

Vivian GREVEN

Mousse,

Vivian Greven “The Negatives” at Gallery Vacancy, Shanghai

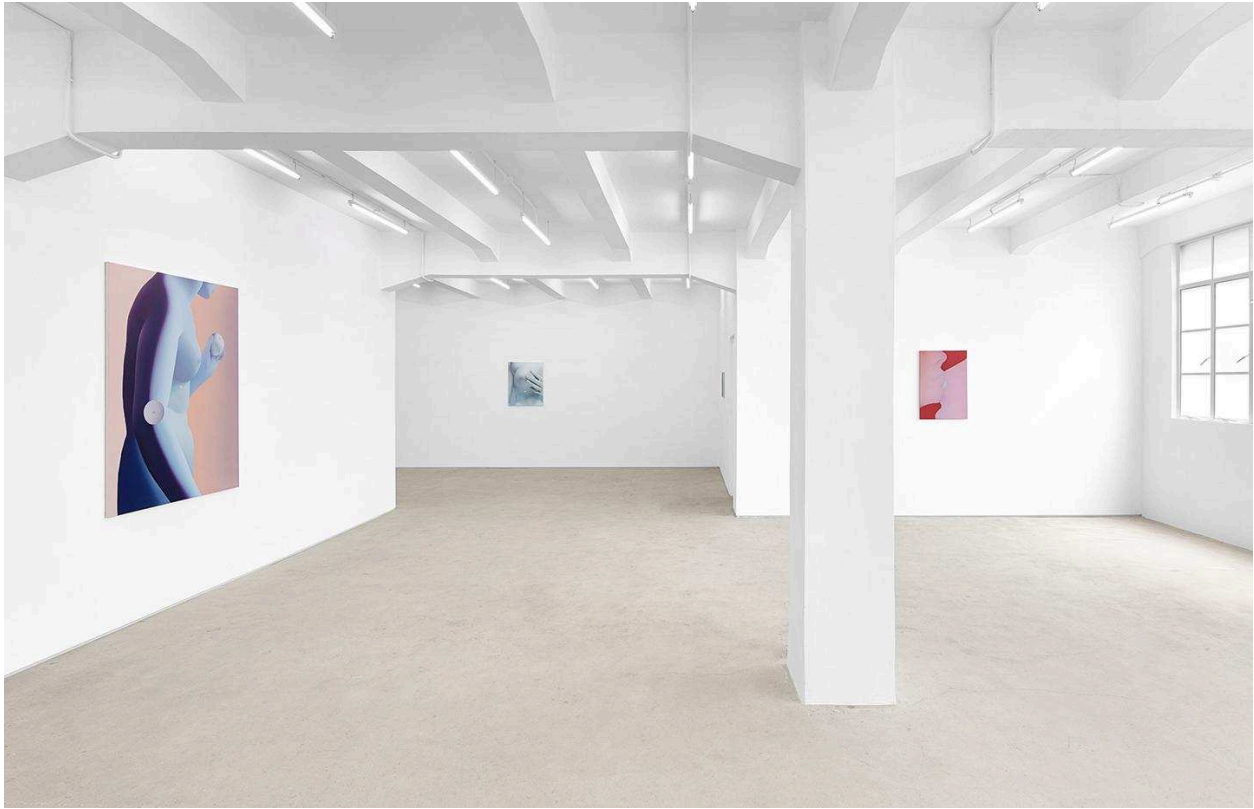
April 2021

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Gallery Vacancy is delighted to announce *The Negatives*, Vivian Greven’s first solo exhibition in Shanghai from March 20 to May 1, 2021. In her new series of ethereal paintings, Greven delves into her long standing exploration in the representation of human forms, scrutinizing through the antiquity depiction of the body to the contemporary interpretation of its virtual image, fluctuating on the infinite pictorial plane across figuration, conception, and abstraction.

Derived from sculptural compositions in Classical art, Greven’s painting delivers a digital perception of the ultramodern image consumption, in which the over-saturation of sensory aesthetics through the mediated screen symbioses with

the loss of integrity in contemporary body politics. As a perennial subject in art history, the notion of beauty and its close associate, human body, are ironed out of their corporeality and transcend into a ghost replica of the originality. The luminosity of the translucent marble that is historically employed in sculpturality is now incarnated as the fluorescent reflection that is electronically modulated from LCD screens. Despite the escalating accessibility in the digital age, this unreality at the threshold of the real clandestinely intervenes between the object and the image, indicating a state of everlasting untouchability, raising questions on how we get in contact and how it feels to touch through a digital interface.

In *Jo(I* (2021), two genderless profiles are staged in proximity, with their lips gently pressed against each other's tip of nose and chin as if they are suckling the affection out of this physical interaction. A diaphanous set of celeste forms interject in between, contrasting with the poinsettia background that implies an unavoidable distance even in the play of absolute closeness. Nevertheless depicted as distant, the illusion of intimacy is only projected through the viewer's internal longing for the caress.

On the contrary, in *Quella V* (2021), the surface of the female figure glows into a cool blue gradient. Referring to an invisible arrow that cuts through the flawless exterior, a rounded acrylic build-up and a pale white color dot are carefully placed onto her body as wounds or metaphorical stigmas, transforming the fleshly skin into an ethereal tegument. The pileup constrains; the falloff prolongs, activating

the underneath rather than concentrating solely on its appearance. The deconstruction of corporeality is further manifested through the abstraction in *XI* (2021), *XII* (2021), and *XIII* (2021), presenting the close-up of an intimate body part. Minimalizing the somatic structure into a literal shape of “V”, Greven is indexing a virtual Venus, the goddess stripped off from flesh and blood, an ultimate untouchable void culminating in our digital world.

Vivian Greven’s works often contain a consistent seriality, expanding from certain pivotal motifs that investigate art history and the contemporary through the luminance and smoothness of her treated surface. *The Negatives* presents eight different series from her most recent practice, providing a comprehensive approach that reveals her conceptual system—the contradiction between human being’s intuitive desire to connect and the inevitable downfall of unveiling attempts. It strikes beyond the physical notion of negative space, to the frailty (*faiblesse*) of inner-human issues, a fragile connection constituted from the standing of Self to the position of the Other.

At [Gallery Vacancy, Shanghai](#)

until May 15, 2021