

# MARC ERWIN BABEJ

Portfolio 2019

[marcerwinbabej.com](http://marcerwinbabej.com)

# BIO

The photography-based work of Marc Erwin Babej (Germany and USA, b. 1970) inquires into the interplay of ideology, rhetoric and aesthetics in the manufacture of political and societal narratives.

The work is rooted in rigorous research and informed by collaboration with eminent scholars. It looks beyond depiction of marginalization — to investigation of its root causes: the material and psychological motives behind the construction of “majority” narratives, and the institutions by which such narratives are propagated.

Throughout the work, images are combined with text elements, often derived from primary sources. The search for synergies between images and text also led to the development of Aspective Realism, a contemporary visual language considered the resurrection of ancient Egyptian art — and with it, the integration of images, symbols and text.

Though political in nature, the work eschews conventions of “political art,” such as the artist’s activism and protest. Instead, the themes themselves take center stage. Their complexities are not discarded in the interest of convincing viewers, but laid bare for their contemplation. The object is not what viewers should think, but that they think.

Babej’s works have recently been shown in solo exhibitions at The Egyptian Museum, Cairo; Bibliotheca Alexandrina, Alexandria; Roemer-Pelizaeus Museum, Hildesheim and Rathausdiele Hamburg. His work has been collected by public and private collections, including the Pushkin State Museum of Fine Art, The Egyptian Museum in Cairo, The House of European History (the museum of the European Parliament), Bibliotheca Alexandrina, the Roemer-Pelizaeus Museum, the Linden Museum and the Gösta Serlachius Museum of Art in Finland. The work has been covered by leading international art, political and general interest media.

# CV

## SELECTED EXHIBITIONS

### Past Solo Exhibitions

2018 Yesterday – Tomorrow, The Egyptian Museum, Cairo

Unser Afrika, Rathausdiele, Hamburg

Yesterday – Tomorrow, Bibliotheca Alexandrina, Alexandria

2017 Yesterday – Tomorrow, Roemer-Pelizaeus Museum,  
Hildesheim, Germany

2016 Mischlinge, Kreismuseum Wewelsburg, Büren, Germany

2015 Mischlinge, Historical-Technical Museum Peenemünde, Germany

Mask of Perfection, Galerie Julian Sander, Bonn, Germany

Mischlinge, m2a Galerie, Dresden

2014 Mask of Perfection, Clarinda Carnegie Art Museum, Clarinda, IA

Africanae, Bardo National Museum, Tunis

### Forthcoming Solo Exhibitions

2019 Pantheon, Davison Art Center, Wesleyan University

Unser Afrika, Roemer-Pelizaeus Museum, Hildesheim

2020 Yesterday – Tomorrow, Reiss-Engelhorn Museen, Mannheim

Pantheon, Tampa Museum of Art

FIND FULL CV AT END OF THIS DOCUMENT

# Mischlinge

2014

Mischlinge portrays Germans of diverse ethnic backgrounds in the shadow of the Nazi past — figuratively and literally. The work uses a propaganda aesthetic against the purpose for which it had devised. Combining environmental portraiture with genetic science, Mischlinge offers a unique position on ethnicity and national identity.

The work has been shown in solo exhibition at Historisch-Technisches Museum Peenemünde and Museum Wewelsburg. It is held by the collections of the German Historical Museum in Berlin, the German Military History Museum in Dresden, the Jewish Museum in Frankfurt and the House of European History in Brussels, among others.

Archival digital pigment prints, ed. 5 + 2 AP

50cm x 76cm (20" x 30") image on 76cm x 101 cm (30" x 40") sheets



*At the V-2 Rocket*

At the Torchbearer  
Monument  
(of Nazi Party training school  
Vogelsang)



Rainer Höß  
(anti-Nazi activist and grandson  
of Rudolf Höß, kommandant of  
Auschwitz)



Into Eternity





The Torchbearer





The Liberator  
(Dachau survivor Werner Kleeman)

# Unser Afrika

2015

Unser Afrika offers a perspective not previously seen in art on colonialism: the worldview of the perpetrators. It is set in the ill-fated former colony of German Southwest-Africa (now Namibia), site of the first genocide of the 20th century. Created on location in Namibia, the work reveals the entanglements of white supremacy, colonialism and genocide. In Unser Afrika, supremacy emerges not “only” as a cynical pretext for exploitation, but also as a utopian vision of racial dominance.

The work premiered as an official state event in Hamburg in June 2018 and is held by the collections of the Übersee-Museum in Bremen, Linden Museum in Stuttgart, Gösta Serlachius Museum of Art in Finland and the House of European History in Brussels.

Archival digital pigment prints, ed. 5 + 2 AP

50cm x 76cm (20” x 30”) image on 76cm x 101 cm (30“ x 40“) sheets

Taking Possession



At the Felsenkirche  
(Rock Church) in Lüderitz





The Inexorable



Foreign Body



Starlight



Mene, Mene, Tekel, Upharsin



# Pantheon

2016

Pantheon imagines a present-day in which Rome has never fallen and extends across Europe and the Americas. Like many leading Roman fashion houses, Pantheon Vestimenta observes the common practice of referencing figures from Roman religion and history in its designs. The work integrates environmental portraiture with digital reconstructions by the classical studies and informatics departments of The University of Virginia and Indiana University.

Following a preview at Davison Art Center (Wesleyan University) in the fall of 2019, the work will premiere in solo exhibition at Tampa Museum of Art in 2020. It is held by the collections of both institutions.

Archival digital pigment prints, ed. 5 + 2 AP

61cm x 81cm (24" x 32") image on 76cm x 101 cm (30" x 40") sheets

Mars apud templum  
Martis Ulterioris



Divus Antinous, in Maeniano  
maximo Villae Tiburtinae  
Hadriani Augusti



Apollo in Pantheo  
Romano



Iulia Maior, Divi Augusti  
filia, in atrio tholi, "Roccabruna"  
dicti



Iulianus Augustus (a Christianis  
“Apostata”, ab Iudaeis  
“Hellenicus” dictus), in Basilica  
Romana Maxentii



Magna Mater in  
Thermis Minoribus





# Yesterday – Tomorrow

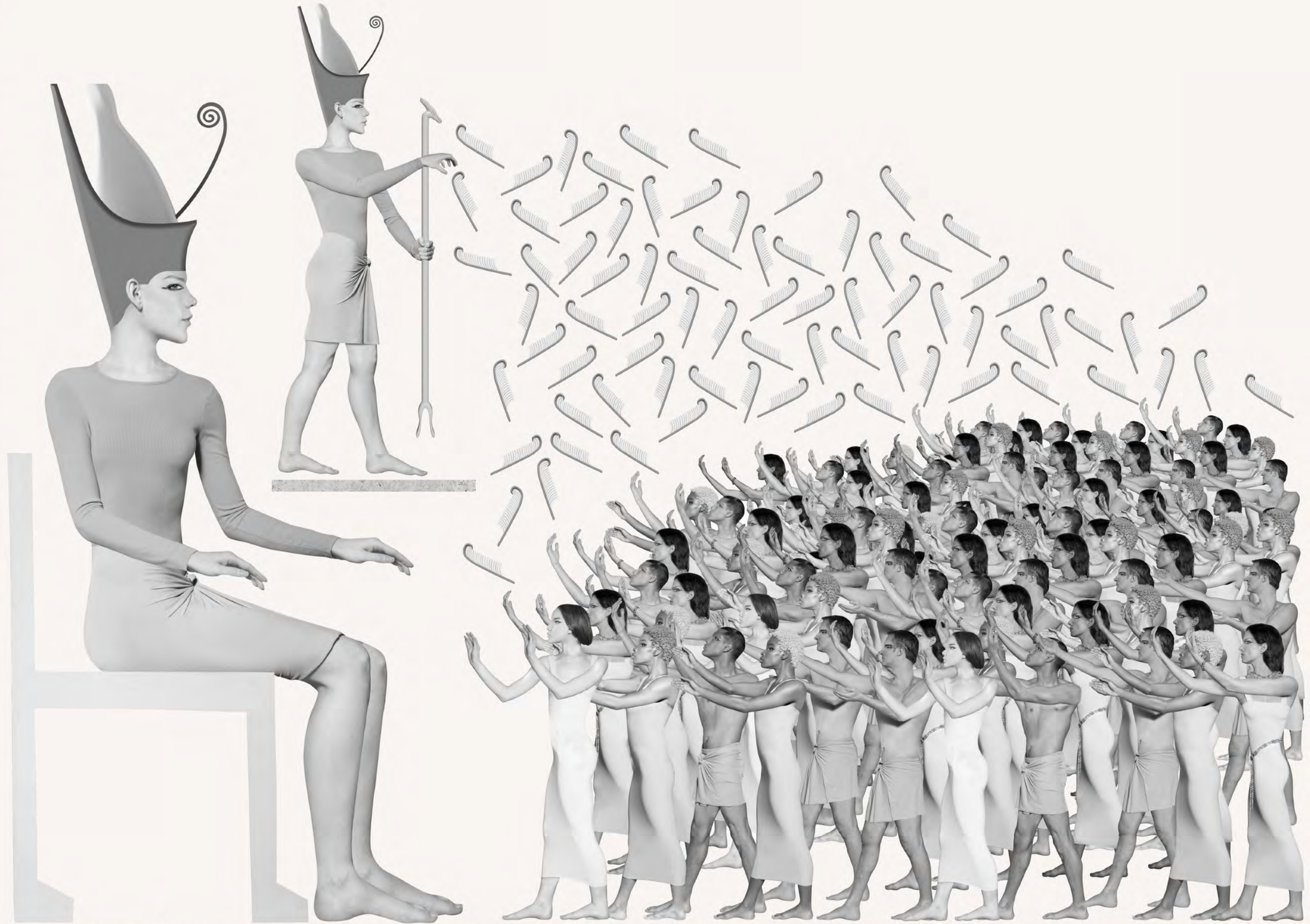
2017

Yesterday – Tomorrow achieves a fundamentally new form of visual expression by reaching back to the beginnings of civilization. The work was created with a team of 55 experts, including 13 Egyptologists from leading international institutions. It is considered the revival and evolution of Ancient Egyptian art, in the form of a contemporary visual language called Aspective Realism. Among its defining features is the introduction of multi-perspective (aspective) figures, which challenge a core tenet of photography: namely, that a photograph is necessarily a single frozen moment, seen in central perspective. Each aspective figure is comprised of up to 24 exposures — photorealistic, but decidedly not naturalistic. Yesterday – Tomorrow's 14 "photographic reliefs" (see exhibition views) portray contemporary themes, such as state propaganda, populism, xenophobia, surveillance, same-sex relationships and beauty culture.





The work has been exhibited solo at The Egyptian Museum in Cairo, Bibliotheca Alexandrina in Alexandria and the Roemer-Pelizaeus Museum in Hildesheim. It is held by the collections of the Pushkin State Museum of Fine Art, the above-mentioned three institutions and others.

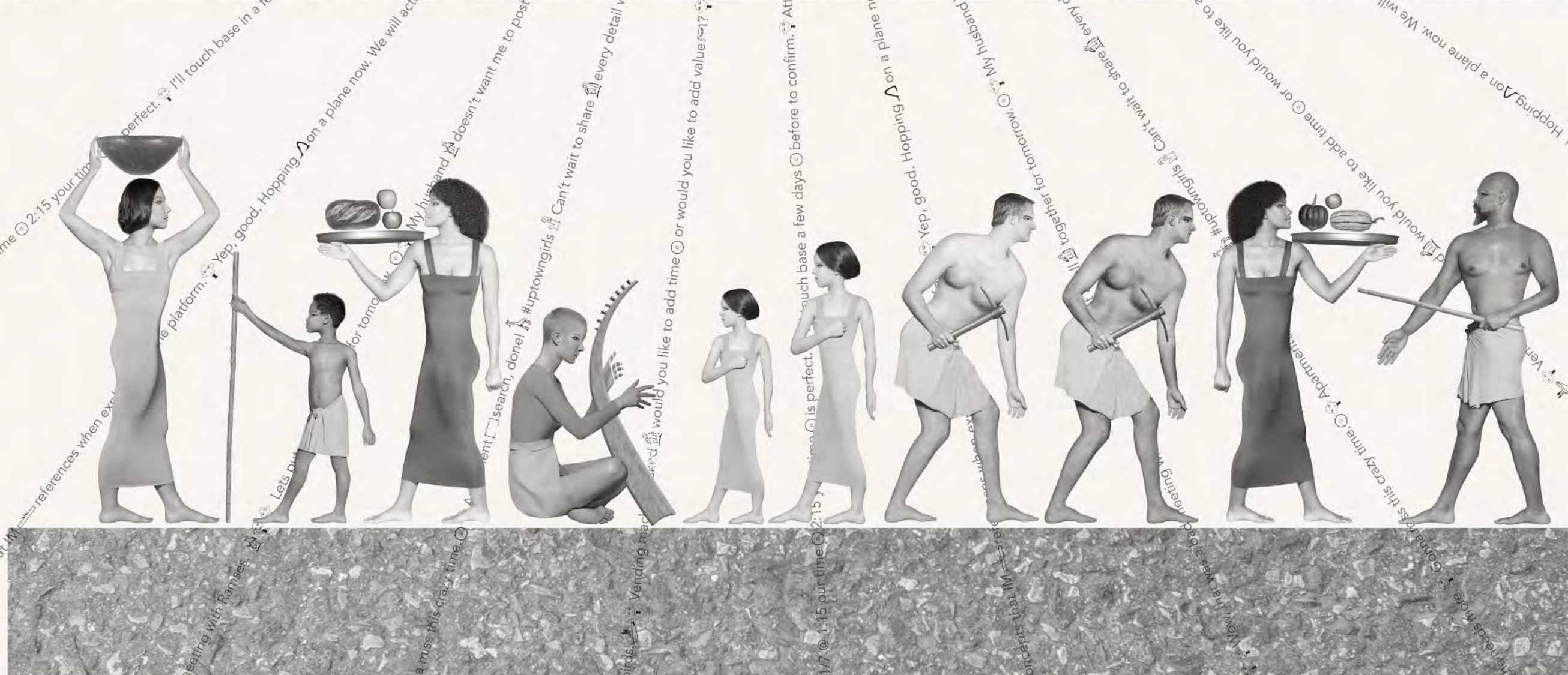
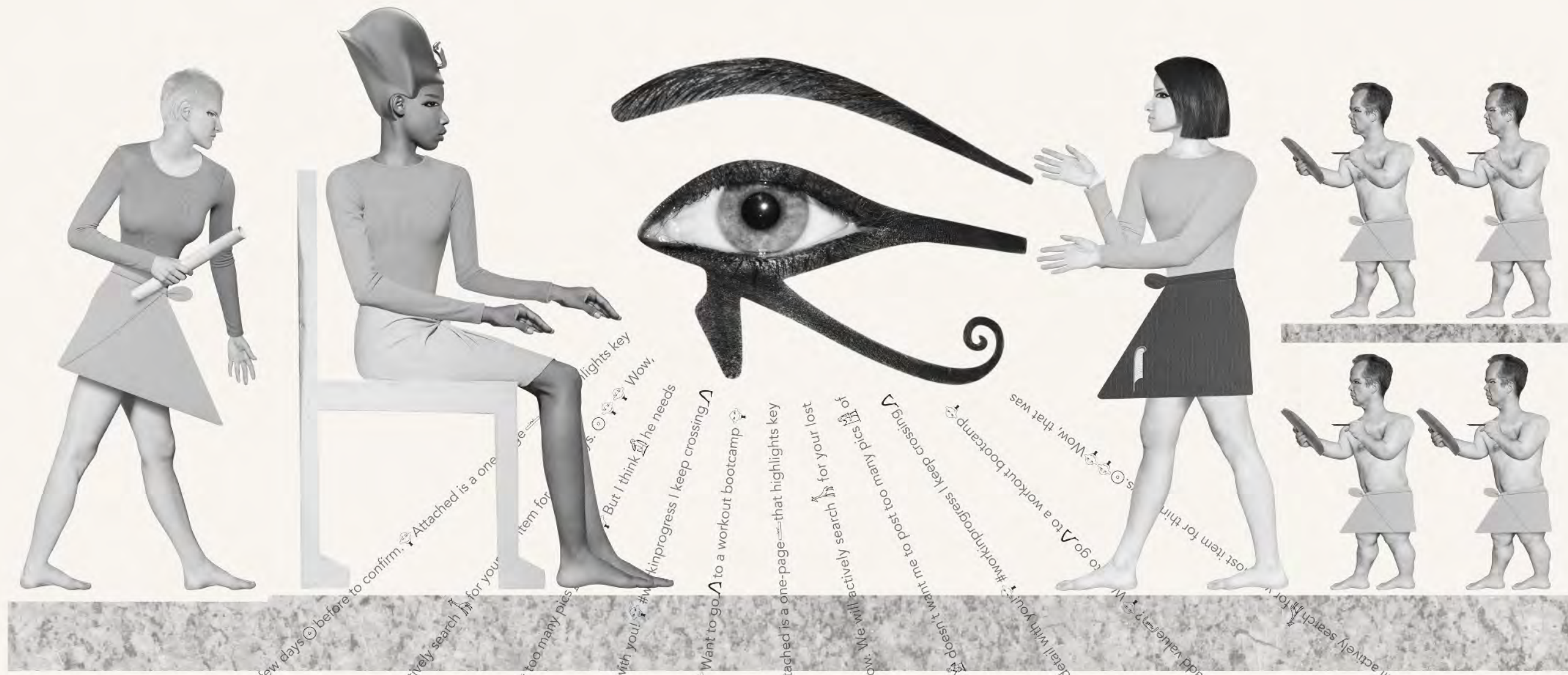
Archival digital pigment prints, ed. 3 + 2 AP  
130cm - 160cm (52" – 63") on the long side, depending on aspect ratio of each photographic relief

O HOW SWEET IS THIS TO SIGHT AND EXAMPLE  
 HOW SLENDERS HE, THE LORD OF COMMAN  
 HOW EXALTED IS HE, THE KING AMONG THE GODS  
 HOW WELOVED IS HE, THE VICTORIOUS RULER  
 SHOUTS GO UP FROM EGYPT'S TOWNS  
 GREAT YOU HAS ARISEN IN EGYPT





THE SEES  WHAT IS IN HEARTS     
 HIS EYES  THEY SEARCH  OUT EVERYBODY



Horus is Watching You

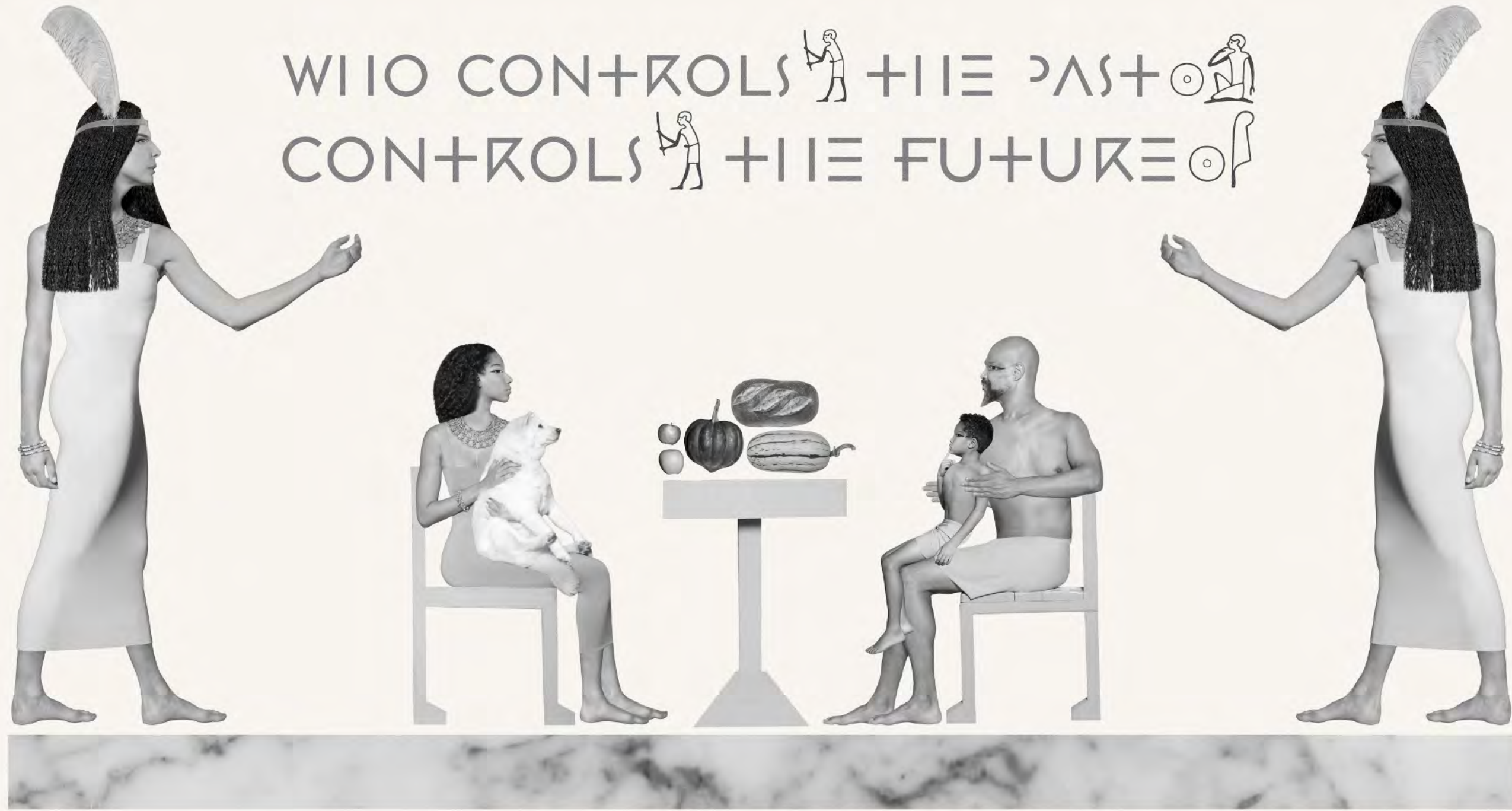


COMING  
QUEEN HAS  
NOW WITH MY  
MINE FOREVER  
ONCE ONIGIT  
IN IS  
KACE HEAR MY HEAR  
SISTER HAS COME MY HEAR + EXULTS  
GLAZE AT MY HEAR + CESSIRE AS SHE STANDS FACING ME  
HAGIVE STRONG I MAKE A WATER-SELL FOR  
HOUSE TO ME + FLOOD AS LAND TO MY FEET I HER LOVE  
MY HEAR + IS STRONG ON + CEET + CROCODILE SEES LIKE A  
WAIT IN + SHALLOW I EN + WATER AND KAVE + WAVES  
OUR VOICES AR MIGHTY AT + IS OF FLOOD A CROCODILE  
RIVER IS WITH WINE  
YONCE R SIDE +  
LOVE IS ON  
MY SISTERS

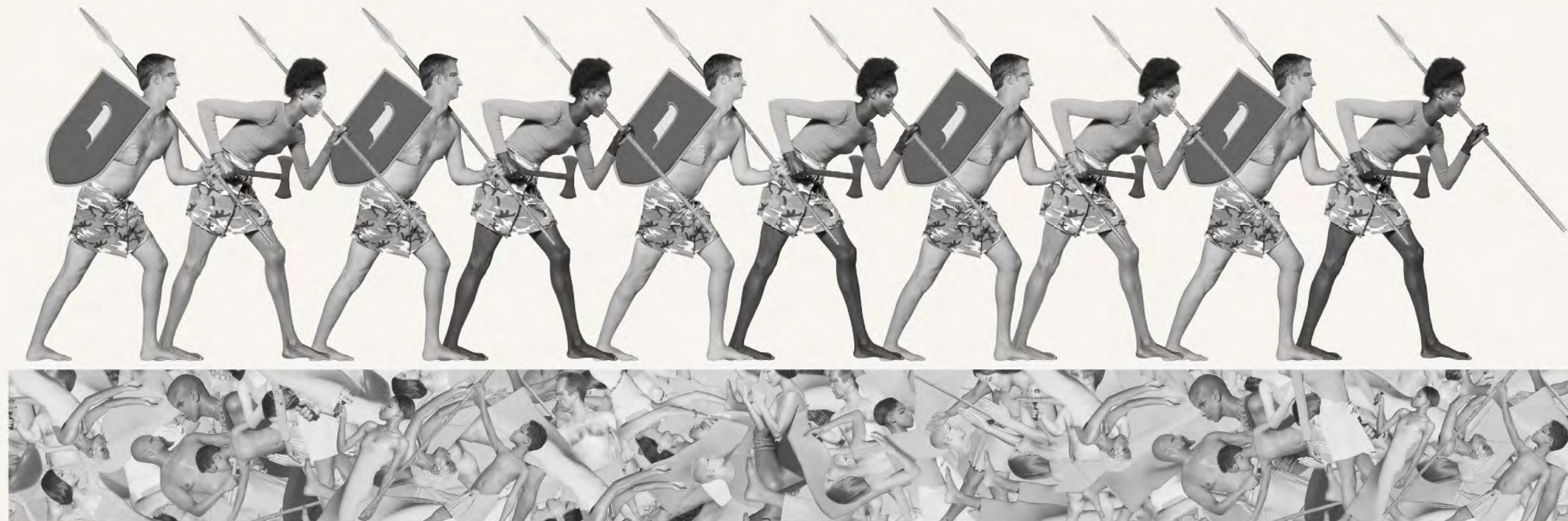
MY HEAR +  
SISTER HAS COME  
GLAZE AT MY HEAR +  
HAGIVE STRONG  
HOUSE TO ME  
MY HEAR + IS STRONG  
WAIT IN + SHALLOW  
OUR VOICES AR  
RIVER IS WITH WINE  
YONCE R SIDE +  
LOVE IS ON  
MY SISTERS

Together Forever

WHO CONTROLS THE PAST  
CONTROLS THE FUTURE

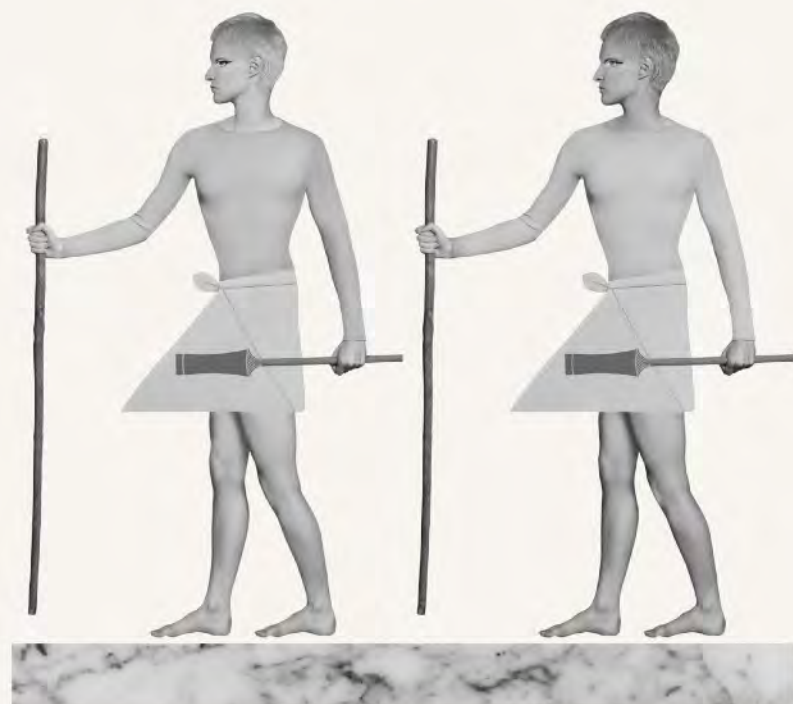


WHO CONTROLS THE PRESENT  
CONTROLS THE PAST



THE IDEOLOGICAL SYSTEM BY WHICH THE WHOLE LEADERSHIP AND PEOPLE ARE FIRMLY ARMED WITH THE IDEOLOGY OF MA'AT AND UNITED SOLIDLY AROUND IT, UNDER THE SOLE LEADERSHIP OF PHAROAH. THREE PRINCIPLES FOR THE ESTABLISHMENT OF THE MONOLITHIC IDEOLOGICAL SYSTEM OF EGYPT:

ORGANIZATIONAL REGULATIONS SO THAT UPPER AND LOWER EGYPT  
 IN CARRYING OUT PHAROAH'S INSTRUCTIONS WE MUST ESTABLISH STRONG  
 WE MUST ACHIEVE STRICTLY TO THE PRINCIPLES OF UNCONDITIONAL Obedience



INHERITING AND COMPLETING IT TO THE END  
 PASS DOWN THE GREAT ACHEIVEMENTS OF PHAROAH FROM GENERATION TO GENERATION  
 MOVE AS ONE UNIFORM AND ONLY LEADERSHIP OF PHAROAH. WE MUST

Dear Pharaoh

## Marc Erwin Babej

American & German, b. 1970, Frankfurt a.M.

### **Education**

M.S., Columbia University Graduate School of Journalism, New York, NY (1993)

A.B., History, Brown University, Providence, RI (1992)

### **Forthcoming Solo Museum Exhibitions**

2019 *Unser Afrika*, Roemer-Pelizaeus Museum, Hildesheim

*Pantheon*, Davison Art Center, Wesleyan University

2020 *Yesterday – Tomorrow*, Reiss-Engelhorn Museen, Mannheim

*Pantheon*, Tampa Museum of Art

### **Selected Solo Exhibitions**

2018 *Yesterday – Tomorrow*, The Egyptian Museum, Cairo

*Unser Afrika*, Rathausdiele, Hamburg

*Yesterday – Tomorrow*, Bibliotheca Alexandrina, Alexandria

2017 *Yesterday – Tomorrow*, Roemer- und Pelizaeus-Museum, Hildesheim, Germany

2016 *Mischlinge*, Kreismuseum Wewelsburg, Büren, Germany

2015 *Mischlinge*, Historical-Technical Museum Peenemünde, Germany

*Mask of Perfection*, Galerie Julian Sander, Bonn

*Mischlinge*, m2a Galerie, Dresden

2014 *Mask of Perfection*, Clarinda Carnegie Art Museum, Clarinda, IA

*Africanae*, Bardo National Museum, Tunis



## Selected Group Exhibitions and Fairs

- 2019 Historical-Technical Museum Peenemünde, *War or Space Travel? The Peenemünde Testing Sites in Public Consciousness Since 1945 (Mischlinge)*  
Memorial Düsseldorf, *The Bodies of the SS: Ideology, Propaganda and Violence (Mischlinge)*
- 2017 House of European History (museum of the European Parliament), images from *Mischlinge* and *Unser Afrika* on permanent display
- 2016 Paris Photo (Galerie Julian Sander)  
Zwischenbilanz - 5 Jahre Bonn (Galerie Julian Sander)
- 2015 Paris Photo (Galerie Julian Sander)
- 2014 Paris Photo (Galerie Julian Sander)  
Scope Basel (AB Gallery)  
Lebensspuren Museum (Wels, Austria)  
Scope New York (Pashmin Art Gallery)  
*Recent Editions* (with Chuck Close & Robert Longo), Adamson Gallery, Washington, DC
- 2013 Pulse Contemporary Art Fair, Miami (Adamson Gallery)

## Selected Collections

- Bibliotheca Alexandrina Museum, Alexandria, Egypt
- Robert & Karen Duncan Collection, Clarinda, IA
- Egyptian Museum, Cairo
- German Federal Ministry of Finance, Berlin
- German Military History Museum, Dresden
- Gösta Serlachius Museum of Art, Finland
- House of European History, Brussels
- Jewish Museum Frankfurt
- Lebensspuren Museum, Austria
- Linden Museum, Stuttgart
- Pushkin State Museum of Art, Moscow
- Roemer- und Pelizaeus Museum, Hildesheim
- Übersee-Museum, Bremen
- Tampa Museum of Art
- The Walther Collection, New York & Neu-Ulm
- Davison Art Center, Wesleyan University

## Selected Bibliography

### Yesterday – Tomorrow (2017)

*Yesterday - Tomorrow: A Work in Aspective Realism*, Kehrer Verlag, Heidelberg, 2017

#### Selected libraries:

- Baltimore Museum of Art
- Bibliothèque Nationale de France
- Brown University
- Catholic University of Argentina
- Central Institute of Art History, Munich
- Centre Pompidou Metz
- Collège de France
- Columbia University
- Duke University
- Emory University
- German National Library
- Getty Research Institute
- Hamburg University
- Harvard University
- Herzogin Anna Amalia Bibliothek, Weimar
- Indiana University
- Leiden University
- The Library of Alexandria (Bibliotheca Alexandrina)
- Library of Congress
- Munich University
- National Art Library, Victoria & Albert Museum
- New York Public Library
- Oxford University
- Princeton University
- Sorbonne/Université Paris IV
- Smithsonian Institution Libraries
- University of Auckland
- University of Basel
- University of British Columbia
- University of Chicago
- University of Michigan
- University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill
- Yale University

ZDF (TV) – *Aspekte*, Marc Erwin Babejs altägyptische Fotokunst (aired 17.3.17)

*Monopol*, Ägyptische Kunst digital in Hildesheim (31.3.17)

NDR, Babej transportiert ägyptische Kunst ins Heute (31.3.17)

*Die Welt*, Fotograf belebt Jahrtausende alte ägyptische Kunst (29.3.17)

*Photo News* (Germany), Marc Erwin Babej: Yesterday – Tomorrow (March 2017 issue)

*GUP Magazine* (Netherlands), Yesterday – Tomorrow (Issue 54, August 2017)

Al Ahram/El Beit Magazine (Egypt), Yesterday – Tomorrow (October 2018 issue)

*El Watan* (Egypt), Yesterday – Tomorrow, Art Between Reality and Imagination (25.5.18)

*Youm Sabie* (Egypt), Yesterday – Tomorrow At the Library of Alexandria (25.5.18)

*Daily News Egypt*, Exhibition Revives Egyptian Iconography in Modern Form (1.9.2018)  
Cairo 360, The Egyptian Museum to Host Marc Babej's Unique Photographs (31.8.2018)  
*Egypt Today*, Egyptian Museum to Host Exhibition by Photographer Marc Erwin Babej (1.9.18)  
Amun, Issue 2, 2018, Yesterday – Tomorrow: A Work in Aspective Realism  
*Focus*, Yesterday - Tomorrow im Roemer- und Pelizaeus Museum (29.3.17)

### **Unser Afrika (2015)**

*The Telegraph*, Hamburg forces Germany to confront colonial legacy with forgotten genocide exhibition (17.6.18)  
*The Art Newspaper*, Hamburg addresses German genocide in Namibia with photography exhibition: Show of Marc Erwin Babej's work comes as Namibia calls on Germany to return cultural treasures (22.6.18)  
*Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung (FAZ)*, Hamburgs Dunkle Vergangenheit (17.6.18)  
ZDF (TV) — *Aspekte*, Völkermord an den Herero: Das Fotoprojekt von Marc Babej (aired 15.6.18)  
*Spiegel Online*, "Deutschland hat verschlafen" (17.6.18)  
*Die Zeit*, "Die Neuvermessung der Welt" (2.8.18)  
*Zeit Online*, Bruch mit den Bildern der Kolonialzeit (19.6.18)  
*Die Welt*, Provokatives Werk zeigt Erbe des Kolonialismus (18.6.18)  
PhotoNews, "Marc Erwin Babej — 'Unser Afrika'" (September 2018 ed.)  
NDR — *Kulturjournal*, "Unser Afrika" (interview) (19.6.18)  
*Hamburger Abendblatt*, Hamburg, Tor zur kolonialen Welt: Marc Erwin Babej zeigt seine Fotoausstellung "Unser Afrika" in der Rathausdiele  
3Sat (TV) — *Kulturzeit*, Marc Erwin Babejs "Unser Afrika" (aired 20.6.18)

### **Mischlinge (2014)**

*NS-Grossanlagen und Tourismus : Chancen und Grenzen der Vermarktung von Orten des Nationalsozialismus*, Ch. Links Verlag, Berlin, 2016

#### **Selected libraries:**

- Brown University
- Cornell University
- Duke University
- Freie Universität Berlin
- German National Library
- German Holocaust Institute
- Harvard University
- New York Public Library
- New York University
- Northwestern University
- Princeton University
- Staatsbibliothek zu Berlin (Preußischer Kulturbesitz)
- Stanford University
- United States Holocaust Memorial Museum

- Universität der Bundeswehr
- University of Michigan
- University of Toronto
- Yale University

*CNN – Amanpour*, Mischlinge (aired 29.1.14)

*PhotoNews* (Germany), Riefenstahl Revisited (Feb. 2015 issue)

*Die Zeit*, Fotograf Marc Erwin Babej – "Wir setzen Pegida etwas entgegen" (22.1.15)

*Ha'aretz*, Hebrew edition, Germans of Today in the Context of the Nazi Past (6.1.15)

*Ha'aretz*, English edition, Using Nazi Settings and DNA Tests, Jewish Photographer Quashes "the Fiction of German Blood" (29.12.14)

*ZDF (TV) – Aspekte*, "Wir sind alle Mischlinge": Die provokanten Fotos von Marc Erwin Babej (21.11.14)

*Gazeta Wyborcza* (Poland), Wszyscy jesteśmy mieszającami. Obcy są w nas (20.6.16)

*3Sat (TV) – Kulturzeit*, Marc Erwin Babej's "Mischlinge" (28.11.14)

*NDR (TV)*, Wer ist Deutscher und wer nicht?

*ARD (TV) – Artour*, *Mischlinge* (aired 29.1.15)

*Spiegel Online*, international premiere dossier (11.11.14)

*Essays*: Marc Erwin Babej: Wir sind Mischlinge

Prof. Thomas Kühne: Der gärende Mischmasch

Dr. Karamba Diaby (Member of the Bundestag)

Cem Özdemir (Member of the Bundestag; Head of the Green Party)

*Spiegel TV*, Fotoprojekt von Marc Erwin Babej: Typisch deutsch? (11.11.14)

### **Mask of Perfection (2013)**

*The Telegraph*, Paris Photo Preview (9.11.14)

*American Photo*, Marc Erwin Babej's "Mask of Perfection"

*L'Oeil de la Photographie*, Mask of Perfection (1.3.14)

*The Washington Post*, Mask of Perfection at Adamson Gallery (31.3.14)

*Spiegel Online*, Schönheitschirurg Dr. Frankenstein (4.7.13)

*La Repubblica*, La maschera della perfezione (10.8.13)

*Die Presse*, Mask of Perfection (8.7.13)

### **Lectures & Teaching**

2019

- Harvard University: *Yesterday – Tomorrow*
- New York University: *Pantheon*
- Wesleyan University: *Pantheon*

2018

- Freiburg University: *Unser Afrika*
- The Egyptian Museum, Cairo: *Yesterday – Tomorrow*
- Ludwig Maximilian University, Munich: *Unser Afrika*
- Ludwig Maximilian University, Munich: *Yesterday - Tomorrow*
- University of Pretoria: *Unser Afrika*
- Bucerius Forum and Hamburg University: Re-Viewing Colonialism (*Unser Afrika*)
- University of Virginia: Visiting Fellow

- *Mischlinge*
- *Unser Afrika*
- Project on: *Identity & Media: The Power of Imagery / The Imagery of Power*

## **Collaborators**

- Dr. Philipp Aumann, Historical-Technical Museum Peenemünde (German history, history of technology)
- Prof. Mariam Ayad, American University in Cairo (Egyptology/philology)
- Dr. Christian Bayer, Roemer-Pelizaeus Museum (Egyptology/art history)
- Prof. Dr. Volker R. Berghahn, Columbia University (German history)
- Prof. Laurel Bestock, Brown University (Egyptology/archaeology)
- Matthew Brennan (Informatics, virtual archaeology)
- Prof. Peter Der Manuelian, Harvard University (Egyptology, virtual archaeology)
- Prof. Roxana Flammini, Catholic University of Buenos Aires/CONICET (Egyptology)
- Prof. Bernard Frischer, Indiana University (Informatics, Classics, virtual archaeology)
- Oliver Gauert, M.A., Roemer-Pelizaeus Museum (Egyptology/mummies)
- Prof. Salima Ikram, Yale University (Egyptology/archaeology, mummies)
- Prof. David Konstan, New York University
- Prof. Thomas Kühne, Clark University (German History, genocide studies)
- Prof. Nancy Llewellyn (Classics/Latin)
- Dr. Christian Loeben, Museum August Kestner Hannover (Egyptology)
- Prof. Henning Melber, University of Uppsala (German history/colonialism)
- Prof. Juan Carlos Moreno García, Université Paris IV/ Sorbonne
- Dr. Matthias Müller, Basel University (Egyptology/epigraphy)
- Ray Müller (filmmaking; Leni Riefenstahl)
- Dr. Sylvia Necker, Institute for Contemporary History, Munich (German history, musical composition)
- Prof. Emeritus Kurt Raaflaub, Brown University (Classics, Roman history)
- Prof. Thomas Schneider, University of British Columbia (Egyptology/philology)
- Prof. Regine Schulz, Roemer-Pelizaeus Museum (Egyptology/art history)
- Prof. Emeritus Alan Shapiro, Johns Hopkins University (Classics)
- Prof. Andrew Szegedy-Maszak, Wesleyan University (Classics)
- Janet Stephens (Archaeology, hair)
- Prof. Ulrich Van der Heyden, Humboldt University Berlin (German history/colonialism)
- Prof. Stephen Vinson, Indiana University (Egyptology/philology)
- Dr. Joachim Zeller (German history/colonialism)
- Prof. Jürgen Zimmerer, Hamburg University (German history/colonialism, genocide studies)

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