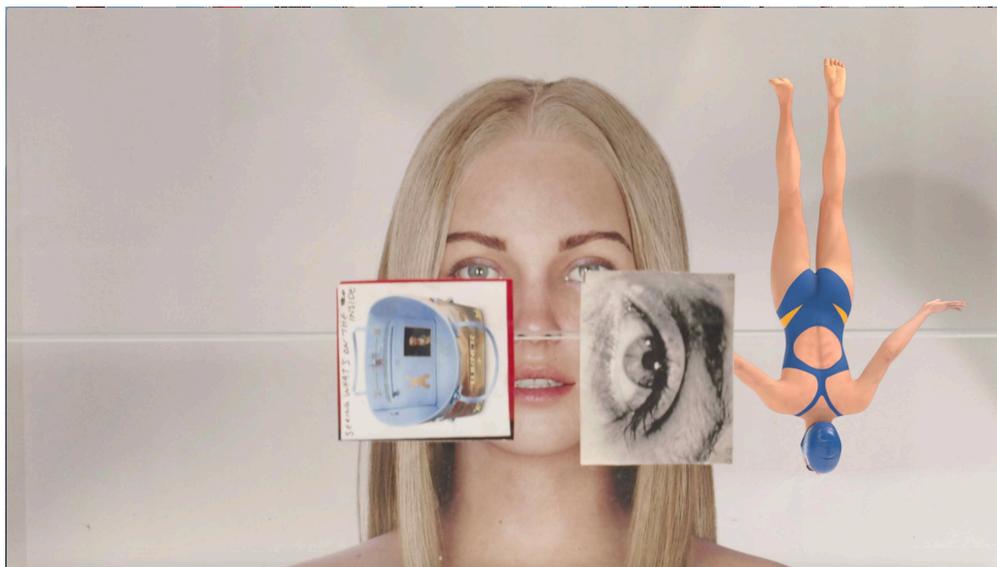


The New York Times



Still from Sara Cwynar's 19-minute video, "Glass Life" (2021). Credit... Sara Cwynar and Foxy Production

Sara Cwynar

Through Oct. 23 at Foxy Production,
2 East Broadway, Manhattan. 212-
239-2758; foxyproduction.com.

The Germans have a nice term to describe the tsunami of images that overtook us in the digital revolution of the 1980s and '90s: Bilderflut, or the "image flood." Sara Cwynar doesn't mention this term in her six-channel video "Glass Life" at Foxy Production. (The show's title comes instead from Shoshana Zuboff's 2019 book "The Age of Surveillance Capitalism," which describes how data-driven technology has infiltrated our lives and eroded privacy and healthy forms of social connection.)

Cwynar's "Glass Life," however, comprises a deluge of images and a recurring figure: a swimmer who glides between pictures, alluding to what it is like to live in a world virtually flooded with photographic images at every turn. Nowadays, algorithms "curate" the images shown to us, and "Glass Life" follows this logic. The video is deeply personal, functioning as an archive of Cwynar's past work. It features images of news events, sports figures, entertainers, G20 political leaders and references to authors who wrote about photography like Berenice Abbott, Walter Benjamin and Vilém Flusser. It also showcases people and entities who have deployed images with surgical expertise: Marilyn Monroe, Ronald Reagan, Kim Kardashian, Google and, of course, the algorithmically driven "surveillance" capitalism referred to by Zuboff. "Glass Life" beautifully captures what it is like to spend your life scrolling through images designed to arrest your attention, and the fatigue of living in such a climate. I was exhausted after watching this 19-minute video. Not too tired to check my Insta-gram a few minutes later, though.

MARTHA SCHWENDENER