



TACK

Martin Eder
19.05–08.07.2023

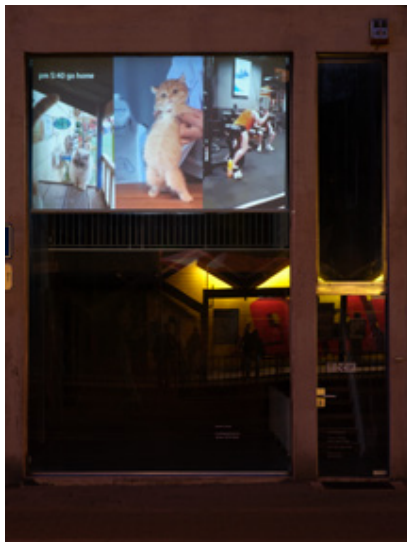
Information

TICK TACK (2019) is a new destination for contemporary art in Antwerp. TICK TACK produces, presents and promotes international exhibitions and video art screenings, complemented with publications and an extensive digital archive.

Housed in the brutalist complex 'De Zonnewijzer', a 1955 key work by architect Léon Stynen, TICK TACK occupies a historic duplex at a vivid city intersection, facing the tram stop and landscape park 'De Harmonie'. The 5-meter-high window functions as an interface between artists and audience and between private and public space.

The TICK TACK program is dual. By day, TICK TACK presents exhibitions, at sunset, the window transforms into a projection screen under the name CINEMA TICK TACK, a new and exclusive platform that brings video and digital art to the public space. Reaching numerous of daily passersby and commuters, CTT serves as a channel, stimulating a connection in its urban setting.

As a result, both day and night, TICK TACK constantly challenges the physical and mental boundaries between inside and out.



KARMAGEDDON

How can we prevent KARMAGEDDON?

Acclaimed German painter Martin Eder explores this question in his first Belgian solo exhibition. Eder, the master of surreal kitsch, takes over the entire TICK TACK space, challenging our viewing habits and questioning what we hold dear.

KARMAGEDDON is a hypothetical doomsday scenario based on the concept of karma that aims to shed light on the uneasy relationship between fantasy and reality. But how can we prevent KARMAGEDDON? Martin Eder addresses this question in his new exhibition, in which he leads us down the wrong path, turns our viewing habits upside down and, with a playful and ironic gaze, questions what has become dear and sacred to us.

With his absurd, mystical and pictorial oil paintings, he tries to visualize the ambiguous character of our society, being particularly interested in undermining the boundaries between the subliminal evil, the destructive and the supposedly beautiful. Eerie and fascinating at the same time, his paintings outline a space marked by the collapse of common perception. Eder's work is garishly provocative and creates a tension between realism and jarring artificiality.

"I've often had to explain that I don't paint cats. No. I don't paint naked people, asses or sunsets either. I paint what's left of it. The nuclear radiation. I paint the afterimage, the burn-in image."



KARMAGEDDON is a visually stunning exploration of the brutality and ruthlessness of our times, where people are constantly under the hypnosis of social media and its "fast dopamine" culture. In a world where images are produced at an unprecedented rate, Eder questions the role and place of painting in modern society, where hanging an image on a wall for an indefinite period seems almost anachronistic. The show challenges the viewer to examine the unconscious process of consuming beautiful content without truly experiencing it, highlighting the discrepancy between digital entertainment and analog pleasure.

The exhibition's title, *KARMAGEDDON*, is a playful reference to karma and fate, as well as the desire for self-improvement and the esoteric industry that surrounds it. Eder's striking collages, made up of overlapped images from his personal cosmos, create a mesmerizing and almost overwhelming backdrop to his paintings. With this technique, Eder sabotages the classic visual language, encouraging the viewer to question their own perception of reality. The in-situ presentation, seamlessly incorporated in *TICK TACK*'s protected architecture, exudes a sense of mysticism and madness and transforms *KARMAGEDDON* into a game for the viewer to grasp the artist's rhythm and language. However, even as the images overlap and leave you feeling vulnerable, the alchemical nature of chaos can also reveal its most beautiful secrets and have a transformative, even healing power.

The *RUIN BASEMENT CEREMONY*, Eder's first performance in over 6 years, offers the viewer a cathartic experience, the opposite effect of a meditation: filling one's mind to the most flamboyant extent and erasing unwanted content and mental trash produced by social media. This 15-minute dark and ritualistic happening, featuring a character embodying the concept of masks and the different personalities we adopt, is an extension of the exhibition's research of visual poetry in a modern world.

On *CINEMA TICK TACK*, Martin Eder presents *HYPOTHALAMOV*s, a selection of fast moving internet trash-videos curated together with *TICK TACK*. This seemingly endless reel imitates the careless doomsday scrolling one experiences on TikTok or Instagram during an unsatisfiable quest for quick dopamine.

Born in Augsburg, Germany in 1968, Martin Eder studied at the Dresden Academy of Fine Arts and currently lives and works in Berlin. His work is exhibited internationally in galleries and institutes such as Kunsthall Rotterdam, ARKEN Museum of Modern Art, Copenhagen; Newport Street Gallery, London; MUDAM Luxembourg, Staatliche Kunstsammlungen Dresden, Mönchehaus Museum Goslar, Staatliche Museen Augsburg, among others, and is part of various large collections such as the Museum of Modern Art in New York, the Museum of Contemporary Art in Los Angeles, as well as the Deutsche Bank Collection.



No War
2019
Oil on canvas
150 x 100 cm







The Essence of Illusion
2021
Oil on canvas
200 × 150 cm



Steckbrief
2012
Oil on canvas
187 x 141 cm



Unity and Division
2021
Oil on canvas
112 x 75 cm

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The Giant
2017
Oil on canvas
150 × 100 cm



Geist/ Psyche
2009/2022
Oil on canvas
200 × 150 cm



The Siren
2021
Oil on canvas
150 x 225 cm





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Paradise
 2023
 Oil on canvas
 200 x 150 cm



Far Away
 2023
 Oil on canvas
 190 x 140 cm

MBE: Martin, tell us in your own words about KARMAGEDDON.

ME: The show is a self-explanatory mix between Karma and Armageddon which alludes to this notion of the end of the world, the end of the future and the end of esoteric warfare. It's a game that can't be explained in the same way as a mathematical formula. It's more like a poem.

MBE: You are drawn back to imagery that has often been described as kitsch and absurd such as nude figures and kittens. How do you decide on the subjects for your paintings?

ME: The idea of the exhibition itself with all of the wallpaper is suggestive of the information overload, recreating the sensory overload and paralysis of the mind that we experience scrolling through, for example, TikTok. By the end of bingeing these images you have a feeling of hardly seeing anything at all.

I collage my paintings on top of this wallpaper, created from imagery I had collected, so that you can not distinguish between the original and the artificial. How do we define the boundaries of originality? There are lots of question marks in this exhibition. My personal question asks what the onslaught of images does to people. Does all of this information make the world a better place? I would say yes, in general. But there is also a point where this becomes destructive, where people are so overwhelmed they can't even go outside. Are our brains prepared for that overkill? That's the question of the whole show.

MBE: I'm interested in the discussion of the 'magic of maybe' to describe social media addiction. When you log into your account, you aren't sure what you'll find; maybe you gained ten followers or lost five. Either outcome evokes powerful

emotions. Each new image, a quick hit. I feel as though the layered collage elements of your work, in a way comment on this unpredictability. Are there any other ways in which you feel this manifests in your art?

ME: The imagery I use is often misunderstood as singularly kitsch. I often say to people that I have never painted a kitten or even a human figure. What I paint are the ghosts of these subjects. The afterglow of the atom bomb. The echoes of existence. It's like going into a trance state, where you can't experience corporeality but instead just the shapes of your memories. I imagine it as a close to death experience where people are surrounded by angelic and non-angelic demons that haunt them.

MBE: I guess we have past the point of no return. We don't possess the consciousness to make decisions about what will exist in the karmageddon.

ME: By overwhelming the audience with information, I address the destruction of the internal guard that enables us to distinguish between right and wrong, importance and unimportance. And if we just let everything into our minds, they would surely melt away. The education of having an internal emotional border control is requisite for preserving our subconsciousness. By overwhelming people with information, you bring them to the edge of explosion and I hope they think about this. If you speak to a gaming kid, they'd probably tell you that it's normal. The boundaries are really fluid these days.

MBE: The fast dopamine culture that you reference is very much grounded in the notion of magic, positioning us in a hypnotic space between reality and fantasy. Do you think social media and technology have a mystical or alchemic quality?

ME: I definitely think so. It's this notion of the ghost in the machine which describes the concept of the mind existing alongside and separate to the machine-like body. With all of these interesting developments in AI, where machines are considered faster and of better quality than human minds, we open up a gate that brings us back to magic.

Our brains have always been functioning like that, collecting information, analyzing it and putting it back out into the world. That's called inspiration and it's the fundamental process of creativity. Mimicking our way of behavior in the machine is something I don't consider to be really extraordinary. What makes it more extraordinary is the outcome and the way in which things develop that we can't predict and probably can't even control. It brings us back to the primal cave, emerging from the darkness and looking into the daylight. The light of the future blinds you but you can't turn back because you're also blinded by the darkness. The only option is to go further into the light without knowing what awaits you. It's a fascinating esoteric question because it's not anything new. The ancient Greeks already kept this in mind when embarking on a new and unpredictable journey.

We live in this church of fear where everything is a threat to humanity. Everything foreign perceived unacceptable. That is a very unpleasant atmosphere to exist in. I don't like it.

MBE: Expanding on this idea of magic, I'd like to consider the ritualistic elements to our consumption patterns. Scrolling and viewing without experiencing. Do you have any thoughts on this?

ME: Waking up and looking at your phone first thing in the morning is a ritual. A ritual can be something we do over and over again in both a positive and negative sense.

In magic, rituals have the ability to manifest and ground things. When you repeat a mantra or a spell, it's not the words that make it strong or even the meaning, it's the moment of repetition that visualizes it for yourself. It's the seconds of internalizing the spoken imagery.

MBE: You describe the images in KARMAGEDDON as encompassing a hypothetical doomsday scenario. What has led us to your doomsday?

ME: Borrowing from the lyrics to the David Bowie song *The Motel*, there is no hell like an old hell. We have been betrayed by the old vision of hell imagined in traditional literature and biblical imagery. It's not the one with demons and boiling water like in Blake's drawings or Dante's *Inferno*. The new hell is existing right alongside us and it's sweet, it's tender. The new hell is not loud, it's calm. Silence could be a new hell. The doomsday we speak about has likely already begun. It's not the atom bomb that will end us, it's the silence of people who don't say anything.

MBE: Could you tell me about the poodle painting *Geist/Psyche*? The translation of *Geist*, am I right in saying, relates to a spirit of mind?

ME: *Geist* has two meanings. Both the spirit within the psychological state and also the ghost, the spectral figure on the staircase covered in a white sheet. The poodle in *Geist/Psyche* has this white bouffant that looks a little ghostlike. But most importantly, it's an artificial creature made by humans. I don't think these dogs would exist in the forest somehow, shampooing each other's hair. They are manmade projections of repressed sexuality and the urge towards softness and tenderness.

ME: Many of your pieces have a stillness or sense of calm to them. *Siren* and *No War*, for example. Can you tell me a bit about the

narratives behind these paintings and why you have chosen to compose them in this way?

ME: What is it that I want in a painting? I always strive for a kind of calmness in the madness. In the eye of the storm, it is quiet. I have never made paintings which are fast, I'm probably not even capable. I think you need stillness in this fast world to get attention.

It's very spooky. When you see paintings by Caravaggio, which are 500 years old, Bacchus is still grinning at you, long after the painter has died. 'Look, I will survive you.' When I am painting, I do consider that.

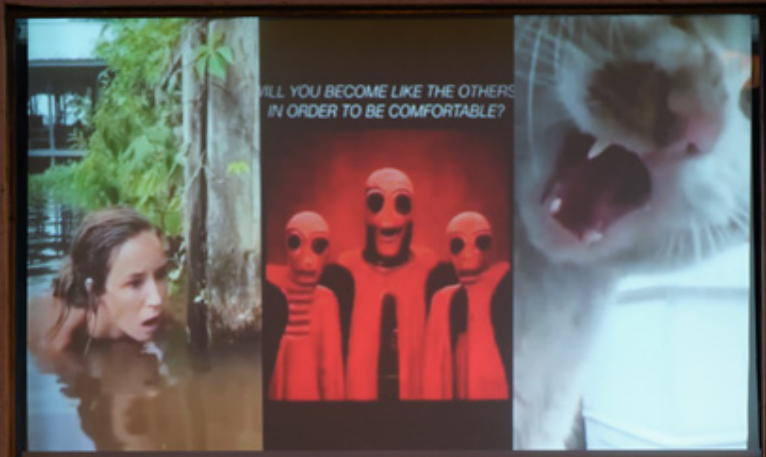


CINEMA TICK TACK

As an extension of his first Belgian solo exhibition *KARMAGEDDON*, Martin Eder presents *HYPOTHALAMOVS* on CINEMA TICK TACK, a selection of fast-moving internet trash videos curated together with TICK TACK. This seemingly endless reel imitates the careless doomsday scrolling one experiences on TikTok or Instagram during an unsatisfiable quest for quick dopamine.

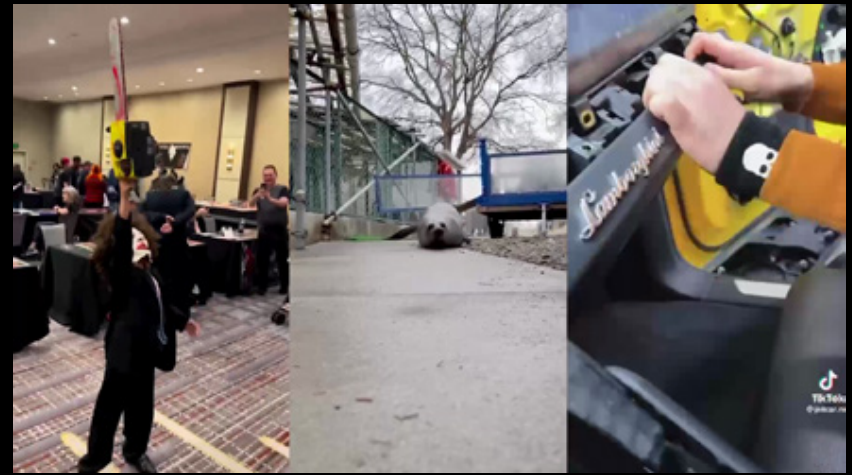
HYPOTHALAMOVS Martin Eder

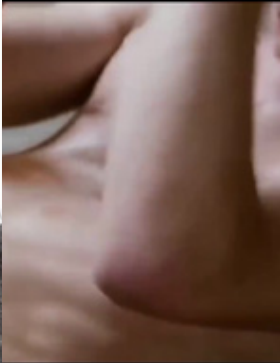




HYPOTHALAMOVS
Martin Eder
2023
HD video
36'24"

Martin Eder
KARMAAGEDOVV
18.09-19.02.2023





HYPOTHALAMOVS
Martin Eder
2023
HD video
36'24"



RUIN BASEMENT
CEREMONY
Martin Eder
2023
Performance



KARMAGEDDON
Limited Edition T-Shirt
Edition of 30





Colophon

TICK TACK is a new destination for contemporary art in Antwerp, founded by Tijs Lammar, Vincent Lemson, Patrick Vanden Eynde, Arne Jennard

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Mathias Swings,
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The logo for 'TICK' is displayed in a bold, white, sans-serif font. The letter 'I' is stylized with a horizontal bar extending to the left, creating a unique graphic element. The logo is set against a bright yellow rectangular background.

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KARMAGEDDON
Martin Eder
19.05–08.07.2023

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TICK TACK

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THU–SAT, 13:00–19:00

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