

# Esther Schipper

Hito Steyerl

**Contemporary Cave Art**

April 28 – May 25, 2023



Hito Steyerl, **Animal Spirits**, 2022. Photo © Kunsthaus Graz/N. Lackner

For Gallery Weekend Berlin 2023 Esther Schipper is pleased to present **Contemporary Cave Art**, Hito Steyerl's first solo exhibition with the gallery. On view will be a site-specific iteration of her 2022 environment **Animal Spirits** adapted to the exhibition space. **Animal Spirits** is a video installation consisting of a film and a live computer-generated animation as well as spatial installation elements. The film and the animation are projected on custom-built, surround screens which create a room within the cave-like exhibition space. Hanging suspended from the ceiling are spherical glass containers with LED growth lamps shining on plants and soil. The planting and maintenance of the plants is handled in cooperation with the transcultural community garden Hevrîn Xelef, and the NGO Flamingo e.V., a network for refugee women and children.

Apart from plants, the glass spheres also contain sensors that measure proxies for plant health as well as react to proximity of visitors in the space. The data gathered by the sensors influence a light-sparkling cloud of particles, appearing in the projection of an animated prehistorical cave. On the other screen, a narrative video interlaces scenes shot with the German actor Mark Waschke impersonating the economist John Maynard Keynes, with historical film footage, animation, motion graphics and documentary interviews, conducted by Steyerl with shepherds in Northern Spain as well as a group of fellow artists. It touches on topics of post-pandemic conditions of cultural production, the boom of cryptocurrencies and NFT art, and possibilities for systems of decentralization and autonomy, inspired by biological systems behind fermentation.

The glass spheres in the exhibition are being sold to raise funds for relief efforts following the severe earthquake in Turkey and northern Syria. All proceeds from these sales will be donated through Hevrîn Xelef/Flamingo e.v. to Jinwar, the women's village in Rojava, Northern Syria and personally delivered there to build a health center.

Hito Steyerl is a filmmaker and writer based in Berlin.

The artist's solo exhibitions include: **Hito Steyerl – A Sea of Data**, National Museum of Modern and Contemporary Art, Seoul (2022); **Hito Steyerl: I Will Survive**, Stedelijk Museum, Amsterdam (2022); **Hito Steyerl. I Will Survive**, Kunstsammlung Nordrhein-Westfalen K21, Düsseldorf, and Centre Pompidou, Paris (2020–21); **Hito Steyerl**, n.b.k. – Neuer Berliner Kunstverein, Berlin (2019–20); **This is the Future**, Art Gallery of Ontario, Toronto (2019–20); **Hito Steyerl: Drill**, Park Avenue Armory, New York (2019); **Power Plants**, Serpentine Galleries, London (2019); **Käthe Kollwitz Prize 2019. Hito Steyerl**, Akademie der Künste, Berlin (2019); **The City of Broken Windows**, Castello di Rivoli, Turin (2018); **Liquidity Inc.**, The Institute of Contemporary Art, Boston (2017); **Factory of the Sun**, Museum of Contemporary Art, Los Angeles (2016); **The Distributed Image**, LUMA Foundation, Arles (2016); **Duty-Free Art**, Museo Nacional Centro de Arte Reina Sofia, Madrid (2015); **Liquidity Inc.**, Tensta Konsthall, Spånga (2015); **Too Much World**, Institute of Modern Art, Brisbane (2016); **Hito Steyerl**, Artists Space, New York (2015); **Hito Steyerl**, Van Abbemuseum, Eindhoven (2014); **Hito Steyerl**, Institute of Contemporary Arts, London (2014); **Circulacionismo**, Museo Universitario de Arte Contemporaneo, Mexico City (2014); **Hito Steyerl: Guards**, Museum of Contemporary Art, San Diego (2013); **Focus: Hito Steyerl**, Art Institute of Chicago, Chicago (2012); **The Kiss**, Overgaden Institute of Contemporary Art, Copenhagen (2012); **Hito Steyerl**, n.b.k. – Neuer Berliner Kunstverein, Berlin (2009); **The 1st at Moderna: Hito Steyerl**, Moderna Museet, Stockholm (2008), and **Red Alert**, Kunsthalle Winterthur, Winterthur (2008). The artist's work is held in numerous collections.

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