

VISITOR'S GUIDE

DIGITAL GOTHIC

Zoe Barcza, Alfred Boman, Nicolas Ceccaldi, Victoria Colmegna, Morag Keil, Clémence de La Tour du Pin, Maria Metsalu, Petros Moris, Jill Mulleady, New Noveta, David Rappeneau and Viktor Timofeev

EXHIBITION

FROM JUNE 22ND TO SEPTEMBER 29TH 2019

The exhibition *Digital Gothic* brings together artworks showing the resurgence (but especially the continuity) of sombre imagination, dark romanticism and the Goth aesthetic, in this time of widespread crises, marked by the effect of digital technologies and the internet's increasing pervasiveness in the life of the global population over the past twenty-five years.

"Gothic" aesthetic, though it originates in medieval art and in a range of forms or symbols that appeared in the 12th century, is above all a fantasy, a mystification that came into being towards the end of the 18th century and developed considerably in the 19th century through literature, art and architecture. It is a constituent of romanticism's gloomy version: dark romanticism¹, that of horror, romanticism's irrational tendency, with disquieting phantasmagoria and the demonic grotesque, which embody fears, dreams, delirium and the darkness of the human being². The Gothic aesthetic and dark romanticism then evolved with symbolism, resuscitating ancient myths, reviving a symbolic language that allowed the imagination to reclaim its rights during a period (1870-1910) known for its rationalism and positivism. These tendencies continued in the early 20th century with expressionist cinema and through surrealism, which integrated the Freudian concept of the "uncanny", as well as oneiric delirium and the psyche. To these three historical moments—recently highlighted in the exhibition *L'ange du bizarre: Le romantisme noir de Goya à Max Ernst*³—we should add the more or less evenly distributed presence of horror movies in the second half of the 20th century (including the *giallo* films), a veritable guiding thread for sombre imagination until the appearance of the "goth" subculture in the 1980s, which is indissociable from the cold wave and gothic rock music genres. The latter placed unprecedented importance on dress style, so that creativity extended beyond the frame of traditional art mediums to bodies and social behaviour, among both adults

¹ The term appeared for the first time in Mario Praz's study *The Romantic Agony*, Meridian Books, New York, 1956 (original Italian edition published 1930).

² Gero von Wilpert, *Sachworterbuch der Literatur*, Stuttgart, 2001, p. 743.

³ *L'ange du bizarre. Le romantisme noir de Goya à Max Ernst*, exhibition catalogue. Städel Museum, Frankfurt am Main and Musée d'Orsay, Paris, Hatje Cantz, Paris, 2013.

and teenagers. goth subculture was all the rage with young people, gaining popularity in the 1990s through music, but also through video games and TV shows, becoming a mass phenomenon that has never stopped branching out into many subcurrents: at the end of the millennium, dark romanticism had never been so popular.

Examining the evolution of dark romanticism and the goth aesthetic in the age of the internet and new media does not mean attempting a pointless classification of the multiple currents pursuing their proliferation. It is more about resolving to plunge into the gulf of data, to get carried away by what the algorithms make of that aesthetic. Also, within this exhibition, the term “Gothic” should be understood in the broad sense: a subversive counterculture that appeared in the late 18th century and endures to the present day through specific aesthetic codes, though it has been evolving and multiplying over time. Thus *Digital Gothic* proposes to consider the existence and future of that universe, that state of mind, and wonder to what extent it helps us navigate our complex contemporary situation, which goes beyond our cognitive abilities and disrupts our relationship to space-time. And if the recent boom in New Age, wellbeing and “happycracy⁴” are struggling to convince us, produced as they are by the neoliberal machine like a new opium of the people, what do we have left if not “the choice of darkness⁵”?

Benoît Lamy de La Chapelle

Translation: Matthew Cunningham

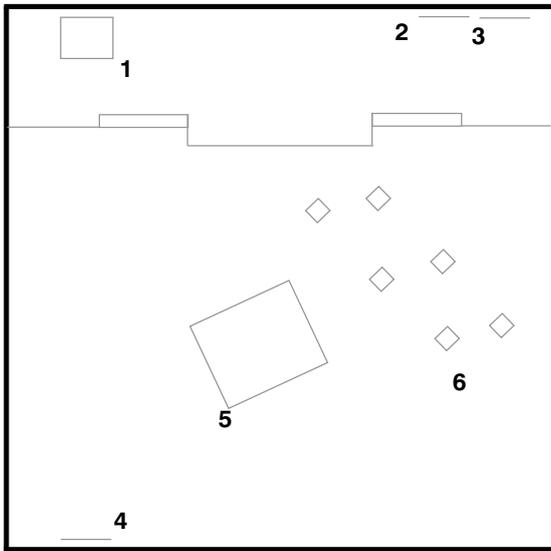
⁴ See Edgar Cabanas and Eva Illouz, *Happycratie*, Premier parallèle, Paris, 2018.

⁵ “L’homme qui ne médite pas vit dans l’aveuglement. L’homme qui médite vit dans l’obscurité. Nous n’avons que le choix du noir.” in Victor Hugo, *William Shakespeare*, I, V, Gallimard, Paris, 2018.

⁶ Philippe Rigaut, *More than life - du romantisme aux subcultures sombres*, Rouge profond, Aix-en-Provence, 2015, p. 43-53.

FLOOR PLAN

Ground floor:

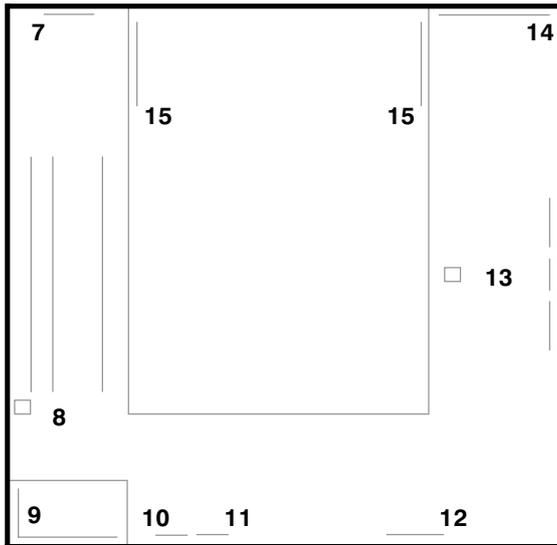


Digital Gothic's floor plan

Works in the exhibition:

1. **MORAG KEIL**
Potpourri, 2013
Video installation
Courtesy of the artist and
Project Native Informant, London
2. **ZOE BARCZA**
Being Alone, 2018
Acrylic and vinyl paint
on linen canvas,
120 × 101 cm
Courtesy of the artist
and Croy Nielsen, Vienna
3. **ZOE BARCZA**
*What Empowers Us to Stay Connected
to Our Compassionate Nature Even Under
the Worst Circumstances?*, 2018
Acrylic and vinyl paint
on linen canvas,
120 × 101 cm
Courtesy of the artist
and Croy Nielsen, Vienna
4. **JILL MULLEADY**
Untitled, 2016
Oil on linen
151 x 92 cm
Private collection
5. **ALFRED BOMAN**
Princess, 2019
Metal, iron, fabric
170 x 170 x 50 cm
Courtesy of the artist
6. **VICTORIA COLMEGNA**
Emo Tribal Squad Indumentaria, 2013
Mannequins, dresses
Courtesy of the artist

First floor:



Digital Gothic's floor plan

Works in the exhibition:

7. **CLÉMENCE DE LA TOUR DU PIN**
1992, 2019
Altar server belt, C-print,
acrylic on foam board
80 x 70 x 5 cm
Private collection
8. **CLÉMENCE DE LA TOUR DU PIN**
Anges des crevasses
(*Angels of Cracks*), 2019
Jute, dye, latex, pigments, fabric,
aluminium tubes, sheep fat, concoction,
salt bag, plastic, pig ears and orange
blossom absolute water
Three curtains of 520 x 450 cm each
Courtesy of the artist
9. **VIKTOR TIMOFEEV**
4.5/5.5, 2016
Hand-cut digital prints on PVC
Courtesy of the artist
10. **DAVID RAPPENEAU**
Untitled, 2019
Coloured pencil, ball pen,
pencils, charcoal, marker on paper
30 x 21 cm
Courtesy of the artist
and Queer Thoughts, New York
11. **DAVID RAPPENEAU**
Untitled, 2019
Coloured pencil, ball pen,
pencils, charcoal, marker on paper
30 x 21 cm
Courtesy of the artist
and Queer Thoughts, New York
12. **DAVID RAPPENEAU**
Untitled, 2017
Acrylic, ball pen,
pencils, charcoal on paper
61 x 43,5 cm
Courtesy of the artist
and Queer Thoughts, New York
13. **NICOLAS CECCALDI**
Souffles prolongés s'engouffrant
inégalement dans la fissure
d'une fenêtre, 2019
Installation composed of an
audio headset and three paintings:
Untitled, 2017
Razor blades on canvas
80 x 130 cm;
Antiface, 2017
Oil on canvas
121 x 94 cm;
Untitled, 2017
Razor blades on canvas
80 x 130 cm
Courtesy of the artist and Gaga,
Mexico City and Los Angeles
14. **PETROS MORIS**
Spirit Structure (Time and Death), 2019
Metal
Varying dimensions
Courtesy de l'artiste
15. **PETROS MORIS**
Time (and Death), 2019
Metal
Varying dimensions
Courtesy of the artist

ARTWORKS IN THE EXHIBITION

GROUND FLOOR

MORAG KEIL

1. *Potpourri*, 2013

Video installation

Courtesy of the artist and Project Native Informant, London

Morag Keil's investigations surround the impact of data-capitalism and digital technologies on contemporary subjectivities, while acknowledging how these are affected by the precarity of everyday realities. Her work frequently adopts a lo-fi, pared-back aesthetic, incorporating everyday objects and found materials alongside digital innovations that affect domestic life, such as home automation. She appropriates and re-presents aspects of branding strategies from advertisements and social media platforms to investigate and expose pervasive techniques for influencing consumerist desire.

Potpourri is a video posted online, available on a workstation installed in the exhibition space. Fake paparazzi images alternate with scenes of domestic life, and the whole thing is interspersed with male and female voices. The narrative is constructed from various sources like comments extracted from social networks or discussions gleaned from digital platforms. The central script illustrates Keil's research into gender opposition: men's perspective on the female body defines the majority of our contemporary images, linked to the worlds of fashion, pornography, social media, gossip magazines... She also explores the way digital platforms influence how we present ourselves, how we stage our identity, and conversely, how we are perceived. Some elements come from a conversation with a female user on a social media site linked to pornographic content. This online environment offers an "alternative" possibility, enabling women to create their own images on their own terms, without any rules concerning appearance or personal style. Evoking the dark, hacked-up, low-tech, PC advocate, or an old home computer, the workstation recreates the individual online viewing experience and our personal consumption of images.

Morag Keil (b. 1985, Scotland) graduated from Glasgow School of Art.

Her work was recently shown at ICA, London; Project Native Informant, London; Jenny's, Los Angeles; Real Fine Arts, New York; Isabella Bortolozzi, Berlin; Cubitt, London; Neue Alte Bruecke, Frankfurt; Outpost, Norwich; Neuer Aachener Kunstverein, Aachen; Palais de Tokyo, Paris; Focal Point Gallery, Southend-on-Sea...

She currently lives and works in London, United Kingdom.

ZOE BARCZA

2. *Being Alone*, 2018

Acrylic and vinyl paint on linen canvas

120 x 101 cm

Courtesy of the artist and Croy Nielsen, Vienna

3. *What Empowers Us to Stay Connected to Our Compassionate Nature Even Under the Worst Circumstances?*, 2018

Acrylic and vinyl paint on linen canvas

120 x 101 cm

Courtesy of the artist and Croy Nielsen, Vienna

Zoe Barcza is an artist who paints with airbrushed acrylics and flat layers of vinyl paint, creating soft-edged and ghostly, figurative yet surreal renderings of bodies and text. Her work often features herself as the subject, pictured in relation to various elements of the environment to depict symbiosis and the connection between herself and the world. She opens up the body through various painterly gestures and inserts elements inside. She confronts her own subjectivity with people, animals and objects that are external to her body but inextricable to the sense of self, including nourishment and preservation of the self as a part of a larger ecology.

The work is a diptych made up of two paintings created by the artist from photographs linked to texts extracted from internet forums.

It examines love affairs and their complexities, that incongruity between our desire to open ourselves to the other person and the difficulty of being a couple. Searching the words “relationships” and “love” in hope of sharing a few philosophical reflections on the subject, Zoe Barcza found that people were giving up connecting with others because of intimacy issues linked to the fear of talking about themselves, revealing themselves. If the texts are personal accounts, the paintings bear the mark of a photo session performance. In this work, she asked people she knew to pose in various positions and poses that were not always easy to hold. For Zoe Barcza, this power relationship between the model and artist is a sub-plot, a micro-metaphor for the love affair and for love in general.

Despite the cynical, dark character of the texts—the individuals ultimately concluding that they prefer to stay alone—for Zoe Barcza there is still hope. Love still counts.

Zoe Barcza (b. 1984, Canada) graduated from HFBK Städelschule in Frankfurt, Germany and the University of Toronto, Canada.

Her work was recently shown at Croy Nielsen, Vienna; Bianca d’Alssandro, Copenhagen; Bonny Poon, Paris; In extenso, Clermont-Ferrand; François Ghebaly, Los Angeles; Shoot The Lobster, New York; Cooper Cole, Toronto...

She currently lives and works in Stockholm, Sweden.

JILL MULLEADY

4. *Untitled*, 2016

Oil on canvas

151 x 92 cm

Private collection

In her painting, Jill Mulleady shifts between extremely artificial, atmospheric spaces and coolly observed domestic still lives. In both her figurative fantasies and her everyday realism, she seeks to stage the interplay of drives and repressions, eroticism and fear. These scenes provide a framework that becomes intoxicated by inner passions. Desires are discharged according to both the laws of the everyday and their transgression. Her paintings can be seen as allegories for the contemporary experience of the image as interface: not just a picture but a means of mobilising attention, bodies and affects within an increasingly virtualised social space.

In the foreground, *Untitled* by Jill Mulleady depicts a gargoyle high up on a Gothic cathedral, seeming to meditate, its eyes fixed upon a contemporary city below. Behind it, a black silhouette strikes the same pose. Its strange appearance and the impossibility of perceiving it sows doubt as to its identity. It could be half-living-being, half-ghost, or maybe even a demonic figure, as suggested by the hornlike projections on top of its head. The scene at twilight seems peaceful, whereas a chaotic movement is breaking out in the sky: two vague black holes are appearing in a kind of double tornado foreshadowing a climate catastrophe or the beginning of the end of time as prophesied in the Apocalypse of John...

Jill Mulleady (b. 1980, Uruguay) graduated from Chelsea College of Arts, London. Her work was recently shown at the 58th Venice Biennale; Swiss Institute Contemporary Art, New York; Schloss, Oslo; Galerie Neu, Berlin; Kunsthalle, Bern; Freedman Fitzpatrick, Los Angeles; Simon Lee Gallery, New York; Gaudel de Stampa, Paris; Herald Street, London; Dépendance, Brussels; Paramount Ranch, Los Angeles; Supportico Lopez, Berlin; Forde, Geneva...

She currently lives and works in Los Angeles, United States.

ALFRED BOMAN

5. *Princess*, 2019

Metal, iron, fabric

170 x 170 x 50 cm

Courtesy of the artist

Alfred Boman is a painter and sculptor using a wide range of techniques, all at once, resulting in ultra-intense works, both abstract and figurative in nature. His works seem to grow out of a free thought that winds in and out of our reality and the subconscious dream world. There is a wild energy, almost a natural force, in the works that, with their organic imagery, seem to emanate from a life-spark, and a central vitality for everything that grows and exists. The condensed atmosphere of the image plane in its multitude of colors and layers, along with the curving and twisting animals dancing across the surface, becomes a picture of the life force that permeates our lives and the life that is in the world.

Floating under the synagogue's dome, Alfred Boman's work might resemble a fallen angel frozen at the end of his fall from paradise, after being banished in punishment for his disobedience or his rebellion against the master of heaven.

Discarnate, his metal skeleton evokes an anti-technological proto-robot hybridised with a medieval knight, his head capped by an aggressively shaped helmet. This unsettling character seems to embody a threat, a bad omen. The whole skeleton is made of metal, its welds visible to the naked eye. The look of this work is reminiscent of the aesthetic of steampunk, originally a literary cultural movement, which cultural commentator Douglas Fetherling has defined as "a genre that imagines how different the past might have been had the future come earlier".

Alfred Boman's sculpture looks worn-out and rusted, but nevertheless quite alive, as shown by the character's bright-red, visible heart, which one could believe is still beating in the glimmer of the red sequins that decorate it.

Alfred Boman (b.1981, Sweden) graduated from HFBK Städelschule in Frankfurt.

His work was recently shown at Moderna Museet, Stockholm; Union Pacific, London; Carl Kostyal, Stockholm; Paramount Ranch, Los Angeles; Johan Berggren, Malmö; Cooper Cole, Toronto; Galerie Nordenhake, Stockholm...

He currently lives and works in Stockholm, Sweden.

VICTORIA COLMEGNA

6. *Emo Tribal Squad Indumentaria*, 2013

Mannequins, dresses
Courtesy of the artist

Victoria Colmegna is inspired by personality cult, psychoanalysis, and her own versions of pop culture in equal measure, in order to produce artworks that set out to strip-mine and reconstruct the institutionalized brain-games that surround and move through us. Colmegna's selfhood is then expressed via hyper-affected compositions in which exhibition making and art production are settled to questions of styling. The works become carriers of poignant emotional and psychosomatic charges effecting unravelled, personal impressions that expand into the universal chronicle of the social apparatuses that structure our desires.

The installation *Emo Tribal Squad Indumentaria* is made up of six ghostly mannequins wearing a collection of dresses created and sewn by the artist. The dresses are a combination of inexpensive "readymade" t-shirts in the Gothic/fantasy/tribal style, sewn to lower parts decorated with various graphics like Japanese leaves, a 1950s glam motif or medieval knitwear. One can more closely observe the details appearing on the clothing ("indumentaria" in Spanish) of this squad. Fantastical, unreal creatures appear on each mannequin's chest, depicting characters that take us back to the worlds of fantasy or video games. Like their practically achromatic colours, the elements represented on the garments belong to imaginary worlds that are also very dark in themselves. This installation highlights a deviation from the contemporary art world towards other industries like fashion or music. It encourages visitors to reflect on how the trends and seasons of these three industries intermingle and how this phenomenon turns creative acts into merchandise in the process of sustaining itself.

Victoria Colmegna (b. 1986, Argentina) graduated from HFBK Städelschule in Frankfurt, Germany.

Her work was recently shown at Gregor Staiger, Zurich; Bonny Poon, Paris; Park View, Los Angeles; Freedman Fitzpatrick, Los Angeles; Richard Sides, Berlin; Truth & Consequences, Geneva; Galeria Marta Cervera, Madrid...

She currently lives and works in Buenos Aires, Argentina.

STAIRCASE

VIKTOR TIMOFEEV

9. 4.5 / 5.5, 2016

Hand-cut digital prints on PVC

Varying dimensions

Courtesy of the artist

Viktor Timofeev's practice pushes autobiographical experiences into invented frameworks; transformative moments are amplified through the lens of fiction, and crystalize as constraints through which the past is reexamined in the present. Everyday rituals and routines are situated as rules, and improvisations within them produce the works. It engages with questions of what it means to interact freely within structures, when those structures are endless, non-existent or imaginary, and how these structures might shape behavioral patterns. As the artist, he is implicated within his work through the use of his own history and body, using them as a platform to exceed the personal.

4.5 / 5.5 is a set of ten digital prints on PVC created from coloured-pencil drawings. They depict forearms that are emaciated and sickly, as if they had been taken from zombie corpses. Deprived of bodies but quite alive, the limbs, sometimes arranged in pairs, mutilate each other, the left and right hands attacking one another, tearing off each other's fingers, revealing flesh in certain places. Installed directly on the walls of the staircase in the exhibition space, the hands seem to want to grab us as we pass, and they create an upward movement towards the upper floor.

They appear to be external elements seeking to attack us. But visitors could see their own hands in them, the metaphorical materialisation of more private conflicts, of an inner duality.

This piece is part of a broader project entitled *Sazarus*, revolving around a digital environment that Timofeev developed.

The artist created *Sazarus* after a health problem that caused him to lose control of his body, and after discovering the red tape of a labyrinthine decentralised bureaucracy before arriving at a possible recovery.

Viktor Timofeev (b.1984, Latvia) graduated from Piet Zwart Institut, Rotterdam and Hunter College, New York.

His work was recently shown at Alyssa Davis Gallery, New York; Fondation Ricard, Paris; Kim? Contemporary Arts Centre, Riga; Podium, Oslo; Cordova, Vienna; Jupiter Woods, London; Arcadia Missa, London; Drawing Room, London; Bozar, Brussel; Futura, Prague; Levy Delval, Brussel...

He currently lives and works in New York, United States.

FIRST FLOOR

CLÉMENCE DE LA TOUR DU PIN

7. 1992, 2019

Altar server belt, C-print, acrylic on foam board
80 x 70 x 5 cm
Private collection

8. *Anges des crevasses (Angels of Cracks)*, 2019

Jute, dye, latex, pigments, fabric, aluminium tubes, sheep fat, concoction, salt bag, plastic, pig ears and orange blossom absolute water
Three curtains of 520 x 450 cm each
Courtesy of the artist

Clémence de La Tour du Pin creates sculptures, installations and scents imbued with religious mystics, spirituality and paranormal universes as well as a profound poetics of abandonment. Her work explores as well the carnal objectivity of the human body— found in advertisements, pornography, cyber-technological control, and the various ways people alter and manipulate their bodies.

The installation *Angels of Cracks* by Clémence de La Tour du Pin invites visitors to plunge into an outdated, misty, scented world of a strange old 18th-century “hôtel particulier”‡, where the ghostly presence of its ancestors establishes a dialogue with old objects abandoned to the dust, and with spiritual entities like angels and demons from traditional Peruvian cultures and Christianity. Here the artist examines the different degrees of infestation of negative mystical entities in the physical body—ranging from infestation to demonic possession. Something of a hybrid between the atmospheres of the documentary *Grey Gardens** and the Addams Family, this corridor with no exit leads to 1992, an irregular cardboard quadrilateral roughly tagged and framed by an altar boy’s belt. To best reproduce this ethereal atmosphere, the artist accompanies it with a scent, which he created from natural animal and vegetable elements. Hoof walls, which weigh down the curtains here and there, are placed as if marking out a ritual space.

Clémence de La Tour du Pin (b. 1986, France) graduated from The Metropolitan University in London and was resident at De Atelier, Amsterdam.

Her work was recently shown at Nationalmuseum, Berlin; CAN, Neuchâtel; In extenso, Clermont-Ferrand; Treti Galaxie, Turin; 1857, Oslo; Kunstverein, Dortmund; Tobias Naehring, Leipzig; The Musée d’Art Moderne de La Ville de Paris; SALTS, Basel...

She currently lives and works in Amsterdam, Netherlands.

* *Grey Gardens* (1975, by David Maysles and Albert Maysles) shows the everyday life of two women who belonged to the American upper middle class, but now live as recluses in an insalubrious house. The two women—a mother and daughter, respectively the aunt and cousin of First Lady Jacqueline Kennedy—spent decades living in a state of near-isolation and insalubrity.

DAVID RAPPENEAU

10. *Untitled*, 2019

Coloured pencil, ball pen, pencils, charcoal, marker on paper
30 x 21 cm
Courtesy of the artist and Queer Thoughts, New York

11. *Untitled*, 2019

Coloured pencil, ball pen, pencils, charcoal, marker on paper
30 x 21 cm
Courtesy of the artist and Queer Thoughts, New York

12. *Untitled*, 2017

Acrylic, ball pen, pencils, charcoal on paper
61 x 43,5 cm
Courtesy of the artist and Queer Thoughts, New York

David Rappeneau's figurative drawings, executed with a sharp, craggy line, represent the world and the social codes of today's youth encased in banal and everyday scenes. His works depict a rather monotonous and cold atmosphere, caused by the frequent use of dark colors contrasted with the whiteness of the characters. Between hypersexualisation, drugs and relaxation, their characters wander in a world marked by mass consumption, violence and boredom.

David Rappeneau's drawings depict young men in urban environments that are marked by churches and other decorative Gothic or neo-Gothic structures. They are loitering, waiting, or taking a break. Their attributes, scooters and famous-brand sportswear—considered cool by young people—situate them in our European contemporaneity, strongly contrasting with the architecture of the past, although the sharp, angular characteristics of the drawing integrates them perfectly into that dark, stormy, tense context. Another young man is seen nonchalantly sitting on the guardrail of a Gothic cathedral's gallery, cigarette and beer in hand, angel's wings jutting out from his back. Maybe this is a true angel—decked in a modern clothes, with leather vest, torn jeans and broken smartphone—that updates the figure of the wandering, lone, (fallen?) angel in the era of Internet 2.0.

His work was recently shown at Bortolami Gallery, New York; Queer Thoughts, New York; Crèvecoeur, Paris; Foxy Production, New York; Misako & Rosen, Tokyo; Forde, Geneva; Balice Herting, Paris; Tomorrow Galley, New York...

NICOLAS CECCALDI

13. Souffles prolongés s'engouffrant inégalement dans la fissure d'une fenêtre, 2019

Installation composed of an audio headset and three paintings: *Untitled*, 2017, razor blades on canvas, 80 x 130 cm; *Antiface*, 2017, oil on canvas, 121 x 94 cm; *Untitled*, 2017, razor blades on canvas, 80 x 130 cm

Courtesy of the artist and Gaga, Mexico City and Los Angeles

Nicolas Ceccaldi makes paintings, collages, sculptures and installations. Spanning a broad aesthetic spectrum – from corporate design to transhumanism to the visual elements of the cyberpunk and seapunk subcultures – his works are a conceptual commentary on nostalgia for the internet revolution of the 1990s in mainstream fashion and contemporary pop culture. These variations and dissonances characterize his universe, a world drawn from the metamorphosis in which the spirit of the Baroque lives along its paradoxical non-actuality, in an infinite process of rumination through tastes, the generic and the unique, various modes of input, reception, and beliefs.

Nicolas Ceccaldi's installation includes an oil painting: an expressionist portrait of singer Anna-Varney Cantodea of the German darkwave group Sopor Aeternus, holding her face as a wolf emerges from her cranium. Two other paintings depict VU metres, the colour squares made out of painted razorblades glued onto the canvases. Linked with these works, headphones play a new soundtrack from the Wampyric Symphonia project, consisting of pieces that Nicolas Ceccaldi composes from MIDI files (Musical Instrument Digital Interface) and imported music that he remixes using the software FL Studio (FruityLoops). Nicolas Ceccaldi's installation plunges us into the Gothic universe through a sensory and figurative representation of dark feelings linked to existence, "Sopor Aeternus" meaning "Eternal Sleep" or "Sleep of the Dead". The melancholy and sadness that we can feel listening to Anna-Varney Cantodea's work are also the source of his creation. Nicolas Ceccaldi's work holds up a mirror that might reveal our worries and dark thoughts in a cathartic process.

Nicolas Ceccaldi (b. 1983, Canada) graduated from HFBK Städelschule in Frankfurt, Germany. His work was recently shown at Greene Naftali, New York; Le Consortium, Dijon; House of Gaga, Mexico City; Goton & Edouard Montassut, Paris; MEGA Foundation, Stockholm; Project Native Informant, London; Kunstverein Munich; Real Fine Arts, New York... He currently lives and works in New York, United States.

PETROS MORIS

14. *Spirit Structure (Time and Death)*, 2016

Metal

Varying dimensions

Courtesy of the artist

15. *Time (and Death)*, 2016

Metal

Varying dimensions

Courtesy of the artist

At the core of Petros Moris' work lies a deep interest in the dynamic dialogue between the transformative forces of memory and progress. He examines this relation through a poetic and conceptual tracing of the mutual stratifications of the material, technological and cultural environment and the fateful interrelations between natural and social phenomena. It evolves as a configuration of information, matter and space, embodying the processing of personal and communal mythologies, locally-sourced and industrial materials, archaic and innovative technologies and techniques.

The mural installation *Spirit Structure (Time and Death)* represents a set of "natural" objects like plants, insects or body parts derived from a broader series by the artist entitled *Nature, Labor, Automation*: it is rooted in the iconographic contents of old automata in Antiquity, which usually represented mythical beings, gods and demigods, animals and other natural elements. Most of the time, they reconstructed a mythical scene, but in other cases, their compositions could be more abstract, illustrating a kind of animist force, or other phenomena linking the natural with the metaphysical.

The installation is also supplemented by signage, like *Time (And Death)*, acting somewhat as titles for the sets of sculptures, and tackling a few basic notions relating to the historical understanding of automation and its relationship with the *anthropos*, ideas like time and life (or death in this case) that explore points of intersection between man and technology. These references echo the historical philosophical discourse attached to them, like notions of *anima* and *psyché*, which were central to the philosophical thought of Aristotle—whose division between mind and soul appeared later in the work of Descartes (both of them compared the "function" of organisms with machines)—or that of Marx in his interpretation of mechanised industrial capitalism and its impacts on notions of reality and human work time, something that extends to contemporary discourse on the applications of robotics and artificial intelligence, particularly those linked to work and to our understanding of life and mortality (or its defeat).

The fonts of the characters on those signs were collected from various freeware sources online. In a way, their styles cover the diverse cultural and historical contexts in which the art of automata was developed (resembling ancient, Byzantine, Asian, Gothic or futuristic styles).

Petros Moris (b. 1986, Greece) graduated from Athens School of Fine Arts and has received an MFA in Curating from the Goldsmiths University of London.

His work was recently shown individually (and collectively with Kernel) at Point Centre for Contemporary Art, Nicosia; DUVE Berlin; Union Pacific, London; Project Native Informant, London; New Museum, New York; Benaki Museum, Athens; the Cycladic Art Museum, Athens; the National Museum of Contemporary Art, Athens; the House of Cyprus, Athens; Kunstraum Niederoesterreich, Vienna; Ontario College of Art & Design University...

He currently lives and works in Athens, Greece.

PERFORMANCES SHOWCASED DURING OPENING NIGHT

NEW NOVETA

Alukah Abad, 2019

Performance ; featuring Vindicatrix, with glass vessels made by Miranda Keys and costumes by Xenab Lone

15 minutes

New Noveta's multidisciplinary practice combines installation, sound and costume design with physical action and dance. Over the past several years, they have developed a series of kinetic performances during which the two artists physically struggle, often frantically, to mutually accomplish an urgent yet Sisyphean task. Responding to what they perceive to be a pervasive atmosphere of conformity and control within high-pressure, primarily metropolitan societies, New Noveta reproach everyday 'task-fulfilling' within the now-mandatory management and regulation of the self, magnifying the dual poles of labor and estrangement that put the body in Capitalism under duress.

Alukah Abad is a performance exploring the theme of beliefs and folklore linked to vampires, specifically their female variety like the shtriga (a vampiric witch from Albanian folklore who sucks the blood of children as they sleep before turning into a fly), or Alukah, a demon woman from Jewish folklore. Alukah is a vampire either derived from Mesopotamian demonology or connected with Lilith, a female demon from the Jewish tradition. Her name means "horse-leech" in Hebrew.

This futuristic incarnation of Alukah confronts the viewer with her hysterical, deviant nature, with the discontent of her spirit, with the chaos of her insatiable needs, as well as with her female freedom. This chaotic, demonic behaviour represents religion's demonisation of free women and their bodies, the pressure inflicted on their spirits and on their non-reproductive bodies up to the present today. The performance is also staged in the synagogue building through 19th-century aesthetic codes linked to the world of vampires in popular culture.

New Noveta is formed by Ellen Freed (b. 1988, Sweden) and Keira Fox (b.1983, UK). Their work was recently shown at ALT CPH, Copenhagen; Kunstverein, Freiburg; Arcadia Missa, London; Bikini, Basel; Liste, Basel; Forde, Geneva; Cell Project Space, London; Sandy Brown, Berlin; Serralves Contemporary Art Museum, Porto; ICA, London...

They live and work in London.

MARIA METSALU

Mademoiselle X, 2017

Performance

40 minutes

In her work Maria Metsalu has an ongoing interest in the production of her own persona, self-mythologisation of it and her own autopoiesis. Exploring physical and virtual realities, bringing them together, understanding the differences of those two in terms of interaction, social exchange and transformation are important aspects of her research process. She is one of the founding members of international performance collective Young Boy Dancing Group.

The performance *Mademoiselle X* takes place in the universe of the figure of Mademoiselle X—a half-fictional woman who, though quite alive, is convinced she is dead. She thinks she lacks a brain, nerves, chest, stomach, intestines, and is nothing but a decomposing body. She nonetheless believes herself to be eternal and able to live forever. That would mean everything could be possible and permitted, everything could be part of her and come from her, forming a system at once simple and complex. Complex systems are uncertain. It is impossible to predict if they will react with precision, no matter how well we understand the nature of their components. *Mademoiselle X* borrows from the atmosphere of haunted houses and fairgrounds, in such a way as to simulate the impression everyone gets when entering these “haunted” places. Through the story of *Mademoiselle X*—lurking in an “interzone” as the living dead, as a zombie body—the position of the performer and the repeated execution of the same performance with the same material and the same motivation are always challenged. Although the artist obviously uses known tricks or effects that might often be interpreted as “overly exaggerated”, she does not seek to create a climax: with the help of strategic repetitions, she tends to produce a “non-orgasmic” performance that slowly takes its course. This performance does not seek to show itself, but rather to hide itself in an imitation. And although there is conflict, she remains vulnerable in daylight. If she takes possession of us, she will no longer have any enemies. There will be no one left to eliminate her. And she’ll have won.

Maria Metsalu (b. 1990, Estonia) graduated from SNDO (School for New Dance Development) in Amsterdam. Her work was recently shown at Baltic Triennale, Riga; Manifesta 11, Zurich; Les Urbaines festival, Lausanne; Performa, New York; Kunsthalle, Vienna; Théâtre Nanterre-Amandiers; Tallinn Art Hall; NU Performance, Tallinn... She currently lives and works in Tallinn, Estonia.

RELATED EVENTS

TEACHER MEETING

Teachers will be welcomed by Camille Grasser, head of visitor services, for an introduction to the exhibition *Digital Gothic* and the *Gue(ho)st House*, a public commission by Christophe Berdaguer and Marie Péjus.

Thursday June 27th from 4.30 PM.

GUIDED TOUR BY BENOÎT LAMY DE LA CHAPELLE, DIRECTOR OF THE ART CENTER

Wednesday July 7th at 4 PM.

Free, reservation not required.

CONFERENCE BY BENOÎT LAMY DE LA CHAPELLE

AT THE DEPARTMENTAL MUSEUM GEORGES DE LA TOUR, VIC-SUR-SEILLE

During this conference, Benoît Lamy de La Chapelle, director of the art center and curator of the exhibition *Digital Gothic*, will go back to its historical basis, by analyzing dark romanticism's development from the XVIIIth century, in parallel with social, cultural and economical contemporary evolutions, to the way internet, technology and our dominant socio-economic system shape our sombre imagination today.

Wednesday September 18th from 8 PM to 9 PM.

5 euros. Reservation required, to be made to the Museum Georges de la Tour : 03 87 78 05 30.

MEETING-CONFERENCE « TROPICS OF ROMANTICISM »

WITH PHILIPPE RIGAUT, DOCTOR IN SOCIOLOGY

Philippe Rigaut, sociologist and associated researcher at the CEAQ (Centre d'Études sur l'Actuel et le Contemporain (Paris V – Sorbonne)) is the author of the book *Continent Dark : introduction aux subcultures sombres* (Publisher: Ragage, 2009) and the book *More than life: Du romantisme aux subcultures sombres* (Publisher: Rouge Profond, 2015).

Saturday September 28th from 2.30 PM to 4 PM.

Free. Reservation required.

DUO-VISIT "FROM SHADOW TO LIGHT"

IN PARTNERSHIP WITH THE DEPARTMENTAL MUSEUM GEORGES DE LA TOUR, VIC-SUR-SEILLE

The visit-duo crosses knowledge and disciplines around a common theme.

Philippe Hoch, Chief Conservator of Heritage at the Moselle Department, invites us to the Departmental Museum Georges de La Tour, to discover the painter's artworks as well as a selection of paintings ranging from the XVIIth to the XIXth century.

This tour will follow a visit of the exhibition *Digital Gothic*, led by Camille Grasser, Head of the Public Services at the centre d'art contemporain - la synagogue de Delme, which will raise sombre imagination, dark romanticism and the Goth aesthetic through the artworks presented.

As a follow-up to the Gothic, this visit-duo brings together timescales and styles, their meeting point being found in the work of de G de La tour representing a Mary Magdalene redeeming in a confrontation with the vanity of life. The visit develops itself around this ambivalence, that there is no light without darkness...

Sunday September 29th from 2 PM to 4.30 PM

From 2 PM to 3 PM: visit of the exhibition *Digital Gothic*

From 3.30 PM to 4.30 PM: stroll through the Departmental Museum Georges de La Tour

4.30 PM: refreshment

Meeting point: centre d'art contemporain – la synagogue de Delme

3,50 euros. Reservation required.

WEEKLY TOUR

Guided tour of the exhibition *Digital Gothic*.

Every Sunday at 4 PM.

Free, reservation not required.

RELATED EVENTS

“BIG IDEAS SMALL HANDS” WORKSHOPS

> FOR CHILDREN AGED 6-11

Led by Camille Grasser, head of visitor services, and artist Katia Mourer, these workshops allow children to discover the current exhibition through a playful, concrete approach to the exhibited works.

On Wednesdays, July 3rd, July 24th, and September 18th from 2 PM to 5 PM.

Free. Reservation required.

“HAND-IN-HAND” WORKSHOP

> PARENTS AND CHILDREN AGED 5-12

For children aged 5 to 12 accompanied by their parents. The art centre is offering a workshop for children and their parents! Little ones and bigger ones can come and share a convivial moment playfully discovering works of art.

Saturday July 27th from 3 PM to 4.30 PM.

Free. Reservation required.

PLAY-WORKSHOP

> CHILDREN AGED 7 and up

Wednesday September 11th from 10 AM to 11.30 AM.

Free. Reservation required.

VISITE BOUT'CHOUX IN PARTNERSHIP WITH THE PARENTS CHILDCARE ASSISTANT RELAY OF THE COMMUNITY OF THE MUNICIPALITIES OF THE SAULNOIS

> FROM 1 TO 3 YEARS OLD

Discovery of the current exhibition *Digital Gothic* through a sensitive approach of the artworks: observation, listening, experimentation.

An exploration filled with emotions and sensations !

Wednesday September 25th from 9.30 AM to 10.30 AM.

Reservation required by e-mail to the address rpam@cc-saulnois.fr,

or by phone at 03 87 01 17 88.

EUROPEAN HERITAGE DAYS

Guided tour of the exhibition *Digital Gothic* and of the *Gue(ho)st House* by Christophe Berdaguer and Marie Péjus.

Saturday September 21st from 4 PM to 5 PM; Sunday September 22nd from 2 PM to 3.30 PM

Free, without reservation.

“Hand-in-hand” **workshop** for parents and children ; available throughout the afternoon at the *Gue(ho)st House* Saturday September 21st from 2 PM to 6 PM; Sunday September 22nd from 2 PM to 4 PM.

Free, without reservation.

MEETING-PERFORMANCE WITH THE ARTIST NICOLAS DAUBANES

AT THE GUE(HO)ST HOUSE, CENTRE D'ART CONTEMPORAIN - LA SYNAGOGUE DE DELME

At the end of his residency at Lindre-Basse from June to August 2019, and on the occasion of European Heritage Days, Nicolas Daubanes will look back at the researches that shaped his stay in the area. The *Gue(ho)st House* – formerly Delme’s prison, converted first into a school, then into a funeral home, and now a visitor reception space for the art centre – will offer a setting fit for this very special way of telling story at work in the artist’s approach.

Sunday September 22nd at 4 PM.

Free, without reservation.

INFORMATIONS

PRACTICAL INFORMATIONS

From Wednesday to Saturday, 2pm - 6pm
and Sunday 11am - 6pm.

Admission free.

Guided tour every Sunday at 4pm.

CONTACT

CAC - la synagogue de Delme
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info@cac-synagoguedelme.org
www.cac-synagoguedelme.org

ACCESS

FROM PARIS (by train 90mins):

TGV Est, get off at Metz or Nancy

FROM METZ (by car, 30mins):

D955, formerly route de Strasbourg

FROM NANCY (by car, 30mins):

N74 towards Château-Salins

then D955 towards Metz

CONTACT EDUCATIONAL SERVICE

Camille Grasser

publics@cac-synagoguedelme.org

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+33(0)3 87 01 35 61 (exhibition space)

THANKS

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PARTNERS

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The duo-visit "From Shadow to Light" and the conference by Benoît Lamy de La Chapelle are realized in partnership with the Departmental Museum Georges de La Tour, site Moselle Passion

