

# curated by

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4.9. – 2.10.  
2021      Wien  
                 Vienna

**Charim Galerie**  
*Olesya Turkina*

Artists: Tanya Akhmetgalieva, Zoe Beloff, Anna Jermolaewa, Pavel Pepperstein

*History repeats itself twice, first as a tragedy, then as a farce*

The title of the show refers to the most quoted and misquoted phrase from Karl Marx's "The Eighteenth Brumaire of Louis Napoleon" in which he refers to Hegel's idea about important historical events and persons appearing twice.<sup>1</sup>

The show presents artists who are working with the carnivalesque character of history in these changing political circumstances. Revolution creates pathos that attempts to conquer the future – Cronus swallows his children, and the counterrevolution vomits back time – anorexia caused by the fear of the overwhelming return of the living dead.

Pavel Pepperstein, post-conceptual artist and one of the founders of the influential Medical Hermeneutic group, works in a style he defines as "psychedelic realism", combining fantasy and dreams about the future that refer to the past. He explores the archeology of Utopia. In his drawings, paintings and installations he refers to influential theories in philosophy, religion, and art of the 19-20th century. launching it into deep space of the distant future. The new series „Phantomcartography" created by PPSS group (Pavel Pepperstein & Sonya Stereostyrsky) has pseudo political character and dedicated to phantom geopolitics. The series has references to geopolitical caricatures in a time of the First World War.

Zoe Beloff works with psychoanalysis, social history and media archeology in her films, installations and drawings. Her art is radical, humorous and carnivalesque. In her recent series "The Parade of the Old New" she demonstrates parallels between historical timelines by creating a historical allegory of the American body politic in the 1930s and today.

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The title is taken from a 1938 poem by Bertolt Brecht. “A World Redrawn” explores Brecht’s ideas on the film “A Model Family in a Model home” and Sergei Eisenstein’s “Glass House” scenario dedicated to the architecture of surveillance.

Anna Jermolaewa explores the influence of politics on the individual. One could say that she works with biopolitics as a subject and object in her photographs, video and installations.

In her recent video series “Doubles”, she presents the phenomenon of political doubles – people who earn money by presenting themselves as political leaders of the past and present whom they resemble and wander around Red Square in Moscow. The historical figures who frightened the country have become a part of comedic entertainment. She thematises everyday realities that transform our appearance, for instance in her series “Noses” that refers to recent quarantine prescriptions and phantasmagories from the 19th century, like Gogol’s “Nose” story.

Through her video works, Tanya Akhmetgalieva includes the viewer in monotone movement from which there is no escape. Introvert swallowing flaws of brightly coloured images and sound immerses one into a scary fantasy of the thrill of bad-night stories again. For example the story about old slot machines that return mass cultural icons back to us in her recent work “Probably she will be laughing”. As the artist once told me, “I know that I scare my viewers. But I didn’t set out to scare anybody. It just happened”.

If history repeats itself twice over then it offers hope that after tragedy there will be a time for comedy, and the expectation of carnival helps us cope with anxiety and fear.

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1. „Hegel remarked somewhere that all great world-historical facts and persons occur, as it were, twice. He forgot to add: one time as tragedy, the other time as farce.“

- Karl Marx: The Eighteenth Brumaire of Louis Bonaparte (1852). Quoted from: MEW. Vol. 8, p. 115.