Peter Jellitsch
All windows open, but no fresh air
A text by Livia Klein

Within his artistic practice, Peter Jellitsch delves into digital realms, where individuals traverse virtual landscapes, navigate the borderlands of Online Forums as well as Social Media Platforms, and are offered a unique space for exploration, interaction, and identity formation. These online heterotopias have their own set of rules, rituals, and codes distinct from our physical reality and function as an intricate network. Within his drawings and paintings, the artist offers a visualised elucidation of these ~~very~~ paradigms. A multitude of different motifs are intertwined, and different areas are converged into a multifaced exploration of alternate realms. A contemplative exploration of socio-cultural shifts triggered by internet culture emerges, and narratives about the depiction and transformation of spatiality are revealed.

By immersing himself in the act of drawing and painting, Jellitsch makes the concealed domain of data tangible, translating it into visual forms that encapsulate the essence of the interconnected global network. The series *Data Drawings* from 2013 presents a semblance of aesthetics upon entrenched systems—Images are meshed, and motifs recur, conventional representations are transcended, and visual or verbal syntax are thrown overboard. Considerations on the stream of information, or rather its deluge, culminate in a production of the static image, born from the flux of data stream. These streams are distorted through Jellitsch' artistic practice and appear as tangible realities derived from the numerical constructs of mobile network metrics. In a world saturated with an abundance of consumable delights clamoring for our attention, where we curate our feeds, playlists, clothes, and consumable content as part of our daily ritual, Jellitsch boldly exercises the liberty to critically pluck what he wishes from the data stream to translate onto the canvas or paper, seamlessly infusing it into his works.

In the series *Rearrangements* (2023), the artist employs a singular image in a diverse array of hues and forms, thus removing it from its original context while instilling a unique characteristic into each rendition. Throughout this process, Jellitsch disassembles the initial image, manipulating its inherent attributes such as scale, proportion, and chromatic palette. The genesis of these drawings can be traced back to the artist's earlier series of the same title, where he adeptly merged four canvases to produce distinct iterations of the central motif of artificial palm trees. The conceptual roots of this endeavour were inspired by his contemplation of the artificial trees encountered during a residency in Los Angeles—structures that mimic natural environments while seamlessly blending into urban landscapes. By harnessing symbolic representations of data extracted from ubiquitous WIFI networks, Jellitsch transforms these captured datasets into a non-functional topographic panorama.

As if observing the artist working on his computer, the latest series *Windows* serves as a reference on the expansion of open windows on the computer screen. Jellitsch abstracts these onto the canvas to muddle any discernible information, rendering the data stream a nebulous, convoluted terrain, stratified in multiple layers. Employing a pun on words—*"All windows open, but no fresh air"*—a reflection on the plethora of data streams and its demanding swift assimilation takes place. The artist creates an open system that encourages apparent contradictions to shape dialogues by the

combination of controlled coincidences. Within the *Windows* series, existing artworks by Jellitsch are "remixed," and imbued with renewed significance.

Throughout art history, the window itself has a rich historical pedigree and serves as a symbolic threshold between the interior and the exterior, reality and illusion, physical and virtual worlds. Functioning as a conduit between private and public domains, windows offer dual perspectives—as both observers and observed. Jellitsch extends this reflection seamlessly into our contemporary media landscape, where screens act as windows to different realities. Computers have become gateways to digital realms, since the advent of the groundbreaking Windows interface by Xerox PARC in the 1980s, as well as Smartphones and Tablets, reshaping human-computer interaction. Prompting critical inquiries into the authenticity of the narratives they portray, the artist sees the intrinsic significance of the window in its multifaceted nature: its flatness, framing and grid-like structure.

In Jellitsch' oeuvre the tangible reality dissolves into the virtual realm of the screen—a mirrored simulacrum. There, the square framing of the image, seemingly destined for platforms like Instagram, challenges the very essence of visual representation and manifests in a fluid synthesis before our very gaze. Drawing inspiration from post-internet and social media aesthetics, where the fluidity of memes perpetually reshapes cultural discourse and the notion of authorship undergoes reevaluation, Jellitsch ponders the origins of these superimpositions—whether they stem from the combination of content, visual stimuli, or the fusion of binary codes. While his pieces may not overtly resemble computer interfaces, they serve as a commentary on our visual consumption habits. Imagery resulting in formats resembling square Instagram posts and 16:9 drawings evocative of Reels and Stories. While the works may originate digitally, they still invariably demand a tangible instantiation. The artist eschews mere virtual refinement, insisting instead upon the perceptibility of layers and the physical presence of the real within his works.