



Eine Kulturinstitution
der Stadt Zürich

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Media Release

Helmhaus

23 September–13 November 2022

Media preview: Thursday, 22 September 2022, 11 am
Please sign up for the media preview either by mail or by calling the telephone number above.

Opening: Thursday, 22 September 2022, 6 pm

trust

with

Yumna Al-Arashi, Marina Belobrovaja, Murielle Gräff, Chantal Hoefs, JOKO connected – Karin Jost, Regula J. Kopp, Fiona Könz & Gregor Vogel, Rachel Lumsden, Gianni Motti, Roma Jam Session art Kollektiv, H.P. Weberhans

curated by Simon Maurer in collaboration with Nathalie Killias and Fanny Frey

“This is not an age of trust or certainties,” wrote a commentator in the Swiss daily *Tages-Anzeiger* just recently. That alone would be grounds enough for staging an exhibition on the theme of trust. After all, trust is a value that is present, at least by implication, in almost every aspect of our lives. Yet it is hardly ever talked about. Is this because of a reluctance to deal with its downsides – with mistrust, loss of trust, breach of trust? Perhaps. Art, by contrast, is never afraid of grabbing bulls by the horns and making us to look closer.

A life lived without trust in other people (and things) would not be worth living, it seems. Yet to trust others too readily is to live dangerously. Trust, then, is always a balancing act. It is also an active verb, which is why the title of this exhibition is not capitalized. Trust is invisible but can have hugely visible consequences. It can also be manipulated – even if primal trust is inviolable. Trust can be derived, gained, aroused or earned – and sometimes it is simply given to us. So trust can evidently be many things.

From the private to the public or institutional, in love as in business, politics or religion, from healthcare and the judiciary to grocery shopping – we would not be able to do much at all without trust, especially not at a time when labels such as “genuine” and “authentic” are constantly being called into question. Artificial intelligence and virtual reality, like deep fakes and cosmetic surgery have made trust a critical factor. The Huber/Sterzinger design studio based its communications campaign for our exhibition

on what are ostensibly portrait photographs of real people. In fact, they are the products of algorithms developed for the project "This Person Does Not Exist". The designers connect the faces to the question whether we would trust these "people".

That is a theme that we encounter in the exhibition itself, sometimes directly, sometimes obliquely. The exhibits likewise demand to be trusted, each in its own way. We can easily believe that of the performance duo, who are physically and psychologically dependent on each other, though it might be less apparent in the paintings. Conceptual art poses very specific questions: How much trust do we have in our healthcare providers? How do things stand with our sex partner? The film screened as part of the exhibition asks whether we can trust genes we hardly know. There are also videos documenting performances that address nothing less than the exchange of two identities and the lingering mistrust based solely on a centuries-old prejudice towards a certain culture. Finally, we are coaxed into taking part in a game that will introduce us to the secrets of creativity.

Events

MENSCHENSKIND!, a film about sperm banks by Marina Belobrovaja, will be the subject of an open discussion in which the film-maker herself will take part: "Trust is good..." (27 October, 6.30 pm).

Artists whose works are exhibited here will talk openly about trust and its bearing on their art (10 November, 6.30 pm).

Two books about projects that can be viewed in the exhibition will be presented to the public for the first time: one is *Morphing the Roma Label* by the Roma Jam Session art Kollektiv (RJSaK), which seeks to break down those images of Roma that are informed primarily by prejudice (20 October, 6.30 pm), and the other is a six-part box set by one of Zurich's most idiosyncratic artists, H.P. Weberhans (3 November, 6.30 pm).

Further details of the other events, the exhibition and photos can be downloaded from the press page at www.helmhaus.org.

For further information and press photos, please contact Nathalie Killias, tel. +41 (0)44 415 56 77, e-mail: nathalie.killias@helmhaus.org.

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