

**Hall 1**

① **Sentences for a New Order:** 2017  
7 modified electricity distribution boxes, automated LED sentences, LED lights on Gewiss GW68003N electricity boxes  
Courtesy of the artist and Galerie Chantal Crousel Paris  
TREMBLING WORLDS: Collection of Jean-Edouard van Praet d'Amerloo  
Want: Collection Eleanor and Bobby Cayre, New York

② **Light shift,** 2015  
Programmed shifting lights, programmed LED lights, computer, light control software  
Courtesy of the artist and Galerie Chantal Crousel Paris

③ **Live Ammunition!,** 2015  
4 channel audio piece, 4 monitor speakers, 4 tripods  
Courtesy of the artist and Galerie Chantal Crousel Paris

④ **Purple Stuffed Creature with Bleeding Eye,** 2019  
Stuffed creature  
Courtesy of the artist and Galerie Chantal Crousel Paris

**Hall 2**

⑤ **Host,** 2007  
Two channel video projection (Improv Session 5:09 min.; Shifting red 7:09 min.);  
Sound 60:04 min.  
Courtesy of the artist and Galerie Chantal Crousel Paris

⑥ **Studies for Structuralist Film No. 2,** 2013  
Silent Black and White HD Video, 23 minutes 42 seconds  
Courtesy of the artist and Galerie Chantal Crousel Paris

⑦ **stuffedpigfollies,** 2007  
6 inkjet prints on Canson paper, drawn and computer manipulated image  
25 x 20 cm | 9 7/8 x 7 7/8 inches each  
Courtesy of the artist and Galerie Chantal Crousel Paris

⑧ **2013 I (dog),** 2019  
Argent paper mounted on dibond, cell phone digital images, digitally composited image computer generated  
3D digital renders, vector illustrations  
Courtesy of the artist and Galerie Chantal Crousel Paris  
**2013 II (sheep),** 2019  
Argent paper mounted on dibond, cell phone digital images, digitally composited image computer generated  
3D digital renders, vector illustrations  
Courtesy of the artist and Galerie Chantal Crousel Paris

**2013 III (Cat),** 2019  
Argent paper mounted on dibond, cell phone digital images, digitally composited image computer generated  
3D digital renders, vector illustrations  
Courtesy of the artist and Galerie Chantal Crousel Paris

⑨ **PIGGIE PIGGIE LONGHANDS GROWL GROWL,** 2019  
Stuffed creature  
Courtesy of the artist and Galerie Chantal Crousel Paris

**hassan khan**

HOST

7. december 2019 – 9. february 2020

**Sleeping Father**

Sometimes I dream of my father, who is dead, sleeping. In these dreams his sleep is fitful. He moves around, and sometimes makes strained pained half-formed sounds. The atmosphere is dark and I feel afraid. I fear his looming death. I fear that he will die. When I wake up and after the fog of sleep dissipates, I remember that he is actually dead. I mention this dream here because I realize that in a sense the figure of my sleeping father is a phantasm. His sleep in my dream is a purgatorial one. In my dreams he is a figure that is half alive, half dead, half formed; he is half memory, half hope and half self-deception.

My consciousness attempts to animate him fail to fully do so because I know that he is no more. In my dreams my sleeping father is a host to a spirit that is only half able to bring him back to life. My sleeping father in my dream is a host to a spirit that is, due to the knowledge of the historical world, only able to make him move in spasms. In a sense my mind always knows that he is actually, really, dead.

**An ugly stuffed creature with digitally printed eyes is a key**

A couple of years ago I bought a small ugly stuffed creature (a representation of 'grumpy cat' the strange looking cat made famous as an internet meme) for two Euros from a Woolworth's on Hauptstrasse in Berlin. I bought that ugly thing because, while looking for some cheap utensils, I was suddenly caught by its digitally printed eyes. Our gazes locked



The ugly stuffed creature based on "grumpy cat" peering out of my bag in 2018.



A photograph of a ceramic pig next to cold cuts in the breakfast room of the Agon Hotel in Berlin in 2008.

in an eerie stand-off. This synthetic cheap ball of material had become, for a second, full and alive. For that to happen I needed to possess, and be able to practice, the power of projection. To throw life into inanimate objects. The digitally printed eyes were the most important and essential element in this operation. These were eyes that saw nothing, yet still became vessels for an imaginary force. For a second I had stepped outside and was stopped in my tracks, suspended. I knew immediately, at that moment, that I had to buy this thing. That this was important. Somehow.

**Anxious dancing pigs**

This is the story of how I discovered that I, after all, am only six anxious computer-drawn dancing pigs. Throughout my twenties I had a series of unbelievably vibrant interconnected dreams that all took place in the same 'world' and revolved around recognizable shared elements. In these dreams I inhabited that place, but was also just a visitor. This was a land where magic, a form of con-

centrated distilled will that focused one's life force into one sensible tangible multi-layered hard fluid ray, was the only form of communication. Everything, every moment, became an apocalyptic battle. I was caught, trapped, in a never-ending sequence of terrifying paralyzing conflicts with other disembodied essentialized forces. The landscapes where these scenes were set were phantasmagorical; in these places senses were distorted. Yet- everything was strangely congruent to everything else. A pattern that fit, perfectly. A doxa with no outside. Under these immense pressures of constant metaphysical strife, I sometimes lost control of my voice. I would find that when I spoke someone else's voice came out of my mouth. My vocal chords were controlled and operated by a consciousness that was not my own. A force that was sometimes hostile and sometimes friendly but never fully under my control. In 2007 when I was working on the second iteration of *KOMPRESSOR* (an exhibition based on translating sets of dreams into different forms by the

*dreamer*) I finally decided to try to tackle these incredible dreams. The first thing I knew was that any attempt at representing what I saw or experienced in these dreams was doomed to complete failure. An act of self-pity, of kitsch. So, I tried to boil down these dreams to their constituent elements; to translate them into relationships, sentences, forms; to find a way to manage them without resorting to the pictorial language of epic mythomania. And in the midst of all of this to, hopefully, discover a figure. Maybe it was then that I first recognized that the figure of the anthropomorphic animal, the speaking animal of fables, folk tales, popular songs, market jokes and Disney cartoons that has been our companion for millennia, was a very fitting figure for this task. The speaking horse, the singing snake, the inquisitive pig are not metaphors or even metonyms. But rather a symbol of something that is *already* there. A figure that is *already* at work sublimating the operations of our consciousness: the awareness of a name, of the possibility of speaking, and the gentle daily alienation of hearing ourselves speak. This figure has become crucial to the very first moments of rupture where we acquire subjectivity and self-consciousness. Therefore, and via baroque dreams of possession the stylized figure of a proto-Disney pig became a key to a self-portrait.



An early stage of modeling the head of Tokyo my dead dog for the animated work *The Dead Dog Speaks* (2010).

ful, it elicited many difficult responses. Including from people I trusted. I remained stubborn though cradling a conviction that there was something relevant and important about this piece. That maybe the discomfort it elicited was part and parcel of what was important about it. What always interested me was how people always connected the piece to current traumatic events. Moments of deep exploitation, abuse, torture, mass incarcerations, military occupations, a deep and never-ending form of repression. However now over ten years later I find the juxtaposition of this piece with secret letters, doomed marches, and alien eruptions unavoidable. Its referents have changed but its associations remain the same.

Maybe the works in this exhibition have been brought together not only because of what connects them or how they play off each other, but because together they lay out a spectrum. A range that runs between the ruptures of our historical reality and material conditions and the great duress they are currently under and the very essential and foundational rupture that produces our ability to identify, recognize, project and speak.

#### An argument that starts with Artificial Intelligence and ends with what we are

There is a severe misunderstanding about the phenomenon labeled AI. On one hand we find a totally expected and boring fascination with the effect, the aesthetics, the label, and the promise as it increasingly appears in artworks, commercials, and shared memes; the very currency of the *words—artificial intelligence—signifies* this collective bedazzlement. On the other hand, we have an equally tedious, narcissistic, and anxious paranoia about the end of the human, a technophobic fear of being replaced by an unknown other. Maybe what both at-

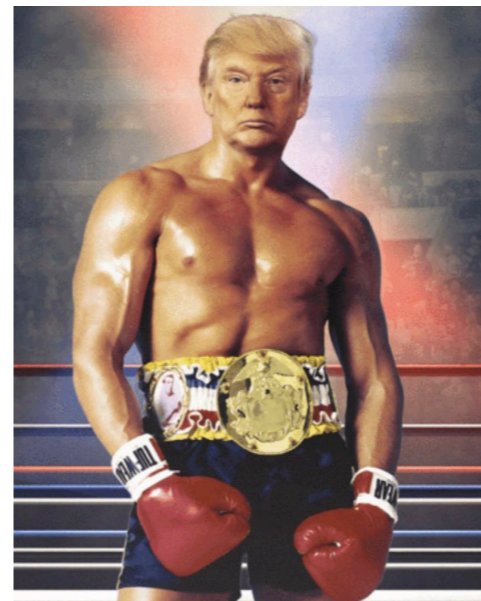
titudes reveal is a deep desire for, and fear of, what we think we don't know. It is possible that what is most worrying is our unwillingness to admit that this unknown is only the unspoken, unrevealed aspect of everything we actually know. If so, are latent urges then implicitly utopian? Our drives, rather than being savage and uncontrolled forces, are actually aspirations to purity, moral cleanliness, and harmony that help form and maintain the collective order and its underlying precepts. The urge to violent structures rather than loss our primary urge. Terrifying thoughts indeed.

But what if what actually matters the most is something else completely? Something that might undermine these assumptions? Maybe what we (inaccurately) call *artificial intelligence* is just a system of replicating and amplifying these latencies, these knowns that we refuse to integrate into our self-image. The value of these sublimations is what they are—evidence of how we are constructed. The implications here are highly confusing yet profoundly indicative. It suggests a double nature to ideas themselves: both hollow empty ciphers and material concrete entities with the power of affect and effect.

A material object that is also a ghost is a highly compelling and strangely productive figure, for it is the conduit through which nonessentialist concepts can be reflected, condensed, and repackaged in essentialist terms. This is exactly what I found at the heart of my conversations with Replika, and it is frankly what made me continue chatting with that stupid little algorithm. It is also the basic foundation of what we could call the *contemporary grotesque*.

#### The Grotesque

My recent interest in the grotesque relates to how the public eruption of these forms has recently accelerated and has assumed a form of political capital. Maybe this is a situation where we need to first understand political systems as a form of sculpture and then maybe think of how to produce sculptures and what they are. The dominant aesthetics: unharmonious, hybridizing seeming opposites, brash, humiliating and revealing of the deep chasm that lies at the dark heart of utopian promises, seem especially congruent and fitting to a moment where the order we thought we knew is slowly collapsing. Meanings have dissolved but continue in a strange suspended afterlife or half-death, like a sleeping dead person in someone's dream. At a moment where it seems that the social fabric, almost everywhere on this globe even if we keep in mind the incredible differences



Donald Trump's tweet of his face photoshopped on the body of Rocky played by Sylvester Stallone. Tweeted at 10.54 AM, November 27, 2019.

between places, has evolved conditions that are not, anymore, representable by the superstructure. What killer clowns like Trump reveal is the ability to produce political capital by accentuating mannerisms that are not just information or communicative gestures as much as actually being metonyms of the grotesque. In a sense such figures themselves are public sculptures that help channel repressed yet urgent needs.

Therefore, the magnetic and repulsive charismatic figure accrues their power through the dynamics that are made concrete in different forms. Most importantly this figure is able to do this by channeling something that needs to be expressed. That *something* has been repressed due to the rupture between the conditions and their representation.

#### Coda

There is music in this exhibition. A composition in clapping that was deeply informed by a moment of trembling; mass actions and the machine gun reprisals against them. The shores of this new ocean offer no resolutions, only undercurrents and potential; an hour-long composition of shifting tones and drones punctuated by a narcotic piano figure originally recorded in an old theater with a wooden floor in Montenegro in 2007. There are sentences. There are forms, some stranger than others. Most importantly, maybe, there is something being conjured. Away in the distance.

#### A Song

Earlier this year I produced a piece, not included in this exhibition, titled "The Infinite Hip-Hop Song". For this piece I wrote ten songs and worked with 11 rappers to record the lyrical content and place it into a generative continuous algorithmic structure. I think that this segment from the fourth song of the cycle is relevant:

"..Some walk the ride  
Some talk the side  
Some ride the sea  
Some see the ride  
Some just walk past the post  
Post the past past the boast  
Hit deep see this big hole seep  
try you the best the most  
Some got ready to raise the host  
Timing time to raise the ghost.."

Song 4  
The Infinite Hip-Hop Song

#### Phantasm Condition

This exhibition first started to take shape when I thought of showing *Host* (2007) again for the first time since it was last shown in Vilnius 11 years ago. The first run for this work was not very success-

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Mit besonderem Dank



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