

Press Release

## **Martina Menegon: when you are close to me I shiver**

MAK presents fourth pop-up exhibition in the context of the series CREATIVE CLIMATE CARE, a cooperation with the University of Applied Arts Vienna

Opening	Tuesday, 20 October 2020, starting at 6 p.m.
Exhibition Venue	CREATIVE CLIMATE CARE GALLERY MAK, Stubenring 5, 1010 Vienna
Exhibition Dates	20 October – 8 November 2020
Opening Hours	Tue 10 a.m.–9 p.m., Wed–Sun 10 a.m.–6 p.m.

With her pop-up exhibition *when you are close to me I shiver*, Martina Menegon gives space to worries about the climate and anxiety about the future. She turns the CREATIVE CLIMATE CARE GALLERY into a dystopian, disturbing “climate fiction.” The titling work is an algorithmically controlled live simulation, a real-time generated virtual reality that outlines a depressing version of the future: out of desperation humans gather in masses on the last remaining piece of land. Every square inch is crowded. Some try to escape up onto the cliffs where hundreds of humans fall from heights they should never have scaled. In the fourth exhibition of the series CREATIVE CLIMATE CARE, a cooperation between the MAK and the University of Applied Arts Vienna, the artist, using apocalyptic imagery, draws a pessimistic, fictional scenario regarding the ecological and sociocultural consequences of the virulent climate crisis.

Not only the catastrophic climate conditions corner the people in *when you are close to me I shiver*. On several tablets, virtual cameras scan the environment from various points of view, like surveillance drones. On the main projection, a camera randomly targets and focuses on different situations while a familiar voice-over narrates the tragic story. The viewer is both touched and unsettled by the “characters” of the scenario: grotesque low poly clones of the artist’s 3D-scanned body symbolize a desperate uniform society on the island.

Menegon found inspiration to artistically examine the profound ecological and, consequently, also social crisis of humanity in the story of the walruses in the impressive British documentary series *Our Planet* (2019), narrated by David Attenborough. As hardly any ice floes exist anymore due to the melting of the polar ice, the animals have to rest on cliffs 80 meters high where they lie very close next to each other and notice how their

friends move under them. When attempting to return to the water, they slide off the cliff. The crew filmed hundreds of walruses falling to their deaths.

By choosing digitally animated avatars as protagonists for *when you are close to me I shiver*, the artist purposefully includes virtual reality in the discussion of “living habitat.” With the creatures generated based on her own image, Menegon proprioceptively delves into the fragility of physical existence, into the possibilities of virtual physicality, and the self-perception and identity linked to it. Online platforms almost daily confront us with our immaterial selves and new identities beyond physical limitations. The seemingly surreal scenes in *when you are close to me I shiver* can also be seen as a reflection of the current culture of distancing and a reminder of the limited capacity of our living habitat.

Martina Menegon completed her graduate degree in “Media Art: Transmedia Art” headed by Prof. Brigitte Kowanz in 2015. The artist works with Interactive and Mixed Reality Art, exploring the contemporary self and its synthetic corporeality. Her works experiment with uncanny and grotesque virtual bodies and create disturbing and unsettling experiences which can be perceived physically despite being virtual in nature. She teaches at the Transmedia Art department of the University of Applied Arts Vienna and at the IUAV University of Venice (MA Digital Exhibit, BA Multimedia Arts).

With the exhibition cooperation CREATIVE CLIMATE CARE, the MAK and the University of Applied Arts Vienna are giving five graduates of the University of Applied Arts selected by a jury the opportunity of each exhibiting in the CREATIVE CLIMATE CARE GALLERY for three weeks. The series addresses the contribution of design, architecture, and art towards the development of a new mindset for active climate.

CREATIVE CLIMATE CARE has, so far, presented works by Florian Semlitsch, Sophie Gogl, and Chien-hua Huang. Martina Menegon will be followed by the final contribution by Antonia Rippel-Stefanska.

Press photos are available for download at [MAK.at/en/press](http://MAK.at/en/press)

Press Data

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Further Dates	Antonia Rippel-Stefanska, 17 November – 8 December 2020
Opening Hours	Tue 10 a.m.–9 p.m., Wed–Sun 10 a.m.–6 p.m.
Curator	Marlies Wirth, Curator, Digital Culture and MAK Design Collection
Graphic Design	Theresa Hattinger
MAK Admission	€ 14 / Reduced € 11 / Family Ticket € 15 Tuesdays from 6–9 p.m.: Admission € 6 Free admission for children and teens under 19
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