



Nataša Prošenc Stearns
Zaklinjanja



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28. 3.-25. 4. 2025



Misericorde, fotokolaž / photo collage, 90 x 50 cm



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Zaklinjanja / Incantations, fotokolaž / photo collage, 90 x 50 cm



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Zaklinjanja / Incantations, fotokolaž / photo collage, 45 x 25 cm



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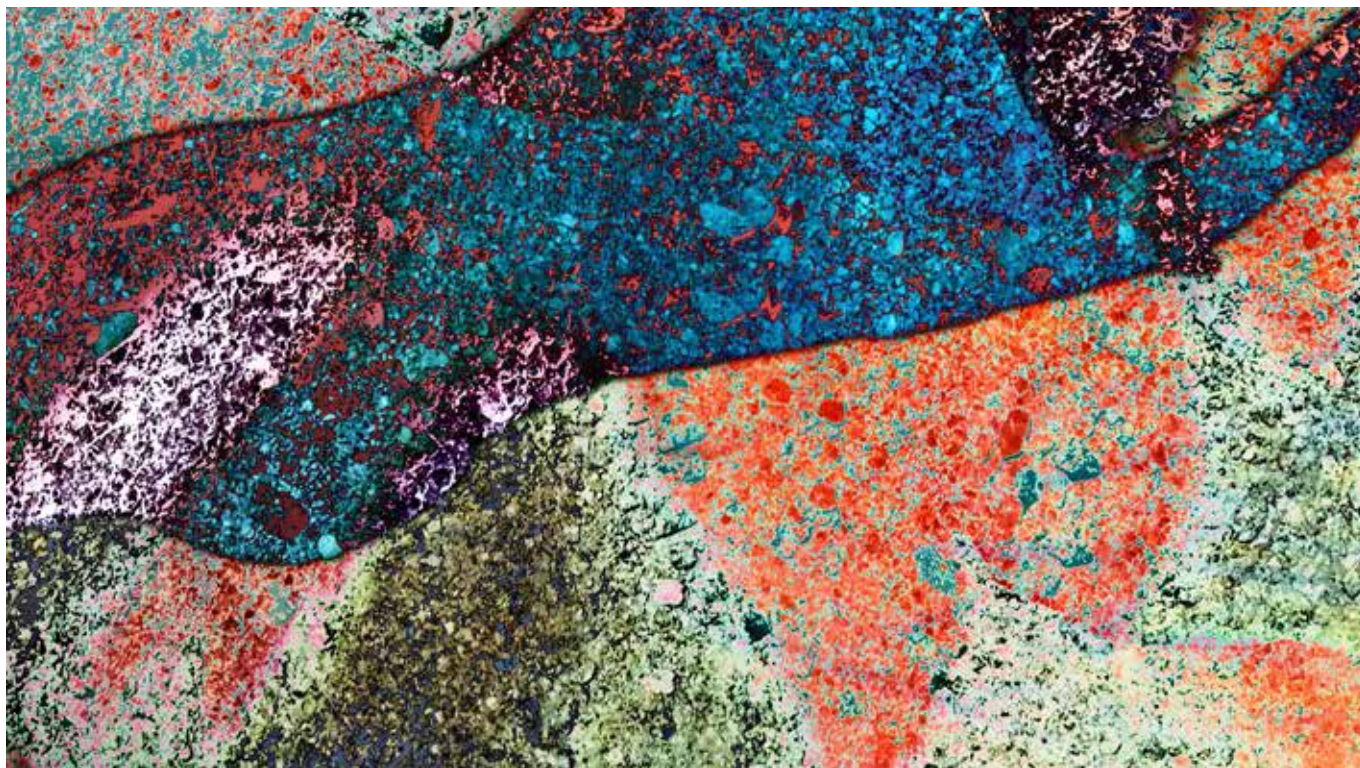
Zaklinjanja / Incantations, fotokolaž / photo collage, 45 x 25 cm



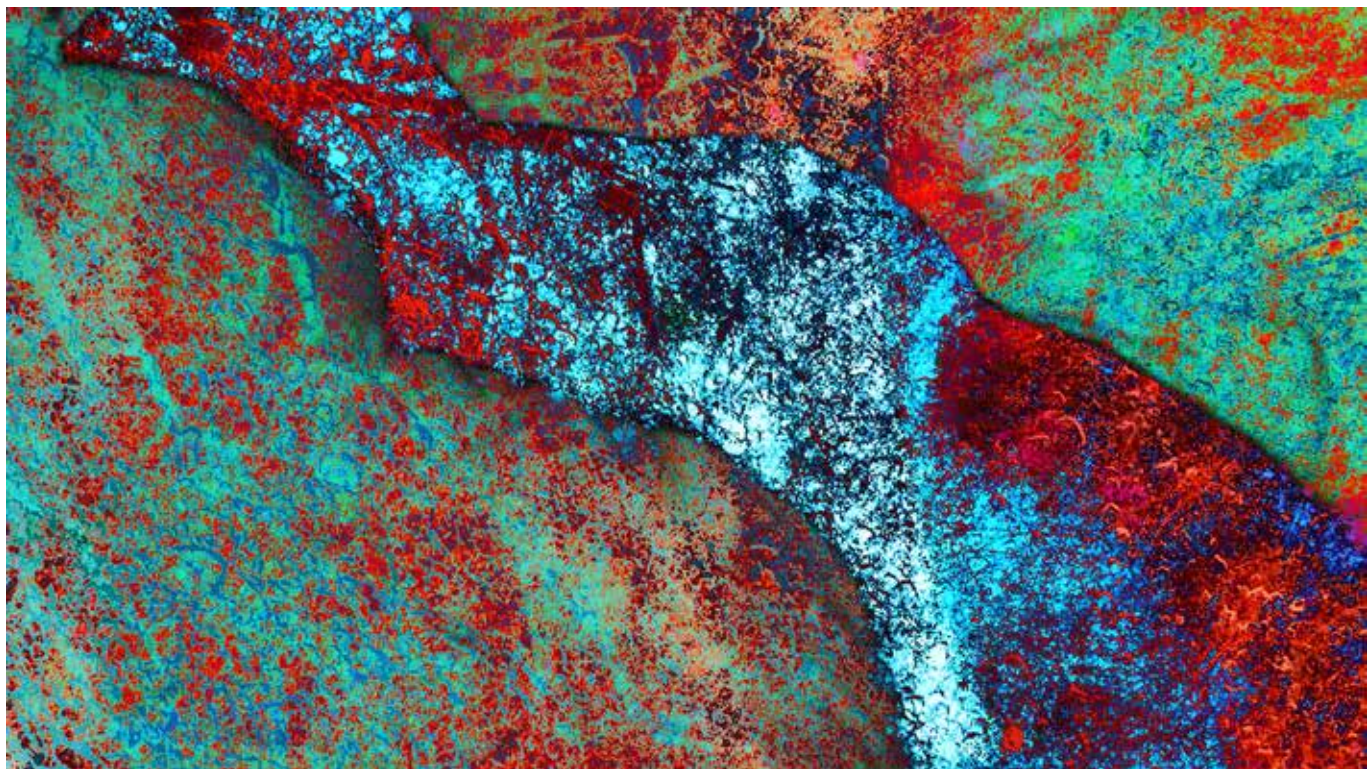
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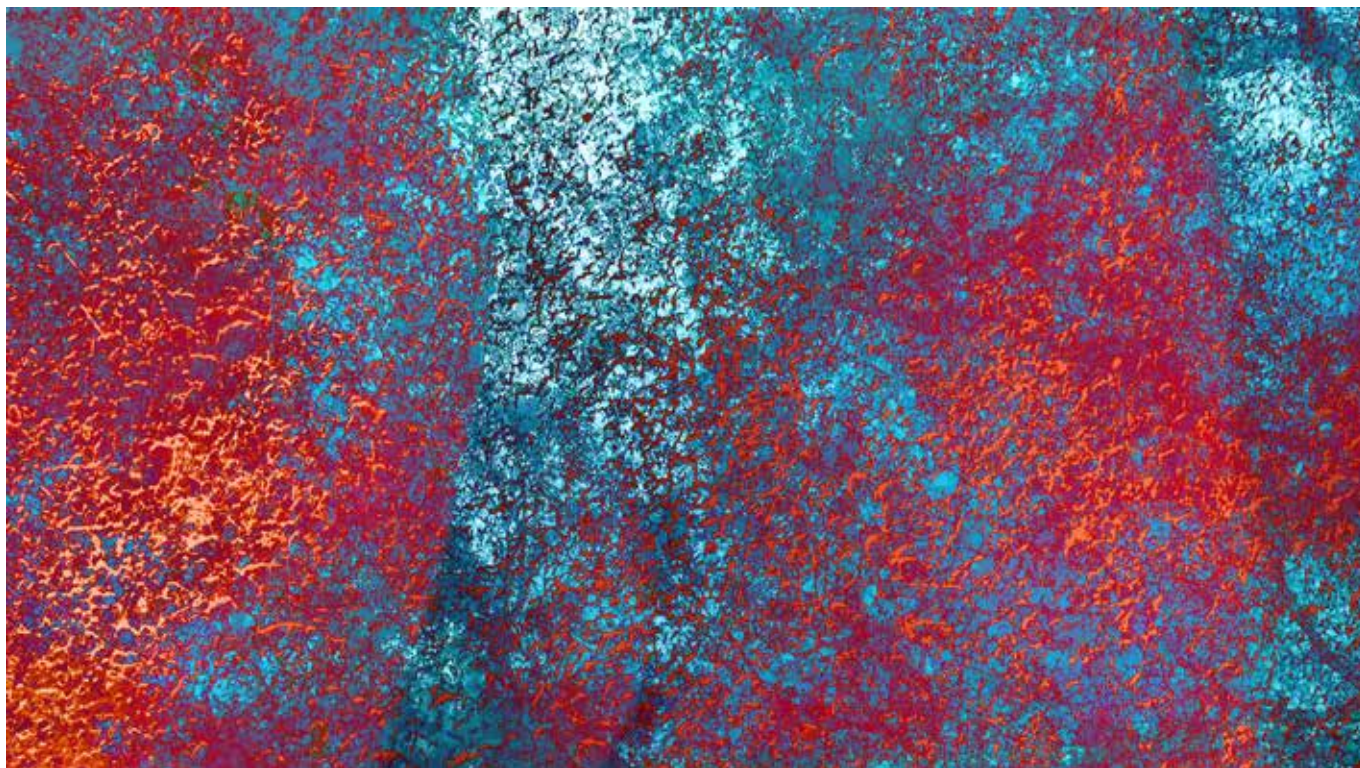
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Zaklinjanja

Nataša Prosenc Stearns je v mednarodnem prostoru uveljavljena ustvarjalka, ki v svojem delu združuje izrazne načine tradicionalnih medijev, videa in filma. Že s svojimi zgodnjimi deli je v slovensko videoumetnost vnesla izrazito čutno govorico: v središču njenega zanimanja so namreč vsebine, povezane s preučevanjem človekovega telesa, njegovih fizioloških omejitev, eksistence, z iskanjem duhovnega pomena, sozvočja med človekom in naravo ter z raziskavo kulturno pogojenih stereotipov. Njene gibljive podobe nas vabijo, da se zazremo dlje, kot lahko prodrejo naša čutila, pod površino kože, preko roba telesnih omejitev, v območje nezavednega, sanjskega. S svojim ustvarjanjem pravzaprav slavi edinstvenost človekovega fizičnega utelešenja, izjemnost posameznika, njegovo duhovno rast in kreativno moč. Po drugi strani pa nas opozarja na našo nezmožnost zaznavanja, dojetanja in razumevanja sveta izven konvencionalnih okvirov racionalnega mišljenja.

Zadnji večmedijski projekt Nataše Prosenc Stearns z naslovom *Zaklinjanja* ravno tako izhaja iz kritičnega pogleda na sodobni način življenja, v katerem moč rituala kot pomembnega povezovalnega dogodka v tradicionalnih družbah, ki ustvarja mir in harmonijo, izgublja svoj pomen. Avtorica je razstavo zasnovala kot preplet digitalnih fotokolažev in video projekcij iz dveh ciklov, *Misericorde*¹ (2024) in *Zaklinjanja* (2025), ki dajejo kljub tehnološki podstati njihovega nastanka vtis organskega.

Izhodišče gibljivih polabstraktnih podob je konstantno prepletanje naravnih elementov in ženskih teles, prikazanih v stanju preobrazbe, ki ponazarjajo današnji globalni svet, poln konfliktov, katastrof in nasprotij. Človeške figure so ponekod prikazane kot silhete, drugod kot nejasni obrisi pokrčenih teles ali njihovih delov, ki se pojavljajo v snovno neopredeljivih prostorih, nekakšni prvobitni zmesi naravnih elementov, vode, zemlje, zraka. Zgradba videov se pravzaprav nenehno transformira, saj telesa izgubljajo materialnost, postajajo eterična, se razkrajajo, prenavljajo in prehajajo v nove, amorfne, biomorfne ali vegetabilne forme, pri čemer se zdi, da naravni elementi delujejo kot snov, ki bodisi povzroča razpad teles bodisi omogoča njihovo ponovno integracijo. S plastenjem in združevanjem navidezno nezdružljivih podob v nove konstelacije namreč avtorica sugerira osnovno idejo projekta: poenotenje sil narave in človeka.

Pomembno vlogo v konceptualni zasnovi projekta imajo tudi statične podobe – fotokolaži iz serije *Zaklinjanja*, ki so ravno tako oblikovani iz fotografskih fragmentov realnosti, predvsem ženskih figur in rastlin, ki se plastijo drug na drugem ter ustvarjajo kalejdoskop imaginarnih barv in oblik.² Fotokolaži namreč predstavljajo v prostorski postavitvi nekakšen premor v fluidnem toku gibljivih slik oziroma – v prenesenem pomenu – prekinjene vezi s tradicijo in naravo.

¹ Naslov izhaja iz latinske besede *misericordia* ter pomeni odpuščanje in sočutje. V srednjem veku je bil *misericorde* [fr.] dolg in ozek nož, ki so ga uporabljali za usmrtitve smrtno ranjenih viteзов, da so jim olajšali trpljenje.

Nataša Prosenc Stearns tudi v svojih zadnjih delih reflektira položaj človeka v današnji tehnicistični družbi, še posebej individuuma brez korenin. Pri tem izhaja iz svoje lastne pozicije izseljenke, ki ustvarja med dvema različnima kulturnima sredinama, vendar se njeno razmišljanje navezuje tudi na begunce, politične in ekološke, ter vse bolj negotov položaj državljanov globalne civilne družbe. Tako njeni gibljivi kot tudi statični kolaži so večplastni in vzbujajo v gledalcu neštete miselne ter vizualne asociacije na podobe iz realnega življenja. Toda v avtoričinem osebnem izraznem jeziku zaznamujejo predvsem vseobsegajoči tok življenjske energije, ki povezuje telo in um, človeka in naravo, lokalno in globalno, preteklost in sedanost v enovito celoto. Njene meditativne podobe skupaj z besedami zaklinjanja – ki jih gre razumeti v kontekstu ljudskih verovanj – kličejo k regeneraciji družbe in ponovni vzpostavitvi ravnovesja v svetu.

Nataša Kovšca

2 V posameznih primerih so podobe sestavljene celo iz desetih plasti fotografskih posnetkov.

Incantations

Nataša Prosenc Stearns is an internationally established artist whose work combines the expressive modes of traditional media, video and film. Already her early works introduced a distinctly sensual language to Slovenian video art: central to her concern are subjects related to the study of the human body, its physiological limitations, existence, search for spiritual meaning, harmony between humans and nature, and examination of culturally determined stereotypes. Her moving images invite us to look further than our senses can penetrate, beneath the surface of the skin, beyond the limitations of the body, into the realm of the unconscious, the dreamlike. Essentially her work celebrates the uniqueness of human physical embodiment, the individuality of each person, their spiritual growth and creative power. On the other hand, it draws our attention to our inability to perceive, comprehend and understand the world beyond the conventional frameworks of rational thought.

The latest multi-media project of Nataša Prosenc Stearns, which bears the title *Incantations*, also stems from a critical perspective on today's way of life, in which the power of ritual as the important connective event in traditional societies that fosters peace and harmony, is losing its significance. The artist has conceived the exhibition as an intertwining of digital photo collages and video projections from two cycles *Misericorde*¹ (2024) and

Incantations (2025), which, despite their technological essence, convey a sense of the organic.

The starting point of the moving, semi-abstract images is the constant interweaving of natural elements and female bodies, shown in a state of transformation that alludes to today's global world full of conflicts, disasters and contradictions. Human figures are at times depicted as silhouettes, at others as indistinct outlines of contorted bodies or their fragments that appear in materially indefinable spaces, a kind of primordial mixture of natural elements, water, earth, air. In fact, the structure of the videos is constantly changing as the bodies lose their materiality, become ethereal, decompose, renew themselves and transform into new, amorphous, biomorphic or plant-like forms, whereby the natural elements seem to act as a substance that either causes the bodies to disintegrate or enables their reintegration. By layering and combining seemingly incompatible images into new constellations, the artist hints at the basic idea of the project: the unification of the forces of nature and humans.

Still images also play an important role in the concept of the project – the photo collages from the *Incantations* series, which are also formed from photographic fragments

¹ The title comes from the Latin word *misericordia*, meaning forgiveness and compassion. In the Middle Ages, a *misericorde* [Fr.] was a long and narrow knife used to execute mortally wounded knights to relieve their suffering.

of reality, predominantly female figures and plants, layered on top of each other to create a kaleidoscope of imaginary colours and shapes.² In the spatial installation, the photo collages represent a kind of pause in the fluid flow of moving images or – figuratively speaking – a broken link with tradition and nature.

In her latest works, Nataša Prosenč Stearns continues to reflect on the position of the individual in today's technocratic society, particularly on the situation of the rootless human. In doing so, she draws on her own circumstance as an expatriate working between two different cultural centres, but her reflections also relate to political and ecological refugees and the increasingly precarious position of citizens in global civil society. Both her moving and still collages are multi-layered and evoke countless mental and visual associations with real-life images in the viewer. In the artist's personal expressive language, however, they predominantly mark the all-encompassing flow of life energy that connects body and spirit, humans and nature, local and global, past and present into a unified whole. Her meditative images, together with her words of incantation – which are to be understood in the context of folklore beliefs – call for the regeneration of society and the restoration of balance in the world.

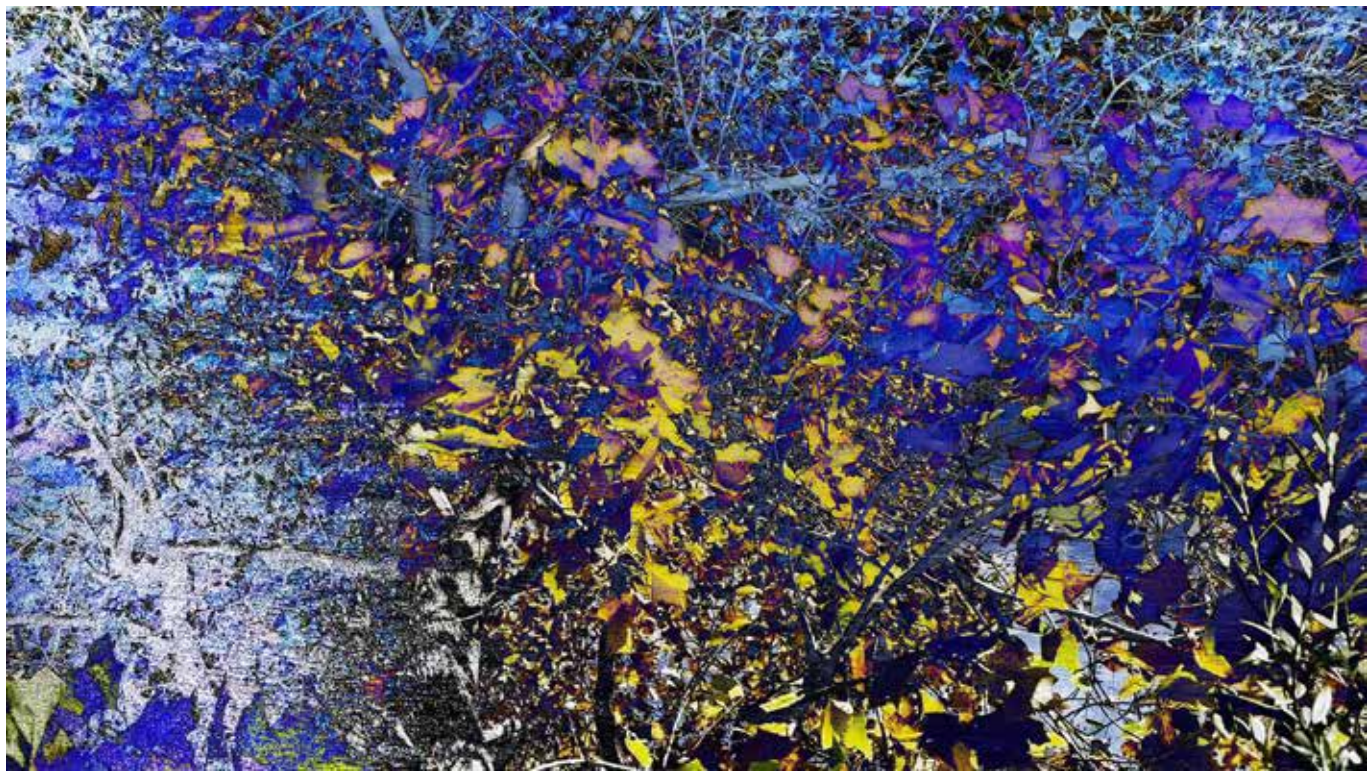
Nataša Kovšca

² In some cases, the images are made up of as many as ten layers of photographic images.

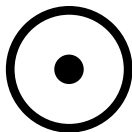
Nataša Prosenc Stearns je umetnica in režiserka, ki je diplomirala na Oddelku za oblikovanje ljubljanske ALUO. Tam je ustvarila svoje prve videe ter jim kmalu pridružila instalacije in filme. S Fulbrightovo štipendijo je odpotovala v Los Angeles, kjer je končala podiplomski študij na California Institute of the Arts. Razstavlja v slovenskih in mednarodnih galerijah in muzejih, s projektom Gladiatori je predstavljala Slovenijo na 48. Beneškem bienalu, za kar je prejela nagrado Prešernovega sklada. Prejela je še vrsto drugih štipendij in nagrad, leta 2015 pa je bila ponovno predstavljena na Beneškem bienalu v sklopu razstave Dvajset umetnikov iz Los Angelesa. Njena dela so v domačih in mednarodnih stalnih zbirkah, v arhivu Postaje DIVA na SCCA ter so del sodobne slovenske opere koda L.

Nataša Prosenc Stearns is an artist and filmmaker who graduated from the Department of Design at the Academy of Fine Arts and Design in Ljubljana. It is there that she created her first videos, and later installations and films. The Fulbright Grant took her to Los Angeles, where she obtained her MFA from the California Institute of the Arts. Her works have been showcased in Slovenian and international galleries and museums; her project Gladiators represented Slovenia at the 48th Venice Biennial and won her the Prešeren Foundation Award. She has received a series of other grants and awards, and appeared for the second time at the Venice Biennial in 2015 as part of the exhibition We Must Risk Delight, Twenty Artists from Los Angeles. Her works are included in the national and international permanent collections, in the archive of the DIVA Station at SCCA Ljubljana, and in the contemporary opera code L.

Seznam razstav, festivalov, rezidenc in nagrad na /
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