

Event Horizon

Artist: Stoyan Dechev

Opening exhibition: Leipzig, 18th May 2019

Anca Poterasu Gallery Leipzig

Text by curator Lavínia Diniz Freitas

Venice, 6th May 2019

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Stoyan Dechev's 'Event Horizon' (2019) explores the inherent ambiguities and metaphorical quality of clouds, their imagery repetition since antiquity and their correspondence to other natural phenomena. Drawing parallels with science and belief systems, the sculpture unveils the relationship between the visible and the immaterial around us, providing us with a chance to consider the limits of our knowledge and probe the origin of the myths' existence.

Set in an enclosed room, 'Event Horizon' is a towering cloud in a solid state which seemingly hovers above five thinly spiked lightning bolts. Its generous scale combined with our inability to see the work as a whole renders the space and the viewer a sense of littleness or totality, both senses of wonder.

Throughout history, the ever-evolving natural phenomenon of clouds formation, a condensation of millions of water droplets formed by rising warm air, serves as a backdrop for poetical inspiration, contemplation and our scientific exploration.

It was in Venice that Tintoretto, Canaletto and Guardi started to embrace clouds as solid forms, either involving biblical or mythical figures in heavenly settings or interweaving with earthly scenes. In many polytheistic and monotheistic religions, the highest of Gods stands on clouds tenaciously holding a thunderbolt, separating them from all the other deities. Clouds were and still are for many individuals the point of contact between earth and heaven, between matter and spirit.

Mimicking nature where there is never a finalised state of cloud configurations, an ever-changing "system of systems of codes" accompanies human evolution and its countless associations with clouds.

The Big Data advent has empowered the metaphor of clouds to unfold toward even bigger ambitions. New 'clouds' of 'information' consisting of digital data have become the memory or, one may say, the brain of today's contemporary society. They host and connect seemingly our knowledge and lives in ephemeral, apparently boundless and perpetual spaces.

Remarkably, these newest clouds associations maintain their close affinity to human processes sustaining their influential historical correlation with our quotidian pursuits.

The relatively light sculpture, cast in aluminium and polished inox, blends analysis of spatial and mathematical concepts including manipulation of complex forms of mass with the work's contemplative attributes. Whether intended or not, the sculpture resembles a charged brain - the assumed location of our internal map of reality. The lightning bolts have numerous connotations, from the thunder of the gods to neurons "firing" in a brain or possibly even some of tensions and dangers of today's interconnected world, where technology has enabled us to wipe out our own existence in an "ultimate flash".

As I marvel at the totality of 'Event Horizon' I wonder, among other things, about our personal autonomy. Could the latest and ever more omnipresent cloud be the first step towards humanity's own 'point-of-no-return', the boundary at which the gravitational pull becomes so great making escaping it impossible?