

Tentacular Thinking

09.15.-

10.21.

Stephanie
WINTER

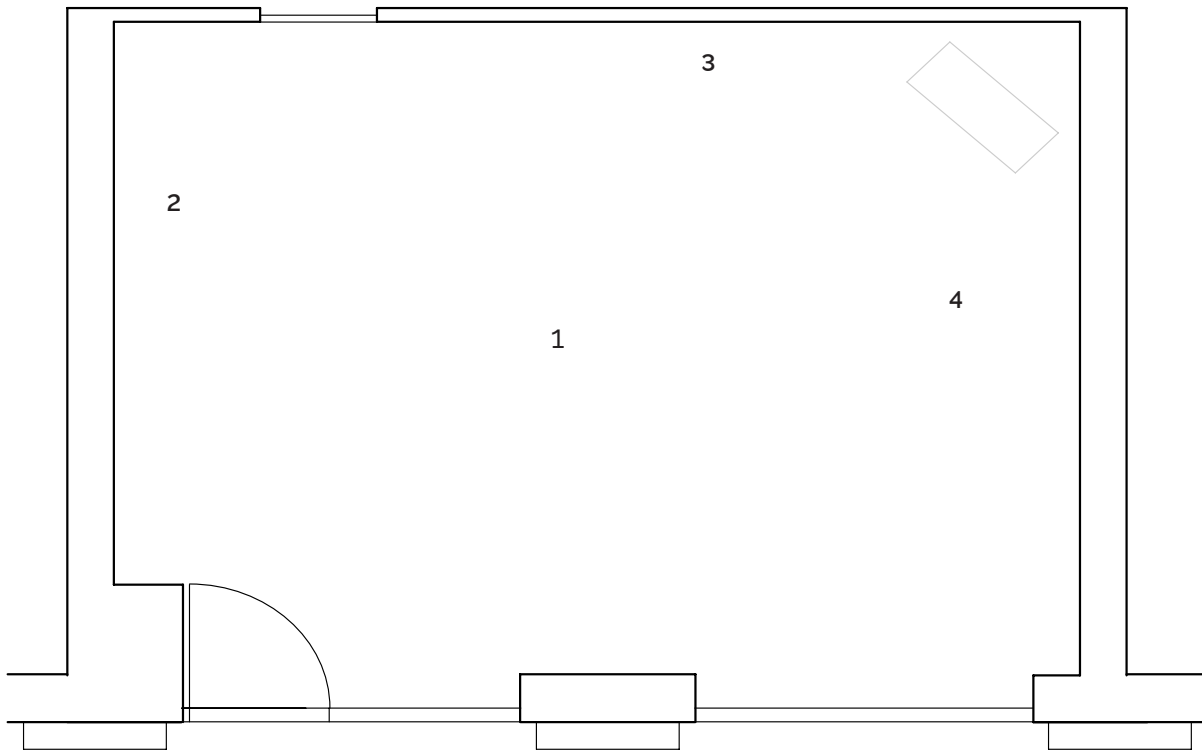
Stephanie Winter studied at the Academy of Fine Arts in Vienna and the University of the Arts in Berlin. She is an artist, director and curator. With a great affinity for the science fiction genre and critical ecofeminist approaches, Stephanie Winter & SALON HYBRID are constantly designing new fictional „bubbles“ and scenarios to experiment within, in a mixture of research, social study, artistic and psychological process. She is the founder and artistic director of SALON HYBRID, a performative office for experimental affairs operating between the fields of Fine Arts, Performance, Film & Theory. Her works have been shown at numerous international festivals and exhibitions, most recently at Kunsthau Wien, Donaukanal. In 2021, Winter initiated the art space MOTHERBOARD to collectively engage with a diverse group of human and non-human entities, such as activists, animals, artists, collaborators, dreamers, earth, fire, mud, plants, slimes, stones, and visionaries, in order to envision and activate new practices of learning and sharing, radical care, creative healing, as well as the activation of new potentials in the realm of the arts and beyond.

For her first solo exhibition in Budapest entitled *Tentacular Thinking*, Vienna-based artist and director Stephanie Winter transforms Liget Gallery into a multi-layered ritual space. Borrowing the exhibition's title from the second chapter in feminist scholar Donna Haraway's pivotal book, *Staying with the Trouble: Making Kin in the Chthulucene* (2016), Winter approaches "tentacular thinking" both figuratively and literally. Tentacles, used for sensing, grasping, and feeding, hang from the gallery's ceiling as reminders of the messy entanglements between humans and the Earth's other inhabitants. Proposing radical new alliances through our tentacular links, Haraway offers the power of storytelling as a "practice of caring and thinking."

Winter uses feminist speculative fabulation as her primary artistic method. Her immersive installation can be interpreted as a cave—referencing Plato's "Allegory of the Cave"—or as a female womb. She creates an environment where we can learn to tell our stories anew and reevaluate our histories as a species in the face of planetary ecocide. As Haraway puts it, "Human as humus has potential, if we could chop and shred human as Homo, the detumescing project of a self-making and planet-destroying CEO."

Winter's photographs and video works are driven by a multi-perspective narrative in which the artist slips into different fictional and real characters. Her self-portrait, *The Neanderthal* (2022), shows the artist as a Neanderthal woman contemplating a silver bone, referencing Ursula K. Le Guin's 1986 essay, "The Carrier Bag Theory of Fiction," and proposing a change of perspective, in which the bag, rather than the weapon, takes precedence instead of our linear, progressive, Techno-Heroic modes of establishing human history. It's an invitation to begin thinking about our existence with a vessel, container, an instrument, that serves the gathering of sustenance and stories, symbolizing the principles of community and exchange.

Through the creation of this immersive, welcoming ritual space, Winter aims to find new ways of community-building, gathering, and sharing food, knowledge and stories. The exhibition will be accompanied by a rich program of workshops and the launch of her publication *The Earth is a Glowing Pudding*, which includes glossary entries, excerpts from conversations with experts related to Winter's artistic research, and visual documentation of her performances, installations and films.



- 1 *The cave*
Site-specific mixed media installation
- 2 *The Neanderthal – Female History X (2022)*
C-print
- 3 *Gestures of care (2021)*
video, 4 min 54 sec.
- 4 *Healing hands*
ceramics