

## Kunsthaus Bregenz

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Austria



KUB 2018.02 | Press Release

# Mika Rottenberg

21 | 04 - 01 | 07 | 2018

### **Press Conference**

Thursday, April 19, 2018, 11 am

### **Opening Reception**

Friday, April 20, 2018, 7 pm

### **Press photos for download**

[www.kunsthhaus-bregenz.at](http://www.kunsthhaus-bregenz.at)

»I enjoy seeing how energies transform things. An irritant to a mussel turns into a pearl, milk becomes cheese.«

Mika Rottenberg



Born in Argentina and raised in Israel, artist Mika Rottenberg addresses the production processes and circulation of commodities. As early as 2007, *New York Magazine* was already including her in their list of »young masters«, since when she has been continually in demand for important international exhibitions. Following her highly acclaimed contribution *Cosmic Generator* for Skulptur Projekte 2017 in Münster, Rottenberg has also become known to a wider art audience.

Her work is neither disinterested criticism nor rigorous political documentation. Rather, she is involved in conducting a contemporary analysis by means of exaggerated distortion and caricature. Rottenberg's spaces are uncomfortable experiences. Her installations, fabricated from cardboard and found objects, revolve around videos depicting specific production processes, such as the extracting of pearls from mussel shells.

Mika Rottenberg's work narrates bizarre actions that nevertheless possess a serious background. She highlights the premises of labor, whilst simultaneously forcing the viewer into the role of a voyeur who is coerced into narrow corridors in order to view the processes of work. Her surreal scenographies lay bare absurd accumulations of commodities and the senselessness of global distribution. Many of her installations are quite humorous and are full of erotic elements.

People, mostly women, process commodities in monotonous assembly-line work. The performers, who hardly fulfill ordinary ideals of beauty, become surreal figures with supernatural powers. They are physically conspicuous too, muscular or obese, overly tall or long-nosed, they sweat and sneeze. Their bodies become both tool and raw material, enriching the things being produced, refining and transforming them.

Rottenberg portrays the capitalist world and its industrialized production with humorous and biting exaggeration. In the video *NoNoseKnows* – to be seen on the first floor at Kunsthaus Bregenz – two stages of production merge. Chinese women in anoraks sit at a long

table placing grains of sand in mussels, and subsequently open mussels to extract the precious pearls, employing just a few simple movements of the hand.

A second level shows a woman with shaggy blond hair and a long nose, a hand-operated cable connecting her vertically with the level where the women work. It is here that the scene topples into the absurd, in that the woman must be made to sneeze so that ready-made meals can be prepared perhaps for the workers' canteen. Sand creates pearls, and sneezing noodles. An interplay occurs between real and surreal work, as if nothing could be more natural.



Rottenberg creates spaces for her videos, through which visitors apparently have to squeeze, finding themselves in workshops, betting offices, gloomy chambers, and tunnels equipped with revolving doors. Darkened air locks have to be navigated in KUB too. The route through the corridors evokes one through organic interiors, almost as if the visitors' bodies are themselves negotiating the production process right through to packaging and subsequent use. We are all commodities. Capitalism does not recognize borders.

The presentation at Kunsthaus Bregenz is Mika Rottenberg's first institutional solo exhibition in Austria.

Biography  
**Mika Rottenberg**



Mika Rottenberg was born in Buenos Aires in 1976. She lives and works in New York.

Mika Rottenberg's film installations explore the seduction, magic, and desperation of our hyper-capitalistic, globally connected reality. The artist weaves documentary elements with fictional ones to create complex allegories for the living conditions experienced within our global systems.

Several solo shows have been dedicated to the artist's work in recent years: Magasin III, Stockholm (2013), Israel Museum, Jerusalem (2013), Palais de Tokyo, Paris (2016). Currently, she is presenting a new solo exhibition at the Bass Museum of Art, Miami Beach (12|2017 – 4|2018). Rottenberg's work was also showcased at the Whitney Biennial, New York, 2008. She collaborated in 2011 with artist Jon Kessler on *Seven*, a cycle of performances and installations created for Performa 11 in New York City. In 2015, her work *NoNoseKnows* was featured in the Venice Biennale as part of *All the World's Futures*. Rottenberg's most recent film *Cosmic Generator* was part of Skulptur Projekte 2017 in Münster.



In her improvised architectures frequently revolving around a video installation, the Israeli artist Mika Rottenberg explores the absurdities of modern production processes. Using found items and objects, she creates surreal scenographies that compel visitors to more closely examine mechanisms of global distribution from an absurdly voyeuristic perspective.

The publication is intended as an artist's book designed in close cooperation with Mika Rottenberg herself. Britta Peters, Angela Dimitrakaki, Fanni Fetzer, Nicole Scheyerer, and Thomas D. Trummer will be addressing the artist's distinctive approach from differing perspectives, focusing on the elucidation of the concept underlying the installations on display at Kunsthaus Bregenz.

Edited by Thomas D. Trummer, Kunsthaus Bregenz  
Graphic design: kühler und mozer, Cologne  
Essays by Angela Dimitrakaki, Fanni Fetzer, Britta Peters,  
Nicole Scheyerer, and Thomas D. Trummer  
German / English,  
Hardcover, 21 x 26.5 cm, approx. 164 pages  
Date of publication: September 2018  
Price: € 42

**KUB Online-Shop**  
[www.kunsthhaus-bregenz.at](http://www.kunsthhaus-bregenz.at)

KUB artist's edition  
**Mika Rottenberg**  
**Cosmic Generator I + II, 2018**



Exclusive special editions for Kunsthaus Bregenz are a result of close collaboration with artists and their production processes.

Mika Rottenberg's work addresses the industrial production of capitalist commodities in an enigmatic and humorous manner. In her videos and installations, she reenacts production processes, revealing their hidden eroticism and absurdity.

**Mika Rottenberg**

*Cosmic Generator I + II, 2018*

2 Stills from the video *Cosmic Generator*, 2017

Twelve color print with pigment ink on Baryte (Hahnemühle), 30 x 52. 5 cm

Limited edition of 15 copies each + 7 A.P., signed and numbered

€ 950 incl. 10 % VAT, plus postage, packaging, and custom duties

**KUB Special Edition**

*Cheese Unlimited*, 2018

As a special edition, portions of the award-winning mountain cheese from the Alma Bergsennerei Lutzenreute from the slopes above Lake Constance will be on offer for the duration of the exhibition.

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Upcoming

**KUB Billboards**

# Alicia Frankovich

## After Blue Marble

05 | 05 – 15 | 07 | 2016

## Seestraße, Bregenz

**Opening and artist talk**

on Friday, May 4, 2018, at 6 pm

at Kunsthhaus Bregenz



*Blue Marble* was a perceived image of the entirety of our earth – a photograph taken by astronauts on Apollo 17 in 1972. It remains one of the most ubiquitous images of earth.. Conversely in light of being situated amidst the anthropocene, as Geophilosopher and poet Daniel Falb asserts we are in an epoch that can never be visualised with one single image or view. I will take a series of »portraits« taken inside of Earth, using the spherical image we know from images from space, but instead building or imaging worlds within our planet out of a process of engagement with micro worlds within it – a spectrum of non-human living and active entities. Macro photographs of interior biological topographies and non-human surfaces that map specific material entanglements of humans and non-humans. These interior spaces become inversions: surfaces of forms exploring the resonances between micro-processes and macro-ecologies. Artificial hormones and antibiotics become fluid continents; the microscope becomes a telescope.

Alicia Frankovich

In 2018 four young female artists are designing a series of imagery for the seven KUB billboards.



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Kunsthaus Bregenz would like to thank its partners for their generous financial support and the cultural commitment that accompanies it.



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Rudolf Sagmeister, Katrin Wiethege,

Samantha-Josephine Kiesel

## **Edition Sales**

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## **Opening Hours**

Tuesday to Sunday 10 am – 6 pm

Thursday 10 am – 8 pm

Ticket Counter | ext. -433