

MU

The New Psychedelica

April 8 - June 5, 2011

Imagine a kind of technological stew. In this big bubbling cauldron there are piles of images. Jpegs of the Super Mario Bros, scratched 1980s children's ads, fractals left over from early rave culture, disintegrating computer animations and lots of odd found snippets. You could call this abstract stew the Internet. This neon coloured pool is the source for The New Psychedelica. Art that is all about the overload of imagery in modern experience. Art that illustrates how (digital) technology has infused our daily lives.



Communal

From its inception psychedelica was an outsider – something that originally mixed politics and drugs, music and experimentation. Something sensorial and populist. As Dave Hickey notes in the essay 'Freaks', published in his book 'Air Guitar': *"Extreme experience was not required, nor was cultural production. One simply proclaimed a commitment to whatever ideology psychedelic experience signified at that particular*

PRESS RELEASE

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Opening April 8, from 8 pm

The New Psychedelica is a thematic group show initiated by MU with mainly new work by 15 international artists from around the globe, co-curated by Francesca Gavin. The opening will be followed by an afterparty with a music performance by The Oscillation and others.

IMAGE:

Yoshi Sodeoka - Violet Dark Spring of the Numinous Orb, video 2011 (screenshot)

historical moment... It was a communal, polemical art, vulgar in the best sense and an international language." The radical movement was quickly adopted and abused as a style. However, the retro tastelessness, faded technologies, cheap methods and trash references are exactly what makes today's neo-psychedelic works so interesting.

The hyper-coloured, tech references of the video works, installations and sculptures gathered in The New Psychedelica provide a perfect illustration of our relationship to the Internet. On the web all is in flux. Users are hit by a constant overwhelming wave of content and image. The internet has become our portal into an immediate alternate world or mode of consciousness. It is the single most influential experience in our daily lives. As British artist Mark Titchner has noted, *"The aesthetics of psychedelic art traditionally have been to depict our heightened state or to be the kind of art you enjoy looking at when you're in a heightened state. With the technology we have available to us now to make more immersive work, you can actually send people into a heightened state."*

New vein

The content of the exhibition is split between how this new vein of psychedelic work emerges in sculpture, installation, print and video. At the centre of the show is a structure showing the main body of video works in the exhibition. The two-level space, which can be walked around, up, through and beneath displays video pieces on projections, monitors and screens. These include **Paul B. Davis**, best known as one of the most innovative computer related artists who was one of the creators of data-moshing and Nintendo hacking. He is experimenting magic eye 3D techniques. **Rosa Menkman's** glitch, pixelated video explores the inner nature of computers and ideas around disintegration and slippage. Other pieces by **Yoshi Sodeoka** and **Jimmy Joe Roche** focus on overwhelming video imagery and dito sound, a perfect illustration of the avalanche at the heart of The New Psychedelica. **E*Rock** and **Daniel Swan's** abstract technological universes reinvent the idea of the psychedelic alternate space with hypnotic animated works. **Brenna Murphy's** ever-moving, flashing, noisy touch screen video works take the interactive element of the internet into the gallery. **Carlos Laszlo's** video piece is a humorous pastiche of old psychedelica. Made in collaboration with Jeffrey Loyal, it is based around a fictional band that sings about responsible internet usage and reveries for technologies past.

Surrounding this central hub of moving image is a number of larger works. **Jim Drain's** ephemeral mobile sculptures very loosely reference elements of psychedelic

"The internet can be such a trippy experience. We are constantly bombarded with visual stimulus, flashing ads, streaming video, emails, advertising noise. It makes sense that art that deciphers this landscape reflects that same psychedelic overload."

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history, in the artist's unique personal way. The sculptural assemblages were made specifically for the space, using found objects, textile and video elements. Drain's vibrant freeform works reference everything from the Woodstock festival to the history of Dutch design, constantly pushing aesthetic boundaries.

British artist **Ben Sansbury** addresses the totemic and tribal aspects of psychedelica in a video installation using holographic panels, where the ghostly presence of rotating 3D objects are projected. The works references science fiction, ethnic art, architecture and mythical structures. The contrast between the totemic and technological can be seen in **Harm van den Dorpel's** installation where his video work 'Strategies', shown in completion for the first time, is displayed alongside two layered sculptures.

Nik Kosmas and **Daniel Keller** (aka Aids 3D) explore the use of the teleprompter, a conduit of power, particularly in American politics. In their installation the viewer becomes the reader and speaker, a 'medium' expressing information and power. French artist **Antoine Catala's** installation piece 'TV Blobs' transforms real-time TV into rounded shapes, fragmenting and repeating TV into curved kaleidoscopic forms. The installation poetically illustrates our relationship and interpretation of a stream of advertisements, news and pop ephemera.

Chilean artist **Sergio Recabarren's** prints and sculpture are inspired by old technology, particularly the low resolution and limited colour spaces from the late 80s video games. Mario from the Super Mario Bros serves as a portal between our real world and the colour-saturated, pixel-based artificiality of the iconic video game. **Jeremy Shaw** also touches on the idea of slipping between alternate realities – a fitting metaphor for our experience of the internet. His video work "This Transition Will Never End" stitches together an archive of vortexes in popular media used to illustrate a change of dimension or reality. The silent single channel video will be shown alongside a series of lo-fi photographic print works that Shaw has taken of psychedelic mushrooms with an aura camera.

About MU

MU zooms in on the hybrid visual culture of now and later. MU is an adventurous guide to all art lovers with a keen interest in the energetic mix of art, design, popculture and new media that contemporary culture has to offer. MU is an open minded and dynamic space that breathes the 21st century practice of multidisciplinary creative co-operation.

Editor's note

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