Claudia Larcher | Austria

Hallucinations

22nd October to 15th December 2024 at the Kunstraum Engländerbau

The exhibition *Hallucinations* takes visitors into a world in which the boundaries between analogue perception and digital creation become blurred. Claudia Larcher, a renowned Austrian artist who works extensively with artificial intelligence (AI), is showing new cinematic works that explore the interplay between man and machine and the fusion of reality and artificially generated visions. The thematic starting point is the term 'hallucination', which is used in AI research to describe the misinterpretation of data by algorithms. Larcher's works reflect these phenomena and invite visitors to explore the limits and potential of digital technologies in art.

The exhibition is divided into three thematic blocks and comprises four main works that delve deep into the relationship between humans, technology and the environment.

AI and Identity: *Me myself and I*, 1:1, video animation, stereo, 5 min, 2022
In this piece, Claudia Larcher deals with the fragmentation and duplication of the self in the digital age. She uses 350 analogue photographs of herself, which merge into a flowing process of deformation with the help of a Generative Adversarial Network (GAN). The visual transformation is accompanied by a computer voice generated from dialogs with chatbots. The work questions how the self is fragmented by digital technologies and how the boundaries between analogue identity and digital representation are becoming increasingly blurred.

AI and Nature: *Das grosse Baumstück (Great Piece of Tree)*, experimental film, 16:9, 8 min, sound: Ursula Winterauer, 2023
This work combines lifelike representations of trees with AI-generated landscapes. Inspired by Albrecht Dürer's *Das grosse Rasenstück (Great Piece of Turf)*, the film shows a tracking shot panning from the treetop down to deep in the ground, where roots, fungi and humus form the basis of hidden life. With the help of artificial intelligence, the forms of the tree bark are multiplied and transformed into fantastic landscapes. The work explores the hidden relationship between humans and nature and encourages us to rethink our connection.

*Stillleben 3000 (*Still Life 3000)*,* video, 9:16, loop, 2024
This work is Larcher's contemporary take on the classical tradition of the still life. Inspired by the Dutch artist Rachel Ruysch, Larcher merges the fields of classical art with modern consumer culture. A techno-aesthetic bee drone and artificial plastic flowers become a memento mori and refer to ecological challenges such as the loss of biodiversity.

AI and History: *KI und die Kunst der historischen Neuinterpretation (AI and the art of historical reinterpretation)*, slideshow, 2023

In this project, Larcher investigates the bias of AI systems and their influence on historiography. She creates a fictional image archive that reinterprets the representation of LGBTQIA+ people (women, lesbians, inter-, non-binary, trans and agender people) in historical documents. The work addresses algorithmic biases amplified by AI and questions how these biases shape our perception of history and identity.

Events program: The exhibition is accompanied by a varied programme of supporting events. A curator's tour with Yvonne Rüscher offers in-depth insights into Larcher's work. A book on the exhibition will be published by Verlag für moderne Kunst in December and will be presented in the presence of the artist and the curator. Another item on the program is an audio-video performance with musician Ursula Winterauer aka *Gischt*, who composed the sound for *Das grosse Baumstück* and is currently working on a live set with Claudia Larcher.

Text: Studio Claudia Larcher

Biographies

Claudia Larcher's artistic work encompasses experimental film, collage, drawing, photography and installation. The Vienna-based artist has presented her work in numerous exhibitions in Austria and abroad, including Anthology Film Archives NYC, Calouste Gulbenkian Foundation Lisbon, Centre Pompidou Paris, Museum of Contemporary Art Roskilde, Ars Electronica Festival Linz, Kunsthalle Wien, TOKAS Japan, Manifesta 13, Gray Area Festival San Francisco, etc. She has received numerous awards, including the Kunsthalle Wien Prize 2008, the Outstanding Artist Award 2016, the Vorarlberg Culture Prize 2018, the Hilde Goldschmidt Prize 2019 and the Austrian Art Prize 2023.   www.claudialarcher.com

Yvonne Rüscher lives as an independent art and cultural mediator in Lustenau. In her work as an exhibition curator, which she began 2003 in Paris, her second home, she focuses on the areas of expanded cinema, film and video art. She has been working as a freelance graphic designer since 2015, devoting herself exclusively to analogue forms of communication. She designs books, catalogues and special printed works, mostly by, with or about artists. Since 2020, she has been running the cultural association *PAVIAN* in Lustenau, where she works with others to promote an alternative cultural programme in Vorarlberg and organizes art projects, film series, concerts and readings in regular collaboration with other institutions.

Ursula Winterauer is a musician and composer based in Vienna. She has performed with her solo project *Gischt* at festivals such as Elevate, Unsafe+Sounds and New Adits, as well as in cities such as Berlin, Zurich and New York. She was SHAPE Artist 2021 and amongst others, presented her work at the donaufestival and musikprotokoll. She scored the film *Das grosse Baumstück* for Claudia Larcher, which premiered at the Ars Electronica Animation Festival in 2023. Winterauer runs the Ventil Records label and the Unsafe+Sounds Festival.   www.gischt.xyz