

„Our souls reflect our worlds and our worlds reflect our souls. One who aspires to understand the nature of the soul ought, then, to be an auditor of culture. The introduction of new technologies reflects previous philosophical trends, reinforces these trends in novel ways, and sparks the creation of new ideas and patterns of culture. Although technologies irradiate their cultural atmospheres in uncountable ways, the fallout is often difficult to discern unless we endeavour to bring the background into the foreground.“

Douglas Groothuis¹

Mia Vučić's exhibition *What if?* will showcase a series of digital graphic papers of the same name. The works comprise elements of computer interfaces (in the most unusual combinations collage digital cut-ups, i.e. visualized software of different programme codes, bugs, graphic glitches, cmds etc.) combined with vector graphics and drawing. The content and title of each image/interface are linked and require the viewer to show patience and insight and to take a careful, focused approach in *reading* them. To put it simply, downloaded sections generate images through combining, while being susceptible to manipulation in a further process step. The technical specificity of these Digigraphie² works of art with a resistance certificate as well as the use of this technology for the production of artistic work in a period of frenetic transformations of form, typically to support capital, profit and essence oblivion are intriguing enough and they could be the subject of a separate analysis of this series of works, which represents the author's continuation in the fundamental investigation into the influence of technology on the identity of the contemporary man, started in 2010 with her first exhibition *Matrices*. The ides behind this was the question of identity preservation while artificial intelligence is rapidly growing. How, if at all, will man maintain ethical standards and identity in parallel with the development of this phenomenon? What parts of our soul remain consistent as the rulers of something that is artificially intelligent? Is wisdom the only thing that remains among those inherent in man? What if boundaries are not clearly distinguishable in the machine development process? The author's intuitive questions, especially the ethical and spiritual aspect of the issue raised in her work are of utmost importance while reflecting on the background and significance of these works and the approach to art that Mia establishes through her work. It is an engagement that does not boast and might not be immediately recognizable but it certainly involves pondering on the implementation or the Borg assimilation will prevail in the future. It should be noted *that any investigation of the fate of the soul in cyberspace must confront the deity/god of technology. Iti s a jelaous deity without official sanctuaries, altars or priests but it is still a god in the sense that people believe technology works, that they rely on it, that it makes promises, that they are bereft when denied access to it, that they are delighted when they are in its presence, that for most people it works in mysterious ways, that they condemn people who speak against it, that they stand in awe of it, and that, in the born-again mode, they will alter their lifestyles, heir schedules, their habits, and their relationships to accomodate it.*³ *Imagining the future is never a politically innocent or ethically neutral act. To achieve the future we want, we first have to be able to envisage it in the most complete possible manner, including all the contexts with its consequences being enacted.*⁴

Toni Horvatić

1 Douglas Groothuis, *The Soul in Cyberspace*, STEPress, Zagreb, 2003

2 The term was officially launched on 13th November 2003 (although its practice is much older) in France to denote a special technology of digital prints by using ink-jet Epson printers and pigmented inks with resin ensuring the longevity of the print over many generations

3 Neil Postman, *The End of Education: Redefining the Value of School*, Alfred A. Knopf, New York, 1995

4 Matko Meštrović, *How Far? How Long?* Croatian University Press, Zagreb, 2018