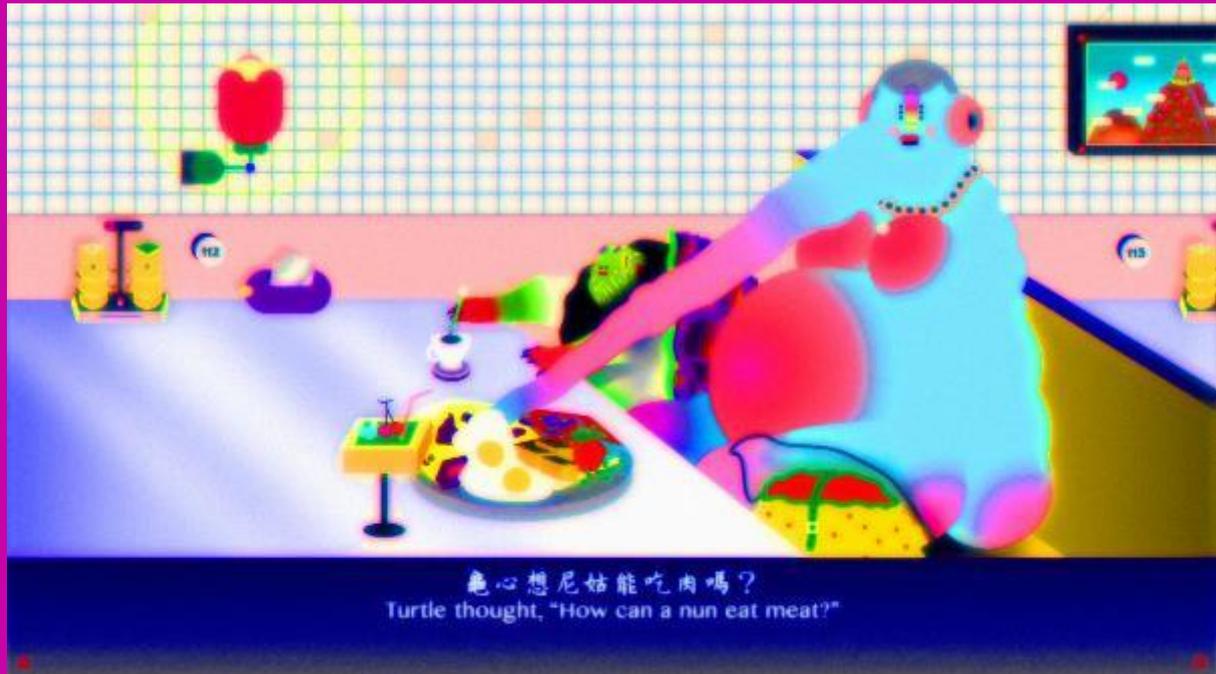


*happiness is only real when shared*

EXHIBITION PRESS RELEASE



Wong Ping, video still from Wong Ping's *Fables 1*, 2018, single channel video animation with sound, 13 min. Courtesy the artist and Edouard Malingue Gallery, Hong Kong / Shanghai; Tanya Bonakdar Gallery, New York / Los Angeles.

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## EXHIBITION PRESS RELEASE

### *happiness is only real when shared*

Opening event: Friday February 12<sup>th</sup> from 5.30pm.

Exhibition opening day: Saturday 13<sup>th</sup> from 10.00am.

Proportunity: Headshot Photography session with Vanessa Crofskey & Kimmi Rindel from midday

Wong Ping (Hong Kong), Mark Schroder (Aotearoa New Zealand), Pinar Yoldas (Turkey / USA)

13 Feburary – 8 May 2021

Gus Fisher Gallery showcases three pioneering artists from different corners of the globe in a major exhibition addressing modern capitalist desires from an altered landscape post-2020. Featuring a major new site-responsive commission by Aotearoa New Zealand based artist Mark Schroder that promises to be his largest to date, the exhibition premiers artwork by internationally-renowned artists Wong Ping and Pinar Yoldas who will exhibit in Aotearoa New Zealand for the first time following presentations at some of the world's most foremost institutions.

Titled after a bittersweet cliché in Wong Ping's famed *Fables* series of animations, *happiness is only real when shared* ponders the current moment through a surreal maze of animation, site-specific installation and sculpture that promises to jolt us from the throws of daily living and into a tumultuous and alternative mise en scène. The exhibition is conceived as a sequel to Gus Fisher Gallery's critically celebrated reopening exhibition of 2019, *We're Not Too Big to Care* that used a slogan from local food chain Four Square to explore the effects of late-stage neo-liberalism and the commercial location that the gallery now finds itself in.

Setting a narrative for Gus Fisher Gallery's latest exhibition is Hong-Kong based artist Wong Ping whose series of animations serve as morality tales for the modern age. Inspired by the literature of the Brothers Grimm and Aesop's fables, the animations comprise of five fictional stories that each communicate a moral lesson. Featuring a set of wonderfully bizarre animal protagonists including an insect-phobic tree and a social media addicted chicken, Ping's fantastically surreal stories are hauntingly poignant post-2020 with a subtlety of references to global health crises, personal responsibility and definitions of truth. Visually exuberant with sugar-coated graphics reminiscent of 1980s computer games, *Wong Ping's Fables* are

cuttingly cynical and provide a wry insight into societal behaviour that visually recall an era of pre-internet early millennials where any milieu of happiness could only exist offline.

Occupying Gus Fisher Gallery's ornate Art Deco Dome Gallery is Aotearoa New Zealand based artist Mark Schroder with *Fortune Teller*, a major new commission by the artist. Conceptually informed by the former use of the Dome Gallery as a reception area when television studios and the gallery's corporate locale in the heart of Auckland's CBD, Schroder's installation juxtaposes corporate goals with employee happiness. Inspired by his day job as a corporate lawyer, *Fortune Teller* is the artist's take on a fictional office where nothing is quite as it seems. It is home to the *Bureau of Happiness* whose template corporate value statements, universal well-being programmes and intended inspirational products are stultified by the staff's own general malaise. Bringing an absurdist humour and insightful critique to familiar tropes of corporate environments and 'wellbeing' initiatives that serve to support institutional agendas, Schroder's installation is an astute take on the corporate world that candidly speaks to global worker experiences.

Adding to the international narrative in the exhibition is a work of speculative fiction by Turkish American artist Pinar Yoldas. Her film, *The Kitty AI: Artificial Intelligence for Governance* (2016) imagines the successful integration of AI and governance in a near future scenario. Set in the year 2039, it is narrated by a cute kitty who leads a politician-free zone with a network of Artificial Intelligence. As the first non-human governor, the Kitty AI lives in the mobile devices of citizens and is "capable of loving up to 3 million people at a time." The Kitty AI extends the dialogues in the exhibition to the realm of AI technology, albeit with a brilliantly surreal twist.

Joining these artists is a solo presentation in the gallery's intimate site-responsive space *The Booth* by Vanessa Crofskey and Kimmi Rindel as part of Wellbeing Analysis Techniques Limited. Their project *Now You See Me* is a pop-up vanity room that delivers digitally mediated spaces for self-reflection. Visitors will be able to participate in a fun activation by these artists on the opening day of the exhibition.

Accompanied by a dynamic and comprehensive public programme of events, discursive discussions and practical workshops, Gus Fisher Gallery's inaugural exhibition of the year is a must-see, and one that prompts true reflection on our current times.

For further information contact:

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09 923 2108

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High resolution and additional images available on request:



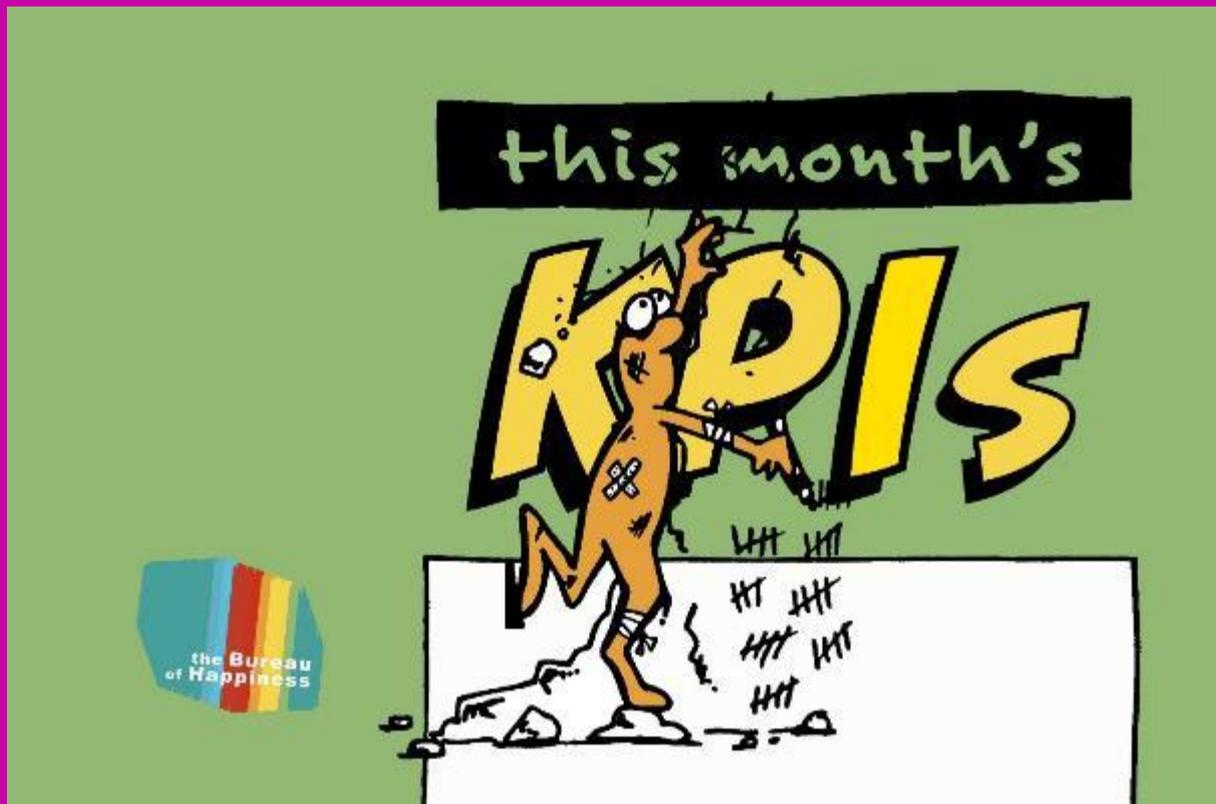
*Wong Ping, video still from Wong Ping's Fables 2, 2019, single channel video animation with sound, 13 min 30 sec. Courtesy the artist and Edouard Malingue Gallery, Hong Kong / Shanghai; Tanya Bonakdar Gallery, New York / Los Angeles.*



*Wong Ping, video still from Wong Ping's Fables 2, 2019, single channel video animation with sound, 13 min 30 sec. Courtesy the artist and Edouard Malingue Gallery, Hong Kong / Shanghai; Tanya Bonakdar Gallery, New York / Los Angeles.*

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Mark Schroder, Fortune Teller (detail), 2020. Courtesy of the artist.

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Pinar Yoldas, The Kitty AI (detail), 2016. Courtesy of the artist.



*Vanessa Crofskey and Kimmi Rindel, Now You See Me: Wellbeing Analysis Techniques Limited, 2020.  
Courtesy of the artists.*

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*happiness is only real when shared*

February 13<sup>th</sup> – May 8<sup>th</sup> 2021

Exhibition open Tuesday – Friday 10 - 5, Saturday 10 – 4

Gus Fisher Gallery  
74 Shortland Street  
Auckland Central

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