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# CYFEST 15: Vulnerability

## Venice, Italy

15.04–30.08.2024

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CYLAND Foundation Inc.

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CREA Cantieri del Contemporaneo  
Giudecca 211-b

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Weave

## CYFEST 15: Vulnerability 2023–2024

**Colombia – Bogota, Manizales, 26.06–8.06.2023**  
XXII International Image Festival, XENOLandscapes, Museo de Artes Visuales (MAV), Universidad de Bogotá Jorge Tadeo Lozano and Museo de Arte de Caldas

**Armenia – Yerevan, 2–18.09.2023**  
HayArt Cultural Center, Yerevan Botanical Garden, Institute for Contemporary Art (I.C.A. Yerevan)

**United States – Miami, 1.12.2023 – 3.01.2024**  
The Deering Estate

**Italy – Venice, 15.04–30.08.2024**  
CREA – One Contemporary Art Space

**United States – New York, 4–29.11.2024**  
The National Arts Club

[cyfest.art](http://cyfest.art)

[cyland.org](http://cyland.org)

# CYFEST

Founded by a group of independent artists in 2007, its primary mission is to support interdisciplinary collaboration, dialogue, and experiments, examine various visual languages and technological cultures and present them to a wide audience. **CYFEST** unites professionals in the field of art and representatives of scientific communities: artists, curators, engineers, programmers, media activists, and theoreticians.

**CYFEST** is a nomadic cultural event. Since 2013, its exhibitions, concerts, performances, video screenings, lectures, and master classes have been held all over the world: in the United States (New York, San Francisco, Miami, Minneapolis, Arizona, and Alaska), Armenia (Yerevan, Gyumri), Georgia (Tbilisi), Belgium (Brussels), Brazil (São Paulo), Great Britain (London, Brighton, Dartington), Germany (Berlin), Spain (Barcelona), Italy (Venice, Caserta), Columbia (Bogota, Manizales), Finland (Helsinki), France (Paris), China (Shanghai), South Korea (Seul, Gwangju) and Japan (Tokio, Fukuoka).

The first **CYFEST** constituted a small program of events. The festival exposition opened with Andy Warhol's installation *Silver Clouds* contributed by the artist's museum in Pittsburg (United States). The festival has also been memorable by the exhibition *History of the E.A.T. 1960–2000*, dedicated to the lab *Experiments in Art and Technology* of engineers Billy Klüver and Fred Waldhauer and artists Robert Rauschenberg and Robert Whitman. In subsequent years, CYFEST has consistently expanded, becoming more comprehensive and complex. From 2007 to 2023, over 350 artists and collectives participated in it. Among them are the pioneers of electronic music, some of the more influential experimental musicians in U.S. history: David Rosenboom, Phill Niblock, and Al Margolis; Austrian post-conceptual artist, curator and theoretician of media art, director of Z.K.M. Center for Art and Media in Karlsruhe Peter Weibel; artist, founder, and editor-in-chief of e-flux journal Anton Vidokle; innovative video

artist Bjørn Melhus; conceptual artist and author of the first *total installations* Irina Nakhova and others. The festival projects in Venice and New York in 2019–2022, organized in collaboration with Kolodzei Art Foundation, united works of contemporary artists with creations of the XX century classics: Erik Bulatov, Ilya Kabakov, Mihail Chemiakin, Ernst Neizvestny, Francisco Arana Infante, Valentina Povarova, Lydia Masterkova and others.

Since 2020, **CYFEST** has collaborated with the International Society for the Arts, Sciences, and Technology *Leonardo*, contributed to *the Leonardo Journal* and organized *LASER Talks*. The last issue of *Leonardo*, put out by the M.I.T. Press, contains texts of the world-renowned French artist whose work enacts the most significant biotechnological and trans-personal metamorphosis in the history of art ORLAN and the internationally recognized multi-disciplinary collective of artists, designers, and writers Slavs and Tatars.

# VULNERABILITY

## Concept of the International Media Art Festival CYFEST 15

The (anti)fragility of biological, social and cyberspaces, personal memories, and scientific imagination, the facsimile of rain and indexical, asemiotic writing, artistic exploration of non-human co-authorship, and a connection between knitting patterns and Mandelbrot sets all converge in our new major group exhibition.

Every man, every woman, every living creature is vulnerable. Nobody lives forever. Ever since the origin of human civilization, gods, demigods and heroes discovered one or more elements of vulnerability in them: in their body, history, encounters or relationship with the outside world. Now it becomes clear: it is not important what kind of global catastrophe could happen – ecological, anthropogenic, political, military or biological. Suddenly, everybody has seen how vulnerable their habitual existence is and that the world of well-being, promised by the Fourth Industrial Revolution, is an illusion that gets dissipated in an instant and that it gets replaced by chaos and suffering for no apparent reason.

Vulnerability is a natural quality of any human being. What's paradoxical is that it is precisely on this that the self-awareness and personal dignity of a human being seem to be based. Acknowledgement of one's own vulnerability makes us truly stronger. The expression of one's desires, reevaluation of personal boundaries and questioning are actions that entail a certain risk, but, at the same time, help to overcome the fear of being rejected or misunderstood. They prepare us for submerging into entropy without fear, but also without superfluous hope, and for meeting destruction face to face. By recognizing our vulnerability, we also discover the empathic ability in ourselves – this is what feeds our ethic responsibility towards the others, society and environment.

However, vulnerability and fragility are not always the same thing. In 2012, Professor Nassim Nicholas Taleb introduced the notion of antifragility into the world discourse. This concept presumes that the antifragile, having gone through trials and tribulations, becomes better than before. That is to say, a certain portion of risk does such systems (and the human being is one of them) good. If they are fragile – chance events destroy them. However, if they are antifragile – errors and damages make them stronger and better. This is the world's fundamental quality, using which one could achieve tremendous successes.

Our present renounces compassion and responsibility in totally different forms than our past because the very notion of vulnerability has acquired new dimensions. In the posthuman age, in which anatomy, unlike it was maintained by Freud, is no longer destiny; we measure ourselves in the juxtaposition of two poles: Bio and Cyber. Of course, these poles reflect the schism in human nature between the "legacy of primeval dirt of the bodies" and the projection into a higher sphere of the spiritual, in which the flesh – an ephemeral material – will be sublimated by the unsubstantiated nature of information. However, the comparison of reason and computer, as the software of body and machine, while reflecting the Cartesian dualism of reason-body, still acquires a new resonance.

It appears that only art, as the pinnacle of manifestation of the "civilized reason", is capable of accumulating universal problems and constantly holding them in its attention field. Contemporary artists explore the "territories" that previously were not included into their area of interest: preservation of nature, social stability, self-identification, scientific research, medicine, artificial intelligence, politics and so forth. Above all, they explore not the disciplines themselves, but what's going on with human beings and how they change the world around them, first and foremost, from the ethic point of view. Art can truly illuminate global matters, offer an unending comprehension of the common path and delineate an unexpected glance at the familiar world and to console with compassion and hope. It can inspire the creation of antifragile signs, upon which one could built a different future.

Vulnerability can be a truly positive force, as a counterbalance to obsessions of safety that we experience every day and that could not be guaranteed at any level.

This ostensible fragility is, in fact, a stable and firmest foundation that is capable of withstanding any traumatic situations. As for whether or not yet another lesson would be learned – time, of course, will tell, though there is not much hope for this. Human tendency to regain one's own comfort at any cost frequently pushes aside the critical evaluation of reality.

*Silvia Burini, Elena Gubanova*

**19.04.2024**

**OPENING NIGHT WITH  
PERFORMANCE BY  
NAO NISHIHARA**

**Duration:** 40 min

**Location:** CREA, Giudecca 211-b

***Sound performance (Venice)***

*Acoustic sound performance, 2024*



My performance is an abstract musical expression in a friendly street performance style, with a drum on my back and a flute in my hand. The music I create is diverse, including contemporary, pop, hardcore punk, and traditional music from around the world. The live acoustic sound and the space prove our existence and sensations.

— Nao Nishihara



# Vulnerability

Alan Boldon

Ursula le Guin writing about the openness she considered vital for her creative work said that she tried to maintain a state: “so that death finds me at all times, and on all sides exposed, unfortressed, undefended, inviolable, vulnerable, alive.”

Vulnerability may be thought of as meaning that one is at risk in a number of possible ways. One could be physically, emotionally, financially, or socially vulnerable, and it is natural to try to defend against falling into such states. However, the barriers that are built to keep vulnerability at bay may also keep out other influences, sensations, ideas, relationships and possibilities.

In collaboration, it is vital to be open to possibilities that may unsettle or disturb habits, identity, and ways of engaging with the world. Holding on to established ideas – even those that have delivered success, advances in thinking, practice, and status – may limit or frustrate innovation. High performing teams are more likely to arise out of a culture that protects or even promotes vulnerability.

The 1948 UN Declaration of Human Rights established the need to protect human dignity. How would it be to seek to protect our mutual vulnerability? How would this look? In a time of climate emergency and mass biodiversity loss, could we consider extending this to the more than human world? For this to be possible, many other changes addressing social and ecological justice would be necessary.

The CYFEST dialogue on vulnerability was convened in Venice: a city that embodies a physically precarious, vulnerable position, whilst remaining a beacon of vibrant culture and contemporary arts and design.

As is well documented, Venice is faced with the risk of rising sea-levels, flood surges and threats to the eco-

systemic health of the lagoon. The city is built on a swamp. The Grand Canal was once a natural river moving through reed beds with many smaller watercourses in and out, not dissimilar perhaps to the network of canals we encounter today. Tidal flows, silting, organic growth, complex interspecies, topographical and climate interactions would have continually informed shifts in the fundamental features of the swamp. As the settlements grew the features were fixed. Wooden stakes driven into the mud provided a platform for ever greater buildings, and as the prominence of the city grew, so did the buildings. Along the way changes were made to the dynamic network of flows, and that which was adaptive became fixed.

Today Venice is visited by as many as 30 million people every year. When it is acknowledged that a flood defence system is needed it is assumed it can't be a massive engineering statement like the Thames barrier as this would compromise the look of the city that draws all of those visitors. The solution that is found is a remarkable system of barages that are sunk below water level only to rise and break the surface and form a barrier when needed.

As with so many technological fixes – when the challenge involves many complex interactions with social, ecological and economic features – the solution can create a problem. One manifestation of this occurs when the tidal flow is blocked by the flood defences. Venice is an ancient city and its buildings do not have modern plumbing and waste removal systems, nor is it possible to retrofit the buildings, again due to the very nature and design of the city that makes it so attractive to so many visitors, with the density of the beautiful buildings edging the canals. Raising the flood defence stops the tides coming in to collect the human waste and take it out to sea. Stopping the flow risks the life of the many organisms in the stagnant lagoon as they become starved of oxygen, never mind the stench that would grow and distress both locals and visitors.

In the 19th century London had grown to be the most populated city in the world but after a series of outbreaks of cholera it was realised that the disease was originating



in the basement cesspools and sewage in the river Thames. A massive engineering project was begun to build a sewer network throughout the city to remove human waste. This was possible in a city where streets could be excavated or widened and buildings retrofitted. If the city in question is more or less all made up of buildings of architectural heritage value and where space is so limited, this isn't possible. This is when we arrive at a conflict between aesthetic, economic, and technical considerations.

In our efforts to preserve or fix things we limit our capacity to adapt. Fixing can be a form of mending, or making permanent, unchanging, rigid. A photograph

that has been exposed to the point where the details and contrast are deemed to be good is immersed in a fixing solution so that the image stops changing. A charcoal drawing, made up of loose marks on a surface, would be at risk of being wiped away so we spray it with a fixative solution that glues the image into place. There is also a way to consider fixing as something that restores the flexibility, flow, patterns and relationships that are mutually beneficial to all. In re-routing cruise liners up the coast where the wash from the vessels causes coastline erosion; or in shutting off tidal flows and risking the ecosystem of the lagoon, Venice is not alone in defining and pursuing solutions to problems that can be “fixed” but missing the greater systemic challenges.

The opposite of vulnerability might be to become hard or hardened, impermeable, not touched by anything external; to develop a thick skin, one could even say petrified; turned to stone out of fear. How would it be if a city took Ursula Le Guin's advice to be "on all sides exposed, unfortressed, undefended, inviolable, vulnerable, alive"? There is a way of thinking about vulnerability here that is about being open to new ideas, new ways of seeing, thinking, feeling; a kind of porosity. Can we conceive of forms of being as individuals, groups, communities, businesses, organisations, cities even, where there is a coherence of form so that we have a sense of what we are and what holds us together but a porosity and beyond this a capacity to adapt our form as conditions shift.

The biologist Brian Goodwin proposed that there was a playfulness in the way cells and organisms explored new shapes and forms of being, relationships and interbeing, and that there was a joyfulness in this process. In art-making many will recognise what could almost be called a dizzying or lurching feeling as stale, familiar forms give way and some new, possibly paradigmatic shift, shows itself.

Our experience of vulnerability in another person may invoke compassion in us. We may also feel a little more able to show our vulnerability to that person and so the dance of intimacy and mutual vulnerability can begin. Noticing times when a comment or idea that was initially



dismissed as ridiculous is later seen as revealing or insightful can open up an atmosphere where different perspectives are valued as we try to see the world afresh. However, our imagination seems to stall when we think of this at a city scale. So called "realpolitik" is invoked as ideas and possibilities are undermined. In a time of mass extinction, climate crisis and obscene social injustice is there not an injunction to think, feel, dream, envision, in ways that go beyond our usual habits and patterns? This is one way to think about the project of art – to disturb and disrupt our patterns and habits of thinking and being.

CYFEST, in bringing together the arts, sciences and technology sets in motion a set of disturbances between siloed disciplines that result in emergent forms that reimagine the world and the possibility of an "anima Mundi" – a living world of beautiful, vulnerable, interbeing.

When Heraclitus said: "the river where you set your foot just now, is gone, those waters giving way, to this, now this", he was saying that everything is in constant flux. He invites us to love change and maybe – rather than trying to fix things, relationships, others – that we attune to ourselves, to others, to the wonder and beauty of mutual vulnerability, and to the tidal movements, seasons and flows of the more than human world, however strong the feeling of being petrified in the face of enormous challenges.

I have a good friend, Satish Kumar, who set out as a young man with his companion E.P. Manon to walk 8000 miles to visit the leaders of the nuclear powers and talk with them about peace. He was inspired by Gandhi and by his teacher Vinoba Bhave who told him that he must travel with no money. When he asked "why?", his teacher said that this would show that he trusts people and if he was vulnerable they would help. At the border between Indian and Pakistan someone went to him and said please take this food and money. He repeated the words of his teacher and crossed the border with nothing. At the other side he was met by people who had heard about their mission and had arrived to meet them with food saying "come eat with us, come stay at our home."

On Earth Day 2024, a number of people gathered in the beautiful Aula Barrato hall to talk about Vulnerability. Remarkably, and somewhat ominously, that Summer day brought with it a great deluge that flooded the city. There are only so many times that the flood defences can be used due to the risk to the greater ecosystem. It was decided that the defences could not be used on this occasion. There was a tender, vulnerable, resilient and determined beauty when Alice Oswald, Gediminas and Nomeda Urbonas, Brian MacCraith, Muriel Mambrini-Doudet, Sha Xin Wei and the audience, waded through flood water on Earth Day to speak together about vulnerability and to imagine other possible futures.

*September 2024*

**22.04.2024**

**VULNERABILITY**

*Panel Discussion*

**Duration:** 90 min

**Location:** Ca' Foscari University, Dorsoduro 3246, Mario Baratto Conference Hall, 2nd floor

**Chair / Convenor:** Alan Boldon

**Panel contributors:**

**Brian MacCraith**, Physicist, Senior Advisor to the President, Arizona State University (ASU); Chair, External Oversight Body of the Irish Defence Forces; Chair, Gaelic Players Association (GPA); Former President, Dublin City University (2010–2020)

**Muriel Mambrini-Doudet**, 1st Research Director, French National Research Institute for Sustainable Development, Doctoral program lead at the Learning Planet Institute

**Alice Oswald**, celebrated poet and gardener

**Nomeda** and **Gediminas Urbonas**, artists, educators, and co-founders of Urbonas Studio, an interdisciplinary research practice for the transformation of civic spaces and collective imaginaries

**Sha Xin Wei**, Director of Synthesis and Professor School of Arts, Media + Engineering at Arizona State University

**22.06.2024**

**CYFEST 15:**

**Vulnerability × Art Night Venice**

As part of the *All Forces Balance* programme curated by Sara Bizai, Gaia De Santi, Filippo Vane, and Victoria Fadeeva.

**Participants:**

**Nao Nishihara**, Venice, acoustic sound performance

**Sara Cecconi**, *Take Care of Yourself*, performance

**Irina Korina**, *On Vacation*, installation

**28.08.2024**

**Presentation of *Umbigo* magazine at the CYFEST 15: Vulnerability finissage**

*Round table on Art, Technology and Ecology and The Importance of Publications in the Art Ecosystem*

**Participants:**

**Anna Frants**, artist and curator, founder and director of CYLAND MediaArtLab and CYFEST

**Elsa Garcia**, **António Néu** and **José Pina**, editors of the *Umbigo* magazine

**Anne Marie Maes**, artist

**Thomas Braid**, artist

**Teresa de Albuquerque**, director of the Mateus Foundation

**EXHIBITION**

**15.04–30.08.2024**

**CREA Cantieri del Contemporaneo**

**PARTICIPANTS**

**Ludmila Belova**

**Max Blotas**

**Alexandra Dementieva**

**Alexey Dymdymarchenko**

**Yvetta Fedorova**

**Anna Frants**

**Elena Gubanova & Ivan Govorkov**

**Irina Korina**

**Natalia Lyakh**

**Anne Marie Maes**

**Tuula Närhinen**

**Phill Niblock & Katherine Liberovskaya**

**Nao Nishihara**

**Fabrizio Plessi**

**Mariateresa Sartori**

**Mónica Naranjo Uribe**

**Where Dogs Run**







Ludmila Belova

***Eternal Present***

*Video installation, 2023*

*Video [00:06:18, color, sound, loop]; 32" screen, frame*

“Because we go and beauty stays. Because we are headed for the future, while beauty is the eternal present. <...> Aesthetic sense is the twin of one’s instinct for self-preservation and is more reliable than ethics.”

— Joseph Brodsky, *Watermark*

The fragility and vulnerability of human life, its brevity and finiteness are questions that torment a person, everyone is looking for their own answers. The consolation in this kind of reflection is beauty. The beauty of nature, art as a kind of “beauty”. Rainer Maria Rilke wrote “For beauty is nothing but the beginning of terror.” The horror is that beauty remains in the eternal present, in eternity, and man gets only a moment.

The installation *Eternal Present* is a monitor inserted into an antique frame and looks like a painting hanging on the wall. On the “picture” you see, reminiscent of abstraction, a composition of bright spots. There is a close-up view of a fragment of a natural landscape. At a distance of two steps, this picture should surprise with color and composition. But, from a closer distance, the strange movement that takes place on the screen among these bright spots is recognized and it becomes clear that under the layer of leaves and shells of shrimp, armies of worms move in their eternal movement.





Max Blotas

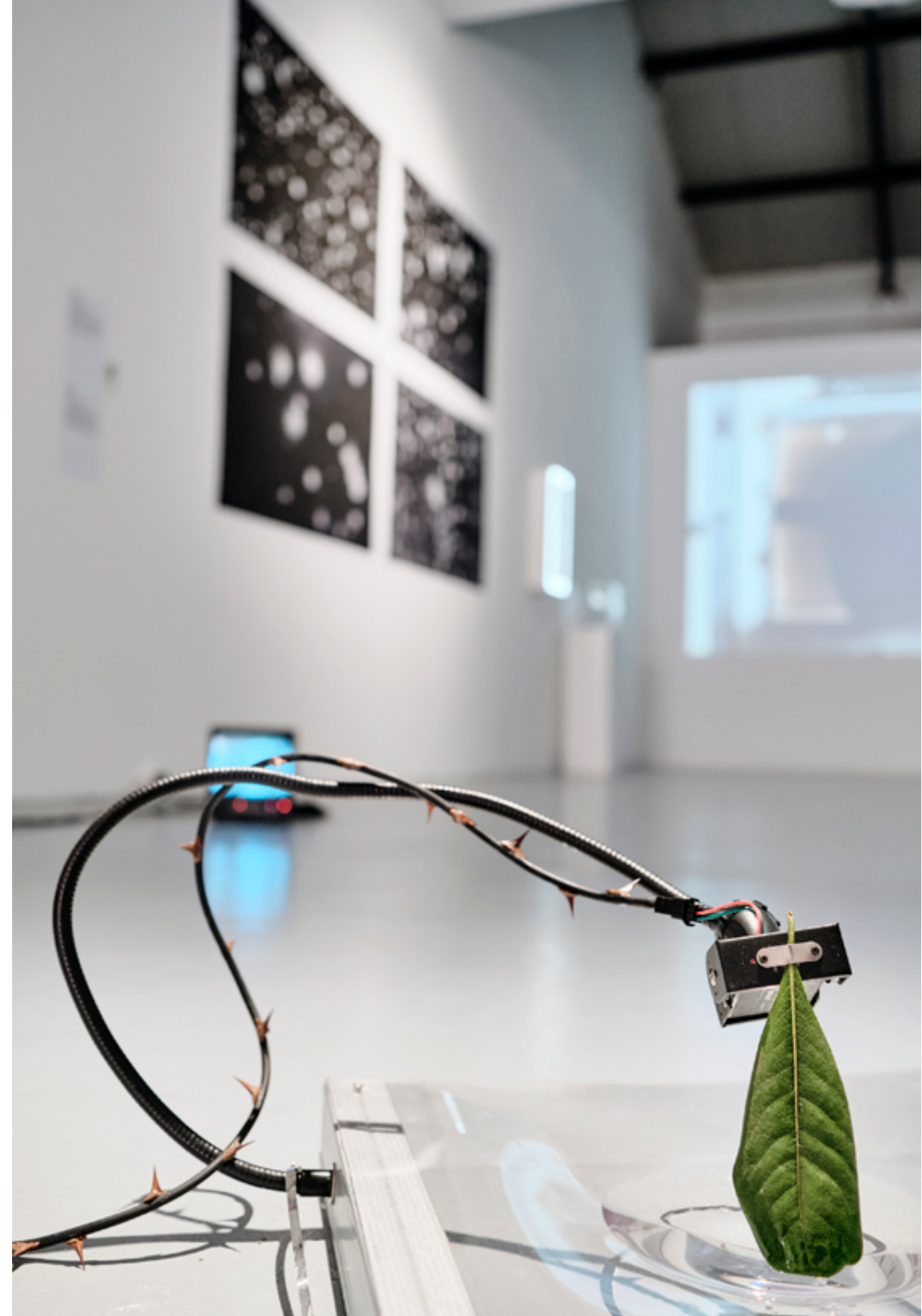
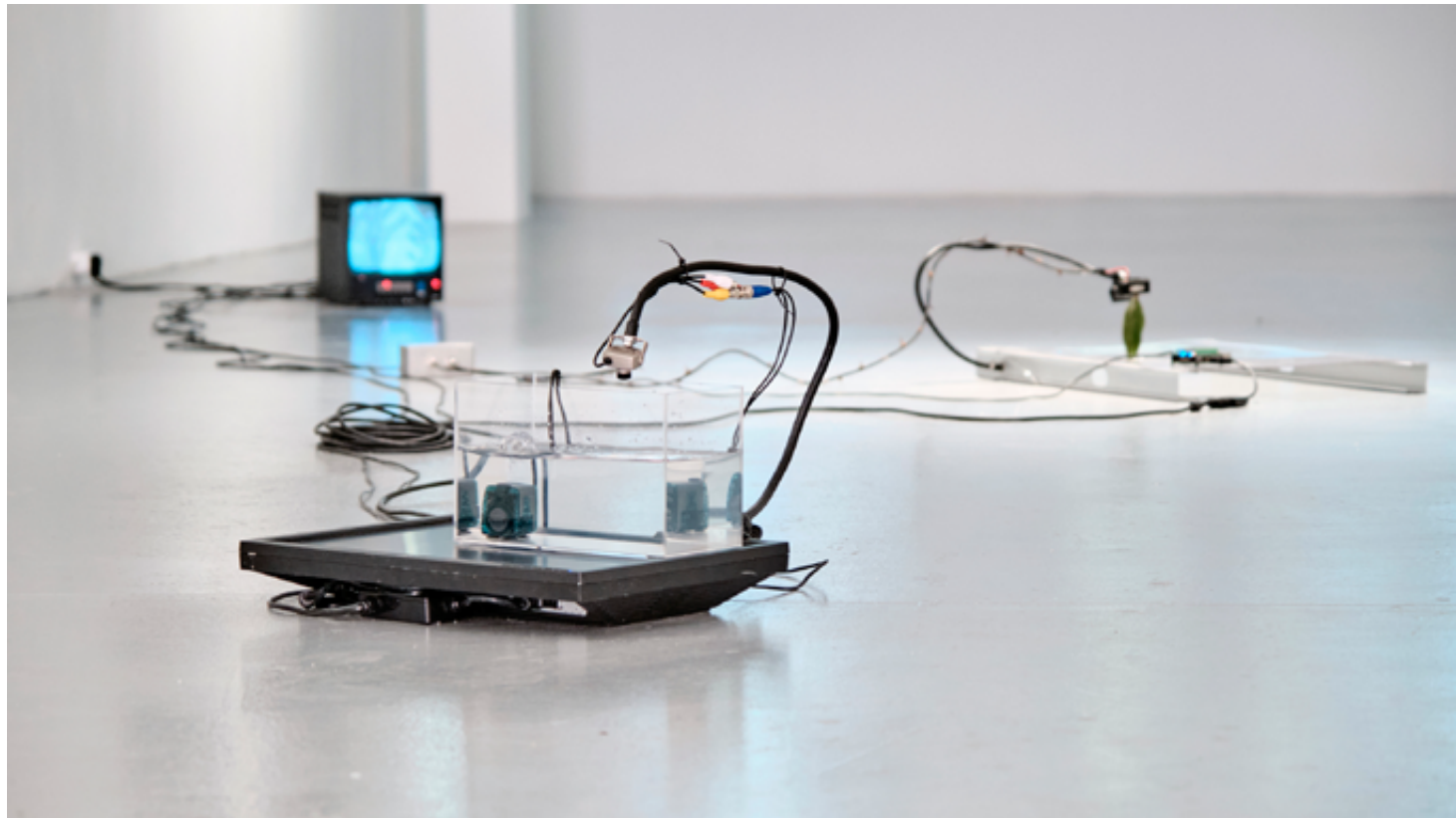
**Crystal clear / eau de roche**

Installation, 2020

Python; water, infrared camera with embedded LEDs, motorized leaf, pump, Raspberry Pi, 15" LCD screen, 12" CRT screen

In *Crystal Clear / eau de roche*, a static image is converted into a live stream through a flickering surface of water to reveal the inner instability of digital archives.

While generating a fragile yet constant change of state, the artwork questions the idea of duplicity and trickery but also the metaphorical resonance of the concept of conversion through simple natural and digital processes.





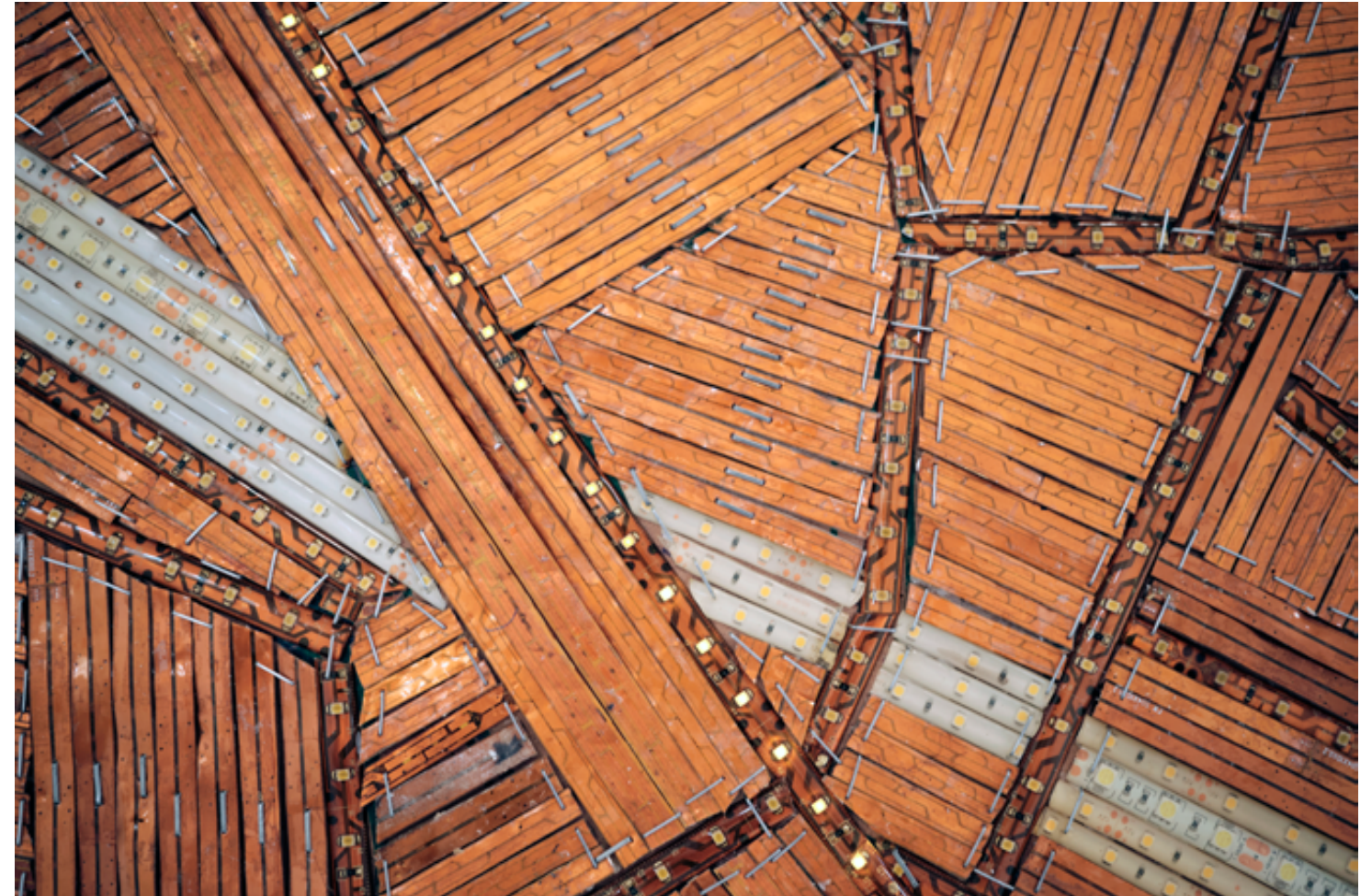
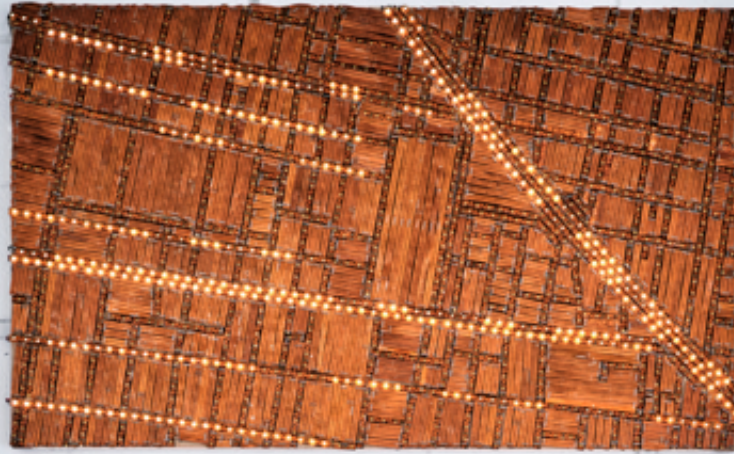
## Alexandra Dementieva

### ***Re-Lighting***

*Objects made of recycled LED, 2022*

Observing Earth from the vantage point of space or cosmos, national borders dissolve, and conflicts diminish in significance. This view underscores the urgent need for a united global society dedicated to safeguarding our planet. Alexandra Dementieva's *Re-Lighting* embraces a creative approach to environmental conservation through the repurposing of industrial products.

*Re-Lighting* features light maps of various cities, each intricately crafted from recycled LED strips sourced from previous light installations. In this innovative transformation, Dementieva turns discarded materials into luminous testaments, inviting viewers to ponder the interconnectedness of our world. The artwork serves as a compelling call to action, urging collective environmental stewardship with a sense of urgency.







## Alexey Dymdymarchenko

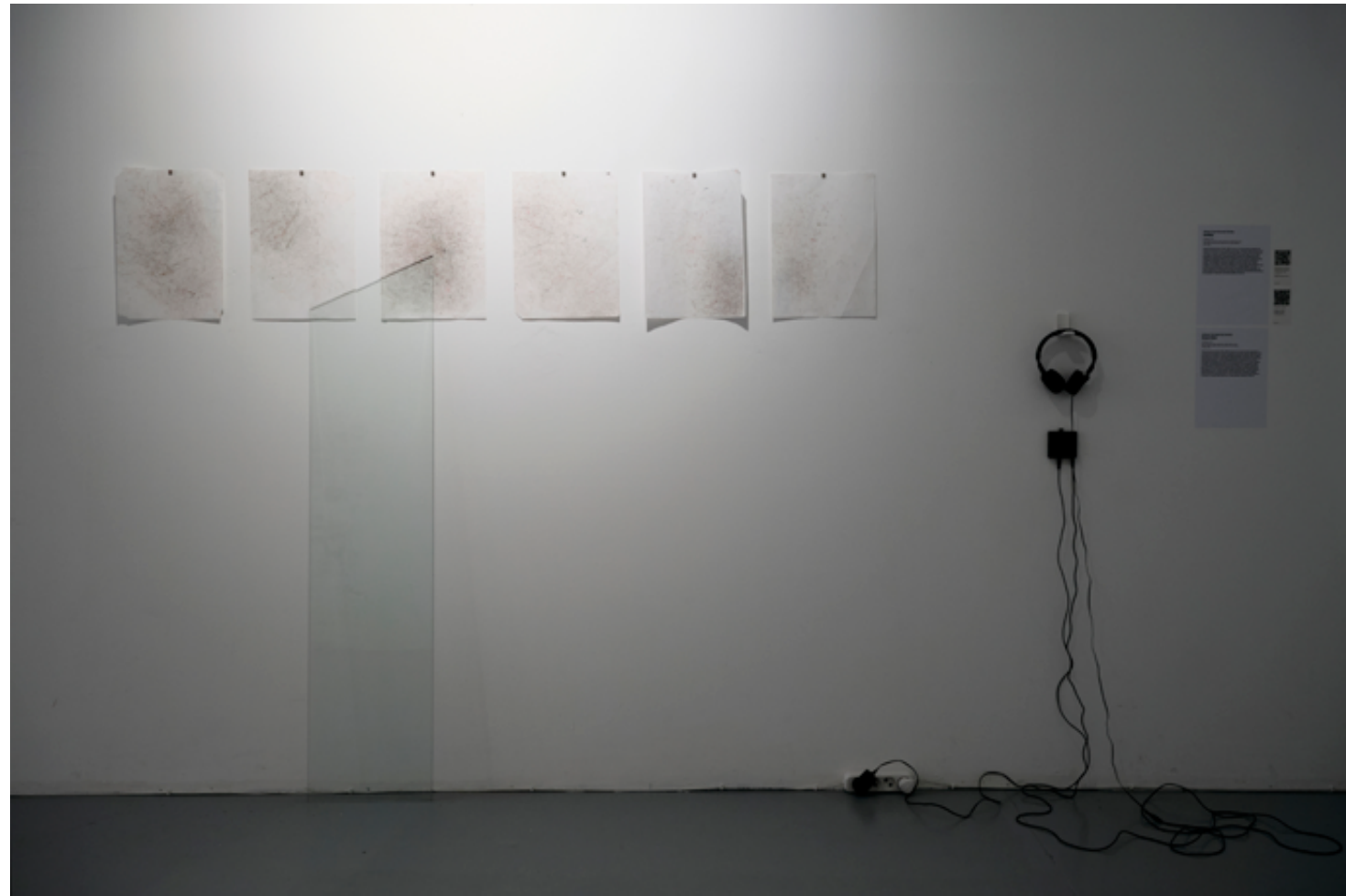
### **Untitled**

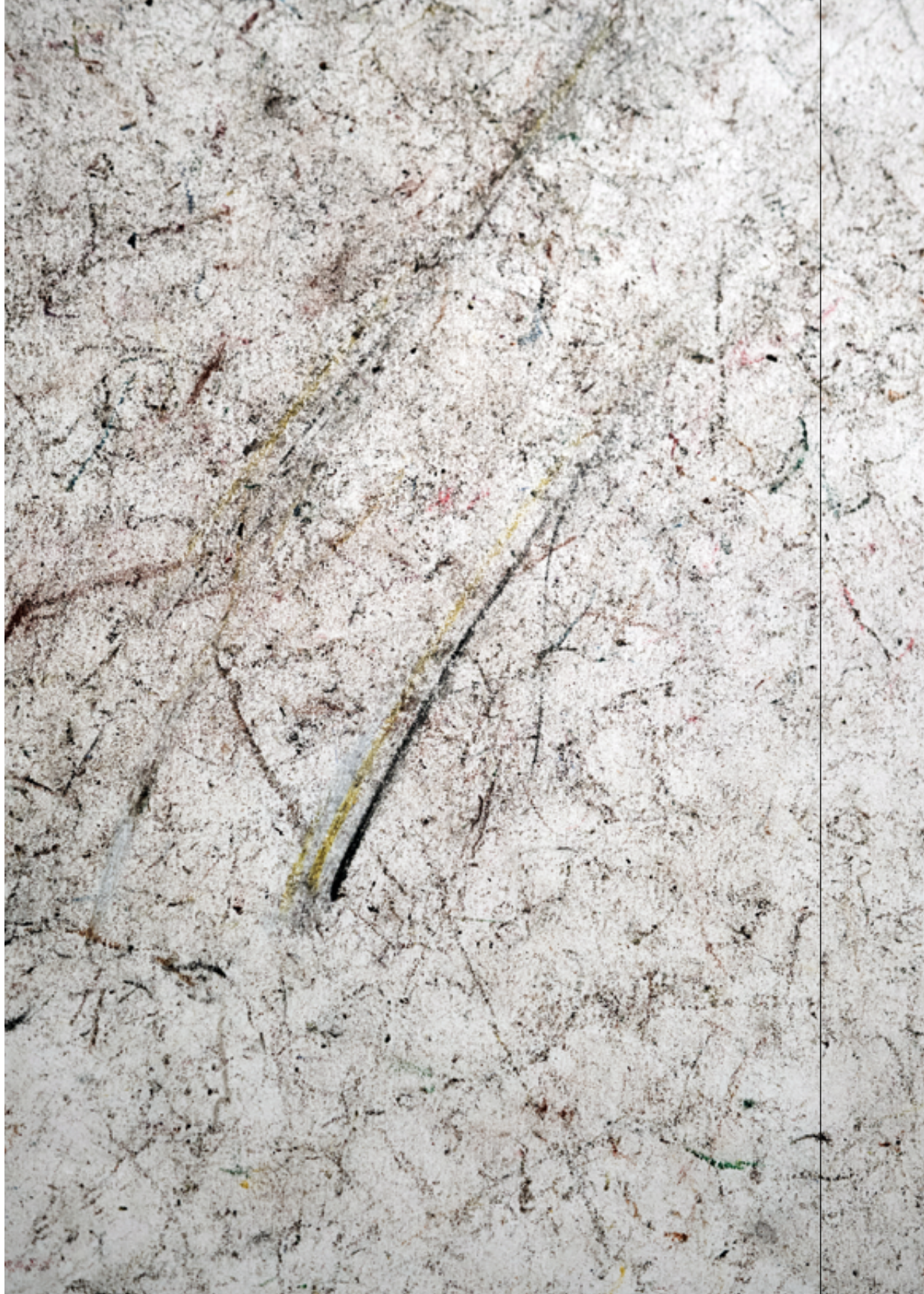
*Installation, 2019*

*Sound [00:04:00, stereo, loop], audio player, headphones; series of drawings: graphite pencil, charcoal, wax crayon, pastel on paper, glass*

Alexey Dymdymarchenko (1986–2020) is known for his minimalist, amalgam-like artworks that embrace sound, material, and process. Although influenced by his own experience of living in a residential institution (called an internat, PNI in Russian) his work does not refer to particular social conditions but rather takes up the radical

possibilities of abstraction. Dymdymarchenko himself was minimally verbal and created each drawing by taking a box of fragments of wax crayons, graphite pencils, or pastels and dumping it out over the paper as a visual, gestural, and auditory process. The resulting composition suggests clusters of marks, dots, dashes, smudges, and scratches, melted into voluminous, cloudy shapes that simultaneously connote sound spectrograms, natural textures or scrawled graffiti. Into these decontextualized, non-hierarchical surfaces constructed via dust and gesture, the artist inscribes his own narratives and creates a new form of autofiction at the time of the resurgence of figuration and identity politics in the arts.





Yvetta Fedorova

## ***The Procession***

*Paper cut installation, 2024*

*Paper, mylar*

Albert Einstein said, "I love to travel but hate to arrive."

In her installation *The Procession*, Yvetta Fedorova creates a cavalcade of cutout paper characters accompanying each other on a timeless journey. Where they come from and where they are headed is a mystery. Do we lose the sense of self when we join a group or does belonging to it make us feel less vulnerable and more empowered? Can we maintain our individuality? *The Procession* could be a circus parade, a protest, or a funeral cortège. It is an ode to the unpredictable journey of life.

By layering the paper cut by hand, Yvetta Fedorova combines abstract shapes with vaguely recognizable forms and occasional figures to create a feeling of theatricality and movement with her unique and complex characters. Is there an old queen, a wizard, a prisoner, a skull, and other creations in *The Procession*? The viewer is encouraged to create their own associations and perhaps recognize something familiar.

We cannot predict whom we will encounter during our journey and what is lurking around the corner, but the truth is, we are never alone.

As Neil Young said: "Sooner or later, it all gets real. Walk on."





## Anna Frants **Vagaries of Affections**

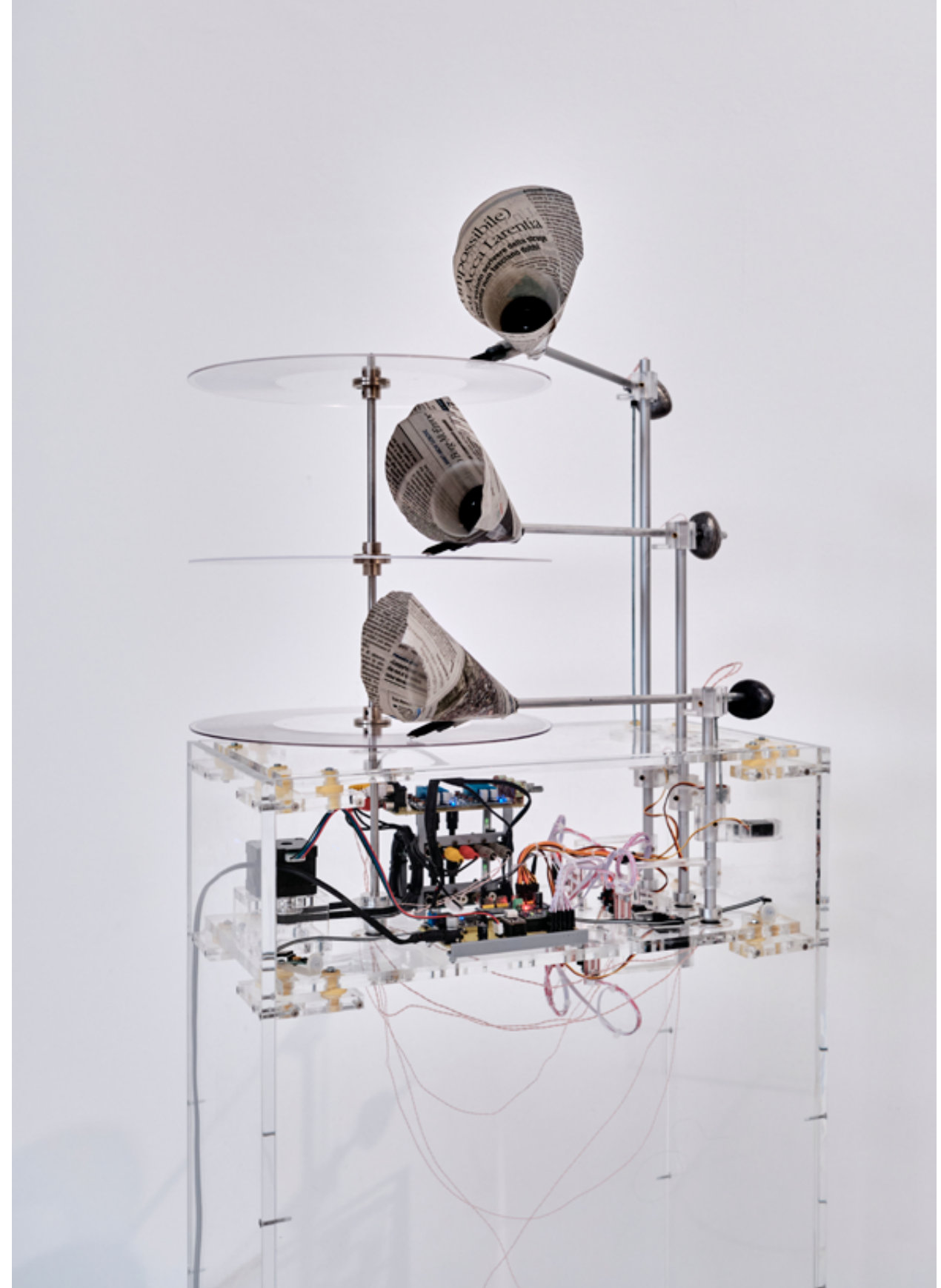
*Installation, 2023*

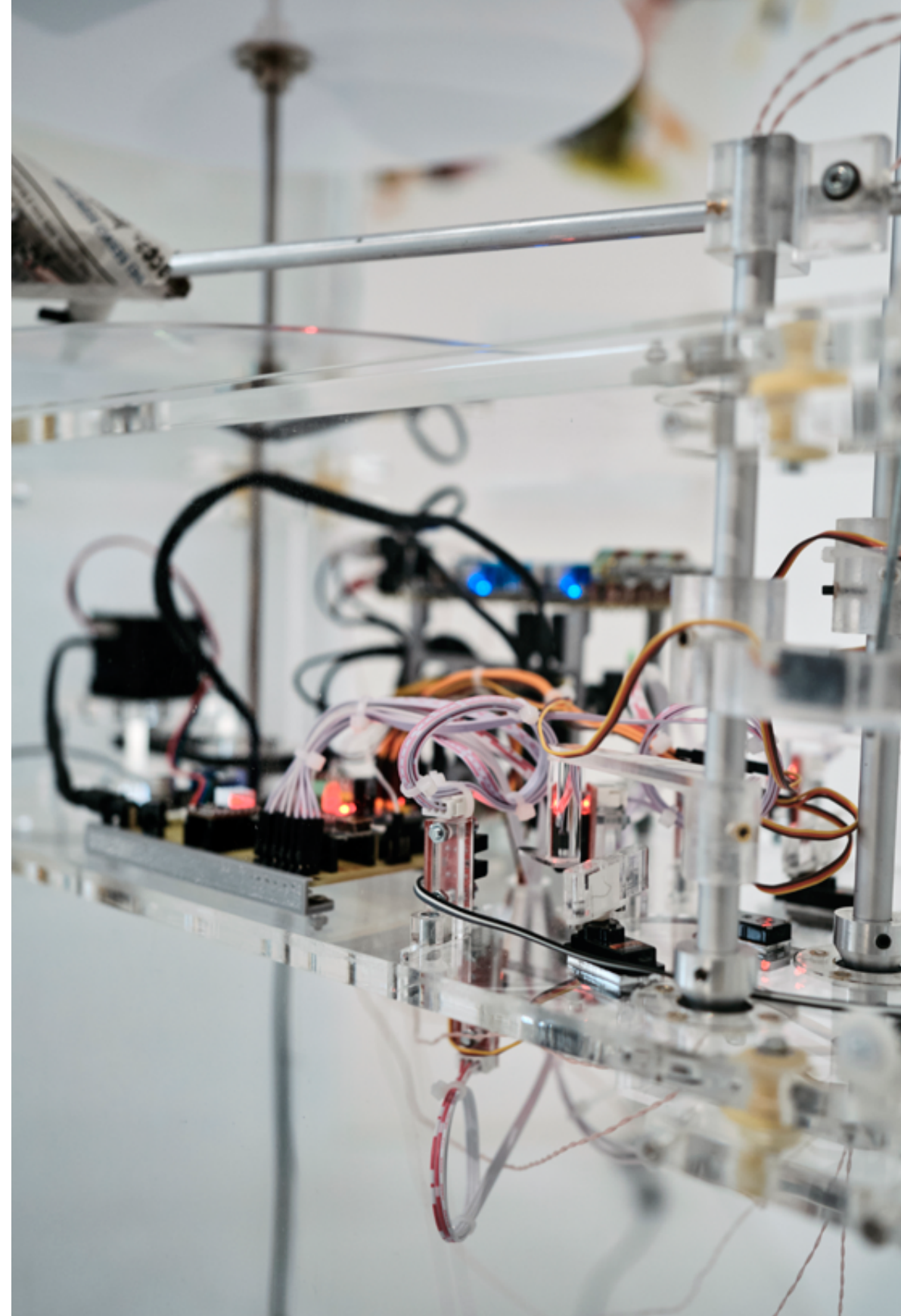
*Arduino C, Python; Raspberry Pi 3, Arduino controllers; stepper and servo motors, aluminum tubes, steel, PLA plastic acoustic horn, vinyl records, podium*

*Engineers: Philipp Avetisov, Denis Andreev, Eugene Ovsyannikov, Dmitry Shirokov*

*Supported by CYLAND MediaArtLab*

“Love is a many splendored things...”, “Love, I’ll be a fool, for you...” – and one could cite many other words of love. Furthermore, if we are to believe Google, quotations about love outnumber quotations on any other subject. In her installation *Vagaries of Affections*, Anna Frants reflects on this and shows that this feeling could be expressed not just in words, but also in numerous other sounds that are generated in various and never repeated combinations. Some people say that affection is just a chemical reaction, while others believe that we understand that we are in love when love songs finally make sense. This work of the artist demonstrates that, whatever “physicists and lyricists” claim, love is always unpredictable.





## Elena Gubanova & Ivan Govorkov

### **Time Density**

Media installation, 2021

Video [00:40:15, Ultra HD 4K video (3 840\*2 160), 16:9, monochrome video, no sound, loop]

3D printing; Arduino; 65" screen, light sensors, microcontroller board; digital prints on plastic, secondary clocks, a model of Nikolai Kozyrev's torsion balance, a shelf, spotlight

Engineers: Andrew Stokov, Alexey Grachev

3D engineering design by Alexander Bochkov

Video by Elena Gubanova, 2021

Video editing by Anton Khlabor

Dedicated to the memory of astronomer V. S. Gubanov

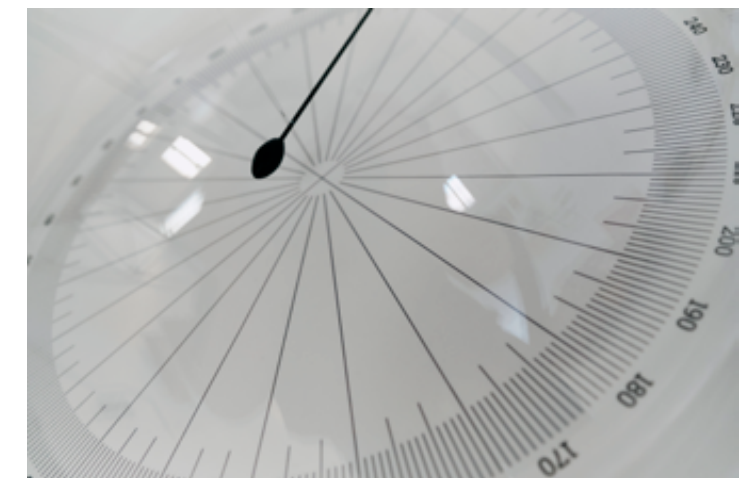
Supported by CYLAND MediaArtLab

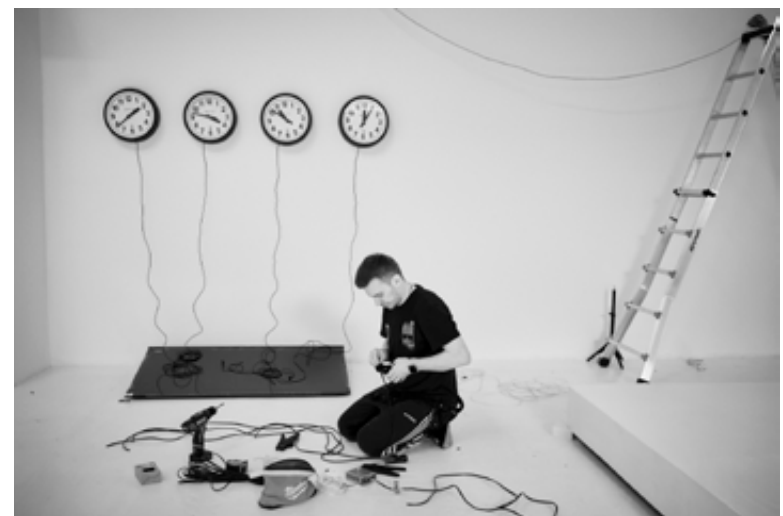
We used to think of time as a constant value. A vector moving from the past to the future. This so-called stable system is the basis of all life in the world. However, we can assume that it is not an axiom, but one of many concepts related to the structure of our universe. In nature, in our senses, and even in history as we know it, one often finds strange inconsistencies which suggest a different character and structure for the "stable" temporal system.

In his experimental research, the prominent Soviet astronomer Nikolai Kozyrev developed a new concept—time density. Presumably, time density depends on the processes taking place in nature. Kozyrev tried to prove that the processes associated with a decrease in entropy (e.g. the beginning of blossoming of apple trees in orchards, heat, light, etc.) weaken the time density around them, i.e. as if they absorb time. On the contrary, the density of time is increased and therefore radiated outwards by processes involving an increase in entropy (withering of matter, storms and thunderstorms, loud noises, conflicts, etc.). So it turns out that through their processes, actions, creativity, and emotions, nature and human beings themselves construct the flow and speed of time.

In their project, Elena Gubanova and Ivan Govorkov sought to find a visual expression for Kozyrev's experiments. Above the screen of floating clouds, the artists placed a round clock from the Soviet era, connected to the surface of the screen by light sensors.

The white clouds floating on the screen are a metaphor for society, with its search for happiness, its problems, and its fears. At the same time, they represent nature, with its tranquility and sudden cataclysms. The hands of the clock slow down when the light sensor captures on video a snow-white cloud moving across the sky, a symbol of happiness. Time is "absorbed". And they speed up, "radiating" time when the space of entropy and stagnation appears on the screen in the form of fragments of black sky.







Elena Gubanova & Ivan Govorkov

## ***Shadow of Emptiness***

*Objects, 2013*

*Arduino, microcontroller, DMX dimmer, spotlights; plastic; paper, pencil, charcoal*

*Engineer: Alexey Grachev*

*Supported by CYLAND MediaArtLab*

Elena Gubanova and Ivan Govorkov's project is a continuation of the theme of the birth and destruction of form. The idea of emphasizing incompleteness and understatement is the authors' reflection on the fixed, conditioned world, where everything is precisely named, signed, and ultimately sold.

In this project, the artists incorporate light as the primary variable and graphic material in their work. By changing the lighting, the authors manipulate the viewer's perception. Their objects made of transparent plexiglass, plastic, and graphics disappear entirely in an unlit space or, on the contrary, take on a rigid pattern of shadows, a precise clarity that suddenly shifts with the movement of the light and disappears again, dissolving into the space. It is a performance for light and shadow. The process itself becomes a form of identification. The theme addressed in their work goes beyond the simple play with form. These are questions about the conventionality of language, an illustration of the vulnerability of clearly defining anything—whether it is a sign, space, form, or meaning.





Irina Korina  
**On Vacation**

*Installation, 2019*

*Inflatable fabric sculptures, photo printing, potted plants, furniture*

*Commissioned for "The City of Tomorrow" group show at the New Tretyakov Gallery, Moscow*

In the installation of the "relaxing columns", Irina Korina recalls her childhood in Moscow, trips with her parents to the museums, cartoon characters, caricatures from magazines, children's books and cinema.





Natalia Lyakh

**Untitled 23**

Video [00:01:13, color, sound, loop], 32" screen, headphones, 2023

**Vulnerability: Us and AI**

While the fish, as a living system, is out of the ordinary in the error condition, it can also demonstrate profound resistance. When glass breaks, the resulting crystals retain some kinetic energy and continue moving for some time; then, due to inertia, this movement fades to zero.

During a highly challenging vulnerability test:

On the “alive” side, there is a sense of fragility, with so many possibilities for the destruction of the complex system. But alongside the vulnerability, there is also a super-ability for restoration, recovery, and development. On the artificial side, in contrast, we are left with a diminishing kinetic impulse.

According to Searle’s “Chinese Room” theory, we can call our vulnerability sensory-semantic and AI’s (non?) vulnerability syntactic.

We see on the “alive” side the elasticity and flexibility of “semantics” and on the other side boundless but predetermined possibilities of “syntax.”

Should we pose “semantic”, ethical, legal, and psychological questions to AI?

Shall we expect deep answers from AI? As for now, our semantic, human grounding filters are necessary and inevitable since “semantic” values ultimately determine development, creativity, and discovery.

Do we desire the emergence of an equivalent consciousness in AI in the near future? Do we still retain control over this dimension?

Shall we increasingly prize our different vulnerabilities, especially the creative ones, and cultivate and test them more and more?



Anne Marie Maes

## ***Sensorial Skins***

*Organic Textiles, 2017–2023*

*Sensorial Skins* is a collection of bacterial grown skins in different sizes, colors and thicknesses. *Sensorial Skins* embody a remarkable flexibility and softness akin to organic textiles. They adapt to the changes in their environment, exhibiting a responsiveness that defies rigidity. In their pliability, we find an invitation to engage in a dialogue with the material world, acknowledging the agency of these living fabrics. Within their folds, memories are preserved, and memories reside not only in their folds but also in the smells they emit. Such a specific scent can transport us back to a particular moment and evoke a sense of nostalgia.









Tuula Närhinen

## Drop Tracer

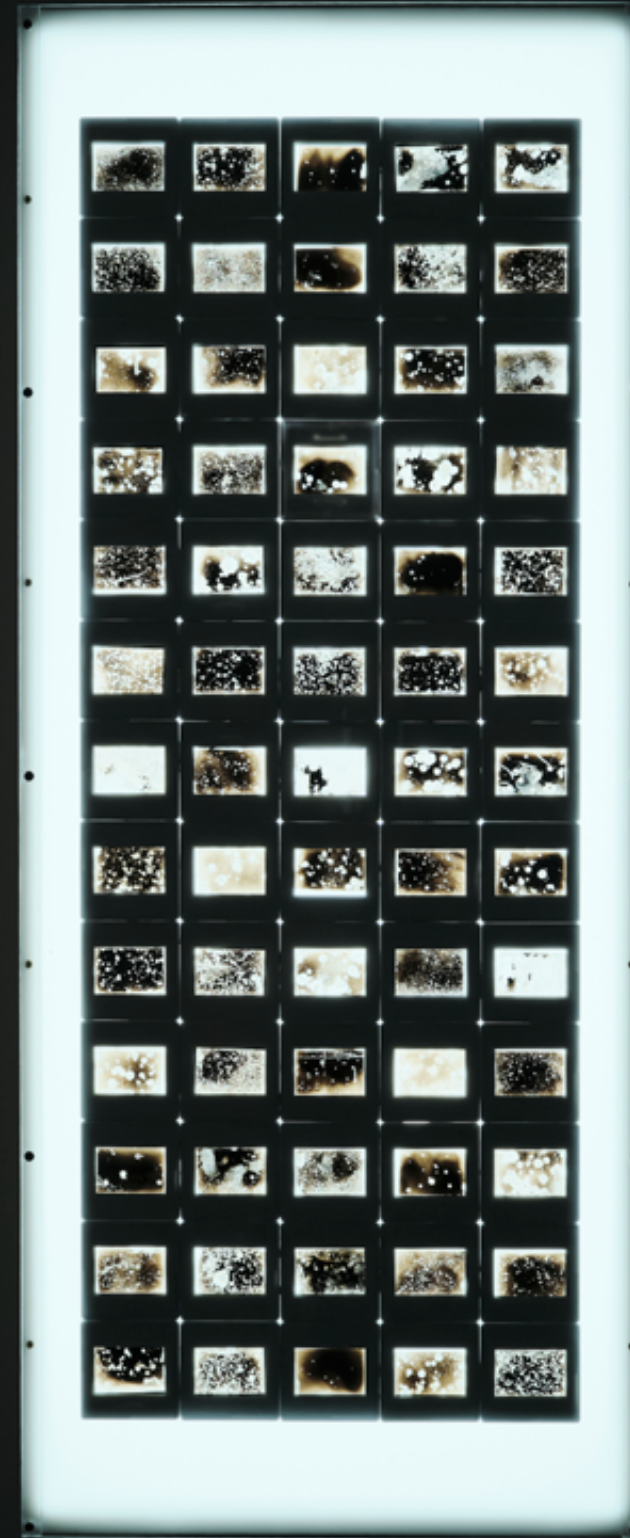
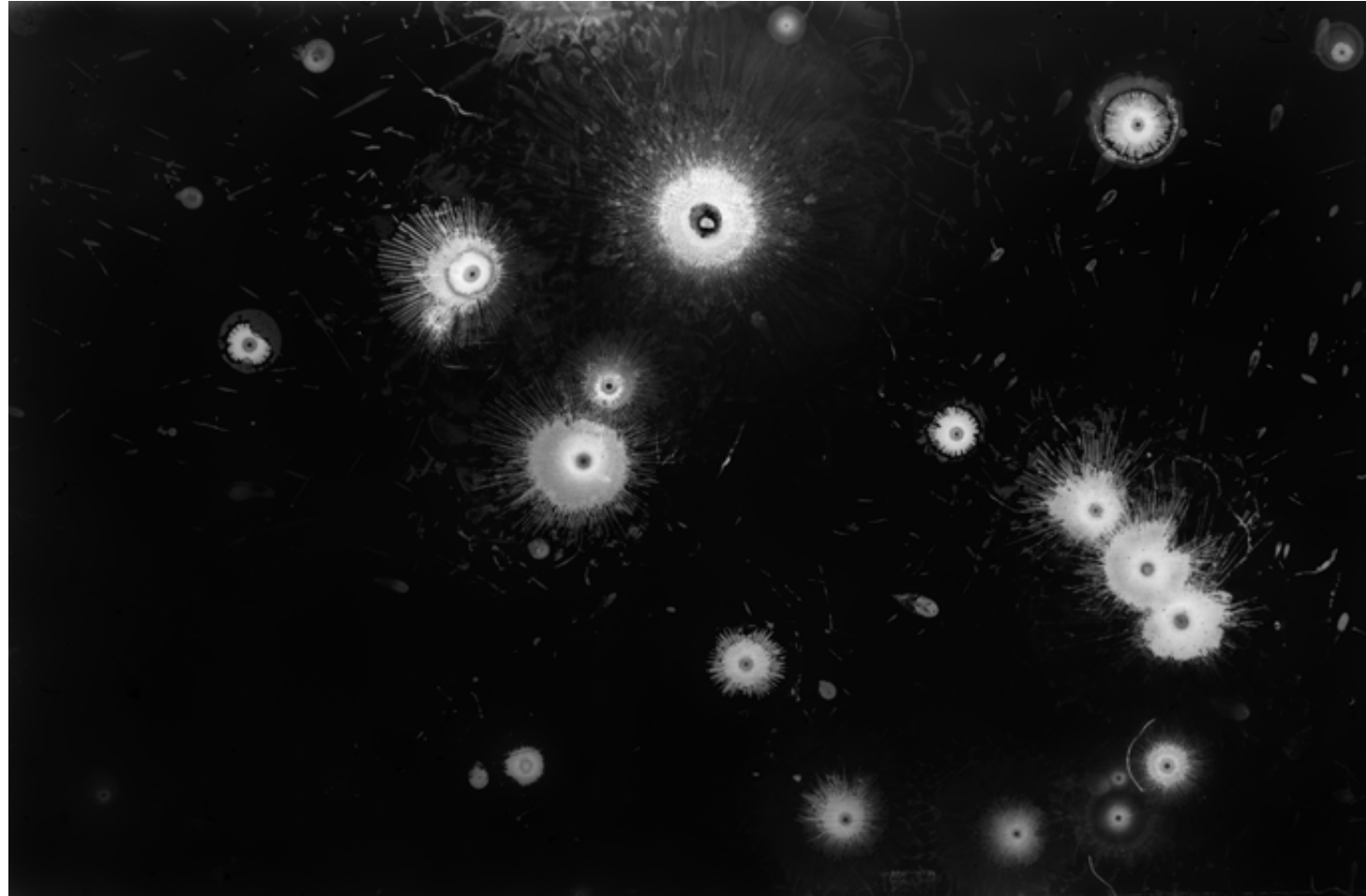
Sound and video installation, 2011

70 soot-coated glass slides, 4 105x155 cm pigment prints enlarged from the glass slides, the Drop Tracer instrument with an unexposed soot coated glass slide, candle, matchbox, HD video [00:49:20, color, sound, loop], projector

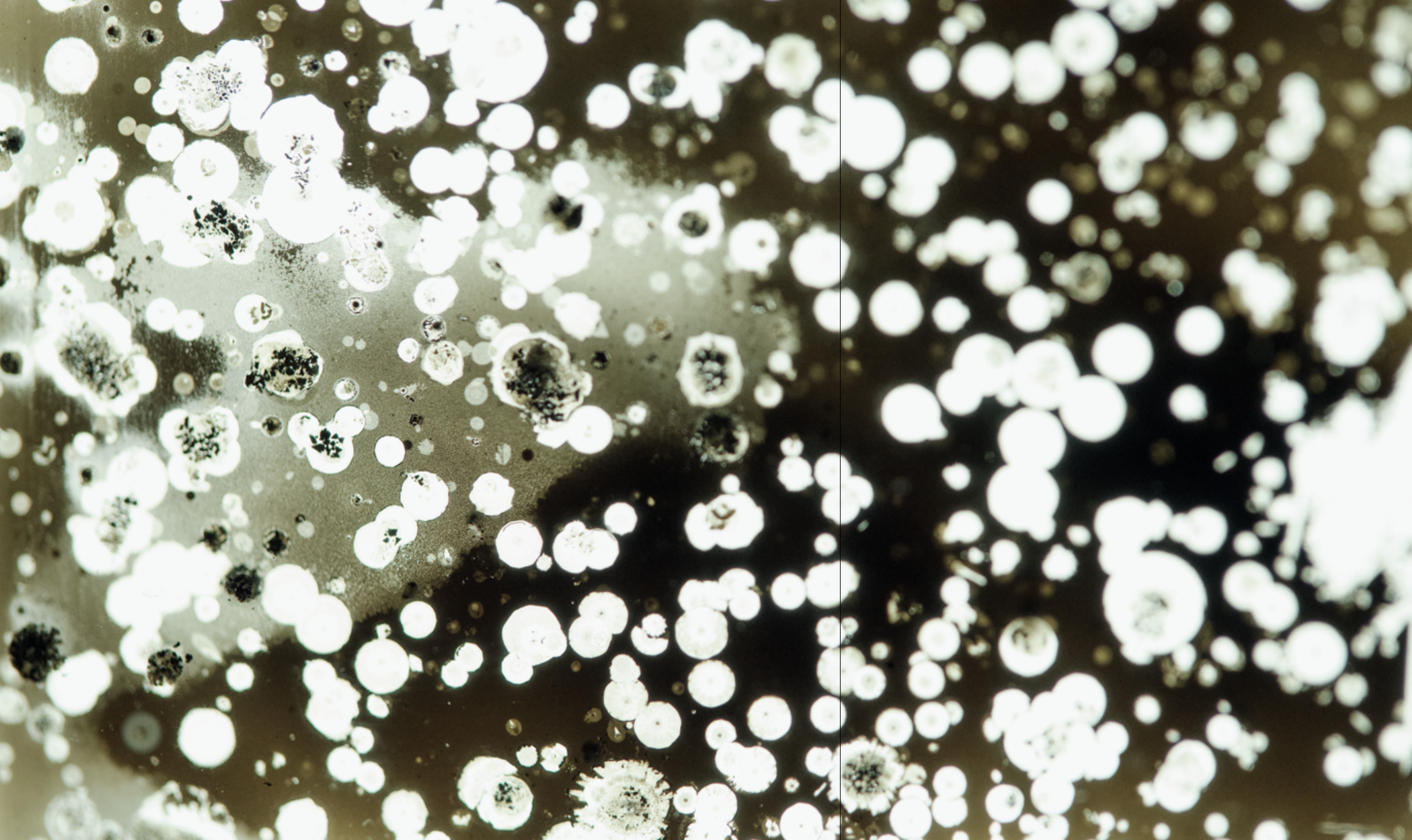
The Drop Tracer includes 35mm glass slide frames sensitized with soot and exposed to rain, photographic enlargements of the splash patterns made by the raindrops, and a video which allows the audience to

experience the duration of the splashes. Falling on the soot-coated slide, raindrops leave traces which remain visible even after the water has evaporated. A contact microphone catches the sound of the collision.

The work draws from a method devised by the meteorologist Vincent J. Schaefer for recording raindrops' collision with glass. When a drop of rain hits the glass surface, air trapped under the droplet lifts up tiny particles of soot that end up creating explosion patterns on the surface of the slide.







Phill Niblock & Katherine Liberovskaya  
***LockStorm (or Outside from Inside)***

*A collaborative video project [00:13:23, color, stereo, HD NTSC], 2020*

*32" screen, headphones*

*Video by Katherine Liberovskaya*

*Sound by Katherine Liberovskaya and Phill Niblock*

A piece entirely made without leaving home during the COVID-19 lockdown by Katherine Liberovskaya and Phill Niblock over the summer and fall of 2020 in New York. Glimpses and sounds of a thunderstorm and heavy rain falling outside were captured from indoors through the fire escape railing.

Additional audio was created in the running shower with a stainless steel pot and a hydrophone.





Nao Nishihara  
***Diligent Machine (Venice)***

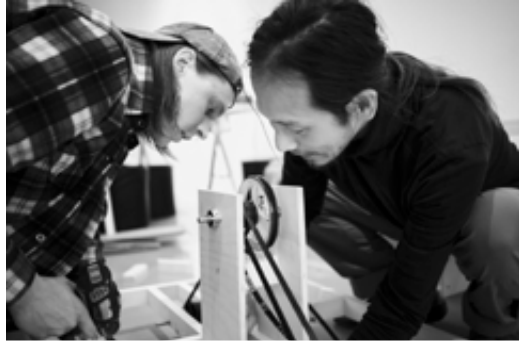
*Kinetic sound machine, 2024*

*Mixed media*

*Special thanks to Nautica Marton for providing items that became part of the artwork*

*Diligent Machine (Venice)* shifts our sense of time in our daily lives. It runs very slowly on a railway, with the live sounds of instruments and daily objects. The audience has to wait for the next sound in the silence. In this moment, we sense the richness of those empty spaces. These ideas and processes are rooted in the traditional Japanese value of MA 間.





Fabrizio Plessi

## **Energy**

*Video installation, 2016*

*7 40" screens*

What is the meaning of Energy,  
after all?

Changing and reversing the lapidary  
order of things.

This is Energy

Altering the rational pattern of our  
perception.

This is Energy

Overturning the very meaning of the  
work and extending its potential.

This is Energy

Running on unfamiliar terrain using  
unapproved strategies.

This is Energy

Entering and leaving without fear of  
the circumscribed borders.

This is Energy

Crossing without complexes the  
separateness and discomfort of  
creativity.

This is Energy

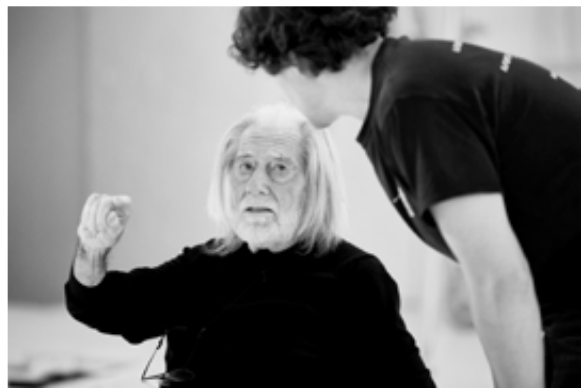
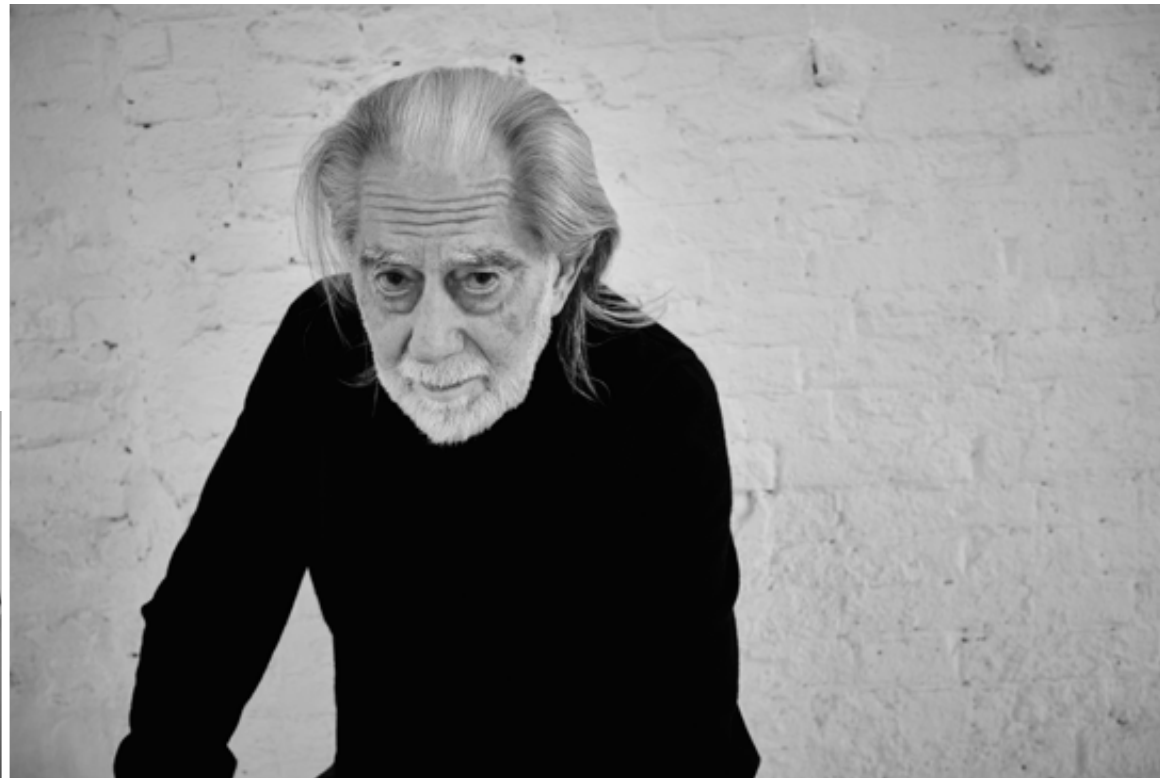
The true and authentic Energy, in the  
end, is only that of the light of a flash  
in the deep darkness of the night.

– Fabrizio Plessi









Mariateresa Sartori

## Sassi. Reading The Rocks

Drawings, frottages, photos, graphite on stone paper, photos on cotton paper, 2016

Courtesy of artist and Galleria Michela Rizzo

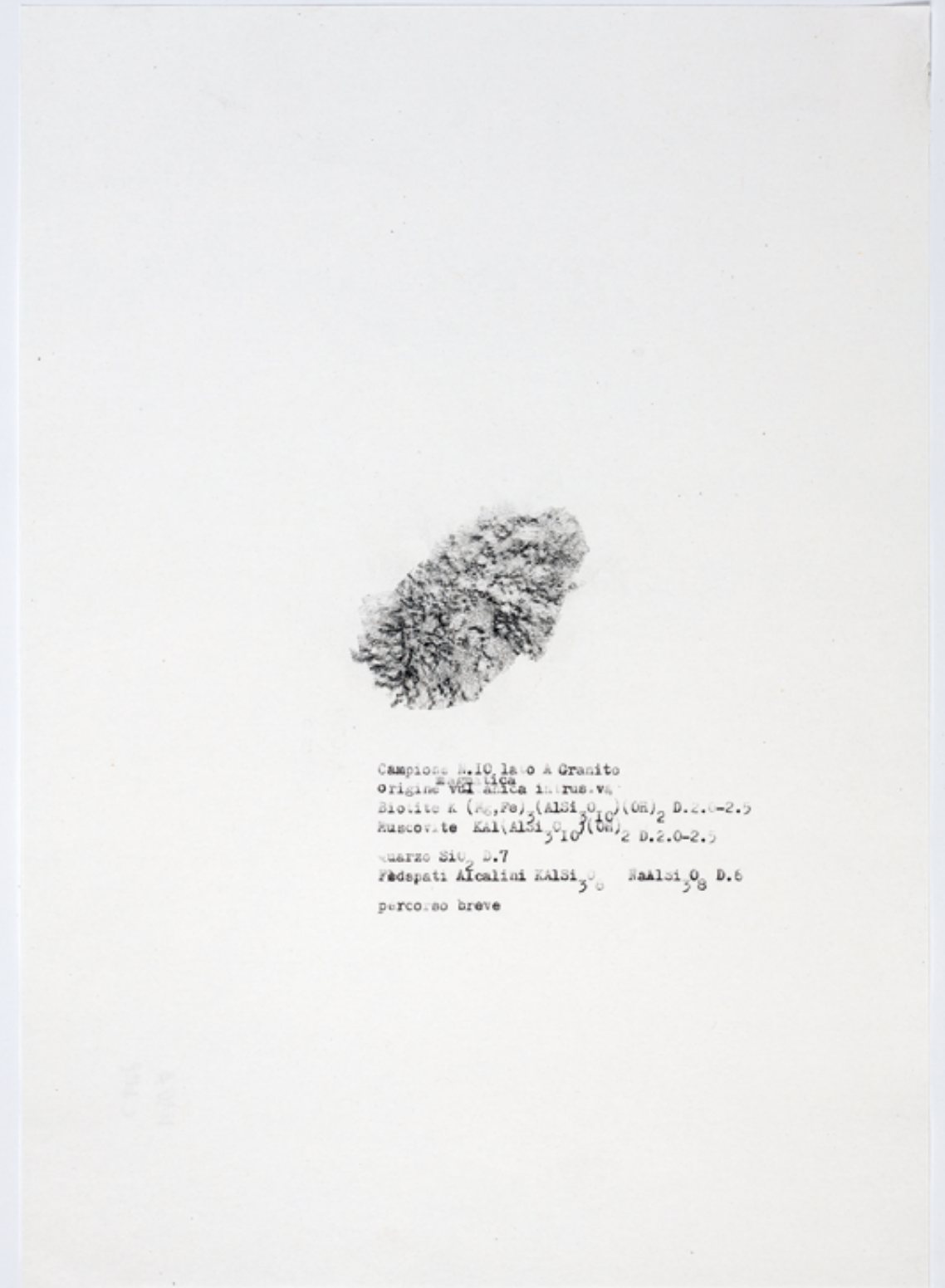
Thanks to Istituzione Fondazione bevilacqua La Masa, to Stefano Pasinato (quarry EGAP, Vicenza), to the geologists Andrea Marzoli and Giancarlo Rampazzo

Sartori extracts samples from a gravel quarry and uses them with rigor to create a scientific archive of sorts. The method has no purpose other than to observe the non-functional characteristics of the samples taken.

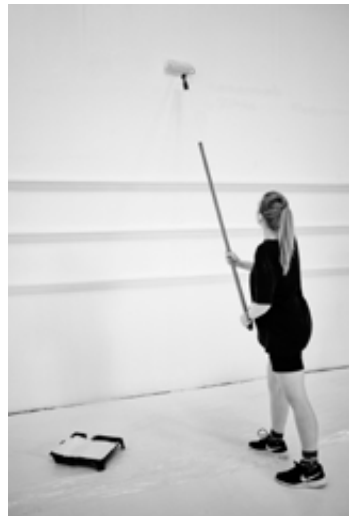
What remains of her artistic basis is the freedom to concede to the useless and to plumb the real. Thus we have *Frottages* on normal paper. *Evaluation of the Fine Dust* is the image obtained from spreading glue onto paper made of very smooth stone, on which the dust coming from the stone is applied with a brush. *Distribution of the Sands* is a series of sheets where the artist scatters a small amount of sand in a box, and the grains are arranged according to their weight and calibers. *Thin Sections* are the enlargements of a phases. Sartori concedes nothing to her personal inventive faculty or to her emotional one. Her drawings aim to offer a given fact reflecting all the human effort made to keep scientific images pure and, to keep knowledge shared, free from personal frames of mind and uncontrolled movements.

Overcoming our individual exigencies and the notion that everything revolves around us is probably the biggest struggle to overcome in order to move on from an infantile state to a mature one. It is a process that must be honored. We want to have a purpose as it would help us and make us feel less abandoned. However, the practice, the doing, and the knowledge that derives from this discovery is the best way of reacting to the absence of final causes; they are our best consolation and our possible purpose.

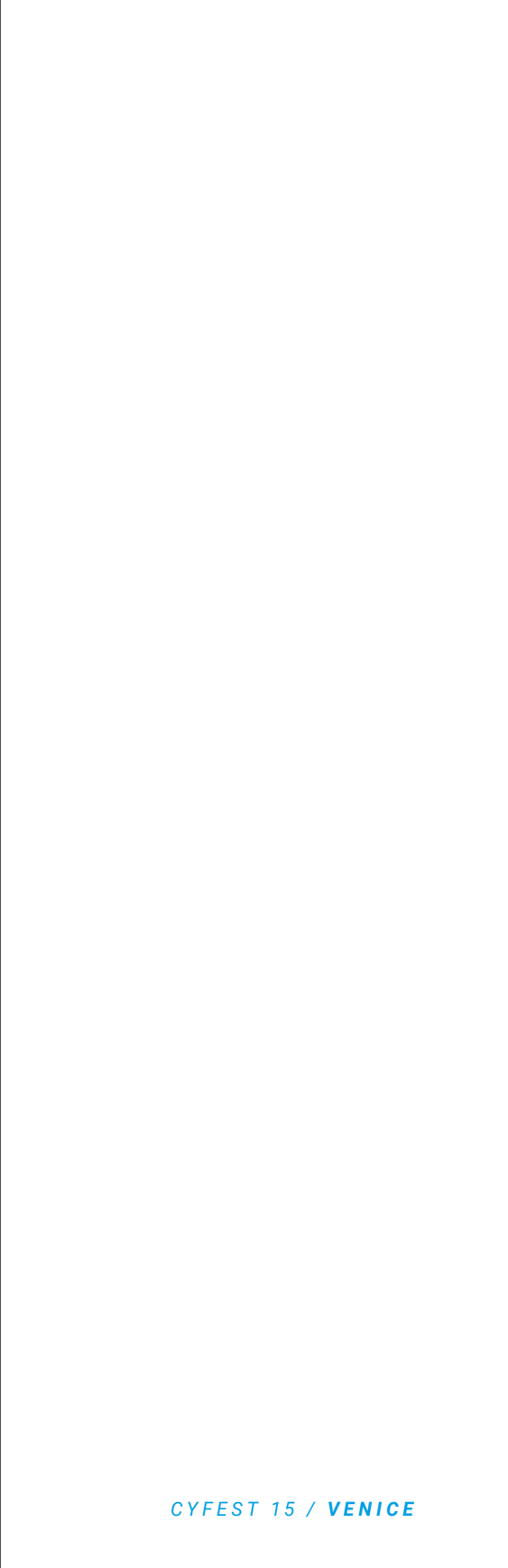
Excerpts from the "The Utility of Futile Ends" by Angela Vettese, Mariateresa Sartori. *Sassi Stones. Reading the rock.*







CYFEST 15 / VENICE



CYFEST 15 / VENICE



Mónica Naranjo Uribe  
***Cartography of an Impact***

*Mono-channel Full HD video [00:06:25, sound, loop], 2023  
40" screen, headphones*

*Sound by Daniel Lara Ballesteros*

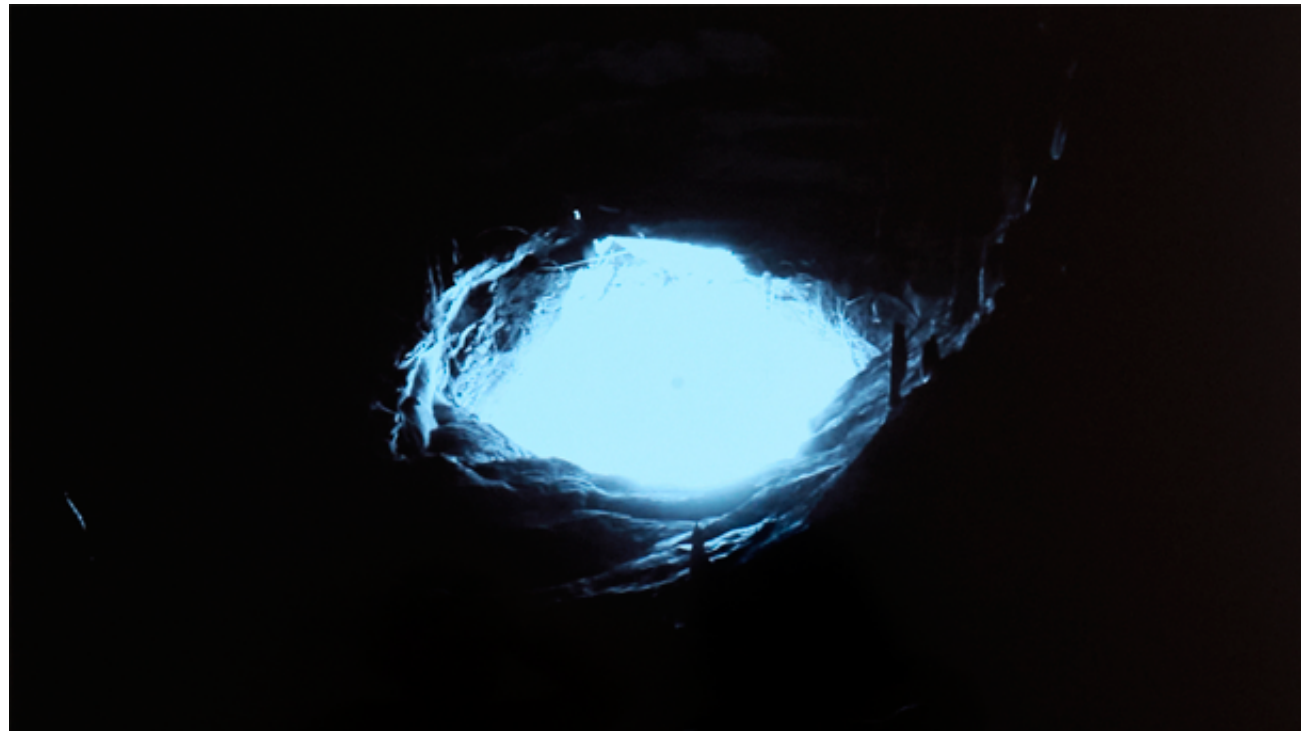
*Cartography of an Impact* explores geological forces beyond Earth's interior coming from encounters with other cosmic bodies. The crater of Chicxulub in Yucatán, Mexico, left by the impact of a meteorite 65 million years ago, is considered to be related to the prominent formation of "cenotes" (local term for sinkholes).

The impact left a fragility on the bedrock of the Peninsula that concentrates along the external ring of the crater, where many cenotes formed and keep forming. This

fragility suggests an active dimension of memory, that stays inscribed in the physical matter of territories and that has an effect on what emerges from it. This invisible state and aliveness of matter is explored in the work through sound and the idea of an echo in matter left after an event that continues having a presence beyond the visible and the audible.

The fictional narrative takes inspiration from the speculative thinking in science, imagining what happens precisely during a meteorite crashing into Earth, whose speed and force are of such magnitude that trigger unprecedented physical and chemical behaviors in matter that are impossible to trace.

The work is part of the research and series of works *The Cosmos in the Interior of the Earth*, developed around the Cenotes in Yucatán, Mexico.



## Where Dogs Run **Knitting and Crocheting the Mandelbrot Set**

*Performance, 2007–2024, work in progress  
Sound, 2024*

*Threads for knitting, text documentation  
of the process, knitting hook*

*Performers: Anna Asvarisch,  
Yevgeniya Tatarenko, Vasilisa Litvinenko*

A woman is knitting the Mandelbrot set converted into a knitting pattern. She is bounding the void.

The Mandelbrot set can be called a boundary of escaping to infinity. One chooses a point not far from zero and then inputs two coordinates —  $x$  and  $y$  —, into two simple expressions. A resulting two numbers, the coordinates of a new point, are substituted into the same expression, and so on. So if the initial point is lucky (or not so “lucky”) to be within the Mandelbrot set, then, passing through the equation, all the subsequent points stay close to the origin. If the initial point is even a little bit beyond the set’s boundary, then its descendants will not hold a position; they will lose touch with the origin point and fly to infinity. The coordinates of the iterated points will only grow and will never return to the vicinity of zero, where their ancestors dwell.

The boundary of the Mandelbrot set cannot be described by even the most complex of equations. It is always generated by trial and error. One takes a point, performs repeated calculations, and sees whether the results remain bounded. It is impossible to check each point, as their number is even greater than the standard (countable) infinity, which in our childhood, used to begin somewhere beyond a million or a billion. The generated boundary is always approximate: one million of points is definitely inside the set, another million of points is definitely outside it, and the boundary is somewhere in-between. Any



fragment of the boundary, even smallest one, looks similar to the entire boundary. That’s why it is called a self-similar shape, or a fractal. It is impossible to generate and draw it without a computer. There are many structures similar to the Mandelbrot set that exist in nature: blood vasculature, coastlines, etc. Our interest here is the attitude towards the indeterminable boundary. What is better: to stay inside and be marked black (the points within the set are traditionally marked black), or to stay outside knowing that one will have to fly to infinity anyway, or to exist on the boundary and infinitely self-similar?









## BIOS

### **Ludmila Belova**

is an artist and curator. Ludmila Belova graduated from the Abramtsevo Art and Industry School (Moscow Region, USSR). She works with video, sound, painting, and photography. Ludmila Belova investigates issues of memory, space and time; studies the impact of new technologies on the human being in art practices; makes the viewer a participant of the art process through interactivity. Her works have been exhibited in Europe, United States, Russia and Asia. Participant of the Moscow Biennale of Contemporary Art (2005, 2011, Russia), exhibitions parallel to the Venice Biennale (2011, 2013, 2015, 2017, 2019, Italy) and the Manifesta 10 parallel program (St. Petersburg, Russia, 2014). Winner of the prize "50 Bestern" ZKM (2000, Karlsruhe, Germany) and of the Sergey Kuryokhin Contemporary Art Award (2017, Russia) for "Best Curatorial Project". Participant of more than 50 local and international group exhibitions and festivals. Her works are held in the collections of the Russian Museum, the Anna Akhmatova Museum, Erarta Museum (St. Petersburg, Russia), the Kolodzei Art Foundation (New York, United States), and in private collections in Switzerland, Germany and Russia. She lives and works in St. Petersburg, Russia and Montenegro.

### **Max Blotas**

is a visual artist. He graduated from les Beaux-Arts de Paris and the Slade School of Fine Arts. Max's work lies at the intersection of sculpture, video, and painting, which he combines in multimedia installations to explore the underlying forces at work between science and beliefs. His hybrid artworks, between poetry and autonomous mechanical devices, recreate patterns and motifs from contemporary and ancient mythologies to reveal their inner secret nature. He currently lives and works in Paris (France).

### **Alan Boldon**

is an artist, social entrepreneur, curator, public speaker and writer. He has held leadership roles in the arts, academia, charities, and business and is known for pioneering initiatives that bridge the realms of education, culture, and sustainability. Alan has consistently

pushed the boundaries of conventional thinking and practice to shape a more sustainable and regenerative future.

As a consultant he has advised senior teams in organisations, including many Universities, all around the world. In his most recent venture as founder and Director of Weave he is creating an international network of bioregional learning labs exploring ways to engage with and solve complex challenges.

Alan is a sought after speaker for prestigious events worldwide. Notable contributions have been keynotes, workshops, and public talks for organisations including: the UN General Assembly Science Summit; MIT; London School of Economics; Kiasma National Contemporary Arts Centre Helsinki; Bristol Old Vic; TATE; Nanyang Academy Singapore; Museum of New Mexico; Politecnico di Milano; San Francisco Art Institute; World Innovation Summit Education Qatar; UNESCO/Learning Planet Institute Paris; CAA Boston, New York and LA; the Academy of Urbanism; CYFEST, Armenia; Luxembourg City; Brighton Dome; the Hermitage St. Petersburg; British Council; UKTI; Malaysian Cultural Ministry; ASEAN EcoTourism Network; and the Royal Society of Arts.

### **Silvia Burini**

is full Professor in Contemporary Art History. She teaches History of Russian Art, History of Contemporary Art, and Contemporary Art Curatorship at Ca' Foscari University of Venice, where for over ten years she has directed the Center for Studies in Russian Art (CSAR). Since 2011, she has been a member of the advisory board of CYFEST, and since 2019 she has been part of the artistic committee of the Russian Pavilion at the Venice Biennale. Her research interests are in Russian figurative arts (XVII–XXI centuries) and international contemporary art. She has also been researching the comparative study of art systems (painting and literature). She deals with the semiotics of culture and the figurative arts (mainly concerning the works of Yuri Lotman, of whom she is a translator to).

### **Alexandra Dementieva**

is an artist. She studied journalism in Moscow, USSR, and fine arts in Brussels,

Belgium. Her principal interest as an artist is the use of social psychology, perception theory, and behaviorism in media installations that combine dance, music, cinema, and performance. She organizes LASER Talks Brussels and teaches at the Royal Academy of Fine Arts (Brussels, Belgium). Dementieva received the first prize for the best mono-channel video at VAD Festival (2005, Girona, Spain). She is a participant of numerous exhibitions in major international cultural institutions, including Rubin Museum (New York, United States), MACRO Museum (Rome, Italy), Centro de la Imagen Museum (Mexico City, Mexico), the Hermitage Museum (St. Petersburg, Russia), Moscow Museum of Contemporary Art (Russia), and others. She lives and works in Brussels, Belgium.

#### **Alexey Dymdymarchenko**

(1986–2020) was an artist known for his minimalist, amalgam-like objects that embraced sound, material, and process. His works have been shown in exhibitions and festivals, including *Crip Ritual* at Doris McCarthy Gallery, University of Toronto Scarborough (2022, Canada), and the *CYFEST 12: ID* Sound Program (2019, St. Petersburg, Russia). He is represented by the *Perspektivy Art Studio (Perspektiven e.V.)* and an independent group of activists and friends.

#### **Yvetta Fedorova**

is a New York City based artist and illustrator who was born in St. Petersburg, Russia. Yvetta Fedorova is a Pratt Institute graduate. Yvetta's work has been recognized by The Society of Illustrators, American Illustration, Communication Arts Illustration Annual, Print's Regional Design Annual, Society of Publication Designers and the Art Directors Club. Yvetta's comic strips and artwork have regularly appeared in publications all over the world, including *The New Yorker*, *The New York Times*, *The Washington Post*, *Time magazine*, and many others. Yvetta worked as a political and cultural graphic journalist for *Internazionale Magazine*, based in Rome. As a fine artist, Yvetta Fedorova exhibits her cutouts that are made with an X-acto knife and paper. With her paper cutouts she creates video and site-specific installations and collaborated on an

animation based on her current installation *The Procession*. Recently, Yvetta Fedorova had a solo show at Delaware Valley Arts Alliance.

#### **Anna Frants**

is an artist, curator in the field of media art. She graduated from the Vera Mukhina Higher School of Art and Design (Leningrad, USSR) and Pratt Institute (New York, United States). Founder of the nonprofit cultural foundation CYLAND Foundation Inc. Cofounder of CYLAND MediaArtLab and CYFEST. Frants' interactive installations have been showcased at Museum of Art and Design (New York, United States), Video Guerrilha Festival (Brazil), Manifesta 10 Biennale (2014, St. Petersburg, Russia), Hermitage Museum (St. Petersburg, Russia), Chelsea Art Museum (New York, United States), Russian Museum (St. Petersburg, Russia), Kunstquartier Bethanien (Berlin, Germany), Hatcham Church Gallery, Goldsmiths, University of London (UK), Dartington Estate (UK), Ca' Foscari Zattere Cultural Flow Zone (Venice, Italy), MAXXI Museum (Rome, Italy), National Arts Club (New York, United States) and at other major venues all over the world. The artist's works are held in the collections of the Russian Museum (St. Petersburg, Russia), Museum of Art and Design (New York, United States), Sergey Kuryokhin Center for Modern Art (St. Petersburg, Russia) and Kolodzei Art Foundation (New York, United States) as well as in numerous private collections. She lives and works in Miami, United States.

#### **Elena Gubanova & Ivan Govorkov**

**Elena Gubanova** is an artist and curator.

She graduated from the Ilya Repin State Academic Institute of Painting, Sculpture and Architecture (Leningrad, USSR). She works in the fields of painting, sculpture, installation, and video. As a curator, she is engaged in CYLAND MediaArtLab projects. Lecturer in the "Young Artist's School" at the Pro Arte Foundation (St. Petersburg, Russia) in 2020–2021. Recipient of the Sergey Kuryokhin Contemporary Art Award (Russia) for "Best Work of Visual Art" (2012, together with Ivan Govorkov) and "Best Festival in the Field of Contemporary Art" (2018). Her works have been exhibited at major Russian and foreign venues, including the Hermitage

Museum (St. Petersburg, Russia), Russian Museum (St. Petersburg, Russia), Museum of Moscow (Russia), Tretyakov Gallery (Moscow, Russia), University Ca' Foscari (Venice, Italy), Goldsmiths, University of London (UK), Chelsea Art Museum (New York, United States), Kunstquartier Bethanien (Berlin, Germany) and National Arts Club (New York, United States). Participant of the Manifesta 10 parallel program (2014, St. Petersburg, Russia) and several exhibitions parallel to the Venice Biennale (since 2011, Venice, Italy); frequent participant and curator of CYFEST. Since 1990, she has worked in collaboration with Ivan Govorkov. She lives and works in St. Petersburg, Russia.

**Ivan Govorkov** is an artist. He graduated from the Ilya Repin State Academic Institute of Painting, Sculpture, and Architecture (Leningrad, USSR). He is engaged in philosophy, psychology, painting, drawing, sculpture, and installations; he works at the junction of traditional art and cutting-edge technologies. Professor of drawing at the Ilya Repin Institute (St. Petersburg, Russia). Recipient of the Sergey Kuryokhin Contemporary Art Award (2012, Russia) for "Best Work of Visual Art" (together with Elena Gubanova). His works have been exhibited at major Russian and foreign venues, including the Hermitage Museum (St. Petersburg, Russia), Russian Museum (St. Petersburg, Russia), Museum of Moscow (Russia), University Ca' Foscari (Venice, Italy), Chelsea Art Museum (New York, United States), Kunstquartier Bethanien (Berlin, Germany) and Sky Gallery 2 (Tokyo, Japan). Participant of the Manifesta 10 parallel program (2014, St. Petersburg, Russia) and several exhibitions parallel to the Venice Biennale (since 2011, Venice, Italy); frequent participant of CYFEST. Since 1990, he has worked in collaboration with Elena Gubanova. He lives and works in St. Petersburg, Russia.

#### **Irina Korina**

graduated from Russian Academy of Theatre Arts in 2000 (faculty of stage design). She also studied at the Institute of Contemporary Art in Moscow, and in the Academy of Fine Arts in Vienna. As a stage designer, she collaborated with many Russian theaters, from the beginning of 2000-s started working in cinema.

In 2009 Irina Korina was one of participants of the exhibition in the Russian pavilion at 53rd Venice Biennale. In 2017 her installation was presented within the main project of the 57th Venice Biennale. Her solo shows were presented in GRAD foundation (London, UK), Brooklyn Academy of Music (New York, United States), Moscow Museum of Modern Art (Russia), within Steirischer Herbst festival (Graz, Austria). Korina took part in numerous group shows, including M HKA museum (Antwerp, Belgium), Saatchi gallery (London, UK), Kühlhaus space (Berlin, Germany).

#### **Nataliya Lyakh**

is a multimedia artist. Passionate about painting, sculpture and photography from early childhood, she graduated with a Ph.D. in neuro-linguistics, focusing on brain-asymmetry and speech processing. Her scientific career did not hinder her artistic development—she continues to experiment with photography and video art. Since 2000, Natalia Lyakh has devoted her full-time attention to photography, video art, short films and video installations, working in Paris, Stockholm, Istanbul, Milano, Rome, New York and London, participating in different art shows and festivals. Her work can be found in private and public collections, including the Russian Museum. Influenced by her former scientific research, she invites viewers to discover the magic dimensions, abstractions, hidden in the simplest objects that surround us, as seen through the lens of a microscope, the prism of binoculars, a periscope or a kaleidoscope. Her creations with plexiglas, aluminium, video or video installation are invitations to discover our daily life objects or situations with aesthetic, innovative and perplexing treatment. She lives and works in Paris, France.

#### **Brian MacCraith**

is a senior advisor to the President of Arizona State University (ASU). His responsibilities include the development of European initiatives, support for the University Design Institute, especially in the area of sustainability, and a Professor of Practice position in the College of Global Futures. Prior to this ASU role, he was President of Dublin City University (2010–2020), during

which time the university underwent major transformation and grew significantly in terms of scale, footprint, and reputation. He also pioneered a number of important developments in the area of Equality, Diversity and Inclusion, including the establishment of the world's first Autism-friendly University. He has a strong commitment to innovation and inclusion in education at all levels. Professor MacCraith is internationally renowned for his research achievements in the areas of chemical and bio-sensor technology, photonics, and advanced materials. In 2020, he was appointed by the Irish government to lead the *High-Level Task Force* on COVID-19 Vaccination and to Chair of the *Future of Media Commission*. He is currently Chair of the *External Oversight Body* of the Irish Defence Forces.

#### **Anne Marie Maes**

is a multidisciplinary artist with a background in botany and visual anthropology. She lives and works in Brussels. Her practice combines art and science with a particular interest in ecosystems and alchemical processes. She works with various biological, digital, and classical media, including living organisms. In doing so, she focuses on the process and creates the ideal conditions for self-generating art. On the roof of her studio in Brussels, she has created a field laboratory and experimental garden where she works with insects and bacteria, studying the processes that nature uses to create forms. For many of her projects, she collaborates with fablabs and university research labs. Her long-term projects *Connected Open Greens*, *Bee Agency and Laboratory for Form and Matter* provide the framework for a wide range of artworks, all at the intersection of art and ecology. She has been awarded several prizes and mentions, Ars Electronica, among others. She has exhibited widely as a solo artist and in group exhibitions around the world.

#### **Muriel Mambrini**

Muriel Mambrini-Doudet, Ph.D., grounds science of science management for sustainable development. She alternates theory and practice: interdisciplinary research at the interface between life science, innovation management, and

philosophy to frame a generic epistemology, simultaneously to the management of large research organizations crossing science, administration, and human dimensions. She is a former head of the largest research center of the national institute for agricultural research, former director of the Institute of Advanced Study for Science and Technology, current director of the Doctoral School for Interdisciplinary Frontier Research. Recently, she designed the framework serving the actors of the innovation ecosystems to accelerate the agroecological transition using the potential of living labs at national, European, and International levels. She sits at the board of the EU Soil Mission with the aim of engaging the transformations for soil health. Having identified for long that reforming the evaluation system of science quality is key, she just joined the French Institute of Research for Sustainable Development (IRD) as director of Research & Programs Evaluation, with the intent to shape evaluation processes fit for sustainable, open—and more vulnerable—science.

#### **Tuula Närhinen**

is an artist and researcher in visual arts. Tuula Närhinen holds an MFA from the Finnish Academy of Fine Arts and an MSc in Architecture from the Helsinki University of Technology. In 2016 she gained a Doctorate in Fine Arts from the Helsinki University of the Arts. Re-adapting methods and instruments derived from natural sciences, Närhinen facilitates visual renderings of natural phenomena. Alongside tracings and recordings, her installations showcase the processes of inscription and the DIY instruments implicated. Her works are represented in the collections of the Kiasma Museum of Contemporary Art and the Helsinki Art Museum. She lives and works in Helsinki, Finland.

#### **Phill Niblock & Katherine Liberovskaya**

**Katherine Liberovskaya** is a Canadian intermedia artist based in New York City. Involved in experimental video since the 80s, she has produced numerous single-channel video art pieces, video installations, and video performances, as well as works in other media that have been shown around the world. Since 2001 her work predominantly focuses on the

intersection of moving image with sound/ music in various both ephemeral and fixed forms (projections, installations, performances), notably through collaborations with composers and sound artists in improvised live video+sound concert situations where her live visuals seek to create improvisatory “music” for the eyes. In addition to her art work she curates events in experimental video/film, sound/ music and A/V performance (primarily *Screen Compositions* since 2005 and *OptoSonic Tea* since 2006). In 2014 she completed a Ph.D. in art practice entitled “Improvisatory Live Visuals: Playing Images Like a Musical Instrument” at the Université du Québec in Montreal (UQAM).

**Phill Niblock** (1933–2024) was an intermedia artist using music, film, photography, video and computers. He was born in Indiana in 1933. Since the mid-60’s he made music and intermedia performances that have been shown at numerous venues around the world. Since 1985, he was the director of the Experimental Intermedia Foundation in New York ([experimentalintermedia.org](http://experimentalintermedia.org)), where he was an artist/member since 1968. He was the producer of Music and Intermedia presentations at El since 1973 and the curator of El’s XI Records label. Phill Niblock’s music is available on the *XI, Moikai, Mode, Matiere Memoire, Room 40, and Touch* labels. DVDs of films and music are available on the *Extreme label and Von Archive*. From 1971 to 1998 he was a professor of film, video and photography at The College of Staten Island, the City University of New York. In 2014, he was the recipient of the prestigious John Cage Award from the Foundation for Contemporary Arts.

#### **Nao Nishihara**

is an artist and active practitioner of sound activities, sound art, performance, recording, and instrument production. An object or human body inevitably produces sound. Nao explores these sounds and attempts to show them through their activities by using self-built machines and his own body.

#### **Alice Oswald**

trained as a gardener and has published 7 books of poetry, including *Dart* — a documentary poem about the River Dart, and *Memorial* — a version of Homer’s Iliad.

She has a particular interest in oral traditions and teaches a course on imagination at Dartington Arts School in Devon, UK. She was the first female Professor of Poetry at Oxford University, and her books have been translated into several languages.

#### **Fabrizio Plessi**

is a pioneer of Italian video art and is the first to have used a television monitor as material which runs a relentless water and digital fire flow (his first video installation goes back to 1974). His numerous participations in the Venice Biennale since 1970 and in film festivals and international dance have enabled him to create innovative and anticipative art experimentations.

Internationally he exhibited at Documenta, in the Guggenheim Museum in New York and Bilbao, Scuderie del Quirinale in Rome, Martin-Gropius-Bau in Berlin, IVAM in Valencia, MoCA in San Diego, Ludwig Museum in Budapest and Koblenz, and The Fundació Joan Miró in Barcelona.

His site-specific installation *The Golden Age*, was inaugurated on the facade of the Correr Museum in Venice in 2020 (thanks to the contribution of the Maison Dior). In Milan in 2021, the first monumental-scale video sculpture was inaugurated at the Generali Tower, *The Seas of the World—Homage to Zaha Hadid*. For Dior, he created MOSAICA, a unique piece of the iconic Lady Dior bag. Invited by the Brescia Musei Foundation to design and create an impressive widespread exhibition, Plessi marries Brixia, which is dedicated to the archaeological and historical-artistic heritage of Roman Brescia and the Santa Giulia Museum and can be visited until January 2024.

Plessi was one of the founders of the Kunsthochschule für Medien in Cologne, where he was also Professor of Humanization of Technologies and Electronic Sceneographies from 1990 to 2000.

#### **Mariateresa Sartori**

is an artist. Her research revolves around three thematic fulcrums: empirical scientific method; behavioral dynamics, often in relation to neurosciences; music and sound in relation to language. She often collaborates with experts from the various disciplines she explores geologists, theoretical physicists,

linguists, musicologists, musicians, singers, actors, botanists, and ornithologists. She has exhibited in numerous museums and galleries in Italy and abroad, including the Therese Giehse Halle, Münchner Kammerspiele, Habibi Kiosk, (Munich), Stanislavsky Electrotheatre (Moscow); Chopin Museum (Warsaw, Poland), Cairn Centre d’art (Digne-les-Bains, France), Ikon Gallery (Birmingham, UK), Fondazione Querini Stampalia (Venice, Italy), Moscow Museum of Modern Art (Russia), Palazzo Fortuny (Venezia, Italy), Museum of the Russian Academy of Fine Arts (St. Petersburg, Russia), MACRO Museum (Rome, Italy), Hangar Bicocca (Milano), Les Ateliers d’Artistes (Marseille, France) and many more. Lives and works in Venice, Italy.

#### **Gediminas and Nomedas Urbonas, MIT and Urbonas Studio**

Nomedas & Gediminas Urbonas are artists, educators, and co-founders of the Urbonas Studio, an interdisciplinary research practice that facilitates exchange amongst diverse nodes of knowledge production and artistic practice in pursuit of projects that transform civic spaces and collective imaginaries. Urbonas have exhibited internationally including the São Paulo (twice), Berlin, Moscow (twice), Lyon, Gwangju, Busan, Taipei Biennales, Folkestone and Baltic Triennials— and Manifesta and Documenta exhibitions— among numerous other international shows, including a solo show at the Venice Biennale, MACBA in Barcelona and National Gallery of Art in Vilnius. Their writing on artistic research as a form of intervention into social and political crisis was published in the books *Devices for Action* (2008) by MACBA Press, Barcelona and *Villa Lituania* (2008) by Sternberg Press, and *Public Space? Lost and Found* (2017) by MIT Press. Urbonases curated the *Swamp School* — future learning environment at the 16th Venice Architecture Biennale 2018. The book *Swamps and the New Imagination: On the Future of Cohabitation in Art, Architecture and Philosophy* published by Sternberg Press and distributed by MIT Press, is forthcoming in 2024. Gediminas is Associate Professor at MIT’s Program in Art, Culture and Technology in Cambridge, Massachusetts, and Nomedas is Research Affiliate at MIT.

#### **Mónica Naranjo Uribe**

is a visual artist and an editor. Mónica is graduated from Visual Arts and Graphic Design in Medellín (Colombia) and the master program Communication Art and Design from the Royal College of Art in London (UK). Her geological oriented artistic research has been focused on rocks and underground formations that she explores in particular geographies and contexts. She combines scientific and intuitive perspectives based on her encounters with territories, to create site-specific interventions, videos, installations, sculptures, drawings and publications. She is founder and editor of Nómada Ediciones, an independent publishing project specialized on narratives of places through cartographies, artist books and zines.

#### **Sha Xin Wei**

Sha Xin Wei Ph.D., Professor at the Schools of Arts, Media + Engineering and Complex Adaptive Systems, directs the Synthesis Atelier for transversal art, philosophy, and technology at Arizona State University. He has been a Professor at Concordia University as director of the Topological Media Lab, at the European Graduate School, and the New Centre for Research & Practice.

Sha’s core research concerns processualist approaches to ontogenesis and poiesis. His art and scholarly work range from gestural media, movement arts, and realtime media installation through experiential design to critical studies and philosophy of technology. Sha has published in philosophy, media arts and sciences, experimental music and performance, science and technology studies, computer science, and human computer interaction, including the book *Poiesis and Enchantment in Topological Matter* (2013, MIT Press). He is an Associate Editor for *AI & Society* and serves on the Governing Board of Leonardo. Sha’s art includes the *TGarden* playspaces, *Hubbub* speech-sensitive urban spaces, Software gestural sound instruments, the *WYSIWYG* gesture-sensitive sounding weaving, and responsive kinetic/light sculptures such as *Membrane* (DEAF, Rotterdam), *Cosmicomics* (Elektra, Montreal), *eSea* (E-Arts Festival, Shanghai), time lenses such as the *IL YA* video membrane and *Palimpsest* (Musée des arts et métiers, Paris) and in collaboration with Oana

Suteu Khintirian, Todd Ingalls, and Ginette Laurin, the Serra vegetal life environment.

#### **Where Dogs Run**

was created in Ekaterinburg (Russia) in 2000. Group members: Natalia Grekhova, Alexey Korzukhin, Olga Inozemtseva. Their artistic practice lies primarily in a field of technological art and uses a wide range of multimedia: video, robotics, hybrid installations, performance and DIY. The group combines innovative visual techniques with scientific research instruments and low tech aesthetics. Most projects by Where Dogs Run deal with serious scientific problems: the problem of three-body system, machine learning, natural language processing, virtual modeling, olfactory pollution, chemical communication.

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