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— NILS ALIX-TABELING, SHARONA FRANKLIN, AMY LIEN & ENZO CAMACHO, SYDNEY SHEN, AMBERA WELLMANN, ALISON YIP
Blue of Noon
Kraupa-Tuskany Zeidler, Berlin
21.05.2022–30.06.2022

The 1935 novel *Blue of Noon* by Georges Bataille posits the duality of revolutionary acts within shifting paradigms, namely those of active dissent and nihilism. Set in the backdrop of an impending war, the characters within the story navigate a seemingly endless amount of chaos, corruption, and death. The works within the exhibition *Blue of Noon* approach modes of resistance in response to the violence of normativity, colonization, upheaval, and erasure of personal histories. By hosting this assemblage, the exhibition environment transforms into a frantic and macabre vision, at times anthropomorphizing these drives into otherworldly, even monstrous figurations.

— In Bataille's *Blue of Noon*, the bed is a recurring site where various facets of human activity transpire. Following the narrative, one immediately becomes privy to the delirious and base sexual life of the protagonist Henri Troppmann. Shabby hotel room mattresses serve as platforms for debauchery and escape from reality. The bed also envelops his physical and mental state of being, imprisoning him in his own nightmare. At times too feverish and weak to move, Troppmann is overpowered by the weight of his condition. In Ambera Wellmann's work *Tarantula* (2022), a pall of black shadow hangs over a reclining figure like a ghoulish creature. Across the room in Wellmann's *2022* (2022), amid the intermingled figures, multiple sets of bleary, deadpan eyes peer from behind the bedposts, perhaps embodying a sense of existential paranoia.

Like an altar, Nils Alix-Tabeling's *Héligabale daybed* (2021) is dressed with fragrant herbs, pointed crystals, and delicate drapery. With hands reaching out, the daybed takes a human form, suggesting a subtle embodiment of Elagabalus, a controversial Roman emperor from 200 AD. Elagabalus was known for his decadent and transgressive acts during his reign and was eventually assassinated at the age of 18 by his family for his refusal to conform to his assigned gender and his role as an emperor. Two capricious, catlike creatures hover near the feet of the bed. Tethered to it by silk and cord, *Sermand* and *Gargouille* are bound, but their expressions are defiant and unruly.

Sharona Franklin's work *RX Vortex* (2019) makes visible the violent division between the resource and power-laden pharmaceutical industrial complex, and those who are controlled by it. This dynamic surfaces in narratives such as the reduction of humans to test subjects and the objectification of living entities. The imbalance of agency is apparent—as much as we yearn to escape the commodification of our corporeality, our mortality inextricably ties us to this same system that exploits and violates us. Perhaps embodying this struggle, *Herbicidal* (2022) has started to decompose through its drying process as it solidifies. Trapped inside a jelly membrane similar to fossilized amber, elements of the artist's daily life are preserved, along with a distinct reference to the pesticidal substance glyphosate, which poisons every living being it comes into contact with.

Rigidly tailored narratives of vitality permeate beyond the pharma industry into every facet of life. Alison Yip's works contest seemingly intractable prospects of our lives by baring their inconsistencies. In Yip's *Juiced!* (2022), a gelatinous substance covers the conspicuously green smoothie, as the contents whirl and blitz in verdant abstraction, a picture of health. This part of the painting is intended to break down over time, defying the expectation of longevity of painting. In Yip's *Untitled (Goblin Organizer)* (2022), various body parts are anatomized into neat shelves like a newfangled exequi-site corpse, composed of contemporary ideals of productivity and aspiration gone awry.

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— Embodying the year of the Fire Monkey, which was predicted by astrologists to be characteristic of havoc, blood, impulsiveness, and inflammation, Amy Lien & Enzo Camacho's monkey king sculpture bears its organs outside, against its hollow, resinous body. Red strings thread through the center, as though linking strange clues, connecting a schema synthesized based on variously sourced organizing principles: from the rebellious monkey king's journey to enlightenment (according to popular Chinese mythology) to the conventional systems of Western medicine; from the left-right axis of political ideologies to the speculative numerology of art fairs. Two preliminary sketches for the monkey king abstract its form even further as its organs float outward and hang from plant-like stems.

Sydney Shen's *Orfeo* (2022) borrows the form of a 'shame fiddle', a historical instrument used to punish those convicted of petty crimes. Shen inlaid a toy labyrinth in this disciplinary device that, if worn, would be animated by the struggle of the bearer to break free, while the polished balls of carved dinosaur excrement trundled around in an endless maze. The absurdity of this device that traps and humiliates, coupled with an imposed incapacitation makes visible the physical and social consequences inflicted by the state. Perhaps this thwarted existential frustration is echoed in its title, *Orfeo*, a figure of tragedy that descends into the underworld only to return fruitlessly.

— Blue of Noon is curated by Christina Gigliotti and Catherine Wang

Blue of Noon

NILS ALIX-TABELING (b. 1991, Paris, France) lives and works in Montargis, France. His practice comprises sculpture, performance, video and sound installations, writing, and his own curatorial projects. Alix-Tabeling holds an MA from the Royal College of Art, London, UK. Alix-Tabeling's work has been shown at Liste Art Fair, Basel, Switzerland, presented by Piktogram, Warsaw (2021, solo); La Maison Populaire de Montreuil (2021); Printemps-Été Automne-Hiver at Palais de Tokyo, Paris (2019, solo); Jupiter Woods, London (2019, duo with artist Rebecca Jagoe). He has curated a group exhibition at Mécènes du Sud, Montpellier, France (2021).

SHARONA FRANKLIN (b. 1987, Vernon, Canada) lives and works in Vancouver, Canada. Franklin is a multi-disciplinary artist, writer, and advocate. Recent exhibitions and projects have taken place at the MIT List Visual Arts Center in Cambridge, MA (2022, solo); La Maison de Rendez-Vous, Brussels (2021, solo); the City of Vancouver (2020); The Audain Gallery of Simon Fraser University, Vancouver (2020); La Casa Encendida, Madrid (2020); Kings Leap, New York (2020); Unit 17, Vancouver (2019); G44 Center for Contemporary Photography, Toronto (2019); New Image Art Gallery, Los Angeles (2019); and Flux Factory, New York (2019). Recent publications include Injustice in Biopharm (Cassandra Press, 2019) and Rental Bod (Peace Library Publications, 2016).

AMY LIEN (b. 1987, Dallas, TX, US) and ENZO CAMACHO (b. 1985, Manila, Philippines) have a collaborative artistic practice that moves from the Philippines outwards to other places, addressing localised iterations of labour and capital from the perspective of post-colonial damage. Their work has been presented at 47 Canal (2022, solo); Asia Pacific Triennial in South Brisbane (2021); New Museum Triennial, New York (2021); the 39th EVA International Biennial in Limerick (2021); Manifesta 13 in Marseilles (2020); the NTU Centre for Contemporary Art, Singapore (2019); Kunstverein Freiburg (2018); the Hessel Museum of Art at Bard College, Annadale-on-Hudson, NY (2018); the Jim Thompson Art Center, Bangkok (2017); and the UCCA Center for Contemporary Art, Beijing (2017), among others.

SYDNEY SHEN (b. 1989, Woodbridge, NJ, US) now lives and works in New York. Shen uses sculptures and installations to create an atmosphere of wretched apprehension, examining the limitation of mentality through the extremity of the physical body. Shen's work has been shown at 47 Canal, New York (2022); Queens Museum, New York (2021, solo); Gallery Vacancy, Shanghai (2021); Deutsches Hygiene-Museum, Dresden (2021); Museum Het Valkhof, Nijmegen (2021); Sophie Tappeiner, Vienna (2019); New Museum, New York (2019). Shen is the recipient of The Queens Museum-Jerome Foundation Fellowship for Emerging Artists and the Lower Manhattan Cultural Council Workspace Residency Program in 2019.

AMBERA WELLMANN (b. 1982, Lunenburg, Nova Scotia) lives and works in New York. Wellmann's works embrace the unpredictable possibilities of an internal gaze, refusing a heteronormative one. Wellmann is a graduate of Nova Scotia College of Art & Design University, Halifax, Canada, and received her Masters of Fine Arts from University of Guelph, Canada. Her work has been shown at ICA Boston (2022); the New Museum Triennial, New York (2021); MAC Belfast (2021, solo); Pond Society, Shanghai (2021, solo); The Emerald Tablet, Jeffrey Deitch Gallery, Los Angeles (2021); Present Generations, Columbus Museum of Art, Columbus (2021); Kraupa-Tuskany Zeidler, Berlin (2020, solo); Drawing Center, New York (2020); Company Gallery (2020, solo); MOCO, Montpellier (2019, solo); Istanbul Biennial (2019); MoMA Warsaw (2019); Australian Center for Contemporary Art, Melbourne (2019); Palais de Tokyo, Paris (2019).

ALISON YIP is based in Cologne. Alison Yip works through painting, wall treatments, writing and objects to find ways of speaking to the dissociative and dispersed nature of our cognitive apparatus and the persistence of figuration, especially through psycho-phenomena. she received a BFA from the Alberta College of Art and Design, Calgary, CAN and a MFA from the Hochschule für Bildende Künste, Hamburg, DE. Yip's work has been shown at Contemporary Art Gallery, Vancouver (2022, solo); Mécènes du Sud, Montpellier-Sète (2021); Noah Klink, Berlin (2021, solo); Dortmunder Kunstverein (2020, solo); Monte Clark Gallery, Vancouver (2020, solo); ACUD, Berlin (2020); Palfrey Space, London (2020); Beursschouwburg, Brussels (2019); Lady Helen, London (2019); and Kunstverein Harburger Bahnhof (2019).