

# MIRRORS / MIRAGES

5 June - 10 July 2021

Galerie Ron Mandos is proud to introduce *Mirrors / Mirages*, an exhibition that delves into the ability of light to both reflect and refract reality. The works by Lieven Hendriks, James Turrell, Ann Veronica Janssens, Brigitte Kowanz, Iván Navarro, Troika, Sarah van Sonsbeeck, and Jonny Niesche show how light is both generated, dispersed and obscured. Through apertures and mirrors we are invited into worlds that intertwine the material and the virtual, the inner and the outer self. As these worlds converge, our understanding of reality begins to shift.

In the paintings of Lieven Hendriks (NL, 1970), prisms and other magical reflections create mirage-like visuals that capture a deep urgency to see something. Like the desert Fata Morgana, Hendriks's works are driven by desire and imagination - a form of optical illusion that since antiquity has been fundamental to the visual arts. From the renaissance to present day, artists have



James Turrell, *Howdy Doody (Magnatron series)*, Installation, Television, Room variable, 100 cm depth, 2000



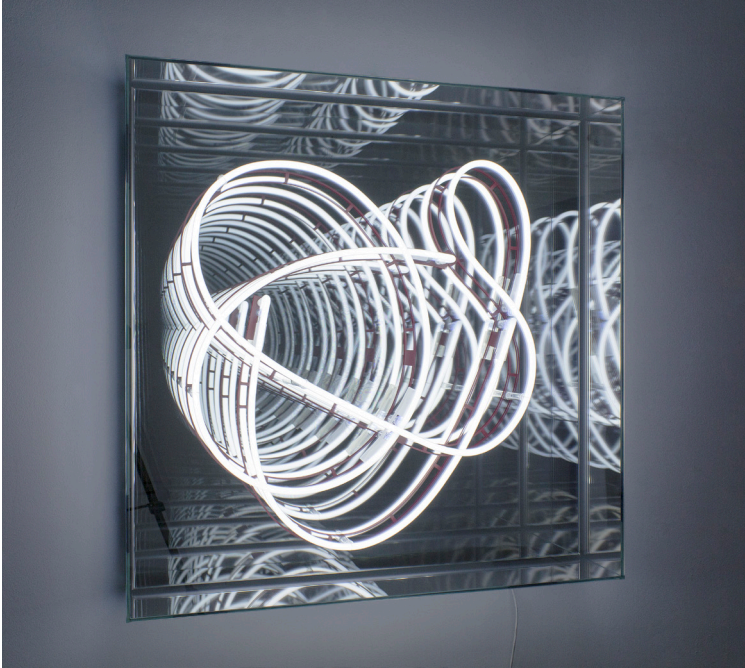
Lieven Hendriks, *Mirage #13 (Prism series)*, Acrylics on linen, 140 x 115 cm, 2021

contemplated whether one should hold a mirror to nature, or to represent it the way they wished to see it.

Whilst historically, light and its effects have played both subject and muse, the work of James Turrell (USA, 1943) uses light as medium. Light, the immaterial and ephemeral, is granted a sense of form and solidity. In *Howdy Doody (Magnatron)*, this pioneer of light art has made what appears to be a television, but on further inspection the work opens into a deep space filled with oscillating light. This subversion of our sense of light and space is echoed in the work of Jonny Niesche (AU, 1972), whose painting-objects become actual conversation pieces as they engage both viewer and environment. Likewise, the *Magic Mirror* by Ann Veronica Janssens (BE, 1956) functions as a portal opening up into a magical universe of blue.

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Brigitte Kowanz, *Treaty of Amsterdam 02.10.1997*, Neon, Mirror, 90 x 90 x 19 cm, 2017



Troika, *Borrowed Light*, Acrylic case, Photographic film, 45 x 35 x 7,5 cm, 2021

In the work of Brigitte Kowanz (AT, 1957), light's connection to color is severed. Instead, opting to use an obliterative white. Here, light and its ability to carry information is central to her practice. Within her reflective spaces, our sense of orientation is warped, and we are brought into a limbo between a material and immaterial reality that feels all too familiar in today's digitally saturated world. Similarly, Iván Navarro (CL, 1972) has created uncanny and infinite spacial constellations. Within *Mirage*, Navarro has formed a miniature black hole where everything seems to collapse into oblivion and danger lies in wait.

Within the objects of artist collective Troika - Eva Rucki (DE, 1976), Conny Freyer (DE, 1976) and Sebastien Noel (FR, 1977) - lies a phantasmagoric spectrum of colors. These infinite, almost liquid spectrums display the same vibrance of an endless loop of sunset and sunrise. The sunset is arguably the most extensive and ubiquitously photographed natural phenomenon. Here, Troika takes an interest in our collective longing to freeze-frame and capture this perpetually fleeting moment. Meanwhile, Sarah van Sonsbeeck's (NL, 1976) light installation tantalizes us with the possibility that we might be able to hold on to this blissful moment. Though, who's to say how long we can cling to this beautiful fiction?