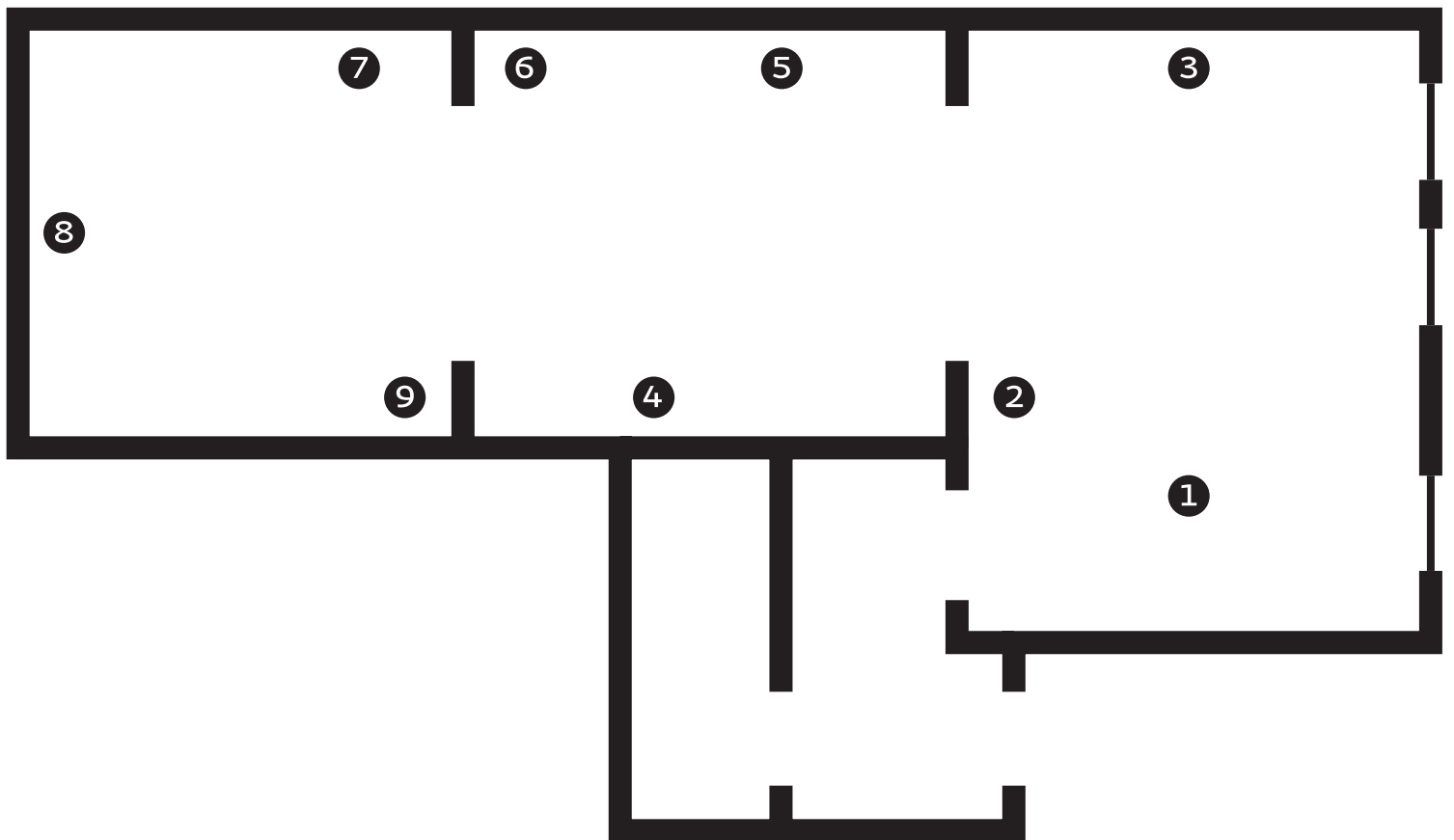


THE WORLD WITHOUT US

NARRATIVES ON THE AGE OF
NON-HUMAN ACTORS



CREDITS

THE WORLD WITHOUT US

Narratives on the age of non-human actors

CURATED BY Inke Arns (HMKV)

07. – 22. September, 2017.

MALI SALON Korzo 24, Rijeka

GALLERY WORK HOURS

Tuesday – Saturday 11–20 h

Sunday 11–13 & 17–20 h

Monday closed

ORGANISATOR Drugo more

PRODUCTION HMKV (Hardware MedienKunstVerein) i

Drugo more

CO-PRODUCTION Aksioma – Institut za suvremenu umjetnost, Ljubljana

i MMSU Rijeka

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YURI PATTISON

① the ideal (v3.0)

installation, shelves,

AntMiner machine, video, 2015

Courtesy the artist; Helga Maria Klosterfelde Edition, Berlin

The installation explores Bitcoin, the still nascent digital currency, which is generated in so-called Bitcoin mines. The more Bitcoin mines one has, the more virtual money one can generate. The Chinese company HaoBTC, a Beijing-based start-up, owns a Bitcoin mine that is located next to a new hydroelectric dam in the province of Sichuan (occupied Tibet). *the ideal (v3.0)* consists of an AntMiner, a smaller version of the hardware used in the HaoBTC mine. The water-based cooling system contains original stones from the riverbed, downstream from the hydroelectric dam. These stones were sent by Eric Mu, Chief Marketing Officer at HaoBTC, along with footage of HaoBTC's expanding operation that Mu shot for the artist.

<http://ideal.exchange/~txt.pdf>

MARK LECKEY

② GreenScreenRefrigeratorAction

video, 2010, 16:25 min.

Courtesy the artist; Cabinet Gallery, London &

Galerie Buchholz, Berlin / Cologne / New York

In Mark Leckey's *GreenScreenRefrigeratorAction*, a monolithic black refrigerator stands in front of a green screen musing upon its own existence. Its monologue, spoken by the artist with a digitally distorted voice, seem to offer observers insights into its thoughts: The fridge describes its daily tasks, gives explanations of itself and its control panels, its outstanding (freezing) features, but also its cosmological connectedness with things, with the sun, the moon, and the stars. The monolog is based on passages from the Mayan holy book, *Popol Vuh*, and a treatise on Marcel Duchamp by Calvin Tomkins, as well as fragments from the technical description of the refrigerator. Through an image search, the household appliance attempts to find "friends"—objects that look similar to it. Its search leads it to images of black limousines, smartphones, game consoles, and computer cases but also to the Kaaba of Mecca. The more or less intelligent fridge offers an inkling of what awaits us in the Internet of Things.

PINAR YOLDAS

③ The Kitty AI, Artificial Intelligence for Governance

video, 2016, 12:40 min.

Courtesy the artist; Ceren Yoldas; Rob Tom Browning

In her work *Artificial Intelligence for Governance*, *the Kitty AI*, Pinar Yoldas imagines an artificial intelligence (AI) that has taken over the world. In a video, a 3D-animated cat talks about itself and its work as ruler of a megalopolis in the year 2039. The AI has the appearance of an adorable kitten so as to not frighten the people. It comments from the future on the unsolvability of past crises—the refugee crisis, climate change, and an ominous "p-crisis"—and the inability of humankind to manage gigantic infrastructure. AI-like *Kitty AI* have, as a result, taken over the positions of politicians and other professional groups in this imagined future. In the logic of the AI, governmental form is a question of quantity: "Democracy was born in a polis—no surprise that it dies in a megalopolis."

SUZANNE TREISTER

④ HFT The Gardner

72 prints on Hahnemuhle paper, video, 2016

Courtesy the artist; Annelly Juda Fine Art,

London; P.P.O.W. Gallery, New York

In *HFT The Gardener* Suzanne Treister examines the world of high-frequency traders, who today operate in the Stock Exchange primarily with help from special algorithms, so-called trading bots. In her work, she explores the complex inner universe of a fictional British high-frequency trader named Hillel Fischer Traumberg (b. 1982). While watching share prices flash across a screen at a rapid rate, HFT has a hallucinatory experience of pure pattern recognition. From that moment on he follows his calling investigating psychoactive substances that are supposed to help him merge his consciousness with algorithmic intelligence and see the world from the other side—from the perspective of an algorithm. In an unusual narrative consisting of a seven-work series and a video, Treister connects scientific, artistic, and shamanic practices with the politics of global financial constructs, botany, algorithms, and Outsider Art.

SASCHA POHFLEPP

⑤ Recursion

video, 2016, 2:00 min.

Courtesy the artist

The central element of Sascha Pohflepp's work, *Recursion*, is a text about humankind, generated by an artificial intelligence (AI). The AI was primed with a wide range of texts from encyclopedic articles on human biology and societal forms to works on psychology, philosophy, and pop culture—including full Wikipedia articles on concepts of humanity, consciousness, economics, emotion, science, technology, the human body, and human behaviour, and more specifically, Sigmund Freud's *Civilization and Its Discontents*, Joni Mitchell's *California*, The Beatles' *Here Comes the Sun*, G.W.F. Hegel's *The Phenomenology of Spirit*, Mary Douglas' *Purity and Danger*, and Brian Eno's *Spider and I*. The AI was then instructed to compose a text beginning with the word "human," which is read aloud in the video by performance artist Erika Ostrander. In this way, Sascha Pohflepp creates a feedback loop between us and the artificial other. We cannot escape the question of whether or not, to quote Benjamin Bratton, "...the real uncanny valley [is] one in which we see ourselves through the eyes of an AI 'other.'"

TIMO ARNALL

© Robot Readable World

video, 2012, 5:09 min.

Courtesy the artist

How do the robots that are slowly but surely populating our environment see our streets, our cities and us, and what meaning do they derive from their observations? In his found footage video *Robot Readable World*, the Norwegian filmmaker and designer Timo Arnall attempts to determine whether the highly selective and excerpted perspective of the machines regarding their environment relate to the principles of human perception, or not. The excerpts from more than 30 sources show how humans, automobiles, microbes and other objects are recognised by machines and how direction and speed are interpreted, objects counted, traffic signs read, and individuals in crowds and faces identified. We become the eye of the machine and see what the algorithm sees: the perception of the machine still seems naive, almost like that of a child trying to make sense of events. The song "Cold Summer Landscape" from Blear Moon lends the images a poetic and dark undercurrent.

NICOLAS MAIGRET & MARIA ROSZKOWSKA

⑦ Predictive Art Bot

ventilators, software,

twitter.com/predartbot, 2017

Courtesy the artists (Disnovation.org)

Nicolas Maigret and Maria Roszkowska's *Predictive Art Bot* is an algorithm that uses current discourse as a basis to create concepts for artistic projects and, at times, prophesize absurd future trajectories for art. Algorithms are now widely used in different fields to make predictions using data analysis, statistical analysis, and pattern recognition for applications including the purchasing behaviour of particular groups, global market developments and even potential crimes. In contrast, the *Predictive Art Bot* is a specialist in making art forecasts, published daily on Twitter (twitter.com/predartbot), which are meant to expand the limited human imagination with new, non-human perspectives. As a parody of transhumanist prophecies, the *Predictive Art Bot* liberates artists from the constraints of creativity and develops ideas not yet implemented or conceived of by humans.

IGNAS KRUNGLEVIČIUS

⑧ Hard Body Trade

video, 2015, 5:02 min.

Courtesy the artist

The work of Ignas Krunglevičius shows a flight through panoramas of snowy mountains. The effect of the images is that of elaborately animated digital worlds in a computer game—except they are real. The artist created *Hard Body Trade* from a montage of so-called stock video footage of mountain landscapes. The soundtrack is a Rhythm & Blues song accompanied by a computer-generated voice, "We wear masks just like you. We are replacing things with math while your ideas are building up in your body like fat. [...] We are sorting algorithmic plugins for your specific age group. [...] We are performing your last cognitive upgrade." The sublime beauty of the images is counteracted by these statements. Suddenly, human viewers have to realize that they are observing a computer in its "idle time": the time in which it has nothing to do. Perhaps it fills the time with images it has processed during the day—pictures that remind us of footage that could previously be seen on television when stations were off-air.

ADDIE WAGENKNECHT

⑨* Internet of Things No. 1

Roomba, white orchid,

ceramic pot, WiFi jammer, 2016

Commissioned by MU, Eindhoven

& Haus der elektronischen Künste Basel

14.6 × 10.7 × 10.7 in / 37 × 27 × 27 cm

Courtesy the artist & bitforms gallery, New York

Wagenknecht modified three Roomba robotic vacuum cleaners to function as a Wi-Fi hotspot, Tor Browser or signal jammer. Thanks to an algorithm that initiates the Roombas' cleaning function, an interaction arises from the original practical functionality that is dynamic but simultaneously disruptive: depending on the Roombas' distance from one another and also from mobile phones, laptops, or other wireless routers, the technology of these devices is influenced and their signals are amplified or suppressed. *The Internet of Things No. 1* comments on the unpredictability of objects' interactions in the net. In their random dance, the robots release themselves from their invisible mutual embrace and continue on their way, steered in other directions only in response to obstacles. The objects placed on the robots refer to the title, which is already a reality, and not only in our office spaces: the Internet of Things acts independently and communicates internally in our technological devices today.

* The artwork is mobile.