



Unstable State of Things

Anca Benera & Arnold Estefan
Svätopluk Mikyta, Paulien Oltheten
Gideon Horváth, Rita Süveges, Anna Zilahi
/xtro realm art group/

CURATORS
Barnabás Bencsik | Laura Mudde

GLASSYARD
gallery

12. 08. 2020.
— 11. 09. 2020.

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Unstable State of Things

four positions

We are in the midst of a pandemic, people worldwide demonstrate against institutional racism, and around the corner lie the threats of climate change. If things have ever been stable and predictable, that dream seems to have gone away long time ago. How to deal with these uncertainties? How to still maintain a sense of belonging to the world and in the world?

The artists that participate in the exhibition **Unstable State of Things** all have their own artistic position to the complex social challenges we are facing today. Their works make us, once again, aware of the fact that the irreversible consequences of the ecological crisis permeate every dimension of life. With one of its implications being increasing migration and consequently a rise in populist nationalism worldwide. Placing these developments in relation to each other we can observe that xenophobia and humanity's destructive relationship with the environment emanate from the same mode of inhabiting the world: a dominating mode that imposes its own interest as law, subordinating others for the extraction of value, eradicating what gets in the way.

The exhibition gives voice to the conviction that social and environmental phenomena are intrinsically and deeply related. By zooming in on the local, the ambiguous and the lived experiences of individual people, the works invite us to move beyond a world view that makes us see otherness, whether human or nonhuman, as something that exists solely to be instrumentalized or 'managed'.

Svätopluk Mikyta has the habit of drawing every day. This series of drawing were made during the quarantine period and this is the first time they are exhibited. The drawings take us along in different reflections and associations on the recent lockdown. Following the days, we can see the changes in moods in between the psychological burden of social deprivation in the quarantine and the remedy of the nature proximity. Feelings that everybody will have felt familiar with.

The work *Dissolution* of **Rita Süveges** is part of the larger project 'out of control' in which she investigates the carbon cycle and the changes it undergoes due to human intervention. In *Dissolution* the image of an erupting volcano is placed next to an oil spill on water. By doing so Süveges is juxtapositioning the slow carbon cycle - that stands for a transformation of carbon that spans through hundreds of millions of years - and the fast carbon cycle in which we extract the coal reserves at a horrifying concentration and speed. At the moment activities of human societies emit around 100-300 times more carbon dioxide into the atmosphere than volcanoes, causing irreversible climate change.

Gideon Horváth's works question the binary, heteronormative way we think of what is natural and invite us to leave the anthropocentric fantasy of nature behind. The series *Deviation finds a way* are abstracted and anatomically conscious objects made from beeswax. The works show three examples in which species challenge the binary oppositions in between male and female: female koalas kept in captivity that are observed to become homosexual in absence of males; the sex change of bearded dragons in their embryonic development due to rising global temperatures; and mating hermaphrodite leopard slugs.

The artists **Anca Benera and Arnold Estefan** perform the fact that writing history is always also a political act. The performance *Black March* is the 4th chapter of *Pacta sunt servanda* and it treats about the violent incidents that took place in March 1990 in Târgu Mures and surrounding settlements in Transylvania. The artist read the press reports about the events from media in Hungary and Romania out loud. Although the chronology of the press reports is the same, the versions upon the inter-ethnic conflict are substantially different. The wall installation *Conflict Lines* highlights a different source of ongoing conflict, being the (imposed) borders of nations. What we see are the areas of the world that Google considers "mapless" - nation borders that are still under dispute. The piece points out to the fact that the borders that Google Maps and Google Earth show are different than traditional cartography methods. Google adapts, for example, certain borders depending on the user's domain. This way, Google represents these borders accordingly to the assumed territorial interests of were the user is.

The video *Meanwhile I am doing exercise* is the result of a journey **Paulien Oltheten** undertook in 2016 in which she followed the ancient walking route of the Via Egnatia, which runs from Durrës, Albania to Istanbul, Turkey. At that time the so-called 'migration crisis' was at its peak. Big parts of the ancient walking route were blocked for refugees by means of fences and border patrols. The video shows however a different picture of the refugee crisis than the news media do. Oltheten primarily points her camera to the daily activities of the people who crosses her path, being it the local residents or the refugees. Against the background of important political events, she captures new and old habits in a poetic way. The recent work *Stay Healthy* stands in stark contrast to the video *Meanwhile I'm doing exercise*. It shows 16 short clips Oltheten made during the first some weeks of the COVID-19 lockdown situation in Amsterdam. The short video portraits show a range of different ways of how people relate to the pandemic, in which we are all forced to find new ways of relating to each other and our surroundings.

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Első szoba / *First Room* Svätopluk Mikyta

(Rajzok balról jobbra / *Drawings from left to right*)

Elszáradt kéz jobbról
Shriveled Hand from the Right, 26. 03. 2020
frottage and drawing
63.3 x 46 cm (without frame: 59 x 41.7 cm)

Elszáradt kéz balról
Shriveled Hand from the Left, 26. 03. 2020
frottage and drawing
63.3 x 46 cm (without frame: 59 x 41.7 cm)

Torzó / Torso
26. 03. 2020
frottage and drawing
63.3 x 46 cm (without frame: 59 x 41.7 cm)

Elszáradt kéz
Shriveled Hand, 26. 06. 2020
frottage and drawing
63.3 x 46 cm (without frame: 59 x 41.7 cm)

Ember és gép I-II.
Man and Machine, 04. 04. 2020
nitro print and drawing
63.3 x 46 cm (without frame: 59 x 41.7 cm)

Haldoklás
To Hold Dying, 15. 03. 2020
drawing
63.3 x 46 cm (without frame: 59 x 41.7 cm)

Botok alakokon keresztül
Rods Through Figures, 30. 03. 2020
drawing
46 x 33.7 cm (without frame: 41.4 x 29.4 cm)

Haldokló növények megkímélése
To Protect Dying Plants, 03. 04. 2020
drawing
46 x 33.7 cm (without frame: 41.4 x 29.4 cm)

Kísérlet a természetten való keresztülhatolásra
An Attempt to Cross Nature, 04. 04. 2020
drawing
46 x 33.7 cm (without frame: 41.4 x 29.4 cm)

Haldoklás
To Hold Dying, 15. 03. 2020
drawing
46 x 33.7 cm (without frame: 41.4 x 29.4 cm)

Peroxid
01. 05. 2020
nitro print, ink, stamps
46 x 33.7 cm (without frame: 41.4 x 29.4 cm)

Remegő kéz
Shivering Hand, 23. 03. 2020
ink drawing
63.3 x 46 cm (without frame: 59 x 41.7 cm)

Élő kéz
Living hand, 14. 04. 2020
ink drawing
63.3 x 46 cm (without frame: 59 x 41.7 cm)

Psycho, 04-05. 04. 2020
nitro print, drawing
63.3 x 46 cm (without frame: 59 x 41.7 cm)

Learatott búza
Felled Wheat, 28-29. 03. 2020
drawing
63.3 x 46 cm (without frame: 59 x 41.7 cm)

Második szoba / Second Room

Gideon Horváth

Deviation Finds a Way 1.

Female koala's reproductive system and lower jaw with laryngeal vocal folds /
Nőstény koala nemi szervrendszere, alsó állkapocs gége hangszalagok
2020

méhviasz, üveg / beeswax, glass
70 x 40 cm

Gideon Horváth

Deviation Finds a Way 2.

Stages of embryonic development of bearded dragon /
Szakállas agáma embrionális fejlődési szakaszai
2020

méhviasz, üveg / beeswax, glass
70 x 40 cm

Gideon Horváth

Deviation Finds a Way 3.

Leopard slugs mating, hermaphrodite reproductive system and eggs /
Leopárd meztelencsigák párzása, hermafrodita nemi szerv és tojások
2020

méhviasz, üveg / beeswax, glass
70 x 40 cm

Rita Süveges

Dissolution

diptichon

akril, vászonacrylic on canvas
150 x 150 cm

Harmadik szoba / Third Room

Anca Benera & Arnold Estefán

Pacta sunt servanda – Black March
2012

performance, 9 min. 30 sec.
Courtesy the artists.

Anca Benera & Arnold Estefán

Conflict Lines

2018

installation

fém, papír / cut-out metal, prints on paper
variable dimensions

Negyedik szoba / Fourth Room

Paulien Oltheten

Addig is csinállok néhány gyakorlatot

Meanwhile I'm doing exercise, 2017

audiovisual work of 25 video fragments and 100 photos, 22 min. 35 sec.

Courtesy the artist and

Gallery Les Filles du Calvaire, Paris

Paulien Oltheten

Vigyázz magadra

Stay Healthy

2020

16 video fragments, 30 min. 51 sec.

Courtesy the artist