

Press Release

Stars Down to Earth

Ei Arakawa, Lutz Bacher, Julie Becker, Kerstin Brätsch, Gino De Dominicis/Claudio Abate, Willem de Rooij, Stano Filko, Dan Graham, Christian Jankowski, John Miller, Christian Naujoks, Mai-Thu Perret, Emily Segal, Studio for Propositional Cinema, Sung Tieu, Andrea Toppel, Camilla Wills, and a proposition by CASE

Invited by Sung Tieu and Nicholas Tammens

October 31 – December 22, 2021
Opening Sunday, October 31, 6–9pm

Gallery hours: Tue–Sat, 11am – 6pm

Galerie Barbara Weiss is pleased to present *Stars Down to Earth*. The group exhibition brings together artistic investigations into astrology, alternative belief systems and the ways in which these pseudoscientific disciplines can colour experience, knowledge, identification, and our social interactions. The title of the exhibition is borrowed from an essay by Theodor Adorno, which uses the astrology column of the Los Angeles Times as a fulcrum for a larger analysis of normative, and ideological dynamics in mass culture. In this context, astrology is analogous to approaches of structuring interpretation or reading, the perception of the viewer, and alternative forms of identification or representation. The exhibition comprises works that touch on these themes, from the humorous to the more unsettling ways in which our egos are exaggerated, distorted and then reflected back to us.

As a system of understanding, it seems to be a matrix that persists as a deterministic form of identification while identities of all kinds are brought into contention. A determinism — derived not from society but by the contingency of a person or thing's time or place in the cosmos — provides a certainty that tempers feelings of unknowing. As the ideal introduction to small talk, a banal measure for social compatibility, or a rigid belief system, we lean into it as a language of social interaction and recognition. The Virgo, or Cancer, or Sagittarius acts a certain way, embodying traits compatible or antagonistic to the Aries, or Aquarius, or Taurus. This is a kind of ideological architecture, one in which we participate in a distorted perception of our own image. It allows us to comfort ourselves in a reality that otherwise seems uncertain.

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