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“Capitalist Melancholia” at HALLE 14 – Centre for Contemporary Art, Leipzig

by [mousse](#)

July 26~2016



HALLE 14 – Centre for Contemporary Art opens its new group exhibition “Capitalist Melancholia” as part of the Gallery Tour of SpinnereiGalleries.

Ten artistic positions and a symposium/performance take a closer look at the current phenomenon of social, economic, and technological acceleration and exhaustion, exploring the theme of 21st century melancholy.

Participating artists: Gregory Barsamian, Stefan Brüggemann, Anetta Mona Chisa & Lucia Tkacova, CHTO, Jeannette Ehlers, Famed, Rumiko Hagiwara, David Maisel, Álvaro Martínez Alonso, Guido van der Werve.

The degree of individual and collective, spiritual, ecological, and economic exhaustion and burnout we are experiencing today has led to a unique sort of 21st century melancholy. This is the result of an inability to differentiate between economics and politics. Eliminating the public sector, deregulating markets, and

significant cuts in social security have been seen as economic panaceas for decades. And when markets are deregulated, life is deregulated as well. An economy of desires running on empty serves as the motor leading to an exhaustion of life and squandering of resources. The exploitation of the earth, warming of the atmosphere, overpopulation, and the far-reaching consequences of the “New World Disorder”, such as hunger, poverty, waves of refugees, civil wars, and terrorism, are manifestly unstoppable. While the present continues to hyperventilate, shaping the future and the course of history has become something inconceivable.

For Sigmund Freud, the “deep and painful malaise” of melancholy is characterized by a “withdrawal of interest in the external world” and “loss of the capacity to love.” During the Romantic period, the pensive wistfulness and exuberant idealism of the melancholic were still seen as a divine madness common in people doing creative work. The artworks on display at the exhibition and the symposium/performance “A Government of Times” invite us to pause for a moment, reorient ourselves, and reflect on new perspectives, raising questions about political fantasy and a different form of acceleration—an experimental, navigational process where we can discover a universe of possibilities.

Curated by Michael Arzt, François Cusset, Camille de Toledo

[at HALLE 14 – Centre for Contemporary Art, Leipzig](#)
until 7 August 2016

Above, bottom – Anetta Mona Chisa & Lucia Tkacova, *Invisibility Cloak*, 2014



CHTO, *The Battle of Past and Present*, 2016



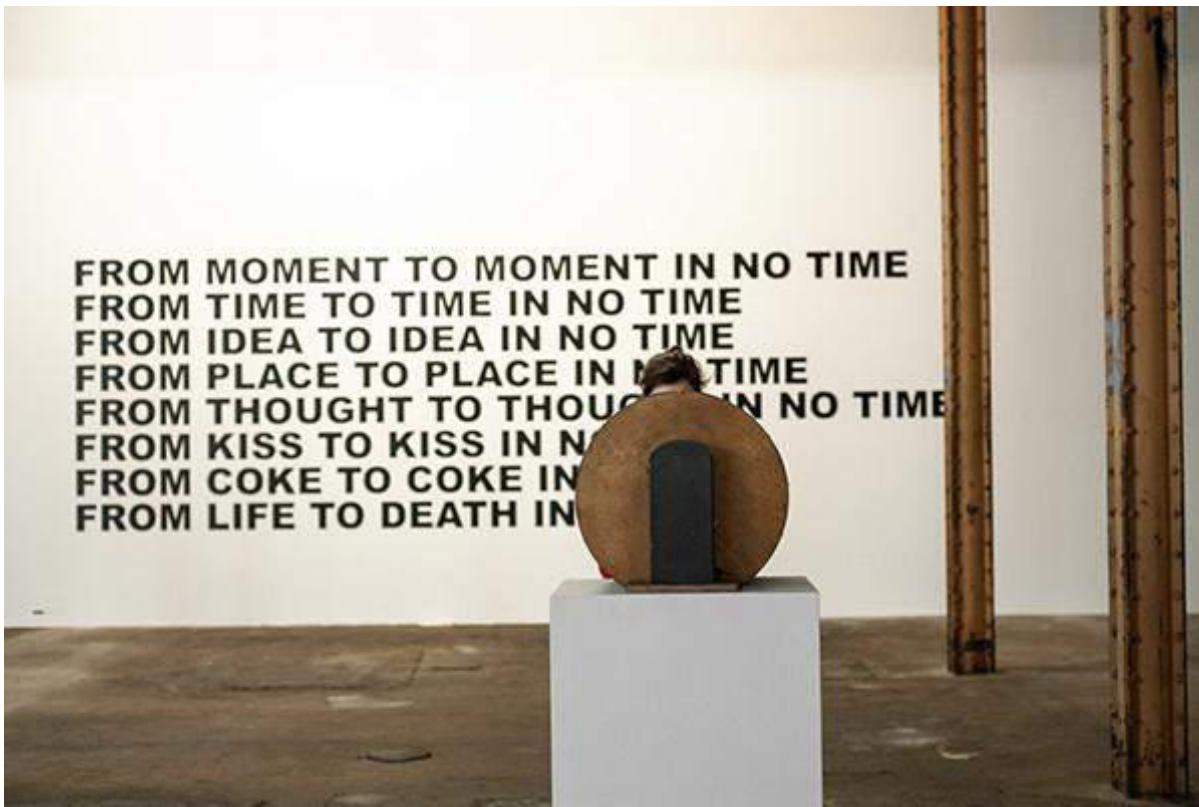
Famed, *Free Your Soul*, 2016

**TO BE POLITICAL
IT HAS TO LOOK
NICE**

Stefan Brüggemann, *to be political it has to look nice*, 2003



Gregory Barsamian, *The Runner*, 2008



Stefan Brüggemann, *time*, 2014

“Capitalist Melancholia” installation views at HALLE 14 – Centre for Contemporary Art, Leipzig, 2016

Photo: © Walther Le Kon

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