

## Press Release

Andreas Siekmann  
*Heads*

September 15 – October 23, 2021  
Opening: Tuesday, September 14, 6–9pm  
Gallery hours: Tues.–Sat., 11am–6pm

The installation *Heads*, 2019-21, represents Andreas Siekmann's attempt to map a historical continuum by way of 47 heads made of Plasticine. The figures depicted range from the masterminds of mercantilism in the 18th century, through the Austrian national economy of the 1920s and the various schools of neoliberalism, to the current protagonists of Californian economics. Many of the heads sit on various makeshift vehicles – some on pointed, cold, spider-like prostheses and others on objects that relate to their theses. These characters are arranged in groups that depict either active connections or historical references. Siekmann attempts, through the form of the portrait or bust, to create psychograms of individuals who all too often remain abstract and invisible, while their theories, disseminated through think tanks and lobbyists, have highly real and all too often painful consequences.

Plasticine – the material selected by the artist – does not harden but remains soft and malleable. Here, Siekmann crafts caricatures that are at once playful and demystifying. The material also takes into account the animism that is often used in descriptions of the economic system as a living body, or, for example, in the metaphor of the invisible hand. Siekmann contrasts this undead hand with the results of his own handiwork.

Five of the heads, Joseph Schumpeter, Richard Thaler, Alex Pentland, Regina Dugan and Peter Thiel are highlighted by Siekmann in short, animated films in which the protagonists are depicted in metaphorical, dream-like scenes with their theories. The series of animations is purposely left open, allowing further additions in the future.

The genealogy shown by Siekmann is connected by a common belief: that all economic phenomena are based exclusively on individual decisions and motivations. It is thus the basis of behavioral economics, which dominates economic thinking today. Siekmann turns this perspective around, allowing viewers to see the originators of these concepts themselves as individuals – at eye level, so to speak.

Friedrich A. Hayek – a prominent representative of this school – wrote that the market was an information processor, as incorruptible as nature, and that government intervention would distort, even damage, that nature. While at that time – in the middle of the 20th century – a large part of economic activity was invisible and could only be assumed, today this fantasy has been realized to a certain extent by the countless sensors that now register and process all aspects of everyday life. Through the analysis of this data, an assumption of the future takes place, in which the future behavior of people (or, rather, consumers) is firmly planned. The concept of freedom, which is actually the basis of liberalism, is permanently reduced to absurdity. Thus, in neoliberal economic action, the planned economy finds its fulfillment, as whose "free" counter-design it actually understood itself to be.



Ayn Rand



Frédéric Bastiat



Peter Thiel



Paul Volcker



Klaus Schwab



Patri Friedman



John Nash



Robert M. Solow



Eugene Fama



Christine Lagarde



Raymond Kurzweil



Reed Hastings



Anthony Fisher



Sheryl Sandberg



Mark Zuckerberg



Carl Menger



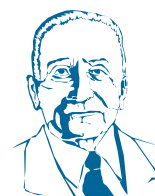
George J. Stigler



James Buchanan



Walther Eucken



Ludwig v. Mises



Ronald Coase



Milton Friedman



Jacob Rees-Mogg



Richard Thaler



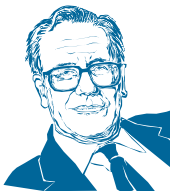
Eric Schmidt



Gary Becker



Hans H. Hoppe



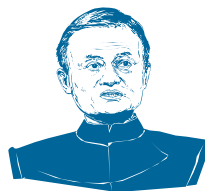
Patrick Minford



Herbert Giersch



Alexis de Tocqueville



Jack Ma



David Friedman



Hal Varian



Willian S. Jevons



Jeff Bezos



Murray Rothbard



Regina Dugan



Alex Pentland



Friedrich A. Hayek



John Williamson



Vernon L. Smith



Hernan de Soto



Joseph Schumpeter



James Tobin



Demis Hassabis



Michal Kosinski



Dan Doctoroff