

BETWEENNESS: Technoculture and the Baltics

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Kim? Contemporary Art Centre, Riga

Participants: Becca Abbe (US), Uģis Albiņš (LV), Valdis Celms (LV), Jānis Dzirnīeks (LV/NL), Flo Kasearu (EE), Oliver Laric (AT/DE), Deimantas Narkevičius (LT), Norman Orro & Joonas Timmi (EE), Adriana Ramić (US/PL), TARWUK (US/HR), Evita Vasiļjeva (LV/FR).

Curated by: Riga Technoculture Research Unit
(Zane Onckule and Elizaveta Shneyderman)

Project Manager: Evita Goze
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Betweenness: Technoculture and the Baltics explores production and technicity through a gathering of Baltic and international artists. Over the past thirty years, the Baltics have experienced dramatic geopolitical upheavals and shifts in power; once bound to the Soviet Union in quasi-political isolation, the region is now more opaque and free-floating, with a cultural atmosphere that always seems to be in search of solid ground. The exhibition imagines cultural identities as technocultural and networked epistemes, binding them through their broken histories. Intergenerational and operating across mediums, this group of artists, scholars, programmers, and designers trace the effects that technoculture has had on Baltic art and life by showcasing their creations – new and old – made over the last fifty years.

“Technoculture” refers to interactions between technology and culture, as well as the politics of those interactions. Starting from the presumption that art and emerging media don’t pre-exist culture, but rather emerge from it, the exhibit unearths a feedback loop between particular media and their reception, between technics and its looped-in culture(s). It is through these curatorial engagements with – and mediations of – contemporary culture that we can effectively investigate and observe the technocultures that augment and shape our world.

The exhibition borrows its title from Oliver Laric’s video work *Betweenness* (2018), which models a commitment to the interstitial through its own indexicality, hybridity, and peculiarities. As animated media, it exemplifies this exhibition’s central critical disjunction – one between cultural aftershocks and the artistic and technical possibilities that can emerge from them. Like the infinitely shifting time-lapse movements of the video, works manifest through a series of vignettes – display materials, cultural ephemera, archival objects – in their investigations of technoculture. *Betweenness: Technoculture and the Baltics* is a procession from one animated space to another – a gathering of artworks deeply concerned with the morphologies of animism and animation, as well as their potential to speak to new imaginaries in cross-cultural dialogues. *Betweenness: Technoculture and the Baltics* champions the credo that construction and deconstruction are interrelated functions, experiences that must share one another. *Betweenness: Technoculture and the Baltics* looks for movement within and beyond contemporary modes of visualization in the Baltic cultural landscape, as well as its interchange with the world.

What might this work signal for the future? Are we attuning ourselves to more dynamic, expansive possibilities in spite of ongoing geopolitical instabilities? Is there a shared approach in these cultural contexts that more pervasive or popular imaging strategies embody? How could those renderings influence or describe a broader international development? This exhibition connects transformations across industries while evoking the entanglements of our contemporary moment through abstract forms and material instantiations from the Baltics and beyond.

Partner institutions: Temnikova & Kasela Gallery (Tallinn), Artnews.lt and Echogonewrong.com (Vilnius), Rupert (Vilnius).

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