

Hope There's Someone (To Touch)

Clemens von Wedemeyer, Benjamin Verhoeven, Ruth Patir, Hans Op de Beeck, Rachel Monosov, Maria Lucia Cruz Correia

Curated by Rachel Monosov & Catinca Tabacaru

15 May — 28 June 2020

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MAY 15 – JUNE 28, 2020

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Catinca Tabacaru Gallery presents Hope There's Someone (To Touch), a video exhibition live now exclusively on our gallery website with works by Clemens von Wedemeyer, Benjamin Verhoeven, Ruth Patir, Hans Op de Beeck, Rachel Monosov, and a live performance ritual by Maria Lucia Cruz Correia. This is Part II of the virtual exhibition trilogy co-curated by Catinca Tabacaru and Rachel Monosov as a response to the current global crisis. Hope There's Someone (To Touch), picks up where Part I: The Far Away Is Here left off. After an interrogation of the otherness at the heart of the initial response to Covid-19, we find ourselves processing the approximately 8-weeks our global community has collectively spent isolated indoors. This exhibition is our best attempt at reflecting our emotional body during this time.

We now understand what it feels like, but still, not what it is, or when and how it will come to an end.

How do we find solace? How do we offer comfort? Will tomorrow ever come? But today, I miss your touch. I miss the touch of many. Today, time and space can be heard. Within the silence we wonder if fellow humans can explore the inner self best when in isolation. Or, does the reality of aloneness have more in common with the Ego?

Touch, silence, and movement run through the 5 video works in Hope There's Someone (To Touch), like the fil rouge of our current global experience... sometimes it feels like experiment might be the term more fitting.

Divided Dialogue, Clemens von Wedemeyer's 80-slides work, premiering digitized here, depicts a conversation between two people caught in one room. The predominant silence, interrupted only by the sound of a projector changing slides, allows the viewer to process the text dialogue, and the expressions in the still portraits of Wedemeyer's two characters.

We move on to the alluring follow-up of Benjamin Verhoeven's 50,000 Scans, a work interrogating how the choreography of a human body, as well as sound, function in a scanned reality. Next, Ruth Patir animates the ancient stone rendering of a female goddess in Merry, Fuck, Kill and ends on a philosophical note of the movement from oppression to freedom. We may find ourselves observing the tactile and rhythmic qualities in these works as a prescient reflection on the absence of touch felt during this quarantine time.

We then enter the loop created by Hans Op de Beeck in Staging Silence 3 as two pairs of anonymous hands construct and deconstruct fictional interiors and landscapes on a mini film set. Op de Beeck interprets the cycle of human intervention on Earth as civilizations are built and destroyed. Are we merely the simulation, even less, the idea being fathomed by some higher all seeing eye? This question is considered by Rachel Monosov

in Melodica, a film in which the artist creates a beautifully detached world inside the sprawling spaces of House Van Wasserhove, a concrete modernist architectural delight melted into the green environment that surrounds it. In both Op de Beeck's and Monosov's films, a melancholic sensations – composed through hyper aesthetics, detachment from the real world, and meditative rhythms – builds towards existential questions in search of meaning.

Much like the characters in these five video works, we have been presented with a new reality. Time and space have been challenged, giving us an entry point to the unknown – in equal parts terrifying and sublime. Perhaps the nature of our relationships and conversations has changed? Perhaps we have made space for a parallel virtual reality on which we are now dependent; or maybe we've re-ordered our priorities and our work/life balance?

As we prepare for the inevitable exodus, one of the questions we find ourselves asking is what long term effects will this time have on our social and psychological behaviors?

Maria Lucia Cruz Correia proposes one path into the near future as she addressed nature colonization and the present climate emergency. On the next full moon, Friday, June 5 at 9pm CET (4pm EST), Correia invites us to join her on Zoom for a performative ritual to become a Guardian of Nature, i.e. a human able to act as representative to a nature entity, like a river or a mountain, which is granted personhood in a court of law. (RSVP to lowery@catincatabacaru.com)

For us, Part II of this online trilogy reflects the very core of our curatorial concept. It is our way of staying in relationship with, and within, the community we have built around the world over the past six years. There is nothing we want more than to see all of you IRL, and we hope very much this day will come soon.