

Artists : Jaakko Pallasvuo and Viktor Timofeev
Exhibition title : Telephone Conversations
Venue : Newton, New York
Date : September 10th - October 8th 2022
Photography : Courtesy of Newton and Benjamin Langford

Text:

We made these video paintings while we were "talking on the phone". The phone call didn't run through the phone lines: instead, an online messaging service simulated the conditions of a long distance call.

Your mind thought up concepts, or sentences, and the body uttered them. A movement of flesh made vibrations in the air. The sounds were received by a microphone and the voice was turned into a sequence of numbers. There are cables running on the ocean floor. That was where the present moment went.

We were "painting" on a "canvas". The shared canvas was suspended in the air somewhere above the Atlantic. It was made of light. It was in the middle distance between Helsinki and New York.

After two years of phone calls and simulated painterly gestures, the work arrives in an actual room. The room has a certain temperature and humidity (scorching, dense). The room has its ambience, its smells, its sounds.

The actual room also pretends to be something. Let's pretend the actual room can contain two years of communication.

We place two desks in the room to show two artists at work. There are "works on paper" on our desks – a welcome human contrast to all this digital chatter. The work we do individually, offline, has its relationship to the looming virtual canvas. Silent recordings of our efforts play out on the walls. There are seven episodes consisting of over fifty phone calls. Real time on one wall and sped up on the other. Two clock radios are tuned to the middle distance.

Every painting session begins where the previous one ends. In between the sessions, news of the day appear briefly on the screen. These headlines mark the passage of time, weeks turned into months turned into years. The news are old: they time the work. The paintings are an archive of what spun out of a slow-moving disaster.

The distance between New York and Helsinki does not fit in the actual room. It must be left for the viewer to imagine.

Jaakko Pallasvuo (b. 1933) is an artist living and working in Helsinki. Pallasvuo's work has been exhibited at Documenta 15, CCA Derry~Londonderry, American Medium, Museum of Modern Art in Warsaw and New York Film Festival, among other places. Pallasvuo's comics for the instagram account *avocado_ibuprofen* were recently collected into a book by Chicago-based publisher Perfectly Acceptable Press.

Viktor Timofeev (b. 1984, Riga, Latvia) is an artist currently based in New York. He has exhibited at National Gallery Prague, Prague (2021); Interstate Projects, New York (2021); The 14th Baltic Triennial, Vilnius (2021); Muzeum Sztuki, Lodz (2020); Ludwig Museum, Budapest (2020); The Latvian National Museum of Art, Riga (2019); Bozar, Brussels (2019).

Captions / Embeds.

1. Exhibition Flyer.

2-9. Installation views.

10-14. Viktor Timofeev, 2022. oil on paper.

15-17. Viktor Timofeev, 2022. ink on paper.

18-25. Jaakko Pallasvuo, 2022, watercolour and gouache on paper.

26. Installation view.

27-31. Telephone Conversations 1-7 (stills).

32. *Telephone Conversations 6*, Jaakko Pallasvuo & Viktor Timofeev, 2022. 16mins, sound.

Video embed link: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=0fL-ZPVUxB8&ab_channel=ViktorTimofeev