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Justine Neuberger, *From Inside a World Image*, 2023 (detail)

Short-term pleasure, Long-term pain

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91 Middlesex St, London E1 7DA, UK

Grab another glass of wine. It soothes the nerves. Takes the edge off. It's amazing how much choice we have these days. How much freedom. Just add to cart. You can be anything you imagine. Power is knowing what you want.

Short-term pleasure, Long-term pain is a group exhibition featuring seven artists exploring the effects of instant gratification upon the human will and our capacity for agency. Here big philosophical questions of self-determination, the management of life, the exercise of freedom, are articulated through aspects of ordinary lived experience, small daily decisions alongside the poetic and extraordinary. It is a question of whether you have that glass of wine to briefly escape from reality, whether you buy that treat you can't afford, or how dependent your self-image is upon that online filter and how estranged this has made you from your own and others' bodies. Does the possibility of short-term pleasure erode our capacity for self-control? Have we become merely reactive creatures, conditioned by stimulus, or so numbed that we are no longer aware of the conditions under which we live?

And what of the other side – the promise that long-term toil will reap rewards? Delayed gratification has become the mark of elite discernment as Pierre Bourdieu observed, while easy or 'facile' pleasures were seen as common – a set of classist values that are essentially built on self-denial. For Theodore Adorno, there were illusory and genuine pleasures, the former often quick and easy, serving to dull social awareness. For Lauren Berlant, contemporary society depends on forms of 'cruel optimism', where what you desire might be the thing preventing you from flourishing, such as the artist working hard for a big break, or those hoping for social mobility in a rigged system. To follow your desire can be the cause of much suffering.

This exhibition reveals how seemingly trivial matters of pleasure and leisure are closely bound to systems of labour and economics, psychological and ecological disaster. Beyond the individual are the global effects of extracting and exporting goods, the rise of sharing economies where community and industry are one and the same, or equating freedom with choice predetermined by society or the marketplace. Life is all about choices. Or is it?

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Artist Biographies

Emmanuel Awuni (b. 1993, Accra, Ghana) lives and works in London, UK. Awuni's practice encompasses sculpture, painting and installations through which he re-imagines the structures that underlie our senses of hierarchy, space and time. Often informed by diasporic oral traditions, he explores the relationship between the non-hierarchical and non-linear sounds common in Hip Hop, Pidgin English and Patois and translates them into a textured visual language. He received his MA from The Royal Academy of Arts, 2022, and BA in Fine Art from Goldsmiths University of London, 2017. Recent solo exhibitions include *walk*, Pipeline Contemporary, London (2022); *Lamps*, Sundy, London (2022); and *Hammer*, Harlesden High Street Gallery, London (2021). He has participated in group exhibitions at Copperfield, London; PM/AM, London; Nir Altman, Munich; and Sadie Coles HQ, London. Awuni will have his first solo exhibition with the gallery in 2023.

Daniel Tyree Gaitor-Lomack (b. 1988, Neptune, New Jersey) lives and works between Los Angeles, California, USA and New Haven, Connecticut, USA. Gaitor-Lomack's paintings are diaristic abstractions; mementos of experiences, places, and ruminations. His peripatetic impulses have created a body of work connected to cities throughout the world, illustrating a distinct sense of personal and creative independence. He has presented solo exhibitions at Lyles & King, New York; Night Gallery, Los Angeles; Alyssa Davis Gallery, New York; and Maple St. Construct, Omaha. His work has been featured in recent group shows at Night Gallery, Los Angeles; Public Gallery, London; James Cohan Gallery, New York; Jeffrey Deitch, Los Angeles; Welancora Gallery, Brooklyn; HVW8 Art + Design Gallery, Los Angeles; PPOW Gallery, New York; and Outono Projects, Los Angeles. Gaitor-Lomack's work is in the permanent collection of The Museum of Contemporary Art San Diego, CA. He is the recipient of the NXTHVN Studio Fellowship and a Rema Hort Foundation Emerging Artist Grant.

Cathrin Hoffmann (b. 1984, Germany) lives and works in Berlin, Germany. In her paintings, sculptures and installations, Hoffmann reimagines, remodels, and recycles various corporealities to explore and question what being human means in the future post-digital age. Her work distinctly dismisses dualist ideas and sets a new basis for futuristic, diverse body types. Recent solo exhibitions include *Human Hand For Scale*, Nicodim Gallery, Los Angeles (2022); *Probably Outside*, Public Gallery, London (2022); and a presentation at Frieze London (2021). Her work has been featured in group exhibitions at Christine König Galerie, Vienna; Nicodim Gallery, Bucharest; Palazzo Monti, Brescia; Mana Contemporary, New Jersey; König Galerie, Berlin; and Villa Merkel, Esslingen. Hoffmann's work is in the permanent collection of X Museum, Beijing, China and Fundación MEDIANOCHE0, Granada, Spain.

Steph Huang (b.1990, Taiwan) lives and works in London. Poetically charged, Huang's multi-disciplinary practice is rooted in the close observation of incidental details, the relationships objects have with each other, as well as in the eccentric moments in everyday life, her work attempts to examine something of the lives of modern human beings through mass-produced objects. She received her MA in sculpture from the Royal College of Art, 2021. She has presented recent solo exhibitions at Taipei Fine Arts Museum (2022); Volt, Eastbourne (2022); Goldsmiths CCA, London (2022); and mother's tankstation, London (2022). Her work has been featured in recent group exhibitions at Galerie du Monde, Hong Kong (2023); Bloomberg New Contemporaries, Humber Street Gallery, Hull and South London Gallery, London (2022); Staffordshire St, London (2022); AplusA Gallery, Venice (2022); Belmacz, London (2021); San Mei Gallery, London (2021, 2020); Bloc Projects, Sheffield (2021); South London Gallery (2021); and Cromwell Place, London (2021). Huang will have her first solo exhibition with the gallery in 2023.

Alexei Izmaylov (b. 1985, Russia) lives and works in London. Izmaylov's practice ping pongs between image making and sculpture. His work is composed of original objects and procured industrial elements that evolve as part of a propositional ecosystem — threading together notions of play, power, consumption and illicit desire. He received his MA in sculpture from the Royal College of Art, 2021. Select solo and group exhibitions include *OPINIONS*, FILET Space, London (2022); *The Swimming Pool*, Carbon.12, Dubai (2022); *PROXY*, Cromwell Place, London (2021); *iObject*, Freud Museum, London (2021); *Like A Sieve*, Kupfer, London (2020); Bloomberg New Contemporaries, South London Gallery, London, and Leeds Art Gallery, Leeds (2019-20); *Cherry Pickers*, Podium, Luxembourg (2019); *Dirty Hands & Revelations*, Standpoint Gallery, London (2019); *PLACID & LIMPID: 3AM MIRACLE, A FRAGMENT*, Nosbaum Reding Gallery, Luxembourg (2019); and *Forårsudstilling*, Kunsthall Charlottenborg, Copenhagen (2017).

Justine Neuberger (b. 1993 in New York, USA) lives and works in New York, USA. Neuberger's paintings offer us a look at indeterminate social encounters, buttressed by fragmentary architecture and improbable landscapes. Enamored equally with Renaissance masters and the unsung heroes of American folklore and vernacular art, Neuberger frequently depicts nature as a kind of destabilized arabesque, situated curiously between the landscape, the picture plane, and some 'other' register. Recent solo exhibitions include *Blue Paintings*, 15 Orient, New York (2022); *Firmament of Time*, Clima, Milan, (2021); *Night Shift*, 17 Essex Gallery, New York (2019); and *Green World*, 15 Orient, New York (2019). Her work has been featured in recent group at High Art, Arles (2022); Polina Berlin Gallery, New York (2022); Harkawik, New York (2022); Centomila at Palazzo Capris, Turin (2021); Svetlana, New York (2020); and Neumann Wolfson Art Gallery, New York (2019).

Yan Xinyue (b. 1992, China) lives and works between Shanghai, China and Los Angeles, USA. She received her MFA in painting from the Royal Academy of Fine Art Antwerp, 2018. Yan's work portrays the tension in everyday life in the context of rapid urban development. She manipulates objects and subjects into different painterly forms - reality and fantasy are mixed on the same canvas, and the dynamic and the tranquil are blended - revealing the conflict between being a part of society and being an individual. Selected exhibitions include a solo exhibition at Capsule Shanghai (2020); and group exhibitions at Sans Titre, Paris (2022); Present Projects, Hong Kong (2021); For Seasons Project, Zürich (2021); Kunstpodium T, Tilburg (2019); Capsule Shanghai (2019); A+ Contemporary, Shanghai (2019, Shanghai); De Brakke Grond - Flemish Cultural Center, Amsterdam (2018); and Cité internationale des arts, Paris (2017).