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Spotlight: A Two-Part Exhibition in London and Hong Kong Explores How Art Can Inject New Images Into the Collective Conscious

"Machines of Desire" finds contemporary echoes of 20th-century movements.

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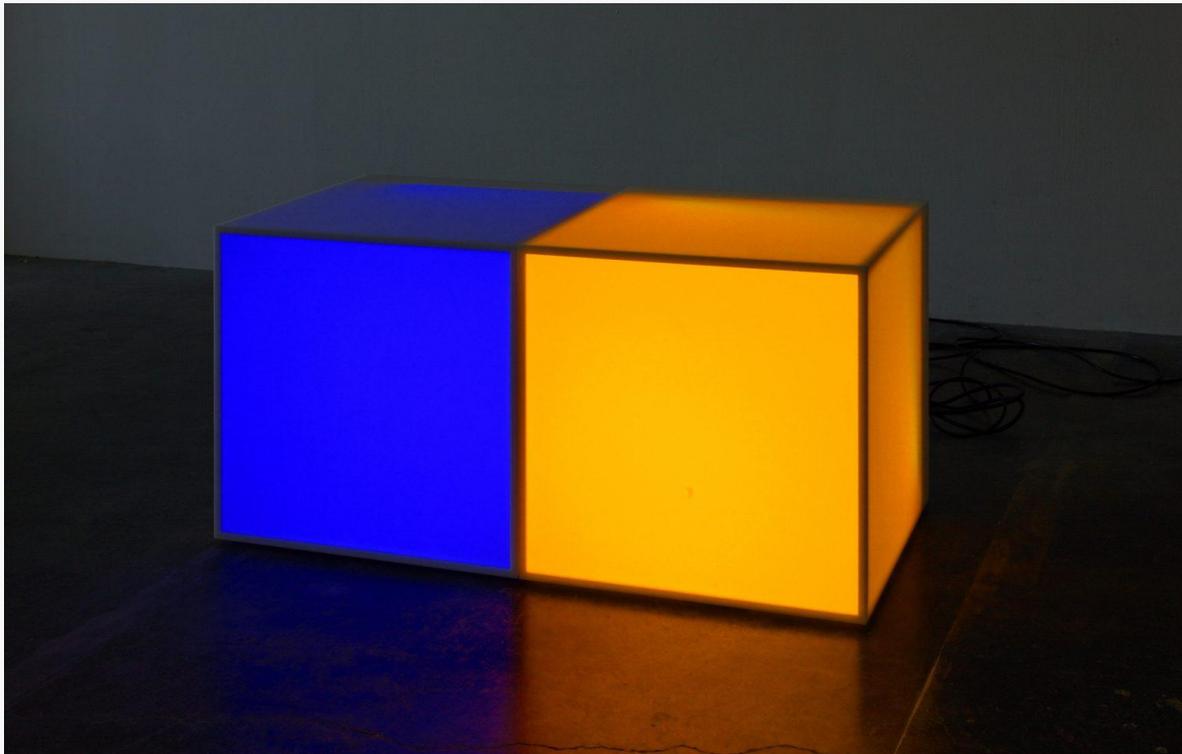


Jessie Makinson, *Hisses and Kisses* (2022). Courtesy of Simon Lee Gallery.

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What You Need to Know: The two-part group exhibition “Machines of Desire” in Simon Lee Gallery’s [London](#) and [Hong Kong](#) spaces brings together an intriguing group of works that in one way or another explore art’s transcendent potential in our current moment. Curated

by gallerist and curator Emilia Yin and gallery director Kat Sapera, the exhibition's two locations feature works by Modernist artists, such as Leonora Carrington and Pablo Picasso, alongside those of cutting-edge contemporary practitioners, including Parker Ito, Jessie Makinson, and Andrew Sendor.



Angela Bulloch, *Double Ice* (2013). Courtesy of Simon Lee Gallery.

Why We Like It: Rather than exploring how technologies inform and influence human interactions, “Machines of Desire” contemplates how human imagination shapes the world around it. Many of the ideas at play in this exhibition first emerged in the early years of the 20th century. In that era, artists became fascinated by machine technologies and how these innovations would interact with the desires and emotions of human beings. The Futurists celebrated the idea of the “man extended by machines,” while the Surrealists cultivated objects of desire inspired by myths, dreams, and the subconscious. Here we see how some images have operated across time and through memory to inform the artworks of today. In one such example, the feline women that strut through Jessie Makinson’s canvases find an earlier parallel in the work of Leonora

Carrington.



Astra Huimeng Wang, *Some Combination Skill and Luck, I Think, Will Get Us Through* (2022). Courtesy of Simon Lee Gallery

According to the Gallery: “Looking at and beyond the impact of Surrealism, the artists in this exhibition utilize the energy of their personal and collated memories to create material that subverts reality, and in doing so, allows new possibilities to spill into the visible world and collective consciousness. A journey through the layers of images and emotions that are invoked through the magic of art-making, ‘Machines of Desire’ asks viewers to interrogate how art can conjure, keep, and project souvenirs of the past, present, or

future, whether they be real or imagined.”

“Machines of Desire” is on view at Simon Lee Gallery, London, through August 24, and in Hong Kong through September 10, 2022.

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