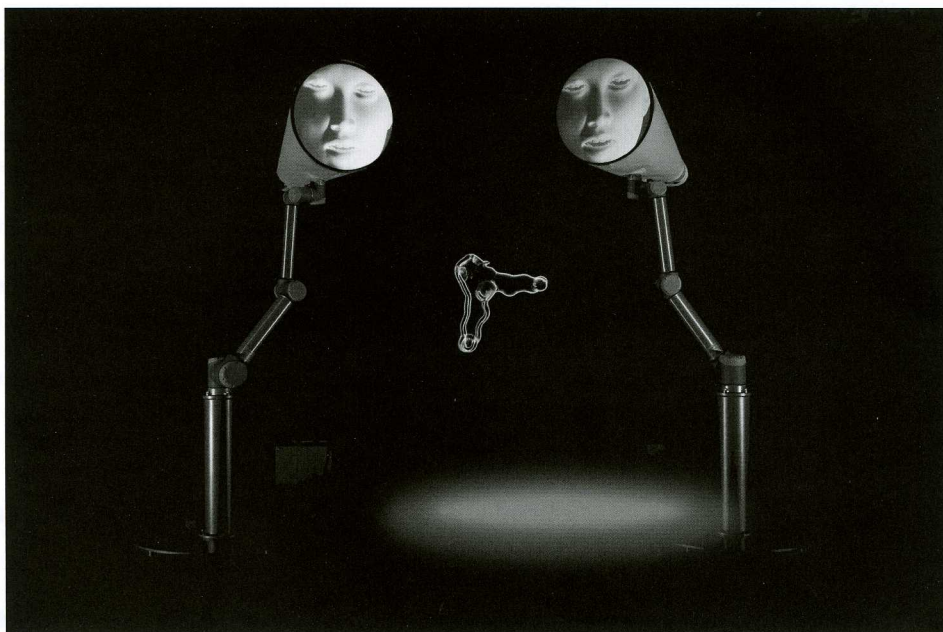


Lindsay Seers
*Every Thought
 There Ever Was* 2018
 installation view



including Hildegard of Bingen and Teresa of Avila. Around the corner from this absorbing sound installation hang the '12 Signs of the Zodiac', a series of undated paintings by Ariella Widzer, who is Shani's aunt. Her personifications of astrological signs as androgynous humanoids with elongated limbs and blank eyes, bordered by Art Nouveau-style foliage, could be alternative portraits of the women of 'Semiramis'. Their ice blue, peachy pink and custard yellow colour palette is reminiscent of the tones Shani used on *Dark Continent: Semiramis*, evidence of the matrilineal kinship that nourishes the entire project, stretching as far back as the 13th century and de Pizan's conception of a city of women. ■

Ellen Mara De Wachter is based in London and author of *Co-Art: Artists on Creative Collaboration*, Phaidon, 2017.

Lindsay Seers: Every Thought There Ever Was

Focal Point Gallery Southend-on-Sea
 8 September to 23 December

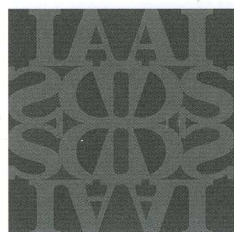
Despite its litany of somewhat clichéd abject metaphors for states of distraction, infiltration, infection or superstition (think fluttering moths, meat flies, writhing larvae and alchemical symbols), a monstrous image worthy of Lindsay Seers's hyperbolic exhibition title lay at the core of her titular film *Every Thought There Ever Was*, 2018: a testicular glob, kaleidoscopically bejewelled with myriad autonomous

eyeballs, suggestive of a mammalian evolution of the compound optics of an insect. This pulsing oracle provided a disquieting bodily allegory for Seers's idiosyncratic exploration of consciousness, namely, the experience of heightened forms of perception reported to occur in the event of psychosis.

As such, the work attempted to create the dysphoric conditions through which a state of unease and piqued receptivity might be induced in a viewing subject through an admittedly impressive display of kinetic projections, heavily echoed audio and animated spotlights. While a large central orb projected onto the back wall of the gallery relayed the film's most consistent series of images, it was a pair of smaller projectors, each housed within their own bespoke conical screens and mounted onto the arms of industrial robots, that performed a kind of cinematic interjection, feeding their imagery into the work as a series of paranoid discordances.

Developing an interest in a recently successful form of psychiatric treatment known as Avatar Therapy – in which digital personages are created to simulate and thus provide a form of safe exposure to the hallucinated persecutory entities encountered in schizophrenia – Seers had derived her film's narrative through the emulation of a therapeutic process. The viewer becomes a patient confronting an intermittently glimpsed robotic avatar tasked with helping them understand their own agency in a state of mental distress, illustrated here by animated emblems of telecommunication and arcane knowledge that appear and recede rhythmically in a flux of nightmarish fits.

The film's avatar channelled the life of James Miranda



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