On the one hand, a deep-seated continuity appears to link all things and all events and lend them a significance that provokes wonder. Whether this continuity is seen as material or ideal, magical or rational, it gives a sense of an immanent and expansive connection – a connective tissue and consciousness extending beyond the one I. On the other, there is the feeling that things are out of control, heading in a direction that is impossible, severed and out of joint. There is a flickering between these positions in Abel Auer’s work.

Much of his art has to do with paying attention to the hidden, obscure and unknowable – that place where sheer cognition will not take us, a space not so much explored as a trajectory of escapism, but as an urgent material and spiritual necessity. The intersection between the concrete and that which cannot be contained within a dominant archetype of the real, not as poles but as totally interconnected parts, is central to his thinking. A thinking and making which moves between a pitch and logic of spiritual histories of the 19th and early 20th century avant-garde, and the intensity and fervour of the conspiracy, and the dark web.

This show has developed from an extended period of exchange around survivalism and modes of living with extinction, with radical unity, magic and beauty. *Factor X / The Work* comprises drawings and paintings, collage, video, props, and materials of Auer’s – a proposition and temporary structure of existing and newly realised work.
I see the Four-fold Man, the Humanity in deadly sleep and its fallen Emanation, the Spectre and its cruel Shadow. I see the Past, Present and Future existing all at once before me. O Divine Spirit, sustain me on thy wings that I may awake Albion from his long and cold repose; for Bacon and Newton, sheath’d in dismal steel, their terrors hang like iron scourges over Albion: reasonings like vast serpents infold around my limbs, bruising my minute articulations.

I turn my eyes to the schools and universities of Europe, and there behold the Loom of Locke, whose woof rages dire, wash’d by the Water-wheels of Newton: black the cloth in heavy wreaths folds over every nation: cruel works of many wheels I view, wheel without wheel, with cogs tyrannic moving by compulsion each other, not as those in Eden, which, wheel within wheel, in freedom revolve in harmony and peace.

Quantum mechanics also involves nonlocal correlations. This was first demonstrated by Einstein and Podolsky and Rosen in 1935, later published as the reductio ad absurdum of quantum mechanics. They said quantum mechanics implies that if two particles were once in contact and they move to the opposite end of the universe they will remain correlated even though there is no mechanical connection between them. This implies there’s telepathy between them. That’s absurd. Therefore quantum mechanics has something wrong with it. That was 1935 and yet nobody has found anything wrong with quantum mechanics. It’s still the most useful theory in atomic physics and more and more things have come out of quantum mechanics including the atom bomb, which terrifies us all, the television set, which amuses us or bores us, modern computers, the designer drugs – all developed on the basis of quantum mechanics.

The subject of this speech is a topic which has been discovered recently and which may not exist at all. I may be talking about something that does not exist. Therefore, I’m free to say everything or nothing. I, in my stories and novels, often write about counterfeit worlds, some are real worlds as well as deranged private worlds, inhabited often by just one person, while meantime the other characters...
either remain in their own worlds throughout or are somehow
drawn into one of the peculiar ones. This theme occurs in
the corpus of my 27 years of writing. At no time did I have
a theoretical or conscious explanation for my preoccupation
with these plural-form pseudo worlds. But now I think I
understand. What I was sensing was the manifold of partially
actualised realities laying tangent to what evidently is
the most actualised one. The one which the majority of us
by consensus gentium agree on. Later that day, back home
again but still deeply under the influence of the Sodium
Pentothal, I had a short, acute flash of recovered memory.

"The words are almost interchangeable: magic and art. We
have the concept of high magic, which is magic where you
don't know what you're doing, essentially you're just doing
whatever comes into your mind, on the assumption that this
is an instruction from the forces of the universe. It's
completely spontaneous, it's not got any of the censorship
of the rational conscious mind involved in it at all. The
same could be said of great works of art: that you don't
know why you're doing them, you're not sure how you're doing
them or what purpose there is... it's just something where
you feel a compulsion that is bigger than you, that is
bigger than yourself.

So yes, I would say, if you want to
understand magic, try thinking
about art, if you want to
understand art

..."
She was a genius.

Nobody before her had the audacity to try to do a global reinterpretation of spirituality the way that she did. At a time when women, like children, were expected to be seen and not heard, it was said that she left her husband to become a trick rider in the circus.

According to Ben, all human communication, language itself, is suffering severe damage. And that is why it was a primary function of the order to preserve language. Language is a kind of magic by which we trigger off telepathic transmission of messages between us. And if you look about the world today we’re becoming more and more confused, more and more cut off from one another. We’re all living in our own little realms of unknowing. This is the great dilemma of our times. We will never have an end to cruelty, war and oppression and greed, and all these evils that we see bubbling all the time.

This is a thing which I believe very strongly, I know, I don’t just believe it. I know it, I see it about me and I sense it. There has to be a great revolution of the spirit, otherwise the world is finished. It doesn’t need the atomic bomb, it doesn’t need any of the worst horrors of modern technology: the smart bomb, mustard gas, nerve gas… we will destroy ourselves in some other fashion. But it’s essential the amnesia has been gotten rid of, that we get back to a stage of primitive thinking, clear. Technology must be brought under proper control.
Abel Auer (b. 1974, Munich) was a co-founder of the Hamburg-based collective Isotrop in the 1990s, followed by long-standing collaborations with artists including Kai Althoff, Dorota Jurczak and Armin Krämer. His work has been exhibited at Corvi-Mora, London; Etablissement d’en Face, Brussels; Michael Benevento, Los Angeles; P.S.1 MoMA, New York; Bozar Centre for Fine Arts, Brussels, amongst others. Over the last six years, Auer has been based in Stuttgart, where he also ran the project space Staub Raum (Künstlerhaus Stuttgart). From October 2019, he is professor at the University of Fine Arts Hamburg (HFBK). Auer is represented by Corvi-Mora, London; Sies + Höke, Düsseldorf; Galerie Jo van de Loo, Munich; and Galerie für Gegenwartskunst Barbara Claassen-Schmal, Bremen.


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