



## MYRIAM THYES – PRETTY SMART

### SMART PANTHEON

It starts with the anatomical model of a human being – a digital simulation of it. This can be rotated and tilted in all directions with the fingers on the screen of a smartphone. After just a few flips, this image on the display makes way, by means of cross-fading and zooming in, for a new, double-handed smartphone display, which is strangely completely black and remains so before another smartphone with a black screen lights up there, which, completely unaffected by the tilting movements of the framing mobile phone, floats in the middle of the image. Then two hands appear there too, holding the smartphone and tapping and wiping on the screen. The camera zooms in on them, the framing smartphone display disappears. This continues.

And goes on in variations seemingly endlessly. And although the events remain predictable in principle, it is difficult to detach oneself from the film monitor – the spatial depth pull is too great and the curiosity about the small variations and deviations in the next smartphone in the picture is too great. All the while we hear strange noises, completely detached from the cinematic images: A clack, a knock, a clap, grinding and rubbing. They are sounds and noises that can be produced with our hands and fingers alone.

It is beautiful to see so many different hands, youthful hands, childlike and old, delicate and sinewy; hands of different skin colours, with tattoos and bracelets, sticking out of cuffs and those with perfectly manicured, long fingernails (and we realise how quickly the sight of hands makes us imagine a whole person).

At one point, in the middle of the film, the image tips into negative – and this point turns out to be a turning point from which the acting persons, i.e. the images of their hands and phones, appear with other movements and in a different order and merge into one another until we finally end up back with the anatomical model rotating on the display.

It often looks as if the hands tapping away on the screen from the outside are being met by other hands from the inside. Simulating a touch, one that is not just the solipsistic pawing of a small, cold glass pla-

te, but a real touch from fingertip to fingertip. The artist herself makes us think of Michelangelo's ceiling fresco of the Creation of Adam in the Sistine Chapel, even if the title of her video conjures up another Roman building, a more religiously overarching one, if you will, consecrated to all the gods at once, perhaps including those technological idols we worship today.

## SMART PANTHEON RGB

A logical continuation of Smart Pantheon and Smart Tunnel is the work Smart Pantheon RGB: It exists as an interactive video work and can therefore only be experienced with the necessary technical equipment, i.e. a digital end device with a touch screen, either a tablet or a smartphone. Where the mode of presentation and the theme finally become inextricably intertwined with the medium. Because when you see a photo of a smartphone with operating hands on your individual touchscreen, nothing happens at first. Only when you perform the so-called zoom gesture, i.e. pulling apart the screen surface with two fingers, does the video start to move a little. However, it then remains as a still image as soon as you stop moving again.

At first, what usually happens is that this movement is triggered on a screen, a zooming in on the object of the image, then the next image appears behind it. Although in the end nothing else happens than in the video loop of Smart Pantheon, the work gives the impression that we, as viewers and users in personal union, can independently and single-handedly penetrate deeper and deeper layers of image and meaning. Even if it quickly becomes clear that behind each display window only another one awaits us.

In the two previous works, Myriam Thyes has already removed the colour from the fiercely colourful, colour-saturated smartphone image storm. Now, in Smart Pantheon RGB, it remains basically the same, only this time she has delicately coloured the black and white images in monochrome. On the one hand, this is reminiscent of the technique of viraging in early silent films, and on the other hand, the use of the three colours blue, red and green (each in quite pale variations) is reminiscent of the three colours integrated into the title, from which screens compose all others: Red, Green & Blue.

As these coloured sequences alternate with sequences left in black and white, this not only creates an attractive visual effect that clearly separates the successive image levels from each other – this change of colour also creates a further incentive for one's own "scrolling", i.e. digging deeper through the next finger spreading movement. There is no end in sight.

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