

## **The Munchhausen-Effect. On Time in Times of Having No Time.**

A project curated by Anamarija Batista and Ksenija Orelj in cooperation with *fiftytwenty*.

Opening: Friday, March 10th, 2017, 7 pm

Performance by Nika Rukavina: Friday, March 10th, 2017, 7.30 pm

Exhibition: March 11th – April 29th, 2017

The Munchhausen-Effect emphasizes the tension between the growing demands of the result-oriented culture and the struggle of the self for its own expression, referring to the story of Baron Munchausen pulling himself out of a mire by grasping his own hair. While searching for forms of moderate conflict resolution, the exhibition depicts interpretations of current time frames which are generated by the perpetual pace of late capitalism, bypassing both pessimistic as well as romanticized models. The artistic methods are characterized by a subtext of uncompleted resistance, they show confidence of their situation as one of vulnerability, but perceive it as a foundation for new configurational possibilities. Instead of adapting to the compulsory rhythm of contemporary technological culture, subtle subversion and restorative retreat are suggested. The artistic act replaces direct criticism. By deliberately ignoring rules of competition, conventional measures of time, as well as resource efficiencies, the notion of forming time as an everlasting relational exchange process is evoked. This emphasizes time as a malleable matter.

Regarding work time, spare time, study time, project time, break time, play time, time for art etc., one may notice that the corresponding points in time are shaped by social and collective norms. The order of time suggested in Modernism, where individual time sequences are directly connected to their locations, has changed in the age of globalisation. As Marshall McLuhan wrote: "Plurality-of-times succeeds uniformity-of-time. Today it is only too easy to have dinner in New York and indigestion in Paris".<sup>1</sup> Increasing digitalisation, but also multifaceted, short-term, and intense relationships (as found in a work contract or mobility and consumption opportunities) make continuities impossible. The system that abstracts the human being and his actions, transforms these into a landscape of formulas. It raises the demand to continuously adapt thoughts, actions, and feelings into an 'external', mathematically modelled

---

<sup>1</sup> Marshall McLuhan, *Understanding Media: The Extensions of Man*, 1964, S.171 (13.2.2017),  
URL:[http://robynbacken.com/text/nw\\_research.pdf](http://robynbacken.com/text/nw_research.pdf)

system. This creates a state of temporal vacuum and generates an infinite series of short term agendas. It leads to a manic increase in production and a steady lack of social time, preventing the distinction between the before and after. The synonyms of our time are fast burn culture (Peter Sloterdijk), acceleration society (Hartmut Rosa, Armen Avanessian), or timeless-time (Manuel Castells). The present time seems suspended while placing heavier and heavier demands on the future. As the world is moved increasingly by abstractions of capital and digital beats, deregulations in work relations, and a lack of long term occupations, the body responds by desynchronization. Time-shortage becomes relevant, warning us about irregularities in the dominant time management, while simultaneously pointing towards possibilities of alternative time horizons.

The gathered artworks – made in different media and by artists with different generational perspectives – deal with individual rearrangements of the dominant temporal orders. They shift the imperative of effectiveness towards overlapping, intentional delays, temporal lapses, retroactivities and cracks in the time layers. The artists demonstrate, how personal time horizons can be rethought and recreated, as well as how acceleration tendencies can be torn apart. In times of permanent motion and urgency, personal time horizons make the incorporation of one's own body with its conditions possible, allowing an on-going process of reflection that oscillates between the systemic, the own body, and the technical apparatus. While being dominated by permanent action, the artists accentuate their own imaginations of time by opening speculative time that is suspended in the financial logic of late capitalism. Standstill is suggested, not as an obligation and prescribed rest, but as a counterbalance, a deconstructive moment, to produce efficiency and promptitude, like in the works by Luiza Margan, Slaven Tolj or Jakub Vrba. Instead of accepting permanent competition as something normal, micro-acts of obstruction are created that open up different temporal directions: recombining temporalities of past, present and future (Sam Bunn, Marko Tadić), introducing parallel times and intentional delays in the dominant time matrix (Veronika Burger), concentrating on neglected historical narratives (Nika Rukavina), and focusing on the pace and rhythm of divergent social and cultural systems (Dušica Dražić, Irena Sladoje, Anna Hofbauer and Matthias Noggler). Modern maladies such as multitasking that should lead to permanent stability and perfect results, but instead often result in burn-out or fatigue, are exposed in several works that depict these temporal 'accidents' through humoresque situations (Sina Moser & Joyce Rohmoser, Christoph Schwarz & Matthias Peyker). The critical moments appear as a

form of resistance, which provokes the compulsion to act despite the pressure of time – quite similarly to the story of Baron Munchhausen who pulls himself out of a mire.

*Text by Anamarija Batista and Ksenija Orelj*

Artists

*Sam Bunn (AT/ UK), Veronika Burger (AT), Dušica Dražić/ Wim Janssen (SRB / BE), Anna Hofbauer (AT), Luiza Margan (AT/ HR), Sina Moser (AT)/ Joyce Rohrmoser (AT), Matthias Noggler (AT/ DE), Nika Rukavina (HR), Christoph Schwarz (AT)/ Matthias Peyker (AT), Irena Sladoje (BiH), Marko Tadić (HR), Slaven Tolj (HR), Jakub Vrba (AT/ CZ)*