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TRANSHUMANISM

BEYOND THE BODY

Monograph coordinated by Salvador Macip

Science allows us to understand the world we live in. Centuries of research have helped us learn more about our place in the universe, and we have discovered a perhaps even more fascinating mystery: how the organism we inhabit works and the reasons why it stops doing so. In this field, as in many others, we have gone from just admiring nature's wonders to being able to control them.

The goal of medicine has always been to fight against the laws of biology and thus extend our lifespan and improve our quality of life. We are now in the 21st century, in the postgenomics era. We have managed to read the genetic instructions that make us humans, and medicine – now morphed into biomedicine after becoming a hub for a series of diverse scientific disciplines – is tackling new challenges. The idea now is not only to increase our healthspan, but to redefine humanity. We have managed to develop tools not only to cure diseased organisms, but also to improve healthy ones. We just need to decide how to use them.

Science fiction authors have talked about posthumans for decades as the next step in our evolution: human beings sculpted not by millennia of natural selection, but by sheer science. With the help of genetics, robotics, and chemistry, we are now finally ready to cross this threshold. The most far-fetched futures can become reality, but this also includes many dystopian alternatives. Therefore, it is important to open an urgent debate to discuss the best ways to face the challenge of transhumanism, an unstoppable movement that demands to improve our bodies using all the technologies at our disposal.

This monograph aims to explore the topic from different angles and to provide arguments to participate in what might be the most important and transcendental debate in human history. Let us get ready to welcome the humans of the future.

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The cover and the interior works of this monograph are by Marina Núñez (Palencia, Spain, 1966), artist and lecturer at the Faculty of Fine Arts of the University of Vigo (Spain). The different series that make up her work focus on the representation of the body as a reflection on the diverse and changing identity of the human being.

In this double page, Marina Núñez. *Rough waters* (8), 2021. Digital image on gold leaf, 45×45 cm.