

BITTER PEACH NO STOP

Tringa Gashi & Mercedes Pimiento

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Curated by Fuxia 2 & Blanca del Río

Gel nails. A row of watches locked in behind the glass of a counter. Nostrils searching for the right scent. Someone is wearing a fur coat. Despite the blurriness and the shaking, we manage to distinguish a recognizable scene: we are in a shopping mall. Now, inside an elevator. Two floors up. And just when we thought we had found our feet, the camera spins again. An unstoppable loop.

At the end of last year, **Tringa Gashi** traveled to Prizren with her collaborator Andita Shabanaj to shoot *Common Desire* (2024). The resulting film transports us to several spaces of consumption, where jewelry, perfume bottles and other products associated with material status are put into circulation. Occasionally, we get to glimpse the backside of that promise of progress and luxury through a fleeting frame (loose cables, a mess of shoeboxes, ashtrays, a mop). Blending with the familiar murmur of the shopping centers, the music score composed by Aase Nielsen charges the images with a dream-like quality. Scenes captured in Prizren are seamlessly assembled with footage shot in a studio in Copenhagen: the social choreography of consumption and the artificiality of filmmaking, in the same continuum.

Tringa situates this work within a larger project focused on the impact of capitalism in Kosovo, and does so through the study of post-war aesthetics and the imaginaries stirred by the rise of a free market economy. The video is accompanied by *Femra* [Women] (2024), a framed list of bootleg feminine perfumes. *Euphoria*. *Private Paradise*. *Romance*. *Bitter Peach*. Combined, the names that these exclusive brands give to their products unfold a sensual cartography. Fragrances arousing class aspirations. *Common Desire* is further expanded with *Arcade* (2024), a site-specific photo-installation covering the windows of the post-industrial building hosting Fuxia 2. These alluring images (taken from LED advertisements projected in a newly built mall in Prizren) subtly reverberate with the processes of gentrification in which the Sorgenfri neighborhood is immersed.

*From Kosovo's shop windows to a city that never was, and on from there to a fingerprint.
The kinds of things that happen only when we let ourselves pay attention to accidents.*

In the early 1970s, immersed in a context marked by political violence and social unrest, the Florentine design collective Archizoom Associati developed the *No-Stop City* project. Affiliated with the so-called Radical Architecture movement, Archizoom proposed a model for a neovanguardist metropolis which, devoid of ideological prejudices, juxtaposed seemingly contradictory elements: communism and consumerism, Marxist principles and pop art. If the working class was to take absolute control of society from within, then the city had to expand as an unlimited concave space, rejecting the functionalism of rationalist architecture. *No-Stop City* is thus conceived as a homogeneous and modular extension, where the distinction between the factory, the places of leisure and consumption, and the home is erased. Ultimately, Archizoom imagines a nomadic way of life with no room for privacy.

This utopian urban plan (of which only a handful of sketches and models remain) has served as inspiration for several of **Mercedes Pimiento's** projects. In 2023 she produced *Superficie Neutra* [Neutral Surface], an installation consisting of a series of sculptures reminiscent of domestic objects and arranged to replicate the modular logic of *No-Stop City*. Through the use of organic and synthetic elements (beeswax and paraffin), as well as industrial components, the work investigated the relationship between bodies, materials and architecture.

For this occasion, the artist presents a new installation that sprung from the manufacturing of *Superficie Neutra*. While working with the beeswax (as the melted material solidified), Mercedes discovered a series of serpentine shapes formed in the concave side of her sculptures. This finding led the artist onto the Turing patterns. Mathematician and philosopher Alan Turing (who also laid the foundations of computer science and artificial intelligence) described how those compositions arise autonomously in a process highly sensitive to chance. The same process that explains the shapes in the wax, the zebra's stripes, the leopard's spots and our own fingerprints.

Mercedes' practice often makes visible the infrastructures that enable the circulation of commodities in a global trade system, being interested in elements like cargo containers. In this work, the artist has turned her own sculptures inside out, revealing that which could not be seen (or smelled) before. The installation consists of metal boxes filled with beeswax, which is intermittently heated and cooled by means of an electrical device, triggering the creation and transformation of patterns. Thus, what began as an investigation about an urbanistic fantasy evolved into a formal essay: a collection of unpredictable landscapes carrying the echoes of a failed utopian plan.

BITTER PEACH NO STOP unfolds as a sensual exploration of the libidinous circuit that connects desires, commodities and political imaginaries. Tringa and Mercedes' practices (interwoven by scent, light and sound) depart from a deep knowledge of the materials they work with. And yet, the artists pay attention to surfaces: rather than resorting to discourse, they translate the meticulous research underpinning their work into shapeshifting images. As if they were defying us not to think about images, but *through* them.

PEACH STOP NO BITTER. NO PEACH BITTER STOP. BITTER NO STOP PEACH.

Thinking through images, while we spin.