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9.9. – 8.10. 2022 **Wien**
 Vienna

Gabriele Senn Galerie
Maximilian Geymüller

Artists: Plamen Dejanoff, Gina Fischli, Tomasz Kowalski, Lisa Oppenheim, Markéta Othová, Jean-Frédéric Schnyder, Anastasia Sosunova

Café del Mar

The exhibition explores borders and their dissolution. It addresses the identity and connectedness of cultural spaces and focuses on the migration of signs and their meanings, their recontextualization/shifting and hybridisation. Further attention is given to the dividing lines between East and West, Orient and Occident, which are being sharply delineated once again in recent times. These cannot be maintained in full clarity and are made to disappear in the picture. The symbolic weight of the sunset and sunrise as cultural and political code is juxtaposed with the recurring spectacle of nature as a pictorial correction. In terms of its content, the latter invites the audiences to view things with more openness and to consider the plurality of meaning. The sun and other motifs are to be understood in their complex semantic breadth, whilst hard electronic sounds coming from the basement of the gallery herald the beginning or end of the party.

An exhibition that highlights both literalness and metaphor, high and low, sundowner and destruction. It is a scenario of blurriness on the threshold of darkness.

With works by Plamen Dejanoff, Gina Fischli, Tomasz Kowalski, Lisa Oppenheim, Markéta Othová, Jean-Frédéric Schnyder, Anastasia Sosunova and a DJ set by Natalia Martynenko.

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Jean-Frédéric Schnyder (born 1945 in Basel) is at the centre of the exhibition. A consistent focus of his since concept art dominated the 1970s, he has anticyclically developed paintings of everyday scenes. The exhibition displays ten sunrises at Lake Zug, from a series of 27 paintings in all, each painted between 12 July and 27 December 1996, whenever the sun was visible. Pop as clear and fresh as early-morning air, traditional open-air painting combined with conceptual coolness. A massive front appears to approach from behind though, a fundamental critique of visual representation: this series of the repeatedly painted reappearing sun is not a parade of the banal, but rather a fanning out of contingency and diminishing significance. Doubts grow as one moves from one picture to the next. Questions arise as to what pictures can mean beyond what is visible.

Affected herself by issues of cultural identity and belonging, Anastasia Sosunova (b. 1993 in Ignalina, Lithuania), a Lithuanian with Russian heritage addresses the aforementioned issues in her video Demikhov-Dog. The „Demikhov Dog“ is named after the Soviet scientist Vladimir Demikhov, who performed the world's first head transplants in 1954, creating two-headed dogs that actually survived for a short time. She explains that, „The footage used for this piece was collected throughout the Baltic region and was mixed with fictional characters, chimerical animated realities and not entirely Lithuanian stories.“ Thus, the wondrous creature becomes an expression of the video's multiple narrative structure as well as a hybrid cultural self-conception that dismisses simplistic understanding that thinks in dichotomies such as East and West.

Plamen Dejanoff (born 1970 in Sofia) stands for transfer and hybridisation par excellence in artistic terms: East and West, one's own and foreign things, historical and contemporary. The artist runs a foundation dedicated to the preservation and reconstruction of the historic capital Veliko Tarnovo in Bulgaria, which has been under alternating Muslim and Christian influence throughout its history, i.e. transitioning between Orient and Occident. Derived from this, the reconstructions and replicas of culturally significant buildings and individual building elements, such as The Bronze House or The Bronze Theatre, are undoubtedly hybrid: autonomous artistic work and/or materially highly-tuned advertising for his foundation. Passing the Czechoslovakian art and literary magazine plamen (in English: flame), published in the 1960s, off as is own based on the similarity of its

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name to his own, much remains unclear. The generous interpretation of what belongs to others or to oneself points in two directions: 2010 appropriation art and/or ironically concentrated Balkan cliché.

Lisa Oppenheim's (born 1975 in New York) slides show two cycles intersecting, that of the sun and that of her images. Viewers see a sunset photographed by the artist on the coast of New York, in front of which she holds a photo of a sunset in Iraq, taken by US soldiers and uploaded to Flickr. This doubling brings to mind many associations, meanings and questions about the setting sun, political and media-reflexive ones: is America's global role – pervasive and also disappearing – being commented on here? Are the simultaneous sunsets emblematic of the effects of the digital on the production and distribution of images, the virtual shortening of space and time? Viewers are left with the impression of disruption and destabilisation: the beauty of the natural process is disrupted by media, one image of the sun displaces the other, the darkening is in full progress.

Gina Fischli's (b. 1989 in Zurich) work highlights the ironic breaking up of geographical divisions of political or cultural spaces even further. Her two „windows“ (as well as the rest of this series) are almost identical and can barely be held apart. Merely their titles, which correspond to different points on a compass, seem to differentiate the pieces. This way they make direct reference to their origin context, the paralysing period during the Covid lockdowns: the levelling of all outlooks and meaning, the low point of all significance. Or the exact opposite, the great moment of signs: When in isolation everything becomes interchangeable in its intangibility, and everything can mean many things.

The exhibition presents a context shift for Tomasz Kowalski (born 1984 in Szczepleszyn, Poland) as his wood object was already part of a solo exhibition at the gallery in 2010/11. This time it is integrated as a temporal flotsam or objet trouvé, in the sense of the artist's proximity to a „new surrealism“. With its cruciform cross-section, it is also used as a strange shelf that appears to be too low.

Markéta Othová's (born 1968 in Brno) medium is photography. The exhibition shows a series of abstract compositions that were created on the

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 Vienna

computer and then photographed. The concentrically constructed, consistently conjugated combinations of circles have a personal-emotional background of origin and actually represent flower patterns. In the context of the exhibition, however, they enter into new referential relationships: radiant suns, stars, pulsating lights or variations of the Love Parade logo. The circles open and close.

Natalia Martynenko is a DJ, curator and radio host from Kiev, Ukraine. She enjoys experimenting with a variety of electronic music genres, combining leftfield motifs with raw and deconstructed sounds.

https://soundcloud.com/natalia_martynenko