of the image is a little bit like that daimonic noon, inhabited by secret and silent relationships that only come to light when we stop our daily routine and look, drawing another continuity between those things that the conscious world insists on separating.

Siegel's works have been frequently described as representations of a complex economy that ties authorship with genre, value or the architectonic space. This is indeed the case with *Provenance* (2013), one of her most well-known moving image works, in which she describes a path that travels from the salons of different luxury apartments, decorated with chairs designed by Le Corbusier, to state buildings constructed by him in Chandigarh, where the same chairs are piled up and discarded. However, beyond the paradoxes of a speculative value system such as the luxury and art markets, Siegel's inexorable suspensions also reveal a way of understanding time by sedimentation: as if it were Jungian archetypes of a collective unconscious, Siegel is able to reveal that the temporality of a chair at auction for \$34,000 is simultaneous, it is just as real, as the time of that same chair as a disposable office supply. In her films, nothing would seem to precede or happen, or turn in circles. All the differences coexist at the same time.

For this second chapter Amie Siegel gathers a collection of works that continue that experimentation with time, revolving around Jean-Luc Godard's *Le Mépris* (1963), itself based on an homonym novel written by Alberto Moravia, *Il disprezzo* (1954), whose argument is, in turn, Siegel posits, largely influenced by *Gradiva* by Wilhelm Jensen, famous for having inspired Freud in its

development of the repressed.

This cascade of information is not unintended but actually a tiny sample of the system of overflowing relationships that Siegel puts into operation in the central work of the exhibition, *Genealogies* (2016), which explores the almost infinite chain of characters, data and images that a movie or place is able to summon when one digs into its insignificant details. Because of this, like a hallucination in broad light, *Genealogies* is capable to convince us that there is a delusional familiarity between Sir John Soane, the Persol sunglasses brand, the Esposizione Universale Roma, Brigitte Bardot, Pink Floyd Live at Pompeii, Alain Robbe-Grillet, softcore porn, Hugo Boss or de Chirico's paintings, among many other references, by making all these stories coincide on the same rocky cliff on which Villa Malaparte stands, on the edge of the Mediterranean, where the motion picture was filmed.

This will also be one of the few times that *Genealogies* (2016) is presented in a gallery without its twin work *The Noon Complex* (2016), inspired by a text of the same name by Roger Caillois that argues the effects of the solar zenith on our imagination. Following that spectral logic of what does not cast a shadow, in this multichannel installation Siegel thoroughly erases Brigitte Bardot's body from all the scenes in which it appears naked in *Le Mépris*. The objective of this operation would seem simple but its effect is twofold: while Siegel plays poetically with the visibility and invisibility of the film's gender bias, in which Bardot was asked to "show more ass" to make the film a more profitable investment, the result of her absence transforms Godard's original shots into architectural camera gestures that could now be Siegel's own, relocating the presence of the female from being the observed to being the observer.

As if we were possessed by the noon demon itself, we attend to the exhibition of a work without shadows that is nevertheless present in the form of a partial shadow: *The Noon Complex* is exhibited in this second chapter of the cycle only through one of its three channels, in the form of a silent monitor, *The Noon Complex (Phantom Limb)* (2016). In it, we see a double of Bardot repeating the same movements that have been previously erased, reincarnating her, only in a neutral museum setting, and now it is the architectural set of the Villa Malaparte that becomes effaced.

The guest piece *Mass Seat* (2019), by designer Sara Regal (1989, Viveiro) also participates of this idea of a set for the body, of a bodily mould, that walks the thin line between functional furniture and abstract sculpture. Yet in this case Regal's goes a step further when she also questions the temporality of the seat, of the pause to contemplate, when designing this modular bench in the form of a thick fluid.

The selection of works is completed with Siegel's *Body Scripts* (2015) in which the artist has blocked different parts of Moravia's original novel with the turquoise blue color of the sea, leaving visible only those passages that allude to the female protagonist, and with *Surrogates* (2016), a continuous slide projection highlighting the objectification of the female body as a sculpture through images of damage and repair of different classical pieces of The National Archeological Museum of Naples.

All in all, surrealist ethnography realized almost a hundred years ago that this "midday complex" of southern European cultures was in progressive decline, favoring midnight as a new "witching hour." For Caillois, the loss of that instinct that confuses the body with space and feeds the fantasy during the vigil, was largely due to the appearance of the clock and the modern division of daytime into working hours and rest hours. In this way the demons of the imagination have been relegated to live forever separated from the light, in the nocturnal after productive time. Siegel's work seems to confirm that, if we stop here, on the edge of the swamp, we can be sure that time will continue to coincide in broad daylight.

The work of Amie Siegel (1974, Chicago) ranges from film to photography, performance and installation. Recent solo exhibitions include the South London Gallery; the Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York, Museum Villa Stuck, Munich; Audain Gallery, Simon Fraser University, Vancouver, B.C.; Kunstmuseum Stuttgart and the MAK, Vienna. The artist has participated in group exhibitions at Witte de With, Rotterdam; the Whitney Museum of American Art, NY; Hayward Gallery, London; KW Institute for Contemporary Art, Berlin; CCA Wattis, San Francisco; MoMA PS1; MAXXI Museum, Rome; Swiss Institute, New York; Haus der Kulturen der Welt, Berlin and the Walker Art Center, Minneapolis. Siegel's work is in public collections including the Whitney Museum of American Art, The Metropolitan Museum of Art, Tate Modern and the Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum. Her films have been screened at the Cannes, Berlin, Toronto and New York Film Festivals, The Museum of Modern Art, New York and The National Gallery of Art, Washington, D.C. She has been a fellow of the DAAD Berliner-Künstlerprogramm and the Guggenheim Foundation, the Fulton Fellow at The Film Study Center at Harvard University, a recipient of the ICA Boston's Foster Prize, Sundance Institute and Creative Capital Awards. She lives and works in New York City.

Sara Regal (1989) born on the coast of Galicia, Spain, was deeply enriched from her native environment. Upon finishing her studies in the Universidad de A Coruña she moved to London, where she gained experience working across diverse disciplines, from industrial and furniture

product design to architectural interior design projects. Subsequently she mastered on Product Design at ECAL, in Switzerland, enabling her to explore and develop her own methodologies. She elaborated an intuitive and experimental approach centered on material qualities and production, with a strong influence on color trends and art direction. After her artistic residency at the HKDI, Hong Kong, she started to work for the Spanish brand Camper as an interior and set designer. Recently her work was showcased at the New York Design Week.

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