

PRISON-

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OF VE-

NUS

A VIDEO EXHIBITION

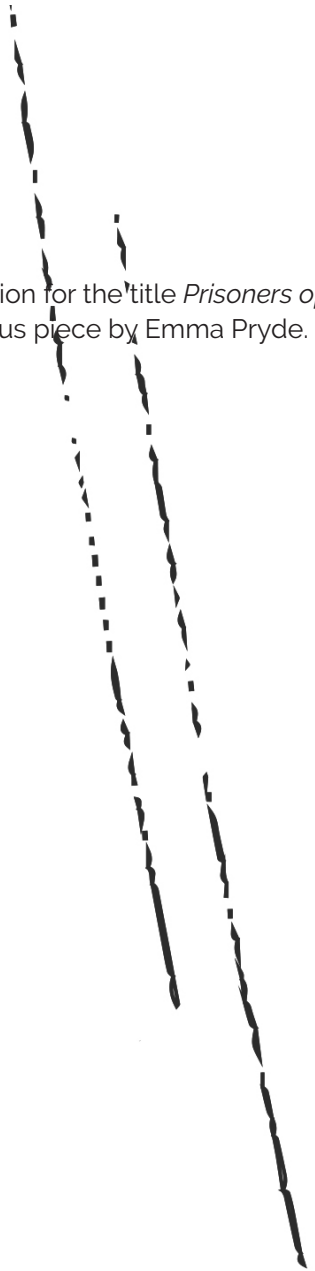
Minda Andrén
Isabella Mcguire
Jenny Palén
Emma Pryde
Jessyca R. Hauser
Anja Morell
Victor Lizana

Curated by Anna Schachinger & Lisa Stuckey

March 22–24, 2016 || Opening: March 21, 6 pm
Opening hours: 1–6 pm

Semperdepot, EG Nord
1060 Vienna, Lehárgasse 8

Supported by
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The inspiration for the title *Prisoners of Venus* comes from the homonymous piece by Emma Pryde.

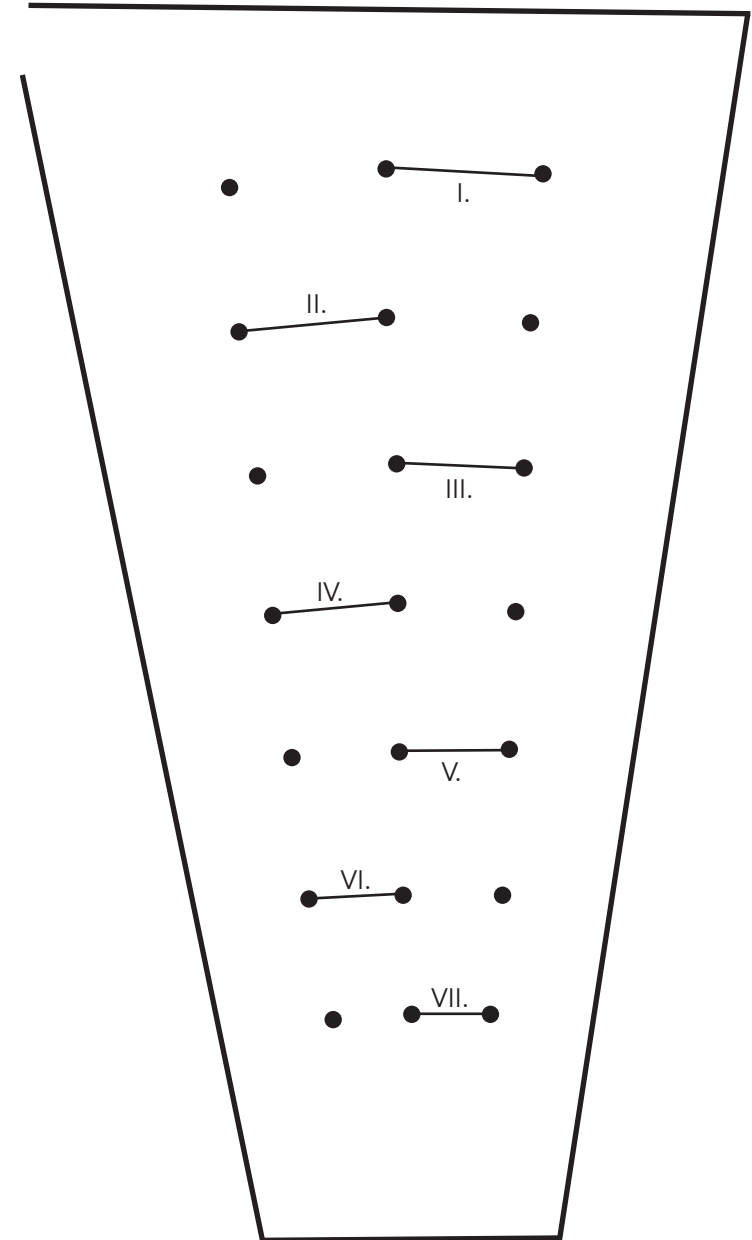
Looped cognitive objects (thoughts, images, sounds, actions), affective technologies, the miracle of destruction, rituals between document and enactment, sexy gadgets, the fetishized mouth, patterns overlaying the fragmentary montages...

Prisoners of Venus features these recurring motives within the visual and rhetorical interdependencies of the various narratives. Some of the moving images function as *objet trouvé*, while others are carefully assembled placing an emphasis on their association to one another. This becomes evident both in the singular videos and the curatorial process.

Ecstatic bodies and topographies as if in trance – induced by oneself or others – perform a certain *otherworldliness* over biographic plateaus. The impression of a common filmic unconscious of the seven pieces is evoked, only separated by floating screens plunged in bluish light, the unconscious exists nowhere else but on the filmic surface itself.

– Lisa Stuckey –

- I. *Beginning of a New Age* by Minda Andrén
- II. *Business Crush* by Isabella Mcguire
- III. *Spacerabbit* by Jenny Palén
- IV. *Prisoner of Venus* by Emma Pryde
- V. *Bamboo Bamboo* by Jessyca R. Hauser
- VI. *Tripping in the Dunes* by Anja Morell
- VII. *Ancient Powers* by Victor Lizana



I. *Beginning of a New Age* by Minda Andrén

Found Footage, 2016, 4:15 min

"Weightlessness, or an absence of 'weight', is an absence of stress and strain resulting from externally applied mechanical contact-forces, typically normal forces from floors, seats, beds, scales, and the like." – (From the article about weightlessness on Wikipedia)

The Video work *Beginning of a New Age* comes from an interest and research in apocalyptic films. It deals with the notion of destruction as a necessity for renewal, to rise from the ashes and start again. While researching the cultural obsession of doomsday films the connection between their increased popularity of these films and growing fear in society became clear. The more issues promote people's insecurities and fear of the future (for example financial crisis and war), the more doomsday-type films are produced. Through this research I gained insight into my own fascination with these films.

After collecting scenes where whole cities were pulverized with their buildings exploding and burning, I put them together into a constant flow that turned into a sort of emotional release. The constant crescendo of suspended destruction gave a sense of weightlessness, a sudden freedom from my own ideas and emotions. Almost like holding your breath and jumping into the water, it is a state of free falling that gives a promise of something new and different.

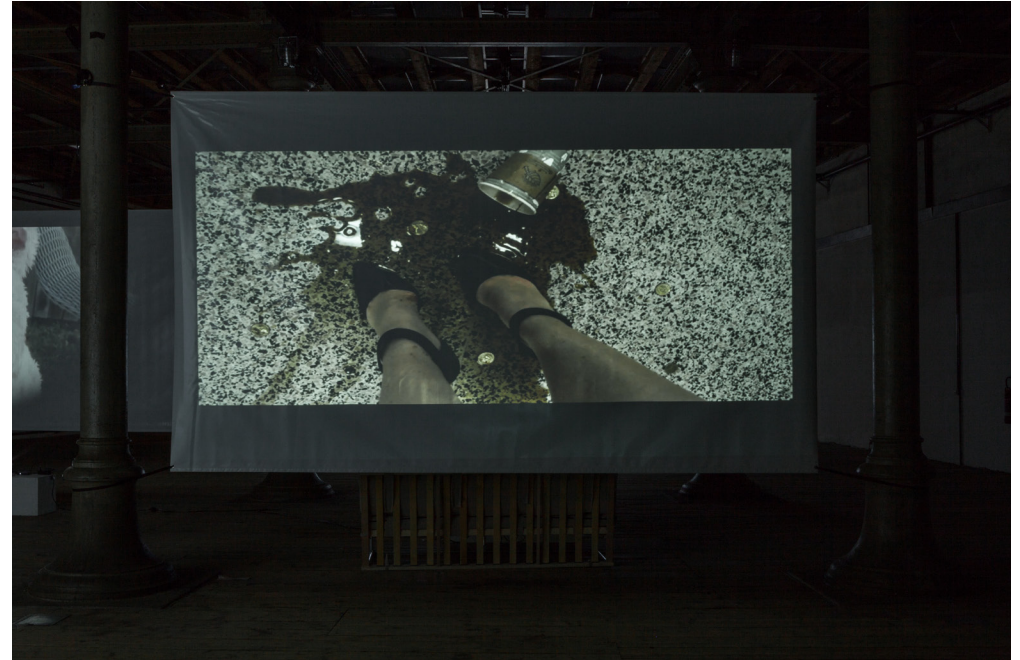


II. *Business Crush* by Isabella Mcguire

HD Video, 2015, 4:14 min

Business Crush is all about power and spaces that dictate power. It was created in 2015 while I was living in downtown Chicago; the heart of Illinois' wealth and corporation where business people and tourist reside until 6 pm and everyone goes home, leaving the city barren.

I have always been interested in the methods of looking at and narratives that surround female bodies on screen. Working with tropes and the gaze as a material in video, I perform with an overtone of fetish to play with power and the body. Crush pornography has a very particular formula in which it follows. The camera is always positioned at the height of the heel, so the destruction of the object is in plain site. I approached the formula in crush through a subversive lens that also honors the practice of fetish.



III. *Spacerabbit* by Jenny Palén

HD Video, 2015, 29:30 min

The video is about a story that has circulated in my mind for a couple of years. I had created a fictional depiction of the world within a room influenced by social realist style for an installation piece and decided to continue its evolution. I then started working on a character that would live in that room: who would she talk to, what would her view of the world be? I wrote a blog called *Spacerabbit* and that's how the character developed and became the basis for the script. I can't say that making the film was always pleasing.

I shot the film during my last year at Kungliga Konsthögskolan in Stockholm, just before a three year pause of living family life. I have three kids now so everything has to be quite structured if anything is to be done nowadays. I would say I work much more focused now.

I hope the film speaks for itself. I would like to keep its meaning quite open as it concerns many different ideas. Though for me, it's mainly about spiritual loss, solitude, and searching, and the need for a special purpose and place.



IV. *Prisoner of Venus* by Emma Pryde

HD Video, 2015, 28:47 min

I lived in New York and I hated the city so I would go to the Rockaways and swim in the ocean. That's where I got the initial inspiration for *Prisoner of Venus*.

The scenes are combinations of improvisation and real interactions between people and objects. I set up a green screen on the roof with one of my friends, and we shot some stuff with that. I learned final cut and premiere pro which has changed my life. I had just quit my job working for Takashi Murakami and I had six months worth of pent up emotions and feelings about life that I needed to get out, and was willing to do anything to express myself.

The film consists of four chapters: Chapter 1 takes place in a spiritual dimension of the distant past. It is directly in reference to a Botticelli painting called Visions of St. Augustine, where a child attempts to empty the ocean into a puddle with a spoon. Then, a male witch convinces one of two pagan sisters that she must be baptized, and the world ends in a giant tsunami. Chapter 2 is about the objective world in the present-future. The protagonist wakes up and doesn't know who or where she is. She works at a factory that produces a drug that is simultaneously a stimulant, an opiate, and an aphrodisiac. This drug produces powerful hallucinations that keep citizens in psychological imprisonment. Chapter 3 is about relationships. The main character is a slave-wife of a violent man who has unlimited power and freedom. His wives are his property, and he murders them as sacrifices. Chapter 4 is a series of hallucinations through which the protagonist reflects on life and death.

My intentions for *Prisoner of Venus* are unexplainable. During the process of its creation I felt as though I was in a trance. I was dealing with huge psychological changes at that point, especially regarding identity. I was responding to the imprisonment I felt. Through this project I was able to regain aspects of my mind that I had lost while working so many menial jobs in New York.



V. *Bamboo Bamboo* by Jessyca R. Hauser

DV Video, 2013, 13 min

June 2010 – a man jumps in front of a train.
A girl buys a cheap collection of T. S. Eliot plays.
She reads his first attempt to write in verse.
Gets hooked on its second scene.

August 2010 – a girl attempts her first attempt.
She rents a car, gathers people, drives to the countryside.
Realizes it's nothing like she imagined – so she leaves it.
Abandons it. Moves on.

Some month 2013 – browsing through hard drives full of past lives.
She finds the second scene of what did not end up being her first film.
Decides it's something.

An attempt to deal with the absurd, she thinks. Life and death, power,
bestiality, despair, wigs, stupid hats, fake blood, relations, honest mis-
takes, questions, failure.

Something that has not been intended but decided, eventually, to
share what it exposes without initially intending to expose anything.

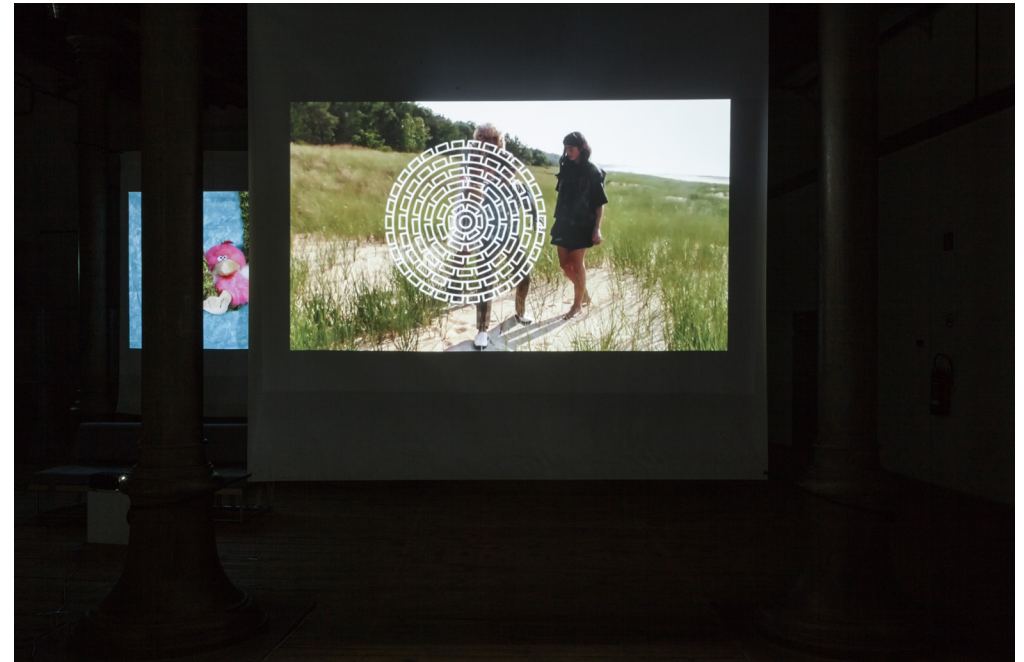


VI. *Tripping in the Dunes* by Anja Morell

HD Video, 2013, 10:35 min. In collaboration with Jacob Blume/Meg Mccarville/Gregory Soup Phillips/Davitt Terrell

Around 2013, Daviet and I had been making a lot of short narratives involving our friends. We were best friends and hung out a lot, so ideas came easily and we worked well and playfully together. For this particular video, I got involved at a point when Daviet, Soup, and Meg had already been talking about a premise for a music video for a song that Daviet had written called »Tripping in the Dunes«. They said it would be a spiritual journey story involving LSD and the Indiana Sand Dunes – a place that Chicagoans consider to be nature but is actually just a beach in between two factories in industrial Indiana on Lake Michigan, about 30 minutes south of the city. One day in July, Daviet and I wrote the script together one day on my porch. A week later, we all drove to the Indiana Sand Dunes and spent a day there.

We intended to make a parody of spiritual types and the storytelling journey or quest trope. It wasn't really intended as an art piece, it was just a combination of the weird stuff we did to entertain ourselves and use our creative energy. Being somewhat focused on spiritual, natural, and healthy ideas in real life, it is a piece that knows it is preaching to the choir. We made ourselves laugh, it's basically a big inside joke. It was really silly for Daviet and I to be a hetero and cross-dressed hippie couple because we are such good platonic friends. As relatively cisgendered queer people, cross dressing can be a cheap shot. I guess, we admit that. We just had fun intentions and it was valuable to get to be a character, unlike how we present ourselves on a daily basis, but someone we vibe with and obviously "get" on some level.



VII. *Ancient Powers* by Victor Lizana

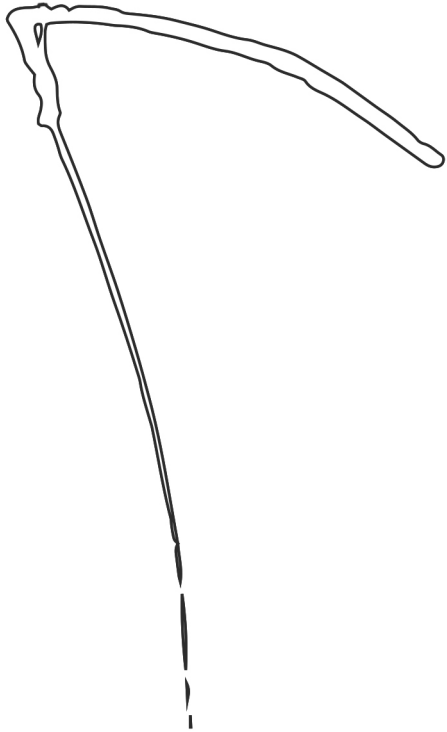
Video, 2016, 8:15 min

I work with questions and thoughts that I have been carrying with me since I was a kid. Those of alienation, exclusion, discrimination, unemployment, future, depression, hope/hopelessness, hatred, and existence are present in my life and my work. The video is about South American colonization. While growing up, I tried to figure out how the hell I ended up in Europe? I walked around with the rich imagination I had, creating different scenarios and stories. Later, when I became a pissed off teenage punk, I used to tell stories to my friends about how I was a part of a South American indigenous people infiltrating Europe for revenge. My friends laughed at me and called me crazy. But hey, later I read a real story of revenge in books about Lautaro, a kid from the Mapuche people (of modern-day Chile), and how he was captured by Spanish colonizers. By observation, he learned the Spanish way of modern warfare. Lautaro returned to the Mapuche people as an adult and later led the Mapuche people at the battle of the Bio-Bio River, which stopped the Spanish army's advance. Much of my work has its roots in the hatred I felt during childhood.

I produced *Ancient Powers* while I was living in the northern parts of Sweden, in a city called Umeå. It's a place with very long winters and very few hours of sunlight. Some days you can see the sunlight shining over the treetops.

I was working for a man and after the economic crisis hit our business, he screwed me out of lots of money. He also told the love of my life that my videos sucked and all my ideas were wack. So I guess the motivation for the video comes from revenge.





Minda Andrén

Minda Andrén lives and works in Vienna, where she studies at the Academy of Fine Arts. Influenced by the aesthetics of romanticism and pop culture her works revolve around balancing and binding elements that are contradicting, yet dependent on each other, such as destruction and reconstruction or surface and materiality. By using patterns and repetitions her works result in abstract painting, video, and installation. She has exhibited in group exhibitions at various off-spaces and galleries in Austria, Germany, and Sweden, amongst others in Gallery Bon in Stockholm, Husslehof in Frankfurt, Paralell art fair, Büro Weltausstellung, HHDM, and Mauve in Vienna.

** mindaandren.tumblr.com **

Victor Lizana

After a few years in different businesses, Victor Lizana decided to cut his hair and get a real job. He went to a painting school, with intention to go to the university for teaching. Problem was, he got accepted to Academy of Fine Arts in Umeå, an art school located in nowhere. With 18 hours a day for work, and 8 hours for sleep, it's possible to get a lot of things done. In Umeå he started to do serious video work. Last fall he came to Vienna to study in the class of Daniel Richter at the Academy of Fine Arts.

** victorlizana.com **

Isabella Mcguire

Isabelle Frances McGuire is an interdisciplinary artist currently based out of Chicago. Her work deals with hierarchies in fetish and the mediated gaze. She has shown in Germany, Mexico, Canada and extensively in Chicago. Currently, she is working on a Bachelor of Fine Arts at the School of the Art Institute of Chicago.

** vimeo.com/isabellemcguire **

Anja Morell

Anja Morell is a performer, curator, video artist, and zine maker living in Chicago. Color, spirituality, accessibility, sexuality, intimacy, and humor are all important aspects of Anja's artwork. Anja has performed and shown work in Chicago, Stockholm, Montreal, New York City, Mexico City, and London.

** anjamorell.tumblr.com **

Jenny Palén

Jenny Palén, born in Stockholm, is working with visual representations such as video, installations, and sculpture. She is a former graffiti artist; the motives are often figurative and comically absurd. The same characters will return in her drawings as well as in videos. Palén has a master's degree from the Royal Institute of Art Stockholm from 2015. She is also an initiator of the renown artist gallery Bastard, where intrinsically social with unpredictable productions and collaborations which extended beyond the gallery space. Palén also worked on commission performing murals in public spaces but in recent years her work has been more focused on film.

** jennypalen.com **

Emma Pryde

Emma Pryde is a artist currently living in Los Angeles. She is working on a series of video projects ranging in style from documentary to fictional narrative. After high school she went to India for three months and lived in Varanasi, the spiritual capital of India, where dead bodies are burned along the Ganges River. In order to escape the sensory chaos of life, she became obsessed with making surrealist paintings. She went to school in Chicago and moved to NY after graduation and has recently relocated to California. Emma Prydes' work is a reflection of contemporary life and the fractured histories, abstracted truths, and artificial social parameters that structure our society, our values, and the way we relate to the self as well as the world around us.

** emmapryde.com **

Jessyca R. Hauser

Jessyca R. Hauser is about to graduate from the Academy of Fine Arts Vienna, where she studies Art and Media. In 2014/15 she studied additionally at the Glasgow School of Art. She works both independently and collaboratively within the field of video, performance and installation. Her work has been presented at festivals and institutions internationally, for example: Viennale, HKW Berlin, GSFF Glasgow, and Diagonale. Lives and works in Vienna.

** cargocollective.com/jessycarhauser **

Anna Schachinger

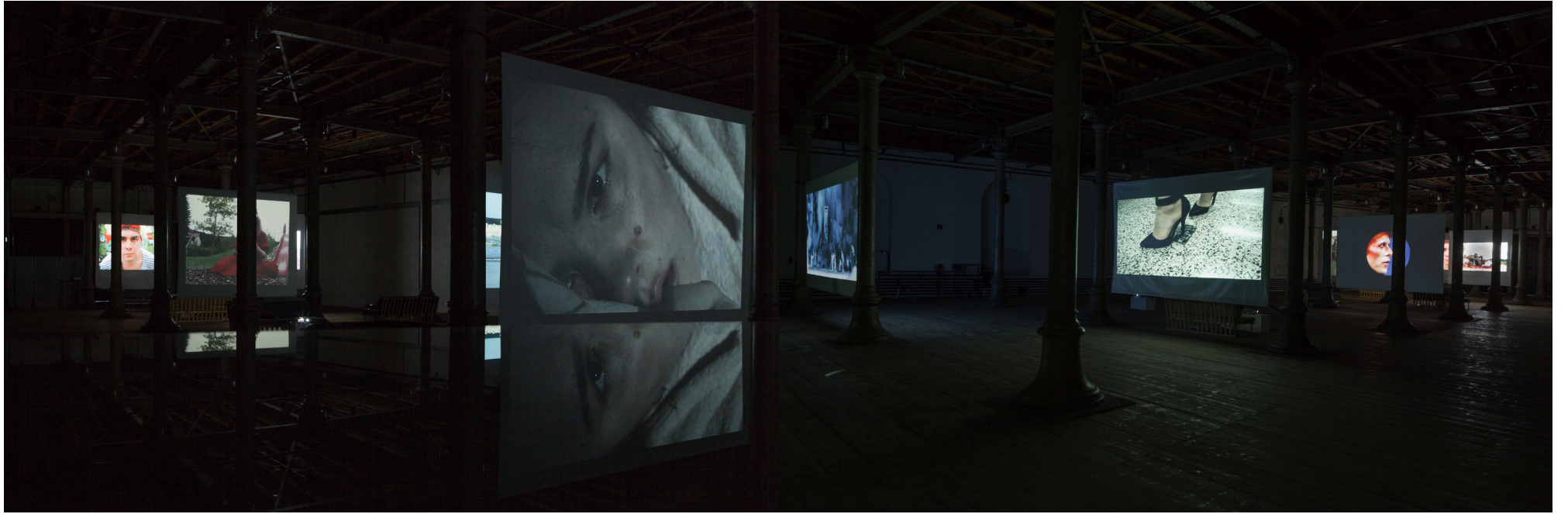
Anna Schachinger currently studies in the class for Expanded Pictorial Space at the Academy of Fine Arts Vienna. She moved to Vienna in 2012, after having lived and studied in Quito and Chicago (School of the Art Institute Chicago). In her paintings, Anna flirts with genres, without believing in any specific style. Anna Schachinger has shown work in different art spaces, such as Galerie Kunstbüro and Dou in Vienna, Husselschhof in Frankfurt, and London's Transition Gallery. She felt inspired to arrange a video exhibition as time-based works have always been of special interest for her.

** cargocollective.com/annaschachinger **

Lisa Stuckey

Lisa Stuckey engages in art, research, and curation. 2015 she graduated from Mediation in the Arts, with a focus on history and theory of art. Since 2014 she studies in the class Art and Media at the Academy of Fine Arts Vienna, and spent a semester at the Royal Institute of Art Stockholm in 2011/12. Her artistic approach is a conceptual one and she often works collaboratively; her videos have been presented e.g. in Mumok Kino and Künstlerhaus Wien. She has been part of Friday Exit (self-managed exhibition space) and current research interests are Performance Theory, Applied Psychoanalysis, and Critical Posthumanism.

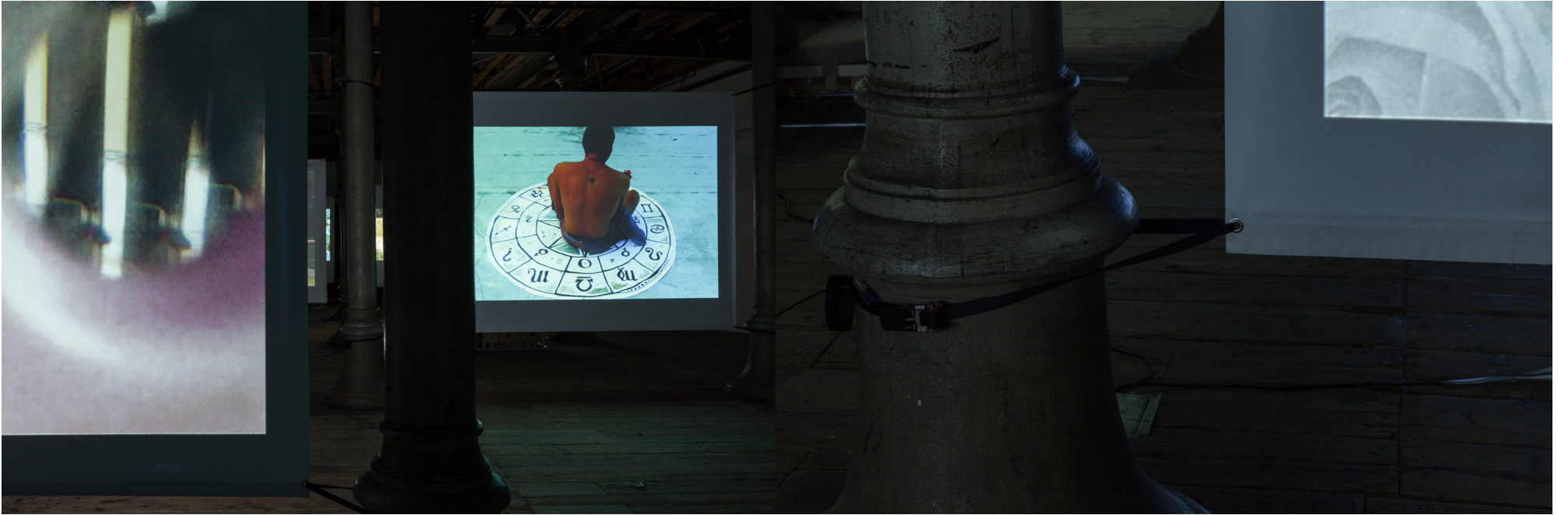
** lisastuckey.net **



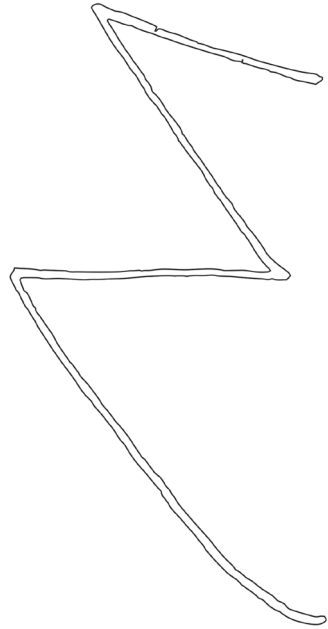
↑ Installation views



↑ Installation views



↑ Installation views



Concept, Curation, Production of the Exhibition

Anna Schachinger, Lisa Stuckey

Publication

Lisa Stuckey

Texts

Lisa Stuckey, participating artists

Installation shots

Jennifer Gelardo, Flavio Palasciano

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