

VOLOSHYN GALLERY

FURTHER THAN LIGHT OR LANGUAGE

December 3, 2023 - January 9, 2024
Voloshyn Gallery Miami
802 NW 22nd Street, Miami, FL, US



For the second show in its new Miami Allapattah location, **Voloshyn Gallery** presents works that take a downward climb into the surface of Earth, zooming into its cavities, grottos, and craters. The collision of time in its widest imaginable span, which the artworks bring to the surface, manifests in the merger of contemporaneous materials and references with the prehistorical vestiges optically captured on the surfaces of art objects. Titled *Further than Light or Language* after Paul Tran's poem *Cave*, this group exhibition curated by Lilia Kudelia vivifies the unique material properties of beeswax, soil, ceramics, tar, plaster, textiles, mouth blown glass, oil paints and pastels. A cluster of powerful individual statements by four international artists, this show is an exploration of measures of intimacy alongside destructive forces of history.

Erika Jaeggli's works in the exhibition are the result of her field research into seven caves in Texas which she explored through photography, videography, LiDAR scanning, as well drawing and writing methods. In this series, her optics offsets the tradition of landscape painting in which a singular point of view translated to dominion and ownership of the land. Jaeggli's representations of raw, interior spaces of underground formations offer multiple points of view and entry through which to consider the land. "While cave entrances have defined boundaries, the space beneath the surface does not," she notes. She seals her photographic collages with liquified encaustic layers which, upon hardening, point to gravity and time of cave formations. Jaeggli's paintings highlight the darkness of a cave as a spectatorial condition, which triggers guttural response and prompts the reverse movement in time.

In **Abi Shehu's** installation 'see, once more, the stars' the cave becomes the lens into familial histories. Capturing the caves of Vjosa River in Albania on black and white film, the artist clings to a story of her father's attempted escape from the communist dictatorship regime of Enver Hoxha. Vjosa, a river flowing from the mountains in Greece to the Adriatic coast in Albania, is one of the last wild rivers in Europe, known for its underground passages and uncharted caves. Shehu portrays these underworld sites as a Dantesque hell, weaving her personal evocations into a larger narrative about mass migration process triggered by Hoxha's autocracy, where

fugitives' routes despairingly developed in the direction opposite to the river flow. The monochrome photograph of subterranean textures covered in desiccated webs of water drips offers itself as a sublime plane to gaze into, in search of familiar contours and shapes. Surrounded by sculpted serpents with grotesque mouths and some missing teeth, the installation is a symbolic representation of the artist's father's intercepted escape attempt. Darkness nevertheless remains a potent space for survival in the artist's mythology, a space for the cultivation of attentive vision. Darkness challenges the knowledge of routes – whether these are the routes of escape, foraging or transmission.

Life next to death under the conditions of condensed time is a recurring theme in **Sana Shahmuradova-Tanska's** work produced during Russia's war in Ukraine at the background. Human-resembling figures in her recent paintings no longer hold their sturdy shapes but rather dissolve and morph into new forms. Like moving magma, these bodies in her compositions breathe out aspirations and exhaustion. The emphatic illegibility of Shahmuradova's plots, which are built out of restrained visual vocabulary of recognizable elements such as human faces and bodies, explodes in the end with dozens of conceptual elements that refer to paranormal. The motif of an eye peeking through clouds of smoke and sand dust, or an eye implanted into palm hollers across the paintings signifying tactility, skin's perceptual apparatus, and the irreplaceable need to touch the other. The illegibility of Shahmuradova's visual language is the product of density, where memories get reanimated and emotions are articulated in their purest form. Her canvas become the textures of the wound, housing within itself complex human physiology and the adamant attempts to grapple with the evolutionary stages of civilizational development.

Pedro Wirz presents wall reliefs with wound-like cavities, adorned by the fragmented depictions of birds and animal bodies along the edges of these nearly human-sized objects. Wirz's colorful elaborate work carries references to his upbringing in the tropical Paraiba Valley in Brazil, bridging the artist's critical look at the aggressive urbanization politics of the 1970s with his fascination in local folklore and lush material culture. The installation of plastic infant dolls from Sour Ground series, encrusted in soil and tar to appear as giant larvae, gains a post-apocalyptic reading next to other works in the exhibition. Looking for meaning amidst the ongoing social clashes and changing ecologies, the extinction and renewal remain two key parameters to watch closely. The wound-like shape in Sadnest wall relief performs better as a volcano crater where an end of one flesh signifies the new beginning for another life form and ecosystems. As a dialectical inversion to other works in the show, Wirz's wall relief evokes the shape of a hyperbolic smartphone – a prosthetic, synthetic cave of the contemporary screen dominated landscape, which is crucial to remember when it comes to technology's exploitative power and human attention fracking.

Where are we on a path from ignorance to knowledge, from illusion to reality? And what purpose does light serve in our sinking spaces? Among many things, this exhibition is an exploration of human vision entangled into complex legal, political and media apparatuses. This show keeps the apertures open, letting the gaze descend into sometimes uncomfortable mental spaces. The darkness of a bomb shelter, the darkness of technological gadgets, the unknowns of human physiology and psyche, the darkness of a sheltering cave. Where does the water flow..?

Exhibition curated by **Lilia Kudelia**.

Artist's Bios

Erika Jaeggli was born in Baltimore, MD and grew up on Caves Road. She received her B.A. in art history from Columbia University and M.A. from New York University's Tisch School of the Arts Interactive Telecommunications Program, and M.F.A. in Drawing and Painting from the University of North Texas in Denton. Her work has been shown in Texas, California, Maryland, Arkansas and Missouri. Jaeggli's work is featured in the current issue of *New American Paintings*, and has been featured twice in *Studio Visit Magazine*. She is a Board Member of Texas Vignette, a non-profit dedicated to promoting and supporting women in the arts in Texas. She has been artist-in-residence at the Dallas Arboretum. Recent notable accomplishment is receiving a TACA Pop-Up Grant for her on-site work at the Boedeker Building, a historical 100-year old former ice cream factory in Dallas, TX. Additionally, she was a 2021 recipient of The Dozier Travel Grant from the Dallas Museum of Art. Currently, Jaeggli is a lecturer at The University of Texas at Dallas and lives in Dallas, TX.

Abi Shehu (b.1993 Lezha, Albania) is a multi-disciplinary visual artist, whose artistic research can be described as an archeology of unconsciousness. Through a combination of visual and media art, from installation to sound art, she creates landscapes that embody the unrepresentable and unknowable dimensions of people, societies, places and historical events. Shehu's work has been exhibited at Hauser and Wirth Menorca; Manifesta 14, Pristina; Zeta Gallery, Tirana; 'In Waves,' with Women in Covid, various locations; Bazament Art Space, Tirana; Galeria e Bregdetit, Vlora; EMOP, Berlin; Kino Rinia, Pristina; CLB, Berlin; and ArtHouse & Marubi Museum, Shkodra.

Sana Shahmuradova-Tanska (b.1996, Odesa, Ukraine) spent a significant part of her childhood in the countryside Podillia region in Ukraine, among rivers and forests. IN 2014, she immigrated to Toronto, where she received a Bachelor of Arts in Psychology at York University. Doing graphics on an ongoing basis, she later decided to turn to painting. In 2020, she finally made a decision to relocate to the city that's been inspiring her all along – Kyiv. Sana uses ink and a brush, and sometimes also pastels to create graphics on paper or canvas. For painting, she uses old burlap or canvas and oil. As an artist, she searches for the barely explored roots of her origins through collective and personal archetypes. Her selected shows include: "Tree after a tree", Asortymentna Kimnata, Ivano-Frankivsk (2023), "Czarnoziem", (to the 90th anniversary of the Holodomor – Great Famine), curated by Ivana Berchak, Galeria Dim, Warszawa (2022), "Like in a movie...", Artsvit Gallery, Dnipro (2022), "If it is no war today, it doesn't mean there is no war", Galeria Institut Goethe, Goethe Institut, Soniakh, Kraków (2022), "APOKALIPSYS", Diogenes gallery, Lviv (2022), "The Waxing Crescent Myth", Muzeon Experimental Centre, Odesa (2021) etc.

Pedro Wirz (b. 1981, Pindamonhagaba, Brazil) lives and works in Zürich, Switzerland. In June, 2022, Wirz completed a large-scale commission for the SKKG (Stiftung für Kunst, Kultur und Geschichte), presented at the Schaffen Museum, and a permanent public installation for Health Center for the Alter Mathysweg (Zurich). He is a recent recipient of the first edition NanoARTS Prize granted by The Swiss Arts Council Pro Helvetia and the Adolphe Merket Institute to artists and scientists interested in stimulating exchanges between art, science, and technology. He also received a 2022 Pollock-Krasner Foundation Grant, and a 2020 award winner of the City of Zurich Kunst Und Bau competition. Recent solo exhibitions include Environmental Hangover, Kunsthalle Basel; Termite Terminators, Marc Selwyn Fine Arts (LA), Tooth of a Giant, Phillip Zollinger (Zurich), and Verwaschen at Galerie Nagel Draxler (Berlin), a group show at Centre d'Art Contemporain Genève, Switzerland.

Opening reception: Sunday, December 3, 2023, 6 – 9pm
Gallery hours: Tuesday – Saturday, 11am – 5pm and by appointment
802 NW 22nd Street, Miami, FL USA

For media inquiries and additional information, please contact:
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