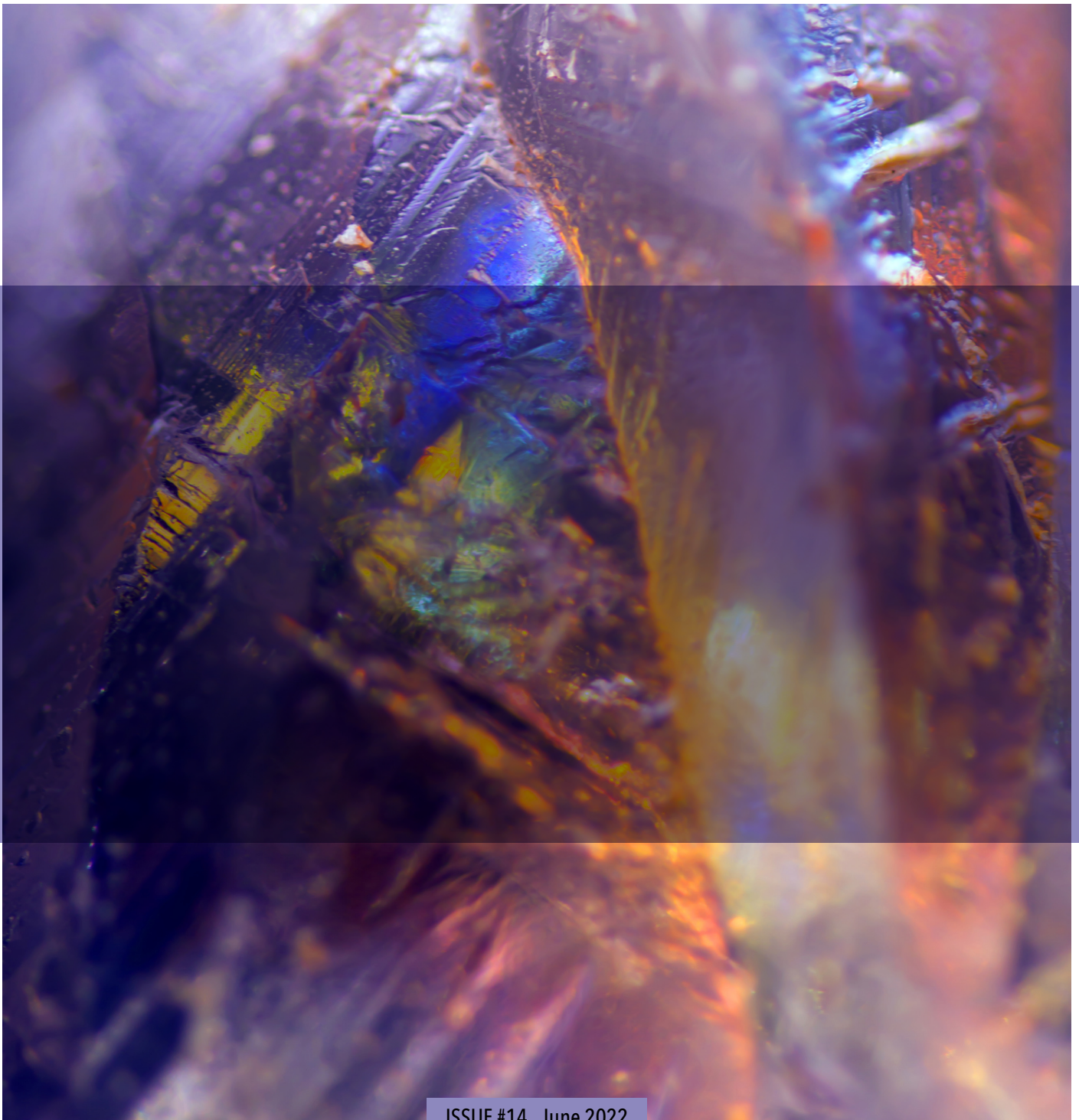


CONTEMPORARY IDENTITIES

International Art Magazine

Agil Abdullayev | Laraib Ahmad | Eytayo Alagbe | Solanne Bernard | Nicolas Crocetti

Michelle Gagliano | Federica Gonnelli | Mirabelle Jones | Tehseen Khan | Kiluanji Kia Henda | Stefano Favaretto



ISSUE #14 June 2022

Art is a way of survival.

Yoko Ono



www.tehranstudio.com/tehran-gallery/
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info@contemporaryidentities.com

Art piece by Maziar Tehrani: Jeanne d'Arc, 70 x 100 cm

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Rainbow Energy 1 from 'Rainbow
Energy' collection on Foundation,
2022, Photo of a fragmented
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EDITORS' NOTE

Summer has arrived and the world is trying to go back to its normal life after the acute phase of Covid-19 pandemic, but it has already affected our lives. It gave strength to online events and publications. The 14th Issue of ContemporaryIdentities is offered as an art adventure in your summer plans to overview aesthetics from different angles. ContemporaryIdentities tries to add insights and wonder to your mind through art in your wonderful summer. It's our way of helping you to view and experience the artworks, even though you may be able to see artworks in person at an event.

For the current issue we had the chance to interview Stefano Favaretto, an Italian NFT photographer and curator. Stefano is a well-known NFT artist and curator who curated three major NFT exhibitions in real world.

In addition to our board members, we also had the pleasure of working with international guest writers such as Majid Heidari (Iran), Sophie Kazan (UK), Flounder Lee (USA) and Judit Nahóczky (Hungary).

Best summer wishes,
Sara Berti & Elham Shafaei

Agil Abdullayev

Azerbaijan Majid
Heidari



I was neither Babek nor Farhad 1, 2022, Mixed media on canvas, 90x60 cm, Gazelli Art House



I was neither Babek nor Farhad 4, 2022, Mixed media on canvas, 60x90 cm, Gazelli Art House



Agil Abdullayev © Yarat, Gazelli Art House

Agil interweaves the past with the future and represents psychosocial issues he has experienced in his life. Interlacing the images' backgrounds with their foregrounds, the artist draws our attention to his non-binary world view. He focuses on the fact that his past is present in his mind, which is presented as a repetitive motif. In psychological terms, no memories or experiences in life can be missed, yet can be forgotten or repressed. The distorted reality and indefinite shapes emphasize the dream-like, indeterminant and repetitive world where the artist lives. In each image, there is a pair of figures whose gender is not clear and the fusion of (feminine and masculine) colors highlights the concept of genderqueer. Through these pictures, the artist contemplates his identity and his relationship with his national history and culture; and he is bold enough to use certain written phrases to showcase his biting irony and humor.



A portion that never dies, 2022, Digital collage, 59.4x42 cm



Bane to the ways falsely sworn, 2022, Digital collage, 59.4x42 cm



Who suffered their promises III, 2022, Digital collage, 59.4x42 cm

In Lariab's contingent world, there are certain doors, windows, or pure hopes (in the form of light) towards a better reality; a reality in which humans are not the dominant specie, and animals, nature, and humans coexist. In her images, there are circular movements and limited colors combined with ambiguous and archetypal suspension. The artist hopes to achieve a better version of this world where we would believe in making, rather than finding (the truth). The images appear as collages of suspended entities on the verge of falling into another dimension of existence. In general, she invites us to see the uncertainty of the universe and see different versions of reality within reality. Rather than a horizontal dominance, her world view includes circular motion and openness to life. The images can be regarded as metaphoric invitations to observe an alternative world in which we participate to add more beauty and justice to things.

Eyitayo Alagbe

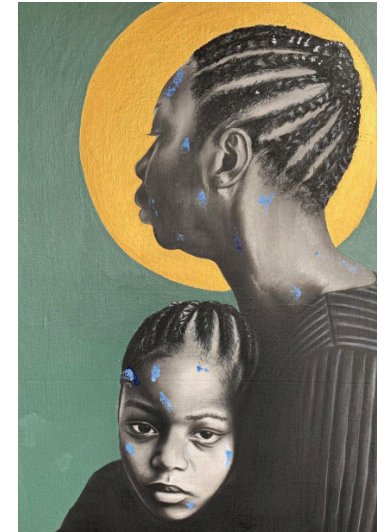
Nigeria Judit Nahóczy



I wear my treasure, series 1, 2021, Charcoal & acrylic on canvass, 122x91.5 cm



Black soul, 2021, Charcoal and acrylic on Canvass, 66x50 cm



Iyaniwura (sweet mother), 2021, Charcoal pencil & acrylic on canvass, 91.5x61 cm

Eyitayo Alagbe (born in 1997) is a young, rising Nigerian visual artist, who lives in Ibadan, the second largest city in the country. Eyitayo other than being a self-taught artist from early childhood, is currently studying for his uni degree in fine and applied arts. In his paintings that are mostly portraiture, uses charcoal pencil for the sketches which are completed by acrylic. He can visualize the shiny and clean skin of African women and children by using charcoal. This way of portraying is attended by beautiful faces of young women, children or mothers. In the philosophy of the artist the people of his homeland appear as idealized: proud and self-confident women, friendly and good children living in brotherhood. That's why Eyitayo's art is called Ayoism, which means the pleasure, joy and happiness. In this Ayoism, however, appear some sort of sadness, melancholy or deep meditation which is distinguished by the artist by the small, thick colour strokes in the pictures reflecting the not perfection of our world.

Solanne Bernard

UK
Sophie
Kazan



Succulent Decantings, 2022, Detail

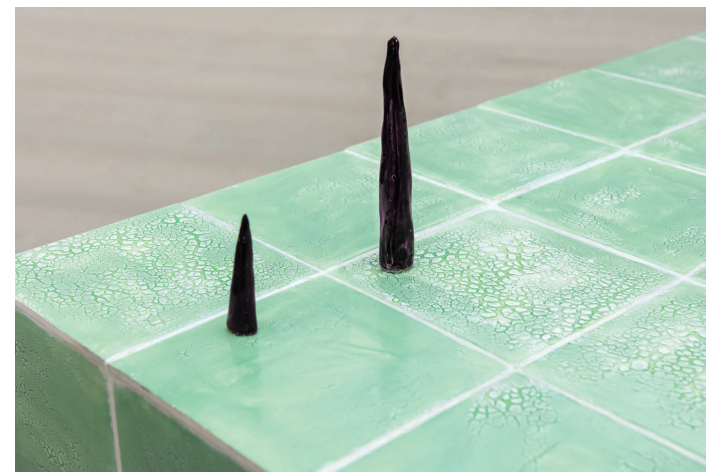


Succulent Decantings, Exhibition view from Synthesis, curated by Delphian Gallery, at Saatchi Gallery, 2022, Glazed ceramics, silicone, aluminium, 180 x 124 x 62 cm, Photo credit: Alessia Gammarota

The artist Solanne Bernard's sculptures have been exhibited throughout Europe. Most recently, Bernard's large-scale installations, Succulent Decantings was in Synthesis, a group exhibition at Saatchi Gallery in London, curated by Delphian Gallery. This explored the hybridity and liminality of materials. "I like to bring out that child-like desire in the viewer, that wants to touch an exhibit," smiles Bernard. Highly glazed spike shapes glisten and seem to drip onto their tiled pedestals while alien-like, silicon tentacles, playfully trigger feelings of repulsion.

A graduate of the prestigious Royal College of Art, Bernard enjoys the idea that her sculptures can provoke these reactions. "I ... play with the notions of the recognizable and the ...alien-ness those things also embody, being... displaced, or contradictory."

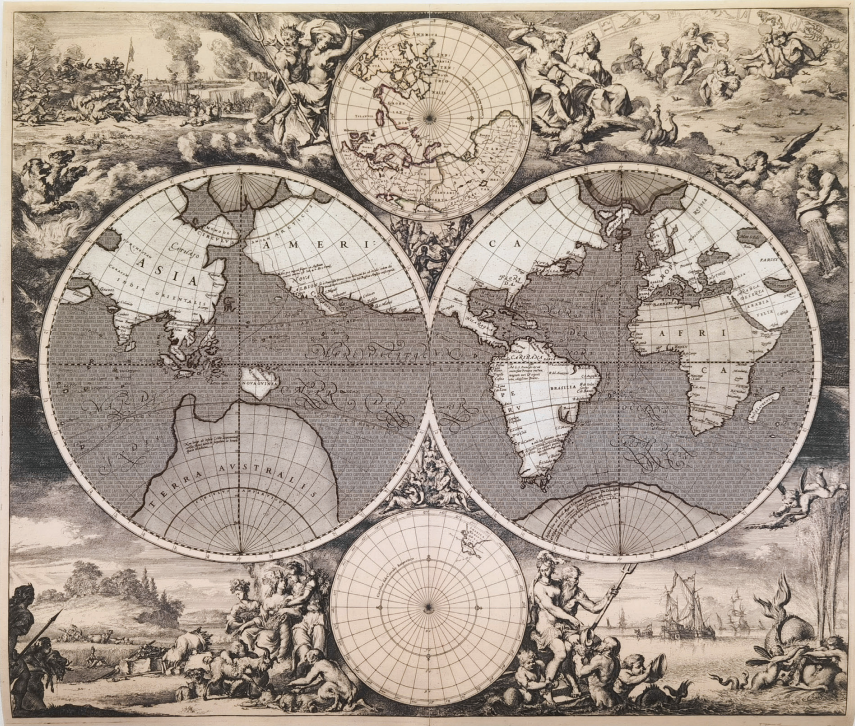
Last year, Bernard and fellow artist Camilla Bliss founded HAZE, to showcase emerging sculptors in pop-up exhibitions, such as Factory Project, shown during London FRIEZE week in 2021.



Succulent Decantings, 2022, Detail

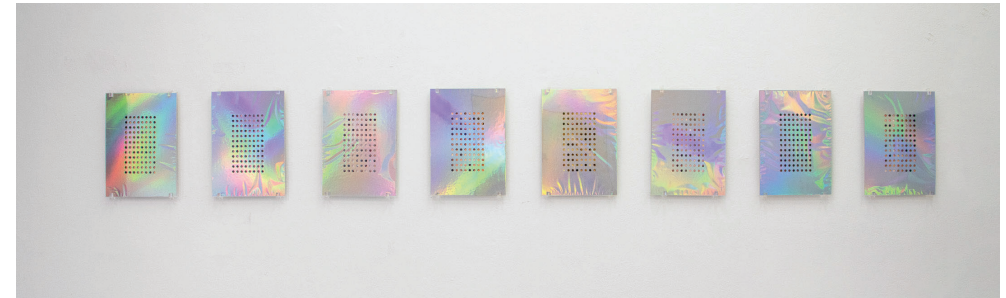
Nicolas Crocetti

Italy Izmer Bin Ahmad

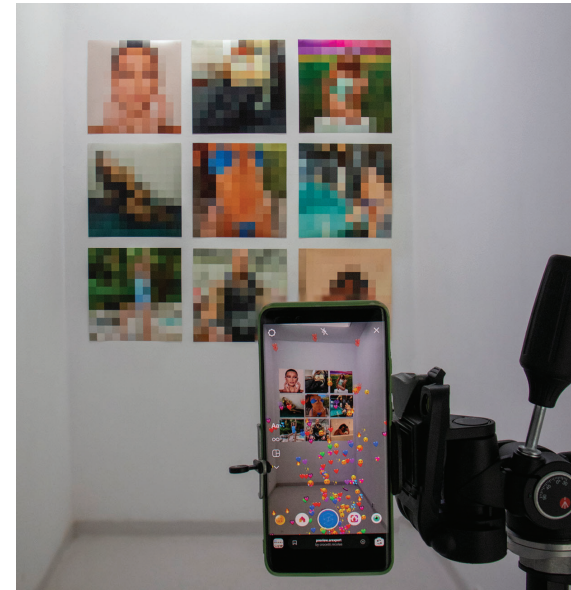


A familiar plot, 2021, Print on canvas, 107x90 cm

It has been a few decades now that we emerge as 'society of control', freed from physical enclosures into decentralized space where thoughts and decisions are encoded into algorithms that are gathered, interpreted, and normalized into patterns of intention and meaning. Nicolas Crocetti's works inhabits this critical space of post-industrial reality. 'Surveillance Capitalism' that commodifies data and confessional pleasure is a recurring theme in Crocetti's practice. The web-based installation "Surfing the Net" fills the audience's phone screen with the word 'archive', referring to the transaction, securing and storage of our digital footprints. "A Familiar Plot" remembers the history of the present through a 16th century oceanic map inscribed with the phrase 'surveillance capitalism'. The map is of the slave trade and colonial economy, the route which continues to generate profit and power through the endless flow within the fiber optics on its seabed.



ID Cards, 2021, Installation, plexiglass, holographic paper, digital print, 30x240x2 cm



Unfocus, 2021, Digital printing and AR animation, 180x180 cm



<http://archived.epizy.com/?i=2> or scan the image



A familiar plot, 2021, Print on canvas, 107x90 cm

Michelle Gagliano

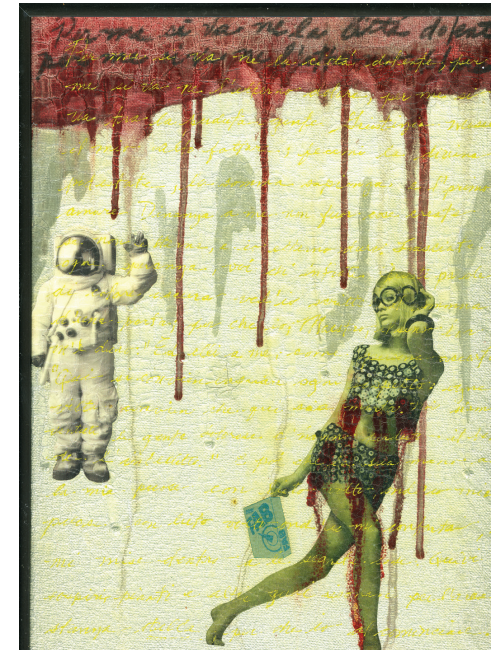
Italy
Judit
Nahóczyky



Canto IX, Calling Medusa, Timeless, Mixed media on canvas, 28x20.32 cm



Canto XXXIII, Count Ugolino, The bottom of hell, Timeless, Mixed media on canvas, 28x20.32 cm



Canto III, The descent, entry hall of hell, Timeless, Mixed media on canvas, 28x20.32 cm

Born in upstate New York, lives and works in Central Virginia. She had very extended formal art studies in academic environments. Other than the long tradition in the history of art from Michelangelo, William Blake, Gustave Doré, Rauschenberg and many others, the Italian origin might have led without doubt Michelle Gagliano to a reinterpretation of Dante's Inferno. She worked on the 34 canti for one year and created a small size (28x20 cm) series of paintings with mixed techniques. Gagliano captures in most of her works the beauty of the world, and also in these pictures we see a very profound contradiction between the argument – the Inferno – and the realization of its representation. All the figures are happy or just reflect no emotions, mostly in serene situations, which doesn't fit in well with the Inferno. Background and figures applied from old popular magazines are equally strong. Sinful people would accept their destiny and can make a modus vivendi or our values are really far from middle age religious ones and we cannot identify ourselves with Dante's morals?

Federica Gonnelli

Italy | Zoltán
Somhegyi



Le montagne da lontano sono color indaco particolare (6)



Ipotesi di felicità - hypothesis of happiness #6a



Ipotesi di felicità - hypothesis of happiness #6c

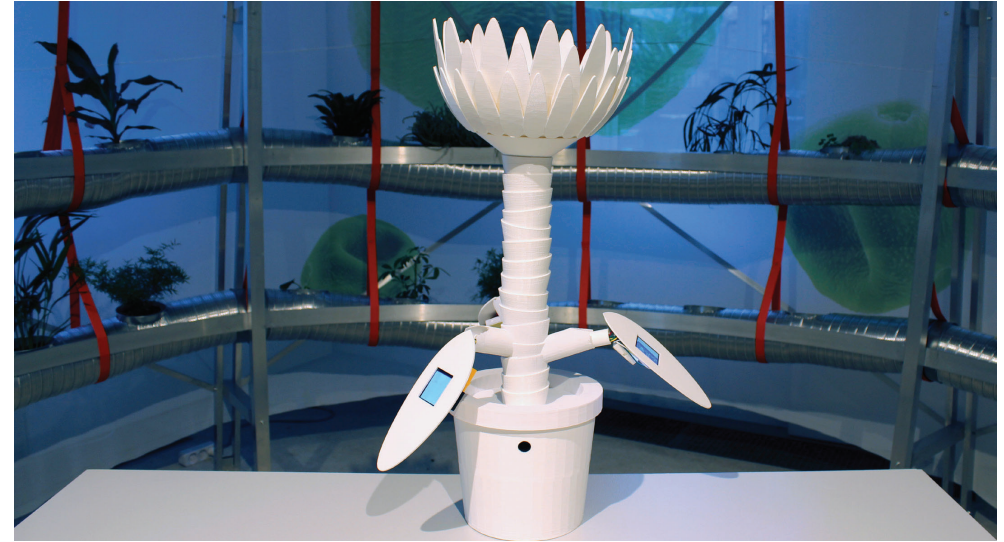
In Federica Gonnelli's works, the observer can find inspiring dilemmas that question seemingly straightforward phenomena. For example, how much can we trust what we perceive? Connected to this and going further, we can also ask why is it important whether we can trust the information that we perceive? The appearing motifs on her artworks, e.g. mountains, segments of landscapes, enlarged detailed of natural scenery etc. are thus not the "final" subject-matters, more like departure points that help the viewer ponder on these above questions. We are forced to observe the scenes through a veil, but it is up to us what we do with this initial condition: accept it as a basic feature, or becoming encouraged to investigate beyond?

Mirabelle Jones

USA-Denmark | Flounder
Lee



It's Time We Talked, 2020, Deepfake, 3D printing with embedded electronics (7" LCD screen, raspberry pi), 23x43x10 cm per sculpture (set of two)



E-Protea, 2020, Surveillance, 3D printing with embedded electronics (webcam, 5" LCD screen, 1.7" TFT screens, latte panda, 3x Arduino ESP32), Dimensions: 60x25x25 cm

Mirabelle Jones is a queer, non-binary artist, researcher, PhD candidate, and creative technologist who creates installations, performances, mixed reality sculptures, and more. Their recent project, Future Technology Products, interprets technologies from a myriad of speculative futures. Instead of forecasting the future (which notoriously fails anyway), Mirabelle asks, "whose world and whose futures are we imagining?" The project is part product design, hacktivism, and intersectional data feminism with dashes of the surveillance state and a base of speculative wide-ranging futures. The three "products" shown are inspired by the stories of Nnedi Okorafor, Ted Chiang, and James Tiptree Junior.



More of What You Want, 2020, Technique: Eye tracking, 3D printing with embedded electronics (webcam), external electronics (27" LCD screen, Intel Stick microcomputer), 13 x8x 3.8 cm sculpture

Tehseen Khan

Pakistan | Izmer
Bin Ahmad



Burden, 2021, Oil and gold leaf on canvas, 63.5x40.64 cm



Untitled, 2021, Oil on canvas, 60.96x 121.92 cm



The golden period, 2021, Gold leaf and oil on canvas, 66.04x93.98 cm

Dress communicates identities, personal as well as collective. It modifies each pound of flesh into meaning, naming each bodily desire and intent. Any form of meaning is always constituted by a touch of violence, the cut of difference, just like the first mark that befalls the canvas to rupture the pictorial space, defining forms against a blinding whiteness. A subject thus appears and erases another. Paintings by Tehseen Khan are informed by the violence that underscores the communicative function of dress and the weight of meaning it bears, which in postcolonial realm often transmutes into identity politics. Khan takes such discord to task, valorizing simultaneous presence of what the artist terms 'eastern and western clothes', where bodies, meanings and difference may conjoin to expand, elaborate, and unveil one another.

Kiluanji Kia Henda

Angola-Portugal | Zoltán Somhegyi



Compacted Distance, 2015, Inkjet print on matt paper, 100x150 cm, Jahmek Contemporary Art

What makes a city? And what makes it a real city? "Real", in a double sense: on the one hand a real, physical, and tangible city, and, on the other hand real as something that has real character, history, references and liveability for its residents. Kiluanji Kia Henda investigates these questions in his series titled "A city called Mirage". The starting point was a decaying signboard in the middle of the desert with the word "Miragem". The project has, however, developed further, with the addition of other material, visual and plastic pieces of art, photographs, and texts, thus creating a multi-layered body of work investigating the equally multi-layered concept and phenomenon of cities – both "real" and "imaginary" cities.



Settings for an imaginary landscape I, 2009, Inkjet print diptych on matt paper, 80x120 cm, Jahmek Contemporary Art

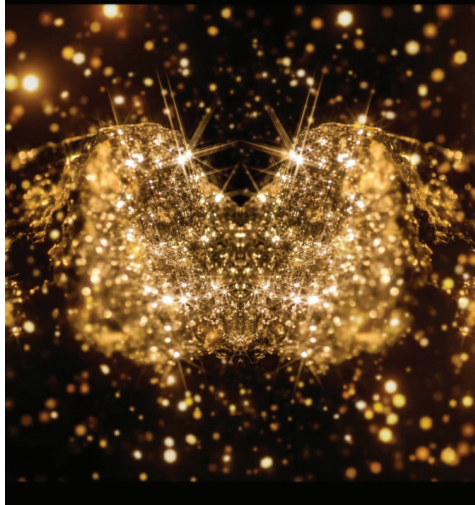


Settings for an imaginary landscape I, 2009, Inkjet print diptych on matt paper, 80x120 cm, Jahmek Contemporary Art

Stefano Favaretto

Interview

Stefano Favaretto Italy

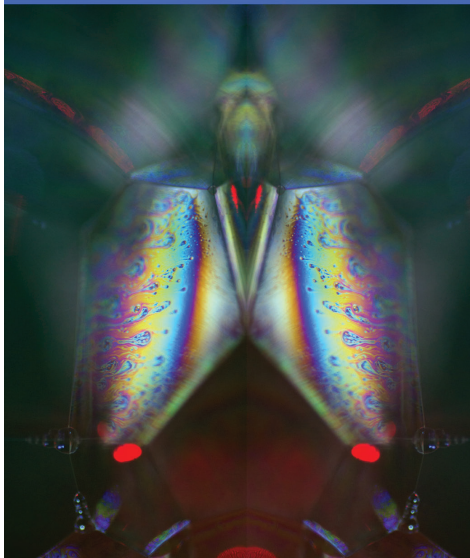


The Golden Kiss



'Hopyelf 42' from 'Hopyelf' collection, Exhibited at the K11 Musea Start Art Gallery, Hong Kong

STEFANO FAVARETTO ITALY



HOPYELF 42



'The Golden Kiss' from 'Invisible Energies' collection on Opensea, Exhibited at the Palazzo Merulana, Rome, Italy

CI: Please introduce yourself.

SF: I am an Italian based photographer and artist. I am living in Northern part of Italy. A beautiful place near the famous mountain called Dolomites. I come from a family they thought me how important it is to do things for others that might be a reason I became a psychologist and psycho-therapist for about 17 years. The experience was very important in my artistic life because I could connect to the deepest part of human beings. Sometimes, I used my photographs for the patients because those allow me to avoid the rationality which many people have and it's not possible to do the same when we talk words.

My biggest passion has always been photography since I was a child. I have a picture of myself with a camera in hands when I was 4 years old. The passion brought to me by my late father. His hobby was photography. When my father passed away, I decided to leave my job as a psychologist and become a full-time artist. My father had a wish to become a full-time photographer after his retirement but unfortunately that didn't happen because he passed before his retirement. That was the reason for me to decide to live in today and follow my dream to become a photographer. In the past 8 years, I followed my dream and exhibited my photographs throughout Italy, New York, Singapore, Shanghai, Monte Carlo etc. In the last 1 year and half ago, I started to work as NFT artist and Curator.

CI: How did you enter the NFT world?

SF: My NFT journey began during the Covid-19 lockdown. I spent more time searching and exploring on social media. I started to join Clubhouse; there I could find out more about the NFT Art. I had a chance to join a club called 'Global Art Exhibition' which I am one of the co-founders. That allowed me to curate 3 physical NFT exhibitions in Hong Kong, Rome, and Sharjah. Now, I am trying to be more focused on my art as a NFT photographer. I have two collections on two different platforms such as Open Sea and Foundation.

CI: What do you most identify with?

SF: Personally, I identify myself as an artist. My passion is to be a photographer than a curator. The role of curator came out because I was part of the 'Global Art Exhibition'. In Clubhouse I started to interview artists every day to give them space to talk about their art and the story behind. I think it is important to give every artist the possibility to show their art. Due to my background, I am very much interested to hear the stories behind the art to understand the artist.

The co-founders of 'Global Art Exhibition' decided to give the role of curators to me to select the works from the artists I interviewed in the club and include their work to these NFT exhibitions.

CI: What does your art aim to say?

SF: I try to connect my photography to psychological knowledge that I have. My photographs are always connected to the psychological meanings with the hope that those can help people to keep

in contact with their deepest part of themselves. To connect with their emotions. I hope my photography can have kind of healing process in audiences like a light of hope. My art also aims to talk about an energetic world around and within us. Nature is part of this energy, and we are part of nature. I try to connect the symbolic psychological meaning to my art.

CI: Tell us more about your experience with NFT art. How do you feel about it?

SF: I believe NFT is a tool to give more value to the art creations. We can imagine the NFT as a package where the artist can add a token of crypto currency to the art works, and this will be saved on the blockchain. To me, as a digital photographer it was easy to jump to NFT world. I use my digital photographs and add more value to them with NFT. Moreover, NFT allows artist to be decentralised. Artists can upload their works and sell their works without interfering any third parties like curators or galleries. Collectors can buy the works from artists and put their collection on secondary market. Artist still gets the percentage of the sale. The system is very fast and handful. These two reasons brought me to NFT. One important thing also, the NFT space helped me to get to know and meet so many nice people. NFT is a community and everyone there should try to build a helpful and strong community around them to sell the art. Most of the collectors in NFT space are artists themselves.

The space allows the artists to meet new artists from around the world and see lots of new and different artworks every day.



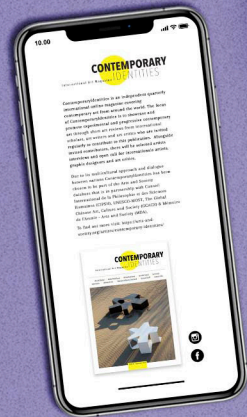
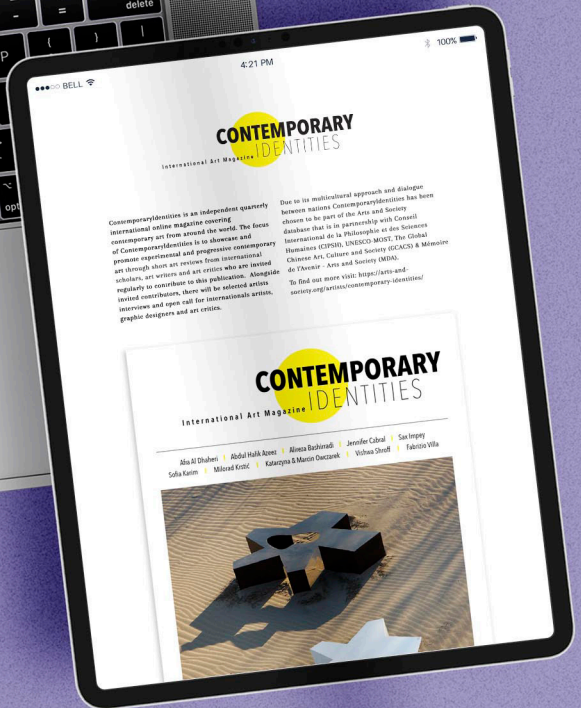
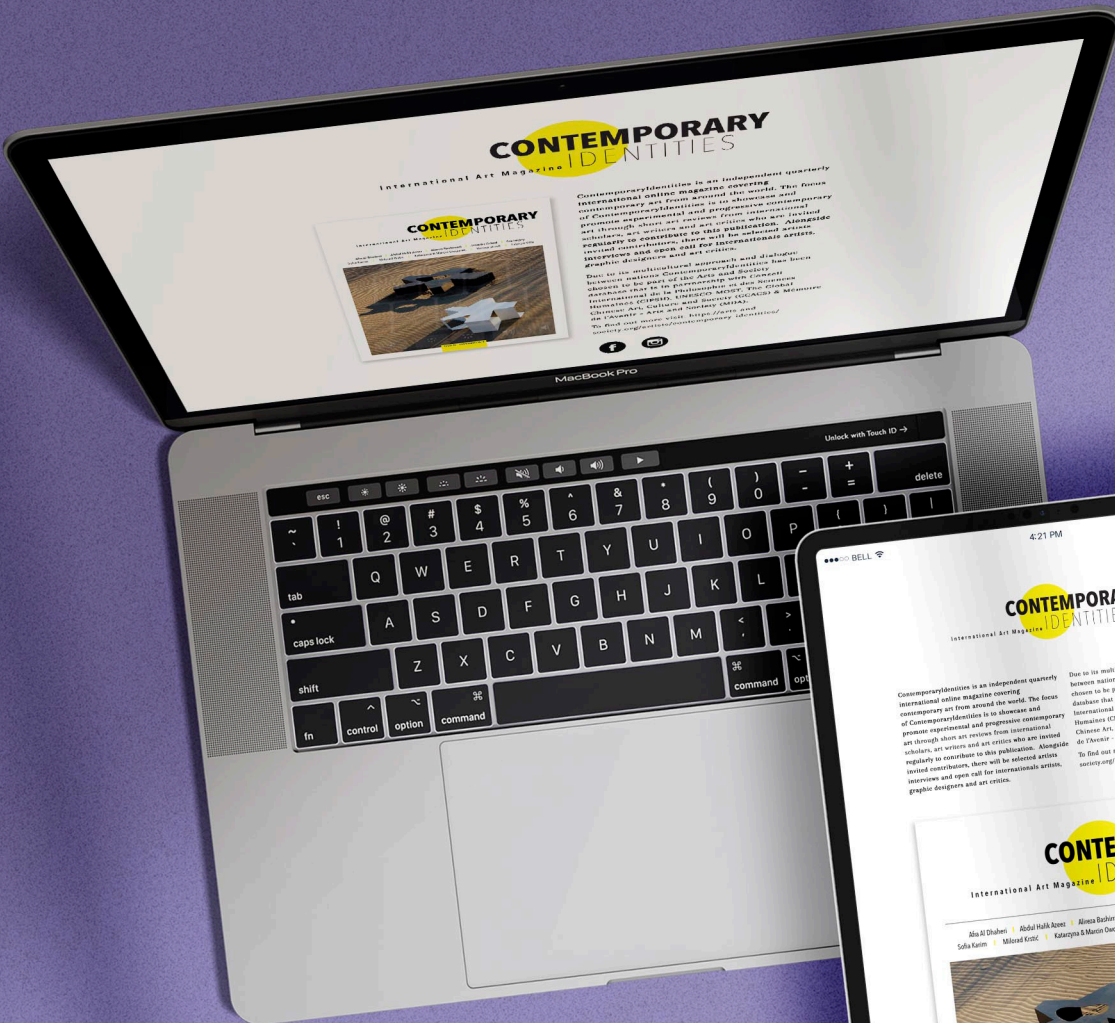
'Where tradition meets the future' exhibition, Organized by Global art Exhibition in collaboration with Culturaitalia, curated by Stefano Favaretto, Rome, Italy, 15th January 2022, Palazzo Merulana

CI: Tell us about more about the three major NFT exhibitions you curated.

SF: The goal of 'Global Art Exhibition' is to bring artists together and provide new possibilities for them. 'Gateway to the Metaverse' was a very huge experience for me because it gave me the possibility to curate the NFT art in a physical space. The first exhibition was in Hong Kong at 11 Key Start Art Gallery. Thanks to Ching Lee for co-curating the exhibition. Ching is one of the young NFT artist's mom. Artus is 7 years old, and he is very popular in Hong Kong and China. The exhibition was very successful. The second exhibition I curated for the NFT art was in Rome. We showed 80 artworks. This exhibition also was a big success and it covered by all the media in Italy. I could say from that exhibition everyone in Italy started to talk about NFT. The location was an old palace which some physical artworks were available in the space and that gave an amazing view to see both physical and NFT artworks together. In Sharjah we exhibited the third show of this series. It was the same as Rome, we exhibited some physical and NFT artworks together to make the audiences to understand the bridge between these two different forms of art. The exhibition was in collaboration with Sharjah Government and Morrow Collective in House of Wisdom which is a beautiful library. Morrow Collective is a local gallery and they brought 15 NFT artists based in the UAE to the exhibition. We brought 76 international artists to this exhibition. We are very happy with all these three exhibitions.



'Gateway to the Metaverse' exhibition, Organized by Global Art Exhibition in collaboration with Morrow Collective, House of Wisdom, Sharjah, UAE, 1st March-15th April 2022, Curated by Stefano Favaretto



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