



Common place

Stefania Migliorati

Curated by *qwatz* - contemporary art platform

The 'Common Place' exhibition focuses on the concept of identity through the lens of technological science, biotechnology, and artificial intelligence. The intersection of human, natural and artificial encompasses a very wide range of actions synthesised in man's intervention in nature and in the use of different technologies in order to increase his own well-being. Always the subject of moral, economic, social and cultural reflections, these actions from time to time update the identity parameters around which each generation questions and repositions itself: what are the boundaries we are crossing today? What will the new ones be? How can we bridge the gap between cyborg and natural identities?

In the mid-1980s, Donna Haraway - philosopher and cyborg theorist - questioned herself on the theme of technological science and the opportuneness of overcoming the mind-body, male-female, natural-artificial dichotomies, rethinking the relationship between identity and nature in the light of the concept of the cyborg. The path of coexistence and the hierarchical elimination of social and thought categories was based on the observation of a de facto hybrid identity, linked to the already evident achievements of science and the idea of a coexistence of inclusive social and bodily realities, which welcome the fusion of human and machine.

In 1992, through an exhibition entitled POST-HUMAN, curator Jeffrey Deitch photographed a moment of cultural transition in the direction of a coming era defined as post-human. Cosmetic surgery, genetic engineering, robotics, the shortening of distances, the development of information technology, the accessibility of communication tools, the increase in goods and services, the relocation of companies' workplaces to different countries around the world: each of these perspectives marks a cultural shift that highlights the possibility of reinventing oneself, of choosing alternatives to one's own model of origin and of relating to a free, open market that disrupts and redefines the previous social structure.

Deitch ends his introductory text to the exhibition with some questions: "Will all these extraordinary possibilities result in greater social repression and a push towards conformity? Will the persuasive abilities

of the advertising industry convince us all to buy the same two or three genetic development programmes? Will governments exercise their control over the power of new bio-technologies and limit their use? Or will they take a more aggressive stance, exploiting the new technologies to create genetically better populations in order to achieve economic and military superiority?"

In COMMON PLACE, Stefania Migliorati presents several paintings depicting a selection of animals: a chameleon, snake, goat, horse, etc. Each of them has been imagined in a cyborg key, through the insertion in the body of details suggesting mechanical prostheses, robotics, and biotechnological interventions, applied to achieve the enhancement of specific functions of the subject. These "visual provocations" tie in with the research the artist has been developing for some years now around the concept of de-extinction, and with her reflections on the practices of reintroduction and ecological substitution employed to regulate and control wildlife, species, and evolution.

Based on renewed questions about the relationship between our scientific advances and their sustainability, Migliorati creates an imagery that helps us visualise a world of grafts, coexistence, transversality, on the borderline between technology and fantastic manipulation. Is the common place therefore the human body that we all embody on the same Earth? Is it the Earth itself, on which we live? Or the belief that a solution will surely be found?

Benedetta di Loreto
qwatZ - contemporary art platform

SUTURA was created in dialogue with the IFT (Istituto Fisioterapico di Torino - 'Physiotherapy Institute of Turin'), a rehabilitation and diagnostic centre in Piedmont that has been committed to assisting people with health problems for more than 120 years. Open to reflections on the relationship between culture and health, SUTURA invites artists to build imagery, relationships and paths to meet a varied audience and promotes different tools for sharing and personal growth.

One of its special projects is the series of multiples that SUTURA invites artists to create. Starting with some of IFT's historical photographs, the artists rework the images with different materials and interventions and create works in limited editions.