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H A U S
for   Media   Art

Infrahauntologies

Internationale
Gruppen-
ausstellung

8. Juli bis
3. Oktober
2021

A.S.T.

Bassam
El Baroni

und

Constantinos
Miltiades

in Kooperation mit
Georgios Cherouvim
und
Gerriet K. Sharma

John Gerrard

Assem Hendawi

Bahar Noorizadeh
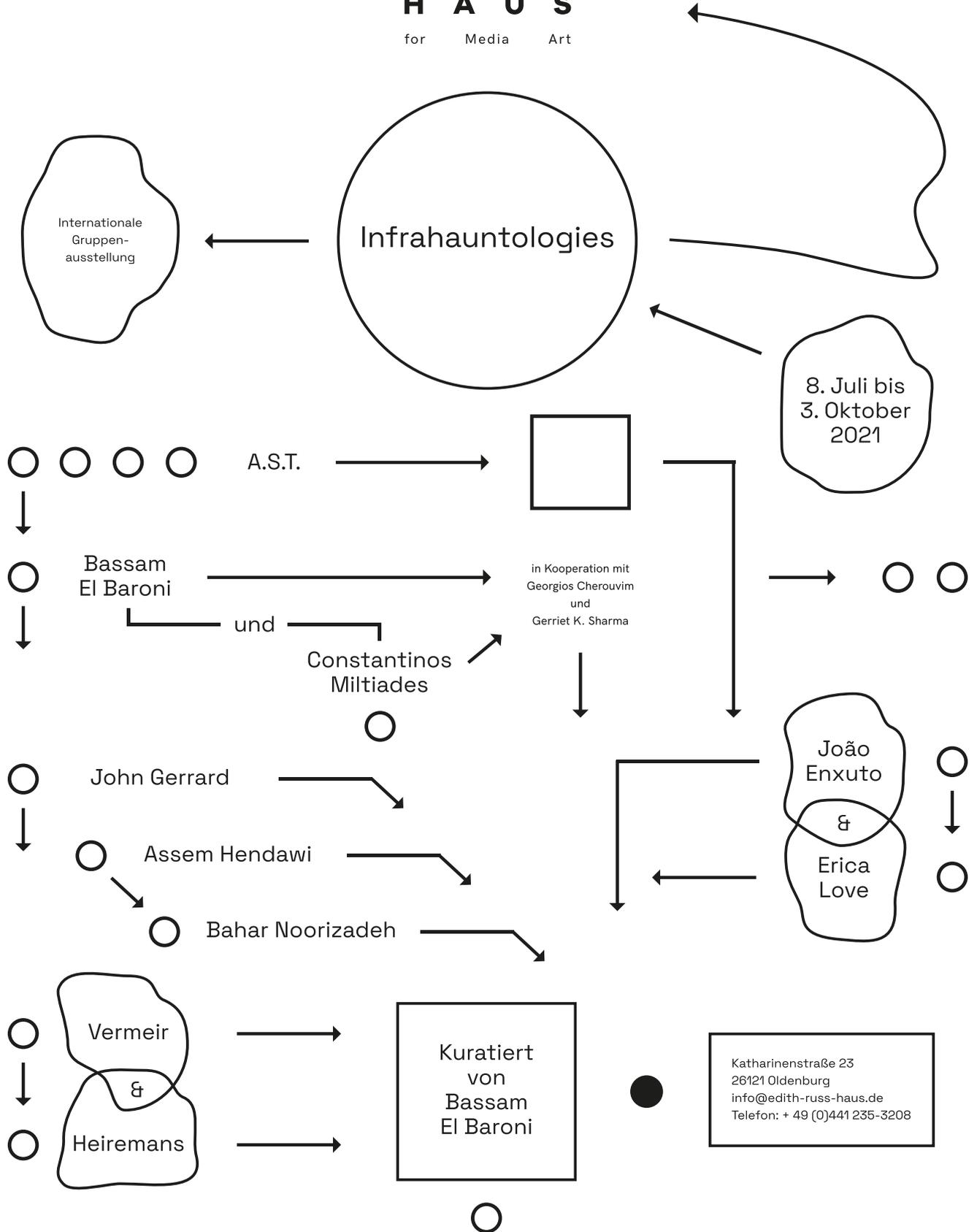
João
Enxuto

&

Erica
Love

Vermeir

&

Heiremans

Kuratiert
von
Bassam
El Baroni

INFRAHAUNTOLOGIES

Infrahauntologies is an international group exhibition foregrounding recent practices that engage with questions of infrastructure. The predominance of certain outlooks on the world versus others is partly due to their embeddedness in and diffusion through the systems, technologies, and infrastructures of the built environment. For this reason, a recent pushback against the popular idea that we are destined to live in some sort of eternal present—with no recourse to shaping a different and more equitable future— has looked to infrastructure as a medium of innovation that might suggest otherwise. In an attempt to counter the impasse of "the canceled future," art has immersed itself in formulating speculative models and propositional thinking around systems and infrastructures, and from this position attempts to address major challenges such as the rampant financialization of the economy and runaway climate change. A key question explored by several works in *Infrahauntologies* is: How can financialization and computation be leveraged to generate fairer conditions and to reopen foreclosed possibilities? While some existing infrastructures are haunted by historical and political legacies, others may be haunted by an excess of speculation on the future—the material traces and imprints of gambles that both did and did not pay off. Through the exhibited video and installation works, *Infrahauntologies* highlights some recurring tendencies within the field of art related to working with infrastructural histories, counter-speculating on infrastructural futures, and embracing fiction as key to supervening upon hegemonic infrastructural nexuses. These overlapping tendencies can be identified as "infrastructural speculation" and "infrastructural re-examination." In the first, artistic competencies are channeled toward transformative infrastructural scenarios, based on the imaginative rerouting of possibilities dormant in current technologies. In the second, artists revisit the legacies of ill-fated megaprojects, with the aim to identify their aspirations, models, and problems and to use these as pathways for learning from collapse.

Works featured in *Infrahauntologies*:

Intertidal (2018) by A.S.T. is a multidisciplinary experience that uses speculative urbanism to envision what the city of Miami, Florida might look like as the seas continue to rise. It is a proposal that simultaneously inhabits three temporalities: dealing, imagining, and planning in the present based on a future that already contends with the lived effects of our mistakes from the past.

Cybersyn—a 1970s socialist networked economy experiment in Chile — is revisited in a new video and sound installation by **Bassam El Baroni and Constantinos Miltiades (with Georgios Cherouvim and Gerriet K. Sharma)** titled *Cybersyn 1973 / 2023* (2021), which engages the question: How can we reimagine the artifactual Cybersyn for our hyper-financialized times?

Elsewhere, **Bahar Noorizadeh**'s video essay *After Scarcity* (2018), tracks Soviet cyberneticians' attempt to build a fully automated planned economy, revisiting the contingent histories of economic technology to enable access to the future.

John Gerrard's *Cuban School (Community 5th of October)* (2010) is a meticulous virtual portrait, in real time, of a school constructed in the Cuban countryside in the 1960s, currently a functional ruin.

Everything Under Heaven (2021) is a new video by *Assem Hendawi* set in Egypt's new administrative capital. This theory-fiction explores Egypt's infrastructural projects and their role in ideological formation.

João Enxuto and Erica Love's video *Institute for Southern Contemporary Art (ISCA)* (2016) presents an institutional prototype advancing a meaningful alternative to problems in contemporary art production and its political economy by rerouting capital from the art market to fund a path to working otherwise.

Vermeir & Heiremans' *A Modest Proposal (in a Black Box)* (2018) is a video installation that investigates how the financialization of public art collections, museum real estate, and symbolic capital could be used to generate a more equitable arts ecology.

Separate from *Infrahauntologies*, Edith-Russ-Haus announces the fall 2021 release of *Between the Material and the Possible: Infrastructural Re-examination and Speculation in Art*, edited by Bassam El Baroni and published by Sternberg Press and Edith Russ Haus. The publication brings together critical analysis from a broad group of contributors engaged in the revisioning of our infrastructural futures. It features eighteen new texts, including essays by **Bahar Noorizadeh**, **Vermeir & Heiremans**, and **João Enxuto and Erica Love**.
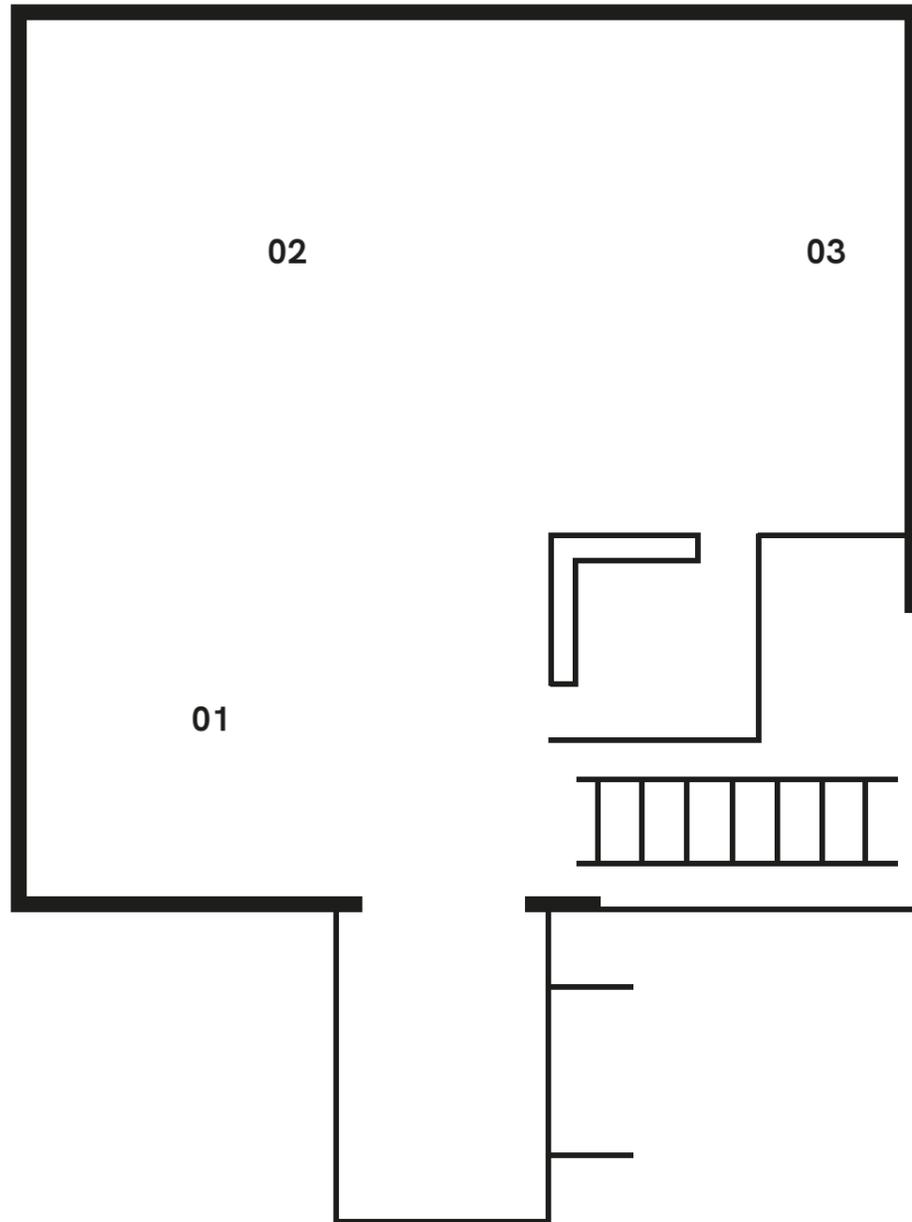
01
Bahar Noorizadeh
AFTER SCARCITY

2018
HD Video
31:50 min

In the Soviet Union of the 1960s, some technologists saw computers as machines of communism and cybernetics as an answer to the difficulties of a waning centrally planned economy. *After Scarcity* is a sci-fi video-essay that tracks these Soviet cyberneticians in their attempt to build a fully automated planned economy. If history at its best is a blueprint for science-fiction, revisiting contingent histories of economic technology might enable an access to the future.
How might we use computation to get us out of our current state of digital feudalism and towards new possible utopias? Flying through swarms of floating dots outlining monasteries and city streets, *After Scarcity* flashes through decades of history to propose the ways contingent pasts can make fictive futures realer, showing us that digital socialism was inbred into the communist revolution and that computation doesn't mean we're condemned to today's tyranny of total financialization.

02
João Enxuto & Erica Love
ISCA MODULE

2021
two Wassily chairs, four fluorescent bulbs, plywood and drywall, 230cm x 230cm x 230cm

THE INSTITUTE FOR SOUTHERN CONTEMPORARY ART (ISCA)

2016
HD Video
16:20 min

The Institute for Southern Contemporary Art (ISCA) is an institutional prototype to advance a meaningful alternative to contemporary art production and its political economy. While advanced technologies have intensified the soft power of speculation, reputation, and hype of networks, recent changes in technical infrastructure have done very little to shake the narrowly-defined and limited objectives of contemporary art. *ISCA* offers another option by rerouting capital from the contemporary art market to fund a path to working otherwise, culminating in a think-tank and independent program to promote new terms for art production.

Credits
Narration: Celia Quillian and David Birkin, Miami Drone Camera: Experience Above, Atlanta Drone Camera: Sky Drone Cinema, Art Studios Camera: Micah Stansell, Musical Composition: Joe Hadden, Graphic Design: Bryan Perry, Animation: Micah Hesse, Architectural Modeling: Leslie Dougrou, Art Advisor graphic provided by Hugo Liu, Additional Research Assistance: John Wright and Chera Baugh (Atlanta Central Public Library), Aaron Putt, Michael White, and Cynthia Farnell (Georgia State University), Support Provided by: Ernest G. Welch Fund at Georgia State University, Art Center/South Florida, and the New Museum, New York. Written, directed, and edited by João Enxuto and Erica Love

03
Vermeir & Heiremans
in collaboration with Luke Mason, Heike Langsdorf and Justin Bennett, Amir Borenstein, Salome Schmuki
A MODEST PROPOSAL (IN A BLACK BOX)

2018
HD video installation (variable dimensions), mixed media
28min

In their 2018 film, *A Modest Proposal (in a Black Box)*, Vermeir & Heiremans, also the film's protagonists, discuss an experimental financial model with a lawyer. Their dialogue focuses on the question if and how financialisation can be re-purposed towards generating a more equitable arts ecology. In considering the financialisation of public art collections, museum real estate and their symbolic capital, the financial model could benefit not only investors and art institutions, but also its first stakeholders, the artists and art workers. Streams of economic and social wealth can emerge from the model, creating more sustainable conditions and futures in which art could flourish as an ecology of practices.

In the film the artists propose to financialise a specific building as their first case study: Pump House Gallery in Battersea Park in London. The gallery is located in the vicinity of the Battersea Power Station, a 20th century former coal-fired power station under re-development. It will house Apple's London headquarters and offer luxury apartments for sale, designed by Frank Gehry, Foster & Partners and others. All in all the redevelopment created an excellent momentum not only to 'pump' up the gallery building's value as an asset, but also for harnessing values that surround the gallery, and generate a return on investment for the wider art community.

With its punning title the film questions if returns on public assets can be channeled directly to artists and art workers, and in that way benefit a specific group. Shouldn't these rather be re-directed into the public purse, for its use to be determined by democratic processes? Vermeir & Heiremans' film questions inequality, displacement, exclusion and the risks citizens have to undergo through ongoing government policies of financialisation which guarantee high returns for foreign investors.

BLACK BOX

Next to the single screen film the presentation of *A Modest Proposal* at Edith-Russ-Haus for media art centers on the financial model which is discussed in the film. This experimental model is stored on a USB stick that itself is enclosed within a purposely created 3D-printed titanium lattice structure, – an artwork entitled Black Box (on display). To access the files on the financial model, the artwork within which it is sealed must first be purchased by an art institution, and must subsequently be destroyed in a ritual performance. In case the art institution wants to make use of the financial model, a cycle of equitable redistribution amongst artists and other stakeholders is set in motion. The contractual terms for this were drafted in an experimental narrative in collaboration with Luke Mason (on display).

07

05

06

04
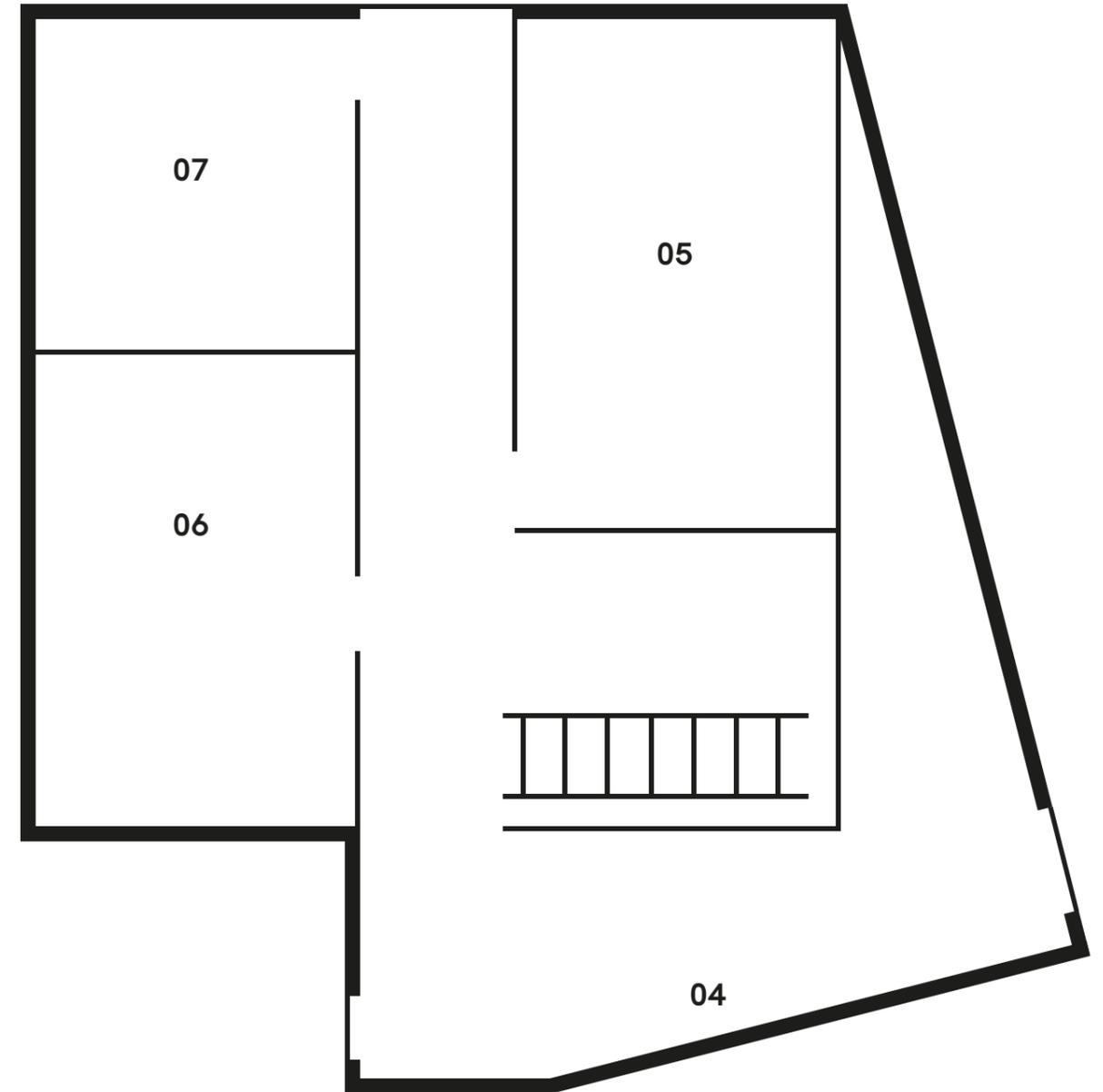
04
John Gerrard
CUBAN SCHOOL (COMMUNITY 5TH OF OCTOBER)

2010
digital realtime CGI projection, mixed media

Cuban School (Community 5th of October) is a virtual portrait of an existing building, situated in the countryside outside Havana. Constructed in the 1960's to a modular Eastern Bloc design, the school was, while still being used and home to 75 school children, essentially what the artist called a 'functional ruin', disinheriting its formal integrity through entropy and decay. Gerrard's attention was initially drawn to the strangeness of its architecture in the landscape and its dilapidated appearance. The school has effectively been closed since the making of the work.
Working from extensive photographs and topographical satellite data, the artist and studio have hand-built a meticulous world which is a faithful virtual representation of the site. Through an unflinching camera orbit, and a 365 day cycle, the viewer is encouraged to both assess the demise of a political vision, and as importantly, the extensive methods used to prolong the usefulness of its artifacts.

Producer: Werner Poetzelberger
Programmers: Helmut Bressler, Matthias Strohmaier
Modeller: Daniel Fellsner
Presentation design: Jakob Illera / Inseq Design

05
A.S.T.
INTERTIDAL

2018
4 channel video installation and exhibition design, interior architecture, graphics, built furniture and integrated audio-visuals

Lying between the tidal marks, an *intertidal* is an area that lies above water at low tide and is flooded underwater at high tide. In its tamest depiction, it is a coastal environment where coral, starfish, and hermit crabs stumble and float with and against the ebb of daily tides. Yet, in this installation, the word *intertidal* points to a zone less akin with wilderness and more like the conditions described in Kim Stanley Robinson's climate fiction New York 2140. In the novel, the entirety of New York City is an intertidal zone, a place where existence has been redefined by a permanent surge in sea level rise. Buildings, political structures, social networks, economies, and ecologies have all been reconfigured--or re-engineered-- to avoid extinction. It is a place where the inorganic, organic, and social have fused simultaneously. For A.S.T, Miami's current intertidal condition is a calcified crosscut of real estate speculations, transactions, normalized king tides and the storm pumps that keep streets dry. It is an event horizon, a point of no return, within the cone of climate certainty.

Intertidal's first manifestation was in 2018 when A.S.T. was commissioned by curator Natalia Zuluaga with ArtCenter South Florida to create a multi-disciplinary experience of what speculative urbanism may feel like in the age of sea level rise. Featuring newly commissioned video, audio script, wall drawings, and architectural interventions, Intertidal reads like a scrambled series of messages from a not-so-distant future. The result is a proposal that is simultaneously in

three temporalities: dealing, imagining, and planning in the present based on a future that already contends with the lived effects of our mistakes from the past. While the installation confronts what often feels like an inevitable cataclysmic event, it does not propose an apocalyptic vision of the future or a collapse of possibilities in facing it. Instead, the sounds, images, and environment created by A.S.T. posit Miami and its distinct position between swamp and sea as a leader in getting submerged, and as such proposes the city could be a model for how best to proceed. *Intertidal* has been adapted for Edith Russ Haus and features a new wall painting.

Video Credits:
Videos are a combination of found and adapted material from a variety of sources including Benjamin Bratton; Charles and Ray Eames; Google Earth; Katherine Hales; "Memory of a Broken Dimension" developed by Ezra Hanson-White; "Eyewar" directed by Ganix Naston; Kim Stanley Robinson; Claude E. Shannon, Iannis Xenakis.

06
Bassam El Baroni and Constantinos Miltiades (in collaboration with Georgios Cherouvim and Gerriet K. Sharma)
CYBERSYN 1973 / 2023

2021
HD Video
15 min

Project Cybersyn was an experiment in instituting a socialist networked economy embraced by the short-lived Salvador Allende government of Chile (1970 – 1973) and developed together with the British cybernetician Stafford Beer. For the past decade, Project Cybersyn has been a recurrent reference - a best practice from the past - in discussions around the repurposing of hegemonic technological infrastructures and their redirection towards more equitable economic and social practices. The iconic image of Project Cybersyn's control room – with its sci-fi appearance - represents a technical and aesthetic object that alludes to negotiation, democratic decision making, and stability. The allure of this image is the starting point for the video which proposes that desires for post-scarcity and postcapitalist economics must grapple with the shifts in the political, economic, and technological conditions of possibility that have transpired since Project Cybersyn. To this end the control room image itself becomes a platform for alien mutations, philosophical speculations, and social commitments. What would it take to reimagine the artefactual Cybersyn for our hyper-financialized day and age? For this work, curator and researcher Bassam El Baroni and transdisciplinary architect Constantinos Miltiades collaborated with multidisciplinary artist and animator Georgios Cherouvim, and composer and sound artist Gerriet K. Sharma to bring this question to life.

Video Credits: The screenplay is composed of original writing, inspirations, and reconfigured fragments from essays and historical research by a host of philosophers, theorists, and historians: David Chandler, Bob Hughes, Anna Longo, Suhail Malik, Eden Medina, Andrew Pickering, Matthew Poole, Alex Williams & Nick Srnicek.
Voice actors: Bassam El Baroni, Andreas Kelemen, Constantinos Miltiades, and Edel O'Reilly.
Animation Director: Georgios Cherouvim; Modelling: Katerina Lakovaki; Illustration: Ino Zavvou and Andreas Kelemen; Render Farm: Dimitris Liatsos; Support: Agelos Christopoulos
Audio Credits: Music and Sound Spatialisation: Gerriet K. Sharma

07
Assem Hendawi
EVERYTHING UNDER HEAVEN

2021
HD Video
20 min

Everything Under Heaven is a work of theory-fiction set in the desert lands east of Cairo, where the *New Capital*, Egypt's most ambitious project is under construction. The video explores Egypt's history of infrastructural projects after the 1952 revolution and how these projects were deployed more for their capacities in ideological formation than for economic aims. This layered history sets the stage for Egypt's *New Capital* as it embodies statecraft through the logic of real-estate speculation. The narrative is woven through the desert as a backdrop - a space out of time, with its spatiotemporal contingencies - that has materially haunted and conditioned Egypt's self-realization in the past and continues to haunt the country's future amid impending global climate catastrophe.

A.S.T.

Alliance of the Southern Triangle (A.S.T.) was established in 2015 and consists of Diann Bauer, Felice Grodin, Patricia Margarita Hernandez, and Elite Kedan. They work in the fields of art, architecture, and urban design. A.S.T. began as a research project focusing on the idea of the global city, with a focus on Miami as a case study. The project is committed to the idea that developmental trajectories of a city can be altered through the adaptation of the networks that already control it, paired with creative rethinking of what a city can be. A.S.T. uses the interdisciplinary space of art to function as a platform upon which to conceive of these possible futures that are both reactive and propositional with regard to the shifting set of legal, economic, cultural, and environmental forces that confront us.

Bassam El Baroni and Constantinos Miltiades (in collaboration with Georgios Cherouvim and Gerriet K. Sharma)

Bassam El Baroni is assistant professor in curating at the School of Arts, Design and Architecture, Aalto University, Finland. Formerly, he lectured at the Dutch Art Institute, ArtEZ University of the Arts, Arnhem (2013 – 2019) and was artistic director of the now folded non-profit art space ACAF - Alexandria Contemporary Arts Forum in Alexandria, Egypt (2005 – 2012). He is the curator of *Infrahauntologies* at the Edith-Russ-Haus for Media Art, Oldenburg, Germany, July - October 2021. His previous curatorial projects include: Manifesta 8, Murcia, Spain, 2010 (co-curator); the Lofoten International Art Festival, Norway, 2013 (co-curator); *Agitationism* the 36th Eva International – Ireland's Biennial, Limerick, 2014; *What Hope Looks like after Hope (On Constructive Alienation)* at HOME WORKS 7, Beirut, 2015. He is the editor of *Between the Material and the Possible: Infrastructural Re-examination and Speculation in Art* (forthcoming, Sternberg and Edith-Russ-Haus) and co-editor, together with Ida Soulard and Abinadi Meza, of *Manual for a Future Desert* (forthcoming, Mousse Publishing).

Constantinos Miltiades is a transdisciplinary architect and researcher, occasionally also programmer, media artist, curator, teacher, and librarian. His work focuses on aesthetic phenomena between technology and culture, and more formally on spatiotemporal environments inconstructible in the physical world, specific to and experienceable through technological mediation. Constantinos studied architecture at NTU-Athens, and the Chair for CAAD, ETH Zurich, and pursued studies in computer music at IEM KU Graz. Between 2015-2019 he was assistant professor at the Institute of Architecture and Media, TU Graz, while since 2019 he is a researcher between the Departments of Design and of Architecture at the School of ARTS of Aalto University. Constantinos was founder and curator of the IAM Open Lecture series, co-founder of the experimental electronic music event series◯, and founding member of SAR special interest group Spatial Aesthetics and Artificial Environments. Constantinos' work is at studioany.com

Georgios Cherouvim is a multidisciplinary artist from Athens with a focus on computer animation and creative coding. In his own practice, he moves away from the rigid constraints of photo-realism and enjoys using the highly sophisticated tools of the industry in unconventional ways, often past their breaking point. Digital artifacts, mistakes or even the by-products of other projects, often become the key ingredients in his work. His work strives to strike a balance between highly controlled systems and expressive bursts of randomness to create a visually compelling interplay between clean forms and textural chaos. His animations have been screened in festivals around

the world including Siggraph, Ars Electronica, Art Futura, One Dot Zero and ADAF. He has also participated in several group art exhibitions, and in 2014 had his first solo show in Athens titled 'Monomorphia'.

Gerriet K. Sharma is a composer and sound artist. Within the last 15 years he was deeply involved in spatialisation of electroacoustic compositions in Ambisonics and Wave-Field Synthesis and transformation processes into 3D-soundsculptures. From 2009 to 2015 he was curator of "signale-graz" concert series for electroacoustic music, algorithmic composition, radio art and performance at MUMUTH/University of Music and Performing Arts Graz. Performances, Site-specific sound installations, exhibitions and concerts in Europe and abroad. German Sound Art Award, 2008. Chargesheimer media-arts grant, Cologne 2009. DAAD scholarships, 2007/2009. AiR Centre for Arts and Technology Karlsruhe (ZKM) 2014. Edgard Varèse guest professor at Elektronisches Studio TU Berlin 17/18. Publications in international journals and books on spatial practices and sound. "Aural Sculpturality. Spatio-temporal Phenomena within Auditive Media Techniques" was published by ZKM in 2019. In 2020 he founded the "Lab for Spatial Aesthetics in Sound" (spaes) at Funkhaus Berlin.

João Enxuto and Erica Love

João Enxuto and Erica Love collaborate on projects about the technopolitics of work, institutions, and economies connected to Contemporary Art. Enxuto received an MFA in Photography from RISD and Love holds BAs from Brown University in Economics and Visual Arts and an MFA from UCLA. Together they were fellows at the Whitney Museum Independent Study Program and were awarded a New York Foundation for the Arts Artist Fellowship and a Creative Capital Andy Warhol Foundation Arts Writers Grant. They have given talks and exhibited work in institutions and venues worldwide. Enxuto and Love's writing has been published by Verso Books, Mousse Magazine, Art in America, Walker Artist Op-Eds, Wired Magazine, X-TRA Contemporary Art Quarterly, and elsewhere. They currently teach at the Cooper Union, New York University, City College New York, The New Centre for Research and Practice, and the Maumaus in Lisbon.
https://theoriginalcopy.net/

John Gerrard

John Gerrard lives and works between Vienna and Dublin. He received his BFA from the School of Fine Art and Drawing at Oxford University and an MFA from the School of the Art Institute in Chicago. Recent solo presentations of Gerrard's work include Corn Work (Corrib) 2020 for Galway International Arts Festival/Galway 2020, John Gerrard: Western Flag, Museo Nacional Thyssen-Bornemisza, Madrid, Spain (2019), John Gerrard: Solar Reserve at LACMA - Los Angeles County Museum of Art, USA (2018), X.laevis (spacelab), Simon Preston Gallery, New York, USA (2017), and John Gerrard, Ullens Centre for Contemporary Art, Beijing, China (2016)

Assem Hendawi

Assem Hendawi is an artist and researcher who works with videos, computer-based media, and text to explore themes of the posthuman, futuristic imaginaries, and the way in which technology informs identity in late capitalism.

Bahar Noorizadeh

Bahar Noorizadeh is a filmmaker, writer, and platform designer. She works on the reformulation of hegemonic time narratives as they collapse in the face of speculation: philosophical, financial, legal, futural, etc. Her work has appeared in the Tate Modern Artists' Cinema Program, DIS Art platform, Transmediale Festival, Berlinale Forum Expanded, Geneva Biennale of Moving Images, and Beirut Art Center, among others. Noorizadeh is a founding member of BLOCC (Building Leverage over Creative Capitalism), a research and education platform that proposes pedagogy as a strategy to alter the relationship between Contemporary Art and urban renewal. Her current research examines the intersections of finance, Contemporary Art and emerging technology, building on the notion of "Weird Economies" to precipitate a cross-disciplinary approach to economic futurism and post-financialization imaginaries. She is pursuing this as a PhD candidate in Art at Goldsmiths, University of London where she holds a SSHRC Doctoral Fellowship. www.baharnoorizadeh.com

Vermeir & Heiremans

The videos and installations of the artist duo Vermeir & Heiremans investigate the complex relationship between art, economy and the built environment in today's highly globalized world. The artists define their own house as an artwork. The ,house as artwork' functions as a framing device that allows the artists to zoom in on the role the arts play within the ever-growing entanglement between finance, urban development and governing. Their practice employs financial tools, historical references, technology, and cinematic language to reflect on social codes as well as on the production of value in today's artistic and non-artistic realms.

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