

Isabelle Andriessen, Brigham Baker
Isabell Bullerschen, Chloé Delarue
Maya Hottarek, Val Minnig

Issue de secours

20.05. - 19.06.2021

*"Humpty Dumpty sat on a wall, Humpty Dumpty had a great fall,
All the king's horses and all the king's men
Couldn't put Humpty Dumpty back together again"*

Imagine we're in an airplane, and we realise that our final destination doesn't exist anymore, or has never existed. So we suddenly have no destination, but we also can't turn back - there is not enough fuel. All that is left is an emergency landing. But where and how? This metaphor taken from Bruno Latour that Maya Hottarek pointed out in one of our conversations sums up our current predicament. Will this machine we have built for ourselves bring us to a safe landing? Hottarek's spiralling *"What flies out of the window comes back in the door"* speaks of action and reaction, karma, a certain balance, something her mother used to teach her. As we drift past all the worrying events of the past years and realise in the words of Bernard Stiegler, that "anthropocene discloses itself as a dead-end trap", hopefully, we also learn something. And if there is anything our gathered knowledge should help overcome, it is the utter imbalance of the needs of the society and the structures it has created for its own survival.

Conceived as a conversation and an exchange, *Issue de secours* offers six artistic positions on the irreversible condition of entropy. If we consider Robert Smithson's definition of entropy "a closed system which eventually deteriorates and starts to break apart and there's no way that you can really piece it back together again", than our attempt at survival on this planet can be defined as "entropic bootlegging" - a futile attempt to organise, to reconstruct something that has been broken into a chaos of tiny little pieces. All things tend towards disorder, it is after all the second law of thermodynamics. The degree of this disorder is essentially the definition of entropy - with the passing of time, the entropy (or the degree of disorder) of any isolated system will increase. Energy disperses and systems dissolve into chaos. This is an irreversible process present in nature and reinforced by human intervention.

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In her work *Ouroboros* - an ancient trope for an endless circle - Isabell Bullerschen associates the concept of entropy with the disintegration of stone paper through exposure to sunlight. This curious material that serves as a second skin to blacklight neon serpent, is produced with limestone powder and is essentially the perfect recycled material, being a waste product from stone quarries. But the small percentage of polyethylene that is used in it as a binder and that gets released into the air as the stone-paper breaks down under the UV radiation dissipates this dream into pieces.

A different kind of contamination is at the heart of Isabelle Andriessen's *Tidal Spill*, an installation comprised of several sculptural elements that ooze, oxidize and grow crystals, evolving through time. The seeming organicity of these pieces is also present in their shapes which, in certain cases, resemble bone and muscular tissue perhaps made mutant by the surrounding toxicity. Andriessen has described the works as 'zombie sculptures' with metabolic characteristics and disease-like symptoms. These 'zombie sculptures' have their own agency and the capacity of choosing the direction of their mutation, without human intervention. In this work, the distinction between living and non-living matter is made deliberately ambiguous.

The effects of friction and contamination between different elements and materials infiltrates Chloë Delarue's *TAFIA - FERTILITY DEVICE (NUDGE FOR THE SCAPEGOAT)* and takes us back to how our emotions and behaviors can be transformed under the influence of indirect suggestions. Our cognition, which has become a merchandize like any other infused with the attention economy, becomes yet another raw material to be traded and whose value increases exponentially, with repercussions on the rises and falls of the emotional stock exchange of which traders are no more than algorithms feeding from our interactions.

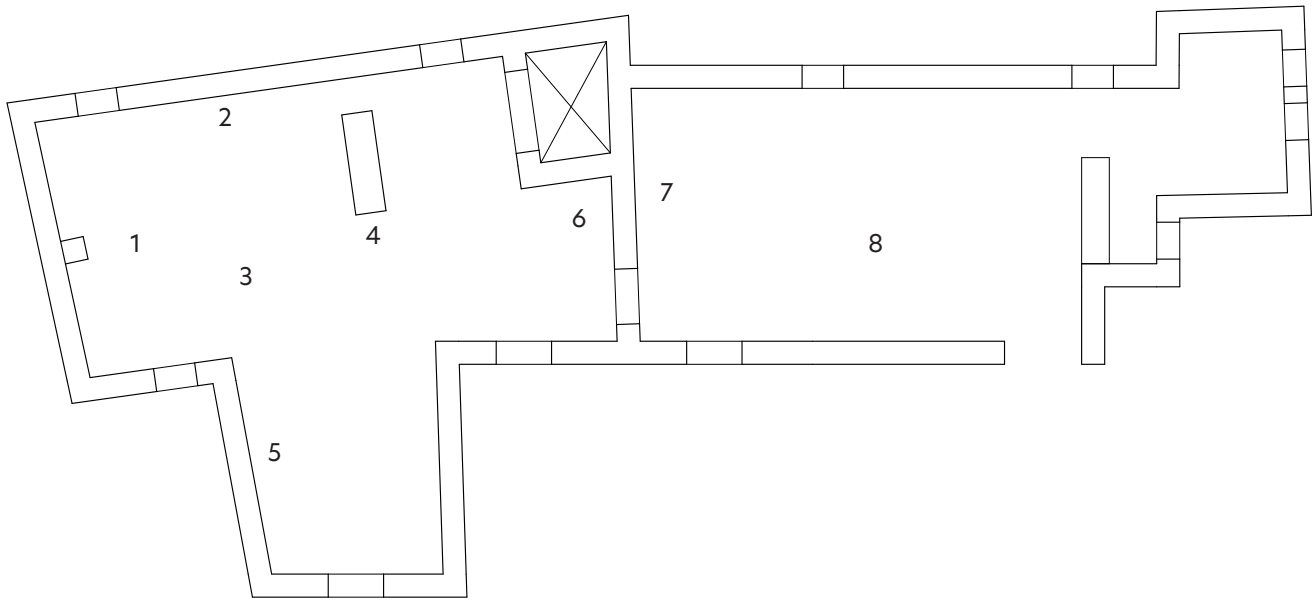
Every basic need of ours is being automated by machines. The constant search and need for automation is also found in the food we eat, in the livestock that we breed and is here exemplified with Val Minnig's *Rubber Coat*. At 8AM, 10AM, 12AM, 2PM, 4PM and 6PM the automated grate of the food dispensary and the meadow of Mrs Seiler opens up and the horses can eat. The mats are urine proof and not slippery. A 2x2 m wooden frame filled with straw and chipped wood serves as a natural toilet. Mrs Seiler is happy. She can sleep in every day. The animals are fed, happy and clean.

Will these machines we have built for ourselves bring us to a safe landing? How can we imagine the continued alliance of human life and the planet? How do we take care of each other in a world of disequilibrium? How do we react in an emergency and does the emergency exit exist at all?

curated by Kristina Grigorjeva

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1.
Isabell Bullerschen
Two-headed Ouroboros, 2021
Blacklight neon tube, Stone paper
Luminescent spray, Wire

2.
Maya Hottarek
*What Flies Out Of The Window
Comes Back In The Door*, 2016
Ceramics, Enamel

3.
Brigham Baker
Issue de secours, 2021

4.
Val Minnig
Rubber coat, 2017
Kälber Neugummi Rollmatte schwarz
mit Noppen, SpanSet

5.
Chloé Delarue
*TAFAA - FERTILITY DEVICE
(NUDGE FOR THE SCAPEGOAT)*, 2021
Stainless steel, Neon, Polyurethan foam, Motor, Latex,
Cigarettes, LCD screen, Led, Video

6.
Brigham Baker
Untitled, 2021
Glass, Various objects

7.
Isabelle Andriessen
Tidal Spill, 2018
Ceramic, stainless steel container, iron(II) sulphate

8.
Isabelle Andriessen
Tidal Spill, 2018
Ceramic, stainless steel container, potassium perman-
ganate, latex

Isabelle Andriessen (*1986) lives and works in Amsterdam/NL. She investigates different ways to physically animate inanimate materials, and questions what is between being human and non-human, between living and non-living. Her sculptures are directed as if they were performers transforming along their own agency, metabolism and behaviour.

Brigham Baker (*1989, Nipomo/US) lives and works in Zurich/CH. He studied BA photography at the ZHDK and did his MA in Institut Kunst in Basel. He explores his environment with a radical sense of curiosity and ensures exhibition visitors can participate in his unconventional and pseudo-scientific research that links art with natural processes and phenomena.

Isabell Bullerschen (*1985, Simmern/DE) lives and works in Zurich/CH. She studied Communication in Social and Economic Contexts at the Berlin University of the Arts, Photography & Video at the School of Visual Arts in New York and Fine Arts at the Zurich University of the Arts. Isabell Bullerschen is interested in ways of knowledge production and narratives that often refer to the relationships between humans, animals, and plants. She mostly creates installations and videos with which she explores the deconstruction of these narratives.

Chloé Delarue (*1986) lives and works in Geneva/CH. A graduate of Villa Arson (Nice) and HEAD (Geneva), Delarue assembles and connects different materials which are emblematic of our urban environment, forming a kind of hybrid, organic and mechanical body, like the product of the unconscious of our postindustrial societies. Since 2015, Chloé Delarue has been developing, under the acronym TAFAA - Towards A Fully Automated Appearance - work combining sculpture and installation, that addresses the issue of automation and its consequences.

Maya Hottarek (*1990, Chironico/TI), lives and works in Biel/CH. She studied at the HdKB in Bern and is currently finishing her MA at the Institut Kunst in Basel. She works mostly with ceramic and sound, and at times with found material. The way most of contemporary societies are handling resources is at the core of her artistic practice. A fundamental interest of hers is to articulate the complex interactions between the individual, society and the economy.

Val Minnig (*1991, Chur/CH) lives and works in Zürich/CH. In 2020 Minnig graduated the MA at the ZHDK in Zurich. Minnig's installative works employ simple materials, partly found on the street, to create room-spanning interventions. Minnig examines technical constructions and structures that reflect the tension in the human-animal relation between control and fascination and shows how these have an influence on animal behaviour.