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→ Melanie Gilligan
The Common Sense
Substitution

30 01 – 03 03 2016

Press talk
Jan 29, 11 am

Opening
Jan 29, 6pm



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→ The videos of Melanie Gilligan (*1979 Toronto, lives in New York) address current political and economic conditions through intricate narratives, adopting the form of television series. These employ drama, comedy, science fiction and horror using visual styles of contemporary film and television. One recurrent theme in Gilligan's work is how economic forces shape various aspects of life today. Since the economic crisis of 2008, Gilligan has made several narrative video works that address the effects of this event on the political landscape. The artist does not deal with economic exchange in isolation but puts this in relation to, among other things, processes of subjectivation, the status of physical bodies and affect in contemporary capitalism and the demands of work. Many of her videos involve situations where individuals or groups are put in direct relation with systemic conditions in unexpected or unlikely ways.

This exhibition presents a section of Gilligan's recent serial video work "The Common Sense" (2014-15) alongside the premier of a video, "Substitution" (2014), made in collaboration with the artist group Wooloo. In both these works economic conditions impact and shape the characters, their situations and their collective relations but there are few simple answers about how these processes play out. In this way, these two pieces take up certain problems of collectivity today, its urgency and its obstacles. The question common to both works is what are the possibilities for collective political and social formations today when the predominant connections with others are through technological and economic abstractions?

"The hypothetical, sci-fi scenario of 'The Common Sense' is constructed around the basic question, 'What would the world be like if we didn't have separate needs?'. To explore the implications of this proposition, Gilligan imagines a newly invented technology that allows individuals to feel one another's embodied physical and affective experiences. This idea of collectivizing basic aspects of human experience resonates with French philosopher Gilbert Simondon's notion of the 'transindividual.' For Simondon, this refers to those elements that both belong to and exceed the boundaries of the individual. Gilligan's new work explores the political potential residing in such 'transindividual,' collectively shared dimensions of subjectivity. In a world where monetary value reigns as the dominant connective tissue among human beings, what would happen if a technology allowed bodily experiences to be overlapped?" (Amy Luo, Canadian Art, Winter 2015)

A catalogue is published with Trondheim Kunstmuseum and Sternberg Press, Berlin.

Biography

Melanie Gilligan was born in Toronto in 1979. She lives and works in New York und London. In 2002 she received her BFA with honors from the Central Saint Martins College. In 2004/05 she was a scholarship holder in the Whitney Museum of American Art's Independent Study Program. Gilligan publishes criticism in publications such as Texte zur Kunst, Artforum and Fillip. Her recent scientific publications include Art & Exchange and Notes on Art, Finance and Un-Productive Forces. In 2009 the artist received the Paul Hamlyn Award.

Exhibitions (selection)

2016 "Melanie Gilligan," Trondheim Kunstmuseum, Trondheim, Norway (solo)
"Nervous Systems. Quantified Self and the Social Question," HKW – Haus der Kulturen der Welt, Berlin
"TeleGen. Kunst und Fernsehen," Kunstmuseum Liechtenstein, Vaduz
"FLUIDITY – The dematerialization of society (and its art objects)," Kunstverein in Hamburg
2015 "British Art Show 8," Leeds Art Gallery, Leeds
"Inhuman," Fridericianum, Kassel
"The Common Sense III," de Appel, Amsterdam (solo)
"The Common Sense II," de Hallen, Haarlem (solo)
"flats," Team Gallery, New York
2014 "The Common Sense I," Casco, Utrecht (solo)
"The Little Things Could Be Dearer," MoMA PS1, New York
"4 x exchange /abstraction," Galerie Max Mayer, Düsseldorf (solo)
2013 "and Materials and Money and Crisis," mumok, Vienna
"Dissident Futures," Yerba Buena Center for the Arts, San Francisco
"Carbon 14," Royal Ontario Museum, Toronto
"Financial Report," Artspace, Melbourne
2012 "Popular Unrest," VOX Centre de l'image contemporaine, Montreal (solo)
"Crisis in the Credit System," Justina M. Barnicke Gallery, Toronto (solo)
"It's The Political Economy, Stupid," Thessaloniki Center of Contemporary Art
2011 "Self-Capital," Inter Access, Toronto (solo)
2010 "Melanie Gilligan," Kölnischer Kunstverein, Cologne (solo)
"Melanie Gilligan," Chisenhale Gallery, London (solo)

Press talk: Jan 29, 2016, 11am

Press download: <http://www.km-k.at/en/exhibition/melanie-gilligan/press/>

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Side program An Art Day's Night:

Feb 04, 2016, 6pm: Curator's tour with Sandro Droschl

Feb 11, 2016, 6pm: Curator's talk with Nicolaus Schafhausen (Kunsthalle Wien)



Melanie Gilligan, *The Common Sense* (excerpt), 2014, 15-channel video (3 chapters), 15 x 6,5 min., edition of 5, courtesy Galerie Max Mayer, Dusseldorf



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