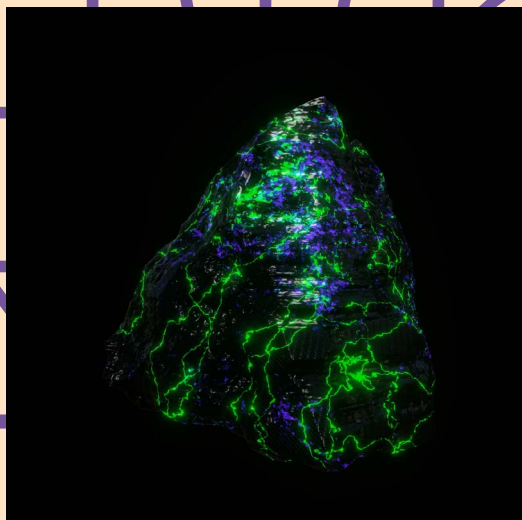


AGNIESZKA KURANT

Uncomputables

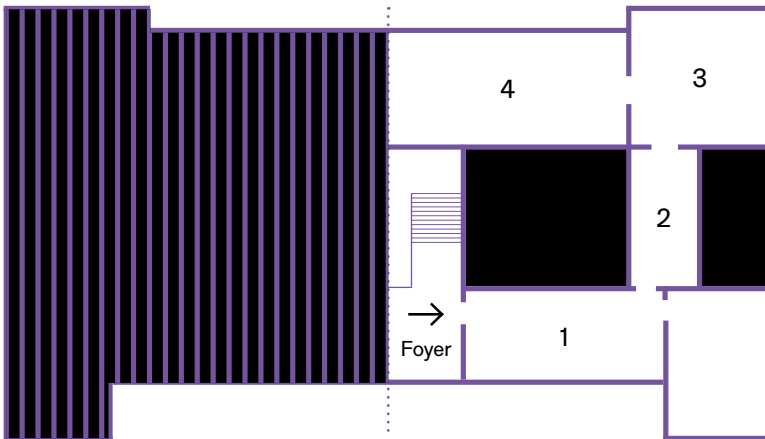


Agnieszka Kurant (b. 1978, Poland) is a New York-based conceptual artist whose work investigates collective and nonhuman intelligences, the future of labor and creativity, and the exploitations within surveillance capitalism.

She is the recipient of the 2020 LACMA A+T Award, the 2019 Frontier Art Prize, the Pollock-Krasner Grant Award and the 2022 Google AMI Award. Her past exhibitions include a solo show at Castello di Rivoli, Turin (2022-2023), a permanent commission for the MIT List Visual Arts Center, Cambridge, MA (2022), a commission for the façade of the Guggenheim Museum, New York (2015) and a solo show at the Sculpture Center, New York (2013). Kurant's work was featured in exhibitions at the Museum of Modern Art, New York, the SFMOMA and the De Young Museum, San Francisco, the Centre Pompidou and Palais de Tokyo, Paris, Guggenheim Bilbao, CAPC Bordeaux, Kunsthalle Wien, Witte de With, Rotterdam, Moderna Museet, Stockholm, Gamec, Bergamo, Whitechapel Art Gallery, London, the Kitchen, New York, Frieze Projects, London, Cleveland Triennial, the Munch Museum, Oslo, ZKM Karlsruhe, Bonner Kunstverein, Grazer Kunstverein, Kunsthalle Mainz, and the MOCA Toronto.

The artist participated in the Istanbul Biennial, the Milano Triennale, Performa Biennial in New York, the Cleveland Triennial, and, with Aleksandra Wasilkowska, represented Poland in the Polish Pavilion at the Venice Biennale of Architecture in 2010.

Kurant was an Artist Fellow at the Berggruen Institute (2019-21), a visiting artist at MIT Center for Art Science and Technology (2018-2019) and held a fellowship at the Smithsonian Institute (2018).



14.5.-16.7.2023

I'm trying in my work, in various ways, to talk about the fact that there's no such thing as individual intelligence, just as there's no such a thing as an individual self.

The magic of artificial intelligence, the ghost in the machine, is in reality the ghost workers in the machine: crowds of people whose labor is exploited online or offline.

– Agnieszka Kurant

Room 1

Semiotic Life (2023) embodies much of Agnieszka Kurant's artistic practice as a whole: a living, 74-year-old juniper bonsai tree grows around a digital model meant to predict the future form this species might take. In juxtaposing an early example of artificial nature – the bonsai, which originated in 6th-century China – with a machine-generated prediction of its future evolution, the artist blurs the boundary between the natural and the artificial, questioning the infallibility of the algorithmic tools we use to produce visions of the future that are configurable, quantifiable, and computable.

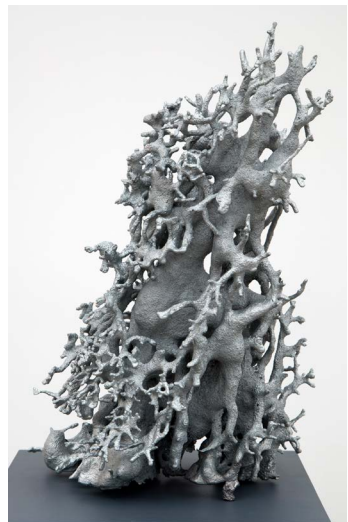


Semiotic Life, 2023

Developed in collaboration with entomologists, the series *A.A.I.(System's Negative)* (2016) consists of zinc casts of the insides of termite mounds. The precise 3D-portraits of animal worker societies echo the shapes of coral reefs, trees, and neural networks, pointing to patterns that recur on micro and macro scales in both the animate and inanimate realms.

Room 2

Evolutions (2014) draws on the research of mathematician Nils Barricelli, which paved the way for the development of evolutionary algorithms. In contrast to Darwin, Barricelli posited that evolution does not have to result from natural selection but can also be driven by collective intelligence and symbiogenesis. His experiments involved growing digital organisms and recording their development in the form of punch cards. Kurant fused these cybernetic artifacts, representing any form of artificial life from viruses to Internet memes, into an animation based on prints she discovered in Barricelli's archives.



A.A.I. (System's Negative) N°7, 2016

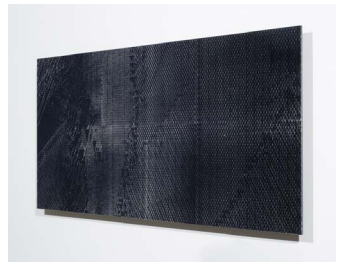
Alien Internet (2023) is an ever-evolving li-form created with ferrofluid – an inorganic black substance, invented by NASA in 1963 – suspended in an electromagnetic field. Inspired by concepts such as the Wood Wide Web, or the networks through which trees and fungi communicate with one another, the work changes shape in response to data collected with digital technologies about animal migrations and interactions worldwide. Scientists look at this data to predict volcanic eruptions, earthquakes, and tsunamis. With reference to the unconventional systems developed to calculate social capital – including the fluid-logic-based computer MONIAC, which the economist Bill Phillips created in 1949 to forecast the British economy, and Project Cybersyn, developed in Chile in the 1970s as a decision-making tool to help manage the country's economy – Kurant investigates and questions our attempts to digitally control wildlife ecosystems.

Installed at the right door to the next space is *Living Currency* (2014), a subtle mechanism that harvests and accumulates the kinetic energy of visitors who open the door to enter the next room. The audience becomes an unwitting worker in this exhibition of energy transformations.

Room 3

Featured in this space is a continuously moving, stainless steel conveyor belt (*Untitled*, 2014) that dissolves in its own mirrored reflection, creating an infinite feedback loop. Its hidden mechanics, in turn, metaphorically reflect the notion of invisible and immaterial labor, virtual products, and supply chains that remain hidden from the consumer until they are disrupted – as we saw acutely during the recent pandemic.

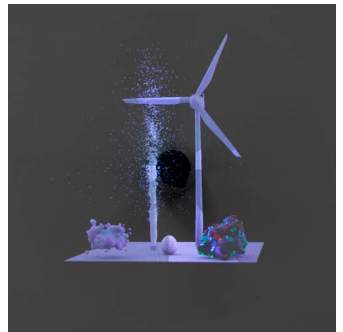
Errorism (2023) is a hologram installation showing a sequence of simulations of artworks that Kurant did not create herself, but were generated by the artificial intelligence neural networks (GPT) which have now rapidly entered our lives. These algorithms were trained on a dataset of descriptions of all of Kurant's artworks created to date, resulting in a set of descriptions of artworks that someone else, without the artist's involvement, could potentially create and capitalize on in the future. Kurant visualized these predictions as an animated holographic display. The resulting hologram simulation undermines the notion of creativity as an individual endeavor, while highlighting collective authorship across a variety of fields, since



Evolutions, 2014



Untitled, 2014



Errorism, 2021



A.A.I., 2015

artificial intelligence is based on the exploitation of the collective intelligence of crowds of people.

Room 4

Based on the exploitations of contemporary surveillance capitalism, where all of society becomes a factory, *A.A.I.* (2015) – the sculptures Kurant outsourced to colonies of living termites – were built by societies of millions of nearly blind insect workers out of colored sand, gold and crystals. The title of this installation references the notion of “Artificial Artificial Intelligence”, coined by Amazon founder Jeff Bezos to describe crowdsourced online work, where thousands of people in aggregate simulate the work of an algorithm.

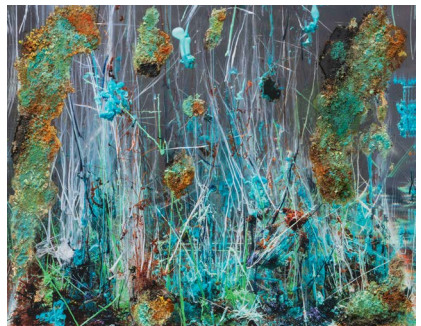
Other works presented in this room revolve around the concepts of transformation and transmutation. *Conversions* (2023) is an endlessly morphing liquid crystal painting on a copper plate that physically reacts to social change through a system of computer-controlled heat pumps that cause quasi-alchemical transformations of the liquid crystal particles present in the pigment. The painting’s composition and colors change in response to data harvested with AI algorithms from emotions expressed in thousands of social media accounts belonging to the members of protest movements around the globe. The data is converted into thermal energy.

Two installations from the *Chemical Garden* series (2021–ongoing) evolve and decay throughout the duration of the exhibition, with plant-like crystalline structures emerging from a mixture of inorganic chemicals: salts of metals used in computer components. The *Nonorganic Life* (2023) paintings are based on the growth and electroforming of vivid crystals of metal salts on anodized aluminum surfaces.

Post-Fordite (2020–22) is a quasi-geological formation created by the fossilization of thousands of layers of automotive paint accumulated on car-production lines in factories around the world. These curious “artificial fossils,” dubbed Detroit Agate or Fordite (in reference to Henry Ford) by factory workers, have recently begun circulating online as collector’s items and jewelry material. While the original Fordite could be considered a geological byproduct of Fordism – the economic model based on industrialized and standardized mass



Conversions, 2021



Chemical Garden, 2022

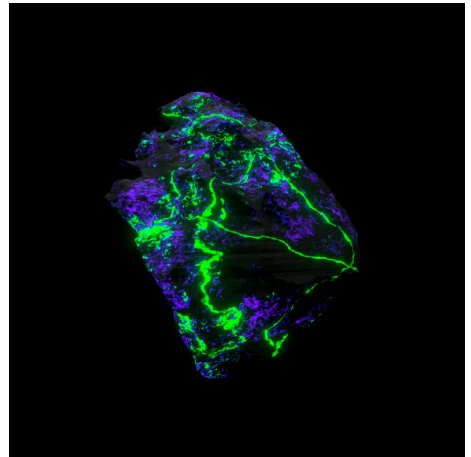
production – Kurant’s Post-Fordites, composed of these “fossils,” are an invitation to think about the current economy of digital capitalism and its means of turning the whole of society into a distributed factory.

Sentimentite (2022) is Kurant’s proposal for a speculative mineral-currency of the future. Drawing a parallel between the extraction of rare elements used in advanced digital products and the mining of online data by global corporations, the artist imagines the discovery of a rare new mineral: created by mixing pulverized objects historically used as currency – including shells, beads, whale teeth, salt, corn, tea, soap – with those used in place of money during wars or in closed communities such as prisons and schools. The latter include items such as cigarettes, batteries, candy, detergent, phone cards, stamps, and electronic waste. Kurant produced and circulated one hundred digital fragments of *Sentimentite* as NFTs which can be redeemed as physical sculptures molded in Kurant’s new mineral.

The levitating rock from the *Air Rights* series (2021) refers to the speculations of the real estate market, where the term describes the legally vague right of the owner to occupy, develop, and trade the space above the plot of land.



Sentimentite, 2022



Sentimentite (NFT), 2022



Air Rights 7, 2021

List of works

Room 1

A.A.I. (System's Negative) N°7, 2016
Poured zinc
54,6 x 30,5 x 30,5 cm
Collaboration Dr. Paul Bardunias
Collection Fusun Eczacıbaşı, New York

A.A.I. (System's Negative) N°4, 2016
Poured zinc
75 x 33 x 28 cm
Collaboration Dr. Paul Bardunias

A.A.I. (System's Negative) N°6, 2016
Poured zinc
65,7 x 28 x 33 cm
Collaboration Dr. Paul Bardunias

Semiotic Life, 2023
74-year old living bonsai tree,
3D-printed resin, paint
70,2 x 65,7 x 50,7 cm
Fabrication Kunstgiesserei
St.Gallen AG, Switzerland
Project manager Sonja Schuerpf

Room 2

Alien Internet, 2023
Ferrolfluid, treated water, electromagnets,
Arduino, mosfet drive circuit,
AC/DC power supply, aluminum
armature, paint, glass, wood,
25,5 x 32 x 15 cm
Engineering and fabrication
Jason Krugman
Programming Agnes Cameron
Co-produced with MUDAM, Luxembourg

Evolutions, 2014
Flip animation lenticular print
44,5 x 90 cm

Living Currency, 2014
Aluminum, steel, brass, wires,
generator, batteries
Dimensions variable

Room 3

Untitled, 2014
Conveyor belt, steel, mirror
203 x 304,8 x 93 cm

Errorism, 2023
Hologram display
75 cm diameter
Fabrication HYPERVSN, London

Room 4

Conversions, 2023
Liquid crystal ink on copper plate,
Peltier elements, Arduino, custom
programming, transistors, custom frame
128 x 97,5 x 5 cm
Fabrication Particle Studio, London
Programming Agnes Cameron

Nonorganic Life 1, 2023
Painting with crystals of metal salts
(copper, nickel, cobalt, chromium,
manganese, iron and zinc) grown on
anodized printed aluminum plate
95 x 140 cm
Fabrication Kunstgiesserei
St. Gallen AG, Switzerland
Project manager Noël Hochuli
Co-produced with Kunsthal
Gent, Belgium

Nonorganic Life 2, 2023
Painting with crystals of metal salts
(copper, nickel, cobalt, chromium,
manganese, iron and zinc) grown on
anodized printed aluminum plate
95 x 140 cm
Fabrication Kunstgiesserei
St. Gallen AG, Switzerland
Project manager Noël Hochuli
Co-produced with Kunsthal
Gent, Belgium

Chemical Garden, 2023
Sodium silicate, salts of copper,
nickel, cobalt, chromium, manganese,
iron and zinc, extra clear glass
30 x 30 x 30 cm
Collaboration Dr. Magdalena Osiał

Chemical Garden, 2023
Sodium silicate; salts of copper,
nickel, cobalt, chromium, manganese,
iron and zinc, extra clear glass
30 x 30 x 30 cm
Collaboration Dr. Magdalena Osiał

Post-Fordite 8, 2022
Fossilized enamel paint, epoxy
resin, iron, powdered stone
19 x 22 x 18 cm
Fabrication Krzysztof Smaga
Collection Eric Meier and Margo
Delidow, Whyrta Contemporary
Art Conservation, New York

Post-Fordite 7, 2022
Fossilized enamel paint, epoxy
resin, iron, powdered stone
19 x 33 x 17 cm
Fabrication Krzysztof Smaga
Collection of Paul van Emmerick
and Sigrid Vendepitte

Post-Fordite 6, 2020
Fossilized enamel paint, epoxy
resin, iron, powdered stone
Fabrication Krzysztof Smaga
21 x 25,4 x 19 cm

Post-Fordite 2, 2020
Fossilized enamel paint, epoxy
resin, iron, powdered stone
21 x 29,4 x 19 cm
Fabrication Krzysztof Smaga
Collection Stefano Buono, Turin

Post-Fordite 5, 2020
Fossilized enamel paint, epoxy
resin, iron, powdered stone
25 x 15 x 19 cm
Fabrication Krzysztof Smaga
Private collection, Turin

Post-Fordite 9, 2020
Fossilized enamel paint, epoxy
resin, iron, powdered stone
Fabrication Krzysztof Smaga
22,9 x 25,4 x 17,8 cm

*Sentimentite (First cases of novel
coronavirus confirmed)*, 2022
NFT displayed on LCD screen; mixture of
various pulverized materials compacted
into a mineral form, acrylic resin
Fabrication Krzysztof Smaga
3,3 x 14,7 x 22,5 cm

Sentimentite 14, 2022
NFT displayed on LCD screen; mixture of
various pulverized materials compacted
into a mineral form, acrylic resin
3,3 x 14,7 x 22,5 cm
Collection Iof1, Zug

Air Rights 7, 2021
Powdered stone, foam, wood,
electromagnets, custom pedestal
10,2 x 15,2 x 14 cm

A.A.I. 7, 2015
Termite mounds built by colonies
of living termites out of colored
sand, gold and crystals
53,3 (diameter) x 66 cm
Collaboration Dr. Paul Bardunias
Collection Taschen Art GmbH, Cologne

A.A.I. 8, 2015
Termite mounds built by colonies
of living termites out of colored
sand, gold and crystals
66 (diameter) x 63,5cm
Collaboration Dr. Paul Bardunias
Collection Douglas B. Andrews, Rome

A.A.I. 9, 2015
Termite mounds built by colonies
of living termites out of colored
sand, gold and crystals
33 cm (diameter) x 38 cm
Collection Max Hetzler, Berlin

Public Programm

Opening

13.5., 19:00

Agnieszka Kurant and

Simon Denny are present.

DiscoDemiri: Partyverse

Cumberlandsche Galerie,

Prinzenstraße 9, 30159

Hannover

From 22.30

KJ, Körper,

Kolonialismus. Imaginäre der Automation.

With Dr. Sara Morais dos

Santos Bruss

15.6., 19:00

German

Nacht der Museen 2023

17.6., 18:00–23:30

Conversation in the

context of www.futurehistories.today

With Jan Groos

5.7., 18:00

German

Böhmische Landschaften und Hyperspaces – oder wie wir uns den digitalen Raum aneignen

With Dr. Marlene Wenger

6.7., 19:00

German

Guided Tours

Curatorial introduction

to the artistic practice of

Agnieszka Kurant and

Simon Denny

With Director Christoph

Platz-Gallus

17.5., 18:00

15.6., 18:00

German/English

Curatorial introduction

to the artistic practice of

Agnieszka Kurant and

Simon Denny

With Assistant Curator

Carlota Gómez

6.7., 18:00

13.7., 18:00

German/English

Sunday tours weekly at

15:00

14.5., 21.5., 28.5., 4.6., 11.6.,

18.6., 25.6., 2.7., 9.7., 16.7.

German

Data Dreams

Mediation program for the exhibition

Kunsttauchkurse:

When Science Fiction

Worlds Emerge. Analog

Algorithms and AI

Experiments

For children

from 5 to 8 years

3.6., 17.6., 1.7.

each 12:00–13:30

For children

from 8 to 11 years

3.6., 1.7.

each 14:30–16:00

Material costs incl.

admission:

5 euros / 3 euros for

members' children

Registration:

[kinder@kunstverein-](mailto:kinder@kunstverein-hannover.de)

hannover.de

T +49(0)511.1699278-17

Redefining Creative Writing

Writing Workshop by

and with an Artificial

Intelligence

from 14 years

24.6., 15:00–16:30

Material costs: 5 Euro / free

for members

German

workspacedays:

Ist die Zukunft jetzt?

in the context of

Kunstsommer Hannover

For persons interested in

art and creative people

aged 15 and older

10–14.7., 11:00–17:00

each day

German

Members

Get together!

Tour, snacks and talk with

Carolin Knüpper

9.6., 18:00–19:00

Contact and information:
vermittlung@kunstverein-hannover.de
T +49(0)511.1699278-17

For the most up-to-date information about the exhibition and all related events, please visit our website www.kunstverein-hannover.de.

Metaverse Landscapes is generously supported by Altman Siegel, San Francisco; Galerie Buchholz, Cologne, Berlin, New York; Fine Arts, Sydney; Petzel Gallery, New York.

The Kunstverein receives institutional support from the Cultural Office of the City of Hannover. It also receives structural support from the Hannover Rück Stiftung.

The annual program is sponsored by the Lower Saxony Ministry of Science and Culture.

The educational program is supported by the Lower Saxony Ministry of Science and Culture, the VGH Stiftung, the VGH Stiftung and the Sparkasse Hannover.



Niedersächsisches Ministerium für Wissenschaft und Kultur

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 www.kunstverein-hannover.de

Opening Times
 Tuesday-Saturday 12:00-19:00
 Sundays and Public
 Holidays 11:00-19:00

Admission
 6 Euro / 4 Euro reduced / members free

Guided tours and events are included in the admission price, free for members of the Kunstverein Hannover. Event admission reduced for members of other art associations (ADKV).

The exhibitions are curated by Christoph Platz-Gallus, director Kunstverein Hannover, and have been realized in curatorial collaboration with Krzysztof Kościuczuk.

Uncomputables is generously supported by the Adam Mickiewicz Institute, the Ernst Schering Foundation and the Polish Institute Düsseldorf. The Kunstverein receives institutional support from the Cultural Office of the City of Hannover. It also receives structural support from the Hannover Rück Stiftung. The annual program is sponsored by the Lower Saxony Ministry of Science and Culture. The educational program is supported by the Lower Saxony Ministry of Science and Culture, the VGH Stiftung, the VGH and the Sparkasse Hannover. With the kind support of Sittenwerk, Kunstgessener St. Gallen; Kunsthal Gent; and Mudam Luxembourg – Musée d'Art Moderne Grand-Duc Jean.

KUNSTHAL
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Co-financed by the Minister of Culture and National Heritage of the Republic of Poland



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 Republic of Poland

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