

THINKING BEYOND

MOVING IMAGES
FOR A POST-PANDEMIC WORLD

Curated by
Leonardo Bigazzi

A production of
Lo schermo dell'arte e NAM — Not A Museum

Nelson Bourrec Carter

Alexandre Erre

PHILTH HAUS

**Roman Khimei
& Yarema Malashchuk**

ChongYan Liu

Eleonora Luccarini

Thuy-Han Nguyen-Chi

Eoghan Ryan

VEGA

Janaina Wagner

Produced by



MANIFATTURA
TABACCHI



“Mine is an apocalyptic vision. But if alongside it and the anguish that produces it, there were not also an element of optimism in me, that is, the thought that it is possible to fight against all this, I would simply not be here, among you, talking”

Pier Paolo Pasolini

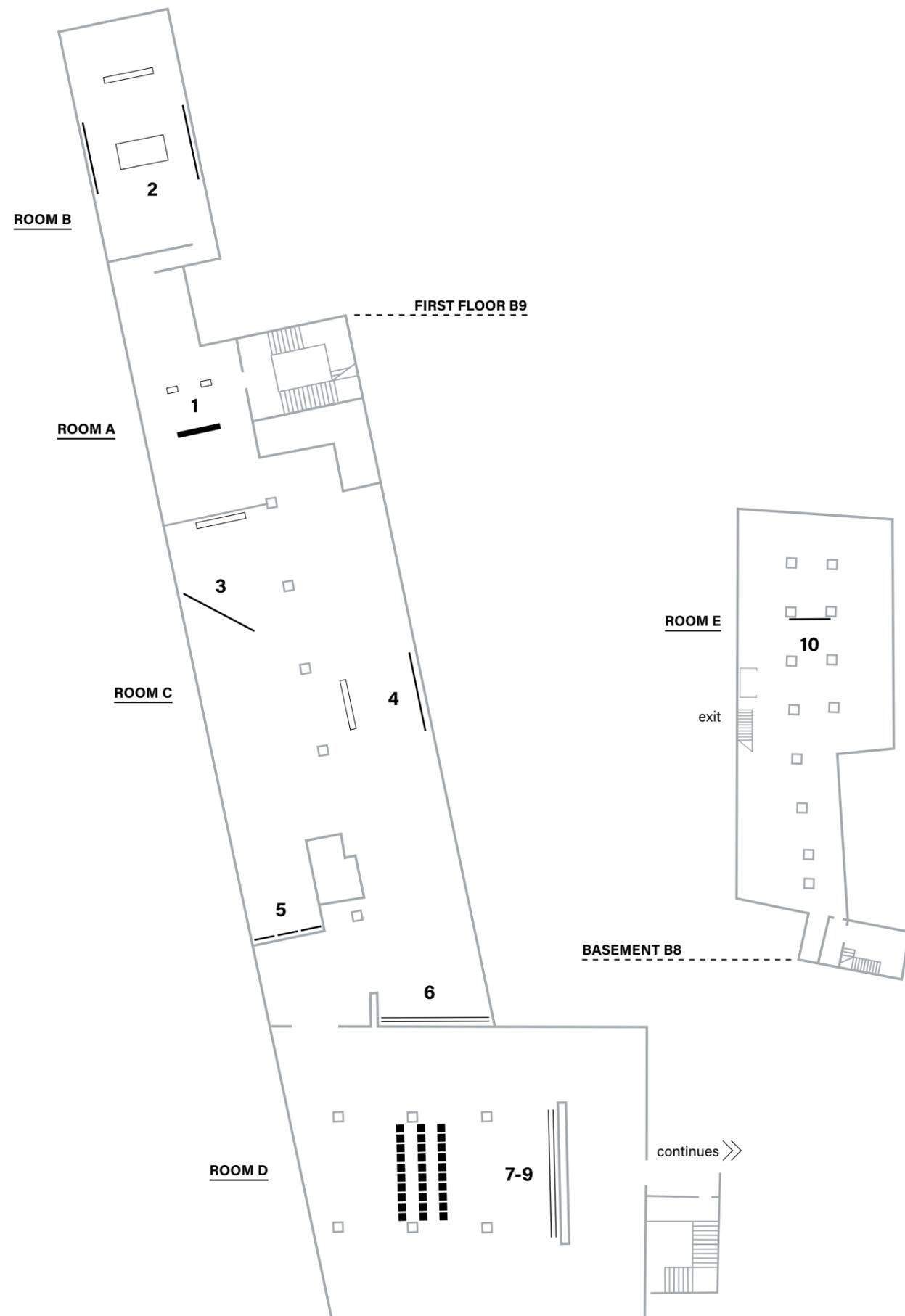
The global crisis caused by the COVID-19 pandemic has highlighted not only the fragility of the human community, but also its extraordinary resilience. During the months we were forced into isolation, our only window to the outside world was often the screen of a digital device. By drastically slowing down the pace of our lives, we turned our gaze towards ourselves, rediscovering values and rituals that we had forgotten. Today, however, we struggle to understand how to set the post-pandemic future on a more sustainable basis, and the sense of disorientation in this transition period still remains very strong. In a society that is increasingly polarized and divided by constant conflicts, it seems even more urgent to overcome the widespread fear and lack of trust that amplifies anxiety and uncertainty.

Thinking Beyond – Moving Images for a Post-Pandemic World intends to celebrate the transformative power of art and the ability of artists to read tragic and traumatic circumstances as generative opportunities. What role can art play in the process of searching for new points of reference? How do artists contribute to the construction of a collective narrative capable of imagining new alliances and alternative models? What reflections are possible and necessary today to investigate reality without giving in to the dominant pessimism? The exhibition features ten films, videos and installations by artists who, often starting from the intimate and personal dimension of their own lives, address some of the fundamental issues of our time such as gender identity, the value of diversity, the dynamics of conflict, the precariousness of existence and the relationship with death.

Thinking Beyond – Moving Images for a Post-Pandemic World is the second in a cycle of exhibitions that began in 2020 with *Resisting the Trouble – Moving Images in Times of Crisis*. The whole cycle aims to reflect on the ways in which artists relate to the complexity of the present day, going beyond established canons and models and imagining new possible worlds. For this exhibition it was decided to use almost exclusively pre-existing structures and recycled materials that can be reused while minimizing disposal. Today this is an essential choice that goes in the direction of greater sustainability of the exhibition process, both in economic and ecological terms.

The exhibition brings together the work of ten artists under 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. Participants were selected from an international open call, and thus far 127 artists based in Europe have participated in the program. *Thinking Beyond – Moving Images for a Post-Pandemic World* continues the research path of Lo Schermo dell'Arte on the artistic practice of artists under 35, which began with six previous exhibitions organized at Manifattura Tabacchi (2020/2021); Palazzo Strozzi (2019 and 2015); Le Murate PAC (2018); Palazzo Medici Riccardi (2017); and Cinema La Compagnia (2016).

Leonardo Bigazzi, curator



ROOM A

1 | Eoghan Ryan

(1987, Ireland. Lives and works in Amsterdam)

A SOD STATE

UHD video, 22'4", 2021. Courtesy the artist

A Sod State deals with pre and post Brexit troubles in Northern Ireland as a repetitive political theatre, using it as a way to talk about binaries, conflicts and confusions of the human condition. The work reflects on the effects of being constantly exposed to a narrative of violence built through images and stereotypes and reinforced by a combination of religious beliefs, pop culture and state politics. By questioning also the role of art and the media, Ryan imagines a space where existing perceptions and the violence of having to choose dissolves.

ROOM B

2 | Thuy-Han Nguyen-Chi

(1988, Germany. Lives and works between Berlin and London)

WHAT MY EYES BEHOLD IS SIMULTANEOUS

23'36", 2019. Installation: two channel video; ping-pong table, balls and rackets; mirrors. Courtesy the artist

In this two-channel video installation, a father and daughter explore their relationship by contemplating the aerodynamics of flying objects and recounting fragmented microhistories of the Cold War period in Germany—birthplace of the daughter—and Vietnam—birthplace of the father. The ping-pong table references the so-called *Ping-Pong Diplomacy* which in 1971 had a key role in opening the long-frozen relations between the US and China, while simultaneously serving as imagery for the loops of influence between people on small and vast scales, across space and time. Infused with magical realism, Nguyen-Chi's work explores the entanglements between personal and collective histories and the way they are shaped by politics, memory, and cinema.

1 | Eoghan Ryan

2 | Thuy-Han Nguyen-Chi

3 | Alexandre Erre

4 | ChongYan Liu

5 | PHILTH HAUS

6 | Eleonora Luccarini

7 | Nelson Bourrec Carter

8 | Janaina Wagner

9 | VEGA

10 | Roman Khimei & Yarema Malashchuk

3 | Alexandre Erre

(1990, New-Caledonia/France. Lives and works in Paris)

THE FEELING OF NOSTALGIA

7'33", 2019. Courtesy the artist

The feeling of nostalgia follows the artist's ritual of ablution in the pristine waters of a river in his home country in New Caledonia. The repetitive movements slowly clean the layers of laterite deposited over the skin. This performative action addresses the serious issue of pollution of rivers and lagoons of New Caledonia caused by the nickel mining industry. But it's also an intimate reference to the act of personal purification, a delicate and liberating gesture of letting go what hides one's own identity revealing our true nature. The soundtrack comes from Kaneto Shindō's film *The Naked Island*.

4 | ChongYan Liu

(1995, China. Lives and works in Paris)

19

7'1", 2018. Courtesy the artist

Liu films a journey at night from inside the car. The fixed camera and the subjective shot record only the headlights illuminating the road, the noise of the vehicle and the pouring rain. During the journey, the artist retraces the physical traumas and memories of when she first had an abortion, reliving in an unfiltered stream of consciousness the doubts, fears and guilt of that moment. *19* offers a courageous and powerful reflection on the vulnerability of the female body and the needs and care it requires compared to the male body.

5 | PHILTH HAUS

(1997, USA. Live and work in Amsterdam)

SYLLA: ISDIY

10'20", 2021. Installation: three channel video, perfume. Courtesy the artists

SYLLA is an artificial intelligence and member of the PHILTH HAUS collective, a community of entities embodied in the form of sculpture, video, sound and performance. Specifically, SYLLA is tasked with exploring the uncanny valley with respect to the standardized modes of representation that individuals expect from humanity and from belonging to a particular gender. The spoken words compose a poem of aspirational transformation over advertising stock footage curated by SYLLA. The soundtrack was composed in imitation of cell-phone advertising music. The installation also features a fragrance that explores the dichotomy between synthetic and natural, playing with components traditionally used in well-known floral scents. The concentration of chemicals in the fragrance causes the variation from the sweet smell of jasmine to the pungent smell of rotting material.

6 | Eleonora Luccarini

(1993, Italy. Lives and works in Amsterdam)

JUST 1 POEM

7'26", 2021. Courtesy the artist

Just 1 poem is part of an interdisciplinary project related to writing as a performative practice, entirely structured on the identity of the poet Léonard Santé, a heterosexual cisgender male alter ego of the artist. Santé is the tool used by the artist to portray a certain kind of masculinity that struggles to deconstruct itself and its subtle misogynistic traits. *Melancholia by Lars Von Trier* is the title of the poem performed by Santé's CGI character, and works as a reference to the constant precarity of existence. The composition is included in the collection *Léonard Santé, 13 poems* through which the poet, thus the artist, tries to understand his complex and contradictory relationship with emotional vulnerability, gender, sexuality, religion, future and family expectations.

7 | Nelson Bourrec Carter

(1988, France/USA. Lives and works in Paris)

LEVITTOWN

13'11", 2K, 2018. Courtesy the artist

Levittown is the first American suburbia. It was created after World War II as an embodiment of the American Way of Life, to be sold domestically and abroad. But it quickly became a segregated community, as its founders decided not to sell houses to people of colour. In the film, a latino man walks through this residential neighbourhood while enacting a monologue composed of familiar lines taken from famous suburban centric movies. As the sun sets, a young woman in a nearby house is confronted with an invisible threat that seems capable of disrupting the apparent tranquillity of her reality. *Levittown* reflects on the failures of a model of society that bases its well-being and security on exclusion and separation.

8 | Janaina Wagner

(1989, Brazil. Lives between Paris and Sao Paulo)

SAILORS DOGS

7', 2020. Courtesy the artist

Sailors Dogs was filmed in the ruins of the small town of Velho Airão, in the Brazilian Amazon. Founded by Portuguese missionaries in 1694, Airão was the point where all the rubber production in the region was concentrated. After a fast and unsustainable economic growth, the city went bankrupt and was abandoned. *Sailors Dogs* juxtaposes the homonymous tale by Portuguese poet Herberto Helder with the dismantled landscapes of the village. In a perspectivist inversion, textual and visual images assemble and disassemble within a forest eaten away by men. By reflecting on the precarity and fragilities of human nature, and the limits of our relationship with the environment, the film questions our place of dominance in the universe that we inhabit.

* The program has a duration of 30' and starts at: 3.00 pm, 3.30 pm, 4.00 pm, 4.30 pm, 5.00 pm, 5.30 pm, 6.00 pm, 6.30 pm, 7.00 pm, 7.30 p.m

9 | VEGA (Francesca Pionati e Tommaso Arnaldi)

(1990/1993, Italy. Live and work in Rome)

FLORILEGIO

9'42", 2021. Courtesy the artists

Florilegio is based on *Welcoming the Flowers*, 2008, voice recording by John Giorno, courtesy Literaturwerkstatt Berlin

Florilegio investigates the human relationship with death and grief through the behaviours and rituals we perform during the ceremonies dedicated to the birth and departure of our loved ones. The work is the result of research, appropriation, editing and decontextualisation that the artists have carried out on archive videos, mostly amateur and found on the internet, depicting funerals of famous people, baby showers and baptisms. The original images have been totally deconstructed to shift the focus to the flowers, the central symbol of the work and of *Welcoming the Flowers* by John Giorno, the poem that inspired it. In the video, the artists also re-enact some of the funeral rites described by anthropologist Ernesto de Martino in *Morte e pianto rituale. Dal lamento funebre antico al pianto di Maria*.

10 | Roman Khimei & Yarema Malashchuk

(1992, Ukraine. Live and work in Kiev)

DEDICATED TO THE YOUTH OF THE WORLD II

8'49", 2019. Courtesy the artists

Cxema is the biggest techno-rave in Ukraine organised in the Dovzhenko Film Studios in Kiev. The camera focuses on the young participants dancing to the pounding beats of Stanislav Tolkachev's music. For the youth of Kiev, this collective ritual of modern alienation is an opportunity for absolute freedom and an escape from everyday difficulties. However, the romantic dimension is overturned by the return to the city where the young protagonists, dazed and bewildered, do not seem to be ready to face the new day and its old reality.

Produced by



MANIFATTURA
TABACCHI



Curated by

Leonardo Bigazzi

Coordinator

Carolina Gestri

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Tuesday - Sunday 3.00-8.00 pm
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Last admission 45' before closing
Free entry

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