

RESISTING THE TROUBLE

Moving Images in Times of Crisis

4 May - 4 June 2021, Manifattura Tabacchi

Curated by Leonardo Bigazzi

A production of Lo schermo dell'arte with NAM – Not A Museum

Jonas Brinker

Claudia Claremi

Helen Anna Flanagan

Valentina Furian

Megan-Leigh Heilig

Marcin Liminowicz

Edson Luli

Olena Newkryta

Ghita Skali

Peter Spanjer

Emilia Tapprest

Tora Wallander

Produced by

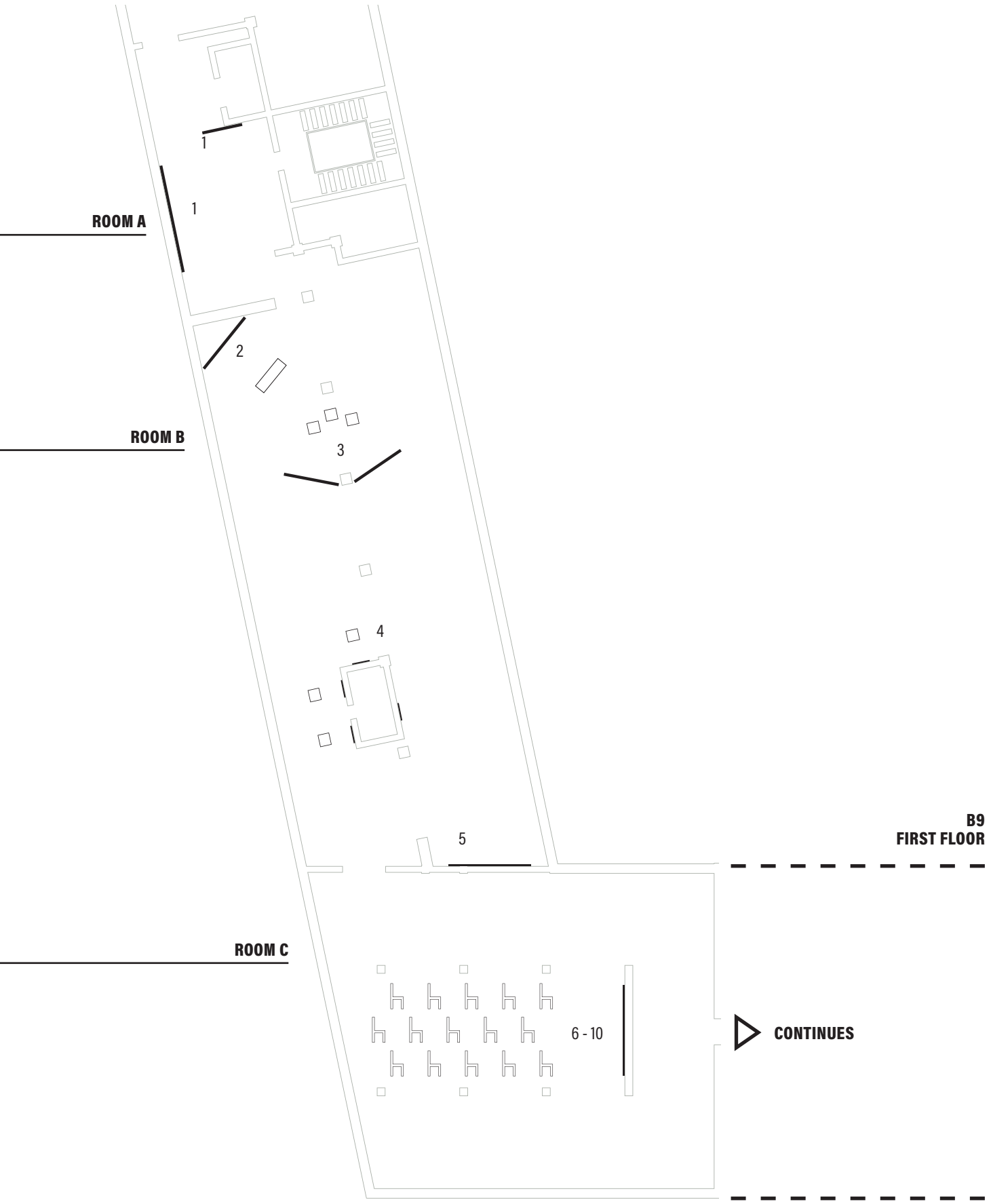
lo
scherm
dell'arte



VISIO
EUROPEAN
PROGRAMME
ON ARTISTS'
MOVING IMAGES

MANIFATTURA
TABACCHI

NOT
A
MUSEUM



1 | **Valentina Furian**

4 | **Claudia Claremi**

7 | **Emilia Tapprest**

10 | **Ghita Skali**

2 | **Jonas Brinker**

5 | **Edson Luli**

8 | **Peter Spanjer**

11 | **Tora Wallander**

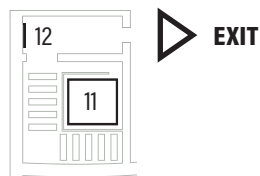
3 | **Marcin Liminowicz**

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12 | **Olena Newkryta**

STAIRS



**B9
GROUND FLOOR**

“Any construction of new alternatives or potential worlds can only begin by its creative imagination”

T.J. Demos

The ecological balance of our planet is becoming ever more fragile and compromised. The health emergency of COVID-19 is simply a more obvious consequence of a global crisis that has developed in environmental, social, political, and economic spheres. The pandemic has made us more aware of the fragility of our biological existence, undermining our sense of community, and magnifying our fear of everything that is Other. In the past year, electronic devices have been more indispensable than ever before in keeping us connected. However, at the same time they have become the primary transmitters of an uncontrolled flow of images and information which has profoundly altered our perception of reality. Our everyday lives have been disrupted, and freedoms and privileges that we had taken for granted have been progressively lost or limited. This condition has accentuated and made more obvious economic and social inequalities, making them more and more intolerable, and rage has transformed into widespread revolt and protest. The need to rethink the capitalist model, and our relationship with the environment and the other species which inhabit the planet, now seems to be the only possibility for avoiding the risk of an imminent ecological catastrophe.

The exhibit presents twelve films, videos, and installations which reflect on some of the most urgent questions generated by the current worldwide crisis, and propose alternative visions that rethink the present and imagine the future. During lockdown, moving images, more than any other artistic medium, showed their intrinsic capacity to overcome the limitations of the exhibition space, by taking advantage of new technologies at our disposal. In this context of uncertainty and precariousness, can art represent a tool of resistance to combat the alienation and isolation that we are subject to? How can we avoid a dystopian future, in which physical relationships are at risk of being entirely relegated to the digital dimension? In what way can we regain an active role in the process of change, basing it on the values of diversity, respect, and solidarity? The exhibit asks questions about the possibility of imagining inclusive models of coexistence that could succeed in dismantling existing power structures, and overcome the consolidated canons and stereotypes linked to competition and exploitation among living beings.

Resisting the Trouble – Moving Images in Times of Crisis brings together the work of twelve artists under age 35 who participated in the ninth edition of *VISIO. European Programme on Artists' Moving Images*, a project promoted and produced by Lo schermo dell'arte Film Festival. Participants were selected from an international open call, and thus far 100 artists based in Europe have participated in the program. *Resisting the Trouble – Moving Images in Times of Crisis* continues the research path of Lo schermo dell'arte on the artistic practice of artists under 35, which began with five previous exhibitions organized at Palazzo Strozzi (2019 and 2015); Le Murate PAC (2018); Palazzo Medici Riccardi (2017); and Cinema La Compagnia (2016).

Leonardo Bigazzi, curator

ROOM A

1 | **Valentina Furian**

(1989, Italy)

55

2019, 1'53". Two channel video installation. Courtesy the artist

Through dreamlike allegorical representation, *55* reflects on the crisis in the relationship between human beings and animals. A dog, symbol of fidelity and man's ability to tame nature, barks nervously at a burning house, signaling alarm. The domestic dimension has lost the value of refuge and protection: the scene conveys disquiet. The video installation creates a soundscape divided into eight audio channels, which combines the crackle of the fire and the barking of the dog with nocturnal ambient sounds. The images are transmitted in a loop, which gives the illusion of being faced with a fire and a perpetual state of emergency.

ROOM B

2 | **Jonas Brinker**

(1989, Germany)

STANDING STILL

2019, 4'28". Produced by Frankfurter Kunstverein.
Courtesy the artist

The protagonist of *Standing Still* is a rare specimen of domesticated wolf, used in the film industry, and able to respond to simple commands, to stay still and pose. The wolf is an historical symbol of protection and violence, and the embodiment aggressive primary instinct, as evinced by literary works and fables that have influenced human imaginations since childhood. The work follows on the heels of the recent repopulation of Germany's forests with wolves, on which the local population often projects their fears. Through the use of an artificial and abstract environment such as the green screen, Brinker explores the impossibility of man's total control over nature, revealing the looks and gestures of an animal that, despite training, retains all its symbolic charge.

3 | **Marcin Liminowicz**

(1992, Poland/Netherland)

IN LANDSCAPE MODE

2018, 7'17". Two channel video installation, 2018. Courtesy the artist

Do we influence the observed object when taking a photo? And what happens if the subject is a landscape? *In Landscape Mode* was shot on an icebreaker cruising the Gulf of Bothnia, in the northern Baltic Sea, between Sweden and Finland. Ice cruises are among Finland's biggest tourist attractions. The artist shows how those on the ship are unaware of the damage they are causing to the natural wonder they are photographing. The apparently innocent tourists slowly turn into invaders of an unexplored land, increasingly at risk due to climate change.

4 | **Claudia Claremi**

(1986, Cuba/Spain)

LA MEMORIA DE LAS FRUTAS

2016. Installation: video 16mm 4'23", overhead projectors, texts.
Courtesy the artist

La Memoria de las Frutas (The memory of fruits) is a project about the forgotten fruits of Puerto Rico, in particular those that do not have commercial circulation and that are increasingly less present nowadays. Starting from street interviews and conversations, the project investigates the collective memory that originates from recalling these fruits, and their shape, through anecdotes and impressions. Trees and fruits are closely linked to personal memories and they also trigger reflection on the colonial model of economic dependency from the United States and the tragic impact of modern lifestyles on biodiversity.

5 | **Edson Luli**

(1989, Albania/Italy)

DO WE NEED THIS?

2017. Installation: projector, digital TV decoder / mini PC.
Courtesy the artist and Prometeo Gallery Ida Pisani, Milan - Lucca

In *Do We Need This?*, the artist superimposes this question through a digital filter on television images broadcast live. The streaming channel is RAI, the national broadcasting company, which has entertained generations of children in Albania, the artist's country of origin, and contributed to their learning Italian. The artist invites the public to question the media's role in our lives today, and the consequences of the bombardment of images and fake news to which we are subjected. The work appears more relevant than ever due to the pandemic that has upset our daily lives and dramatically increased our dependence on digital media.

ROOM C*

6 | **Helen Anna Flanagan**

(1988, England/Ireland)

GESTURES OF COLLAPSE

2019, 11'7". Courtesy the artist

Gestures of Collapse is inspired by a news story about alleged Coca Cola poisoning in numerous high schools in Belgium in the 1990s. After an investigation, the epidemic was recognized as a mass sociogenic illness (MSI): 'a constellation of symptoms of an organic disease, without identifiable cause, which occurs between two or more people who share beliefs related to those symptoms.'

Gestures of Collapse uses the television news format to reveal the ways in which contagion, rumors, beliefs, emotions, and actions spread. The work reflects on human action, the mimetic unconscious and the ways in which behaviors are predicted, influenced, reproduced and manipulated.

7 | **Emilia Tapprest (NVISIBLE.STUDIO)**

(1992, Finland-France/Netherlands)

SONZAI ZONE

2019, 22'56". Courtesy the artist

Sonzai Zone is a speculative fiction film about intimacy and loneliness set in a dystopian near future after the normalization of ambient communication media. The protagonists Yún and Souvd meet and interact through "Sonzai-kan", a portable device that mediates human contact. Switching between XR game scenarios, Immersion Arcades and spatial home displays, their adulterous relationship is transformed into an extreme idealization of platonic love. Meanwhile, Souvd's ex-girlfriend Ntzumi starts an undercover investigation.

8 | **Peter Spanjer**

(1994, Nigeria-Germany/England)

MAKE ME SAFE

2020, 7'. Courtesy the artist

Created during lockdown and in the midst of the reinvigoration of the Black Lives Matter movement, *Make Me Safe* captures the artist's immediate reaction to these important historical events. The video questions and re-imagines the circulation of images of the black body. Using language and sound, the work communicates vulnerability and uncertainty, leaving out the presumption of physical strength usually associated with blackness. Ultimately the artist offers us softness and sensibility as a form of resistance.

*The program has a duration of 1 hour and 15 minutes and starts at:

6.00 pm, 7.15 pm, 8.30 pm from Tuesday to Friday

2.00 pm, 3.15 pm, 4.30 pm, 5.45 pm, 7.00 pm, 8.15 pm on Saturday and Sunday

9 | **Megan-Leigh Heilig**

(1993, South Africa /Germany)

THE POLITICS OF CHOICE AND THE POSSIBILITY OF LEAVING

2019, 15'. Courtesy the artist

Divided into chapters, the film documents a decisive moment in the artist's life: her last days with her partner in South Africa before their departure. The artist has to move to Belgium for work; her partner, whose visa expired, must return to Namibia, where homosexuality is illegal. Interspersing intimate shots with travel scenes, *The Politics of Choice and the Possibility of Leaving* combines aspects of the artist's private life in a poetic and delicate way. The film is a political reflection on the right to love and explores the emotions and violence related to national identity and physical and imaginary borders.

10 | **Ghita Skali**

(1992, Marocco/Netherland)

THE HOLE'S JOURNEY

2020, 16'13". Courtesy the artist

In the office of the director of a Dutch art institution, a portion of parquet flooring measuring 102 cm x 120 cm is removed. The size is exactly that of the groove left by the chair on which the former director worked for 23 years. The video documents the extraction process and the journey that this worn floor made to Morocco during Lockdown to reach a piece of land that had been expropriated. The journey represents the dynamics of power, on the part of the ruling classes who rarely leave their seats, and on the part of national companies that appropriate a country's natural resources for economic purposes.

STAIRS

11 | **Tora Wallander**

(1991, Sweden)

SOFT RESISTANCE

2018, Video installation. Courtesy the artist

Soft Resistance was first exhibited in the hall of the reactor R1 at KTH, the site of Sweden's first nuclear reactor. The work stems from a series of events in which jellyfish forced nuclear power plants to shut down when they blocked the cooling turbines. In fact, these animals thrive due to uncontrolled fishing, rising ocean temperatures and acidification of the waters caused by the destruction of marine ecosystems. The work proposes a vision in which the anthropogenic dimension will be overwhelmed by the animal kingdom's reaction, which will inevitably re-establish a new balance between the parties.

12 | **Olena Newkryta**

(1990, Ukraine/Austria)

HAND. A PROJECTION FOR THE PALM

2017, 7'47". Courtesy the artist

Is it possible to satisfy the desire for human contact through the digital dimension exclusively? *To Hand. A Projection For The Palm* reflects on the need and lack of physical connection that characterizes long-distance relationships. The idea for the work came when Newkryta moved to Austria and left her family and loved ones in the Ukraine. The video of the artist's hand offers a virtual caress to anyone who positions himself, voluntarily or not, in front of the projection cone. Delicate and fragile, this gesture establishes a moment of ephemeral union between artist and visitor, made even more intense after the months of isolation and social distancing due to the COVID-19 crisis.

Produced by

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TABACCHI

**Curated by**

Leonardo Bigazzi

Coordinator

Carolina Gestri

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EXHIBITION OPENING HOURS

Tuesday-Friday 18:00-21:00

Saturday, Sunday and holidays 14:00-21:00, reservations required 24 hours in advance: manifatturatabacchi.eventbrite.it

Last admission 45' before closing

Free entry

Access will be in full compliance with the measures that the Italian Government is taking to combat the spread of Covid-19.

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