

'Stine Deja- Cyphoria', Anti-Utopias, ( March 2017 )

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# Stine Deja: Cyphoria.

In Events and Exhibitions / March 24, 2017

Annka Kultys Gallery has recently opened the exhibition *Cyphoria*, featuring a recent video and a large scale print by London-based artist Stine Deja, marking the artist's first show with the gallery. The exhibition consists of a large projection, alongside an immersive installation evoking the sense of an airport departure lounge for a cyber traveller.

Deja's lavish and sleek video-animations wash over the viewer, encapsulating the viewer's consciousness in a bubble of highly stylised motifs and graphics often accompanied by music. These microcosms are punctuated with footage found in the public domain, integrating a sense of parody and the absurd within the narrative. Throughout Deja's practice, the use of voice-over guides each viewer's gaze across the transient planes of her videos.

Within this generated space, viewers inhabit digital surrogates that negotiate the malleable borders separating the 'real' and the 'virtual.' These entities possess an uncanny familiarity; their responsive range stretching from comforting to ironic. Deja's digital human proxies simultaneously probe both cyberspace and the viewer's psyche, investigating the extent by which genuine

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emotional feeling within this virtual domain shapes us as social beings.

*Cyphoria* can be seen as a metaphysical travel agency, offering to transport the viewer to an unrestrained plethora of destinations beyond the limitations of the physical body. The destinations exist in cyberspace but only become animate with the approval of the traveller. The power of imagination is central to this process, as the terminals of *Cyphoria*'s operation are equally founded in concept as they are in the tangible machines that mediate and support them. Cyberspace has become the extended nervous system of the body, following the notion that such a realm can constitute reality.



*Stine Deja, Cyphoria, installation view at Annka Kultys Gallery in London, March 22 - April 22, 2017. Image courtesy of Annka Kultys Gallery. All rights reserved.*

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In her installation for Annka Kultys Gallery, Deja has chosen to replicate an airport terminal in the gallery space. The visitor begins with departure signage on the staircase. In the centre of the gallery are metallic waiting room chairs, and scattered throughout the space are a range of ephemera reminiscent of airports: crowd barriers, a lost suitcase, a refuse bin, generic plants, discarded Starbucks cups, a phone plugged into the wall charging, a water cooler and directional signage on the floor. The overall effect is to create the feeling one has entered an airport terminal.

The central work of the exhibition is the video *Cyphoria* (2015), displayed via a large projector and three iPads. This video-animation eschews the notions of the hyperlink or simple moving image in favour of a thought-experiment, proposing instead a

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hypothetical way of being within the digitised age. The infrastructure of the *Cyphoria* agency within the video shows a series of opulent and spacious buildings, stretching into an idealised cityscape of shimmering light. Within this metropolis the formation of cybernetic environments occurs, through both the participant's vision and involvement. Inhabitation breeds meaning, as viewers and digital surrogates alike create communities as the total sum of construction.



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On an adjacent wall, the large scale print *Electronic Nomad* (2015) features 3D printed replicas of the artist's own belongings. To create the print, Deja 3D-scanned those objects she felt most represented her identity and which she would want to 'take with her' to places and times beyond the present. In the print the objects become shifted, suspended and hyper-real. Throughout history, humans have travelled virtually through time and space. Via the act of drawing, photographing and even the use of language, a sense of suspension and distancing from reality is felt. Each of these processes provides a means of separation from actuality and can create alternate, liminal destinations for the mind. As the Deja notes, "I can easily call upon them [the chosen objects] when transitioning from the real world to the virtual world." By

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translating her every-day, fixed-existence into digital objects, Deja imbues them with a deeper, nomadic quality. This incidental escapism galvanizes perception, accentuating the possibility of experience without the body.

Positioned at the centre of the installation, the viewer must adopt the role of a cyber traveller. Technology has become the architecture of intimacy: every day each of us has authentic, intimate moments inside the virtual realm.



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# *Artist Biography*

Using 3-D animation, digital surrogates, and narrative, Stine Deja's videos explore how cyberspace affects our imagination and sense of intimacy. Recognising that technology has become an architect of emotion in the hybrid space of contemporary life, Deja's work compels the viewer to consider him or herself through this self-reflective intertwining of humans and machines.

Deja's lavish and sleek animations wash over the viewer, encapsulating the viewer's consciousness in a bubble of highly stylised motifs and graphics; often supported by music. These microcosms are further punctuated with footage found in the public domain, integrating a sense of parody and the absurd within the narrative. Throughout Deja's practice, the use of voice-over guides each viewer across the transient planes of her videos.

Within this generated space, viewers inhabit digital surrogates that negotiate the malleable borders separating the 'real' and the 'virtual.' These entities feel an uncanny familiarity, with their responsive range stretching from comforting to ironic. Deja's digital human proxies simultaneously probe both cyberspace and the viewer's psyche, investigating the extent by which genuine emotional feeling within this virtual realm shapes us as social beings.

Stine Deja was born in Denmark in 1986 and currently lives and works in London. She received her MA in Visual Communication (Moving Image) from the Royal College of Art in 2015 and her BA in Interaction Design from Kolding School of Design in 2012. In 2017, Annka Kultys Gallery is pleased to welcome Deja by hosting her first solo exhibition with the gallery featuring

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CYPHORIA, a virtual travel agency that explores the techno-social phenomenon of living concurrently outside/inside the machine. Deja is also collaborating with artist Marie Munk on a forthcoming project examining synthesised intimacy. A select exhibition history of the artist includes shows at: Annka Kultys Gallery, London; Assembly Point, London; SixtyEight Art Institute, Copenhagen; Frieze, London; Concrete Lab, Copenhagen; Remisen, Copenhagen; Bargehouse, London; Hockney Gallery, London; Fringe Film Festival, London; Dansk Kvindesamfund, Copenhagen; and No Man's Art Gallery, Copenhagen.



*Stine Deja, Cyphoria, 2015. Video, 6 min 20 sec. Dimensions variable. Edition of 3 + 1AP (SDej001.15). Image courtesy of Annka Kultys Gallery. All rights reserved.*



*Stine Deja, Electronic Nomad, 2015. Archival Inject print on Velvet 250 gsm. 197.6 x 158 cm (77 3/4 x 62 1/4 in) (framed). Edition of 3 + 2AP (SDej002.15). Image courtesy of Annka Kultys Gallery. All rights reserved.*

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