

## **Taking technology into our own hands: a new way of seeing**

**Can we re-appropriate technology in order to break open fixed constructs that influence how we relate to one another? For his first solo exhibition in The Netherlands, Polish self-taught artist Janek Simon uses technology to dismantle simplified constructs of reality and hierarchy, creating hybrid, meta folkloric sculptures.**

The Hague's art space 1646 recently opened *Meta Folklore*, the first solo exhibition in The Netherlands by self-taught artist Janek Simon (b. 1977), showing his newest 3D printed sculptures. Growing up in Poland during the 1980's amidst post-war dichotomies, Simon developed an anarchist political position and a resistance to reducing the world into categories. Combined with his urge to intrude on overpowering, opaque technologies, Simon sees the DIY approach as a tool to reappropriate technology and to empower people to dismantle simplistic constructs of reality, categorization and hierarchies.

### **Reconstructing fixed ways of seeing the world**

For his exhibition at 1646, Simon collected a large database of images from websites like Etsy and Ebay, that problematically categorize folkloric sculptures from around the world. Through a labor intensive process, Simon collected a database with over 12.000 images of folkloric sculptures from these websites' archives. He then used machine-learning programs, artificial intelligence, and 3D printing techniques to produce new sculptures that everyone and at the same time no-one can recognise themselves in. This way, Simon's work is a gesture that brings focus to openness and common grounds, amidst the devastating geopolitical conflicts of current times.

### **About Janek Simon**

Janek Simon is a conceptual artist and an occasional curator based in Warsaw. Simon is inspired by travel, history of science and political ideas, and the practice and ethics of the DIY culture, always filtering the theories through his personal experience. In recent years he developed a body of work investigating notions of distance and difference between places, working on projects that try to remap the semi-peripheral position of Eastern Europe through geographical experiments. Simon's works were shown, amongst others, at Manifesta 7, Liverpool Biennale, Prague Biennale, and numerous individual exhibitions in major public art institutions in Poland and elsewhere (Arnolfini Bristol, Casino Luxembourg, Zacheta National Gallery of Art in Warsaw, CSW Zamek Ujazdowski and others).

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Note for the editor:

For more information, visit: <https://1646.nl/program/meta-folklore/>

Want to speak to 1646 or Janek? That's possible!

Call +31 6 39 61 13 40 or send an email to [pr@1646.nl](mailto:pr@1646.nl)

The exhibition *Meta Folklore* is on view till 15/05/2022

The Background Evening takes place on 12/05/2022