



**Sorcery, Transcendence and a Meeting of Divine Feminine Spirits for *Vagina's Apologies*  
7.7.16 at Urban Spree, Berlin  
Curated by SHALTMIRA**

Participating Artists:

SHALTMIRA  
[www.shaltmira.com](http://www.shaltmira.com)

THE ORACLE (JULIA SINELNIKOVA)  
[www.juliasinelnikova.com](http://www.juliasinelnikova.com)

ZIGENDEMONIC  
[www.zigendemoniac.org](http://www.zigendemoniac.org)

CULTTASTIC  
[www.culttastic.com](http://www.culttastic.com)

DANAE-CUESTA  
<http://cargocollective.com/danaeshootsfilm/>

DOLLAR BABY  
[www.facebook.com/dollarbaby666](http://www.facebook.com/dollarbaby666)

VIVIANA DRUGA  
[www.vivianadruga.com](http://www.vivianadruga.com)

CHORDEVA  
<https://chordeva.com/>



***IMAGE: Shaltmira photographer by Laima S. aka WHOARE YOU***

*Vagina's Apologies* is a vision brought forth by Lithuanian artist and organizer Shaltmira, known for her complex, dark illustrations and ritualistic performances. Shaltmira has recently relocated to Berlin, and for this exhibition she brings together a diverse group of visual and performing artists with international backgrounds, all of whom are tied together by their alchemical approach to feminism. The participating

*artists draw equal inspiration from the futuristic to the traditional, drawing on technology, cyberfeminism, and ancient witchcraft to fuse the digital and the handmade into synergistic works. The exhibition ranges from visual art, live performance and video projections, framed by the driving musical stylings of UnReaL and Worshippers.*

*For both the curator and the artists, breaking down the walls of gender and the way it is conceived in language and society is a goal and a tool. They aim to use humor, charged imagery and the body in its extreme forms to demolish the labels which continue to haunt even the most progressive circles. The fluidity of the human spirit trumps all in this exploration, rather than a single definition of what is, or of the right approach to these questions. In an era where the norms of gender and methodologies of feminist art have come to the forefront of the discussion in many parts of the world, the participating artists bravely examine these issues through photography, costume, video, illustration and song.*

*Notably, most of the artists hail from Eastern Europe (Russia, Lithuania, Ukraine, Romania), while all are loosely based in Berlin and Brooklyn, New York. Eastern European folklore is rich with allusions to witchcraft and sorcery – these are the types of stories children are commonly raised reading, and idiomatic phrases in the languages often derive from such tales, making their way into the common consciousness. Thus, artists steeped in technology in their urban worlds are drawing on a deep cultural connection to their heritage.*

## **SHALTMIRA**



***IMAGE: Shaltmira photographer by Laima S. aka WHOARE YOU***

### **How would you describe your visual work?**

My work is full of sharp teeth, indecent poses, open erotica, anatomic abnormalities, beasts, and hybrids, all in constant battle. The dark imagery arises from melancholic beauty in decadence as I draw the nonexistent world to create a timeless space, as a place of acting opportunities for individuals resurrected through my drawings.

My visual stories which incorporate occultism, mysticism, alchemy and the cosmos have deep mythological meanings as narratives that reveal specific problems that arise from our common society, and to show possible ways of solving these problems with their outcomes. My drawings are a visual chronicle of loneliness and custom gods, told through canvas, paint, ink and other handwork. The esoteric in dialogue with the demonic comic aspects make for a relationship which plays with extremes.

### **Shaltmira is your alter-ego. Can you reveal the nature of her character, what she means to you?**

Shaltmira is the Shaman holding the chaotic black mirror to your face, helping to build a bridge through the gaze. This bridge connects the darkest aspects of the human psyche and the highest forms of consciousness, a sort of contemporary grimoire that evokes equal parts Ishtar and GG Allin.

Shaltmira is magickal blackness in the broadest sense of the word. What the alchemist would call the Nigredo or the confrontation of the human shadow. It is in that sense fearlessness, and it is through that intimate inspection of darkness that energy is transferred to the audience.

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## THE ORACLE (JULIA SINELNIKOVA)



***IMAGE: THE ORACLE Julia Sinelnikova photographed by Eva Mueller***

**Light sculpture seems to play a central role in your work. Can you elaborate on how your physical sculptures fit into your multimedia practice?**

Working with my hands to construct freestanding sculptures with a massive presence is my focus, and serves as a launching point for building immersive environments through the manipulation of space and light. Modular forms are crucial to this process: I cut and assemble very small shapes into much larger sculptures, which are often built to fill a warehouse space. Living in a world which communicates through tiny packets of data - code, cells, short messages and pixels - this practice serves as a parallel to my social reality, and also serves as a therapy due to its slow and laborious nature.

My intricately hand cut light sculptures comprise a body of work entitled "Fairy Organs." This series juxtaposes the ancient myth of the fairies (known for both effervescent wish grant power and manipulative trickery) with my fascination with modern methods of transforming the body and persona through the Internet and plastic surgery. The sculptures emit inviting light but are built primarily through cutting, their form alien and full of edges. These works become alive when I install them in space and dance with them as my character "The Oracle." I use video footage of these performances to create holographic animations, which I project back onto my sculptures to create immersive light retractions. In this sense my process is recursive, constantly feeding into itself.



***IMAGE: THE ORACLE Julia Sinelnikova photographed by Eva Mueller***

**What role does performance play in your work?**

I began performing as "The Oracle" through my role at Vector Gallery ([www.vectorgallery.com](http://www.vectorgallery.com)), a traveling conceptual project founded by my good friend and collaborator JJ Brine. We have worked together extensively at his semi-permanent spaces in NYC and LA since 2013, and the newest public Vector Gallery will open in New York's Lower East Side this fall. For this project I have created costumes, led sermons and meditations, and participated in extensive dialogue regarding religion and philosophy with visitors to the space, which has historically been housed in storefronts accessible from the street. In fact, it is through Vector that I met Xenolith Y, aka CULTTASTIC, who is also performing at Vagina's Apologies.

My work with Vector made me more comfortable with inserting my physical body into my work through performance, video, and photography. As a result, I have been photographing and filming myself in character around the world since 2014, such as in Finland, Canada, and most recently in Corsica with Don De Vore behind the camera.

## CULTTASTIC



***IMAGE: CULTTASTIC photographed by Julia Sinelnikova at Vector Gallery LA***

**Can you tell us about your relationship with magic and the occult and how it influences your music? What message do you send with your art?**

I see the act of magic as fundamentally an aesthetic experience, in the same way that music is. Conversely, the act of creating music is alchemical, and performance is ritualistic. I see reality as consisting of intersecting symbols, and I have a fascination with "bad taste," so I like to combine contradicting symbols. My music attempts to capture the feeling of indulging in depravity, melancholy and virtual reality because these archetypes are considered to be obstructive and are simultaneously fetishized in our culture. I like to let my morbid fascinations guide me so I can find and extract what is enchanting from what is ugly. The message I want to share is this: "Exercise your imagination," because society conditions people to be "realistic"-and therefore predictable and easy to manipulate. I want to promote individuality and free thought! You can find me on [www.alienlanding.biz](http://www.alienlanding.biz)!



*IMAGE: CULTTASTIC photographed by Julia Sinelnikova at Vector Gallery LA*

**ZIGENDEMONIC**



*IMAGE: ZIGENDEMONIC, "Super Rich Fast Food Eater"*

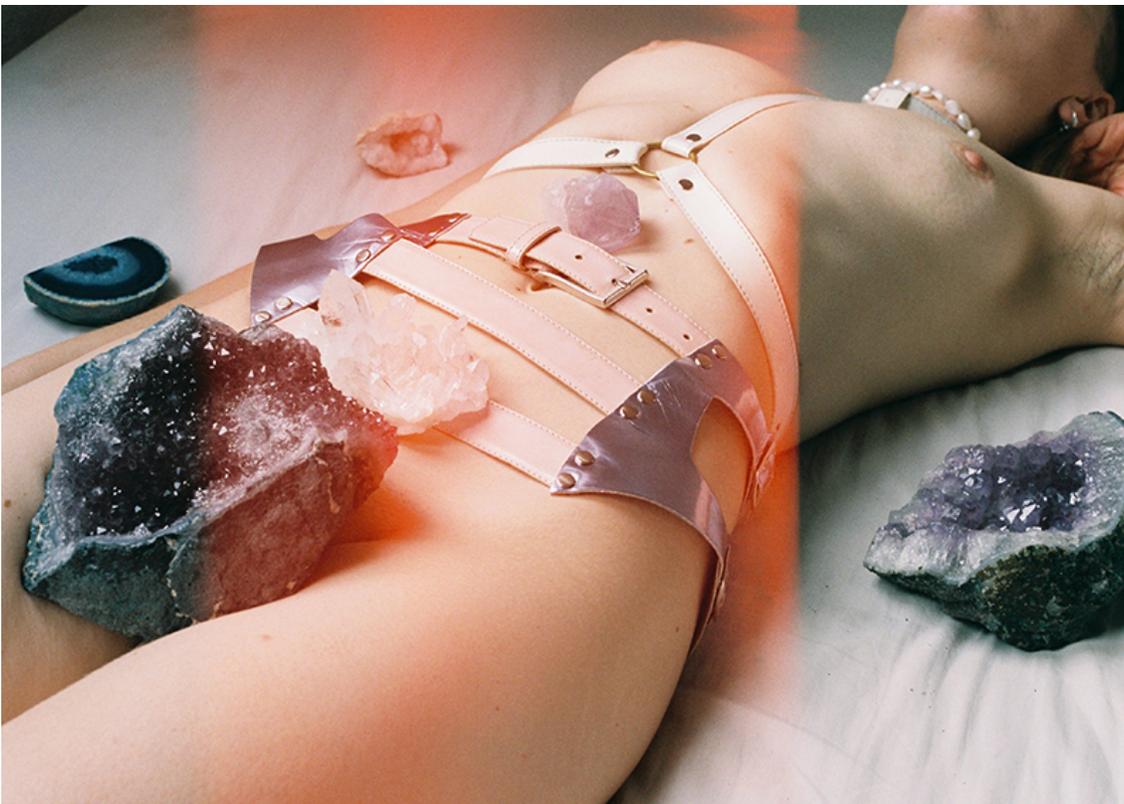
**Your detailed, demonic illustrations possess the viewer through a kind of dark, psychedelic energy. How does consciousness and spirituality tie into your visual art?**

All ever seen accumulated in the subconscious as a huge interwoven chaos of visual images - which begins to manifest itself as dreams, obsessions and visions - and as completely formed abstract stream going into the canvas.

I'm trying to convey an emotional attitude to certain cult objects and attributes of the modern world - transferred into a neutral space and changing their values to make an absurd combination with each other. Maintaining a sense of melancholy, of irrationality, to reveal the ambivalence of objects and symbols, experimenting and changing the hierarchy of fetish objects. In my works, I often use the method of free association, leaving enough space for the "law of randomness", trying to go beyond the generally accepted limits of a visual image - for me is important to bring to the canvas images from the subconscious. I am calling on the viewer to peek over the brink of stereotypical thinking in the search for new levels of visual beauty.

I take pleasure in the observation of the supersaturated visual space, especially digital "dimension," where the atmosphere of the information chaos is predominant. This causes a feeling of romantic tragedy in the face of absolute beauty, new technologies, and sentimentality of sleepless nights spent staring at the computer monitor, and the sweet lucid dreams after.

## **DÁNAE CUESTA**



***IMAGE: Artwork by Danae Cuesta***

## **How does the body channel magick? What are you seeking to evoke with your images?**

I am interested not only in portraying the female figure, but to admire the feminine essence, the feminine creativity, and the feminine sexuality.

Altering the prevailing *lebenswelt* (existential structure), envisioning qualitatively new modes of seeing and new relations between human beings, technology and nature.

I consider my work part of the post-porn movement: the process of humanizing the bodies that have been traditionally objectified in porn representation, of empowerment and re-appropriation of the sexual representation.

Magick is in the core of creativity, creativity that comes from sexuality.

## **How have feminist art movements influenced your work?**

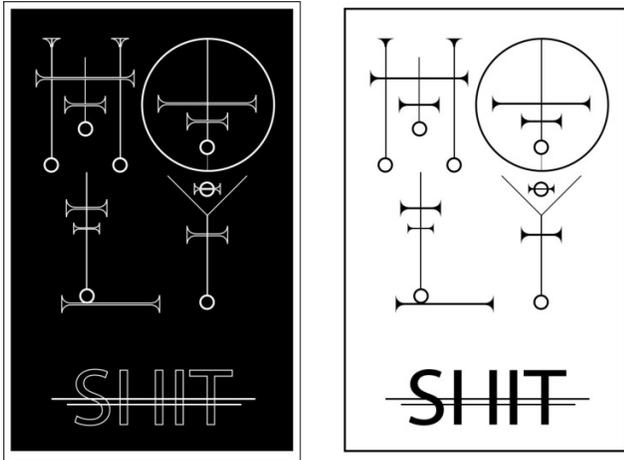
I see technology and the internet as a way to dissolve gender and sex divisions.

Somehow we have to go back to the witches. The witch, la mujer, the poet, the one with the knowledge of nature, the enchanting, the nonconforming. The witches were women who resisted the establishment of an unjust social order - the mechanical exploitation of capitalism.

“we see art with our cunt we make art with our cunt  
we believe in jouissance madness holiness and poetry  
we are the virus of the new world disorder  
rupturing the symbolic from within  
saboteurs of big daddy mainframe  
the clitoris is a direct line to the matrix”

- *VNS Matrix, Australian Cyberfeminist Artist Collective, 1991*

**CHORDEVA**



**IMAGE: Chordeva, “Type For The Wicked”**  
**How you feel Lilith showing in your life?**

Several aspects of Lilith accompanied my whole life. Her symbolic power for the anti-patriarchal and feminism in general is definitely one of the most common themes for me. What empowers me personally is her unbreakable passion. She was abandoned by the ones she loved because of her dedication to her own free will and non-conform way of thinking. I think her restlessness and devotion to her passion influenced me in how I am dealing with my own method of creation.

**What message is important for you to transmit with your art?**

I want to give empathy and sensuality a new powerful connotation by creating art that combines filigree illustrative parts with strong contrasts in form or material. Empathic people are still misinterpreted, their behavior mistaken for weakness. In my opinion being empathic in our society is the most powerful and natural, intrinsic way to be, even if it is painful.

## VIVIANA DRUGA



*IMAGE: Viviana Druga, "Natur Götter," 2013*

### **What is it about rebirth that fascinates you?**

It's linked to my childhood. I went through a very dark time when I was a teenager when I read Emil Cioran, a Romanian philosopher. He's a total nihilist and I couldn't see any hope at all for humanity. I couldn't sleep during that time; I didn't sleep for two years. My parents took me to priests to exorcise the devil from my body, but I didn't like the church and I didn't trust the priests. I ended up gulping down a load of sleeping pills and vodka. I slept for three days after that. I had no dreams; it was a kind of half-coma. My entire system shut down – it was fantastic. It was a little death. Afterwards, I read that it's common for shamans in various cultures to do similar things before they become shamans. They go through a crisis and then a ritual. It could be piercing their bodies, or inducing a death-like state. I think that's what I did. I had nowhere to go, so I induced that state. When I woke up and came out, I just wanted to hug everything I could see. The trees, the buses, the trams. It was incredible. I often relate to that awakening in my performances. It's like gestures of thanks and understanding to life and death. A reminder to be thankful for being here and to cherish it.

## DOLLAR BABY



*IMAGE: Dollar Baby*

### **What does your alter-ego DOLLAR BABY represent?**

Dollar Baby is a drag disaster. Transgressing boundaries between drag, satanic striptease and ritualistic performance, she was resurrected from the crypt of shattered teenage dreams and is out there to slay in corpse paint and high heels.