

UNTITLED ART

Miami Beach

From 6th to 10th december 2023

Artists :

Chun Hua Catherine Dong, Lauren Moffatt, Kika Nicolela & Sabrina Ratté

For over thirteen years, Galerie Charlot has been a pioneer in the field of contemporary art, focusing on digital technologies that bring together science, art and technology.

We work alongside artists who explore artistic creation through digital tools that challenge our perception and speculate on the future in contemporary art.

For this edition, we propose a booth that highlights the work of four mid-career female artists from around the world: Chun Hua Catherine Dong (USA/China), Kika Nicolela (Brazil), Lauren Moffatt (Australia) and Sabrina Ratté (Canada).

In line with this year's theme "Curating in the post-digital age", Galerie Charlot's booth will explore the trace - both material and immaterial - left by humans through today's technologies.

THE ARTISTS

Artist **Chun Hua Catherine Dong** explores identity, memory and the impact of technology through series such as *Mulan or Reconnection*. *Mulan* is inspired by a Chinese fairy tale and revisited giving it a 3D aspect. This work deals with subjects related to our identity in the Anthropocene, mixing elements from biology, culture and technology. The video is broadcasted via a virtual reality headset, appealing to the viewer's senses.

For its part, *Reconnection*, a series consisting of photographs, features the artist wearing a VR helmet in which the Great Wall of China is projected. Shot in Quebec, the piece alludes to the possibilities offered by technology to experience emotions in two spaces simultaneously, one virtual, the other real. *Gold girl* and *The Sleeping Bear* both allude to Chinese identity, whether viewed through the prism of culture or nature; Chun Hua investigates our gendered social constructions and the implications of living in a fractured and fragile world.

Memory and legacy are themes explored in **Kika Nicolela's** art practice. Her series *Glimpses* - presented as gifs - and her piece *I don't remember much about her* focuses on her mother's memory and motherhood in general. Presented in the form of shimmering photographs and videos, they symbolise the artist's research in themes relating to cultural identity and the relationship between memory and image. Presented on an iPad, *Glimpses* expands the notion of photography and transforms it into "moving images". Her latest series *Feel Me*, proposes a series of moving tableaux expanding the artist's universe inspired by Japanese tentacle erotica. In her perspective, the octopus acts as a conduit to inner desires, fantasies, and fears, while the hybrid bodies of her series celebrate queerness and non-normative bodies.

Sabrina Ratté's works belonging to her series *Inflorescences*, present the traces left by humans in the environment; these traces become an intrinsic part of our ecosystem and impose themselves like monumental architectures in ruin. Abandoned objects such as telephones or computer motherboards, are re-contextualized creating hybrid ecosystems.

In the same spirit, the series *Compost* by artist **Lauren Moffatt** transmutes vibrant and organic flowers into minerals. Referring to J.G. Ballard's novel "The Crystal World", she proposes photo prints where flowers, unable to exist in their organic form, become artefacts projecting us into a sterile future. The artist has created an AR application where flowers take shape and push the boundaries of 3D, expanding the frame of the artwork and reaching new heights. This alternative reality, imbued with an apocalyptic atmosphere, is experienced through an iPad.

The absence of life as well as the luminous atmosphere of the work creates a tension conveying mixed feelings, between loss and nostalgia, juxtaposing aesthetic images and hostile landscapes. These vestiges of the Anthropocene are exhibited through a video installation on screen, completed by prints.

Our booth would offer a singular vision of artistic creation in the post-digital era. With works using several mediums such as video, AR, photographic printing, gifs, 3D, and more, we aim to offer the diversity of today's artworks, expanding the very notion of contemporary art, affirming what it means to "live towards our future".

Chun Hua Catherine Dong

Biography - *lives and works in Montreal, Canada*

Chun Hua Catherine Dong (she/they) is a Chinese born Montreal based artist working with performance, photography, video, VR and AR. Dong received an MFA at Intermedia from Concordia University and a BFA at Visual Art from Emily Carr University Art & Design in Canada. Dong has exhibited their works at The Musée d'Art Contemporain du Val-de-Marne in France, Quebec City Biennial, MOMENTA | Biennale de l'image, Kaunas Biennial, Canadian Cultural Centre Paris, The Aine Art Museum in Tornio, Bury Art Museum in Manchester, Museo de la Cancillería in Mexico City, Canadian Museum of Immigration at Pier 21, DongGong Museum of Photograph in South Korea, HuBei Museum of Fine Art in China, Art Gallery of Hamilton, Art Museum at University of Toronto, Art Gallery of Markham. Among many other grants and awards, Dong was the recipient of the Franklin Furnace Award for performance art in New York in 2014, listed the "10 Artists Who Are Reinventing History" by Canadian Art in 2017, and named "The Artist of the Year" at the DongGang International Photo Festival in South Korea in 2018. Dong was also a finalist for Contemporary Art Award at Le Musée national des beaux-arts du Québec (Prix en art actuel du MNBAQ) 2020, and awarded with Cultural Diversity in Visual Arts Award by the Conseil des arts de Montréal in 2021.



Reconnection 03 - 2021, 82 x 122 cm, print on paper.



Reconnection 22 - 2021, 82 x 122 cm, print on paper.

"Reconnection" is a series of performance photographs explore the ideas of connecting two places – my two homes – through performative gestures and immersive technology. It was made during my Fall 2021 residency at The Musée de Charlevoix in Charlevoix, Quebec. The river behind me is The St. Lawrence River. In this series I'm wearing Beijing opera costumes and a VR headset to perform a series of gestures and movements. In my headset I see and experience the Chinese Great Wall. This wall can be interpreted in many ways: as physical barrier, bans, firewalls, what is deemed acceptable and what is not, and the two sides of a thing. VR is a kind of illusion, as it brings one into situations or places that make one feel that they are present, when they actually are not. Creating these works was an emotional experience for me. When performing the gestures in Charlevoix, I could touch, smell, and sense the Canadian landscape – one of my homes – around me, but visually I was immersed in the Chinese landscape of the Great Wall: a barrier to a place – a home – where I cannot currently be."

"Mulan" is a VR installation that explores gender, the plasticity and plurality of the body stimulated by discoveries in Chinese folktale, marine biology, and the virtual world. Mulan is a Chinese legendary folk heroine. According to legend, Mulan disguises her identity in order to take her elderly father's place in the army. Later, Mulan is honored by the emperor, but declines high office position offered by the emperor, and returns to her hometown where she reveals her gender.

This work is inspired by nudibranch. Nudibranchs are colorful hermaphroditic organisms that live in the deep ocean. While many plants and animals use color to attract mates, the nudibranch's colors are a warning: don't come close; I am poison. I'm intrigued by nudibranchs and their extraordinary colors, striking forms, unique defense, and ambiguous gender identities; they have become a new inspiration for my ongoing research on feminism.

This work draws from performance tradition. I use 3D VR tools to build an imaginary underwater fantasy world where Mulan and nudibranch co-exist and become one. Wearing a colorful Peking Opera costume and staging herself on a large rainbow nudibranch, Mulan reveals her true identity as the double, which represents gender and body pluralities contained in one person.

With their body connecting with the nudibranch, Mulan becomes not only a hybrid being, a symbiosis, but also part of marine ecosystems.

Peking Opera, often regarded as a male-dominated performance, has a long history of male actors playing female roles. Through positioning Mulan in Peking Opera style, Mulan challenges sexism and gender inequality in theater tradition. Mulan's gesture in the VR also refers to Marina Abramovic's *Rest Energy* (1980), where Abramovic holds a bow and her performance partner Ulay holds the bow's string with an arrow pointing at Abramovic's chest. Tension and balance, danger and trust, male and female, two are seemingly opposite but interrelate and depend on each other.

Through performative gestures and expressions, I re-interpret Mulan from a feminist perspective. This work also raises questions about the binary system, about how to merge the boundaries of self/other, culture/nature, and human/animal, creating a new social relation that supports different ways of living and diverse beings in order to sustain and survive."

Mulan, 2021, video 4K - Option VR Installation.





***The Gold Girl*, 2022, 38,1 x 40,64 x 55, 88 cm, resin 3D printed sculpture.**

"The Gold Girl is a sculpture that explores visual culture of shame in relation to Chinese shame culture. Shame is used as a tool of social control and harmony, as a way to prevent citizens— especially women—from acting in ways that might disrupt the status quo. Chinese shame is rooted on the concept of face, it literally means "losing face." If you lose your face, you let your cultural, family and yourself down. My sculpture figure lacks a face, implying that if there is no face, there will be no shame.

This sculpture is made from a posthuman feminist perspective, expressing my desire to no longer be constrained by social norms and no longer to be identified as singular based on my appearance, but to become whoever I want to be, possibly becoming whoever looks at her/their mirror face on the sculpture. It has a gold mirror on her/their face, when you look in it, it reflects your face, in a way, allows viewers to see through themselves, and possibly reflect their own shame. The colour gold and the material of the sculpture, plastic PLA, represents my desire to be treated as valued and treasured as gold, but in reality, girls were not given much consideration during the time and place of my birth. Girls were commonly treated as cheap commodities in my birthplace, just like plastic stands for: cheap, disposable, and of little value."

"The Sleeping Bear is a sculpture of a four-ear sleeping bear with a pink bonsai tree on its head. This sculpture, influenced by Zen philosophy, is a visual representation of the natural world that stands for a peaceful and sustainable coexistence between the environment and its inhabitants. Bonsai, a cherished form of traditional art, is a symbol of patience, balance, and a profound connection to nature. By planting a bonsai tree on the sleeping bear, this sculpture builds a spiritual connection to the environment.

The bear has four ears that symbolizes four seasons of a year, it also symbolizes mother and child in one form. Bears are often used as symbols in conversations concerning environmental conservation and protection. As a result, the bear sculpture acts as a call to action and a reminder of the necessity of maintaining natural environments. The tree on the bear's head depicts its mental disposition because all the bear dreams for is a growing thriving tree, which represents nature's vigour and prosperity."



***The Sleeping Bear*, 2022, 21 x 12 x 6cm, resin 3D printed sculpture.**

Lauren Moffatt

Biography - *Born in Australia in 1982, lives and works in Berlin and Valencia.*

Lauren Moffatt is an Australian artist working with immersive environments and experimental narrative practices. Her works, often presented in hybrid and iterative forms, explore the paradoxical subjectivity of connected bodies and the indistinct boundaries between digital and organic life. In 2021 she was awarded the DKB VR Art Prize (DE) and in 2022 she was awarded the I Certamen Internacional de Arte Digital (ES) and the Revista MAKMA Aquisition Prize (ES). Lauren completed her studies in painting, in theory and practice of new media art and in audiovisual creation at the College of FineArts (AU), Université Paris VIII (FR), and at Le Fresnoy Studi National des Arts Contemporains (FR) respectively.



Lauren's works have been exhibited at Haus der Kulturen der Welt (DE), Centre Pompidou (FR), La Gaité Lyrique (FR), SXSW (US), Haus am Lützowplatz (DE), UNSW Galleries (AU), Daegu Art Museum (KOR), Le Grand Palais Ephémère (FR), SAVVY Contemporary (DE), FACT Liverpool (UK) The Sundance Film Festival (US) ZKM (DE), Q21 Freiraum (AT) and at Hartware MedienkunstVerein (DE).



Compost IV



Compost XIV



Compost XXII

2023 - variable dimensions, AR.

The **Compost** series explores forms of deceleration and regeneration, using video game technologies fused with conventional painting techniques.

The creation of digital images and sculptures thus takes sideroads and follows a realization made of accidents and dialogues with machines. This singular photogrammetry practice consists of working with a reduced number of photographs, varying focal lengths, photographing subjects too close, or causing willful errors when photographing moving subjects. The textures are then painted and blended into compositions in 3D modeling software.

By creating a digital strangeness and effects that associate sublime and digital defects, these interventions return a measure of disorder and indeterminacy to the living.



Compost XXIV, 2023, 210 x 110 (2 panels), diptych on dibond.

Kika Nicolela

Biography - Lives and works in Brussels, Belgium.

Kika Nicolela is a Brazilian artist, filmmaker and independent curator, living between Brussels and São Paulo. Graduated in Film and Video by the University of Sao Paulo, Nicolela has also completed a Master of Fine Arts at the Zurich University of the Arts. The artist was nominated for the international award EXTRACT – Young Art Prize in 2014, and she was the recipient of several prominent Brazilian grants and awards. She has participated of over 100 solo and group exhibitions worldwide, including the Kunst Film Biennale (Germany), Bienal of the Moving Image (Argentina), Bienal do Mercosul (Brazil), Ventosul Bienal de Curitiba (Brazil) and Bienal de Video y Artes Mediales (Chile). Her videos have been screened and awarded in festivals of more than 30 countries. She was in residence at the Gyeonggi Creation Center (South Korea), Objectifs (Singapore), Route Fabrik (Switzerland) and LIFT (Canada), among others. Her works are placed in private and public collections in Brazil and Europe. Her videos are distributed by Vtape, Heure Exquise and GIV.



Glimpses, 2022, variable dimensions, GIF / NFT



I don't remember much about her, 2022, 11 min 56 s, 4K, NFT

"I don't remember much about her" is a piece I developed over 5 months at a residency at the Villa Empain - Boghossian Foundation (Brussels). It departed from a research on my Lebanese roots and memory centred around the figure of my maternal grandmother. It evolved to become a deep reflection on memory loss, mother-daughter transmission and the fictions we create about our lives.

The piece combines different techniques and materials, such as scanned old family photos, video, 3D scan and manipulated children's drawings. Its narrative intertwines an audio interview with my mother - whose memory is badly degraded - and the video testimony of a young Lebanese immigrant, the artist Maha Yammine, 7 months pregnant at the time. It also has the special participation of my 2 year old daughter, Lily Belle. The piece counts with the music of the French Canadian sound artist and long-time collaborator Thierry Gauthier."



Feel Me, 2023, video animation made in collaboration with AI, 07'24" min, 1920 x 1080 pixels.

Feel Me represents Kika Nicolela's most extensive moving image work created in partnership with AI. Part of her series exploring the octopus as a leitmotif, "Feel Me" proposes a series of moving tableaux that morphs into one another, expanding the artist's universe inspired by Japanese tentacle erotica. In her perspective, the octopus acts as a conduit to inner desires, fantasies, and fears, while the hybrid bodies of her series celebrate queerness and non-normative bodies.

Nicolela has been intensely working with a range of different AI tools for the past 18 months. She believes we are living in a unique moment in history, with early prompt-to-image AI models that while striving to perfection, still generate a lot of mistakes, imperfections and weird bodies and shapes. This strangeness is maybe the visual representation of the noises in the dialogue between human and machine - and it often offers something disturbing and new to the viewer, not achievable in any other way.

In "Feel Me", Nicolela is particularly interested in the new image-to-video models that produce lots of artifacts and impossible bodies and movements. Each tableau animates an image the artist has produced with a long-form generative project she has been refining for months.

The compositions are teeming with hybrid entities - part human, part octopus, and at times, part plant - where skin, limbs, and organs coalesce in a provocative dance of forms that defy conformity and embrace disruption.

Octopus Mirage is an expression of the artist's ongoing fascination with the octopus as a recurring motif. This enigmatic creature has held a significant place in the myths and legends of diverse cultures, often serving as a symbol of rebirth or a connection to the spirit world. Throughout history, the octopus has also embodied the essence of female empowerment.

This image is part of a long-generative AI project that Nicoela has developed and refined during a few months that uses not only prompt-to-image, but also a series of initial images (drawings made with her 3 year old daughter) and several additional prompts as variables. While she can produce an infinite amount of images departing from this project - and she has generated hundreds of them - she has chosen this image in particular to create a physical piece.

This distinctive collaboration between AI and the artist culminates in this oil painting - Kika Nicoela's first venture into the medium - achieved through the application of cutting-edge AI robotic technology developed by an experimental studio based in Brooklyn. "Octopus Mirage" serves as both a digital and tangible embodiment of human-AI synergy, testing the boundaries of creative collaboration with the machine.

This work poses several questions, about authorship, art rarity, post-medium and the role of human creativity in a posthuman type of art production.



Octopus Mirage, 1m x 1,5 m 2023, oil painting made in collaboration with AI and robots.

Sabrina Ratté

Biography - Lives and works in Canada.

Sabrina Ratté, a Montreal-based Canadian artist, specializes in exploring various expressions of digital imagery. Her artistic practice encompasses a wide range of mediums, including analog video, 3D animation, photography, printing, sculpture, virtual reality, and installation. By constantly integrating new techniques into her work, she is able to delve into recurring themes that take on ever-evolving forms. These themes include the impact of architecture and the digital environment on our perception of the world, our relationship with the virtual aspects of existence, and the convergence of technology and the natural world. Ratté's artworks exist in a realm that blurs the boundaries between abstraction and figurative representation, landscape and architecture, and the tangible and the virtual.

Her work has been presented internationally in several institutions including the Laforet Museum (Tokyo), Montreal Museum of Fine Arts, Centre Pompidou (Paris), PHI Center (Montreal), Whitney Museum of Art (New York), Chronus Art Center, (Shanghai), Museum of the Moving Image (New York). She presented solo exhibitions at Gaîté Lyrique (Paris) and Arsenal Contemporary Art (Montreal & New York). Her work is part of the collection of the Montreal Contemporary Art Museum. She was longlisted for the Sobey Art Award (CAN) in 2019 and received the award in 2020.



Inflorences I, 2023,
80 x 64 cm, print on dibond.



Inflorences IV, 2023,
80 x 64 cm, print on dibond.

"Inflorescences" unfolds in an hypothetical future, where plants, mushrooms, and unfamiliar critters have undergone mutations to exist in symbiosis with electronic waste. Challenging the definition of life, this project explores the emergence of life forms from what we perceive as inert and forgotten remnants, which continue to evolve and foster new relationships with the ecosystem. Inflorescences portrays a world devoid of humans, yet its evolution is shaped by the remnants they left behind.

As part of the project, four sculptures are crafted from electronic waste, incorporating screens and lights that evoke the entities depicted in the videos, offering a glimpse into the future of these discarded objects."

[watch videos](#)



Inflorescences I, 2023, video 4K,
3min42s.



Inflorescences II, 2023, video
4K, 3min44s.



Inflorescences III, 2023, video
4K, 3min47s.



Inflorescences IV, 2023, video
4K, 3min40s.