

Join us for the opening reception of Synthesis Gallery's newest exhibition:

So Far, Still So Close

Yu Hong & Nikita Shalenny

April 26th - 28th, 2019



Yu Hong, *She's Already Gone* & Nikita Shalenny, *The Bridge*
Virtual Reality Artworks, 2017 - Courtesy of Khora Contemporary

Synthesis Gallery, the first VR Art gallery, is pleased to premiere two VR artworks produced by Khora Contemporary, by Chinese artist Yu Hong and Ukrainian artist Nikita Shalenny.

'*So far, still so close*' is curated by Tina Sauerlaender (Radiance VR) and George Vitale (Synthesis Gallery) and is the first collaboration between Khora Contemporary (Copenhagen, Denmark), Radiance VR and Synthesis Gallery (Berlin, Germany).

Both artists, Yu Hong and Nikita Shalenny, in their artistic practice deal with the altering passage of time. In Hong's '*She's Already Gone*', the narrative follows differing timelines as the life and aging of the protagonist moves forward while history goes backwards. Nikita Shalenny's work is mentally extended to infinity. The bridge and the horizon are set between two places. The horizon disappears

within space, yet the strong conviction that there is a better world beyond the horizon lives on. Both artists create drawings and paintings by hand that are later transferred into the virtual space to become animated artworks. The visible brush strokes add a layer of physicality to the virtual world.

Yu Hong, She's Already Gone

Virtual Reality artwork, 2017

Courtesy of Khora Contemporary and Yu Hong

The sun crawls across the floor of a bedroom belonging to a young Chinese girl, as the chaos of the Cultural Revolution rips through the streets outside. Locked inside the room, she opens the window, her only way of satisfying her curiosity. As she absorbs herself in the wonder of blowing soap bubbles, the slight noises of the demonstrations flood into the tiny space. She seems oblivious to the viewer, who came into the room through the keyhole and is with her in this instant for only so long. This bubble is ever so transient. It will be gone in a second.

The scene is one of four in Yu Hong's Virtual Reality work, placing the viewer in the middle of four moments, traveling through the life of a female character from her birth to her old age. The narrative follows differing timelines as the life and aging of the protagonist moves forward while history goes backwards. Whereas her birth takes place in a modern hospital, the subsequent scenes take her and the viewer further and further back in time, until reaching a shamanistic ritual in the earliest known period in Chinese history.

Through Chinese history the freedom and opportunities available to women have varied, and in the history of Chinese art women are often depicted occupied with everyday activities as subject to a male point of view. For long the female perspective was not a tolerable mode of creation. Yu Hong's work acknowledges the female in all stages of life, exploring the relationship between the individual and the rapid social change taking place in China.

Nikita Shalenny, The Bridge

Virtual Reality artwork, 2017

Courtesy of Khora Contemporary and Nikita Shalenny

In Shalenny's Virtual Reality work the viewer goes beyond the horizon on a compressed forty thousand kilometers journey around the world. A game of chance, the journey is the outcome of a line drawn from a bridge and further across the world, taking place in the dead of night, where fuzzy silhouettes of people tear along through desolate landscapes, fleeing into gray blizzards and shadowy forests. Based on watercolors by the artist, one setting replaces the other as the ghostlike figures cross birch forests, oil fields, abandoned churches and oceans in a limitless universe.

Mentally extended to infinity, the bridge like the horizon is set between two places, the scene of arrival and the point of departure. All horizons disappear in space, and yet the strong conviction that there is a better world beyond the horizon lives on.

Seen in the light of the current global refugee crisis the infinite bridge seems like a symptom of our times, or, a cure for an escape attempt. The construction of a bridge allows one to access the other

shore with ease, to solve the gap between longings and goals and dreams, which else remain distant.

SYNTHESIS GALLERY is an immersive blend of technology and art displayed under one roof, showcasing cutting-edge experiences by new wave artists and visionaries through virtual reality. Founded in New York in October 2017 by George Vitale, the gallery opened his doors to the public in April 2018 in Berlin. Synthesis' shows have so far been selected to be part of Berlin Art Week and participated in art festivals such as Transmediale/Vorspiel. Pieces are displayed through different media. Tangible and traditional art forms intermingle with Oculus and Hive headsets. Dedicated to exhibiting internationally renowned, well-established artists along emerging ones, since its inception, Synthesis has garnered considerable attention in the art scene.

Opening reception: April 26th 2019, 6-9pm;

Private view: April 26th 2019, 5pm (by invitation only);

Exhibition dates: April 26th - April 28th 2019, 1am-7pm;

Press Accreditation: email to register, +49 176 325 10217;

Free admission;

Kopernikusstrasse, 14 10245 Berlin

Join the discussion about the exhibition online at:

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Website [synthesis.gallery](https://www.synthesis.gallery)