

Each Apparition, Searches for an Eye

Ames Yavuz

Opening 31 May 2025, 4pm - 6pm

On view until 12 July, 2025

Location: Ames Yavuz Sydney, 114 Commonwealth Street Surry Hills NSW

Ames Yavuz presents *Each Apparition, Searches for an Eye*, featuring a new body of work by Stanislava Pinchuk.

Each Apparition, Searches for an Eye is a series of 100 photo-portraits of soldiers from Pinchuk's deployment to witness combat training for the Armed Forces of Ukraine as the Official War Artist of Australia in 2023. Instructed to obscure all identifying features to elude enemy facial-recognition software, the artist manually manipulated the film negatives to blur the faces of her subjects. The works are presented as passport photo-size images framed within steel plates, gesturing towards the critical shift of what a 'war portrait' may mean in the 21st Century.

Acts of facial erasure, paradoxically, allow Pinchuk's photo-portraits to enter into a public record. In the iconoclastic process of blurring, the artist speaks of committing each face to her own memory. This, she calls the double bind of the photograph, "the flux and re-flux of the image; for the private to become public, to become a part of a record for the moment, it has to become destroyed in part."

The partly-erased photo-portraits recall 19th Century 'spirit photography', in which daguerreotypists experimented with emergent long-exposure technology in an effort to capture 'ghosts' onto silver plates. Around the same time, the daguerreotype's unprecedented visual fidelity also produced the first photo-portraits of soldiers, as well as the first photograph of an active battlefield—a road littered with cannon-balls in Sevastopol, Ukraine taken during The Crimean War in 1855.

The exhibition examines how the fundamental processes of photography have remained in place since its invention, with its components simply re-arranged. The artist lists, "the unseen eye behind a lens, the information veiled behind a curtain, the hardware plate, the migration of the captured image, be it through a portable frame or a fibre-optic cable, and the process of sensitisation, by which the more exposure time to a subject's face still means a greater clarity."

At the same time, the technological infrastructure around image-making and consumption has vastly transformed. The facial-recognition technology that necessitated the artist to blur identifying features of her subjects today is also being used to identify previously unnamed sitters of 19th Century soldier portraits, matching facial structures against wider data-sets of historical photographs and archives.

In *Each Apparition, Searches for an Eye*, Pinchuk proposes that we understand our relationship with technology by becoming "ghosts for the machine". Rather than work in Alan Turing's famous 'ghost in the machine' paradigm of machine sentience, Pinchuk's photo-portraits, which bear no resemblance to their subjects yet retain their subjective presence,

suggest a more nimble stance. One perhaps already embodied by figures such the 'Ghost of Kyiv', the nickname given to a MiG-29 Fulcrum flying ace rumoured to have shot down six Russian planes over Kyiv in 2022. This is an elusive apparition, one which first searches for an eye to be seen, an eye to be localised, classified, mapped to a wider face, and verified.

Selected Works



Stanislava Pinchuk, *A_12*, 2025, Pigment print, erasure and stainless steel, 20 x 26 x 6 cm



Stanislava Pinchuk, *H_95*, 2025, Pigment print, erasure and stainless steel, 20 x 26 x 6 cm

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Stanislava Pinchuk, *A.O.*, 2025, Pigment print, erasure and stainless steel, 20 x 26 x 6 cm

About the Artist

Stanislava Pinchuk (b.1988, Kharkiv, Ukraine) lives and works in Melbourne, Sarajevo and Barcelona. Pinchuk is an artist working between data-mapping and information-mining, conflict topographies, legacies of literature and the politics of translation. Her practice spans film, architecture, installation, performance, drawing, tattooing, painting and sculpture. She is the current serving Official War Artist of Australia, and has previously held career surveys of her work at Heide MoMA and FAC.

Recent exhibitions include the 17th Gjon Mili Biennale at the National Gallery of Kosovo (curated by Valentine Umansky, Tate Modern), solo institutional exhibitions at The Dallas Contemporary Museum of Art (curated by Lilia Kudelia) and at the Australian Centre for the Moving Image (curated by Fiona Trigg). She has also shown at Manifesta Biennale 14 (curated by Catherine Nichols, Hamburger Bahnhof), the National Gallery of Australia, the National Gallery of Victoria, Salzburger Kunstverein, Art Basel Hong Kong Encounters (curated by Alexie Glass-Kantor), and the New Museum, New Inc. Columbia Architecture University Incubator (curated by Cristina Goberna-Pesudo).

She is currently exhibiting works at the Vila 31 in Tirana (Albania), the HE Museum (China), the Art Gallery of South Australia (Australia), Rotor Centre for Contemporary Art (Austria) and Foundation Leeds-Miesten (Belgium).

Stanislava Pinchuk is the director of the roaming, radical architectural design school The Anti/Monumental Laboratory, which is currently the opening faculty unit of the

experimental Masters Degree in Critical Design at the Elisava University of Architecture & Engineering in Barcelona.

About the gallery

Ames Yavuz embraces its diverse cultural background through a strong international focus and perspective. The gallery's vision is underpinned by robust curatorial practices that form the core of our program and foster intercultural discourse on a global scale.

Representing a wide range of multidisciplinary artists across continents, Ames Yavuz aims to challenge, inspire, and reclaim through art. The gallery provides a platform for transformative and compelling artistic voices who bring care and attention to the most urgent conversations of our time, and celebrates storytelling with authenticity, innovation and wit.

For further information on the artist and the works, please contact:

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