NEW NOW supports Europe’s emerging artists. It presents the work of those advancing from art academies towards their professional careers, and provides them with a framework for further development.

The annual NEW NOW festival showcases a selection of work from all disciplines and art academies across Europe. In 2015, NEW NOW presents 32 artworks from 65 artists within five broad categories: Design / Architecture, Film / Animation, Music / Sound, Theatre / Dance and Visual Arts. This catalogue features selected artists and their works.

NEW NOW 2015 is held at Amsterdam’s Westergasfabriek from 9 – 13 September.
Since it was founded in Vilnius in 2009, the NEW NOW festival has been a nomadic event, moving from city to city, country to country. We have enjoyed the opportunity to work with different partners and to engage with diverse audiences in each of the vibrant cities that have so warmly and enthusiastically welcomed the festival. On its travels, the NEW NOW festival has once before visited Amsterdam (de Brakke Grond, 2013) and we are delighted to return. This year, and for the following editions, we look forward to show the work of emerging European artists in the wonderful spaces of the Westergasfabriek, and we are excited to have the opportunity to deepen our relationship with the cultured city of Amsterdam.

As the Co-Artistic Directors of the NEW NOW festival, we are grateful to all those who have helped us in the process of selecting the work that we are presenting this year. This process is a rigorous one, commencing at the level of the arts institutions from which our artists have recently graduated. The institutions are invited to nominate work they consider to represent the excellence of their programmes, which is then assessed by an international jury, one for each of the five discipline categories. The jury members are leading arts professionals – many of whom are producers, programmers or curators of distinguished international arts organisations, prestigious festivals or leading galleries.

These two stages of the selection process inform our selection of work for the online version of the NEW NOW festival; something for which we are usually able to include 90 works from the many hundreds of submissions received. It is from this pool that we make the final selection of the work that will be shown during the festival – the work that you will be able to see this year in the excellent theatre, cinema and exhibition spaces of the Westergasfabriek.

In making our final selection, we take a number of factors into account; firstly, and perhaps most importantly, the work has to interest and excite us. We have to ensure that the context in which it will be seen will enable it to be experienced to its best advantage, and we want the various works to create a dynamic dialogue within and across the five broad discipline categories. These five categories...
are intended to be permeable, to offer a point of departure for the work rather than to define it. In fact, we are particularly interested in selecting work that offers a challenge to these ‘labels’ and we delight in juxtaposing works across performance space, cinema and gallery to emphasise the interdisciplinary nature of the festival.

It is not just the aesthetic quality of the work that interests and excites us, nor simply the craft skills through which they have been realised – we are just as interested in the conceptual aspects of the work, its social relevance and the way in which it speaks to the passions and beliefs of the emerging generation of artists who have developed their work in the frame of European arts institutions. So we try to ensure that the NEW NOW festival presents the widest possible diversity of work drawn from across the whole of Europe and beyond. We are grateful to the Creative Europe Programme of the European Commission that supports NEW NOW, to the partner institutions involved and to all institutions and persons that have made NEW NOW 2015 possible.

We hope that you are both challenged and inspired by the NEW NOW 2015 festival.

Paula Crabtree
Artistic Director NEW NOW
Vice Chancellor, Stockholm University of the Arts

Anthony Dean
Artistic Director NEW NOW
Dean of Faculty of Arts & Dean of Cultural Engagement, University of Winchester

Carla Delfos
Executive Director ELIA – European League of Institutes of the Arts
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ARIELLE GRASSER

RELICS

Switzerland
HEAD – Genève, Haute école d’art et de design /
Geneva University of Art and Design

Wooden pieces, supposedly parts of the original cross on which Jesus was crucified, have been found all around the world. But if one were to attempt to assemble these parts, there would be too many fragments to form one cross. Arielle Grasser’s first step was to make an inventory of all of these relics, creating a book in which she mapped their locations. Then, imagining an alternative scenario for the end of Jesus’ life, she built a (2.5 × 4 m) boat with the same wood these crosses were originally made of. In doing so, the artist has given the relics a new function and highlights the way history can be manipulated.

‘My work explores the construction of myths and how they are fuelled by interpretations, rumours, false information, fake artefacts or a lack of information. My aim is to bring new light to old stories and show the viewer that there is always an element of imagination and falseness hidden behind the representations that surround us. I use different materials and media in order to embody my stories and make them come true, choosing the materials that best fits the fiction or myth I am working with.’
Hotel Portable is a fully equipped, mobile hotel room that fits easily through a door. On arrival at a destination of the guest’s choosing (the only requirement being a certain proximity to a lavatory), the lobby-boy unfolds the hotel room before the guest’s eyes, creating a cozy interior space. Pulling cuboids of various sizes out of the walls expands the hotel room further. In its final state, the room is furnished with a double bed, minibar and television. Hotel Portable can be used as a retreat, hidden from the outside world, or as part of a performance. Now the adventure can begin at what is perhaps the most extraordinary overnight location.

‘The concept of a portable hotel room as an unfamiliar object allows us to perform a spatial experiment. The project is an artistic intervention in a semi-public space. It examines how much space we need to retreat and how sensitive the environment is to disturbances from the outside. It is also intended to broach the discussion of the interplay between intimacy and public places: to what extent can a symbiosis occur between a public institution and a guest, between a host and parasite? Can Hotel Portable become the element that interconnects people and institutions? Hotel Portable has already been successfully occupied. The guests spent the night in the public space of the School of Arts Zurich and interacted in various ways with the school’s infrastructure, its students and residents. We are curious how the interaction between Hotel Portable and a new environment will be manifested and how future interactions may differ.’
The International Gastronautical Society is a critical research unit that has recognised an artistic opportunity to reclaim food as a capacious medium and that constructs experimental setups and experiences around it. The purpose of ‘gastronautical cooking’ is not primarily to exude pleasure, but to approach food and eating as a toolkit. The society creates imaginative spaces for debates about eating, food, its forms and influence; as well as mind-bending concepts and events for restaurants, festivals and cultural spaces, and intellectual and visual output for publications, books and the web.

“We, the International Gastronautical Society, declare that:
1. Food is something we intend to map, explore and colonise.
2. We shall sing for the liveliness of foodstuff.
3. We shall take it upon ourselves to make visible the multiplicity of food. We shall chart it in all forms: food found in households and restaurants but also in nature, art, literature, garbage bags and compost heaps.
4. Our ultimate sin is to establish a culture that savours the lively and lives the ‘savourly’, to fight instant meals, famine, canned and fast food.
Cockroaches under the Cushions is a children’s picture book; the Polish equivalent of the famous lullaby ‘Good night, sleep tight, don’t let the bedbugs bite’. The lullaby is constructed from texts by Wisława Szymborska and the artist’s own illustrations. The illustrations, both within the book and also on a set of pillowcases, form a collage with fragments of photographs. The images are mainly black and white to attract the eyes of children.

‘My biggest influences are children’s behaviour and laughter. I like their simple way of thinking; something so difficult for adults. My illustrated books explore the collision of these two worlds. I try to make my pictures say more than just what the text reads and often simultaneously write and illustrate. This gives me more opportunities to play, and play is a large part of my work. In making my books, I also try to go beyond the limitations of paper. This has led me to hand-stitch pillowcases and a backpack in which the book can fit. In this way, the book’s heroes can become part of the children’s lives.’
Osmo Nadir is a rare case of a designer who can combine sound-design work with creation; going beyond what is commonly understood as ‘design’ and into that which annexes the space reserved for art. And so it is with *Rite Machine*, a lab-station for creating music and visual effects. The person operating the station conducts an audio-visual performance using a system of innovative instruments and controllers. A set of unusual instruments enables the performer to build relationships between body, movement and sound as he seems to merge with the sound he produces. He becomes a dancer, performer and musician in one. Visual variety and specificity of interaction between the performer and the machine’s instruments create a kind of ‘theatricalisation’ of the event, which creates a peculiar atmosphere; one typical of rituals and ceremonies despite the performance being embedded in today’s technological culture.

‘The controls of *Rite Machine* intentionally do not resemble well-known instruments: the removal of commonly recognisable objects from the performance space allows me to create a convincing stage reality. One of the basic assumptions while designing *Rite Machine* was to ritualise the process of interaction through the creation of tools that would force the user to act in a manner resembling some mysterious ceremony. Thus a ritual is naturally brought to life as a result of operating in an environment where man and machine work together.’
Zlín, the Artbook consists of historical photographs, archival advertisements, thematic illustrations and diagrams as well as the architectural details and typical functionalist typography that corresponds with the town of Zlín. Several spreads feature three-dimensional components that only appear when the page is turned. The most iconic 3D objects are the famous ‘21’ skyscraper of 1938, a model of a female shoe produced by Tomáš Baťa’s company and the Junkers F.13 plane in which he perished in 1932. The presented artbook is the first one of a series of three and the only one to have been completed.

‘All my life I have been influenced by my hometown. Zlín, the city of functionalism, the city in the garden. The motivation for my work was to find an unusual way to present this unique place to a wide audience using different techniques. As a graphic designer, I decided to create a series of three books that would focus on the town’s shop signs, neon and typical typography. Basically Zlín from different points of view. I tried to create motives and find a form that fully corresponded to interwar modernism and the concept of the prefabricated modern city of Tomáš Baťa.’
Vuk Sans is a new alphabet that combines the phonetic symbols of the French and Serbian languages into 43 unique phonetic symbols. Vuk Sans falls into the family of geometric sans serif and was inspired by the forms used in the Glagolitic alphabet, created around 860 AD by Cyril of Salonika. The Vuk machine was produced as a direct application for the new typographical system. Voice recognition technology detects words spoken into the microphone, which are then transcribed into the new alphabet and displayed onscreen. Vuk Sans enables speakers of either French or Serbian to use a common writing system despite the fact the two languages use different alphabets.

‘My involvement in Swiss-Serbian collective Le Cabinet SR:CH forced me to reflect upon the differences between the two languages and the manner of communication itself, which requires a basic understanding of the typographic symbols of both languages, their structure and anatomy. The phonetics of the two languages made me realise that some sounds could not be reproduced with “regular” letters, which led me to develop new symbols and, ultimately, to invent an entirely new alphabet. A second objective of my work was to show how scripture constantly evolves with the times and ever-changing social contexts.’
FILM/
ANIMATION
GILI LAVY

LA MÈRE DIVINE/ THE DIVINE MOTHER

United Kingdom
Royal College of Art

This art film takes place in a religious institute for girls who have lost their mothers and have dedicated their lives to their maternal spirit. It is about the fragile transition between life, death, the human and the sacred. A journey of belief and doubt.

‘The concept of my film work is based on the study of humankind and the investigation of different anthropological approaches to the theme of death. My artwork not only makes use of, but questions death rituals and their origins, and shifts these closer to contemporary alternatives. Through my professional practice, I am consistently crafting a social and religious imaginary existence in order to expand our perception of life and death, while also evolving the film’s narrative. My aim is to provoke questions and discussions as a result of the spectator experiencing a story through fragments of time and narrative, and the challenges of fiction and reality.’
Anton is a short film about a child’s first experiences of powerlessness. In the film we meet Anton, a ten-year-old boy with a knack for getting into trouble. When Anton’s parents get into financial difficulty, the little boy tries to break free from the mounting pressure at home only for his family life to fall into a downward spiral.

‘With Anton we very much wanted to tell the story as close to the main character as possible. You see the world through his eyes. You know what he knows, understand what he understands. His blank spots are yours. We wanted to remain faithful to the world of a ten-year-old boy, in which everything is not as clear as it should be and where sometimes actions come before contemplation. Our aim was to show the character of Anton through all the imperfections that come with being a child. The unruliness, the erraticism but also the impulsiveness and unrestrained way of being. There is definitely something beautiful and powerful in this. Something you can lose as you grow older.’

Scenario: Julia Jansen
Director: Nico van den Brink
Production: Chris Stenger, Juul Op den Kamp, Woolf Franssen
Oma is a short animated film about the relationship between a young girl and her terminally ill grandmother, based on the artist’s own experience. The film combines tranquil landscapes and happy memories with the dark thoughts of the girl who does not fully understand what is happening around her. It is about accepting the disease of someone you love, and being able to say goodbye even if though it is difficult. The girl imagines that she has done both of these things but in reality, she just sits besides the deathbed unable to say or do anything.

‘After making this film, I realised that I was making it for myself in order to process my thoughts and emotions. It was not my intention to make such a personal film but the idea grew organically. A couple of years ago I lost my grandmother to cancer. We were very close but I didn’t see her often. I knew she was sick but only heard she was dying when it was too late, and when I arrived at the hospital she was already in a coma. I was told that I still had the chance to say goodbye to her and that she would hear me, but I couldn’t. It wasn’t my grandmother anymore. Later, when I noticed I was still confused, I felt guilty that I wasn’t there for her. I decided these confusing feelings would be a good starting point for an autobiographical story but also as a sort of goodbye to my grandmother, one I couldn’t give her in real life. I am happy that I told this story. It really helped me to structure my thoughts and allowed me to accept her death.’
Undertaker deals with death, not in relation to a specific person, but to a building. It is a film situated on the border of fiction and reality. The artist uses the gestures of an undertaker to create her own fictional landscape in which the spectator observes the undertaker carrying out the rituals that precede a ceremony at the Hofheide crematorium.

‘The main focus of my artistic practice has been my video works – cinematic installations that explore the relationship between people and their surroundings. The sound and music in these videos are, to me, equally important as the images. Every detail of the soundtrack is composed, recorded and edited especially for the film so as to ensure the images and sounds fit together as a whole. My previous music and sound installations remain an important part of my artistic practice. They influence my videos not only in the field of sound, but also the rhythm of the montage and the manner of telling a story.’
Martin Kukal made this movie during his first year of his master’s degree. The task was to choose and animate a piece of art so he chose Vincent van Gogh’s *The Potato Eaters* and created a short story based on several other paintings that shared a similar theme. The movie is seen through the eyes of van Gogh, and ends with his meeting the characters from *The Potato Eaters* painting.

‘In this movie, I tried to show a very simple story which is based on basic human needs and desires. Every human longs to be accepted, nobody wants to be alone. Everyone also wants to be himself and to be accepted on his own terms. I chose Vincent van Gogh because I appreciate his admiration for poor, working people and yet he was rejected by them and suffered because of it. Van Gogh was a very lonesome man. I thought this to be a strong position for the movie because everybody knows this about him, who he was and how he died.’
MUSIC /
SOUND
Miradas Cruzadas takes you on a tour of the world’s traditions and rituals. The performance begins with an exploration of the origins of mankind and the world: water. From here, the audience is taken on a trip to India, Lebanon, Argentina, Kenya and Japan. Each piece concerns a different aspect of traditional cultures and explores the rhythms that punctuate the days, moments of meditation, martial arts, and pagan or religious rites. Through musical analysis and poetic vision, Miradas Cruzadas strives to provide a fair interpretation of every piece while magnifying the complexity of the music through staging and the natural flow of the performance.

‘What importance do traditions have in our modern lives? What place do rituals have in a world where we don’t take the time to think about ourselves? Music and rituals have been interconnected since the beginning of humanity, and it is our goal to inspire an identity within the listener and allow him to escape and reflect on his roots. The pieces we have selected each have a strong identity drawn from the roots of the cultures of the composers, and have been enriched through a combination of staging and lighting so as to give a different resonance beyond pure music. By blending the senses, we seek to offer the spectator a global experience: immersion into our artistic universe.’
PEARLA PIGAO

LUMSK
NOISEANNOYS
PERLIN

Norway
Kunsthøgskolen i Oslo / Oslo National Academy of the Arts

Pearla presents a combination of three works; a sound installation titled Lumsk and two textile works (Noiseannoys and Perlin) of woven white and black cotton thread combined with multi-coloured metallic, polyester thread. The textiles are made up of different layers of images of white noise and the artist's own musical compositions. The choices of colour and textile have been made to reinforce the feeling of the electronic signal: the multi-coloured threads help lead the viewer closer the surface and when the fabric is lit and moved to different angles, it changes colours, making it alive.

'I visualise music with my artworks. When I use my own musical compositions in the loom, I use a method where I convert mp3 files to RAW format. This way I can open my music as an image in Photoshop and it becomes a pattern in the textile. The similarities in working methods between weaving and how I make music is highly important for my works. With this process I can make both music and textiles with unique patterns. Likewise, by understanding how different frequencies create different patterns, I can make music with the sole purpose of creating patterns for the weave, in this instance white noise. White noise is the term given when all frequencies are equally represented. The term "white" is borrowed from the colour doctrine as white light consists of all the colours of the spectrum in equal parts. When one sees pictures of white noise, the surface is smooth and monotonic and one can hear a discreet droning sound.'
Big Ben is an interactive sound installation. Speakers are hidden within a white plinth in the centre of the space and the distorted ringing of Big Ben is contained within. Using a translation process, the piece renders the sound of Big Ben, chiming at midnight, unrecognisable. The result is a four-minute, ten-second soundscape that builds with intensity. The white plinth relates to the Elizabeth Tower that houses the original Big Ben Bell, whilst the removal of its features imply an imposing structure much like the overwhelming British political system. The spectator’s only opportunity to regain control of the space is to ring the bells that hang suspended within the tower. To ring a bell no longer links us to the aristocracy of the past, but indicates the power that we hold as individuals to make our mark in an uncertain time. Lighting projected onto the plinth highlights the importance of the dominating political structure within today’s modern society.

‘In this work I explore the fundamental notion of understanding. Using text, image, speech and other audible output, I put recognisable sounds and visuals through a manipulation process. The element of creating the work digitally, using modern technology and then playing it through an old medium, adds to the discussion of the fading physicality of our times. By using sound, a medium used by politicians and the media, I ask the viewer to question what is speech? What are promises? If sound or speech is translated into something that no one can decipher, then how real is it? Can we trust a person within a position of power on the strength of their words without action?’
THEATRE/
DANCE
The young scenographer Floriane Jan created her play Alchimie du Verbe in order to explore the objects of daily life. Her desire was to create a play where objects are no longer used as mere accessories, but as materials that can produce emotion or reflection. The play, presented by nine actors and 136 objects inspired by Arthur Rimbaud's poem, Alchimie du Verbe, from which this play takes its name, unfolds over six scenes. Each scene deals with objects coming from ideas of faith, materialism, creation, dreams and neurosis. It is set in a long, black corridor, a setting inspired by a scene from urban life: the street. The spectator must choose on what to focus, aware that there will be things happening that he cannot see.

‘For a few years, my focus has been on daily movements – demonstrations of daily drama. How to talk about the sensible? How to show it? How to integrate the accident in the theatrical process? My experience in scenography led me to imagine a set direction where the hierarchy between body and object disappears to create a hybrid that mixes the matter and the flesh. For this project I explore, handle and play with objects extracted from the streets or from deep in the kitchen cupboard.’
Hotel City is a trans-disciplinary artwork that combines theatre, film and the visual arts. The spectator enters a dark and abandoned surveillance room full of display screens, maps, printers, books, evidence and clues of a dismantled fiction including 35 movie sequences. Wandering through the installation, the spectator pieces together the story. The narrative revolves around a group of young people living in a non-specific occidental city, maybe all involved in a mysterious plot, maybe not. Sequences change meaning when viewed from a different point of view, causing the spectator to constantly renew his vision as the deck of fiction shuffles. The investigation is video game-like with the spectator playing the hero.

'Hotel City is part of a research programme that aims to create connections between art and science. For this project I worked with researcher and digital scenographer Andrew Sempere, movie editor Frederic-Pierre Saget and visual artist Hervã Coqueret. Hotel City is the result of our interrogations concerning cinema that can be downloaded, streamed, uploaded and discussed live; cinema without the character of the Saturday Night séance. A cinema torn to pieces but still alive. Hotel City is a hypothesis on what the art form will become.'
In *Last Night a Cowboy Saved My Life*, the laws of society — to which we naturally surrender — are put to the test. It is about a journey, looking for the contradiction of life, just to find that life is a never-ending search for love. In this solo theatre performance, the actress plays out her own coming-of-age story and brings the spectator back to the basics of theatre: the power of storytelling in a language everyone knows — Hollywood. Set in America in the 1970's, the performance raises questions on individualism and whether the world is ever going to change. History repeats itself. Crisis after crisis, war after war. How can we live with the powerlessness and the void it leaves behind?

“What should theatre look like today? I went back to where it all began: storytelling. Fascinated by America and its influence on Western culture, my path led me to country music and road movies. I wanted to use the clichés and structures applied in these stories and explore why they seem to work elsewhere in the world. What is it about American pop culture that so influences our Western lives? How does it influence the way we think? I always start my work from a personal perspective, and in this instance I am questioning the manner in which I believe the media, political and social space of The Netherlands has been overpowered by the American way of making individuals a customer instead of a human being. The challenge is to make this theatrical and, in the end, universal. *Last Night a Cowboy Saved My Life* is the result of the road trip I made looking for reality.’
Acts of Self Love is an attempt to embody what it means to be unfixed. An attempt to reclaim abandoned parts, an attempt not to hide, an attempt to be visible at all times. It calls into question the everyday compromises we make to fit in, in order to be considered normal. Acts of Self Love is both a playful exercise in performance and a serious exploration into the artist’s own identity. What gives us a sense of our gendered self? What gives us a sense of self beyond gender? What selves arise out of an attempt to transcend gender norms?

‘My practice is centred on breaking out of cycles of shame with the belief in individual change as being a tool for instigating social change. I am interested in performances of gender, the politics of a queer body and creating spaces of refuge. My work is concerned with performance as a place of transformation for both the performer and audience. Acts of Self Love came from knowing the importance of investing in the self. Self-love means self-acceptance. This led me to accept that most days I feel neither woman nor man. Why is there shame in having a fluid gender identity? In this performance, I reveal all the parts that I have previously felt the need to hide. I am empowered by exposing my most private acts.’
You have just received an invitation to an exclusive party. Upon arrival, you will be confronted by distorted versions of yourself and your role in social hierarchy. The self-absorbed fast food culture is collapsing and the music is still playing. Developed through intense character work and critical observation, United States of Amnesia is an eight-person, mobile theatre performance that is ever changing in its on-going dialogue with the audience. Upon entering the space, one plunges down the rabbit hole and into a version of America that is at once unrecognisable and eerily similar to what you know.

‘As artists, we believe we have to shout our message until our throats are hoarse. This is not just a commentary on our world but a battle cry. Wake Up! Room 916 Collective will not let anyone idle through a mediocre existence. It is time to take off your rose-coloured glasses and look closely at our awkwardly ordered society. This group of eight young artists relentlessly interrogates the very fibres that hold our psyche together through caricatures, dance routines, improvisation and original prose in the setting of a raucous party. Through satirising the dysfunctional, industrial world we have grown up in, we shine light on the garish privileges and rules that we follow blindly. We explore coming of age as artists in post 9/11 America. It is Chicago 2015: the modern American psyche begins to collapse meanwhile a wildly absurd party ensues. Come dance with us as the world ends!’

United States
Columbia College Chicago, School of Fine and Performing Arts
Joey Chestnut is a theatre performance about food. About how we eat what we eat. Because everyone does it. Everyone, everyday. From the day we are born to the day we die. This interactive piece, set against a backdrop of sound and light installations, begins as a new world record has been set – Joey Chestnut has eaten 69 hot dogs in ten minutes without throwing up. It then follows the imaginary life of real-world eating champion Joey Jaws Chestnut, seen through the eyes of an eccentric piano-playing narrator. A story that is nonlinear but which revolves around food like planets revolve around the sun. Joey Chestnut explores the taboos, traditions, joys as well as the rotten things in Western dining.

‘The project was the start of our theatre troop and made during two highly intensive weeks of teamwork. We were all art school students with different specialties, and we wanted a subject that was relatable and yet complex. We turned to basic human needs and landed on food. Food and interaction is something that we all share and that makes for relevant art.’
VISUAL ARTS
The theme of *Terra Subcutanea* is life and its vivid bodily substance, something that can be easily modified as a sort of living canvas. Painting is understood as a living medium: it can be hurt and healed and changed so that the only remains visible are a pattern or traces of washed-out paint. Andrea draws inspiration from her work as a tattoo artist and a contemporary societal obsession with the body, image, the fashionable status of the tattoo and the growing acceptance of tattoos as art.

'I've always been interested in how one’s personality can be visibly represented on the surface. I like to reveal and hide the stories of the people I portray, posing the question “is the story true or is it just an illusion?” There is always a tension in my work between a realistically painted motif, pushed to the background, and the unpredictable texture of an acrylic substance coming to the foreground. Sometimes my work takes the form of a symbiotic dialogue of both parts, and sometimes the result leads to the destruction of one of the parts. Lately, I have found a similar tension in society’s love of tattoos. Our ambivalence of the distortion of the skin’s integrity made me notice a similarity with the process I use in my own paintings. I perceive the acrylic layers on my works as protective layers of skin that separate the subject matter from the surrounding world. The theme is captured under layers as the ink in a tattoo stays under your skin. We cover our skin with images. We hide under them as we exhibit ourselves. A tattoo carries sacrifice to support the illusion of being perceived as original.'
**ANDREA WIKHAMMER HEIR**

**FATLAND**

"Fatland" is a photograph (110 × 70 cm) portraying two cow stomachs, hanging, as found at a slaughterhouse in Oslo called Fatland. The photograph is inspired by the duality of the beautiful and the grotesque in relation to the body, and explores our impermanence as beings that are vulnerable to the laws of nature. It questions whether it is possible to find a balance between the repulsive and the attractive.

'In my work I use real hair, skin and fluids. Through various methods of abstraction, I attempt to prevent the viewer from immediately recognising the materials and invite them to closely explore the images. The site of the photograph is a non-consumption hall where the waste material and carcasses of the animals are discarded. I searched for subtle beauty in this place; a place that, for many, primarily represents death and brutality. The image is not staged – it is a snapshot of reality. An image that invites ambiguous interpretations. I see it as metaphor for the dilemma of our modern existence and as starting a dialogue between aspects of attraction and repulsion.'

Norway
Kunsthøgskolen i Oslo / Oslo National Academy of the Arts

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This twenty-minute video was recorded during a one-and-a-half-hour coaching workshop in a boardroom at the National Gallery in Prague. Six actors, mixed together with regular participants who did not know the situation was staged, took part. The piece deals with manipulation and with the specific question of power in the market, subjects equally topical in the art world; be it the art market, within art institutions, or in the relationship between the artist and the spectator. Watch as the participants’ desire to control the situation becomes more and more apparent. The title of the piece, Reliable Relationship comes from an advertisement for a course in NLP (Neuro-Linguistic Programming).

‘My work is focused on the current political and economic situation. During the last twenty-five years, society’s expectations have drastically changed. In the 1990’s, people seemed to believe in a future that was unproblematic. However, towards the end of the century, a certain disillusionment grew. Today we face immense pressures caused by the powers of global capitalism and the hegemony of the economy. In my work I try to read what is happening behind the scenes of these power struggles. What are the rules of the game that enables one to enter into relationships with other people and act together with them? How do such rules function and how do they change in time? What is society?’
BILLY DANTE

A POEM DEDICATED TO THE PAST, SPOKEN FOR THE FUTURE

Ireland
CIT Crawford College of Art & Design (CCAD)

A Poem Dedicated to the Past, Spoken for the Future is a solo performance piece by the artist. It consists of a live reading directed to one spectator at a time in an otherwise empty, entirely dark lecture theatre save for a single light shining above the podium. Billy Dante delivers the poems in a haunting, emotionless state. He is a conduit from which the words pour, anonymised by white face paint. The video of the performance is deliberately constructed so that sound and image are disjointed.

'Ve work explores the mirrored effect of art as life and life as art. These poems were entirely composed from the phone book by cutting up and reassembling the names and addresses. Each poem follows a strict structure of syllables, words, lines and paragraphs, and the poems are read with specific timing and rhythm. The symbolic use of the phone book is intended to give the work universality. However, given that the poems are nonsensical, their power can only be fully achieved through my own reading of the works. The poems suggest at archaic forms of expression and forgotten languages. Each piece is based on the classical poetic form and follows the structure of a villanelle, whilst taking influence from such literary artists as Dylan Thomas, James Joyce and Samuel Beckett.'
In *Objects of Desire*, Elisa Cuesta Fernández explores the border territories between mind and body. She works with the uncanny (from the German ‘unheimliche’, the opposite to familiar), a Freudian concept used to describe things or situations that are both familiar and strange. Cognitive dissonance is the word used for describing the simultaneous feeling of attraction and disgust towards something, something Elisa plays with in presenting a series of small jewellery pieces made from corporeal elements: jewels made from detached human body materials (hair and nails) and polyester resin. These are delicate, elegant and attractive objects that the viewer will at first be attracted to, and then automatically jump to reject once they notice what they are made of.

‘I have always been interested in life and its functions, and in organic processes. Above all, I am interested in the human element. This has led to personal research through which I try to decipher the bonds existing between those vital corporeal processes that generate basic needs and movements (what belongs to the inside), and their projections on the exterior of our bodies (what belongs to the outside); projections that are socially conditioned. These bonds are what are commonly known as “feelings”. Through my work, I try to reinterpret these interactions and ultimately to modify, distort and overlap the bonds considered to “correctly belong” to the inside and that which belongs to the outside. I try to understand, reflect and modify the human universe in an aesthetic way: from a chemical, physiological origin to its most external and quotidian reflection.’
EXPLOSION OF EMOTIONS

Explosion of Emotions is an installation made of a rotating cube of six transparent plates (50 x 50cm) with drawings by the artist. A light is placed inside the cube to create shadow patterns on the surrounding walls and surfaces. The cube rotates for dramatic effect and to create a hypnotic experience. Explosion of Emotions brings together Jermick’s last years of developing new forms and styles of graphic art as well as his experiments with different surfaces and textiles.

‘My inspiration for this piece comes from a dark place in my mind where I see, feel and experience ugliness. An ugliness that I do not want to share directly with an audience or, for that matter, with anybody. An ugliness that reflects a side of my being that probably everyone else in life experiences. This ugly experience is personal for each individual. It is not public. What is your ugliness? How would you bend it into beautiful perfection without being too superficial? Like life, ugliness can be hidden within beauty. Maybe there is no beauty without ugliness. My art piece reflects these questions.’
Dad attempts to define what remembrance is and how photos can influence and shape the perception of memory. At first, a memory is crisp and sharp, but what happens to it when it fades away? For this piece, the artist photographed her father during his last days of life in order to translate the meaning of memory into a narrative installation work. Lisa Klaverstijn experimented with her photographs by transforming them into three-dimensional shapes and adding different material textures, thereby reconstructing her memories with a twist. By blowing up and changing the perspective of the images, they become a new memory in their own right.

'I remember how he lay in his hospital bed and all the tubes and cables around him that kept him alive. I remember the smell of medicine and those typical hospital blankets. Yet I wonder whether what I remember is what was really there... Photography may form the starting point for each of my works, but the process really begins after the picture has been taken. I transform images into three-dimensional objects, turning my thoughts into a tangible, tactile experience. I invite the viewer to walk through my thoughts by way of an installation. By reconstructing an unexpected representation, I play with the perception of my viewer, adding enough hints to act as guidance while at the same time, making the viewer aware of the discrepancies that exist between his actual perception and the perception induced by my method of arranging, deforming and reforming my photographic material.'
The work of Maarten Davidse often embodies temporary, site-specific projects with the possibility for participation. The work attempts to create contexts and crossovers within which new relations and connections can be established between people. In *Set up for a Holistic Experiment*, a hypnotist brings the audience back to the beginning of the evolution of life on earth. The participants are pulled into a trance-like state, eyes closed, and become a part of the ancient flow of water. A process that begins with their sweat as it is collected through dehydration and its condensation upon the walls of a green house. The work attempts to create a context in which remembering and forgetting, seeing and feeling, imagining and evidence build tension in a seemingly real-life situation.

‘How can an artist provide a context for the collective re-imagining of daily situations given the complexity of our societies? This is the question I consider while deciding how to employ my work to activate curiosity and self-organisation within society. I deal with change: unravelling expectations for a particular moment as well as creating room for thoughts about a possible future. I believe change enables people to see the world as a process in which we can add or shift something, rather than it being a fixed end-result in which we lose our purpose. I attempt to empower individuals to co-produce our collective future and see the outcome of my work as a durational and participatory process rather than a finished art-object or event.’

*The Netherlands*  
Academie Beeldende Kunsten Maastricht, Zuyd Hogeschool / Maastricht Academy of Fine Arts and Design, Zuyd University

MAARTEN DAVIDSE & SIMON WEINS

SET UP FOR A HOLISTIC EXPERIMENT
Marta Mielcarek’s Inversion is made of two four-minute video projections, presented simultaneously on opposite screens. The piece skilfully combines cultural traditions with contemporary issues such as the relationship between individuality and the nature of the masses, and addresses the dichotomy between drawing strength from a group and the need to manifest one’s uniqueness. Key to the successful translation of this concept into a visual language was a method used by Rudolf Laban, a dance artist and theorist, consisting of having dancers make simple movements in unison. Inspired by this, Marta Mielcarek multiplied her protagonist which, when combined with the projection on a 1:1 scale, gives a strong sensation of collectivity consisting of an individual.

‘Inversion is about the relationship between the individual and collectivity. The genesis of the project comes from my inner conflict between a desire to belong to the masses and to be an individualist. I have drawn my inspiration from the Greek chorus, something which represented collectivity, array, the standardisation of individuals, ceremonial character and universal remittance. Especially fundamental to this project is my post-production work where I decided to use a mechanism of multiplication to turn one person into a crowd. This enabled me to synchronise the characters’ movements.’
Warm Cave is a sculpture created in situ and constituted of cement plaster bands and charcoal. The 120 × 180 cm sculpture, in black, white and grey, leans against a wall and seems to grow out of it – or to be peeling off of it – like sloughing skin. It appears to be an organic shape made with cement. Its mass reveals a landscape similar to a relief map of mountains. To stand, the sculpture needs the wall as a support. And whereas in architecture, this is usually hidden under a wall, here, this structure becomes a form beyond the wall.

'I use my work to talk about the past and memory. With sculpture, I find that I can talk more easily about sensations like melancholia. I also like how the spectator is confronted with an alien foreign body in a daily context. I use raw materials without any notion of history and turn these past forms into an abstracted landscape or abstracted form of architecture through my sculpting. I work a lot with cement as I am interested in it as a material and how it can become powder – an important part of my work is the feel and materiality of my sculptures: pouring the cement, crushing the coal and sprinkling the powder.'
Peripheral Knowledge is about the re-use of obsolete things and their repair. By repairing, producing or modifying, we shift from the position of consumer to the role of creator. This project provides the time and space for consultations, tutorials and practical lectures about work and activity that can be completed by the spectators in a series of workshops. Some of the tutorials are aimed at solving problems in the field of new media. The project casts the idea of DIY as a radical political activity and as a sort of activism that opposes the trends of mass production, conspicuous consumption, massive waste, corporate philosophy and the pre-designed lifetime of products.

‘My work refers to the actual state of the society I live in as I consider the role of an artist to be an occupation strictly connected to society. I am therefore interested in artistic expression and reflection, in looking for alternative solutions. I see my experiments and re-use of objects in my art as a way of paying back to cultural and social heritage.’
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