

World as Lover, World as Self

October 2020 - December 2021

Over the course of 14 months we have invited four artists to work with us to rework existing artwork and to help us experiment with the exhibition format. We also create a moment where the solo exhibition becomes a fleeting duo exhibition, where the exhibition chapters that fade in and out of each other. As a format, we see the chapters crossing over as similar to the crossfade in film or in music. The artworks will intermingle, creating entangled relationships and networks of associations.

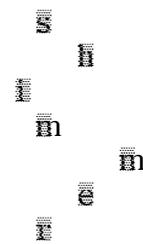
In this PDF we share Chapter 1 by Magali Reus, and the week long the overlap with Chapter 2 by Harm van den Dorpel. As the exhibitions unfolds.

Inspired by environmental activist and Buddhist scholar Joanna Macy, our exhibition *World As Lover, World As Self* turns to contemporary art to help us to “relinquish our separateness” and take account of the residue of the world that we think we know. Our program does this through the concept of defamiliarization as a means to “turn the familiar strange,” to redefine the self and our subsequent community. Defamiliarization, or aesthetic distance, is a literary and artistic technique coined by Russian Formalists during the outbreak of the 1918 flu pandemic. According to the formalists, the technique uses language in a way that ordinary objects are made to be reconsidered, that what is in front of us might surpass our assumptive narratives. How can bodies, technologies and modes of being, be taken outside of predefined cultural presumptions in order to de-categorise, to shapeshift, to morph, to glimmer, to shimmer. In this program, we estrange, not to create a ‘foreign’ or ‘other’ but to radically rethink community, to engage with the World as Lover, and as Self.

Thanks to Magali Reus, Harm van den Dorpel, Antonio de la Hera, Isabelle Sully, Antye Guenther, Sol Archer, Gemeente Rotterdam, Creative Industries NL, Mondriaan Fonds, The Approach, London, Upstream Gallery, Amsterdam.

Now it can dawn on us: we are our world knowing itself. We can relinquish our separateness. We can come home again—and participate in our world in a richer, more responsible and poignantly beautiful way than before, in our infancy. Because of the journey, we undertook to distance ourselves from our world; it is no longer undifferenced from us. It can appear to us now both as self and as lover. Relating to our world with the full measure of our being, we partake of the qualities of both.

– Joanna Macy, *World as Lover, World as Self*, 2007, Parallex Press



Shimmer is a curatorial studio that experiments with exhibition-making in time and in space. It run by Eloise Sweetman and Jason Hendrik Hansma.

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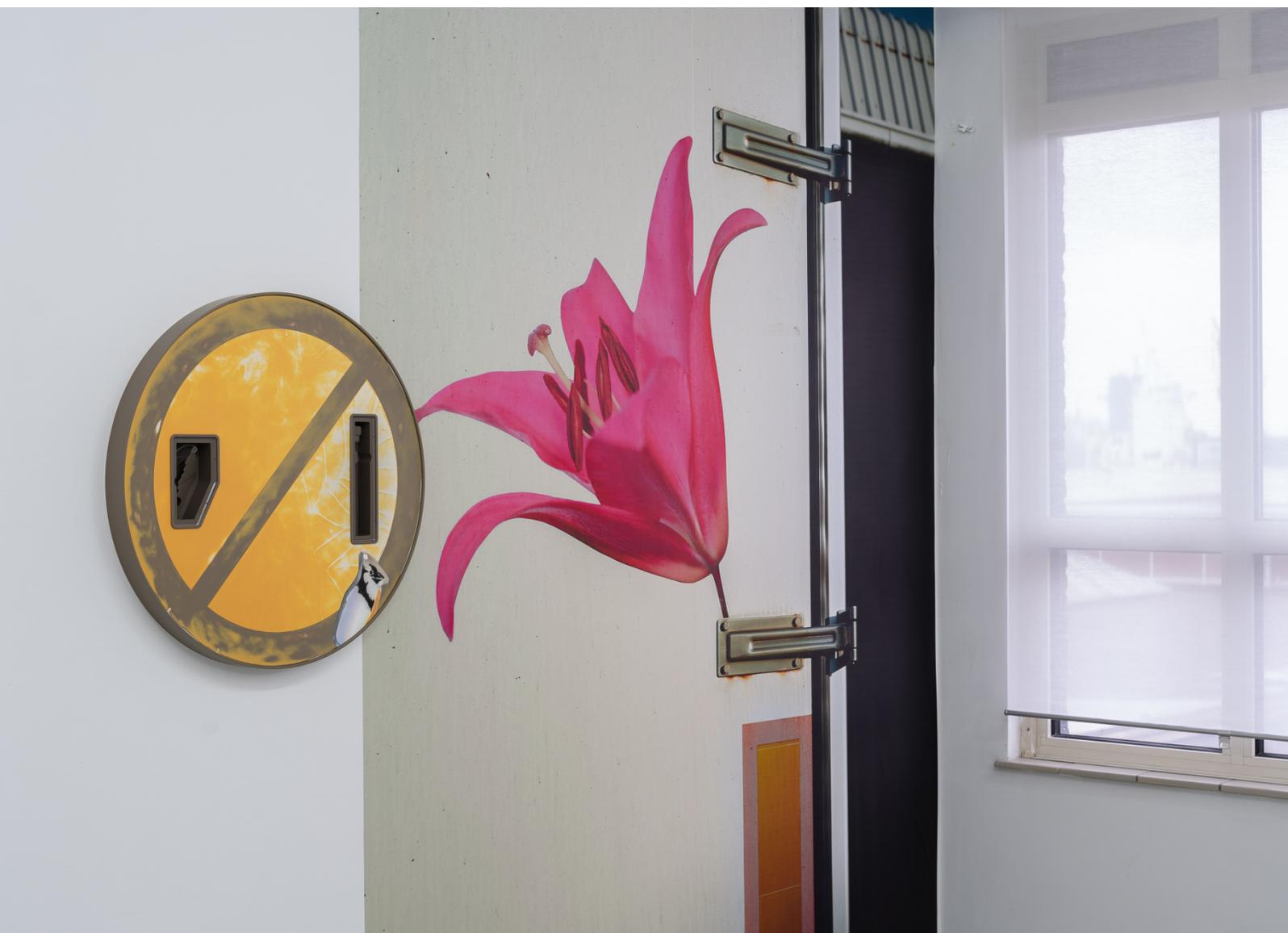
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**Chapter 1:
City Pollen by Magali Reus**

9 October 2020 - 13 February 2021



We open with *World as Lover, World as Self* Chapter 1: *City Pollen* by Magali Reus, whose sculptural and photographic work evokes new material associations and renderings. The artist resurfaces Shimmer's interior walls with large-scale images of the facades of Dutch flower trucks en route to auction. These trucks are beautifully contained lozenges of colour and striking typographic detail, a strange paradox of hard external skins with their perishable organic cargo. Featuring detailed depictions of floral exuberance, these blooms transform the metal armour of vehicle anatomy into softly erotic and malleable substance. Framed in isolation, these images question what it means to render an image and how quickly the hierarchy of looking can enter a process of symbolic reversal.

Overlaying the photographic works, at mirror height, are *Settings (City Pollen)* and *Settings (Headlights)* from Reus's recent series. These sculptural works take the NO PARKING road sign as their immediate graphic communication and their message is a first and primary function - go this way, stop here, warning: dog. Yet nested into the public sphere over time they accrue fragments of information, contradictory patterns, or surface interventions that open them up to material collage. Like cultural artifacts they are a quiet canvas for a more unhinged type of mark-making: the obscure shadow-play of nightlife, globs of bird shit or chewing gum, busted headlamp residue, lost dog pleas, advertising, and pornography. In *Settings* the toughness of the baked enamel sign's surface has been perverted with process interruptions: the surfaces are sanded, masked, adjusted, airbrushed.

The *Settings* works read as a type of portraiture: polyvocal eyes, heads, or faces, they are watching us as we watch them. Objects from the genre of domestic melodrama (toothpaste, mousetrap, windscreen wiper) are enshrined behind Perspex in small recessed cavities. Like place markers at a table, these utensils are now complicit performers in the watching. Provocatively perfect replicas of their real-life selves, each implies an action - foaming, a snapping, a killing, an isolating. They amplify the pun of their very existence as signs: take one layer away and beneath it lies yet more language and symbolist instruction.

Between the wallpaper and the sculptural works, the structural significance is confused, as Reus collapses the scale and conventional materiality of images as mechanisms for establishing value. An organic form is newly huge, baggy, unidentifiable, whilst fragments of a more domestic ubiquity - toothpaste, a torch, intercom buttons - enter into uncharted cycles of displacement. Everything is abstracted from its expected function: the hinted proximity of human touch lingers, with the material in both its literal and metaphoric sense used as an emotional or chemical sign to subtly morph or force the tone of the work overall.

About the artist

Magali Reus was born in Den Haag, The Netherlands in 1981, and currently lives and works in London. Forthcoming solo exhibitions include *Nasher Sculpture Center*, Dallas, USA; *The Perimeter*, London, UK (both 2021); *Museum Dhondt-Dhaenens*, Ghent, BE and *CAC Synagogue de Delme*, FR (2022). Recent solo shows include *As mist*, description, South London Gallery, London (2018); *Hot Cottons*, Bergen Kunsthall, Bergen (2017); *Night Plants*, Kunstmuseum St. Gallen, St. Gallen (2017); *Mustard*, The Stedelijk Museum, Amsterdam (2016); *Quarters*, Fondazione Sandretto Re Rebaudengo, Turin (2016); *Spring for a Ground*, SculptureCenter, New York; *Particle of Inch*, The Hepworth Wakefield, Wakefield; *Halted Paves*, Westfälischer Kunstverein, Münster (all 2015). Reus has been included in group exhibitions and screenings at Tate Britain, London; ICA, London; CCS Bard Hessel Museum of Art, Annandale-on-Hudson; Kestnergesellschaft, Hanover; LUMA Westbau, Zürich; Kunsthalle Wien, Vienna; David Roberts Art Foundation, London; Museu Nacional de Arte Contemporânea, Lisbon; De Appel, Amsterdam and the British Art Show 8 (touring).

Reus has been shortlisted for the Hepworth Prize for Sculpture 2018 and was awarded the Prix de Rome 2015. Her work is included in international collections including Tate Collection, UK; Stedelijk Museum Amsterdam; Collection CCS Bard Hessel Museum of Art, Annandale-on-Hudson; Kunstmuseum Winterthur; Kunstmuseum St. Gallen; Lafayette Anticipation - Fonds de dotation Famille Moulin, Paris; Rubell Family Collection, Miami; among others.



In Wait For You

by Shimmer

Reus' work undoes ideas of material truth. An undoing of signifiers taken for granted in our day to day. Reus' work is not a 'trick' of another material, it is our contemporary life. Materials that appear defined, slip seamlessly to become another. Say 'copper', 'leather', 'twill', but now misspeak them as 'plastic', as 'resin', as 'steel' and the back again. Ebbing back and forth, over borders and thresholds of identification.

I am a containment of renderings, of plastics made to look like leather, of textured cup holders and easily cleaned fabrics. I sleep in transitions, plastic injection mouldings that give way to an adjustable seat. Months on the road, and I have a place for everything. This is comfort. A place for my keys, an armrest, a microwave, a small memento from my girlfriend placed neatly on the dashboard.

Nested logics.

People dismiss the 'just surface' of objects. Remind me of how scared we were when the cladding fell from the ceiling of our plane. How the 'just surface' of our plane's interior fell into the gangway during turbulence with a thud on the carpet. How our panicked eyes looked for each other as we witnessed the surface disappear.

I am a momentary anti-entropy machine at its finest, rendered, affixed and attached. Surfaces that speak to familiarity. Remember me, the embossed leather pattern on plastic, the implication of hope for another space, one remembered, and one for the future. Think of what I signal as we hurtle into the unknown.

Surface and containments are never separate from us. That both protects and conceals. All hail the maintainers. Us- who move across surfaces deemed false and untrue. Us, who drive the logistical paths to make it possible to show care, to hand waxy surfaced flowers as symbols of your undivided love. Us- whose surfaces nest and protect others, as tender gestures of protection. As surfaces designed to disappear and make way for flowers that scent your interiors, your surfaces of comfort and safety.

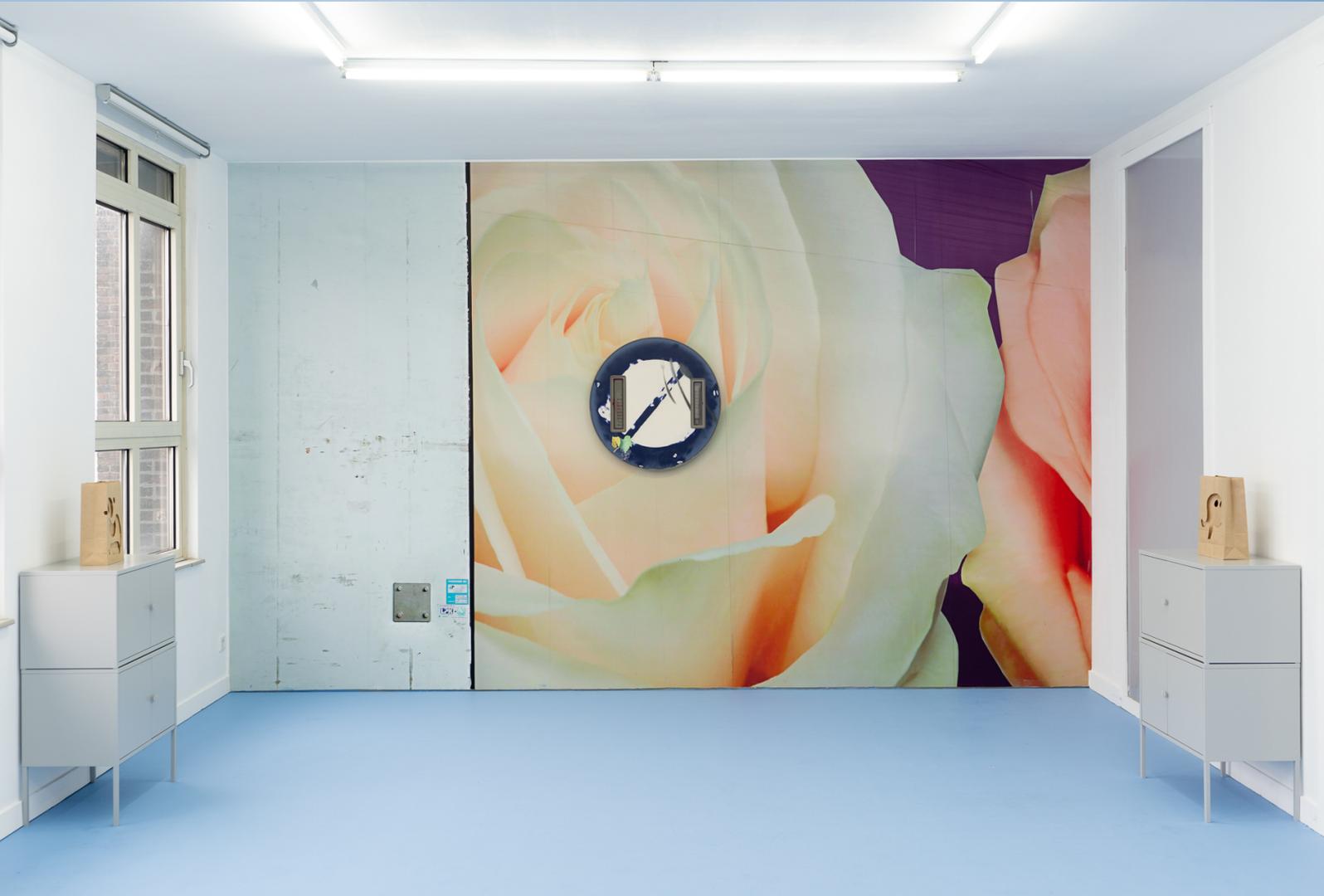




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Overlap

**Chapter 1: City Pollen by Magali Reus and
Chapter 2: A Field Without Boundaries by
Harm van den Dorpel**

5 February 2021 - 13 February 2021





**Chapter 2: A Field Without Boundaries by
Harm van den Dorpel**

5 February 2021 - 12 June 2021



In Chapter 2: A Field Without Boundaries, we present a back-catalogue of works made by Harm van den Dorpel over the past few years. Starting in February 2021, Shimmer will regularly ‘refresh’ the exhibition to reformat the value systems of artistic and curatorial exhibition-making by creating shifting sets and generations within A Field Without Boundaries.

In the first phase, we present work of his series *Death Imitates Language*, which emerged from a genetic algorithm written by the artist, then rendered onto acrylic glass through finely milled perforations that seduce the eye into seeing liquid forms. The artist took the title from the paper ‘Language and mathematics: a field without boundaries’ (2013) by Candia Morgan, who explores the ways in which language interacts with the infinite system of mathematics. She writes,

It is widely acknowledged within the field of mathematics education that language plays an important (or even an essential role) in the learning, teaching, and doing of mathematics. However general acceptance of the importance of language is not matched by agreement about what this role (or these roles) might be, or even about what the term language itself encompasses.

Harm’s early encounter with the limitless potential of computer programming and exhibiting on the Internet, made him aware of the limitations traditionally encountered in the production and display of art. Unlike paint and marble, programming languages are free to use, and their potential is only limited by the intelligence and perseverance of their programmers. Equally, the Internet offered a venue of infinite exhibition possibilities, without gatekeepers or real estate costs (or so it seemed).

Chapter 2: A Field Without Boundaries embraces an expansive conception of an ‘exhibition’. Not entirely a solo show - A Field Without Boundaries temporarily overlaps with Chapter 1: City Pollen by Magali Reus. The works on display were chosen in close dialogue between the artist and Shimmer’s curators, establishing new dialogues between existing works, but also placing them in the presence of new pieces. The new pieces gesture towards manifestations of indeterminacy.

A recurring formal characteristic found in many works on display, is based on the geometric form known as the ‘squircle’; an intermediate shape fusing a square and a circle. This ‘impure’ shape is often used by user interface designers to give software a more ‘organic’ and ‘user friendly’ appeal, but its in-between status lends it an awkward relationship to other, more defined geometric forms with which it interacts. The squircle also appears in a series of squircle-shaped stickers that can be applied to surfaces within the exhibition both to ‘distribute’ the work, querying its ‘location’ in space, as well as to resist the notion of a ‘final form’ of the exhibition itself.

Finally, presented are a series of nested brown paper bags from which the artist hand-cuts organic shapes. Referencing the chance-based practice of late dadaist artist Hans Arp, van den Dorpel creates logics within logics, and layerings of intentional serendipity.

About the artist

Harm van den Dorpel (born 1981) is a Berlin-based artist whose practice includes the creation of sculpture, collage, computer animation, computer-generated graphics and interaction design. His work has been widely shown at exhibitions including the New Museum in New York, MoMA PS1 in New York, Ullens Center for Contemporary Art in Beijing, Museum of Modern Art in Warsaw, MMCA Seoul, ZKM Karlsruhe, and the Netherlands Media Art Institute in Amsterdam. In 2015, Van den Dorpel started “left gallery”: an online gallery that commissions, produces, and sells downloadable files.



