Economic jargon settles in and makes things sound correct by making them sound familiar; it comes to our aid when troubles arise and comforts us with its reason-able-sounding justifications. Like religion, it gives hope and solace, soothes worry and anguish. The doctrine is everywhere, oozing out of academic studies and financial newspapers; ‘efficiency’ has become the measure of the everyday, as cost-benefit analyses guide us to make decisions in the interest of the greatest possible return. This logic promises freedom in exchange for leaving things to take their own course: laissez faire, laissez passer.

The ‘invisible hand’ of the market should ensure that needs and wants are met without any outside intervention or regulation. Yet needs and wants are not governed by rational rules: the desire to have it all, to have it now and without limits, is a notion without end, with irrationality as its command.

The Economy is Spinning looks into various manifestations of the language of economics and finance, a language that permeates our vocabularies and builds the boundaries of our imaginations. The exhibition considers the economy as a ‘performing body’ that reveals its state with hope and sings in excitement about better days to come. Sometimes its voice trembles with fear, at other times it whispers economic jargon settles in and makes things sound correct by making them sound familiar; it comes to our aid when troubles arise and comforts us with its reason-able-sounding justifications. Like religion, it gives hope and solace, soothes worry and anguish. The doctrine is everywhere, oozing out of academic studies and financial newspapers; ‘efficiency’ has become the measure of the everyday, as cost-benefit analyses guide us to make decisions in the interest of the greatest possible return. This logic promises freedom in exchange for leaving things to take their own course: laissez faire, laissez passer.

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The Secrets to Success (film, 9’20”, 2016)

How to visualize and represent capital is the essential question of On Nature, a speculative exploration of capital’s real abstraction and its aesthetics. In an era when we are accustomed to a God’s eye view, and capital has grown into an unintelligible complexity, the problem of capital’s representation is hidden deeper. The false sense of mastery given by our screens and maps feeds a sense of control when in fact we are not in command. This film decomposes images of our abstract, built and imagined environment in an attempt to adequately visualize the false feeling of unlimited progress and universality that is the only nature we have left.

The performance Delusional Cause will take place on the 16th July.

Mercedes Azpilicueta
Geometric Dancer Doesn’t Believe in Love, Finds Aspiration and Ecstasy in Spirals
(film, 9’20”, 2016)

In this performatively video installation the artist re-energizes the soundscapes of the port city of Rotterdam. Her ghostly appearance recites sounds and words collected on the marketplace, at the harbour and in the city’s streets. In what resembles a yoga video, methods of mindful meditation and the acceleration of bodily limits intertwine. Yet instead of providing relaxation, the performance ultimately exposes the delusional processes of cognitive capitalism.

NOT IN THE EXHIBITION

The office monitor shows a film by the Danish artist group Superflex that is not formally part of the exhibition. This short film, Financial Crisis (Session I-IV), is a four-hour therapy session with a hypnotist who treats the financial crisis as a psychosis. The viewer is guided through four of its symptoms, in one chapter experiencing life inside George Soros’ skin, feeling the rush and excitement of buying and selling stocks, while in another experiencing anxiety and a loss of control as the free hand of the market malfunctions.

First Floor

Robertas Narkus
Contract (text on wall, dimensions variable)

Hedge fund founder and pharmaceutical firm CEO Martin Shkreli became “the most hated man in the World” and the “poster child of greed” after he acquired the rights to a widely used medicine and raised its price by 5000 per cent overnight. In 2015, this “most hated man” also bought the “most exclusive rap album of all time”: the only known copy of the Wu-Tang Clan album Once Upon a Time in Shaolin. The Wu-Tang Clan have imposed an 88-year commercial ban on releasing further copies as they believe the number 8, a rotated infinity sign, has a mystical importance. The text on the wall is a transcript of a video made by Sikkreli and addressed to Wu-Tang, and echoes a Faustian pact – a deal with the devil in exchange for diabolical favours.

8
Monique Hendriksen
On Nature (film, 9’20”, 2016)

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