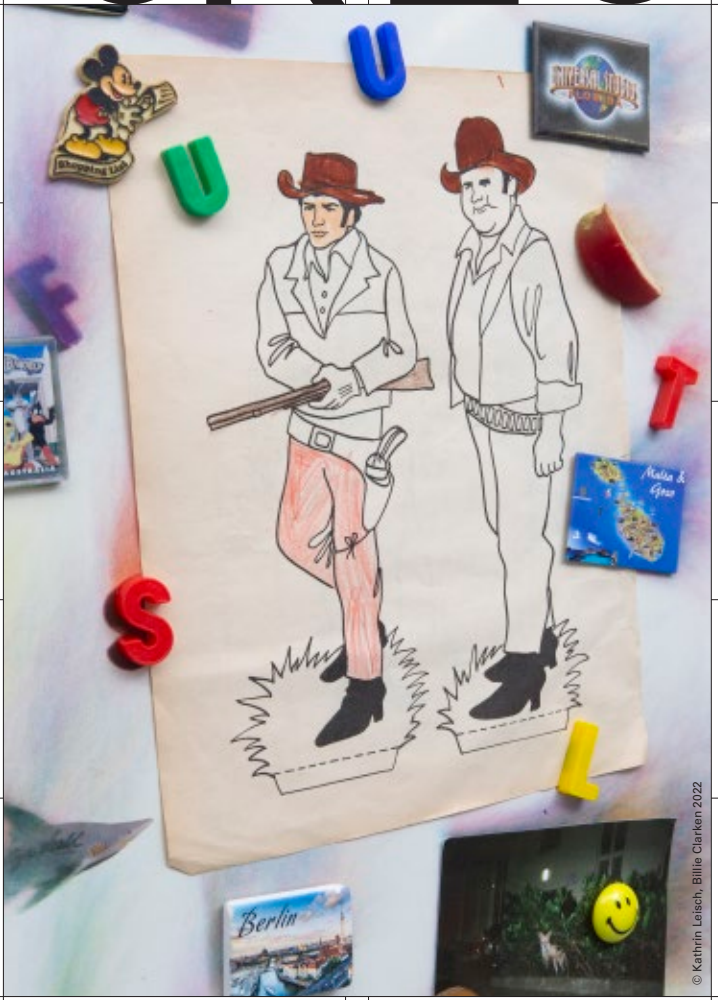


# DOCK 20

Kunstraum



## Billie Clarcken: Cancel the Reboot



Duration:  
18 Feb – 15 Mar 2022  
Opening:  
17 Feb 2022, 7 pm

Billie Clarcken's installation-based practice explores the visual politics of the contemporary culture industry. Initially a photographer, the artist shifted her focus to three-dimensional media and became known for sculptural works featuring the ghostly images of such celebrities as Anna Nicole Smith or Miley Cyrus printed on foam material.

The appropriated, reproduced, and repurposed images take on a life of their own, becoming the starting point for Clarcken's investigations of stardom and identity. As early as 1978, the French philosopher Jean Baudrillard observed a social paradigm shift towards what he described as "desert of the real": the condition whereby images ultimately become the expression of their own reality, "substituting the signs of the real for the real." In doing

so, they exert a greater influence on the physical world than their human subjects ever could. Printing the spectral pictures on large pieces of foam – images that have long haunted the boundless spheres of digital half-worlds – re-embodies them in a sense. This new physicality relocates and situates them in the specific social and spatial context of the exhibition space.

Billie Clarcken's exhibition "Cancel the Reboot" focuses on famous personalities whose likenesses still hold a prominent place in the collective media memory – years after their subjects were broken by an exploitative star system. Anna Nicole Smith, the erotic-model-turned-actress who died in 2007, was a poster child for this contradiction in terms even during her lifetime: born in the tiny Texas town of Mexia, the daughter of a young

policewoman and teenage mom in her own right epitomized the American dream with her meteoric rise from strip club dancer to style icon. Yet failure seemed built in her media narrative from the very start. Her tragic death affirmed the perpetually-attentive media world's perception that no real human being could ever sustain such a public image without losing themselves in it.

What remains is a picture of a blonde icon, a media-generated image that has been shared and reproduced millions of times and continues to circulate widely today. It shows a body that, printed on foam in Clarcken's presentation, also reads as a hollowed-out allegory of the noughties.

[www.lustenau.at/dock20](http://www.lustenau.at/dock20)



Permeability and porosity, boundaries and breaks are a recurring feature of Clarcken's preferred materials. In many cases, the items used – refrigerator doors and garden tools, for example – add aspects of their "previous lives" as utility objects to the work.

Clarcken's pieces give castaway or obsolete objects an *after-life*, transforming them into contemporary witnesses reflecting not only collective experience, but collective memories as well. For her 2021 works *Trap Door #2* (In the Memory of Others) and *Trap Door #3* (BEHIND EVERY ISSUE IS AN ADVERTISEMENT), the artist gathered discarded refrigerator doors from streets near her home in Berlin's Neukölln district. In a reference to classical panel paintings, she uses them as "windows to the world" – or, in this case, windows to the imagined, sentimental worlds of their fictitious previous owners, including jumbles of personal keepsakes, souvenirs, and postcards that appear individually collaged. Only at second glance does it become clear that neither the objects nor their histories are real.

# DOCK 20

## Informations Contact



Digital or analogue, the bulk of Billie Clarcken's artistic vocabulary (in line with what has been called the "pictorial turn") derives from Internet research, social media activity, and glossy magazines.

analyzing the very same visual artifacts that still bear witness to Lustenau's glittering bygone days as a world-class industrial town.

Billie Clarcken (\*1992 in Fairfax, Virginia, USA) lives and works in Berlin. She studied Photography and Film at the Virginia Commonwealth University in Richmond (USA) from 2011 to 2015, and was a guest student at the UdK Berlin under Monica Bonvicini in 2019.

For her first institutional solo exhibition at DOCK 20, Clarcken has chosen to work site-specifically with the local infrastructure and history of the location. She picks up images and tropes and arranges them in her system of perception – a system in which found-and-reworked objects and other ready-mades exist on a par with one-of-a-kind pieces she made herself.

The region's rapid economic transformation in the 1960s and 1970s prompted the people of Lustenau to model their surroundings after prominent examples; they built copies of the kinds of houses and gardens they knew from well-known sitcoms and Hollywood blockbusters of the day – a visual choice that lingers in the townscape, aging as erstwhile symbols of global social participation.

Exhibition (selection):  
Kunsthau Tacheles (Berlin), Aplus (Berlin), KaDeWe (Berlin), Berlin Masters, Quaid Gallery (Tampa), Cunsthau (Tampa), THEVOID315c (L.A.), Showroom Bontemps (Paris), Noho Studios (London)

The work can thus be said to focus not only on commodity aesthetics but also on the curious sideshows of globalized industrial societies and their 20th-century iconologies. Clarcken's installations involve

Constant updates on Instagram:  
[www.instagram.com/dock20\\_lustenau](http://www.instagram.com/dock20_lustenau)



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## Programme

17 Feb, 7 pm  
Opening  
Official opening and introduction to the exhibition with curator Anne Zühlke and artist Billie Clarcken. The current safety measures apply. Admission is free.

18 Mar, 6 pm  
Guided tour and apéro party  
A brief tour of the exhibition with drinks, snacks and plenty of opportunity to ask questions.

07 Apr, 6 pm  
Book presentation  
Monika Grabuschnigg:  
"Violent Delights"

09 Apr, 3 pm  
Guided tour with the curator; children's programme  
While curator Anne Zühlke is giving a tour of the exhibition, children are welcome to join Christa Bohle in her playful forays into the realms of photography and collage. For children aged 6 or older. Registration is required: [dock20@lustenau.at](mailto:dock20@lustenau.at)

14 May, 6 pm  
Closing event and artist talk

Free admission to all events with a valid exhibition ticket (4 euros / 3 euros for a reduced-price ticket; all openings are free).



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## Information and education

DOCK 20  
Kunstraum und Sammlung Hollenstein  
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+43 5577 8181 4220  
[dock20@lustenau.at](mailto:dock20@lustenau.at)  
[www.lustenau.at/dock20](http://www.lustenau.at/dock20)

Opening hours Kunstraum (art space): Thursday 2–8 pm, Friday and Saturday 2–6 pm (while the exhibition is on)

Opening hours Sammlung (collection): registration is required


Admission:  
4 euros / 3 euros for a reduced-price ticket  
Free admission to all events with a valid exhibition ticket

Education:  
School classes are welcome to make an appointment for a free visit and special tour even outside the opening hours while the exhibition is on.

For detailed information and appointments, please email [dock20@lustenau.at](mailto:dock20@lustenau.at)

Marktgemeinde **Lustenau**



 Bundesministerium  
Kunst, Kultur,  
öffentlicher Dienst und Sport