

The background of the entire page is a light-colored marbled paper with intricate, swirling patterns in shades of pale blue, lavender, and cream. The patterns resemble natural stone or watercolor washes.

MYTHS OF THE MARBLE
April 28–August 6

THE ELEANOR BIDDLE LLOYD GALLERY & RAMP

The group show *Myths of the Marble* explores how the notion of “the virtual” can be used as a way to image and imagine the world as both a site of possibility and a set of limitations. Here, marble doubles as a reference to NASA’s 1972 “Blue Marble” photograph of Earth taken from space and to the stone often used in classical sculpture to simulate the human form. By extension, this reflects on the context of the museum and the way contemporary artists negotiate the blurring of the immaterial and the physical. Many of the artworks on view trouble the line between the analog and the digital, suggesting a more nuanced approach to technology (be it hard, soft, or wet) explored through a wide range of media, from painting and 16mm film to VR technology and 3-D animation.

The artists in the exhibition consider other forms of virtuality through extensions of the body: prosthetic devices, avatars, armatures, and illusory architectural spaces. An attention to ecological formations further suggests alternative notions of technology, materiality, and time. In this way, the “myths” explored here address the museum as a site of world-making and the experience of art as a vehicle for the reorientation of the senses. At a moment when the capacity to depict the world in high definition has never been greater, reality is itself increasingly understood as a construction. In this respect, it is essential that today “the virtual” not simply be seen as an escapist technology promoted by Silicon Valley, but also reclaimed as a way to mobilize a new political imaginary.

—Alex Klein, Dorothy and Stephen R. Weber (CHE’60) Curator, ICA, and Milena Hoegsberg, Senior Curator, Henie Onstad Kunstsenter (HOK)

“Today, the virtual has become a synonym for the computer-generated, but this is not its original meaning. The virtual is not the same as the false or the simulated: it is a potential on the brink of becoming actual, an image of a near future that may or may not come to pass. It is not a separate parallel reality; it is continuous with our own reality. It is connected to our own world and made of the same stuff, but it reaches for something beyond this world...”

Excerpt from Hoday King’s essay “Myth for an Age of Lies and Marble for an Age of Walls” included in the exhibition catalogue (Published Summer 2017)



View of Earth, probably the Indian Ocean east of Madagascar after the second pass over Africa, and about one orbit prior to TLI. 7 December 1972. Scan by Kipp Teague. Photo: NASA.

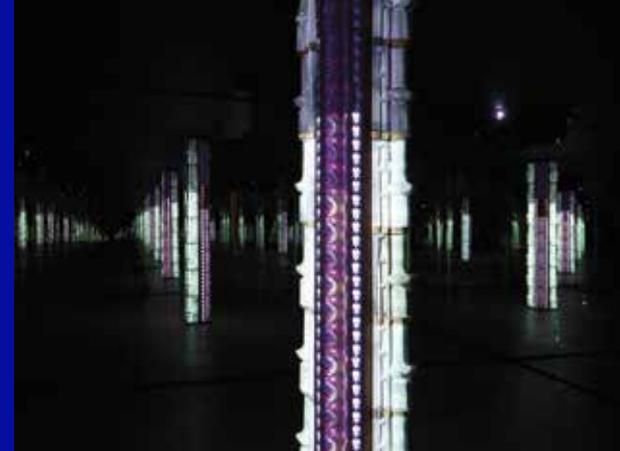
Rachel de Joode



Rachel de Joode's (born 1979, Amersfoort, the Netherlands; lives Berlin) work revolves around a tension between the flatness of the pixelated screen and the fleshiness of the porous body. At first glance, her photographs take on the appearance of skin or organic matter, but, upon closer inspection, the images come into focus as elemental artistic materials such as clay and bronze that bear the imprint of de Joode's hands. The materials she molds, presses, and smooshes bear the traces of her body, only to reappear as three-dimensional images propped up by armatures and placed so as to evoke classical sculptures. For de Joode, the forms suggested in her work are at once personal and universal, exterior and internal. They revel in the messy sensuousness of the haptic, in which touch is felt with the eyes, while submitting to a process of digitization that keeps it at bay.

Rachel de Joode, detail of *Stacked Reclining Sculpture*, 2017. Inkjet print on Dibond. Courtesy the artist and Galerie Christophe Gaillard, Paris and Neumeister Bar-Am, Berlin.

Cayetano Ferrer



Cayetano Ferrer's (born 1981, Honolulu; lives Los Angeles) work explores the subject of simulation with respect to our digital sphere and within the history of art, architecture, and the museum. At the center of his hall of mirrors is a column that includes actual fragments of buildings by noted American architects Louis Sullivan and Daniel Burnham, whose respective styles—the vernacular and the revivalist—were at odds with each other in the late 19th century. In *Endless Columns (Chicago School)* (2017), the original objects are replicated, joined together, and extended infinitely to form an “augmented reality” in physical space. Divorced from its original architectural context, this composited ornamentation is dislocated in a way that resonates with the spectacular constructed environments found in the casinos of Las Vegas and the film industry of Hollywood. Here, the sculptural object becomes an entropic image as its surface is cyclically dissolved and rendered anew in concert with the syncopated soundscape. Within the installation the viewer is simultaneously grounded by the physical materiality of the plaster column and disoriented by its infinite reflection.

Cayetano Ferrer, *Endless Columns (Chicago School)*, 2017, installation view. Salvaged architectural elements, plaster, mirrors, quadrophonic sound and light projection, 48 minutes. Courtesy the artist. Photo: Øystein Thorvaldsen / HOK.

Ane Graff



Materiality and how it relates to touch is at the core of Ane Graff's (born 1974, Bodø, Norway; lives Oslo) work. In her hanging sculpture, *What Oscillates* (2017), Graff draws our attention to the raw materials and physical properties that make our technologies possible and that have an impact on our ecology. Through a poetic fusion of the natural and the synthetic, she blurs how we define the distinction between the analog and the digital, pushing against an immaterial understanding of the virtual. For example, copper, a metal ubiquitous in communications infrastructure, gains new agency in the shape of salt growths and shimmering crystal formations. The sculptural elements highlight the alchemical forces at play in our daily lives, where objects are transformed by both the deep time of geology and the touch of the human hand. Behind every glossy screen is the reality of its material composition ranging from the interaction of microscopic atoms to the often invisible labor of miners and factory workers. As a result, *What Oscillates* reminds us that our actions affect all aspects of the natural world.

Ane Graff, detail of *What Oscillates*, 2017. Mixed media installation: steel and aluminum structure with woven copper/steel/textile bands, glass plates with sculptural elements consisting of: aluminum, copper, iron, bismuth, indium, alunite, quartz, fulgurite, glass, alum, coral, plaster, plant material, pigments, fiber optics, epoxy, nylon, polymer. Courtesy the artist.

Ignas Krunglevičius



Trained as a composer, Ignas Krunglevičius (born 1979, Kaunas, Lithuania; lives Oslo) primarily works with text and sound to explore the intersection of technology, power, and capital. In *Skin Currencies* (2017), fragments of audio that have been hacked from the web* are intermittently broadcast via makeshift structures assembled from scavenged steel often used in the construction of skyscrapers and server farms. While its intentions are unclear, the voice, both biological and algorithmic, reports on a world that has turned into a wasteland populated by a precariat who struggle for basic resources. In this bleak world humans compete for trashed nutrients, infotech, prosthetics, and expired "cognitals" (rare drugs that enhance performance and increase the chances of survival). In this scenario people are no longer the dominant actors, but must adapt by augmenting their skin, identity, and movements to become something other than recognizably "human."

Ignas Krunglevičius, detail of *Skin Currencies*, 2017. Steel, DC motors, media players. Courtesy of the artist. Photo: Øystein Thorvaldsen / HOK.

* www.darkpool.cc

Chris Marker



In *Ouvroir, the Movie* (2010), filmmaker Chris Marker's (born 1921; died Paris, 2012) avatar, an orange cat named Guillaume, leads us on a tour of a museum he has built in the online simulation Second Life. Launched in 2003, Second Life became the first popular user-created 3-D social media platform, allowing millions of users to inhabit parallel lives in a virtual world. In Marker's computer-generated museum the galleries are filled with images and videos culled from his own oeuvre. Marker hangs his works alongside cartoons and modified masterpieces as if to literalize André Malraux's idea of a "museum without walls" in which artworks are transformed into images and freed from a singular narrative of art history. In *Ouvroir, the Movie* Marker seems to suggest that we would do well to reflect on our own constructions in the real world at a moment when the Internet allows art and information to be endlessly reproduced, modified, and remixed. As the walls of the virtual building crumble around him, Guillaume exits and ruminates on watching the end of the world. Turning toward us he asks us to consider our own responsibility as both viewers and witnesses to history. Poignantly, although Marker passed away in 2012, his avatar lives on.

Chris Marker, still from *Ouvroir, the Movie*, 2010. Animation in Second Life (coordinates 189, 70.39), color, sound, 29 minutes. Courtesy Les Films du Jeudi.

Daria Martin



Daria Martin's (born 1973, San Francisco; lives London) *Soft Materials* (2004) is set in an artificial intelligence lab in Zurich specializing in developing robots that simulate human intelligence by learning through physical experience known as "embodied AI." The 16mm film focuses on the interactions between two dancers and their machinic counterparts. What results is a tender *pas de deux* between real and virtual bodies. The man and the woman have been trained in Body-Mind Centering, an approach to movement that sensitizes an individual to a bodily awareness of consciousness and also to the different developmental stages of life. Although the lab is a contained environment, separated from the real world, the meeting of robotic antennae and human skin is marked by the intimacy and fragility of human relations. Their actions suggest a mutual sense of discovery through touch that as the film progresses makes it difficult to discern who is mimicking whom.

Daria Martin, still from *Soft Materials*, 2004. 16mm film, 10:30 minutes. © Daria Martin, courtesy Maureen Paley, London.

Florian Meisenberg



Trained as a painter in the age of the Internet, Florian Meisenberg (born 1980, Berlin; lives New York and Berlin) expands the material boundaries of both pictorial and virtual space to explore the glitches that result when the analog and the digital meet. The installation immerses us in a kind of skybox, a term that describes the illusion of a limitless horizon in a computer-generated environment when it is in fact a distinct boundary. Meisenberg places us inside of a vertiginous virtual reality full of references to the way that museums restructure the world through the objects they select for safe-keeping and display. Inside the VR program users interact with 3-D objects that are being randomly selected from open-source libraries online and that are pulled toward a floating blob. The space defies gravity yet constantly returns us to the limits of our real bodies, the texture of the carpet under our feet, and the painterly surfaces of the canvases that, for Meisenberg, function as another kind of screen.

Florian Meisenberg, *Of Defective Gods & Lucid Dreams (The Museum is Closed for Renovation)*, 2017, installation view: custom carpet, VR live-render-interactive-fluid-simulation, HTC Vive, 4 paintings (custom CNC-cut stretchers, oil paint, iridescent acrylic paint, and airbrush on canvas). Courtesy the artist. Photo: Carsten Aniksdal.

Shahryar Nashat



Shahryar Nashat's (born 1975, Geneva; lives Los Angeles and Berlin) work pivots around a tension between the body and the art object as mediated sites of desire. In his installation *Hard Up for Support* (2016), an alluring female voice welcomes visitors to the Institute of Contemporary Art. Bathed in a theatrical magenta light, the hard surfaces of a pink, human-scaled, marble polygon play off of a sleek, flat screen vertically positioned in a way that is reminiscent of the intimacy of holding a smartphone. In the video, the monitor waking up is likened to the arousal of the human body as it begins to focus on sensuous close-ups of a tear duct, an earlobe, nostrils, a mouth, and an anus. The image zooms in on these orifices, which are partially struck out by a large "X," as if to suggest the camera's wish to penetrate its subjects as well as the impossibility of merging the fluids of the body with the technological properties of the liquid crystal display.

Shahryar Nashat, *Hard Up for Support*, 2016. Installation view, "Made in L.A. 2016: a, the, though, only," June 12–August 28, 2016, Hammer Museum, Los Angeles. HD video, silent loop on digital LED monitor, marble, 9:20 minutes. Courtesy the artist, The Rubell Family, Miami, David Kondansky Gallery, Los Angeles, CA, and the Hammer Museum, Los Angeles, CA. Photo: Brian Forrest.

Sondra Perry



Sondra Perry's (born 1986, Perth Amboy, New Jersey; lives Houston) videos and performances foreground the tools of digital production as a way to critically reflect on new technologies of representation and to remobilize their potential. In her most recent installation she considers open-source 3-D platforms that both capitalize on the simulation of bodies and objects while at the same time providing alternatives for human agency and the circulation of images. The projection focuses on Perry's twin brother, whose likeness and statistics as an athlete were used in a basketball video game produced by the NCAA (National Collegiate Athletic Association), which in recent years has been criticized for exploiting its sports scholarship students. In the video, Perry's brother is reintroduced to his playable character and creates a new avatar on his own terms. This is in turn juxtaposed with the chroma key "blue screen" walls of the room and a flat screen in a vitrine displaying 3-D renderings of artifacts that have been taken out of their original contexts and are now housed in the collections of encyclopedic museums.

Sondra Perry, still from *IT'S IN THE GAME '17 or Mirror Gag for Vitrine and Projection*, 2017. Two-channel installation: HD video, and animation, color sound, 17 minutes. Vitrines with pedestals and monitors and Rosco chroma key blue paint. Courtesy the artist.

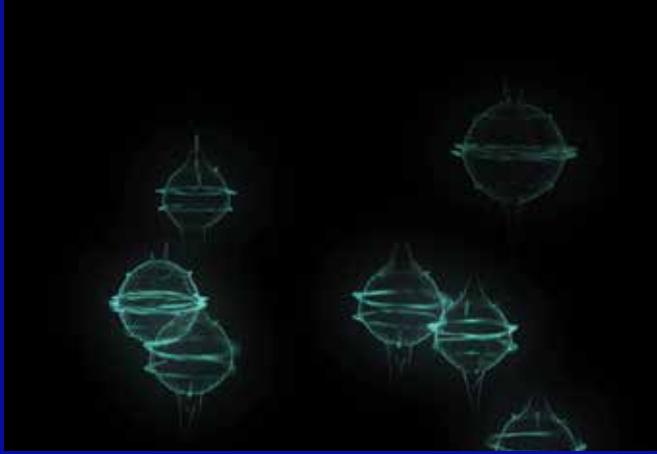
Jacolby Satterwhite



Trained as a painter, Jacolby Satterwhite (born 1986, Columbia, South Carolina; lives Brooklyn) is known for his elaborately detailed videos that seamlessly meld 3-D animation, archival material, and live performance. In his ongoing work *En Plein Air: Music of Objective Romance* (2016–present), Satterwhite builds an orgiastic intergalactic world in which real and virtual cyborgs power a multichambered spaceship pulsing with eros. Imagined as a kind of concept album, the visuals are set to songs by the artist's mother, Patricia Satterwhite, which have been remixed by Nick Weiss (one half of the electronic music duo Teengirl Fantasy). Throughout the video we see the artist voguing, multiplied, and entwined with props and hybridized bodies as handwritten texts by his mother float in and out of view. Although deeply autobiographical, this fantastical and unabashedly queer universe allows the artist to realize his desire to inhabit an outer space where it is possible to be beyond human.

Jacolby Satterwhite, *En Plein Air: Music of Objective Romance*, 2016 (ongoing work). Animation and HD video, color, sound, 10 minutes. Courtesy the artist. Commissioned by San Francisco Museum of Modern Art.

Susanne M. Winterling



Susanne M. Winterling's (born 1970, Rehau/Oberfranken, Germany; lives Berlin) work is informed by her interest in philosophy, artificial intelligence, and ecofeminism. In *Glistening Troubles* (2017), animated dinoflagellates spin below sea level. For Winterling, these blue, bioluminescent, single-celled organisms embody a kind of living touch screen, lighting up as a cluster when agitated. In another video, a Jamaican fisherman recounts how for the people of Glistening Bay bioluminescence has healing powers, but is also understood by scientists as a defense mechanism against predators. Acting as a kind of "burglar alarm," these microscopic lifeforms provoke us to think about the threat of climate change and the potential mobilized by interspecies solidarity. Winterling's polyphonic installation reflects on how species survive and adapt to environmental conditions and in so doing suggests that they might offer us an alternative way to imagine communication and community.

Susanne M. Winterling, *Glistening Troubles*, 2017, mixed media installation. Courtesy the artist and Jessica Silverman Gallery, San Francisco. Co-commissioned by the Contour Biennale 8, Thyssen-Bornemisza Art Contemporary-Academy, Alligator Head Foundation-Residency, Henie Onstad Kunstsenter (HOK), and the Institute of Contemporary Art, University of Pennsylvania with additional support by the Research Fund of Oslo National Academy of the Arts.

Related Programs

Thursday, July 13, 7 PM

Screening at Lightbox Film, International House
Philadelphia (3701 Chestnut Street)

July, TBD

Vaporwave Event with *death's dynamic shroud.wmv*,
Eyeliner, and special guests. Details forthcoming.

Co-organized by curators Alex Klein, Dorothy and Stephen R. Weber (CHE '60) Curator (ICA), and Milena Hoegsberg, Senior Curator, Henie Onstad Kunstsenter (HOK).

The exhibition was initiated by the Henie Onstad Kunstsenter (HOK) in Norway and conceived and produced in collaboration with the Institute of Contemporary Art, University of Pennsylvania. The exhibition will be accompanied by a fully illustrated catalogue published by Sternberg Press with contributions by scholars Tom Holert and Homay King in Summer 2017.

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