



## **APOCALYPTIC CHANGES OF STATE | EXHIBITION TEXT**

BWG Gallery presents *Apocalyptic Changes of State*, a two-floored, multi-environment exhibition featuring sculptures, paintings and drawings by an outstanding international line-up of 21 artists. The show invites spectators to undertake the rites of passage needed to reveal, reflect upon and adapt to the present, apocalyptic era imposed by our species' ever accelerating change; which affects all human and non-human beings.

We are on the precipice of the current Anthropocene (Paul J. Crutzen, 2000), a quagmire of social and economic polarity, potentially an era of devastation, or a turning point in human revelation and enlightenment. Global media perpetuates divisive fear and discourse, failing to pay heed to the inner and outer apocalypses (apocalypse meaning revelation, derived from the Greek *apokálypsis*) ignited in response to the culmination of millennia of humanity's cognitive and practical evolution. As we experience revolutions in faith, folklore, paganism and spirituality, sobering changes to the environment and the natural order, globalisation bringing new understanding of culture, heritage, identity, connectivity and community, alongside increasing advancements in industry, technology and science, we are impelled to undergo a defining naturalcultural awakening.

*Apocalyptic Changes of State* displays both contemporary art's potential to act, in dialogue, as a primary conduit through which trans-binary ways of perceiving and thinking about the past, present and future can flow; and how an artist's unique vision can illuminate realities beyond the darkening veil of modernity.

A spectator's journey through the exhibition begins on the ground floor, where they enter an environment alive with Rococo rituals, therianthropy, supernatural surrealities, macrocosmic reimagining of art history, sacred geometry, totemic idols and gargantuan worms formed of recycled pulp. Many of these artworks imagine a naturalism and primitivism, in which humanity's form and industrial imprint is fantastically reintegrated into the natural order. Faced with the philosophies and interpretations imagined in artworks, a spectator can find both reliquaries of the historical or mythological, and a sanguine inspiration toward the present and future in which the old informs the new.

When ascending to the second environment, a spectator is surrounded by ancient statues and organic reclamations of geometric structures. Upon entering the space, they are immersed in futuristic dystopias and utopias. Confronted by a dominant painting depicting 21<sup>st</sup> century warfare, this harsh reality is then deconstructed by uplifting, world(re)building artworks that explore visions of naturalcultural symbiosis. Sculptural shamanic Lego masks, cybernetic exoskeletons and synthetic heterogenous forms hang, stand and float. Painted topographies of temporal, urban and rural techno-mazes are presented alongside dreamy metamorphoses of human, floral and architectural bodies. Figurative paintings, though science fictional, are uncannily familiar in their intimate yearning, action, abstraction and multi-dimensionality.

The apocalyptic changes of state imagined in this exhibition offer a hopeful openness toward the new and the previously unknown, inviting a spectator to explore humanity's divergent paths away from the Outer Apocalyptic Anthropocene, toward the healing ideals of inner apocalyptic epochs like the Chthulucene (Donna J. Haraway, 2016) and the Symbiocene (Glenn A. Albrecht, 2014).

Jack Trodd | Gallery Director | Exhibition Curator

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*Apocalyptic Changes of State* includes artworks in which what was previously concealed (and thus unknown) to a spectator, becomes apocalyptically unconcealed (and thus known) to them. An individual spectator (microcosm) may transcend their habitually and prejudicially fixed experiences of reality, by becoming immersed in the continual state of flux of the universe (macrocosm) imagined in the artworks in this exhibition. The apocalyptic changes in the mental and/or bodily states of the beings in these artworks, may be conceived to have been initiated either inside a being as a (microcosmic) 'inner apocalypse', or outside this being as a (macrocosmic) 'Outer Apocalypse'; and to involve dynamic alternations between these two apocalyptic states of being, that reveal new experiences and knowledge about microcosmic and macrocosmic being.

The resistance of 'human' beings to changes in the natural and cultural orders of being, have been undermined by artistic and scientific technologies that are increasingly allowing us to experience how processes of naturalcultural hybridisation are producing inner apocalyptic and Outer Apocalyptic contestings and transcendences of the boundaries between what constitutes a 'human' being and a 'non-human' being.

The artworks in this exhibition display the consequences of using inner apocalyptic and Outer Apocalyptic experiences, to undertake sublime contestings and transcendences of the 'outer limits' of the mental and bodily existences of 'human' beings and 'non-human' beings, for example by imagining *trans*-binary ('hybrid') transcendences-without-abolition/assimilation of the *binary* distinctions imposed between the minds and/or bodies of 'human', 'animal', 'vegetable' and 'mineral' beings; microcosms and macrocosms; older technologies (like painting and sculpture) and new technologies (such as analytic-synthetic biotechnologies and AI); and utopian and dystopian realities.

By constituting openings toward the new and the previously unknown, the artworks in this exhibition impel spectators to undertake rites of passage betwixt and between the wounding and dis-easing 'normality' of the natural and cultural wasteland called the Anthropocene; and the healing 'paranormalities' of the naturalcultural realities of other epochs like the Symbiocene and the Chthulucene.

Stephen Baycroft | Writer | Philosopher