

## *Do You Ever Just Ascend?*(1)

The struggle is real.

*Do You Ever Just Ascend?* is an exercise in reflection on identity. We are living through the moment when identity politics became a tool of division, through which the intensity and precariousness of late capitalist work culture have left us in a state of simultaneous exhaustion and overstimulation.(2) As the Western paradigm keeps proving to have fundamental faults we turn to identity for insights into ourselves.

In *Do You Ever Just Ascend?* each exhibition offers a profoundly personal take on identity, on working through it, unlearning and learning from it, challenging it.

The central point lies not in the recognition or affirmation of identity, but rather in its destabilisation. Exploring the revolutionary potential of self-abolition of identity offers a hopeful promise of the future, even as it is slowly being cancelled.(Ibid) After all, as Negri puts it, revolutionary politics has to start from identity but cannot end there.(3)

In the past couple of decades, identity politics has replaced economic issues as the defining narrative in politics.(4) Today, the notion of identity penetrates all realms of life – from personal to political and beyond. In the utopian safe space of the gallery, four artistic perspectives unfold in four distinct ways, as they touch on questions of personal history, dogmatic knowledge, political struggle and mythology. Since identity is not a fixed construct, maybe just for a moment, let us lose who we are to discover who we can become.

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1 <https://www.instagram.com/doyoueverjustfuckingascend/>

2 Franco “Bifo” Berardi, “Precarious Rhapsody. Semiocapitalism and the

pathologies of the post-alpha generation.”, *Minor Compositions*, London, 2009;

3 Michael Hardt, Antonio Negri, “*Commonwealth*”, The Belknap Press of Harvard university press, Cambridge, Massachusetts, 2009;

4 Francis Fukuyama “*Against Identity Politics: The New Tribalism and the Crisis of Democracy*”, *Foreign Affairs*, September/October, 2018.