

# CABINET OF WONDERS

## GERHARD FLEKATSCH

### Introduction

For decades, the Austrian visual artist Gerhard Flekatsch has been combining and re-evaluating his experiences in medicine, music and journalism through works of visual art such as photographs, videos, sculptures, and paintings. With this exhibition, he takes us back to the era when science and art were inextricable from one another. The *Cabinet of Wonders*, that is, *Wunderkammer* is a collection of works of art, inventions, and natural phenomena, such as could be found in churches and noble houses during the 18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> centuries, and which inspire the feeling of defamiliarization in the viewer. Drawing on contemporary discoveries about the influence of art on the human brain, Gerhard Flekatsch's latest exhibition engages in an unusual dialogue with science.

The *Cabinet of Wonders* is part of the Visual Arts Week, within the Kaleidoscope of Culture, a programme arch of the *Novi Sad –European Capital of Culture* Foundation.

### Contributing artists

#### *dislocation*

**Miloš Fath** born in 2001 is a Serbian artist and designer professionally working as an assistant art/creative director. He studies video-game design at the Academy of Arts in Novi Sad and combines its interdisciplinary practices with contemporary art and installations. His inspiration lies within collectivism in face of time, experience and intimacy. [milosfath.com](http://milosfath.com)

#### *a different view*

**Stanko Gagrcin** is a multimedia artist from Serbia. Born in 1994 in Sombor. He got his Bachelor's degree in Scene Architecture, Design and Technology at Faculty of Technical Sciences of Novi Sad in 2017. Attended the Experimental Film Course at the Berlin school filmArche in 2019. Author of several interactive virtual audio-video installations and experimental films. In his virtual art installations he is exploring the aesthetical possibilities of new media digital art. [stankogagrcin.com](http://stankogagrcin.com)

#### *Mona Lisa*

**Kolja Obrovski** is a visual artist from Serbia. Born in 1979 in Novi Sad. In 2005 he graduated at the Academy of Fine arts in visual graphic, fine graphic. He is professor for fine art. [facebook.com/napadan41](https://facebook.com/napadan41)

When thinking about a reinterpretation of the historical cabinet of wonders, I soon became less interested in the inventions and curiosities. We are now used to the rapid pace of our discoveries - or perhaps not? I was much more attracted by the question what "wondering" actually is. So naturally I came to the human brain, the seat of our consciousness.

Thanks to modern medical technology, we can, to a certain extent, look inside our bodies (wonderful). Methods like functional magnetic resonance imaging, EEG or other technological inventions let us observe processes in the brain. Thus, already numerous scientific studies are dealing with the effects of art on our brain. More and more amazing discoveries are coming to light. Whether it's language learning, Alzheimer's, resilience or more complex thought processes, art can make our brains measurably fitter. This will probably surprise those who have so far thought of art only as entertainment and luxurious decoration. Yet art makes use of a comparable cerebral mechanism that we have otherwise only observed in the species-sustaining functions of food intake and reproduction.

My concept became quite complex when emotional abilities were added, such as empathy and its connection with social intelligence, or the discovery that reality is in some sense personally constructed. In fact, it was no longer possible to maintain a strict rational separation between the different domains - one was related to the other. Perhaps this is one of the miracles of life, perhaps we should think again more in correlations!

This exhibition demands your perception, demands your introspection. Every picture is created in the brain, in your brain. Do not try to understand rationally, just let the impressions in and you will discover the wonderful world of imaginations. In your brain. In your personal cabinet of wonders.

Gerhard Flekatsch, Novi Sad 2022

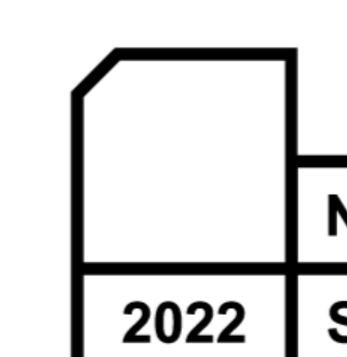
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