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KATJA NOVITSKOVA
MIRROR LIFE
Kraupa-Tuskany Zeidler, Berlin (DE)
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MIRROR LIFE explores the evolving entanglement between biological life and digital systems, examining how generative technologies, synthetic materials, and physical memory reconfigure the boundaries of species and perception.

Novitskova's new sculptures meditate on potentials of synthetic biology. Shimmering in shades of blue, these brooding forms return the viewer's gaze with a hybrid sentience as part biological and part algorithmic. Composed of polyurethane resin embedded with minerals such as obsidian, hematite, and labradorite, the sculptures suggest a speculative taxonomy: entities born from a process that fuses 3D modeling, AI-driven crossbreeding, and studio craft. They exist not merely as objects, but as living approximations that are suspended between ancestral memory and imagined future trajectories.

The *Earthware* series expands Novitskova's ongoing inquiry into vision and representation. Cephalopods emerge through digital images transferred onto epoxy clay via a process the artist has developed over a decade. Red lenticular eyes pierce the surfaces, endowing the works with a sentience. Brooding squid mothers carry around their giant egg sacs with millions of eggs until they hatch. During this period they are not able to eat, resulting in senescence, a life phase that begins with eggs hatching and ends with their death. Devoid of nutrients and strength, their bodies begin to disintegrate. Their anatomy can be viewed as giant compound eyes made of tiny paralarvae that devour their own mothers. Novitskova's wall works read like premonitions: mineralized traces of once-living organisms, now re-coded as synthetic relics.

Novitskova draws parallels between biological metamorphosis and the latent operations of generative AI. Just as a butterfly retains neural echoes of its caterpillar form, machine learning models encode spectral remnants of their training data. 'Mirror life' refers to a speculative form of existence that emerges in parallel to our current biological life, but with inverted molecular structures. Many vital molecules for life on Earth, like sugars and amino-acids, come in two mirror-image forms: 'left-handed' and 'right-handed.' This handedness describes the direction polarized light bends when it passes through a pure solution of the molecule. However, living organisms typically use only one of these forms. Mirror life would be life with mirror-reflected molecular structures. If it could exist or be synthesized it would be very similar to biology we know, but exist in a parallel space of interactions with possibly catastrophic overlaps with our own current life forms.

How would this mirror life look, and how would it look at us? Perhaps a set of artificially synthesized primitive life forms emerges, branching into a novel path for life. A common ancestral community of primitive cells that develops into a living thing, a genetically modified feral organism. The exhibition unfolds in a space where biological memory, digital transformation, and material speculation converge. Referencing phenomena such as embryogenesis, cell fate, and the autonomy of generative algorithms, *MIRROR LIFE* invites viewers into a zone of mirrored evolution, where artificial organisms brood their offspring, observe, and mutate. Novitskova shifts forms across categories and timelines: an egg becomes an eye, an image becomes a mineral, and life itself is rendered as a composite process of translation.

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Novitskova's work tackles the complexity and eventual failures of depicting the world through technologically driven narratives. By uniting art and science to the level of nature, Novitskova brings awareness to the mediation and representation tools used to depict these realms.

More specifically, Novitskova's work focuses on the mapping of biological territories that are no longer outside but rather 'inside' biological bodies. The images that depict nature become models for future approximations of life and translations into more synthetic forms. The cycle of biological morphogenesis and visual creation becomes a loop. In Novitskova's mind 'the look inside has somehow replaced the gaze into the future.' From parasitic worms to robotic nurturing or incubating machines, technological devices are not only dominating the inner biological realm, but also the affective one.

In 2018 the publishing house Ringier released their Annual Report with a commission of Novitskova. Between 2017 and 2018 her third artist book 'If Only You Could See What I've Seen with Your Eyes' with Kumu Art Museum and Venice Biennale through Sternberg Press and in 2016 'Dawn Mission' was published with the Kunstverein in Hamburg. In 2010, she published the influential artist book the 'Post Internet Survival Guide.'

KATJA NOVITSKOVA, (b. 1984 Tallinn, Estonia), lives and works in Amsterdam. She was artist in residence at the Rijksakademie van Beeldende Kunsten in Amsterdam from 2013 to 2014.

Her work has been exhibited internationally in solo and group exhibitions including Kraupa-Tuskany Zeidler, Berlin (2025, solo); Stedelijk Museum, Amsterdam (2024); 15th Gwangju Biennale (2024); Kraupa-Tuskany Zeidler, Berlin (2024); Museum für Gegenwartskunst Siegen (2023, solo); Fries Museum, Leeuwarden (2023, solo); Stavanger Art Museum, Norway (2023); Marta Herford Museum, Herford (2022); Kraupa-Tuskany Zeidler, Berlin (2022, solo); MUDAM Luxembourg (2021); Kunstfort bij Vijfhuizen (2021, solo); Belgrade Biennial (2021), Migros Museum für Gegenwartskunst, Zürich (2020); Sharjah Art Foundation (2020); Powerlong Museum, Shanghai (2019); Hamburger Bahnhof, Berlin (2019); the 14th Fellbach Triennale (2019); CCA, Tel Aviv (2019); Marta Herford Museum, Herford (2018); Whitechapel Gallery, London (2018, solo); Kumu Art Museum, Tallinn (2018, solo); Baltic Triennial, Vilnius (2018); the Estonian Pavilion at the 57th Venice Biennale (2017, solo); The Public Art Fund, New York (2017, solo); Cc Foundation & Art Centre, Shanghai (2017, solo); Schirn Kunsthalle, Frankfurt (2017); The Museum of Contemporary Art Kiasma, Helsinki (2017); Kunsthall Charlottenborg, Copenhagen (2017); K11 Art Foundation, Shanghai (2017) and Greene Naftali, New York (2016, solo). Other solo and group exhibitions include Kunstverein in Hamburg (2016, solo); the 9th Berlin Biennale for Contemporary Art (2016); Museum Folkwang, Essen (Nam June Paik Award 2016); Yuz Museum, Shanghai (2016); Okayama Art Summit, (2016); The Museum of Modern Art, New York (2015); 13th Lyon Biennale (2015/2016); Kunsthalle Lissabon (2015, solo); Astrup Fearnley Museum, Oslo (2014); Fridericianum, Kassel (2013) and the CCS Bard, New York (2012). She had her first solo exhibition at Kraupa-Tuskany Zeidler, Berlin, in 2012.