

City SALTS, Box

Opening Thursday, 13 June 2024, 6 PM
Exhibition until 1 September 2024
City SALTS, Hauptstrasse 12, 4127 Birsfelden/Basel



Kenneth Bergfeld, Charlotte Horn – Neuromancer

Curated by Benedikt Wyss and Samuel Leuenberger

Kenneth Bergfeld: not yet titled, 200 x150 cm, oil on canvas, 2024
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Kenneth Bergfeld's work delves into the intricate dynamics of representation, exploring the complexity of personal identity and the fluid nature of subjectivity. Oscillating between parasitic and symbiotic scenarios, his avatar-like figures navigate shape-shifting backdrops, blurring the boundaries between self and environment. His interest in the realities of the globalized economy and the psychological conditions of consumerism is reflected in his works, which address issues of sustainability and relational dynamics.

The works at City SALTS depict an ongoing investigation into the artist's avatar at different moments in time and in various psychological states. One painting presents the figure standing alone in the center of the canvas within a seemingly fictional landscape, while the other shows a close-up of the avatar's profile, adorned with a mushroom-like headpiece. The figures oscillate between reality and fiction, between virtuality and actuality. The artist attempts to externalize states of being while simultaneously concealing them within the act of revelation, often portrayed through head coverings. These coverings frequently take the form of mushroom hats, symbolizing both sustenance and poison. Beneath the surface lies an entire network, while the dichotomy of hiding and revealing remains ever-present. Clothing often functions as a sculpture of dual emotions, encapsulating both confinement and comfort. The eyes are white: anonymous, ecstatic, blind, dead? The sky is often green, evoking a surreal feeling reminiscent of De Chirico's paintings, creating a metaphysically displaced atmosphere.

In January 2024, the trout was classified as endangered in Germany for the first time. The artist is drawn to this animal because it is known among anglers as the fish that puts up the strongest fight when caught. Additionally, trout tanks are often used in research because trout only live in clean waters, making them a barometer for water quality in laboratories. The artwork itself is a hollow fish replica, commonly used in the sale of cooling systems. Placed loosely on the floor, the fish sculpture transforms the exhibition space into an aquarium, serving as a metaphor for a system similar to the tanks in laboratories. Ultimately, the piece aims to highlight the interdependence between us and the fish. The illness or death of one species reflects our own health and the condition of our tank.

Title of the work: Cathexis

PainEng 1: 160x160cm, oil on canvas

PainEng 2: 160x160cm, oil on canvas, Pedestal Soundpiece: loop ? length (undecided)

Charlotte Horn is a multidisciplinary artist and works mostly with oil painting, music, and sound. She tends to combine those elements within exhibition contexts as installations and has held sound related performances for which she composes experimental music pieces. Within her practice Horn mainly investigates the relationships between different organisms, human and non-human. She often finds herself engaged within her immediate environment and is concerned for her local ecology and its conservation. Common notions regarding the concept of nature and its imposed boundaries of physical and psychological borders, she aims to not only deconstruct but to hopefully generate a deeper understanding for our interspecies-connections and potentiality to create new allyships and ways of living with and alongside each other.

In her work *Cathexis* Charlotte Horn explores the relationship between two perspectives of the same place through a new body of work. She detaches the two oil paintings from a conventional canvas shape through rounded arches in which the canvases take on an almost window-like role within the exhibition space. The paintings seem to partially mirror each other in composition with a lake at its center and a dried out field and partial forest around it, yet what's being reflected in and the viewpoint from where the spectator is looking at the lake is a different one. The sound

piece in the work acts as a connector between the two paintings, adding another layer of sonic narration consisting of an arrangement of field recordings, voice samples and synthetic instruments. The work aims to play with perception of one's immediate environment and challenges the viewer to question fixed ideas about objects, places and individuals bound to the relationships we've cultivated with them over time.

Kenneth Bergfeld (1990)

MFA, Kunstakademie Düsseldorf, 2014

Selected solo exhibitions:

Animal, Jan Kaps, Cologne, 2024

Human Performance, Jan Kaps, Cologne, 2022

Fast Day Menu, Project Native Informant, London, 2021

I, Spider, Project Native Informant, London, 2019

The Spire, Pt. 1, Hospitality, Cologne, 2018

Selected group exhibitions:

Black Box Theatre, Clearing, NYC, 2024

De Profundis Oscar Wilde, L'Hotel, Paris, 2023

November, Juli August September, Tokyo, 2023

An Ocean Standing, LC Queisser, Tbilisi, 2022

The Male Gaze: From Larry Stanton to Now, The Artist Room, London, 2022

Charlotte Horn (1994, Darmstadt)

Based in Basel, Switzerland

MFA (Diploma summer 2024) Institute Art Gender Nature HGK Basel FHNW

Selected duo exhibitions

Grass Dwellers, with Alex von Engelberg, 822 Showroom, Basel, 2024

Floating Continuum, with Hannah Maria Furgal, Dock Basel, 2021

Group Shows (selected)

Long Distance, Hamlet, Zürich, 2024

Beyond water, Bains des Paquis, Biennial of Art and Urban Nature, Geneva, 2023

Inherited, Atelier Mondial, Basel, 2023

Friendly Space, FOMO Art Space, Zürich, 2023

Temporary Perfection, Stapflehus, Weil am Rhein, Germany, 2020

Performances (selected)

School Models, in collaboration with Raffaella Boss, Cabaret Voltaire, Zurich, 2023

Quiet Hunt, Basel Social Club, Basel, 2023

I hear a new World, Fondation Beyeler, Basel, 2022

Why are you following me, in collaboration with Floris Maniscalco, der Tank, Basel, 2022

The exhibition is supported by the Cultural Promotion Department BL and the Dr. Georg and Josi Guggenheim Foundation.

