

**Press release**

**Pakui Hardware | *Absent Touch***

14 November 2020 – 23 January 2021

Opening: Friday, 13 November 2020, 11 am – 9 pm

carlier | gebauer is pleased to announce *Absent Touch*, the first solo exhibition with the gallery by artist duo Pakui Hardware.

When Neringa Černiauskaitė and Ugnius Gelguda founded Pakui Hardware in 2014, the body increasingly began to be experienced a post-natural, porous interface. A malleable entity, it revealed itself perpetually reshaped by an interplay of personal transformations, interpersonal relations and structural power mechanisms. Attuned to philosophies such as new materialism, bio-capitalism and necropolitics as well as closely connected to scientific and technological research, their sculptural installations have since then introduced the viewer to ecosystems that intensify emerging sensorial patterns by abstracting the shapes that usually convey them.

Drawing on their recent exploration of prosthetic bodies through digitalization and quantification of health, Pakui Hardware's first personal exhibition at carlier | gebauer, Berlin opens a new chapter in their research. With *Absent Touch*, the duo focuses on the recent rise of remote-health-care technologies and services, a phenomenon also known as "virtual care" that encompasses telemedicine, telehealth and robotic surgery.

While the environment at the gallery brings to mind various hospital spaces, merging a surgical unit with a waiting room, the interaction between the works, as well as the contrasting materials used for each, introduces a more ambiguous tone. Placed under surgical lamps and on operating tables, fragile objects combine stainless steel elements with translucent, rounded glass shapes and delicate, billowy fabric drapings while on the walls, a series of photograph brings forth certain details of the sculptures, delineating possible modes of contact, negotiation and tension.

Echoing researcher Jeannette Pols for whom there is no "cold" technology and "warm" body, Pakui Hardware delineates "a lingering moment between actual and virtual bodies" while refusing to adopt a black and white view on technology. Of this, virtual care is a telling example. A short-term remedy to the limitations of accessible healthcare, it also rises a looming threat of personal data being gathered by big corporation. A way of easing the awkwardness sometime arise through an in-person exchange, it however leads in many other cases to a sense of neglect.

*Absent Touch* leaves questions unanswered and Gordian knots entangled. Here, presence is reduced to traces, shells and imprints; while feelings are fleeting, muted and withheld. As we roam through the exhibition space, careful not to shatter a precarious stasis, we constantly feel as a threat. Slowly, we grow accustomed to the experience of a space where motion precedes cognition and adjustment knowledge, one that mirrors the ethical complexity of a potential yet already nearing future.

**Pakui Hardware** (1977 and 1984, Lithuania) live and work between Berlin and Vilnius. Upcoming solo exhibitions include BALTIC Art Center, Gateshead; carlier | gebauer Berlin; Leopold-Hoesch-Museum, Düren. Past solo exhibitions include Future Gallery Mexico, Museum der bildenden Künste Leipzig (MdbK), Bielefelder Kunstverein, Tenderpixel, London, Museum of Modern Art Ludwig Foundation Vienna (MUMOK). Past group exhibitions include MOCO La Panacée, Montpellier; 13th Baltic Triennial at CAC, Vilnius; Istanbul Biennial; CCA Tel Aviv; MAXXI, Rome; Musée d'Orsay, Paris; Kunsthalle Basel; Kunstverein Braunschweig; Kunsthalle Basel, Basel; BOZAR, Brussels.

Text by Ingrid Luquet-Gad