

# James Alec Hardy & Martine Poppe

27 Apr — 9 Jun 2018 at the Kristin Hjellegjerde Gallery in London, United Kingdom

14 MAY 2018



James Alec Hardy & Martine Poppe. Courtesy of Kristin Hjellegjerde Gallery

Marking the gallery's 6-year anniversary, London-based Kristin Hjellegjerde is delighted to announce the opening of its second space in Berlin.

Coinciding with Berlin Gallery Weekend, the inaugural exhibition, *Aphrodite Lowers Her Mirror*, presents new works by Norwegian painter Martine Poppe and British video installation artist James Alec Hardy. Together, their works mirror each other's investigations of feedback loops, and of the physical and digital manipulations between subject and object that mark this process.

The exhibition's title takes its cue from the curious phenomenon in Western art history of depicting Venus, known as Aphrodite's roman match, gazing into a mirror. However, by the laws of optics, what the audience is shown in the mirror reflection is not what Aphrodite herself could possibly see. Such visual manipulation is apparent from age to age: in former times, Velasquez, Titian, and Rubens only created harmless illusions to depict Aphrodite's beauty simultaneously from the back to front. Correspondingly, in today's world, our reality is mirrored in fake news, Facebook, photoshopped pictures and post-truth videos. We see what is intended to be seen, but is this silhouette of reality showing us any truth?

Contemporary artists have a responsibility to act as mirrors, providing a reflective commentary on societal views and attitudes. In their work, Poppe and Hardy are figuratively letting Aphrodite lower her mirror – they encourage the viewers to go deeper, to question manipulated views, and to reveal, at least once in a while, the real world around us.

Poppe records photographic images by painting from top left to bottom right. The process is intensely physical, requiring the artist to perform as a human printer, replicating full-scale prints onto translucent polyester restoration fabric. The fabric acts as a screen during the painting process, covering the print and revealing the artist relationship with the chosen subject. Rhythmic brushstrokes are all that remains of the movement and action of painting. The resulting image, both subject and object,

triumphs over its content, and act as a naked and honest dialogue with the viewer. In this human-machine interface of interpreting and replicating photography, Poppe creates a loop between the artist, the artwork and the viewer. The exhibition reflects on the cycle of an entire day through light, from the morning sky to the evening scene of moon lit clouds.

Hardy's work is presented through swirling floor-based works and rising totems of stacked video screens. His escalating ladder-like shapes of overlapping video frames are forever renewing and regenerating, like oscillating antennas from some lost sci-fi movie. Arranged in a geometric layout, the video works are mirrored by totems of unique C-type prints, a reverse of Poppe's process, as it were. Poppe's works make permanent productions of fleeting moments by committing them to screens, while Hardy's video works are looping visitations to the same screen. Each of these cycles subsist between the tangible and intangible, fleeting and permanent: looking at you looking at them, reflected in the mirror. As Poppe's and Hardy's works offer a meditative projection for our own truth, the intimate, almost oasis-like gallery space in Berlin gives viewers a meditative space for reflection. Eventually, Aphrodite lowers her mirror. And we?

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## Kristin Hjellegjerde Gallery

Kristin Hjellegjerde Gallery quickly gained recognition in the contemporary art world for showing a roster of innovative, international artists, both emerging and established, with strong theoretical and aesthetic bases.

[Gallery profile](#)

Location

London, United Kingdom

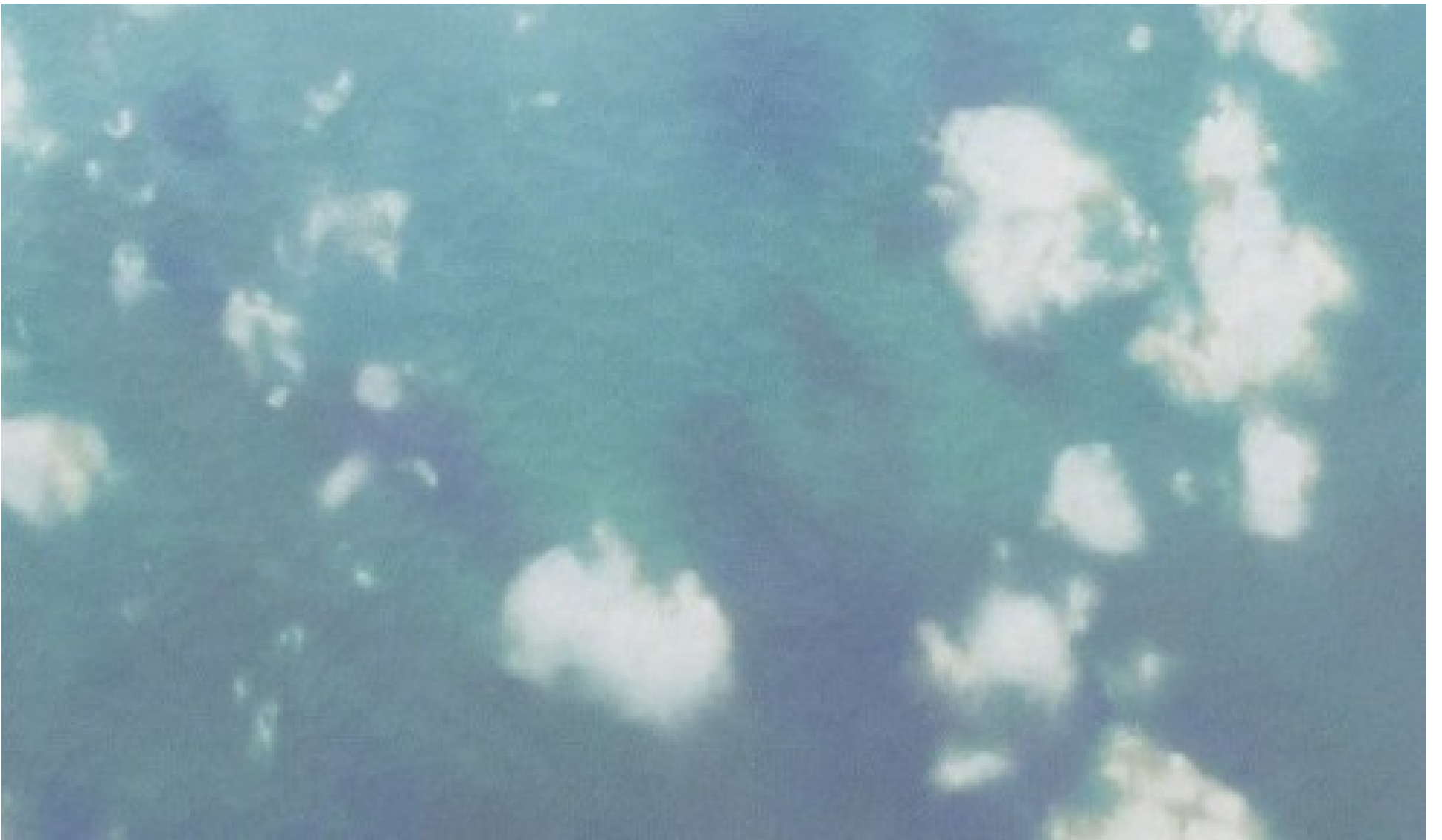
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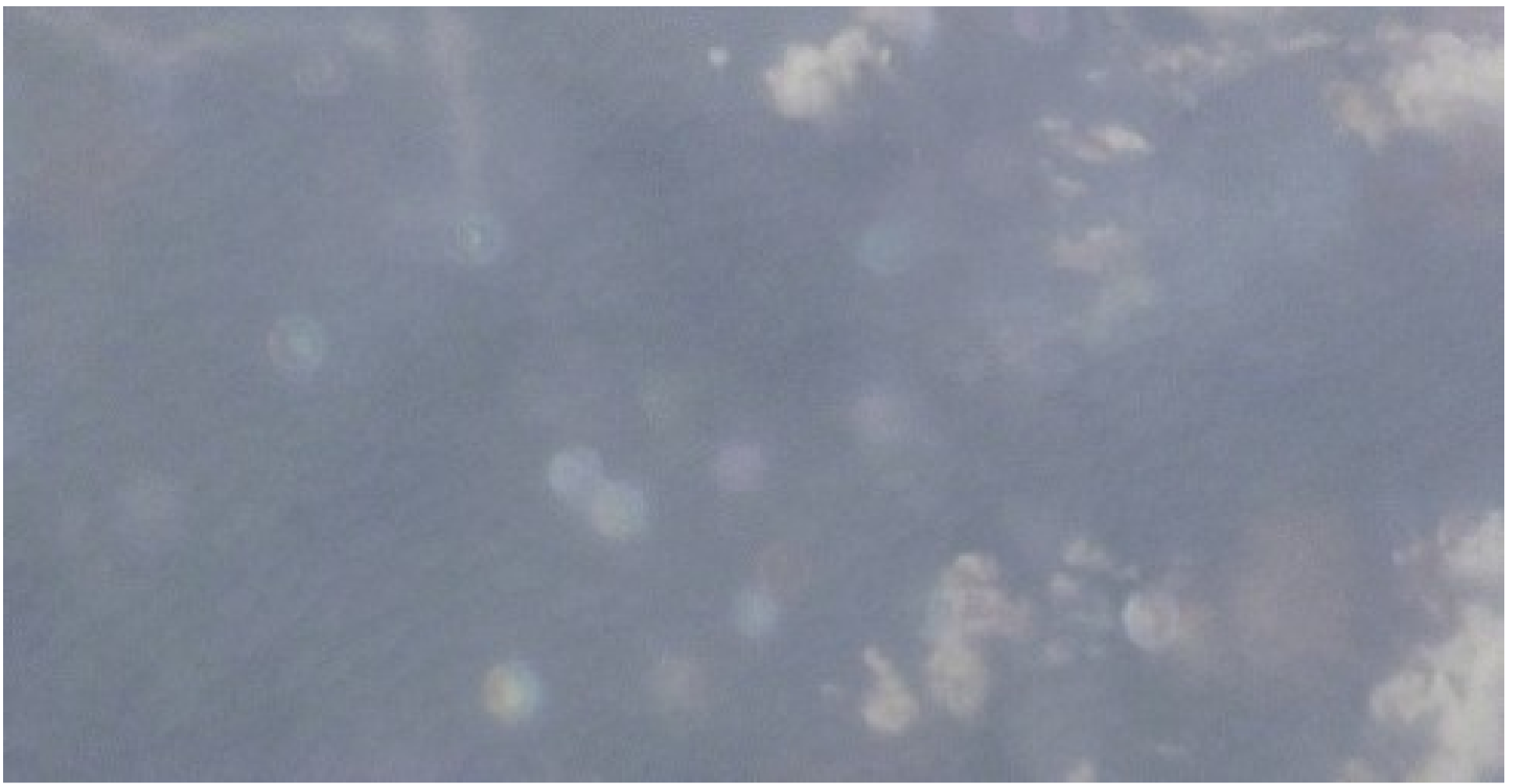
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- 1. James Alec Hardy & Martine Poppe. Courtesy of Kristin Hjellegjerde Gallery
- 2. James Alec Hardy & Martine Poppe. Courtesy of Kristin Hjellegjerde Gallery
- 3. James Alec Hardy & Martine Poppe. Courtesy of Kristin Hjellegjerde Gallery

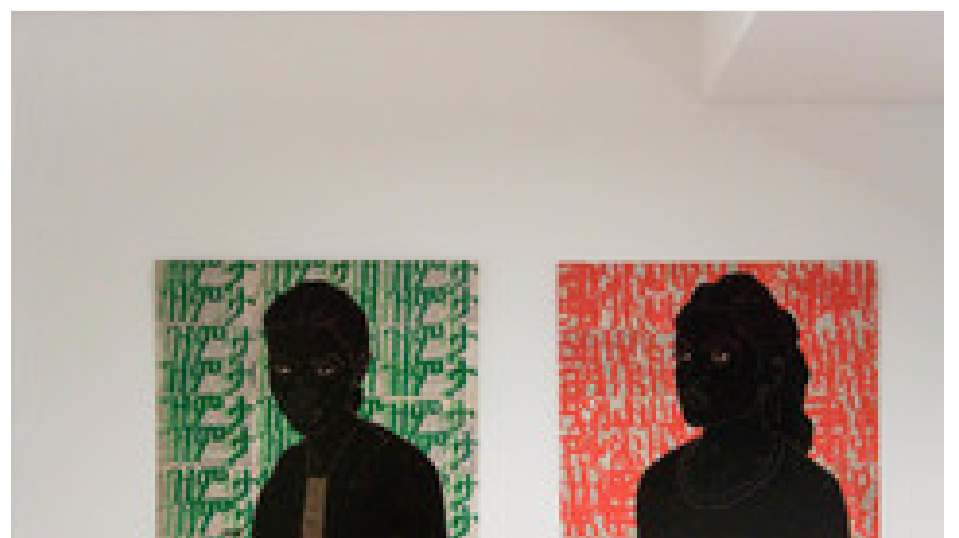
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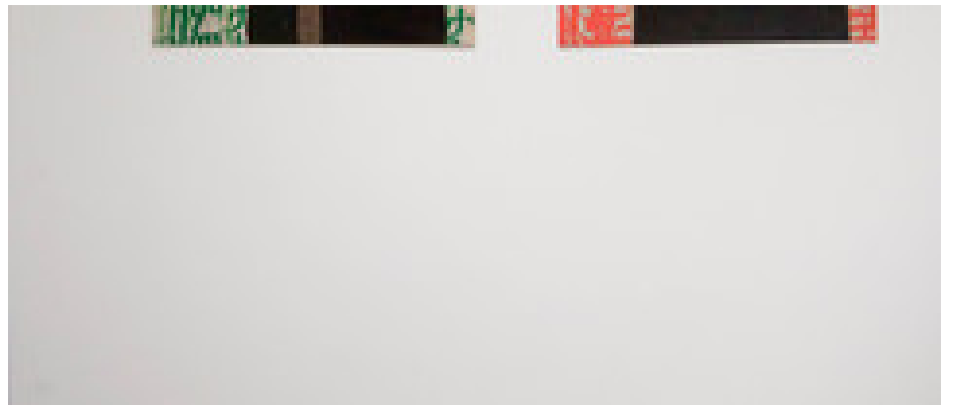


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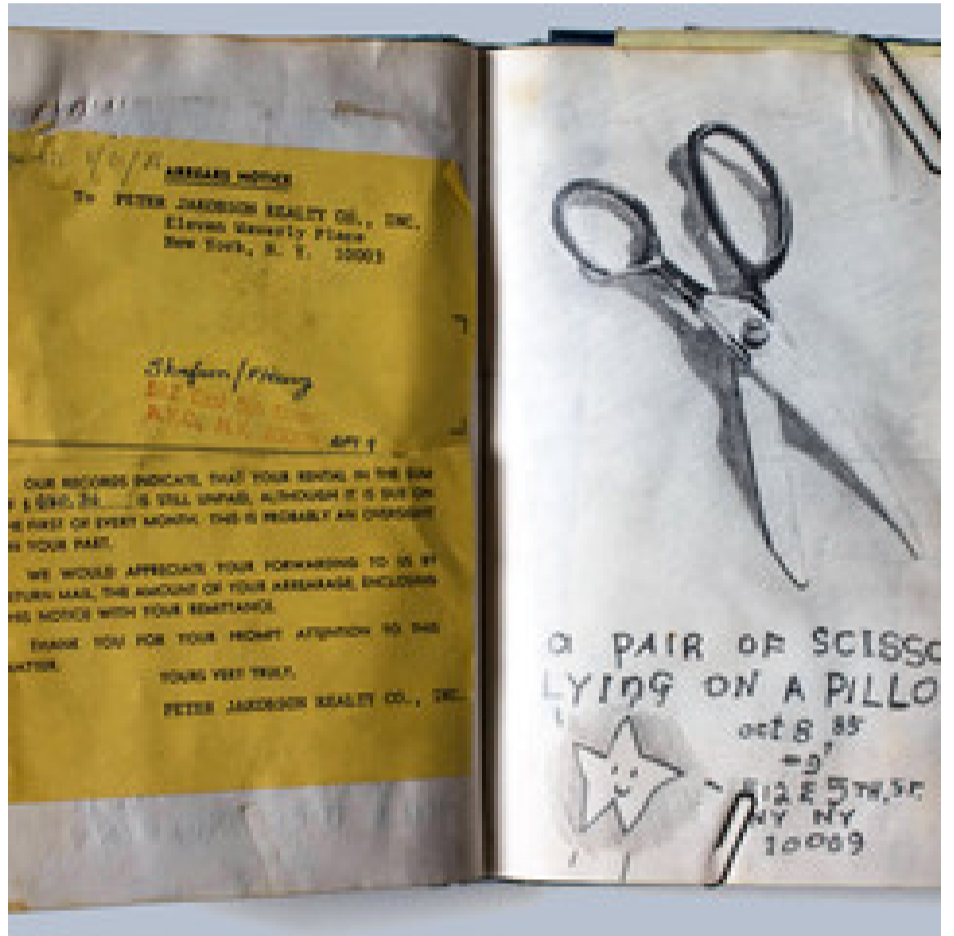


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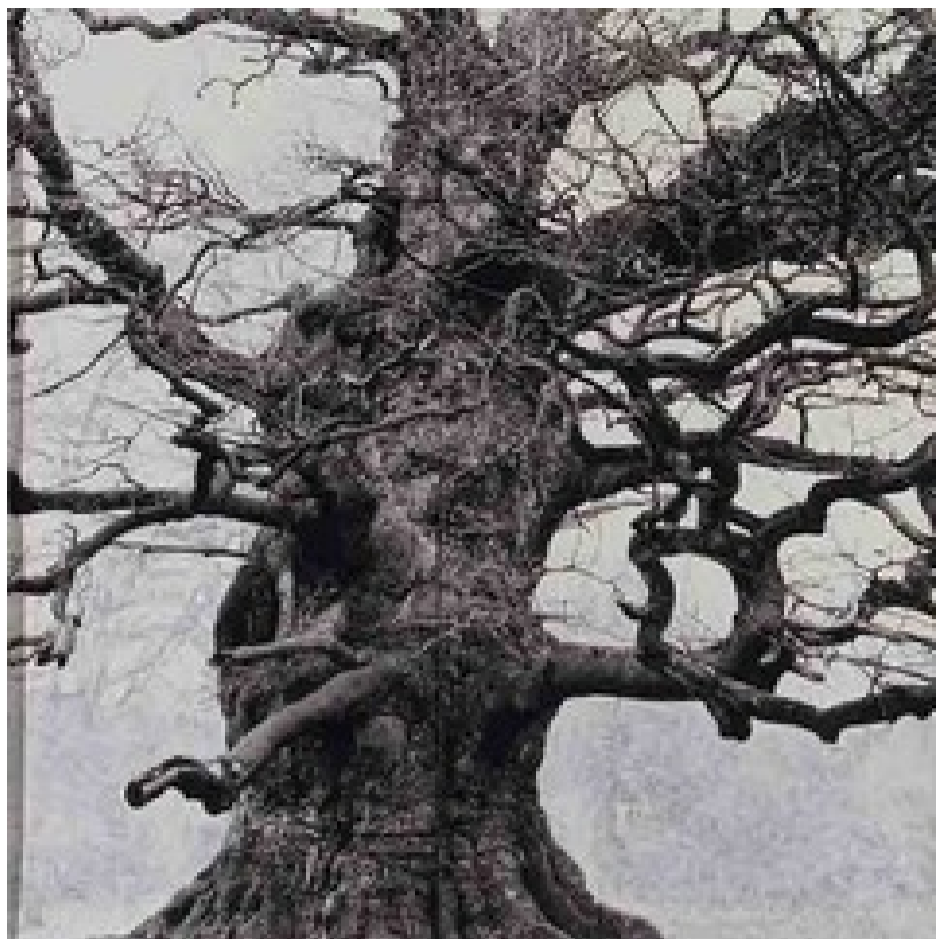


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Allyson Strafella  
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