

PACE RDS

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KUNSTRAUM NIEDEROESTERREICH

LIMINAL SPACE RECORDS

Artists

Stine Deja
Monika Grabuschnigg
Eva Papamargariti
Louise Sparre
Rowdy SS

"In order to reimagine the body, one must reimagine space [...] Deterritorialization of the body requires a departure from the heaviness of space, with the realization, instead, that physical form is dynamic."¹

Legacy Russell

"Fixation in space and time has been one of the most elementary and persistent techniques capitalism has used to take hold of the body."²

Silvia Federici

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Guest curator

Frederike Sperling

Colophon

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Palais Niederösterreich is a symbol of spatial heaviness. Its classicist façade, the hidden frescoes on its metre-high ceilings – they speak of political and cultural functions and convey the weight of history. The monumental architecture of the palace assigns bodies their places, bears down on them, contouring worlds and imaginaries.

Many of us have felt this weight of physical space over the past two years – whether in lockdown, home office, or even quarantine. Due to the pandemic, we were forced to experience and define our bodies solely in reference to closed indoor space. The digital realm, which occasionally offered new, virtual mobilities and welcome "changes of scene", increasingly undermines the authority of physical space as a surface legitimating everything corporeal, as a stage for legibility.

In a time when the borders between digital and analogue realities are merging unstoppably, the group exhibition *LIMINAL SPACE RECORDS* seeks new locationabilities for bodiliness in its hybrid, cosmic forms. Building on the manifesto *Glitch Feminism* (2020) by author and curator Legacy Russell, the show invites the artists Stine Deja, Monika Grabuschnigg, Eva Papamargariti, Louise Sparre, and Rowdy SS to go in pursuit of light spatiality. The presented works deterritorialise corporeal-

ity, shed light on it as a fluid and flexible formation and ask: What if we begin to think of space as the *result* of bodiliness and not as its premise?

LIMINAL SPACE RECORDS renegotiates the relationship between corporeality and spatiality, illuminating artistic strategies for reappropriating the body. This seems especially urgent today when techno-optimistic infrastructures are beginning to govern our virtual as well as physical realities with their deterministic, binary algorithms and increasingly take on the characteristics of "heavy space".

Frederike Sperling
Guest curator

With the support of:



¹ Legacy Russell, *Glitch Feminism. A Manifesto* (Verso Books, 2020), 84.
² Silvia Federici, *Beyond the Periphery of the Skin: Rethinking, Remaking, and Reclaiming the Body in Contemporary Capitalism*, (IPM Press, 2020), 121.

LIMI SP

Eva Papamargariti

Combining digital animation, personal footage, and computer-generated soundscapes, *Always a Body, Always a Thing* highlights the frog as a biologically peculiar organism and queer icon. Undergoing a natural metamorphosis during the process of growth, frogs have, for instance, also proven able to mutate as a result of environmental toxicity. Appropriating the amphibians' transformative features, Eva Papamargariti speculates on the fluidity of being and proposes the body as a collection of multiple and ever-changing formations: "I like this sense of fluidity that I recognize in my own being [...] if we are all mutated and transformed repeatedly, then maybe we will all become liquid in the end", we read in the video. Amorphous becomes a strategy to resist identification and fixation and, for Papamargariti, opens an imaginary space for queer futurabilities. The adjacent printed textiles *Spineless and Sublime* then, stand in an almost provocative contrast to the video in that they add their tactile properties, their "thingness" to the notion of fluidity: they stir the question of how the proposed ungraspability of bodiliness translates into the analogue world, a world in which we are trained to name and thus to fixate things and bodies. It is a conundrum that manifests in the title of the video itself, *Always a Body, Always a Thing*, leading one to believe that, for Papamargariti, the digital realm holds a great potentiality for "poetic elasticity that refuses the name as static or definitive"¹ that the physical does not. In other words, the digital offers space for the malleability and flexibility of being.

¹ Legacy Russell, *Glitch Feminism. A Manifesto* (Verso Books, 2020), 59

Rowdy SS

Responding to the history, architecture, and various functions of the Palais Niederösterreich, Rowdy SS has created a site-specific adaptation of his multi-faceted piece *GLASS* (2022). Unfolding as installation, sound, and performance, *GLASS* holds and releases different entangled rhythms and frequencies throughout the duration of the exhibition. At the centre of the gallery, a seemingly floating grid of over a hundred glass vessels appropriates the alignment of the Palais from an aerial perspective. Filled with water that reflects/refracts the shapes and colours of the surroundings, the glasses unhinge the heaviness of the gallery, make it seem weightless, lift it out of its solidity. The tension inscribed into the installation, its minimal movements as well as its changing weights as a result of the vaporization of the liquid, reinstate the notion that all physical things hold energy and are, therefore, malleable. Building on this very idea, Rowdy SS has produced a new sound piece which relates to the poetics of the sculpture and in so doing calls into existence a space in its own right – one that is charged, but weightless and invisible.

Always a Body, Always a Thing

2017, HD video, sound, 15:25 min

Spineless and Sublime

2022, textiles

GLASS

2022, site-specific installation (glass, metal tubes, wire, water), sound, performance (in collaboration with Rebecca Bellantoni)

Stine Deja

At three different points in the exhibition space, screens seem to crack the shiny floor of Kunstraum Niederoesterreich wide open, producing heaps of gravel around them in the process. Each of the screens shows a different video in which ambiguous, hybrid 3D beings – part biological organ, part technological prosthesis – are presented as in a shop window: a digestive system jumps up and down on what looks like a prosthetic blade runner; a shiny heart, balanced on the tip of a nose, turns left and right as if praising itself to a potential customer. The sounds of birds chirping together with the machinic noise of what might be a pump only add to the bizarreness of the scene. With *Hard Core, Soft Bodies*, Stine Deja has created a seemingly absurd amalgamation of human anatomy and futuristic technology that urges us to think about what it is that makes our bodies human. Unpacking corporeality against the background of late capitalism, Deja reimagines bodiliness as a cybernetic spectrum of artificial intelligence and virtuality.

Louise Sparre

Three metallic structures seem to grow out of the wall. On each structure, hair partially covers the shiny metal, winding itself around it in a daring choreography. Building on her interest in the different textures, shapes, and surfaces of the human body, Louise Sparre has created hybrid objects that fuse the (seemingly) organic with the inorganic into abstract existences. Associative of posthuman organisms, prosthetics, or sci-fi creatures, they stand in an almost performative relationship with the space they occupy. Disobedient to the present architecture at Kunstraum Niederoesterreich, they variously stretch themselves into the room or cling to the white, slick wall. The origins of these beings are obscure and yet they instil an almost otherworldly cosmology into the gallery.

Monika Grabuschnigg

Building on her interest in the impact of digitality on the physical body and human self-perception, Monika Grabuschnigg presents two ceramic sculptures from her series *In Delirium I Wear My Body* (2019). As if free floating, the sculptures embody weightless figures, each composed of several abstract shapes with different textures and colours. Their surfaces are shiny and, together with the blue light that fills the room, they evoke the image of digital screens – an impression that is yet subverted by Grabuschnigg's choice of material. Ceramics, a millennia-old manual craft that requires the human body for processes like moulding or glazing, suggest a certain melancholy or longing to feel, to be in touch with one's flesh and the physical environment. This perceived lack of connection with one's bodiliness recurs in the series' title *In Delirium I Wear My Body*. Given virtual reality and the various social worlds it offers us to experience, are we not indeed starting to "wear skin", or to "wear our bodies"? How are we to understand corporeality when the materiality of the body dissolves into the world wide web?

Hard Core, Soft Bodies

2019, HD video, sound, gravel, 05:00 min

Perception I, II and III

2022, metal, hair

Computing in between hollow clouds

2019, glazed ceramic, acrylic spray paint and stainless steel

Spellbound by uncertain algorithms

2019, glazed ceramic, acrylic spray paint and stainless steel

MALLE
SPACE