Contents:

Elevate Me Later

"Elevate Me Later" is the title of a 1994 song by a band called Pavement; I was reminded of it, approximately 20 years after the last time I listened to it, by a fellow academic I recently met at a conference who posted it on Facebook. The YouTube link showed a static picture of the band (as there is no official music clip); equally, all other links to the same song present various static images of band members or the album cover whilst the song itself comes in different sound qualities from one link to another. In the 1990s, I had to go to a specialist record store to buy the album, as the band never became popular enough to be stocked by major chains. I also used a slow dial-up connection to search for the lyrics (which I didn't find). It now takes less than a second for a series of results about the very same song to appear on my screen. Whenever I listen to a track I like but don't recognize, I raise my phone close to the speakers and an app instantly gives me its full details. I am part of a generation that was born analogue and raised digital; new technologies constitute an essential part of my daily routine and yet, I feel a bizarre combination of nostalgia and disdain when I realize that, at present times, mixtapes are sold out at Rough Trade or that Lomography is becoming stronger than ever.

The technological changes of the past thirty years have not only impacted irreversibly our perception (and use) of time but also our interconnectedness and access to information. Images, sounds, texts are continuously reproduced, fragmented, edited, manipulated, appropriated, redistributed. Ten years after Hito Steyerl's "In Defense of the Poor Image" (2009), the finding that the 'new' condition of poor images and their subsequent circulation creates an "alternative economy of images, an imperfect cinema existing inside as well as beyond and under commercial media streams" (Steyerl 2009) seems more topical than ever. At the same time, free access to information and the development of user-friendly software for image manipulation seems to have resulted in the birth of new online 'tribes' based on a series of brand new (and often algorithmically complex) set of criteria. Lev Manovich has coined the term "Instagrammism" to talk about the new 'aesthetics of the image', going as far as suggesting that this is a historical moment of a new movement. Initially talking about the photo and video sharing social media platform Instagram but expanding the argument further to include a range of creative practices, he suggests that there is a standardization of aesthetics on different online platforms that is directly dependent on the style associated with the platform itself. Discussions about social media encouraging gang conformism via "likes" and "retweets" and algorithms devised by online retailers short circuiting choice (Moss 2015) bring forward a constant questioning of the space that is left for originality and

Elevate Me Later – an analogue sea in a digital world

or the ways in which meaning is defined in artistic practices.

So on one hand we have endless reproductions of images, sounds, and texts of various qualities and on the other a set of implied rules associated with different online communities that creates a rhizomatic development of online 'tribes'. The latter often relies on analogue aesthetics or the return of long-forgotten media via the fetishisation of anachronistic technologies (Kholeif 2018). In this light, it is interesting to revisit the way in which analogue practices today are renegotiated and examine how technological symbiosis may lead to works that remain true to their own materiality.

Fast Forward to the Analogue

The works that appear in this volume were shown at the exhibition "Fast Forward to the Analogue: vintage immersions" (Project Space, University of Greenwich Galleries, 2 July – 3 September 2019), which sought to explore the use of analogue techniques and to place them within the wider realm visual arts. Over the past years, digital and immersive technologies have been hyped as consumer gadgets, entertainment media and the future of exhibition practices. The free distribution of VR headsets with smartphones and the increasing interest of museums, festivals and other cultural organisers towards 'immersive digital content' have quickly turned VR and AR devices and applications into widely recognized cultural artefacts. The promotion of digital and interactive technologies in the physical spaces of exhibitions and museums has led to some venues relying solely on projections and audience interaction (Papadaki & Ploeger 2019). In this context, the 'analogue' is often presented as what preceded the 'digital'. However, the revival of analogue techniques and aesthetics bears witness to a range of practices that are beyond the mere polarising opposite of digital practices. The exhibition examined how those choices are embedded within an interdisciplinary framework.

The works presented by contributing artists and/or researchers (Mihalis Arfaras, Patrick Beveridge, Eleanor Dare, Carla Garcia, Jim Hobbs, Andrew Knight-Hill, Gabriel Menotti, Dani Ploeger, Audrey Samson, Systaime, Michael Talbot) showcase a wide range of approaches to the notion of the analogue as a concept and practice. After having selected the works in question, and whilst visualising their placement in the exhibition space, it quickly became apparent that groups of works fell into specific narrative threads and entered into a dialogue with one another. Arfaras' *Wochenschau* and *City Life Graffitis* were hung side by side Systaime's *Post-Internet Ecology* and offered different takes on pastiche images and collage practices. From a painstakingly frame-by-frame drawing onto film (reminiscent of traditional printmaking techniques) to a quick copy-paste of online imagery, a powerful commentary is made on the abundance of images, the creation

of subjective narratives and a diametrically opposed concept of time in the creation of a work. Samson's *Goodnight Sweetheart*, Hobbs' *It's all right. I came back*, and Talbot's '*Acemaşiran Kantosu Aklım Başımdan*' by Hanede *İbrahim Efendi* automatically evoke memories from a (collective?) past and thoughts on the materiality of both analogue and digital technologies, as well as the handling of the objects themselves at present times. Samson embalms her father's hard drive in resin, whilst Hobbs takes digital scans of his late father's digital slides and presents them both as images and palimpsest-objects. As part of his research on the Ottoman Empire, Talbot presents a shellac record from the early 20th century; in this case, the sound is digitised and accessed via headphones whilst the exhibition of the object itself stands as a reminder of the history contained within the actual physical object. At the same time, Menotti takes us on a virtual tour of Vila Itiororó via a VR installation (*Old Constellations [above Vila Itororó]*) that explores material heritage and where, amongst digitally-created 'constellations', objects left behind at Vila Itororó tell their stories through the voices of their former owners. Right next to it, Carla Garcia's *Sea Cave Cinema* and Patrick Beveridge's *The Mountain Lake* insist on 'film as film' and on the effect of its materiality over their work and the narrative they create within it. Garcia plays with the relation between the moving light in a cave in Portugal and the importance of the medium of film per se, whilst Beveridge creates a revisited analogy of the film camera mechanism to the movement of the sun. At the same time, Dare, Hobbs and Knight-Hill 'alter' some well-known references of our cultural and historical heritage. In the VR installation *Empathy for the Devil*, Dare offers an insight into Motel Room number 1 (i.e. Norman Bates' room) from Alfred Hitchcock's *Psycho* (1960). Apart from questioning VR's function as a potential 'empathy machine', the work makes use of our prior knowledge of the film (and the recognition of the sound sequence from the famous shower scene) to create an unexpected sense of tranquillity: we know that we are 'safe' while looking around Bates' room because at that very moment he is elsewhere and won't be coming back for a while. In *Vesuvius (I wish I had___)*, Hobbs draws in pencil a top back on Mount Vesuvius on an analogue photograph that has been digitally reprinted. His work is meticulous to the point where one can hardly recognise the volcano, although the latter remains seemingly familiar to the well-known image of Vesuvius that has been widely circulated throughout the years. Knight-Hill's *Whispers of a Long-forgotten Dream* offers two soundtracks for the film *Child of the Big City* (dir. Evgeni Bauer, 1914). Apart from altering our perception of the –originally silent- film, the two scores (one a fully analogue instrumental score and the other an electronic instrument rendering) stand as witnesses to the tension between analogue and digital executions of the same soundtrack. Finally, Ploeger's *European Studies #1* uses 6x6 negative film to capture the 'advanced technologies' of

contemporary border fences. An ironic take on the 'high-tech' aspect of the material itself versus the physical violence often associated with crossing said fences, he uses an 'old' technology for a result that could be seen as an Instagrammable and over-aestheticised implicit depiction of fear.

Different thematic and conceptual threads could be endlessly devised between the works in question. However, the essential characteristic here is the symbiotic way in which analogue practices are inscribed onto the creative process in order to contribute in the creation of a work of art with a clearly communicated message. In this respect, the analogue component of the works is not isolated but assessed in relation to the other components and to the intended aims of their creators.

An Analogue Sea in a Digital World

The digital world already counts decades of life and yet one could argue that contemporary art has failed to adequately respond to the impact of the digital revolution (Bishop 2012). Along the same line, it could equally be suggested that digital artworks themselves have not yet made a groundbreaking impact on the cultural landscape of the 21st century, which is partly due to the obsolete model of agency deployed by many digital artists (Dare and Papadaki 2015). In reality, this is not a question about the use of medium in the visual arts, but one about being truthful to and challenging the times via creative expression, and thus, going back to the track at the beginning of this text, creating art with 'elevating' qualities. Oil on canvas can do this just as easily as a VR installation; however, merely following the trends in terms of medium and form without fully realizing the impact of these choices resembles following the 'likes' and resulting in the awkward situation where everyone can say anything via an abundance of means but nobody has really anything to say. After all the media, genres, techniques, and -isms, all we are left with is the work itself and its impact on us. In this context, identifying the cultural and historical signifiers of analogue practices within a digital framework becomes a question of understanding and appreciating how the creative interplay between said media can contribute in a complete work of art.

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Wochenschau, 1982,
digitised 16mm film;

City Life Graffitis, 1985,
digitised 16mm film

Arfaras combines a
series of techniques
using 16mm or 35mm
film, especially Cell
Animation and Object
Animation, which are
conceptually linked
to hisbackground in
painting and sculpture,
where the material itself
has a direct effect on the
artistic creation. He often
interferes to the medium
by engraving and
drawing straight onto
the film, adding to the
pre-existing imagery
a particularly
expressive force.

The final image and
sound editing is done
on a computer, after
having transferred the
work to digital form.
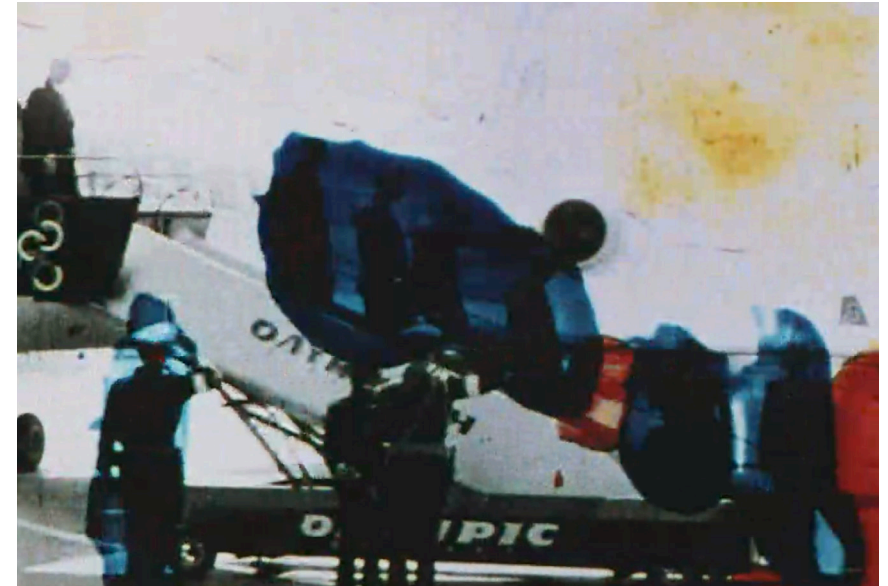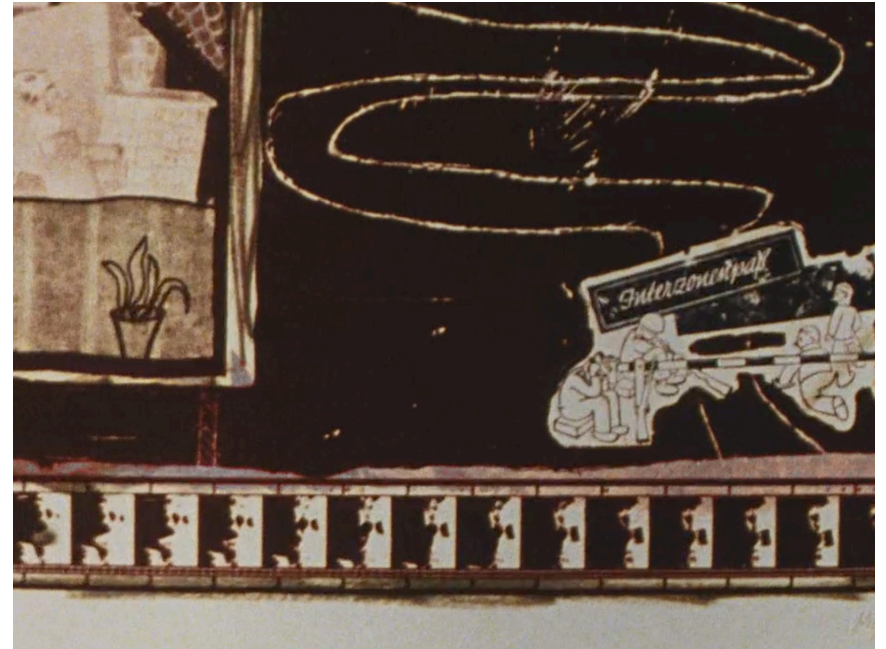
Wochenschau & City Life Graffitis

From the 1980s to the present day, Michalis Arfaras (Athens, 1954) assembles found objects into grotesque anthropomorphic figures with symbolic, totemic and narrative elements. This is realized with a variety of different techniques as demanded by his equally varied sculptural, painting, graphic and cinematographic work. From his earliest 16mm films to recently presented digital videos, prints and sculptures, media are seamlessly combined in hybrid works: found-object assemblages appear as puppets in animated films, engravings incorporate cinematographic film strips and even prints are made with a combination of multiple printing techniques, such as woodcut, lithography, etching and typography. With works that are realized out of hybridizing gestures, Arfaras' choice to adopt digital technology is no surprise: it is a technology that can imitate other technologies, a tool which can provide an array of other tools, the most effective way to create, edit and combine still or moving images. From 2000 onward, Arfaras has been using 16 or 35 mm film to record moving and animated images with the intention to digitize and edit in digital video format, adding the digital toolbox to his already rich vocabulary of analogue effects and transformations.

In the statement text "The moon creates large shadows; the sun, persistent ones" written for his 2010 exhibition "Michalis Arfaras, Absence from reason", the artist relates his work to the tradition of shamanistic "masks" and to "Grotesque" medieval ornaments, both of which relied on the idea of transformation of man to beast and had a religious function. The etymology of "Grotesque" lies in "Grotta", the Italian word for cave, whose shadowy corners those ornaments were used to decorate. In the same text, Arfaras will refer to shadows as "part of his psyche" and to print-making as "the quintessential art of shadows", admitting a spiritual motive in his work but also alluding to another "art of shadows": cinema. In his oeuvre both media are used to combine found or original imagery in uncanny, monstrous and satirical amalgams, i.e. contemporary grotesques.

Consistent with his views on shadows, his first film titled *Wochenschau* [newsreel], 1982, is dedicated to shadow play (Karagöz theater - also an "art of shadows" and of grotesque), which "replaced forbidden cinema" during the artist's childhood. The work is centred on a found newsreel film which is cut and integrated in a series of 22 prints, which are in turn re-filmed and animated. The camera imitates the viewer's gaze as it pans around each print's frame allowing for short and fragmented episodes to unfold in filmic space and time. Could this lack of central narrative be related to the nihilistic question posed and answered in animated text within the film itself? "What can you do out of a boring newsreel film? One that is even more boring." Contrary to the film's self-deprecating message, the

narrative that we see through the fast paced parade of punk music and visuals, combined with original and appropriated still and animated graphics, is the story of the found film's re-use and re-contextualization.

City Life Graffitis, produced in 1985, is Arfaras' second film and much like *Wochenschau*, is a sampler of animation techniques and narrative tropes. As alluded by the title, the film is a visual comment on urban living, a theme relayed through sequences of cityscapes and the daily grind. Images sourced from superhero comics, postcards and advertisements are combined with original animated drawings, abstract typography and filmed gestures. Sections of the film are hand-coloured frame by frame, as abstract structuralist film flickering colour fields and as visual animated effects on original filmed material. *City Life Graffitis* ends with a dreamlike stop motion sequence of Rorschach blots forming on a piece of paper followed by the cameraman's exit from the editing studio. Seen as a metaphor, this scene encapsulates the associative way of reading Arfaras' films, as a stream of consciousness flowing between the filmic space of the projected image and the filming space where the film frame exists as an object.

Stamatis Schizakis

The Mountain Lake,
2019, 16mm film

A reworking of the
analogy of the film
camera mechanism to
rhythms in nature; a
development of an idea
suggested in the early
writings of Mikhail
Prishvin, where he writes
about the midnight sun
in a darkly poetic and
engaging way.

The Mountain Lake

The projects I have worked on stem from interests in the light installations of James Turrell in the Arizona desert, and a genre of landscape films, created by avant-garde filmmakers of the same generation.

Before using film I made art that was about seeing reflected, coloured light on white surfaces. Some were wall pieces with pigment hidden under slats, others were hollow spheres made of resin with neon tubes running around a cross-section where the sphere was split into two segments. The two pieces I made in resin were about the effects of scattered, ambient light close to our eyes restricting our ability to see into the distance. There was also the intention to mix the three primary colours by adjusting their brightness levels.

I stopped working with direct light sources because of the danger of working with high voltage transformers, the toxicity of resin, and the difficulty of storing or disposing large sheets of fibreglass.

During the final months of working on these pieces, I looked at other subjects of interest related to the study of colour and light. One of these were displays of natural phenomena in the skies, as captured in atmospheric and astronomical photography. I noted that many of the photographs and weather documents that interested me, were taken in the European Arctic. I applied for a residency in northern Finland, and took a film camera with me. The film I made there focussed on the sky and its relation to the surface of the earth, and was made by experimenting with film cameras placed on celestial mounts.

I was influenced by reading interpretations and criticism of some key films by North American and European avant-garde film-makers of the late sixties and the seventies.(1) Michael Snow's La Region Centrale is a film where the camera was attached to a complex device that rotated slowly in several different planes. The resulting footage, shot from a camera moving back and forth across the land and sky, often shows the horizon drifting into the picture frame at different angles. Chris Welsby's Seven Days has the camera placed on an equatorial mount. It records the passing of night and day in time lapse.

In these films the camera captures changing light conditions over a period of time. Filming outdoors over extended periods, particularly when there are no shadows in the scene, captures the gradual change in the direction of the sun. The shutter opens at regular intervals, and although the intervals may be altered, each film frame is pulled down into the camera gate with a regularity that resembles a clock mechanism. It is hard to say whether Snow or Welsby would have used a digital video camera in these films were they available to film-makers at the time,

given that digital cameras and projectors make no running noise.

Digital video was available when I went to northern Europe for the first time. It was expensive to access, and there was the problem of batteries freezing when a camera was left outside for a long time. Far more disconcerting was how the footage would end up. At this time it would have been on Digi-beta videotape.

There have to be measurements of the amount of light a film stock uses to make a detailed picture of the subject. Whereas this can be done accurately in a television or film studio, a sudden change in cloudcover outdoors could lessen the likelihood of a perfect exposure. Filming in unpredictable weather can make you aware of the medium, through revealing the limits of its sensitivity.

The most recent film, part of which was shown in this exhibition titled *The mountain lake*, has a time-lapse shot where the camera moves along a wire in the same direction as the sun. This work was based on a travelogue by Mikhail Prishvin, a Russian nature writer who wrote about the midnight sun in 1908. I wanted the camera to move with the sun over distances of 20 metres for each cardinal point, but it became very difficult to realise this project due to unpredictable weather.

This film was shown as a colour print. When this service was available in London filmmakers would be invited into film laboratories to observe the stages and processes involved. With a background in making light sculpture, I was particularly intrigued. The mixing of light, for example is a task familiar to film graders. For example they would tell the client the image "looks too blue", and then correct the imbalance. I was also shown how a colour film printer works. They do not use colour filters to illuminate the printer gate, but prisms which would rotate slightly so as to send parts of the colour spectrum.

I have also tried to create abstract pieces using film. One of these pieces shows a Gaussian spot on the screen surface of a film recorder. The spot is the electron beam focussed in the centre. When the brightness of the spot is increased it produces a series of halos, or a ripple pattern of light. It would not be possible to place the film recorder base in a gallery and have the viewer operate the brightness level, because over-use would damage its working components.

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The film can be seen here: https://vimeo.com/190746484

Empathy for the Devil, 2019, VR installation and screen capture

VR spatiality is ideological. This VR app and screen capture is a 3D realisation of Motel Room number 1 from Alfred Hitchcock's film, *Psycho* of 1960. The mobile phone application, which was rendered in Unity 3D in March 2019, is an invitation to test the limits of VR's current over determination as an 'empathy machine'. What does it mean to immerse oneself in the violent, voyeuristic world of Norman Bates? Do viewers feel present in a physical space or experience this as an extension of cinema - as an illusion? What happens to the *empathy machine* in this configuration?

Empathy for the Devil

I'm on a plane flying to Shanghai, sporadically reading Paul Virilio's Open Sky, of 1997, while fiddling with my mobile phone. I bought the book second-hand from Amazon a couple of months ago; by coincidence it's an edition withdrawn from the University of Greenwich Library, I can't fathom why, it's in excellent condition, with barely a scratch or a line of graffiti. Beside the book my mobile phone is in flight mode, every six minutes or so the habitual urge to pick it up returns. I can't check emails, but I can look at my photos. There are so many of them stored on my phone, I have to scroll down for several minutes before I find the image I'm looking for, a 360 shot of our front room, back in Denmark Hill. It's a photo I look at again and again, a long frieze-like image which I can never fully grasp. The first thing I'm always struck by is the giant wine glass, just left of centre, like one of those M.C. Escher prints of a confounding castle, or his studio seen through a reflective orb. The scale of the wine glass makes no sense. It 's larger than anything else in the room. The wine inside the glass is deep and dark, nearly reaching the rim. A thin, vermillion border floats on top of the wine, lighter than the rest of the liquid, like a circular life-raft, it floats on an ocean from which there's no escape.

'We'll take you out in minute, Henry.' It's Kay, my partner's voice. The 360-photo app records sound as well. Emanating from the small world of the phone, her accent sounds more cockney, or rather South East London, then it does in person.

'I'm going to make a VR film about memory, recreate that time we tried to find the cave in Bostall Heath Woods.' My voice, on the other hand, sounds middle-of-the-road, radio bland.

'Oh, he wants a walk. Soon be in the park.' Says Kay, in that breezy tone we all seem to use when addressing dogs.

'It'll be about memory and disorientation.'

'There's a good boy.'

Behind the wine glass there's an electronic toothbrush standing in its charger. I can see the scuzzy mouth froth that gathers round the base of electric brushes. Along with dead hair and dried-up flakes of old foot skin, it's a new category of super abject material. Beside the toothbrush charger I can see myself, seated on our ramshackle sofa, waving at the camera, palm outwards, as if putting an invisible shot. At first glance I think you could still mistake me for a boyish thirty something, a young gay-girl about town. My grey hair hasn't been captured by this image, it looks dark, almost black, but, a closer look at my face reveals deep lines. Worry and laughter have abraded my skin like an old limestone landscape over which water and ice have moved for aeons.

Beside me, on the sofa, sits Kay. Though blurred, she has a dignified stillness, a stable face. Kay also waves. Her hand moves so rapidly it looks like she has eight fingers. Henry, our grey and white merle whippet-cross, looks up at her. His head in profile is silhouetted, he looks like Anubis, with huge upright ears and a long, curving snout. Kay's right hand reaches out to stroke him. He is needy. Kay it seems, is always alert to his unfathomable anxieties.

I scroll right again, past the giant wine glass towards a silver lamp, zoom in but can't decode the abstracted reflections on its curved surfaces, the photo's resolution is insufficient. In front of the lamp there's a green mat on a coffee table made by Kay. The mat splays out into a cockle shell shape, the sitting room wall also bulges outwards. It all looks outlandish, distorted by the gymnastic mapping from two dimensions to three, the image is flat. it only looks three dimensional when seen through a VR headset.

A pain wave passes through my forehead; it feels like one of those slow-motion films of a bullet cutting through a playing card. I put my cool palms against my forehead, then cup my eyeballs with my fingertips. I haven't had a drink of water for six hours. I Try not to dwell on a growing homesickness. I return to Virilio and idly rotate a plastic cup of red wine, resting on a pull-down table, the wine wobbles through a gentle turbulence, an analogue of the air outside. On a dirty TV screen at the end of the cabin, there's a crude picture of a plane arching over Siberia towards Shanghai; though the plane window to my left there's a vast flatness, too hazy for detail, less realistic than the on-screen map, it causes a cognitive disjunction I can't quite articulate. Virilio asks us how we can rationally manage such splits, 'not only between virtual and actual realities but, more to the point, between the apparent horizon and the transapparent horizon of a screen that suddenly opens up a mind or temporal window for us to interact elsewhere.' (37) In Open Sky Virilio is convinced we are on the brink of a grey ecology, one in which we will focus on the 'postindustrial degradation of the depth of field of the terrestrial landscape,' (41) the 'wrong of the telescope', the instantaneous image event horizon which collapses renaissance perspective into a flatland, without a near or a far or a here and now. As Virilio puts it: 'dismantling the necessary conditions for sensory experience.' (45)

In the current VR hype-cycle such a dismantling is rarely the focus of conversation, rather claims for the 'empathy machine' and the Utopian potential of 'presence,' which much of my work has sought to deconstruct, in particular, my piece, *'Empathy for the Devil'*, in which viewers are invited to get inside the headset with the murderer, Norman Bates – to ask themselves what empathy can and can't mean in such circumstances. But for now, at 33000 feet, I'm with Virilio in the Open Sky, I'm flying on the glocal axis, in a here and now which is neither analogue nor virtual, but somehow in between, a great circle of informational inertia, in which all I can feel is a longing for home.

Sea Cave Cinema,
2017, 16mm film

Sea Cave Cinema is a
form of thinking about
cinema, the medium of
film, and the practice
of filmmaking. It was
made alongside a
research project that
investigated the notion
of retreat in cinema
through the thinking
of British psychoanalyst
Wilfred Bion. The
film was made near
Sesimbra, in Portugal,
in a sea cave where light
is filtered through a
hole in its ceiling, and
then reflected on one of
its walls by the moving
surface of water. The
moving light in this cave
inspired the development
of ideas on our encounter
with moving images.
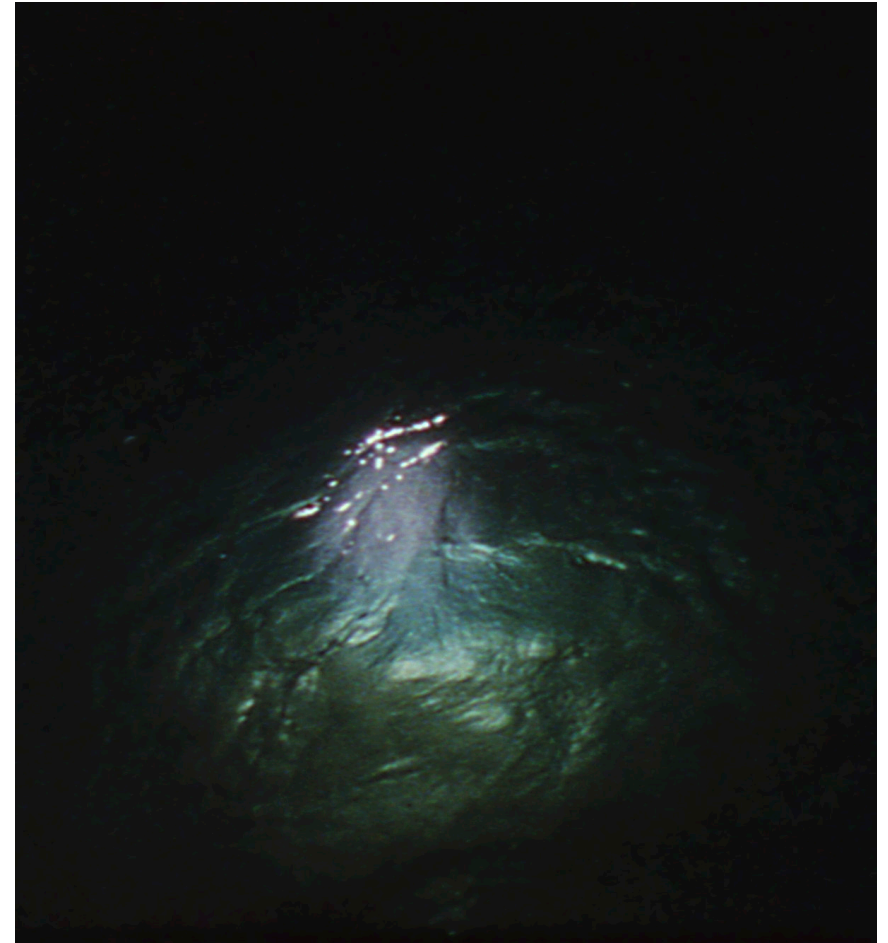
Sea Cave Cinema

Sea Cave Cinema is a film that I made alongside the writing of my doctoral thesis, which was published as a book with the title Bion in Film Theory and Analysis: The Retreat in Film (2017). This film and this book are two forms of research that originated in the same question: what if Plato's forms could be found inside the cave?

The project began when I encountered, in a newspaper magazine, images of a cave located near Sesimbra in Portugal, which was only discovered in the mid-1990s because of its difficult access. The cave's formations, in vivid colours and various textures, had strange, evocative shapes that led me to ask: what if these were the true forms of the objects in the outside world that they seemed to evoke? There was a sense of wonderment and discovery in the contemplation of these images, and this made me think of an inversion of Plato's allegory of the cave, whereby Plato's forms could be found inside the cave and could be perceived by the senses.

While Plato was interested in the movement from inside to outside the cave – from what he postulated was a place of illusions to a space where the true forms of things could be apprehended through the intellect – I was thinking of the opposite movement, and of a different topography. Implicit in this movement of 'going back into the cave' was a gesture of retreat from the 'outside world'. But this gesture, to my mind, did not simply imply a regression or a mere return to an origin. Neither is my use of analogue film in *Sea Cave Cinema* imbued with nostalgia for the long history of cinema that precedes its transition to digital.

Plato's cave has been used to theorize the cinema numerous times, perhaps most famously by the French film theorist Jean-Louis Baudry (1975). Wanting to see how I could challenge this analogy, I began to think about the cinema as a potential space of transformation and discovery, and to see it through a psychoanalytical lens, as a space connected with the internal world.

At this point the work of the British psychoanalyst Wilfred Bion came into the project. Bion, reader of Plato, Kant, and other philosophers, was also concerned with forms, noumena, ultimate reality. He considered what happened between analyst and analysand in the consulting room to be unknowable, a thing-in-itself in Kant's sense – what Bion called 'O' – as it was always subject to transformations in the mind of the people involved (Bion, 1965). These transformations deserved investigation if we were to better understand what psychoanalysis is or could be.

If Bion was interested in the notion of an ultimate reality beyond our apprehension, he conceived of emotions in a very different way to how Plato saw them. Plato saw emotions as 'the lower elements in the mind', opposed

to reason (Plato and Lee, 1955, p. 348), whereas for Bion the growth of the mind is in fact dependent on the capacity to think about emotions. The mind grows as it becomes able to assimilate emotional experiences; and the mother's role in containing and assimilating the infant's emotions through communicative projective identification is fundamental in the initial stages of this process (Bion, 1961). In later formulations of his theory of thinking, Bion notes that it is not the apprehension of the ultimately real that is stake, it is rather the capacity to be or become real, which entails the process of being or becoming at one with our own emotional truth.

Parallel to this reading and writing about Bion's theory of thinking and how it was helping me to rethink the experience of the subject in the cinema, I contacted the speleology group who had discovered the cave I had seen in pictures. The NECA group (Núcleo de Espeleologia da Costa Azul) first showed me some other caves they knew in the area, and it was, in the end, in one of these caves that I decided to make a film. This was a sea cave with a hole in its ceiling, which at a certain time of the day projected a beam of sunlight on the undulating surface of the sea, which in turn projected a moving image of light on the cave wall.

There was something cinematic about this cave. In a way, this cave was already a cinema. What could my experience of being a spectator of its moving images, of making a film from these images, and of thinking about how to present the film to an audience, tell me about the experience of cinema? What could this film tell us about cinema?

As I filmed inside the cave and the day passed, I saw the light of the Sun being transformed. I also saw the waves become bigger, and the tide begin to ebb, and was reminded of the gravitational force of the Moon. Things were projected and contained inside containers, which then became contained in other containers, such as my eyes or my camera. The coming together of these things produced transformations: different shapes of light and water, different sounds, slow erosions, exposures, and emotions.

I was rethinking the cinematic apparatus with Bion, but I did not want to confine my theory to the space of the cinema. In my view, cinema can happen in other spaces or situations too, but what is it that defines those spaces or situations? What, when, where is cinema? What, when, where is the retreat in cinema? I decided to shoot a last roll of film somewhere outside the cave, perhaps at night, on the coast. I was not sure what I was looking for, but I needed a place to set up my camera. As I walked along the shore, I saw the reflection of the Moon on the water that filled a small hole in the rock. I aligned my camera with the Moon and this tiny reflection, and let the film run. The silver light of the Moon and its reflection in salt water strike the silver salts in the film emulsion, and later turn into black metallic silver through a chemical reaction. The black metallic silver of the film negative projects beams of intense darkness,

which in the film print are transformed into beams of intense light. The two long takes that make up this last roll are the opening shots of *Sea Cave Cinema*. The spot of light in the rock gradually disappears in the second shot, as the Earth and the Moon continue along their course. During the process of making *Sea Cave Cinema* I realised that it is about a force, an energy between things that move, when they become temporarily placed in relation to each other. The different elements that compose the spaces in the film – the sunlight, the moonlight, the cave, the water, the wind, the waves – seem to come together in certain patterns, in relations that involve a force, a tension, an attraction, a reaction, and then let go. Cyclical, linear, chaotic – day after day, season after season, through the years. These energetic fields carry with them visible and invisible areas, sounds and silence, sensations, effects, and affects. They make things strikingly visible and audible, or barely perceptible, and then plunge them again in darkness and silence, drown them into horizons, to then return.

Pluto and its moon Charon rotate and revolve around each other in tidal locking. This means that they always show the same hemisphere to each other as they move; in other words, they always face each other as they move. Because Earth's mass is bigger than the Moon, only the Moon is tidally locked to the Earth. The Moon always faces us, but we turn away from it, only to return again after some time.

The cinema is a massive circulation of images happening around the world in certain patterns, and we are attracted to it also in patterns, aligning ourselves with its energies, at certain moments in time. *Sea Cave Cinema* is about how we make space and time for cinema. I made the film on 16mm film, and I show it in a darkened space. I wanted an encounter with space and time for cinema, at a time when our encounter with digital images is so pervasive that most have become completely banal or indistinct. I wanted this film to be seen very much as belonging to this moment in the history of cinema, even though it was made using technologies that have been around for decades, and shown in a space configured for even longer, for the experience of film. To paraphrase one of Bion's comments on the suppression and expression of the epistemophilic instinct (1965, p. 77), I do not see these choices as having been made in relation to what might have been lost, but instead as forward-looking, searching for what can be found.

The image I found in this work is not of a specific or ideal form of cinema; it is an image of a relation, an encounter, a certain energy, an effort even, a focused experience. This encounter has a certain physical and psychical quality about it, but it is one that can take many forms.

In the age of the digital, the use of analogue film seems a conscious choice, but to see the analogue and digital simply opposed to each other would be reductive to the breadth and depth of meanings that

these forms can take. In practice, these forms often intersect – for this exhibition I made digital prints of two stills from the film. Within the object-relations paradigm in psychoanalysis, Bion notes the importance of the metabolizing function of the container – mother, analyst, an other – for the development of our own capacity to think. *Sea Cave Cinema* proposes that a certain energy or effort in that process has to be allowed to take space and to take time. Cinema is about this encounter with ourselves and with others at a deeper level: it is about objects, and about subjects, put in relation.

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On show:

(2019). Still #1 from *Sea Cave Cinema*. Digital print, 59x42cm.
(2019). Still #2 from *Sea Cave Cinema*. Digital print, 59x42cm.
(2017). *Sea Cave Cinema*. 16mm colour film, 16 min.

An earlier version of the present text has been published as Bion in Film Theory and *Sea Cave Cinema*: A book and a film about the retreat in cinema. Reframing Psychoanalysis, September 2017. Available online at: http://reframe.sussex.ac.uk/repsychoanalysis

Vesuvius (I wish I had
_____), 2017, pencil on
digitised photograph

*Vesuvius (I wish I
had____)* is a recent
drawing that utilizes
analogue photography
that has been digitally
printed and reworked
with pencil. The original
photograph, taken during
a visit to Naples in 2016,
depicts Mount Vesuvius
as a truncated pinnacle
in the landscape – a
monumental reminder
of the historical and
destructive forces
of nature. However,
through the act of
drawing (a futile gesture),
the volcano is brought
back to a semblance of
completion. Littered
along the base of the
image are the artist's
notes and scribbles,
offering a subtle insight
into the thoughts and
processes of the work.

It's all right. I came back, 2019, digitally scanned slides with text on paper, dimensions variable

The title of this work references the opening lines of Arthur Miller's play, *Death of a Salesman*. Here, Hobbs has taken digital scans of slides from sales talks given by his deceased father who was a lighting salesman at General Electric for over 50 years. Specific slides have been chosen for their ability to operate both as images (the photographed bulbs with their coloured backgrounds) and palimpsest-objects (the slides themselves with writing/scribbles/ notations). The apparent symmetry of the paired works is challenged through a dichotomy of "back" and "front", where the coupled works mirror each image, but the physical slide itself offers a different characteristic based on its orientation. The coloured backdrops of each image hold particular importance – effecting the mood and character of each individual bulb. Complimenting/ contradicting the slides are musical cues taken from Miller's play, where the language personifies, locates and poeticises the seemingly simple documentation of the light bulbs.
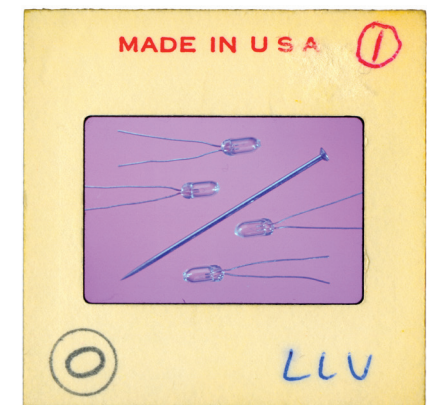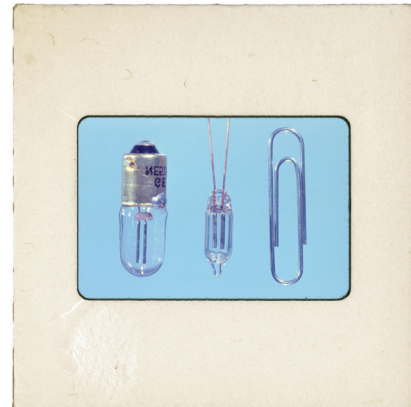

The flute plays on.

He hears, but is not aware of it.
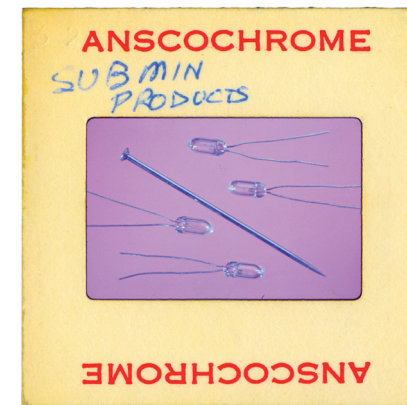
Suddenly music, faint and high, stops him.

It rises in intensity, almost to an unbearable scream.

A melody is heard, played upon a flute.

It is small and fine, telling of grass and trees and the horizon.

The apartment houses are fading out,
and the entire house and surroundings become covered with leaves.

Music insinuates itself as the leaves appear.
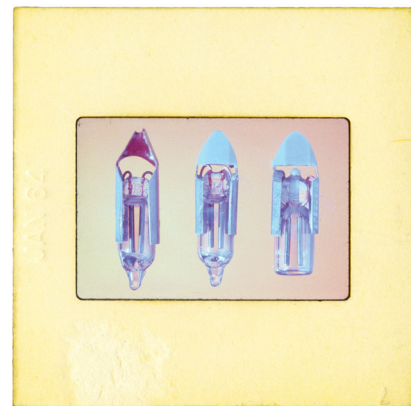
There is a long pause, the sound of the flute coming over.

The light gradually rises on the kitchen, which is empty.

She is in a black slip;
he is buttoning his shirt.

Raw, sensuous music accompanies their speech.

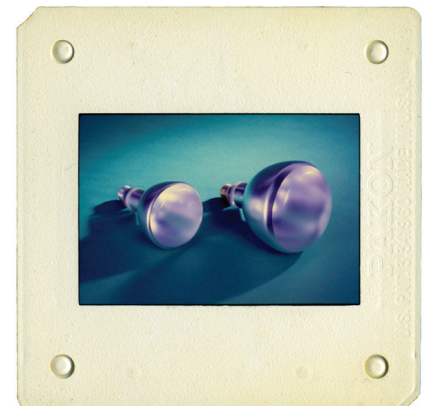**A Task**

i.
A simple task: to draw a circle.

ii.
One can easily embark on this request with minimal delay and draw a circle using no more than a pencil and paper. However, a more difficult problem soon arises, not with the task, but embedded in the question of how to draw a specific circle. It is here, within the how, or the means by which one chooses to execute the task, where the artist's choice of implementation suddenly becomes complicated with ideas of meaning, outcome, precision, reality, truth, emotions, correctness, scale, authenticity . . . . . . and so on. This task is not meant to generalise, or even worse create a dialectical argument around Ensō or Platonic forms (which isn't to say that drawing a circle does not already have an array of historic problems/politics around thought and representation), but rather to consider the appropriateness, processes and subsequent qualities of work produced in regards to the intention of the artist in developing meaning within an artwork. In many ways, it is the conversation of our time about the analogue/digital and the choices we make when creating.

In order to draw a circle using no more than a pencil and paper one must imagine the shape and find its manifestation through the process of a physical act. There is a starting point where the pencil first touches the paper. Movement can be seen as eyes, brain and body work together. An eraser can be used to recalculate and adjust, interrupting the flow of the line. The circle, even by the most experienced draftsman, will have irregularities. The type of pencil, the pressure applied, the paper's weight and texture, the speed/time of the drawing, the signature of the mark – these are all factors that come in to play. But the most interesting result by far is that the hand drawn circle, when examined closely, leaves behind a record of its totality: its self-contained inception and history. It is simultaneously present and past. There is a circle, but there is much more. One can see where the pencil first found contact, the (un)assertiveness in the process of movement, hesitations, (con)figuring, thinking, cognition, doubt, sensitivity, etc. In a sense, one can see time, process and humanity within this circle. Or stated another way, the circle is unique and its visual qualities (gesture) are intrinsically linked to its creator's authorship.

If one is to choose to draw the circle using an implement/aid such as compass or template, the circle takes on different qualities. Here, the pencil is aided by a machine-made apparatus to assist in its precision. Equally, a hand-made apparatus could be constructed offering up a slightly less precise outcome, but still be an external assistant in the execution of the

circle. In either case, the human has become augmented. The thought process has shifted as the reliance upon the apparatus allows for a type of disengagement with the cognitive-physical figuring of the circle. One aspect of the circle is now completed for us; however, there is still a choice in terms of the material, scale, placement and to a certain extent, the gestural properties. The circle takes on qualities similar to that of a line drawn with a ruler or straight edge – precise but still maintaining some sense of process such as a beginning and end, variations in line weight, etc. It is a form, which by some standards, is more "correct" as it removes many of the perceived flaws which detract from the ideal of a circle. It has tinges of the mathematical, the sciences, the progress and achievements of humanity. Yet it is also lacking in the more evident characteristics that distinguishes each individual circle from the next.

To draw a circle using digital means, such as a tablet and/or computer, confounds the issues even further. The use of a tablet and a stylus, where the computer records the movement of an implement across a sensorial surface, still maintains a human action but it is interpreted by a computer and digitised onto a screen. The movement and resistance of the drawing implement (stylus) on the surface (tablet) is reduced and the outcome is formed of data. On the tablet, there is no evidence of a drawn circle, instead a circle appears elsewhere. Physical materiality is not of the highest concern and instead a shift to the image is paramount. Effects can be applied before or after to mimic gesture, pressure, and materiality. The use of vision in the process to create the circle has also been adapted. Instead of looking at one's hand and what is being drawn, the visual focus instead shifts to the screen where the results are published. This distance, or disconnect, has an impact on the physical-cognitive act, and one that creates a type of disembodiment between the drawing and the creator. One is no longer physically attached to the image being drawn. Furthermore, if one is to draw (and it is questionable if it is even drawing) a circle using a computer programme such as Photoshop, Illustrator, etc., then the circle's qualities are predetermined by the set parameters, functions and aesthetics of the digital. One selects an icon of a shape, moves another icon to the desired location on a screen, depresses the mouse/trackpad while holding down the "Shift" key, and a circle appears of perfect proportion. One can then decide on the thickness, graphic style, and size of the circle. If one would wish to reproduce the circle, then it is simply a matter of depressing Ctrl+C, then Ctrl+V, and an army of circles begins to appear which one can throw around the digital battlefield. There is no drawing implement, no physical tool, no contact between materials, but rather a set of numerical points and data which determine this circle's qualities and perfection. There is no evidence of hesitation, irregularities or even a starting point. The circle just is.

iii.
The artist can neither turn away from his time nor lose himself in it. If he turns away from it he speaks in a void. But conversely, insofar as he takes his time as his object, he asserts his own existence as subject and cannot give in to it altogether. Albert Camus, Create Dangerously, 1957

I am not here to argue or judge which circle is better or worse. I am not here to extend this trajectory into the manifestation of solid forms, or lay claim to the most versatile of shapes. Nor am I here to rehash some sort of Benjaminian critique about the aura of each circle. In fact, I'm not really all that concerned with circles. But I am concerned with how these circles are made manifest, and in turn how they help define meaning within an artwork. We live in a time when there is an overabundance of images, media, technologies, fabricators and databases which have allowed for a type of laziness in the act of making, viewing and digesting art. People often confuse images for photographs. The differentiation between video and film appears flippant. Sound, noise, music and audio are generalised to mean the same thing, when there are many differences amongst all of them. And to be honest, it's not the misnomer of media that is the issue. It is the lack of understanding of the process and materiality which signifies so much within an artwork. From the artist to the viewer, we need to be more responsible and aware of the materials and means of production – now more than ever.

In 1957, Albert Camus, who had just won the Nobel Prize for Literature, delivered a speech entitled Create Dangerously regarding the responsibility of the artist in terms of (re)presenting reality and the creation of works which challenge the times and speak for the unspoken. His opinions had been heavily influenced by Post-War thought and he challenged the idea of an elite artist who viewed their role as being an enlightened solitary individual who only came down from on high to exhibit their works and educate the masses (or simply their own colleagues). Instead, Camus argued that art needed to include societal issues, create change and challenge all that had come before. It was necessary that the artist engaged with their own time – to be influenced by it, speak of it, take part in it, but not let it be the only focus. Despite the creator or medium, he was insistent that for it to be art, it needed to have risk, realism and the ability to bring a voice to people who had been silenced. It could not be passive or pastoral, it needed to engage. It could not be merely self-referential or a continuation of traditional artistic cannons. It needed to be reflective and new simultaneously.

I'm not sure exactly what Camus' stance would be now, but I have a feeling he would be more than a little irritated. Today, artworks take on a vast amount of forms and formats, with ever changing disciplines being named and renamed with countless combinations of genres, prefixes and suffixes. In fact, the term "New Media" seems to have little value as

everything is "new". The issues which many artists claim to take stances on are drowned out in a sea where everyone has a voice – or at least has their own Facebook or Instagram page. Artworks seem secondary, or even arbitrary, as many artists focus on grand concepts which are meant to be catalysts for societal changes – though the artwork itself takes no care or concern for how it was produced or its inherent qualities. The masses go to museums and galleries to see art, or rather to be seen seeing art. Much of art has become entertainment, fashion or a socialised symbol of having culture. It appears as if it is the opposite of what Camus was calling for. Art poses as being responsible, but is more aligned with the politics of art at the sacrifice of being art in and of itself. The form of realism in art which Camus desired was meant to be a mirror that reflected society back onto itself in order to rise up and challenge the human condition for all. Today, it seems more like a confusing hall of mirrors where the real has disappeared, made a return, and then propelled forward at lightening speed without reconciling with its own history and production.

I feel uneasy speaking in a dogmatic tone about such things as the responsibility of an artist. It begins to sound like some sort of manifesto – as if there is only one type of art that is supreme. I know this is not true. I do not believe that certain subject matters, styles or media are more relevant, or that others are obsolete. I don't care if an artist works with analogue or digital or everything in between. I don't care if they draw a circle with a pencil or a computer or both. However, I do care that there is an awareness of the repercussions that exist when choices are made as to how one makes a work. I am becoming more and more frustrated with a world in which artworks rely so heavily on structures outside the work itself because the work itself has no clue. It doesn't know how to speak or present itself. If an artwork is only accessible via a supporting text, then that artwork is failing to communicate and cannot engage with the type of realism Camus spoke of. It becomes elitist and distances itself from having risk or impact. To make visible the means in which an artwork is created is the choice of the creator. To understand the implications and meanings intrinsically linked to those processes is not a choice, and to a certain extent, this is the responsibility of the artist. It is essential to be conscious and aware of the actions, materials and processes and to know how they effect and imbue meaning. To create dangerously today is to make a work which dares to exist autonomously and decides knowingly whether or not to reveal the hand of the maker.

iv.
A not so simple task: to draw a circle.

Whispers of a long forgotten dream, 2019, two mono soundtracks for the silent film "Child of the Big City" (dir. Evgeni Bauer, 1914)

Excerpts of digitised film with two soundtracks.
1. Live instrumental performance
2. Electronic Instrument rendering (General MIDI)

The ephemerality of silent film sound renders these historic artefacts mute. Responses of contemporary composition can re-energise these lost worlds of film, charting connections between shared perspectives on class, gender and morality, across time.

While most of my work is digital, I was delighted to collaborate with the New Music Ensemble at St Andrews on this project to develop a fully analogue instrumental score, performed live alongside a screening of the film.

While the original film and the final musical performance were decidedly analogue, the process of creation was mediated by the digital, with electronic composition software allowing me to hear an approximation of the final performance. Digital technology offered an ability to access and explore this historic media, creating textural and temporal connections between moments lost in time.

When you listen here you will hear the live analogue performance of the real musicians in one ear; and the same piece performed by digital instruments in the other.

Whispers of a long forgotten dream

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When you listen here you will hear the live analogue performance of the real musicians in one ear; and the same piece performed by digital instruments in the other.

But, where does the music exist?

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In the ANALOGUE sound wave that travels through the air to the listeners ear? In the DIGITAL encoding of the audio signals? In the ANALOGUE rendering of the live musician performance? Or in the rendering of the DIGITAL software instruments?

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Is this installation an ANALOGUE of the live performance? Is it not? Is it something else entirely? 0 1 What of the binary decision to choose to listen? To the the human musicians? Or to the digital instruments? To Listen? Or Not? Or to audition both? What is this choice?!

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Are your actions DIGITAL or ANALOGUE? If "a creature's perceptions are exactly proportioned to its actions, its perceptions are its actions - in their latent state" (Massumi 2002: 81).

Are you DIGITAL or ANALOGUE?

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01110000 01100101 01110010 01100011 01100101 01110000 01110100 01101001
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But, where does the music exist?

01010111 01101000 01100101 01110010 01100101 00100000 01000100
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00100000 01001101 01110101 01110011 01101001 01100011 00100000
01000101 01111000 01101001 01110011 01110100 00111111

Reference

Massumi, B. (2002) Parables for the Virtual: Movement, Affect, Sensation. Duke University Press.

Clips of the soundtrack and film: https://vimeo.com/showcase/7118227

Analogue Sound Wave   Digital Sound Wave
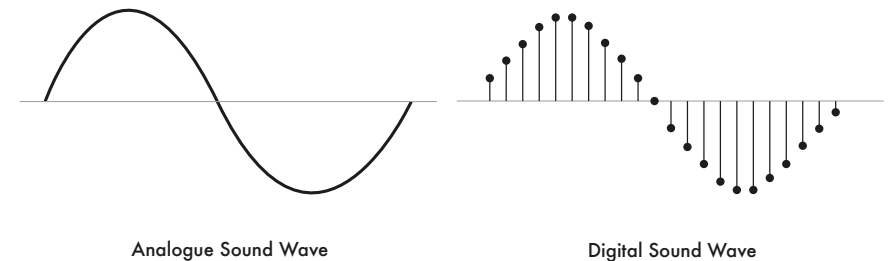
Old Constellations
(above Vila Itororó),
2019, VR installation
(screen capture)

Marginalized heritage as
blazing celestial bodies.
By drawing from oral
testimonies and digital
replicas, Old
Constellations
explores what has
been excluded from the
history of Vila Itororó,
in São Paulo.

The piece stems
from a research
project on critical
interfaces for material
heritage. It calls into
question the role of
technological mediation
in the production of
monuments, as well as
the institutionalization of
historic realism through
the partial analogy
achieved by 3D scanning.
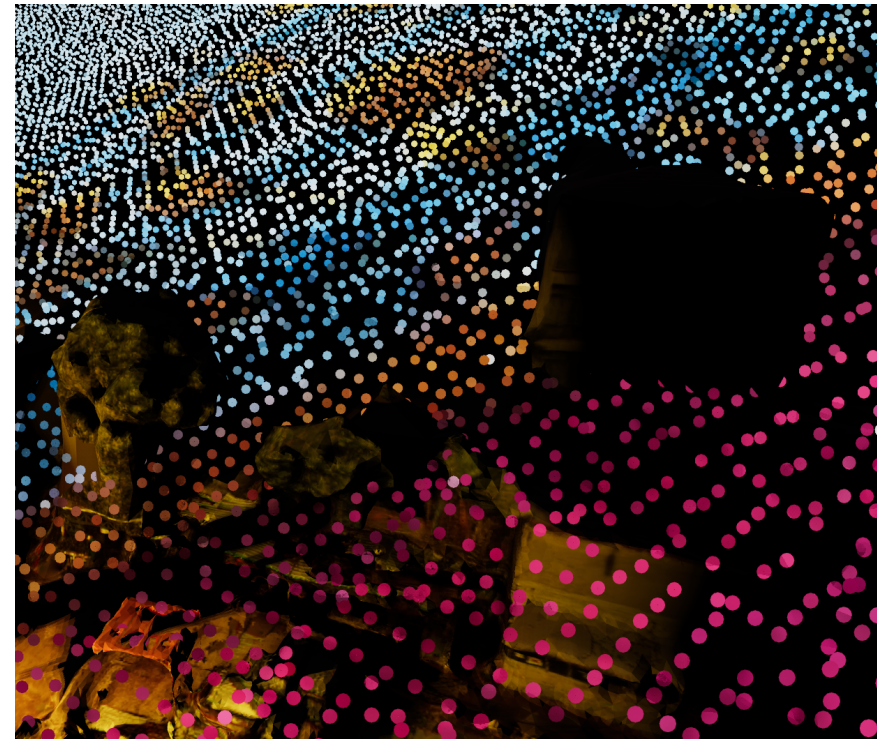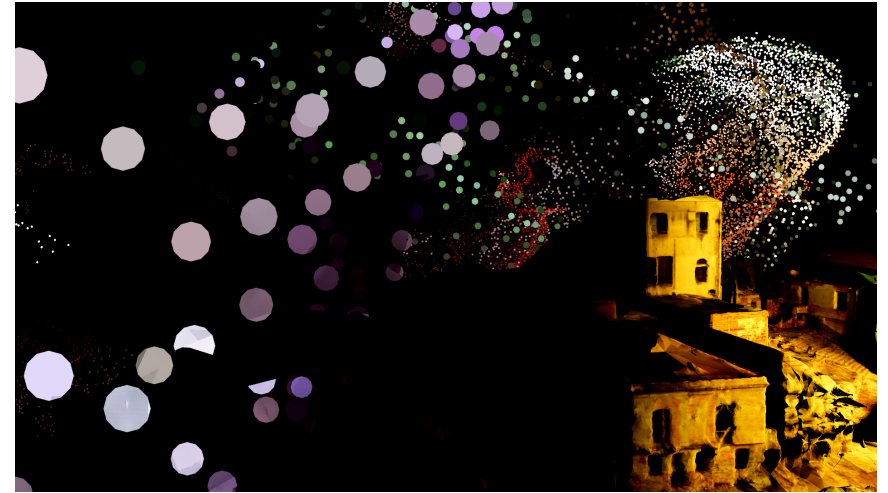
Old Constellations (above Vila Itororó)

An extraordinary zodiac crosses the skies of Vila Itororó, a small tenement in downtown São Paulo. In 2011, after years of conflict with the tenants, the city government evicted the last person residing there. The site, officially listed since 1985 and recognized long before that for its singular architecture, had been expropriated in order to become a cultural center. Families that lived in the place for generations were cast out. All that was left behind was the exotic buildings, now emptied of people, hollow shells adorned with ornaments made in plaster. The outcome is perplexing because, like few other examples of protected heritage, Vila Itororó expresses the impossibility of detaching historical forms from the everyday activities generating them. Its monumentality stems from the incongruities of lived life.

The tenement was created by its original owner without any strict regard to the best practices and proper architectural styles of his time. He built a palace for himself and about a dozen houses for rental employing miscellaneous materials salvaged from the demolition sites that abounded in the modernizing Brazilian metropolis of the 1910s. After he died of tuberculosis, young and without heirs, the place continued to flourish, further departing from standard designs. Buildings gradually changed in shape and semblance by virtue of their symbiosis with each new tenant. Some of their most striking features were added later, in what seemed to be a random manner, with vernacular engineering techniques. One can hardly miss the appendix made of naked bricks that sprouts between two large columns at the palace veranda. It is misplaced details such as this that render Vila Itororó's construction unique.

The accumulation of layers testifies to the continuing occupation of bodies, to their discrepant modes of living and familial arrangements, their aspirations and desires. Vila Itororó owes its existence to these bodies as much as to the inorganic structures remaining within its territory. The place, inherently hybrid and lacking an original configuration to which it could be returned to, frustrates the misanthropic containment so often enforced by conservationist agendas. There is little sense in the attempt to preserve the tenement by removing the forces that shaped it, while substituting them with the self-sufficient performance of a cultural program. Today, more than ever, the history of Vila Itororó overflows the location where it stands. It is scattered among its former residents, many of whom were relocated to tight condos nearby (a little compensation provided by the government for their lost homes). As it often does, the past survives in pieces.

Old Constellations (above Vila Itororó) is an executable documentary that seeks to rescue this narrative of dispossession from its pulverized state. The movie stems from research on critical interfaces for material heritage

and the exhibitionary possibilities of physical-made-virtual spaces. It calls into question the normalization of historical realism as well as the role of technological mediation in the production of monuments. Through digital replicas and oral testimonies, it presents a partial collection of objects that are dear to Vila Itororó's former tenants. In their personal character, these objects tell intimate stories that don't fit into the cultural institution's official records. They stand as a kind of phantasmatic heritage that, whether we realize it or not, populates the fissures of History. The memories they embody confront the place's master narrative with idiosyncratic accounts that both humanize it and reveal its contradictions.

For the work, these objects have been reanimated in an immersive experience taking place in the firmament above Vila Itororó. While the actual territory is now largely unavailable to public access, its digital replica can be completely apprehended with a glance. Unbound by the coherence of real-world behaviors, the virtual setting is able to accommodate objects in quantities and qualities the physical place never could. Artifacts are recomposed as massive groupings of stars and soar across the night, carrying along the voice of those who are gone. This metaphor implicates the informational constitution of volumetric replicas, which are created as point clouds before being rendered as continuous geometries. As dense as these sets of color coordinates may be, their correspondence to real objects and behaviors ultimately relies on our cognitive investment. The audience is largely responsible for projecting particular shapes in the virtual diagrams, just as they would in any arbitrary arrangement of celestial bodies. This 'analogue' aesthetics, contrasting with the highly precise digital technology underlying the work, creates the impression of uncertain presences. The closer the point clouds get, the less defined their configuration becomes. From a short distance, replicas lose their objective coherence and turn into an atmosphere of colors. The artifacts' outsider condition is therefore expressed in the means of their appearance. The memories they arouse seem larger than the place itself; they engulf the audience and take over their senses.

As an exhibition setting, Old Constellations evokes the contingencies of museum collections as far as the logic of totalizing cultural systems is concerned. It invites the audience to question how we negotiate the presence of both individuals in historical narratives and heritage in our everyday lives. 3-D scanning, a technology that frequently reinforces cultural hierarchies and reifies canonical shapes, is here deployed to subvert archival parameters. Replicas allow artifacts that wouldn't otherwise be admitted into institutional collections to simultaneously exist within and beyond them, thus enabling a counter-archive of Vila Itororó. The presentation of real-life objects as fractured models, in an intermediary state lacking post-processing and even proper finishing, serves more

than poetic purposes. It also reflects the precarious circumstances of this inscription, reaffirming 3-D scanning as a means to produce not faithful analogies, but rather flawed ones. Mimetic representation is a historically disputed technology inasmuch as a tool in the dispute of historical truths.

Old Constellations (above Vila Itororó) is a work by Gabriel Menotti commissioned by the Goethe-Institut Brazil. Production: Ventania. Production assistant: Francesca Tedeschi. Testimonials: Maria Aparecida, Camila, Iara, Alessandro, Michael, Valeska, Kauã, Elaine and Isamar. Soundtrack: Blue Medication (Ft: Javolenus, Martijn de Boer) (cc-by-nc 3.0) Doxent Zsigmond. The piece uses the Pcx and Reaktion packets by Keijiro Takahashi. Acknowledgements: Instituto Pedra, Concrejato, Fablab da Vila and Graziela Kunsch.

The VR experience can be downloaded at <menotti.itch.io/vilaitororo> and the full counter-archive of Vila Itororó's replicas is available at <sketchfab.com/menotti/collections/vila-itororo>.

There used to be so much space there!
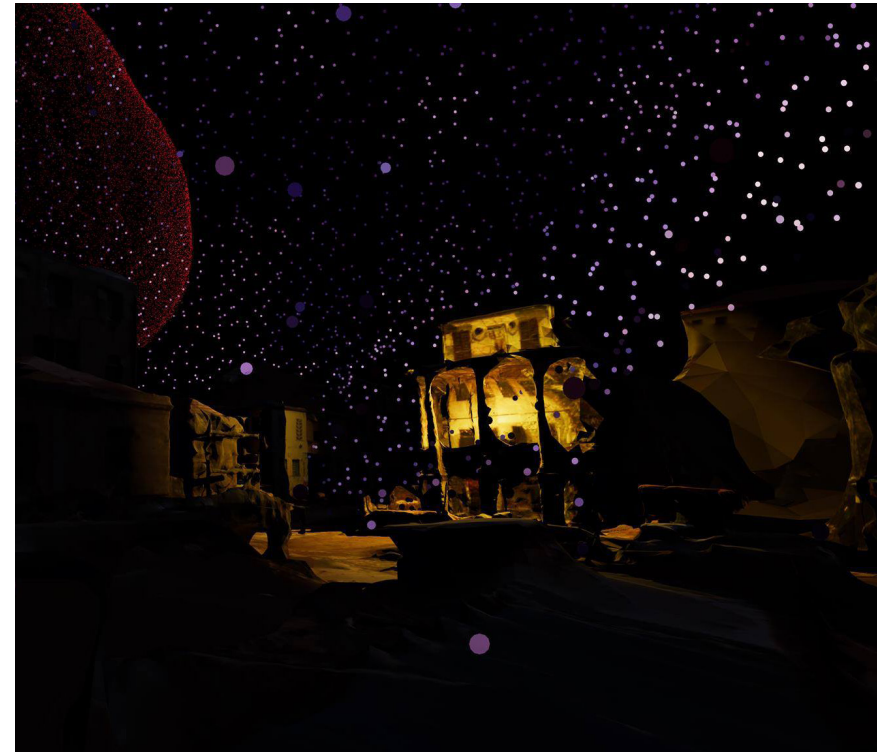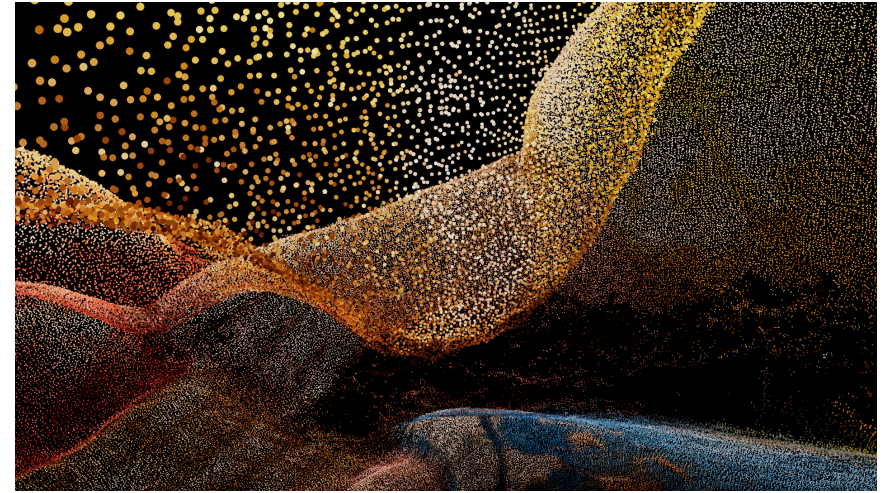
European Studies #1, 2018, three C-type prints from 6 × 6 negative film

In recent years, more and more border fences have been erected across Europe. These fences, designed to stop 'illegal immigrants', are often described as advanced technologies: they are supposedly 'high-tech' or even 'smart'. This terminology and the focus on the various sensors attached to the fences obscure the physical violence that is enacted on humans and non-human animals with these so-called 'passive safety' structures. Moreover, their framing as supposedly clean and precise technologies is symptomatic of a broader cultural practice that uses narratives of technologization to justify means of violence (e.g. 'smart bombs' and drones).

Despite the use of some contemporary electronic detection technologies, the border fence erected on the Hungarian-Serbian border from 2015-17 is mainly an old-fashioned barbed wire barrier, reminiscent of the iron curtain that separated Europe during the ColdWar-era. A sensor installation on the border fence near Subotica in Serbia was documented with a mid-format consumer camera, manufactured in the German Democratic Republic in the 1960s.

The Smart Fence is the Message
EU border barriers as violent media

Since 2015, hundreds of kilometers of reinforced barriers have been built on the outer borders of the European Union. These fences, erected to prevent migrants from entering the EU, largely consist of mesh fencing and so-called NATO razor wire, but are oftentimes also equipped with loudspeakers, lights, electric shock devices, and various sensors. The Hungarian anti-immigration fence on the border with Serbia features a particularly broad range of such technological additions.

Despite these features, the fence might appear to be not much more than a crude physical obstacle, violently separating spaces and people. Its high-tech additions seem to merely enhance its power to separate. While this material dimension is important, the ways in which the fence operates in practice cannot be reduced to just this. In most direct encounters, people don't come into physical contact with it. When you stand next to the fence, your eyes are likely to be drawn to the sharp appearance of the blades of the razor wire. According to the manufacturer of the wire for the Hungarian fence – European Security Fencing in Malaga, Spain – this is the most important aspect of razor wire: it is a 'passive safety' product that primarily operates as a 'deterrence.' It is conceived to communicate the threat of physical harm, rather than to inflict it. Hence, unlike conventional barbed wire, no green-coloured or otherwise inconspicuously looking razor wire is produced. The point is that it is visible.

There are other deterrent aspects to the fence as well. When you approach it, cameras detect you and the loudspeakers start to play a voice recording of a warning message in various languages, pointing out that damaging or crossing the fence is a criminal act under Hungarian law. Meanwhile, yellow warning signs tell you that the fence is electrified and touching it poses a shock hazard. This latter aspect also operates primarily as a deterrent, because there seems to be no actual danger: the shock is reportedly only 'mild.'

Last but not least, if you do touch the fence, movement sensors notify border guards at a nearby watchtower, after which they speed towards you to see what is going on and intervene if they deem this necessary. This is what happened when I stole a piece of razor wire from the fence (Border Operation, 2018.) Shortly after I started cutting the wire, two border guards arrived by car and started yelling at me. I ran off as fast as I could, scared to be pepper sprayed or otherwise assaulted by them.

Considering all this, it becomes clear that instead of looking at the Hungarian border fence as a more-or-less technologically enhanced obstacle, the following might be a more accurate reflection of the way it operates: an 'intervening substance through which sensory impressions are conveyed

or physical forces are transmitted.' This is one of the Oxford Dictionary of English definitions of a 'medium.' (Oxford Dictionary of English, 2019) EU-border fences are media that transmit different contents, ranging from notions of danger, (il)legality and authority, to affective exchanges between people protecting and challenging its structures. However, if we follow McLuhan's (1964) adagium that 'the medium is the message,' another question arises. If the medium itself – rather than the contents it transmits – defines its broader cultural relevance, what would the 'message' of these EU border fences be? The first answer that comes to mind seems straightforward: The broader relevance of the fence is its limiting effect on migration. But this answer is less conclusive than it might appear. It remains debatable whether the new border fences have led to the significant decrease in the influx of migrants to Europe that has taken place during the years since they were built. Moreover, when we examine the way the fences – particularly the Hungarian one – have been represented in news reports and government communication another message comes to the fore.

A 2017 press release on the website of the Hungarian government reads '"Smart fence" is working, second border barrier is being erected.' In addition to announcing the supposed success of an experiment with a new fence design in preventing people from crossing the border, the title already shows that another interest is at stake in the article as well. The use of the adjective 'smart' is relevant. The designation 'smart' is conventionally used for everyday technologies that enhance comfort and efficiency through detailed and accurate data processing. In other words, by referring to the border fence as 'smart' it is framed as an innovation connected to the world of high-tech consumer culture. This focus on the technologically advanced aspects of the fence has also featured prominently in media reports, oftentimes accompanied by images that put the fence's sensor elements at the centre of attention.

Thus – especially when considered from the perspective of its representations – we could say that the 'smart fence' is the message. While digital technologies make up only a small part of the fence they tend to be foregrounded in representations through the use of the idiom of digital consumer culture, combined with a visual focus on – supposedly – advanced technological features. Thus, the fence contributes to the idea that EU border protection is part of the everyday paradigm of digital consumer culture, rather than the realm of territorial, military violence that is now taking place in civilian spaces. The fence does indeed have a few features that involve digital sensor technology, but the framing of the whole structure as a 'smart fence' or 'high-tech border' draws attention away from the fact that its main components are razor wire, mesh fencing, metal bars and a 'vehicular access trench' in between two parallel barriers. Rather than a high-tech innovation, the fence actually isn't very different in design and

function from the Iron Curtain that separated Europe during the Cold War. In the end, its main modes of operation evolve around the impression of physical threat evoked by the razor blades and metal obstacles it is made of, and the physical obstruction it poses. It has little to do with the conventional associations of 'smart' technology with an optimized, 'civilized' everyday life.

This framing of a technology of violence as supposedly clean and precise technologies is by no means an anomaly. It is symptomatic of a broader cultural practice that uses narratives of technologization to justify means of violence, such as 'smart bombs' and armed drones. In other words, there is more at stake than just this fence. This is about a more fundamental culture of violence that lies at the basis of consumer capitalism and that is closely tied to what philosopher John Gray (1999) critiques as the 'myth of progress,' the belief that 'new technologies will conjure away the immemorial evils of human life.'

The question is therefore: how might we counteract or deconstruct this misleading message of technologization and draw attention to the violent material realities that it obscures? One approach I have taken is to 'de-digitize' the supposed high-tech aspect of the fence. *European Studies #1* (sensors) (2019) consists of three C-type prints that document the seemingly high-tech elements of the Hungarian border fence, but represent these with a visual idiom that belongs to a pre-digital era. I used an analogue mid-format camera made in the German Democratic Republic in the 1960s – the time when the Iron Curtain emerged – to take photos of a unit of sensors, loudspeakers, cameras and lights that are attached to the fence; a constellation that has also been featured prominently in media reports about the fence. After developing the film, contact prints were made: the negative was put directly onto the photo paper and was exposed without further (analogue or digital) processing. I cut the prints slightly wider than the exposure area of the camera's objective. As a result, edges of the film and parts of the brand name (Kodak) and serial numbers can be recognized when you look carefully.

Thus, I reversed the representational logic of the Hungarian government and news media. Instead of framing a largely low-tech structure as part of digital consumer culture, the high-tech elements of the fence are now represented in connection with an era of the past: Despite all attempts to make 'fortress Europe' appear like a necessary and justified component of a progressive, liberal democratic society, its actual workings are reminiscent of the dark days of Cold War separation.

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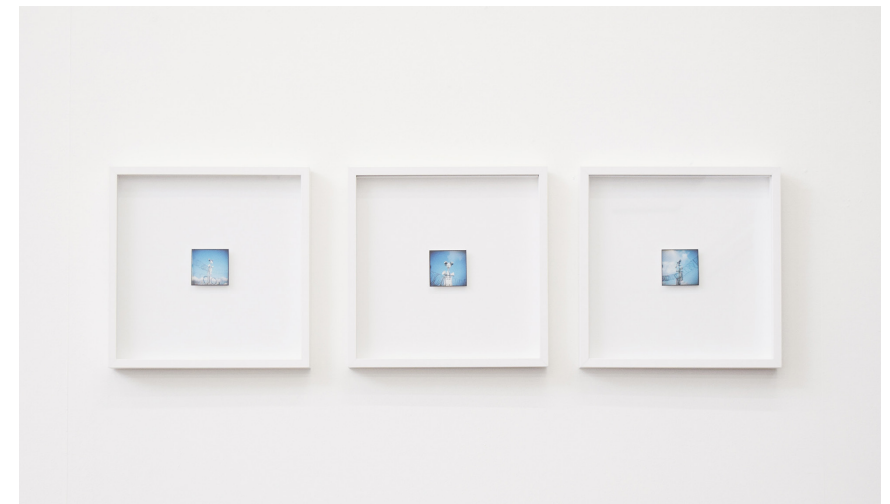
Goodnight Sweetheart
(produced by esc medien
kunst labor), 2017,
HD film

Data leaks... The undead
data haunts us and our
need to forget. Time and
politics are effectively
effaced through
systematic re-writing
of history. The site of
execution is politicised.
Between grammatisation
in corporate servers,
systematic surveillance,
data persistence and fake
news, the archive fever
is growing strong. The
materiality of data traps
us by eluding us. Erasure
is an important part of
archiving. Goodnight
Sweetheart is a ritual
of erasure that points
to its impossibility.
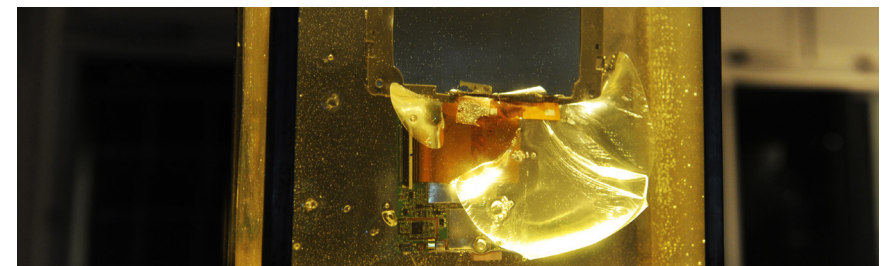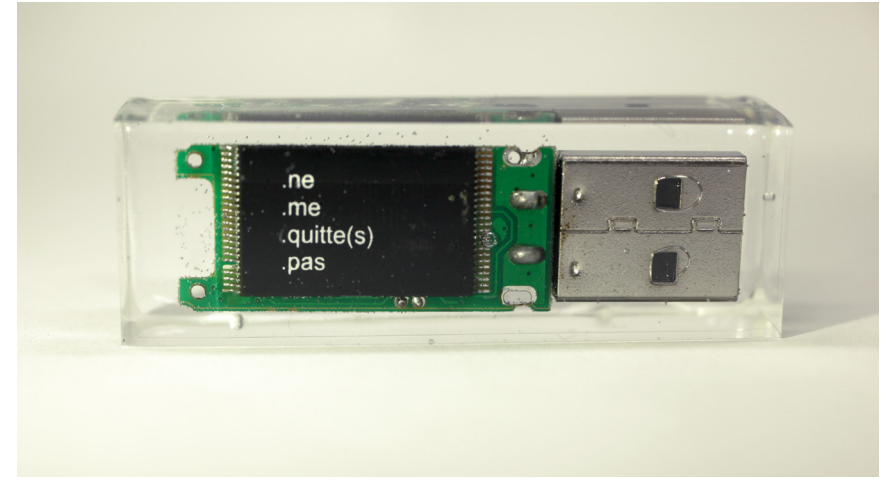
Goodnight Sweetheart

The digital leaks our supposedly analogue selves. Malignant datafication manifests itself through massive breaches of corporate servers, systematic surveillance, fake news, and hidden camera porn. The digital and the analogue were once differentiated by notions of discrete and continuous, which reflected the particularities of the signal. The digital's 0s and 1s are distinct, represented by the ideal square wave of the steadily alternating amplitudes. Analogue, with its continuous signal offering an infinite range of values, represents uncertainty and probable error. The analogue was always messy.

The Cartesian spatial logic that still defines our epistemological understanding of the world continues to pursue the straight line as an ideal. These constructed dualities may have facilitated the swift adoption to digital technologies which have thickly lined the pockets of technocrats and Silicon Valley-ists. These quaint platitudes are however obsolete. Dualities and neat concepts of separation have been debunked through leakages of all sorts. In Code/space, Rob Kitchin and Martin Dodge describe a transduction of space that unfolds in which software and data sets modulate space (2011). This Simondonian approach, which problematises the deterministic division of digital and analogue, reflects the quantum notions of indeterminacy that have yet to reorder our ontological understanding.

Karen Barad analyses the ontological implications of quantum physics through her radical theory of agential realism in which all Descartes' reference points are lost. As the French philosopher is finally put to undeniable question, an unevenness that may account for the material (and messy) conditions of production emerges. In the words of Anna Tsing, linear progression makes way for polyphonic assemblages (2015). The straight lines which guided the Enlightenment fulfilled their greatest potential through pixilation. The scientific production of a so-called neutral knowledge, which discredited thousands of years of situated knowledges, could not be contested. Once this abstraction was complete, the digital could appear immaterial.

However, the Petaflops which fuel the Google servers, the gargantuan landfills of defunct hardware in Nigeria, the women who commit suicide in Korea because of their vilification through the circulation of hidden camera porn footage, the server farms the size of several football fields, and the malleability of democracy through data manipulation on social networking sites are only some of the very gritty materialities of data that trip the Cartesian line. The 'nothingness' that was used to validate the genocide of indigenous people through the colonisation of territory uncharted by Cartesian mapping, reclaims its flesh in quantum theory. Nothingness becomes a material presence which exudes the tension between non/presence and non/ existence (Barad 2017, 112). Jacques Derrida also reflects on the materiality of nothing with his notion of sous-rature, which recalls the presence of

an absence. The tension of the potentiality that takes into account the complexity of spacetimemattering this refusal of the empty, is what underpins the ritual of erasure that is performed in Goodnight Sweetheart.

The symbolic erasure points to the quasi impossibility of truly deleting data online and in doing so, to the materiality of data. These events reimagine the biopolitical relationship to "data", and as such address the entanglements of body and data. Through the visceral procedure of embalming, the haunting data is symbolically exorcised. *Goodnight Sweetheart* is a data and device embalming service which poses the question: "What would you erase forever, if you could?"

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Images:

'USB key'. Photo by Audrey Samson.

'Screen and Phone'. *Goodnight Sweetheart* - The right to happiness, FRAUD, Audrey Samson & Francisco Gallardo. Photo by Sarah Kim

GoodnightSweetheart. Photo by Maryam Mohammad

Post-Internet Ecology,
2017, HD film

In "Post Internet Ecology",
Systaime offers
explosive mashups of
Internet Aesthetics, where
information, images and
comments provide a
frame of today's Digital
Pop culture. The artist
remixes web images and
uses an audiovisual
spectacle to display
the patterns that are
dominating the Internet,
its icons, its manifestations
and its digital prosperity.
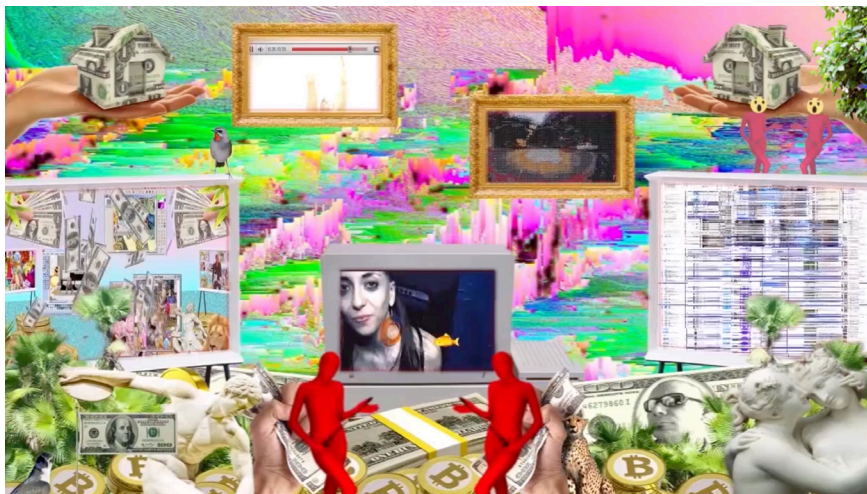
The Overloaded Minimalist -
A conversation between Systaime and Klio Krajewska

Klio

Systaime, before your absolutely unique career as a founder of the
French Trash Touch movement, you studied painting at the Academy of
Fine Arts. You are a figurative painter and this shows in your work.
You even once said: "there is no difference between a painter
who will spend hours on a canvas and an artist who will spend
hours on the creation of a GIF". What does this mean to you?

Systaime

Oh it's very simple. It means that the technique and the support do
not matter, what is important is the act of creation. I think that it is
all the more important to make it clear today at a time when art is
also dematerialized even if we return towards physical support with
movements like Postinternet. In short, it means that I have as much
respect for a painter as for an artist who makes animated gifs.
I'm sure if Duchamp, Warhol or Basquiat were alive today, they
would use the web and certainly make animated gifs. For me,
an artist is first and foremost someone who speaks of their era
through their vision and using the codes or tools of their time.

Klio

So what can we see in this "painting" which is *"Post-Internet
Ecology"*? Could you describe the process of creating it?

Systaime

It's a vision, let's say it's my subjective view of the web today. In this
series, I put forward in an offbeat and sometimes ironic way all the
elements that compose the web and seem to me to be emblematic of
our time. I do not usually have a concept or process of creation; I work
instinctively. I put things together and then see if it speaks to me or not.
    My process is primarily that I scrutinize the web regularly, for
hours on end, on the lookout for new stuff to discover and experiment
with. And then, I proceed to the act of reappropriation, instead
of passively accepting them. It's neither digital nor analogue, it's
all at the same time, it's a mix of methodologies and tools.
    I'd like to think that my creative process is very similar to a DIY process

where there is no plan and therefore good or bad surprises will occur
but these surprises will always lead to new grounds or new thinking.
You have to take risks. I am not logical or conceptual. I like surprising
myself in the creative act – it's boring to always repeat the same recipe
and if I wanted to do that I would have chosen another profession ...
    I build my videos a bit like a meditation or a shamanic tool; the
spiritual element is also very present on the web and in my work.

Klio

You are one of the most prominent digital artists of our time working with
the web as a main tool. But can we say that you are also the most analogue
of the digital artists? There is a constant attempt in your work to blur the
boundaries between the digital and the analogue. Back in 2003 you decided
to make digital art accessible to everyone by distributing it on VHS
tapes - why?

Systaime

Well, Internet access was not as commonplace as today and connection
was certainly not that fast. YouTube and other video platforms did
not exist. In short, I wanted to make my videos accessible to people
who didn't have access to the Internet or couldn't see my videos. And
obviously the DVD format did not interest me, instead I found interesting
to return to the medium with which I had begun. The VHS was a
perfect format and it was also an ironic move - as often in my work -
using a disappearing medium to support the one that is developing.

Klio

The digital aspect of our lives has changed significantly since you
started, even between the creation of the *"Post-Internet Ecology"* and now,
and continues to evolve at an insane pace. In that context, can we still
talk about the digital and the analogue? Would you say the difference
between the two increases or diminishes? Is the analogue a residue
from the past which should be examined by the archaeology of media
ore are they evolving in parallel? And how does it affect your practice?

Systaime

We have arrived at the saturation point of the digital! Recently we've
seen the reappearance of the audiocassette, before that - the analogue
records, today there is a trend to add old artificial VHS effects to videos.

I'm currently interested in musical movements such as VaporWave or Synthwave, which are inspired by visual aesthetics and sounds or samples from the 80s. Nowadays, people are more and more in need of attaching themselves to the material and "authentic" media. We can observe it in all areas of our life. Look at food and eating practices for example - people constantly look for what they perceive as the "authentic" experience.

At first, when I started working as an artist, I encouraged people to discover the web - today I invite them to use it knowingly and purposely. I encourage them not to become slaves of technology, sometimes I even preach about total disconnection.

The effects that the evolution of the digital world has had on society are enormous and not always nice to see. Today most people let themselves be manipulated consciously or unconsciously by the tech giants even if we all know that they take advantage of the weaknesses of the human brain to make people addicted to them. From the very beginning, my work has been around to play with the limits of the new tools, to divert and subvert the web in order to invite users to an informed use of it.

I have to admit that I am gradually becoming closer to the Minimalist movement.
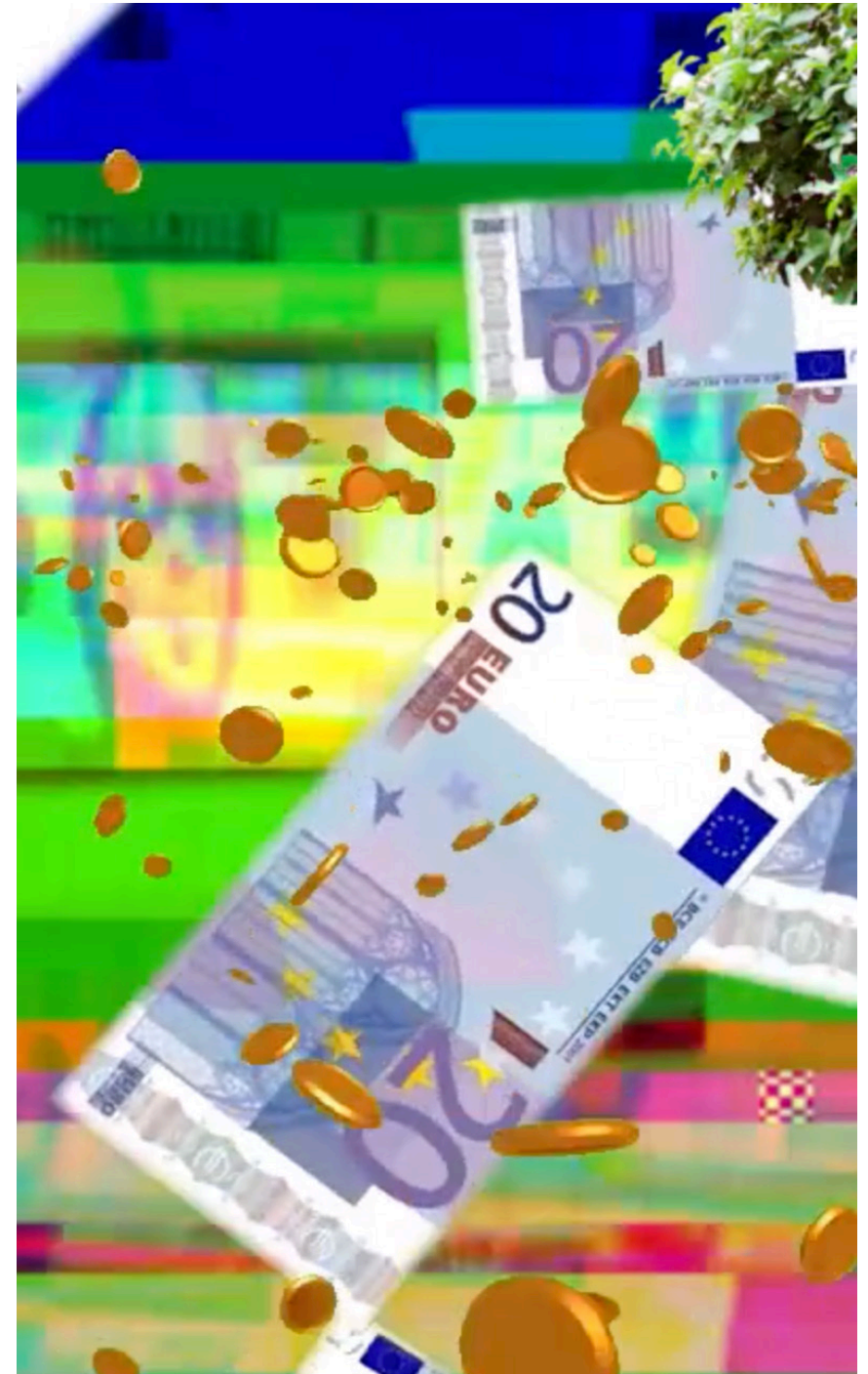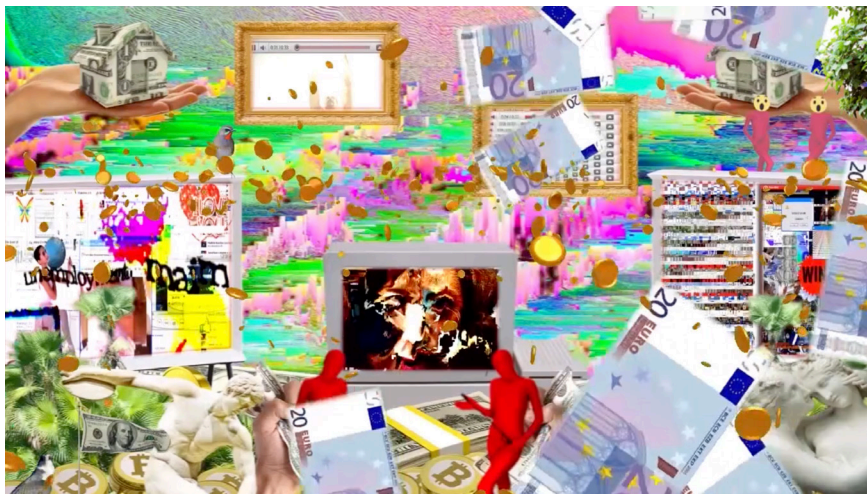
'Acemaşiran Kantosu Aklım Başımdan' by Hanede İbrahim Efendi, c. 1912–c. 1924, shellac record, 78rpm

Vinyl records might be back in fashion, but for a long time this key early form of sound recording was doomed to moulder in attics or be hammered to the walls of retro cafés. So many have been lost, each a unique document of the past.

This fragile, worn record was produced in the early 20th century in Istanbul, capital of the Ottoman Empire. A Jewish recording company producing a disc by a Turkish artist in a Greek musical style using an Arab musical mode attests to the city's ingrained cosmopolitanism.

The materiality of the record is crucial. The scratches remind us that this item was used and enjoyed by people a century ago. Even though digitisation might allow us to retain the sound, the physical object contains its own stories.

Notes on 'Acemaşiran Kantosu Aklım Başımdan'

Second-hand and rare-books shops are a big deal in Turkey. Known as sahaf, they tend to cluster together in particular neighbourhoods, like Istanbul's Fatih and Üsküdar or Izmir's Donanmacı. Although the etymology of sahaf as a purveyor of books comes from the Arabic for a sheet of paper, these stores house a bewildering variety of postcards, photographs, private letters, posters, business cards, tickets, and magazines, all grouped together under the title of 'ephem-era'. These are the things that were never meant to be preserved for History. Only the weighty, serious productions of the state or powerful men — almost always men — were to be placed upon the altar of Clio for perpetual remembrance. In Turkey, much of the ephemera to be found are trivial items produced in the later decades of the Ottoman Empire. Written in an archaic version of the Turkish language in modified version of the Arabic script, fewer and fewer people could read them, and with state policy firmly geared towards erasing the backwardness of the Ottoman past in favour of a bright, modern, Republican future.

It is striking that music records should be classed as ephemera, when their entire point was to capture and reify otherwise transient sounds. The same might be said, in fact, for photographs. One late Ottoman observer described the process of having his picture taken as transforming his physical existence into a shadow and then into a likeness. Ottoman state and society fell in love with photography, with the autocratic Sultan Abdülhamid II using it to inform himself on life in his Empire to a minute level, employing the technology in turn to convey a vision of his choosing to his subjects and the wider world. It became indispensable to journalism, to bourgeois society, to the police state. Records, however, were more suspect. They might carry seditious messages and morally corrupting music. They might put imams and muezzins out of a job by mechanically reproducing the sounds of the holy Qur'an and Islamic prayers. So, it was only with the Young Turk Revolution of 1908, which over-threw the despotic sultan and his censorship,that the Ottoman music business began to boom. And the record that I chose for this exhibition represents that cultural explosion, of which mostly ephemeral traces remain today.

Historians are often seized by a desire to visit, if just for a day, the distant places they research. This is because historians — well, some of them anyway — really need to put their imaginations into gear if they are to try to understand the experiences of the pasts from dry documents, which might hint and sights, smells, sounds, tastes, and textures, but never quite enough. For me, the closet I can come to visiting the vibrant, chaotic, exciting, dangerous world of Istanbul in the early 1900s is through the musical records preserved from that time. There is something about the immediacy of the manner of their

recording, with the singer and his musicians — unfortunately, for this period, always his — sitting close to the giant recording horn, trying to find the right balance between voices and instruments, the vibrations of their sounds scratched into a physical surface. In turn, the records produced from that master gathered their own scratches over the years as different owners played them, moved them, damaged them.

One of the pioneers of music recording in the Ottoman Empire was the Blumenthal Record and Talking Machine Company and its label, Orfeon Records. The Blumenthal factory was situated in the Feriköy neighbourhood of Istanbul, in the midst of prominent middle-class Greek, Armenian, Jewish, and Muslim communities. The object is, in many ways, a physical embodiment of the cosmopolitanism of late Ottoman Istanbul. The label name, Orfeon, comes from Ladino, the language of the Sephardic Jews in the Ottoman Empire, and means 'choir' or 'chorus'. This particular example has text in Ottoman Turkish because the songs it holds are in that language, but other copies were printed in Armenian, Greek, or Ladino characters to match songs in those languages.

The song on the record's 'A' side, digitised for the exhibition, is similarly mixed. It is called 'Aklım Başımdan Gitti' — 'I've Lost My Mind' — and is typical of a number of recordings from the world of Istanbul's nightlife. Many of the records in my collection contain music that would have featured in the city's meyhanes and gazinos, nightclubs where patrons would enjoy food and alcohol to the accompaniment of live music, often with sing-a-longs as well as other forms of performance. In these spaces where the audience was united by class rather than by religion, different communal traditions mixed together to create new tastes and sounds. A particular kind of song type called the kanto emerged in the city's music halls and clubs that epitomised this new popular entertainment culture, and Aklım Başımdan Gitti is a great example of a late Ottoman kanto. The kanto on this record is per-formed in a particularly entertaining way by Hanende İbrahim Efendi, a Syrian Jew, a virtuosic 'ud player, and one of the premier recording artists of the day. The sounds and rhythms of the kanto were heavily influenced by Greek music and dance, set in a traditional Ottoman makam or musical mode (in this case the acemaşiran mode). In a political and youth culture dominat-ed by satire and irreverence, these songs often dealt with love, lust, or alcohol, and sometimes all three, or provided a humorous self-reflection on the tastes and trends of the city's middle class.

This record brings together so much that has been lost; the sounds of a long-dead singer, long-discarded instruments, long-emptied gazinos, long-destroyed communities. The confessional diversity of Feriköy has been erased by succes-sive waves of fire, persecution, and emigration, with the living Jewish and Christian residents outnumbered by the tombstones of their ancestors in neighbourhood's non-Muslim cemeteries.

The site of the Blumenthal record factory is currently occupied by a luxury hotel chain, and the records it produced that survive reside in the city's sahafs, waiting for someone to take an interest in them. So many of these records never get heard, as they sit in these shops gathering dust, or get bought and hoarded into a private collection never to be heard again. I have no idea when the last time this record was played before I purchased it, but the quality is good enough to suggest it had been quite a while. This silent fate is far removed from the song's original home of buzzing gazinos, its recording being blasted in private homes or cranked in the streets on portable gramophones, so loud and so intrusive that local mosques would petition the state to make their operators stop as they drowned out the sound of the muezzin and the rituals of prayer.

Digitising the record has allowed this kanto to be heard again in a public space, albeit a rarefied one quite different from its original setting. But then the meaning of the record as an object has been fundamentally transformed by time. What was once a relatively disposable item indicative of a new cosmopolitan, bourgeoise, consumer lifestyle is now so rare and precious that I treat it, and my other Ottoman-era records, as some of my most valuable possessions. The disc's survival for a century since it was pressed from Hanende İbrahim's recording session is something of a miracle. Shellac records are incredibly brittle, and shatter at the slightest provocation. It is already cracked and chipped, scratched and pitted. Yet Aklım Başımdan Gitti has survived its journey from the Blumenthal factory to a line of previous owners, settling at some point to sit in a box in a backstreet sahaf, and finally coming to live with me in London. I know that it will not survive forever. The song now, at least, is preserved as an mp3, and in due course will join my other records on a publicly-available website to be enjoyed by a wider audience. Yet the record is more than just a form of audio file, but also has value as a text and a physical object. The physicality of the record is crucial, and it is the analogue whole that contains all that rich history. What is most important is the immediacy of the gramophone needle connecting with the worn soundwaves of Istanbul in the early 1900s, not just providing us with a unique historical source, but reminding us of the hundreds of records that have not survived, of an urban culture that did not survive, of a cosmopolitanism that was shattered.

Contributors

Mihalis ARFARAS studied Art at the Hochschule für Bildende Künste Braunschweig (HBK, Germany), with further studies in Printmaking and Animation. He is a pioneer in experimenting with a series of techniques using 16mm or 35mm film, especially Cell Animation and Object Animation, where the material itself has a direct effect on the artistic creation. He often interferes to the medium by engraving and drawing straight onto the film, adding to the pre-existing imagery a particularly expressive force. His work has featured in numerous exhibitions internationally; he is Professor of Fine Arts and Director of the Printmaking Lab at the Athens School of Fine Arts (Greece).

Patrick BEVERIDGE studied Fine Art at Edinburgh University and the Royal College of Art. His light sculpture was part of the group show Northern Lights at the Fruitmarket Gallery (1997). More recent work has focussed on light and colour in the landscape, with one 16mm film distributed internationally by LUX in 2007. He was awarded an Artist International Development Award by Arts Council England in 2017 to make a short film of the landscape in North Western Russia where Mikhail Prishvin traveled in 1907, and to commission a translation of the author's descriptions of it in Za vol'shebnym kolobko. The first exhibition of the film was accompanied by a reading of the text by actors Evgeny Goman and Xenia Mari in the Murmansk House of the Actor (Union of Theatre Figures).

Eleanor DARE is Reader in Digital Media at the RCA's School of Communication. She also Heads the MA Digital Direction, a 15-month Master's programme addressing the future of storytelling and emerging technology. Eleanor has a PhD in Arts and Computational Technology from Goldsmiths UoG (Department of Computing), supported by a full doctoral studentship from the Engineering and Physical Sciences Research Council. Her doctoral thesis and MSc (Distinction) at Goldsmiths were concerned with computer programming practices, subjectivity and artificial intelligence for interactive and responsive books. The title of her thesis was "Navigating Subjectivity: South a Psychometric Text Adventure". Since completing her PhD in 2011 she has continued to research the ways in which computational systems try to understand humans, especially what happens when computers attempt to generate human-like cultural expressions. Inevitably, this has resulted in an increasing concern with the significance of the human and the non-human, with situatedness and embodiment. In 2018, she completed an Open University MA in Creative Writing (Distinction),

addressing virtuality and non-linear narrative structures. She has exhibited work addressing both the limits and potential of VR/AR and AI.

Carla Ambrósio GARCIA is a filmmaker and academic who completed her doctorate in Film Studies at King's College London. She is the author of "Bion in Film Theory and Analysis: The Retreat in Film" (Routledge, 2017) and her articles on film and psychoanalysis have been published in peer-reviewed journals and edited collections. She has taught film and media studies in various universities in the UK, including King's College, Royal Holloway University of London, and the University of Bedfordshire. Her films have been shown in various UK and international venues, such as the Close-Up cinema in London, and the Barcelona Independent Film Festival "L'Alternativa", where Film #1 (2003) was awarded a Special Mention.

Jim HOBBS' work utilizes a variety of media including 16mm film, video, performance, installation, site-specific work, drawing, sculpture, sound, and photography. Currently his work and research investigate the personal and social implications of loss, oblivion, history, place, memory and the subsequent acts of remembrance/memorialisation. The work bears particular focus on how the use of architecture (space/place) and monuments (objects) become a type of physical manifestation of that which is absent, and how these "stand-ins" can be used, manipulated, and reformed. More recently, his work has moved into the realm of filmic installations and performances, utilizing film as a time-based material and medium to investigate these concerns. He often collaborates with other artists/musicians to expand the work across disciplines and find new relationships between sound and image. Intrinsically interlinked with this is a constant questioning of the role of the analogue within the digital age – how it functions, if it can override associations with nostalgia, and the quality of image in relation to memory. His work is shown inter- nationally in museums, galleries, art spaces, and festivals. Most recently, his project (I) MAGESOUND(S) travelled to various venues including New York's Public Library for Performing Arts/Bruno Walter Auditorium at Lincoln Center and the Danish Film Institute in Copenhagen. He is currently Senior Lecturer and Programme Leader of Digital Arts at the University of Greenwich.

Andrew KNIGHT-HILL is a composer specialising in studio composed works, both sound-based electroacoustic and audiovisual. His works are composed with materials captured from the human and natural world, seeking to explore the beauty in everyday objects. He is particularly interested in how these materials are interpreted by audiences, and how these interpretations relate to our experience of the real and the virtual. He is Senior Lecturer in Sound Design and Music Technology at the University of Greenwich, programme leader of Sound Design BA,

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Klio KRAJEWSKA is an independent curator specialised in conceiving, producing and presenting contemporary/media/digital art exhibitions and events internationally. She regularly cooperates with the WRO Art Center and the WRO Media Art Biennale in Wrocław as a curator, and actively participates in creating the programme of performances and exhibitions. Having initially studied Philosophy and Governance of Cities, she is a co-founder and member of the strategic committee of the "7 Billion Urbanists" Network as a consultant in the field of digital, urban and social innovation in contemporary cities with a focus on collaborative urbanism. Additionally, she is a member 'of the governing body of the DRAW – International Digital Week Paris and has been associated with the Parisian environment of sound art; currently serving as vice-chair of Collectif MU - a production and creative studio specialising in sound art, music and new media. Since 2018, she is the Head of New Media Arts at Watermans Arts Centre in London.

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Elena PAPADAKI is a cultural theorist, art historian and curator. Her research interests lie in the intersection of screen-based imagery, curation, interactivity, and audience reception. She holds a PhD from Goldsmiths UoG titled "Curating Screens: Art, Performance, and Public Spaces". Having previously held posts at the Hellenic Ministry of Culture (department of Museum studies) and the International Council of Museums (ICOM), she has over ten years of professional experience in the arts and museum sector.
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He studied at the Royal Conservatoire of The Hague, the Orchestra Academy of the Berlin Philarmonic and the University of Sussex.

His work explores situations of conflict and crisis on the fringes of the world of high-tech consumerism via the constant questioning of sanitized, utopian marketing surrounding innovation and its implications for local and global power dynamics. He has exhibited in numerous museums and exhibition venues across the world, including the ZKM Centre for Art and Media, WRO Media Art Biennale, Import Projects, the ICA, and the Whitechapel Gallery.

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Stamatis SCHIZAKIS is an art historian and curator. He studied History and Theory of Art and Photography at the University of Derby and Art History at Goldsmiths University of London. Since 2005, he has ben working as a curator at the National Museum of Contemporary Art (Athens, Greece). He has curated the exhibitions Bia Davou – Retrospective (2008, co-curated with Tina Pandi) , George Drivas - (un)documented (2009), Angelo Plessas, The Angelo Foundation: School of Music (2011), Marianne Strapatsakis, Invisible Place – The Vast White (2011), Rena Papaspyrou - Photocopies straight through matter (2011), Georgios Xenos, Procession No163 & Thousand Images (2012), Phoebe Giannisi – TETTIX (2012), Dimitris Alithinos – A Retrospective (2013, co-curated with Tina Pandi), PLEXUS Petros Moris – Bia Davou – Efi Spyrou (2015, co-curated with Tina Pandi) as well as the screening programs Wonder Women (2010), Secret Journeys (2011) at EMST and Terrhistories – Greece as part of the 26th Festival Instants Video in Marseille (2013). Since 2017, he is the founder, director, curator, designer, art handler and photographer of the First and Last and Always Psiloritis Biennale.

Michaël BORRAS a.k.a. SYSTAIME studied Art and is the founder of the movement French Trash Touch (1999) and a member of net.art and the international alternative network of digital art. As a multidisciplinary artist, he has worked in many areas: remixes, mashups, blogs, books, CDs, artworks, photos, audio/video performances, music videos. In 2011, Systaime founded the Super Art Modern Museum (SPAMM), an online museum collecting digital pieces from over 700 artists.

His works have been exhibited, among others, at the Internet Pavilion

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Michael TALBOT is Senior Lecturer in the History of the Ottoman Empire and Modern Middle East at the University of Greenwich. His research examines Ottoman relations with the wider world, having published on cultural histories of Ottoman diplomacy, maritime history, and late Ottoman Palestine. He is passionate about bringing Ottoman history to a wider audience, being a long-time contributor to the Ottoman History Podcast, a BBC/AHRC New Generation Thinker, and a historical consultant for a variety of TV shows. The record he discusses in this volume is part of a wider collection of Ottoman, Turkish, and Palestinian books and ephemera that he uses in teaching and research.