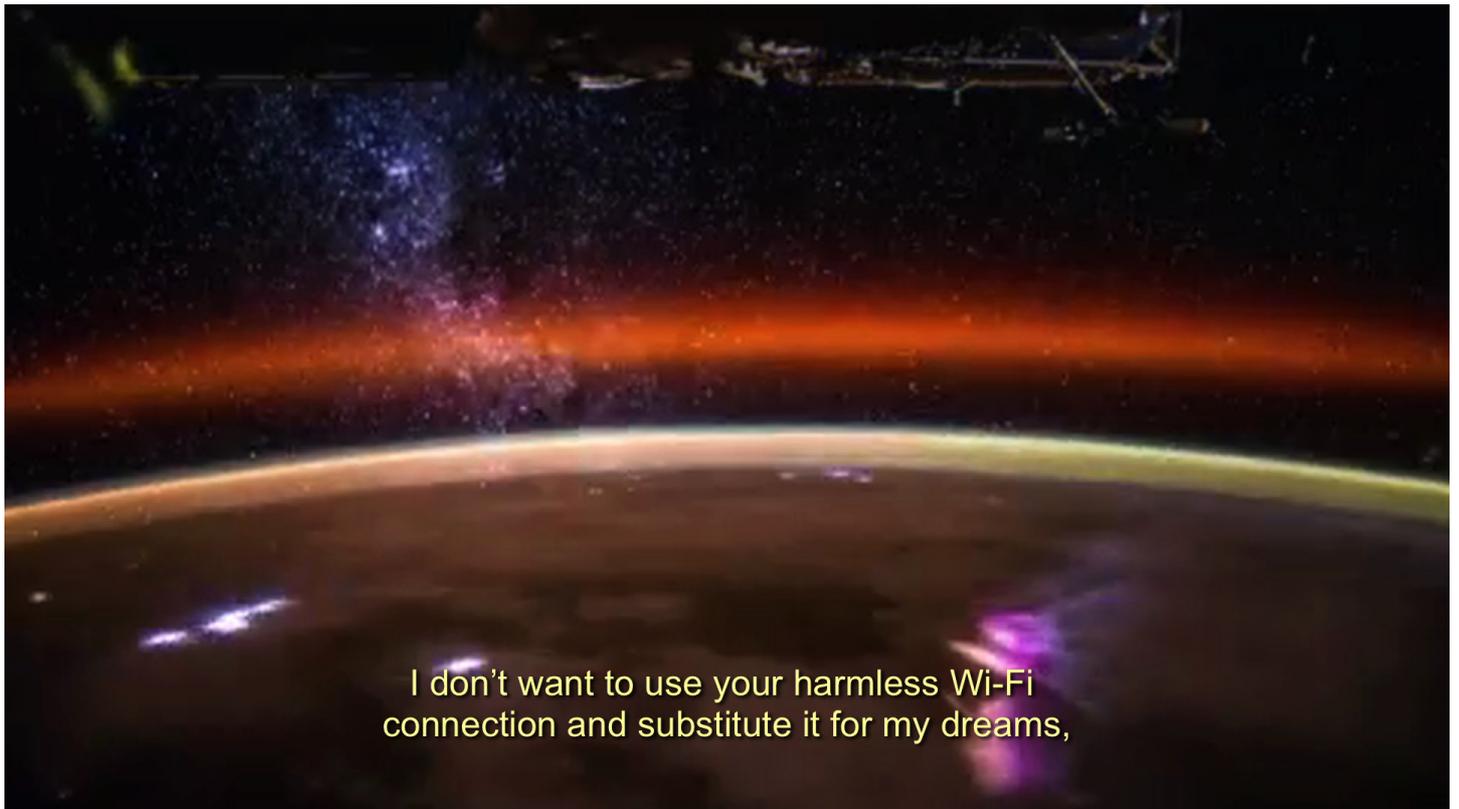


30/5–12/9/2021, *Sensing Scale*: Tekla Aslanishvili, Pedro Barateiro, Emma Charles, Geocinema, Bahar Noorizadeh, Wolfgang Tillmans, Kunsthalle Münster



Press release:

Our world is played out on the planetary scale: it is marked by decentralized infrastructures and production sites, globe-spanning logistical flows as well as a collective technological conditionality, complex data material and all-embracing communications networks. How can the processes taking place within such highly branched structures be described and queried?

With the exhibition *Sensing Scale*, the Kunsthalle Münster addresses the question of how networks, data traffic and technocratic mega-structures operating on a planetary scale inscribe themselves into our world, how they influence our lives, our thinking, our acts, our visual culture and also our perception. It is such intricately wired and interconnected systems that Tekla Aslanishvili, Pedro Barateiro, Emma Charles, Geocinema (Asia Bazdyrieva and Solveig Suess), Bahar Noorizadeh and Wolfgang Tillmans examine in their works. In their preoccupation with this particular subject matter, the artists have encountered hardly discernible interrelations and virtually incomprehensible magnitudes. They intently illuminate these systems from various angles and gauge their extent. Probing what is “behind” the networks, they trace their courses underground and aboveground, and reveal hidden infrastructures of our digital everyday life. At the same time, they are keeping a close eye on how technological progress affects value systems such as time, productivity and work.

The question therefore arises as to how the new planetary scale of the hyper-capitalized society is altering our previous perspective on the world. Which established ideas must be broken with? At the same time, such changed magnitudes also challenge aesthetical conventions. If for a long time the iconic “Blue Marble” photo taken from the Apollo 17 was seen as an adequate representation of the earth, the momentous photo has long been replaced by continually updated images—images existing in the plural form. It is about understanding and measuring the planet, despite being entangled in processes of production of images and meaning as well as new configurations of power distributed worldwide. Conceived as a metaphor of globalized, networked image cultures, the project name “Geocinema”, can be rendered productive.

Technological infrastructures continually convey what we can see, feel and perceive – and what not. It is this type of imagery—connected directly or indirectly with the mega-structures or generated by them—that is of interest to the artists and serves as the basis of their productive look. Based on translations of the world into an enormous accumulation of data, drawn from the complex media networks and infrastructures, the six artists have developed images and concepts that are far from being exhaustive. And yet their underlying subjective narratives articulately reveal what a determining influence technology in the 21st-century has on geopolitics and which (emotional) reactions this can trigger. They address, among others, affective experiences with navigation systems (Pedro Barateiro, Bahar Noorizadeh), they concern the sensory perception of cables, antennas and computers (Emma Charles, Geocinema, Wolfgang Tillmans) and thus point to the future in a likewise conceptional and sceptical manner (Geocinema, Tekla Aslanishvili).

In her film *Algorithmic Island* (2019), Tekla Aslanishvili investigates the as yet failed attempt to develop a Georgian resort town on the Black Sea into a smart city. To this aim, she visits the site of the inflated construct made up of architecture, location factor and political vision right where it has started manifesting since 2017. Pedro Barateiro, in his film *The Opening Monologue* (2018), examines social-media imagery and the related sometimes dismal, sometimes slippery promises for the future we are currently being flooded with. The work is complemented by the artist's drawings and installations. The formally stringent site inspection in Emma Charles' film *Fragments on Machines* (2013) is, in line with Karl Marx, dedicated to the question in which sense the value systems of productivity and workforce are shaped by technological progress. It is characteristic, of course, that behind the façade of an art deco industrial building not far from Wall Street today lies a major node for the Internet. In his audio work *I want to make a film* (2018), Wolfgang Tillmans – in an equally sober and amusing tone of voice – describes a fictive film project about digitalization, including its enormous scope: from the miniaturization of computer hardware, to the exponential increase in the amount of data, all the way to a worldwide cable system. Tillmans is fascinated with the performance of smart phones, which have taken over all functions of digital life and have made photography an everyday means of communication. Bahar Noorizadeh's *After Scarcity* (2018) is a science fiction film highlighting Big Data scenarios, on the tracks of a Soviet cyberneticist and his past attempt to programme a fully automated command economy. Noorizadeh speculates on how infrastructures for production can be modelled through tech industries and their regimes. In the form of a vastly distributed super camera generating terabytes of (raw) data, Geocinema (Asia Bazdyrieva and Solveig Suess) examine satellites positioned in orbit. For *The Making of Earths* (2020), the artists have devoted their attention to the production of post-ionic images in Asian ground stations, including the radio telescopes and the staff.

Curators:

Merle Radtke is an art historian, curator and author. She worked as a curator for the Hamburger Kunsthalle and the Kunstmuseum Stuttgart, among others. From 2015 to 2017 she was a member of the postgraduate course "Aesthetics of the Virtual" at the Hamburg University of Fine Arts. This was followed by a research scholarship at the Villa Kamogawa/Goethe-Institut Kyoto for several months. She regularly publishes texts on contemporary art and culture. Her work focusses primarily on the practice and theory of the Internet, (post-)digital art, feminism and aspects of simulation. Since July 2018, she has been director of the Kunsthalle Münster.

Vera Tollmann is a Berlin-based writer and a lecturer in digital media theory at the University of Hildesheim. This spring semester she also has a lectureship at the University of Basel. As a former member of the graduate program "Aesthetics of the Virtual", she completed her doctorate at Hamburg University of Fine Arts in 2020. A revised version of her thesis will be published by Spector Books this fall. Vera has worked as an assistant editor for *Springerin - Hefte für Gegenwartskunst* in Vienna, Kulturstiftung des Bundes in Halle, and the media art festival transmediale in Berlin. She worked as a research assistant at *Moving Image Lab* of Leuphana University. Together with Boaz Levin and Hito Steyerl, she ran the Research Center for Proxy Politics at the University of the Arts in Berlin from 2015 to 2017.

Press preview:

→ 27/5/2021, 10 am, Kunsthalle Münster

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Biographies:

Tekla Aslanishvili (born 1988 in Tbilisi, Georgia) is an artist, filmmaker and essayist, based between Berlin and Tbilisi. Her work focuses on new forms of algorithmic governance and their impact on urban spaces and their subjects. Tekla graduated from the Tbilisi State Academy of Arts in 2009 and she holds a MFA from the Berlin University of the Arts (UDK) – the department of the Experimental Film and New Media Art. Aslanishvili's work has been screened and exhibited internationally at the Tbilisi Architecture Biennial, Short Film Festival Oberhausen, Kunstverein Leipzig, Jameel Arts Centre, Dubai, Ashkal Alwan, Beirut, VISIO – European Programme on Artists' Moving Images, Florence, Pylon Lab, Dresden, 20. International Film Symposium, Bremen. She was a 2018–2019 Digital Earth Fellow and most recently the recipient of the *Han Nefkens Foundation – Fundació Antoni Tàpies Video Art Production Award 2020*, as well as Hamburg Short Film Special Mention Award and the nominee for *ars viva Prize 2021*.

Pedro Barateiro (born 1979 in Almada, Portugal) works in a variety of media, including sculpture, film, performance, writing and drawing. His work focuses on the deconstruction of Western binary narratives. He had solo exhibitions at the Kunsthalle Basel, Museu de Arte Contemporânea de Serralves, Porto, Kunsthalle Lissabon, RED-CAT in Los Angeles, Museu Coleção Berardo in Lisbon, among many others. He has participated in group exhibitions such as the 13th Sharjah Biennial, the 29th São Paulo Biennial, the 16th Biennale of Sydney and the 5th Berlin Biennale. His performances have been presented at Centre Georges Pompidou in Paris, ZHdK in Zurich, Théâtre de la Ville, L'école nationale supérieure des beaux-arts and Fondation Ricard in Paris. Barateiro organises events and exhibitions at Spirit Shop, a space founded by him and attached to his studio on Rua da Madalena, Lisbon: <https://spirit-shop.weebly.com/>.

Emma Charles (born 1985 in London, UK) is an artist working in film, photography, sound and installation who studied Photography at the Royal College of Art in London. Since 2009 she has focused her practice on the financial sector, exploring the City as an epicentre for economic exchange in which value systems of time, productivity and labour are altered through technological progress. In 2012 she began research into the materiality of the Internet, going beneath the urban veneer to uncover the hidden infrastructures of modern life. More recently these concerns have expanded into nuclear cultures and its legacy. Playing with the blurred lines between documentary and fiction, her work often reveals the artificiality of both the filmic environment and our lived experience. She has produced numerous moving image works which have achieved success at international film festivals and art biennials. She was commissioned by ZKM Karlsruhe to produce 16mm work *White Mountain* for the exhibition *Reset Modernity!*, curated by Bruno Latour in 2016. In 2017 she was nominated for the *New Talent Award* at Sheffield Doc Fest for this work. Her work has exhibited at the Guangzhou Triennial in China and the Museum of London in 2018. In 2020 she completed her first feature length film which was selected to screen at Visions Du Réel in Nyon, Dharamshala International Film Festival and 74th Edinburgh International Film Festival.

Geocinema (Asia Bazdyrieva, born 1986 in Svitlodarsk, Ukraine and Solveig Qu Suess, born 1990 in Vevey, Switzerland) is a collective that explores the possibilities of a “planetary” notion of cinema. Based in Berlin and Kyiv, their practice has been concerned with the understanding and sensing of the earth while being on the ground, enmeshed within vastly distributed processes of image and meaning making. Their work has been shown internationally, including their first solo show *Making of Earths* at Kunsthall Trondheim Norway (2020) and group shows such as *Critical Zones* at ZKM Karlsruhe (2020–21) and *Re-thinking Collectivity* at Guangzhou Image Triennale (2021). They have given lecture-performances at the Ashkal Alwan Beirut, ICA London, HKW Berlin, NYU Shanghai, Matadero Madrid and have taught at the Berlin University of the Arts, FAMU Prague, Central Saint Martins London among others. They

were 2018–19 Digital Earth Fellows and have been nominated for the Schering Stiftung Award for Artistic Research (2020).

Asia Bazdyrieva is an art historian whose practice revolves around writing, research, and education both independently and within various cultural institutions in Ukraine and internationally. Her main expertise is the project of Soviet modernity and its ideological implications in public spaces, architecture and art. After the Maidan protests in Ukraine (2013–2014) she was particularly interested in grassroots artistic initiatives and interventions as spaces of resistance and collective political efforts. Bazdyrieva holds master's degrees in art history from the City University of New York and analytical chemistry from the Kyiv National University. She was a Fulbright scholar in New York in 2015–2017, and a researcher in Storefront for Art and Architecture as an Edmund S. Muskie fellow (2017). In 2018, she was a postgraduate in the *The New Normal* program at Strelka Institute for Media, Architecture and Design. Solveig Qu Suess works within the fields of documentary-making, research and writing. She has been focusing on the embodied and ecological politics across infrastructures of circulation, attentive to new spatial configurations of power. In her practice, she has been un-stitching and re-stitching intersectional relationships between image-making, supply-chain capitalism, techno-scientific histories and environmental futures. Her films have been screened internationally, including at ArtScience Museum Singapore, the International Film Festival Rotterdam, Images Festival Toronto, OCAT Beijing, HKW Berlin, with her writing published in *Synoptique Journal of Film & Moving Image*, the *Funambulist*, *Lausan* amongst others. Solveig was a former postgraduate in *The New Normal* program at Strelka Institute for Media, Architecture and Design, holds a Master from the Centre of Research Architecture, Goldsmiths, and is currently a PhD researcher at the Critical Media Lab Basel.

Bahar Noorizadeh (born 1988 in Teheran, Iran) is a filmmaker, writer, and platform designer. Her current research examines the notion of “Weird Economies” to precipitate a transdisciplinary approach to economic futurism and post-financialization imaginaries. Her work has appeared in the Tate Modern Artists’ Cinema Program, DIS Art platform, Transmediale Festival, Berlinale Forum Expanded, and Geneva Biennale of Moving Images among others. Upcoming engagements include participation at the German Pavilion, Venice Architecture Biennial 2020 and solo exhibition at Museum Folkwang, Essen. She is pursuing her work as a PhD candidate in Art at Goldsmiths, University of London where she holds a SSHRC Doctoral Fellowship.

Wolfgang Tillmans (born 1968 in Remscheid, Germany) studied at Bournemouth and Poole College of Art and Design in Bournemouth, UK, from 1990 to 1992. In 2000, Tillmans was the first non-British artist and the first photographer to receive the Turner Prize. Wolfgang Tillmans has presented his work in major solo exhibitions at museums since the 1990s. Kunsthalle Zürich (2012) and Les Rencontres d’Arles (2013) presented works from the series “New World.” In 2012, the Moderna Museet, Stockholm, showcased a selection of works from the past twenty-five years; the same exhibition was on view at K21, Kunstsammlung Nordrhein-Westfalen, Düsseldorf, in 2013, while a comprehensive retrospective of Tillmans’s oeuvre toured South America. In 2014, installations by Tillmans were displayed at the 8th Berlin Biennale, Manifesta 10, and as part of presentations of art from the collections at the Fondation Louis Vuitton, Paris, and the Folkwang Museum, Essen. His video installation *Book for Architects*, which made its public debut at the 2014 Venice Architecture Biennale, subsequently travelled to the Metropolitan Museum, New York. A major solo exhibition opened at the National Museum of Art, Osaka, and in Gothenburg in 2015 on occasion of Tillmans’s receipt of the Hasselblad Award. In early 2016, he presented an extensive survey of his oeuvre at the Museu de Arte Contemporânea de Serralves, Porto, followed by major exhibitions at Tate Modern, London, and Fondation Beyeler, Riehen near Basel, in 2017. In 2018, he was awarded the Kaiserring, the art prize of the City of Goslar. Produced in collaboration with the Institut für Auslandsbeziehungen (ifa) in 2018, Tillmans’s travelling exhibition “FRAGILE” has toured venues in numerous African cities including Kinshasa, Nairobi, Johannesburg, Addis Ababa, and Yaoundé, with more cities to follow. Recent exhibitions have included retrospectives at the Carré d’Art-Musée d’art contemporain, Nîmes (2018), the Irish Museum of Modern Art, Dublin (2018), and WIELS, Brussels (2020). A show at the mumok, Vienna, is scheduled for the fall of 2021, followed by a comprehensive retrospective of Wolfgang Tillmans’s oeuvre at the MoMA, New York, in the summer of 2022.

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