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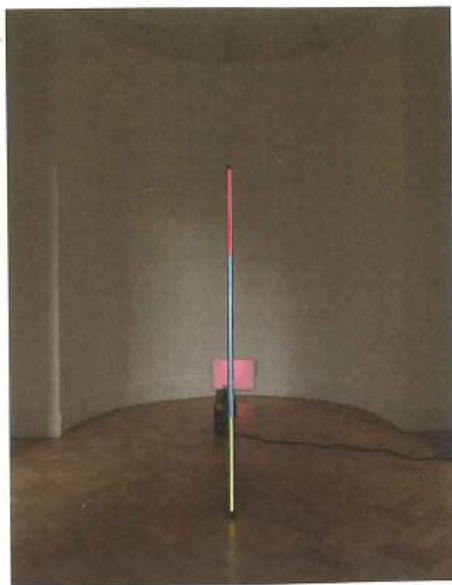
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Philipp Fleischmann, *Film Sculpture (3)*, 2022. Installationsansicht im Kunstverein Braunschweig 2024–2025. Courtesy: der Künstler; Wonnerth Dejaco, Wien; Kunstverein Braunschweig. Foto: Julian Blum.

wie zu der Zeit nach dem Zweiten Weltkrieg, als das private Gebäude mit Remisen und englischem Landschaftsgarten zum Ausstellungshaus für den Kunstverein Braunschweig umfunktionierte und auch sein Inneres sichtbar gemacht wurde und auch sein Inneres sichtbar gemacht wurde. Das Vestibül mit offenem Treppenhaus, das Gartenzimmer, der Spiegelsaal, sie alle waren nun öffentlich zugänglich und beinhalteten anstelle privater Ausstattung Kunstausstellungen.

Die Besonderheit des Hauses enthält für die neue Direktorin des Kunstvereins Braunschweig, Cathrin Mayer, die mit *Mirage* dort im vergangenen Dezember ihre erste Ausstellung eröffnete, Bedeutung. Etwa, welche Möglichkeiten des Sehens und Wahrnehmens von Kunst an einem solchen Ort heute offerieren kann. Mittels einer bedacht getroffenen Auswahl an Arbeiten der Künstler*innen Gleb Amankulov, Wisrah C. V. da R. Celestino, Kevin Jerome Everson und Philipp Fleischmann führt Mayer unter dem Titel *Mirage* einen Gedanken an, der sich durch ihre kuratorische Setzung zwischen Film, Assemblage und Installation atmosphärisch entfaltet. Abgeleitet vom Französischen »se mirer«, sich spiegeln, reflektieren oder auch sich selbst sehen, bedeutet *Mirage* eine visuelle Täuschung, ein Trugbild, vielleicht sogar: im Gesehenen eine Spur des Selbst zu erkennen? Ein räumliches Erfahren zu schaffen, das diesen Effekt evoziert, gelingt Mayer durch einen Wechsel an statischen und fließenden Bildern, die die Erdgeschossräume der Villa miteinander in einen sinnlichen Betrachtungszusammenhang führen.

Die Ausstellung liegt zunächst in Stille, wird aktiviert, indem ich den ersten Raum betrete und das 16mm-Filmband einer der Skulpturen von Philipp Fleischmann (geb. 1985 in Hollabrunn) zu laufen beginnt: ein vielfarbiger Filmstreifen in unter anderem Magenta, Cyan und Gelb bewegt sich durch einen Projektor hindurch, wirft auf eine bodennah angebrachte, kleinformatige Leinwand ein abstraktes Farbbild – doch verbleibt das Filmband nicht im Gehäuse des Projektors, sondern wird über eine von Fleischmann eingerichtete Aluminiumkonstruktion sichtbar vertikal im Raum auf und ab geführt, bevor es zurück in den Projektor mündet und den Kreislauf des Filmes schließt. Dass es sich um einen

Loop handelt, ist nicht zu erkennen. Denn die Filmstreifen der Reihe *Film Sculptures* (2022), die Fleischmann mit Schablonen in verschiedenen Farben als eine bildliche Formulierung queerer Abstraktion ausbelichtet hat, hinterlassen im Abspielen ein rhythmisches Flackern, das sich der Verortung des Bildes – und des eigenen Körpers – in Raum und Zeit entzieht.

Die Temporalität von Wert wird mit einer ortsspezifischen Setzung von Gleb Amankulov (geb. 1988 in Minsk) umfasst: durch das Verbliebene, Ungesehene oder unsichtbar Gewordene der Villa Salve Hospes. Ein Sammelteiler mit dem Motiv des Hauses, vor dem Spazierende zu sehen sind, liegt zum Beispiel auf einem Metallobjekt, formt eine Etagere. Ein amorpher Gegenstand aus Holz – vielleicht ehemals die Rücklehne eines Bettes oder der Unterbau eines Schlittens – wird scheinbar nur von einem Metallstäbchen gehalten, wirkt schwebend. Ein kegelförmiges Objekt steckt wie ein Dolch in einem Spalt des Parkettbodens. Gleb Amankulov entwickelt seine Skulpturen und Installationen aus Gefundenem oder Geliehenem. Für *Mirage* trug der Künstler vom Dachboden der Villa Materialien zusammen, aus denen er über zwei Räume hinweg Ensembles erzeugte, die einzig für die Dauer ihrer Präsentation bestehen und im Anschluss daran in ihren einzelnen materialen Komponenten an ihren Fundort zurückkehren werden. Die zeitliche Limitierung des Wahrnehmens ist Bestandteil der von ihm hervorgebrachten Objekte und Orte.

Wie ein Insert wirkt die im darauffolgenden Kabinett platzierte *Film Sculpture* von Philipp Fleischmann und lässt spätestens hier deutlich werden, dass Cathrin Mayers kuratorische Kon-



Kevin Jerome Everson, *Polly Two*, 2018. Installationsansicht im Kunstverein Braunschweig 2024–2025. Courtesy: der Künstler; trilobite-arts DAC, Charlottesville; Picture Palace Pictures, New York; Kunstverein Braunschweig. Foto: Julian Blum.

zeption aufeinander aufbaut, doch zugleich Zäsuren setzt, um eigenständig Verbindungen zwischen den Werken der Künstler*innen sehen zu können.

Im ehemaligen Gartenzimmer der Villa hat Wisrah C. V. da R. Celestino (geb. 1989 in Buri-tizeiro) die raumfüllende Installation *Peso* (2024) eingerichtet, die aus 120 Metallkanistern besteht, die neben- und übereinander in einem Raster angeordnet sind. Die Anzahl der Kanister entspricht dem Körpergewicht von Wisrah C. V. da R. Celestino – die Kanister selbst verweisen auf die Eltern Celestinos, die bis in ihre Jugend hinein ohne fließendes Wasser in jeweiligen Zuhause in

Brasilien lebten und deshalb täglich Wasser vom Fluss in derartigen Kanistern nach Hause trugen. Celestinos Kanister sind jeweils mit einem Liter Wasser gefüllt: als physische Referenz auf das eigene Körpergewicht und um das Ephemere dieses Elements, das Leben sichert und deshalb so sehr *wiegt*, zu betonen. Darum kreisen meine Gedanken, während ich zwischen den in Gruppen positionierten Kanistern im Slalom laufe, von ihnen umringt bin, sowohl ihre räumliche Weite als auch ihre symbolische Schwere in einem Bild, das in mir entsteht, erfasse.

Für einen Moment verweilend in Philipp Fleischmanns *Film Sculpture (2)* (2022), die wie eine Harfe in die Höhe ragt, mäandert mein Blick über den schimmernden, fließenden Filmstreifen, legt sich auf der aufflackernden Projektionsfläche ab. Bilder, die nachscheinen – und in der Dunkelheit des dann folgenden Raumes erlöschen.

Denn in dem Kurzfilm *Condor* (2019) von Kevin Jerome Everson (geb. 1975 in Mansfield) sehe ich zunächst die totale Sonnenfinsternis, die der Experimentalfilmemacher im Sommer 2019 in Chile in Echtzeit mit einer Handkamera auf 16mm-Film festgehalten hat. Die zarten, im Schwarz des Bildes noch sichtbaren weißen Sichel der Sonne korrespondieren mit einem dünnen Lichtspalt, der durch die Fensterläden des abgedunkelten Raums fällt. Erst mit dem grellen Sonnenlicht, das in Eversons Film – akustisch begleitet von Wind- und Meeresrauschen – als Weiß zurück ins Sichtfeld tritt, erhellt sich der Spiegelsaal des Braunschweiger Kunstvereins. Seine architektonischen Details werden sichtbar, der Film selbst reflektiert auf einer ihm gegenüberliegenden Spiegelfläche. Leicht zu Überse-

mit dichtem Nebel. Sichtbares und Empfundenes vereinen sich in einem Geschehen, das sich in der Fantastik des Bildes und der Kontinuität des Lebens fortträgt.

Christina Irrgang (geb. 1983) ist promovierte Kunst- und Medienwissenschaftlerin und publiziert als freiberufliche Autorin Texte zur zeitgenössischen Kunst.

Time Won't Give You Time

Julieta Aranda: *Clear Coordinates for Our Confusion*

MUAC – Museo Universitario Arte Contemporáneo, Mexico City, 23. 11. 2024 – 11. 5. 2025

by Mohammad Salemy

Clear Coordinates for Our Confusion, the first review of the Berlin- and New York-based artist Julieta Aranda in her birthplace Mexico City, brings together nearly forty works produced by her over the last three decades, as well as a collaboration with Anton Vidokle called *Time/Bank* (2009–ongoing). The latter is housed in the city's Goethe-Institut, allowing the visitors to contribute labor by assisting others, creating an exchange-based economy.

Occupying three galleries, two outdoor displays, and several corridors of the MUAC – Museo Universitario Arte Contemporáneo, this extensive exhibition presents concepts, materials, forms, and processes through which Aranda has wrestled with questions related to time in our ever-shrinking, increasingly technology-dependent and environmentally compromised world. These works assume various forms, for instance a large oversized bone suspended from the ceiling by several ropes as *Ghost Nets* (2018) or a long diagonal hedge made of bricks on a gallery floor mimicking the arbitrary line in the Pacific that, according to Aranda, "separates where yesterday ends and tomorrow begins" as *You Had No Ninth of May!* (2009–15). There is also a miniaturized video projection displaying a new iteration of *The Time Until Next Time* (2010); viewing it requires one to peek into a small microscopic lens built into a partitioning gallery wall.

As co-founder and editor of *e-flux journal*, Aranda has contributed to the articulation of concerns that have been animating the discursive field of visual art for nearly two decades. However, with *Clear Coordinates for Our Confusion*,



Julieta Aranda: *Clear Coordinates for Our Confusion*. Ed. by Ekaterina Álvarez Romero, MUAC – Museo Universitario Arte Contemporáneo.

With contributions by Liam Gillick, Alejandra Labastida, Chus Martínez, Elizabeth Povinelli (spa./eng.). Universidad Nacional Autónoma de México, Mexico City 2024. 152 pages, 16 x 22 cm, numerous b/w and color illustrations. M\$400.- / €18.50 / ISBN 978-607-30-9728-4 (print) / ISBN 978-607-30-9717-8 (eBook)

she transposes the viewers – as in science fiction – out of the conventional white cube and into another place, like an odd laboratory for scientific experiments, alienated not only from the everyday world but also from what one might expect to confront at a museum of contemporary art today.

The guiding thread linking artworks in the exhibit is the artist's profound interest in temporality – in phenomenology, this stands for the experience of time – which she explores through scientific observations and mathematics, and their application in various technologies. Aranda of-



Julieta Aranda, detail from: *A Machine for Perpetual Possibility*, 2008. Plexiglass cube with the dust of pulverized novels; C-print, dimensions variable.

ten examines time as a tension between its shape and materiality, versus the complexities of its calculation.

An example of this dynamic is at play in the small sculptural sound piece *So It Goes...* (2011), resting on a white pedestal in the hallway leading to the main gallery. The device, which resembles a radio, plays a sound patched from the pieces of the analogue archives of a now defunct radio station in Mexico that used to announce the time every minute. A continuous audio recording loops indefinitely, spanning a duration of 23 hours and 59 minutes, perhaps as a sign of a creeping acceleration that has been slowly pushing human time ahead of what is temporally transpiring in the actual world.

The artist does summon the ghost of time – not just in the accelerated process of its regeneration but also in its slow decay and transient yet materially situated state. Aranda sidesteps the prevailing focus on virtuality, a common theme among contemporary artists working with technology. Thus, rather than idealizing the potentialities of the virtual, Aranda explores how it manifests within lived realities. Her subjects are always caught between the concrete and the abstract, the actual and the virtual, showcasing a refreshing alternative to the overexploited relationship between technology and virtuality. What can be noticed at MUAC are traces of influence that expand on the legacy of artists associated with post-Minimalism conceptualism. An example is *A Machine for Perpetual Possibility* (2008), a cubic plexiglass sculpture containing dust and dirt which is periodically disturbed from within by an invisible fan that, when it stops blowing, allows the contents to settle into new configurations.

Somewhere outside of its subjective and inner perception, Aranda treats time as something not to be fully domesticated or controlled, acknowledging a dimension that transcends human reference points, hinting at the inhumanity of our cosmic-level clock.

Mohammad Salemy is an independent Berlin-based (DE) artist, art critic, and curator from Canada.

Knowledge Is a Garden. Uriel Orlow in Dialogue with the Migros Museum für Gegenwartskunst Collection

Migros Museum für Gegenwartskunst, Zurich, 28. 9. 2024 – 19. 1. 2025

by Marie-laure Allain Bonilla

For the past five years, curators in various exhibition spaces in Switzerland, whether in art galleries or museums, public or private, have started to take on postcolonial and decolonial issues, as evidenced by a significant and promising increase in the number of exhibitions, panel discussions, and other public events on the topic. The growing representation of artists from Black, Indigenous, and People of Color communities and from non-Western migration backgrounds in temporary exhibitions is to be welcomed, and the programming of the Museum für Gegenwartskunst has been remarkable in this respect, for example with solo shows by Renée Green, Basel Abbas & Ruanne Abou-Rahme, and Evan Ifekoya. Swiss artist Uriel Orlow's curated exhibition *Knowledge Is a Garden* is part of this vein – on the one hand, through the themes addressed by the artworks and the exhibition discourse, and on the other, through Orlow's selection of works from the Migros Museum collection reflecting its diversity and openness, which is quite unique in the Swiss landscape. Orlow, who has been dealing with post- and decolonial issues for quite a long time, sees his artistic work in particular as a social practice



Munem Wasif, *Song of Seasons. An Ecological Calendar*, 2023–ongoing. Natural-dye textile, drawing from photographs, silkscreen print, hand-stitched text with wooden and steel hanging system. Installation view at Migros Museum für Gegenwartskunst, Zurich, 2024–25. Courtesy: the artist and Project 88. Photo: Studio Stucky.

to create spaces for exchange. His invitation to show his work alongside his selection of works from the Migros Museum can be seen as part of this practice.

Based on a West African proverb stating that "knowledge is like a garden: if it's not cultivated, it cannot be harvested," the exhibition is an exploration of what a garden of knowledge might signify and how it can be cultivated. The show did not revolve around the literal idea of gardening as one

might first think, especially since Uriel Orlow's work largely deals with plants and botany in colonial contexts. Flora is an entry point for addressing issues of traditional knowledge from Indigenous people and minority groups and the related transmission, as well as their suppression, repression, unjust appropriation, multiple forms of knowledge production, and the core issue, addressed by postcolonial and decolonial studies: who speaks and whose voice is being silenced. The books of the reading space installed in one corner of the second-floor room set the tone with their programmatic titles, such as *Can the Subal-*



Eva Kotátková, *Collection of Suppressed Voices*, 2014; General Idea, *White AIDS* (Wallpaper), 1990. Exhibition view at Migros Museum für Gegenwartskunst, Zurich, 2024–25. Photo: Studio Stucky.

tern Speak?; Learning to Unlearn; Another Knowledge Is Possible; and Biopiracy: The Plunder of Nature and Knowledge.

On the ground floor, Uriel Orlow's installation *Learning from Artemisia* (2019) dialogued with Sammy Baloji's one of plants from the rainforest in the Democratic Republic of the Congo, domesticated as houseplants in Europe, potted in shell casings from the First World War. *Artemisia afra* is a plant used in Indigenous medicine in Africa and Asia to prevent malaria, but Western authorities do not recommend it, due to the influence of Big Pharma. Orlow's multimedia installation shows that Indigenous knowledge of plants is not a detail of colonial history but is subjected to power and appropriation as much as people's bodies, lands, or natural resources. It is an issue also wittily illustrated by Orlow's video installation *Theatrum Botanicum Trilogy* (2016–18) on the second-floor space, which shows the biopiracy case of how South African Indigenous expertise on the use of rooibos has been plundered by the multinational conglomerate Nestlé, an infuriating example of colonial pillaging of Indigenous knowledge for capitalist purposes.

If Uriel Orlow's work was clearly the core of the exhibition, the other artworks either dialogued directly with his, like Baloji's installation or Lothar Baumgarten's photos addressing the extinction of the Yanomami people and the loss of their names, or functioned as an extension of Orlow's exploration of knowledge and produced other echoes which reverberated the issues. For

example, parallels between personal and historical narratives, silenced voices, unheard voices, and voices archived forever were particularly powerful in the other room on the ground floor. The center was occupied by Eva Kotátková's installation *Collection of Suppressed Voices* (2014) that consists of sculptures made of ceramic pots and metal forms, which can be activated during performances, each representing a person with language issues (Josef a mute boy; Karel a boy that stammers; Lada a girl who cannot pronounce R, etc.). To the right, the wall was saturated with Dani Gal's vinyl collection, made up of historical, political, and propaganda speeches that form our collective memories of the twentieth century. Opposite, Maria Eichhorn's photographs of book pages from Robert Mapplethorpe's *The Big Monograph* (1992), censored by Japanese customs, were hung on General Idea's wallpaper, on which the word AIDS is printed tone-on-tone, as an almost invisible motif, echoing the 1980s and 1990s when talking about the epidemic was taboo, when it did not convey fears, homophobia, and partial or erroneous knowledge of what the AIDS virus is.

There were also some historical, rarely shown gems disseminated in the exhibition like Senga Nengudi's *Ceremony for Freeway Fets* (1978/2019), a series of photos documenting a performance under a freeway bridge in LA, or Teresa Burga's *Autorretrato. Estructura. Informe. 9.6.72* (Self-portrait. Structure. Report. 9.6.72, 1972/2006/2011), which questions what the physiological measurements of Western medicine say about a person, omitting a whole aspect of their identities. Numerous videos were included in the selection, and Susan Hiller's *Lost and Found* (2016) encapsulated particularly well the topic of the exhibition. The sounds of twenty-three endangered languages, some of which have disappeared altogether, were lulling visitors in a black box. The screen was black with only subtitles and, in the middle, there was an oscillating horizontal green line that visualized the sound wave of the recorded voices. This hypnotic immersion left a melancholic taste of parts of cultures disappearing forever, and a sense of urgency to preserve them, both through sound archives but, above all, through the continuity of knowledge passing.

In an age of post-truth and misinformation—when opinions are becoming more important than facts, when History is shamelessly being revised to serve far-right politics and genocidal states—*Knowledge Is a Garden* arrived in a very timely manner. Mark Zuckerberg's recent declaration that fact-checking partnerships will be terminated on his social-media platforms, changing the terms and conditions of use under the pretext of free speech, can be compared to the *requerimiento* of 1513, the declaration read by Spanish conquistadors to Indigenous peoples to explain the confiscation of their land, their need to obey in order to access education and knowledge. It shows how historical schemes repeat under other forms, threatening our democracies and knowledge production, particularly when it originates from minority groups and Indigenous communities. The works gathered by Uriel Orlow illustrate the vulnerability of knowledge, that sometimes is as fragile as an embroidered thread, a line on paper, a sound which can be silenced, a cultural or social practice that can be repressed and that constantly needs our attention and resistance in order to be kept alive.

Marie-laure Allain Bonilla, PhD, is an art historian specializing in exhibition history and postcolonial studies. She is based in Switzerland.

Tabita Rezaire: Calabash Nebula

TBA21 – Museo Nacional Thyssen-Bornemisza, Madrid, 8. 10. 2024 – 12. 1. 2025

by Estelle Nabeyrat

The immersive show *Calabash Nebula*, curated by Chus Martínez, is the first solo exhibition in Spain by the Afro-cyberfeminist artist Tabita Rezaire (born 1989 in Paris). Based in French Guiana—a French territory in South America covered by more than 90 percent equatorial forest—Rezaire conceived the exhibition in relation to this particular land and the different practices she is developing there. Like a triptych, the show takes the visitor on a circular journey through three interconnected installative artworks, which are depicted, in turn, as a circle, a hut, and a temple. From artisanal medium to sophisticated 3D video montage, the artist demonstrates her relationship with technology, earth, and spirituality.

When entering the TBA21 exhibition space at the Museo Nacional Thyssen-Bornemisza in Madrid, visitors first encounter the *Omu Elu* (2024) installation, a circle made up of six hanging fabrics with drawings representing different incarnations of the orisha Yemoja. She is a goddess from Yoruba mythology—a mother, water, creator, healer, ruler, and a dancer. Imported to French Guiana by Yoruba slaves from southwestern Nigeria, Yemoja—often represented as a black mermaid—is depicted here on indigo-blue dyed fabrics, a technique the artist encountered and learned by working with traditional dyers in Nigeria. By choosing indigo pigment—a material used in numerous cultures also for ritual healing practices—Rezaire reconnects with an-



Tabita Rezaire, *Omi: Yemoja Temple*, 2024. Installation view at Schering Stiftung, Berlin, 2024. Photo: Jens Ziehe.

cestral practices and polytheist beliefs that were largely invisibilized since French colonization debuted in the seventeenth century.

The exhibition *Calabash Nebula* intends to de-linearize fields of knowledge. It offers a holistic approach that reflects the multitude of practices that Tabita Rezaire develops in the Amazon rainforest of French Guiana, especially through Amakaba, a center dedicated to agroecology, yoga, and support for mothers.

With the second work *Des/astres* (2024), the artist takes us on an hour-long journey through several intersecting narratives and original image registers (documentary, scientific, spiritual, etc.)

conceived from French Guiana and its history. *Des/astres* makes a play on the French words *désastre* (disaster) and *astres* (stars). As signified by the title of the show, *Calabash Nebula*—astronomers' name for a proto- or preplanetary nebula—the exhibition aims to give us the measure of a large-scale disaster: from the cultivation of land to the spirit of Indigenous cosmologies, colonial extractivism is everywhere. The video installation is shaped as a *carbet*—an Amerindian shelter—and furnished with hammocks that allow the viewers to stargazing. On the underside of the structure's roof, a round film screening is displayed, converting the hut into a planetarium. With a mix of scholarly and cosmological references, the video is organized according to four natural elements—forest, water, stone, and cosmos—and paints a portrait of French Guiana through its inhabitants and customs, where scientists from the French spaceport and Amerindian cosmical rituals are intertwined.

The third piece goes back to Yemoja. The installation *Omi: Yemoja Temple* (2024) is a place for offerings. Made in collaboration with the architect Yussef Agbo-Ola and the biologists Alex Jordan and Anja Wegner, the temple is a shady space, covered in indigo-dyed textiles, for people to enjoy time and place. Scents of honey and coconut perfume the space, offering a spiritual moment to the visitors, one that contradicts the thrilling Madrilénian ecosystem, far away from Tabita Rezaire's place of living: "I believe that our inner lands have much influence on how we experience life, so I am committed to supporting the inner journey. . . . As my teacher says: 'Social justice is a spiritual practice.'"

1 "Tabita Rezaire: I prefer to stand for what I believe in," interview by Theresa Sigmund, *Contemporary*, May 13, 2022, <https://contemporaryand.com/magazines/tabita-rezaire-i-prefer-to-stand-for-things-i-believe-in>.

Estelle Nabeyrat is a curator and art critic. She is currently teaching and tutoring at IESA – Institut d'études supérieures des arts in Paris (FR) and at ENS Paris-Saclay.

Nico Mureş: The Office After Dark

Sandwich Gallery, Bucharest, 14. 11. 2024 – 31. 1. 2025

by Maximilian Lehner

In the latest exhibition by Nico Mureş (born in 1996), *The Office After Dark*, the central video opens with a motivational speech for the staff to invest more energy, just like their boss, and bring the company back to profitability. After thanking them, we see the workers hanging in all directions in a spider net, typing on their computers. This work, *The Eternal Night Shift* (2024), loosely connects animations of these employees repeating the words "peace, freedom, happiness" like a guru's mantra, mostly in coffins or while holding two candles in a red ban circle in some digital outlines of a tomb. One line sums up the energy, a dad joke, obviously created by an AI and followed by canned laughter: "What do you call a vampire who works all day? Dead tired!" Low music, sounding like a church organ randomly changing notes without getting to a recognizable melody, only interrupted by clacking keyboards, supports the feeling of being worn out.

Another shot: a gamer's setup in a badly lit room. It is one of those black-and-red office

chairs, screaming "I love a good racing car—at home." The back of the animated chair is way higher than the one in the exhibition space, which recalls late-1990s furniture stores; it is one of these countless models of an adjustable black-leather computer chair with plastic arm parts. Apart from that, equipped only with a bed and a



Nico Mureş, *The Eternal Night Shift*, 2024. Installation view at Sandwich Gallery, Bucharest, 2024–25. Photo: Rares Toma.

table for the large computer screen, it matches the tristesse embraced by the exhibition space. It is a lonely place that Mureş created, stressing the qualities of the gallery space—a metal shed with dark walls only escaping the garage feeling with its gable roof.

As much as this aesthetic is related to the figure of the gamer, today it also speaks of remote work and its implications on social life. The screen at the desk shows a recorded series of Teams conference calls that provide some backdrop: in various meetings, the "Evil Boss" instructs employees on how to manipulate their new "Human Trainee" into extensive working hours. Their aliases on the call, as well as their descriptions on a set of cards, designed like a tarot set of five, reveal that they themselves might have gone through such a treatment. They are called "Bat Colleague" or "Vampire Worker," with a cemetery as a background and an ornament in art nouveau style framing the figure. As vampires usually feed from the living in the place they used to inhabit and love, it comes with the lightness of irony that the fellow employees state that this "place has a way of draining the life out of you." Nonetheless, all which is happening basically sounds like an ordinary nine-to-five office job, and were the boss not explicitly named "Evil," then probably no one would have ever noticed this character trait. Nico Mureş's combination of an early, not-too-realistic 3D animation and weird pointless narratives mirrors everyday life, just like in *The Sims* video games. But far from the playfulness of that game, we don't have any means of interaction here.

In earlier print works like *Make Human* (2017), eponymous with the 3D modeling software, Mureş already pointed toward the eerie emptiness in the facial expression of avatars and bodies by sending an army of naked avatars to a supermarket with "dead peoples [sic] things for sale." This links to the incessant creation of artificial needs and their satisfaction through further exploitation of humanity, even beyond death.

Whereas the artist's imagery mimicking video games evokes a nostalgia for a time when digitalization and computers promised a facilitation of work, *The Office After Dark* reveals more about the current state of the world. Why do we even go to work when an avatar could do the same? Are we the actual vampires in this, expecting others

to drain themselves for the job, to not give up, and to believe that they can achieve anything?

While the dark exhibition space, repetitive music, and empty faces remind us of how drained we are by these imperatives, Mureş's impaled vampire worker printed on the bed's velvet blanket is the perfect image for those who still want to believe in them: a thorn in the chest, the undead not yet released from their suffering, but perfectly willing to cozily snuggle up to the delusion. Dead tired!

Maximilian Lehner is a curator, critic, and researcher. His texts have been published in *Artforum* (US), *Revista Arta* and *Kajer* (both RO), *BLOK Magazine* (PL), *Par-nass* (AT), and others.

Andrea Orejarena & Caleb Stein: Viral Hallucinations #1. Tactics and Mythologies

PHOXXI, Deichtorhallen Hamburg, 7. 9. 2024 – 26. 1. 2025

von Marinus Reuter

Glitch Typologies (2020–2024) sind eine Hommage an den Humor, mit dem auf dem Imageboard 4chan Verschwörungstheorien verbreitet werden. Auf den Acrylglaswänden der drei Kuben, die im unteren Bereich des PHOXXI durch Rückprojektionen in durchscheinenden Screens verwandelt werden, leuchten jene humoristischen Bildformeln wie kleine Juwelen auf, die den Künstler Caleb Stein durch ihre mitreißende Einfachheit begeistert hätten, wie er auf dem Symposium »Viral Hallucinations«, erklärte.¹ Andrea Orejarena und Caleb Stein, die als Duo in New York arbeiten, haben aus dem Bildrepertoire des Imageboards für ihre konzeptionelle Arbeit *American Glitch* (2020–2024) geschöpft und eine Sammlung unwirklicher Phänomene ange-