

## Press Release



## HYPEROBJECTS

### An exhibition concept by Birgitta Weimer

*There you are, "sheltering in place" to stop the spread of Covid-19, the hyperobject of our age, the hyperobject within a hyperobject, the global warming one. Is it global warming prep? Is it a disastrous distraction? You're terrified, if you're like me - Timothy Morton 2020*

In 2000, atmospheric researcher Paul Crutzen proposed the use of the term Anthropocene for the current geological epoch shaped by humankind. Since 2007, a geoscientific commission has been working on the question of whether it should be defined as the new geological era following the Holocene. The Anthropocene covers a complex range of issues, from species extinction to climate change, which manifests itself in the melting of polar ice caps, glaciers and permafrost soils, the associated rise in sea levels, the acidification of the oceans and the ground, over-exploitation of available resources, and the impact of climate change on the environment.

The American philosopher Timothy Morton calls these diversely interwoven ecological and socio-economic aspects of the Anthropocene Hyperobjects - entities

of such enormous temporal and spatial dimensions that they shatter traditional notions of what a thing actually is. The term Hyperobjects implies that an end of the world has already occurred in the sense that our conception and definition of world, nature and even environment are no longer a meaningful horizon, in front of which human events take place.

The current pandemic is a prime example of a hyperobject: a tiny virus rules the world. Zoonoses such as Covid-19 are favored by human intervention in landscapes and ecosystems. Humans themselves therefore become a risk for epidemics.

Thinkers of the Anthropocene like Bruno Latour tie in with the Gaia hypothesis, which was developed in the 1970s by the chemist James Lovelock and the microbiologist Lynn Margulis. It defines the earth as a living being that creates and maintains conditions that enable the evolution of complex organisms. In his manifesto *Où atterrir?* (2017) Latour describes how nature enters the stage and interacts with us due to the ecological consequences of human activity. Gaia not only takes blows, but increasingly strikes back violently.

Hyperobjects is not intended to document individual aspects of the Anthropocene, but rather to explore artistically the deeply unsettling experience of the end of the world as we knew it.

In accordance with Hyperobjects' concept, the works shown in the exhibition are fundamentally multidimensional, cut-out-like and thus boundless.

**Birgitta Weimer** (\*1956 Gemünden am Main, studied at the University of Fine Arts Hamburg, class of Prof. Sigmar Polke and Ulrich Rückriem), shows a multi-part installation created this year entitled *The Spread*. Visitors move through a landscape of black charred wood pieces, The End of the Carbon Age, overgrown with copper pipes growing from the ground. Like rhizomes, they seem to be spreading out incessantly and eerily. Sections of copper tubes, Sections of Exponential Growth, protrude from the wall like islands. The phenomenon of exponential growth, which we are confronted with in the pandemic, is described here as well as in a series of works on paper, *Emotional Seismology*, in which current vibrations are woven into multi-dimensional color structures.

*In the Anthropocene the anthropocentric world view is transformed into a collaboration of all living beings on this planet. Against this background, **Lea Grebe** (\*1987 Munich, studied at the Academy of Fine Arts in Munich, class of Prof. Axel Kasseböhmer) creates sculptures and drawings in which she broaches the issue of interactions between living beings. Based on an archive of found dead insects, she creates a monument to these smallest seemingly insignificant creatures in the form*

of bronze casts. In drawings, she examines visual patterns and processes in series, as can be observed in swarms of animals, but which also allow comparisons to our everyday human world.

The symbiosis of all living beings, which Timothy Morton calls "Solidarity with Nonhuman People" in his book *Humankind*, is also the subject of Alex Kassian (\*1986 Kyoto, BA Design & Research at Goldsmiths University of London), who will present his sound installation *Rhythms of Life*. In the vaulted cellar of the gallery, we hear the breaths of a human being, which almost sound like the roar of the sea. This project impressively demonstrates the unique connection of our body to the natural rhythms of life on earth.

**Claudia Mann** (\*1982 Wuppertal, studied sculpture at the Düsseldorf Art Academy, class of Didier Vermeiren) shows sculptures in the courtyard and in the entrance area of the gallery. Her works are directly related to the earth: she works with the ground, into which she digs holes and moulds them for example with her body measurements. She creates vessels and shells, which sometimes remind of sarcophagi and refer to an absence of the body or the earth. In her work there is a direct connection between body and earth and thus to Gaia. The hands in the sculpture *From Hand to Head* symbolize the Anthropocene and become hyperobjects.

The gallery is open on the opening day, Thursday 22 October from 17 to 21 hrs.

The current distance and hygiene rules apply.

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**Birgitta Weimer, Claudia Mann, Alex Kassian und Lea Grebe**

**OPENING DAY: Thursday, October 22, 2020 5 - 9 pm**

**Running: October 23 until December 5, 2020**

We look forward to separately agreed appointments with you even outside our opening hours.