

Lentos Kunstmuseum

Nika Kupyrova

Simulacra

06.06. to 17.08.25

In *Simulacra*, Nika Kupyrova explores the blurred boundaries between the real and the imaginary, the virtual and the non-virtual, the organic and the mechanical. The solo exhibition of the artist—recipient of the Kardinal König Art Prize—is on view at the Lentos Kunstmuseum Linz until 17 August 2025.

With *Simulacra*, Lentos presents the artist's first solo museum exhibition. Kupyrova weaves digital aesthetics, pop-cultural references, and mythological motifs into a dense visual language, envisioning a digital animistic cosmology—a world poised between dream, technology, and reality.

Digital Archive as Starting Point

Kupyrova draws upon a personal digital archive grown over years: .jpgs, .pngs, and screenshots serve as raw material in her reflections on reality and illusion. The internet becomes a collective repository of images, emotions, and cultural codes.

"I spend a lot of time online, which is why many of the ideas for *Simulacra* come from that space. A consequence of screen time is that the seemingly playful interpretations I encounter online are coupled with a pressing anxiety about the world's condition and a deep technological unease," explains artist Nika Kupyrova.

White Dogs and Surreal Objects

A central work in the exhibition is a series of four large-format image panels featuring white dogs—motifs that originally circulated online. The cryptic titles, such as *C696879b62f37ed3d7f7d0204c0d49b8.jpg*, refer to the original file names.

In collaboration with her mother, classically trained painter Irina Kupyrova, the artist transforms these digital files into multilayered, tactile artworks. On painted wooden panels, dog portraits merge with collages of shells, googly eyes, and surreal objects like a cast hand acting as a shoehorn.

These assemblages draw with irony from the visual worlds of naturalism and horror. The white dogs appear as markers of altered consciousness—reminiscent of transitions between sleep and wakefulness or reality and simulation. In this liminal space, boundaries between the organic and artificial dissolve.

Between Sleep and Simulation

The metal sculpture *Alectrona*, a stylized eye, symbolizes awakening from a half-sleep—referencing the Greek goddess of the dawn. Nearby, a sunset wallpaper suggests another transitional state: between day and night, reality and imagination. The wallpaper condenses into an atmospheric "image cloud." Kupyrova

translates originally digital “poor images”—low-resolution visuals typical of the internet—into a pseudo-analogue screen-printed aesthetic.

The eponymous video work *Simulacra* brings these themes together. In a dystopian-fantastic setting, the animated avatars Eidolon and Orphe—hybrid beings of myth, code, and body—meet. Sound artist Ai fen creates an eerie acoustic space, reinforcing the idea of a sentient, animistic digital realm.

Tactile Aesthetics Over AI-Generated Images

Simulacra invites visitors on an expedition into a dense network of references—from ancient myth to internet memes to posthumanist theory. The lines between what we perceive as real or fictional are increasingly fluid—a phenomenon intensified by images generated through deep-learning models.

“Kupyrova consciously avoids the use of AI-generated images, instead opting for tactile aesthetics. In a world oversaturated with visual stimuli, the artist questions the status of the original, the perception of reality, and the significance of images in a simulation-infused present,” says Lentos director Hemma Schmutz.

Exhibition Duration & Program Highlights

Simulacra is on view at the Lentos Kunstmuseum Linz until August 17. A diverse accompanying program offers opportunities to meet the artist in conversation with art historian Denise Sumi or to create paper-mâché dream creatures with the family.

Biographie

Nika Kupyrova

*1985 in Kyiv, Ukraine

living and working in Vienna and Prague

Education:

2013 – 2016 University of Applied Arts in Vienna / MA TransArts — Transdisciplinary art

2004 – 2008 Edinburgh College of Art / BA Painting

2007 Iceland University of the Arts / Department of Fine Arts

Selected solo exhibitions:

2025 *Simulacra*, Lentos Kunstmuseum Linz, Austria

2024 *Fake Fur*, RAVNIKAR, Ljubljana

2022 *Woman in Green*, Bildraum 07, Vienna

2021 *Yaekahngai*, Kunstraum Lakeside, Klagenfurt

2020 *A difficult weekend*, hoast, Vienna

2018 *No More Mr Nice Guy*, Fait Gallery, Brno

2018 *White Honey*, Galerie 35m2, Prague

2018 *Adventure, fantasy, mystery, action*, Wien Museum MUSA

2018 *Otis Rem*, Tomas Umrian Contemporary, Bratislava

2017 *Otis Rem*, das weisse haus, Vienna

2012 *Mud Cake*, Lust Gallery, Vienna

2011 *Earwax*, MeetFactory, Prague

2010 *Earwax*, Sotheby's Artist Quarterly, Vienna

2009 *Fish Fingers*, lothringer13/laden, Munich

Selected group exhibitions:

2024 *20 Jahre Kardinal König Kunstpreis*, Lentos Kunstmuseum, Linz

2024 *ETC. / Selling Out*, Maribor Art Gallery, Maribor

2023 *Boundaries: Travel*, Ladislav Sutnar Gallery, Pilsen

2023 *No time to have you lurking*, Bistro 21, Leipzig

2023 *Uncanny Valley*, PRÁM Studio, Prague

2022 *Finding Forte*, designforum Wien, Vienna

2022 *Viktor Frešo, Marek Kvetan, Nika Kupyrova*, DOT. Gallery, Bratislava

2021 *The Meek One*, Karlin Studios, Prague

2021 *Hi, How Are You?*, Cerquone Gallery, Madrid

2021 *Talking Hands*, Jan Koniarek Gallery, Trnava

2021 *mud-mother#1 Bathybius haeckelii*, new jörg, Vienna

2020 *Cruel Summer Camp*, EXILE, Vienna

2020 *Anything Goes pt. 2.: Techno ed.*, White&Weiss, Bratislava

2020 *Otherworldly*, RAVNIKAR, Ljubljana

2019 *Über das Neue*, Belvedere 21, Vienna

2019 *ECHO — the Fait Gallery collection*, Fait Gallery, Brno

2018 *UNFRAMED/FRAMED*, Galerie Raum mit Licht, Vienna

2018 *“,“,“ — Footnotes*, WIELS Contemporary Art Centre, Brussels

2017 *A ditto, ditto device*, Angewandte Interdisciplinary Lab, Vienna

2017 *Urgent Perspectives #1*, Projektraum Viktor Bucher, Vienna

2017 *Sonata for Four Hands*, Berlínskej model, Prague

2016 *Rethinking*, das weisse haus, Vienna

2016 *Juxtapositionen*, Salon für Kunstbuch, Vienna
2015 *Re-*, Kunstraum Niederoesterreich, Vienna
2015 *WYSINWYS*, Tomas Umrian Contemporary, Bratislava
2015 *When Sophisticated People Think They Are Having Fun*, FLUC, Vienna
2013 *On the Road*, NÖ Dokumentationszentrum für Moderne Kunst, St. Pölten
2013 *Global Locals*, National Library of Technology, Prague
2013 *Little bit of history deleting...*, GPLcontemporary, Vienna
2011 *Factory Installed*, Mattress Factory, Pittsburgh
2011 *Über Dinge*, Kunsthaus Mürz, Mürzzuschlag

Festivals and biennials:

2021 *The Art of Appreciating*, Jindřich Chalupecký Society, Prague
2019 *UKYA City Takeover Nottingham*, Bonington Gallery, Nottingham
2016 *A Character's Coat*, VIENNA DESIGN WEEK, Alte Post, Vienna
2012 *Inconclusive Analysis*, 3rd Moscow Biennale of Young Art, NCCA Moscow
2010 *Globe(E)scape*, 2nd Moscow Biennale of Young Art, Design Center Artplay
2010 *Triennale Linz 1.0.*, Lentos Kunstmuseum Linz

Art fair participations:

2024 NADA Miami 2024 solo presentation
2024 *OPENING*, Curated Programme at ARCO Lisboa
2022 *ZONE1 solo positions*, viennacontemporary art fair
2022 *Liste Showtime Online*, Liste Art Fair Basel

Prizes and scholarships:

2023 *Kardinal König Kunstpreis*, Salzburg
2023 *City of Vienna Promotion Award for Fine Arts*
2019 *Startstipendium Fine Arts*, Federal Chancellery of Austria
2017 *Erste Bank ExtraValue Art Award*, das weisse haus, Vienna
2017 *Kapsch Preis* — nomination, MUMOK, Vienna
2011 *Disaronno Photo Award*, International Talent Support, Triest

Residencies:

2017 *Theory of Leaves*, residency by E.M.M.A., Ancona
2016 ARTos Cultural and Research Foundation, Nicosia
2010 Egon Schiele Art Centre, Český Krumlov
2009 lothringer13/laden, Munich

Curatorial:

2024 *4 whales in a soft sponge*, Medium Gallery, Bratislava
2023 *Giulia Cacciuttolo: Rituals*, Pragovka Gallery, Prague
2022 *Dispatches from a Troubled City*, Wien Museum MUSA
2022 *The Somnambulists*, Kunstverein Eisenstadt, Eisenstadt
2019 *Your delicious dreaming*, Salon Goldschlag, Vienna
2019 *Hydrobutter*, GOMO Art Space, Vienna
2017 *Neverwhere*, Galerie Ferdinanda Baumann, Prague
2017 *Working Knowledge*, Academy of the Performing Arts Prague
2016 *Working Knowledge*, Galerie IG Bildende Kunst, Vienna

Program

Events

Opening

Thu 05.06., 7:00pm

Welcome: Hemma Schmutz (Director of Lentos), Conversation: Nika Kupyrova (Artist), Denise Sumi (Art Historian and Author)

Lecture Performance

Thu 19.06.

Sat 21.06.

Sun 22.06., each from 3:00–4:00pm

A lecture performance staged within the exhibition Simulacra, as part of the Monologue Festival.

What is real? Is reality an effect? Are the decisions I make truly my own?

With Gemma Vannuzzi, Jan Nikolaus Cerha

Stage accompaniment: Martin Mader

Set design: Bianca Stummer

In cooperation with Landestheater Linz

Information and tickets at landestheater-linz.at

Guided Tours

Artist Talk

Thu 26.06., 7:00–8:00 PM

Art historian and author Denise Sumi in conversation with artist Nika Kupyrova about the exhibition.

Cost: museum admission only, registration requested*

Public Guided Tour

Thu 17.07., 7:00–8:00 PM

Cost: € 4 plus museum admission, registration requested*

Tour with Sign Language Interpretation

Sat 09.08., 4:00–5:00 PM

Free admission for deaf visitors

***Registration/Information: +43 732 7070 3614 or online at lentos.at**

Children & Families

Create Dream Creatures from Papier-Mâché!

Sun 13.07., 10:00 AM–1:00 PM

Together with artist Nika Kupyrova and inspired by her exhibition, we'll create objects, avatars, and beings from papier-mâché. These will become "ambassadors" between different realities, fictions, and dreams.

With Nika Kupyrova (artist) and Cécile Belmont (artist and art educator)

Duration: 3 hours incl. break

Family price: € 7 for the first person, € 3 for each additional person

Registration required*, max. 20 participants

Baby Tour**Tue 12.08., 10:30–11:30 AM**

A relaxed guided tour through the exhibition, specifically designed for visitors with babies.

Cost: museum admission only

***Registration/Information: +43 732 7070 3614 or online at lentos.at**

Schools**Research Workshop: Dream Worlds and Avatars****From grade 8 onward**

What does it mean to wander between the worlds of the internet, our own dreams, and different (sometimes unsettling) realities? What kind of “avatars” do we need to navigate these spaces?

Duration options: 1 hour, 1.5 hours, or 2 hours

Cost: € 4, € 5, or € 6 per student (depending on duration)

Registration/Information for the school program: kunstvermittlung@lentos.at or +43 732 7070 3614

Factsheet

Exhibition title	Nika Kupyrova Simulacra
Exhibition periode	06.06. to 17.08.25
Venue	Lower Level, Lentos Kunstmuseum Linz
Opening hours	Tue–Sun 10am–6pm, Thu 10am–8pm Closed on Mondays Check www.lentos.at for exceptions.
Admission	€11 regular / €9 or €5 reduced
Press contact	Clarissa Ujvari-Hanten M: +43 650 48 49 706 T: +43 (0)732 7070-3603 clarissa.ujvari-hanten@lentos.at Ernst-Koref-Promenade 1 4020 Linz
Web & Social Media	www.lentos.at facebook.com/lentoslinz instagram.com/lentoslinz

Press Images

Images and installation views available for download at: <https://www.lentos.at/museum/presse/pressekit-nika-kupyrova-simulacra-06-06-bis-17-08-25>. Royalty-free use permitted only for current exhibition coverage with image credits.