

Programme (April 1, 2023):

11:00–11:15 Introduction by Aleksei Borisionok and Antonina Stebur, curators of *If Disrupted, It Becomes Tangible. Infrastructures and Solidarities beyond the post-Soviet Condition*.

11:15–12:15 Keynote lecture by Olexii Kuchanskyi ‘Abandoned Imaginaries: Approaching Scientific Film beyond the post-Soviet Condition’

What if left-behind futures can serve as an operator to shift us out of the current state of affairs? By questioning two predominant geographies of the post-Soviet, the lecture pays special attention to some of the unrealised projects of Kyivnaukfilm (Kyiv Science Film Studio). These mostly neglected and abandoned practices store potentialities of revising the relations between knowledge and aesthetics, gaze and sociability, as well as moving image and its environment. Destruction of cultural storages—besides attempts of territorial reversion by Russian imperialism—add an existential vibrancy to considering forgotten archives, as well as ties between trauma and speculative historiography. Thus, approaching these abandoned imaginaries may be surprisingly timely as a way of thinking beyond the temporality of the war-dependent post-Soviet condition.

12:15–12:45 Coffee Break

12:45–14:45 Discussion ‘Why do you see so many stars in the sky?’

Participants: Tekla Aslanishvili, Medina Bazarğali, Anna Engelhardt, fantastic little splash Moderated by Aleksei Borisionok and Antonina Stebur

The title of this discussion, ‘Why do we see so many stars in the sky?’ (a line from a poem by Federico García Lorca), was inspired by the work of the Ukrainian art group fantastic little splash. Their work reflects on the mediatisation of war, the interconnection between kinetic and cyber weapons, and potential tactics for disruption of infrastructures as a form of resistance. Deriving from artistic works presented at the exhibition, the discussion will explore various contexts that stretch beyond the post-Soviet Condition and become entangled in the complex colonial interdependencies that underlie them. The conversation centres on different forms of resistance against invasive military infrastructures and the creation of new spaces and temporalities for solidarity.

15:00–16:00 Keynote lecture by Almira Ousmanova ‘Digital Multitude against Analogue Dictatorship’

The political crisis in Belarus that unfolded in 2020 uncovered a deep divide within Belarusian society. Two years later, the division between an archaic regime and a large part of the society seeking political changes became even more acute. In this lecture, I will reflect on the ideological and informational gap between the supporters of the authoritarian regime and the adherents of changes in Belarus through the prism of a conceptual pairing of ‘analogue dictatorship’ and ‘digital multitude’. The two main features of an analogue dictatorship are the use of outdated technologies for state governance and methods of ideological indoctrination that rely on ‘old media’. The concept of ‘multitude’ is considered in the context of the development of digital technologies and new communication tools which fostered the formation of horizontal ties, non-hierarchical modes of communication and the creation of infrastructures of solidarity, thus playing a crucial role in the

unfolding of the Belarusian revolution. The tactics applied by the authoritarian regime in Belarus to retain its power represent a clear example of how ‘analogue dictatorship’ attempts to hinder the emergence of digital democracy.

[The Women in Tech program](#) is an infrastructural educational and research project aimed at supporting women in the IT field, stimulating research at the intersection of technology and feminism, and promoting gender equality in the field of high technologies. The project was launched by the EHU Center for Gender Studies and is funded by the European Union.

Olexii Kuchanskyi is an independent film programmer and art writer whose main interests lie in experimental moving-image practices, Soviet para-avant-garde cinema, situated geographies, and critical cultures of nature. His/her works have been published in *Prostory*, *Your Art*, *TransitoryWhite*, *Political Critique*, *East-European Film Bulletin*, *Moscow Art Magazine*, *Theory on Demand*, *Soniakh Digest*, and others. S/he curated film programs and shows for Kyiv Biennial, *Perverting The Power Vertical* (PPV) (London), “Sunflower” Solidary Community Centre (Warsaw), *Coalmine — Raum Für Fotografie* (Winterthur, Switzerland), among others.

Almira Ousmanova is a philosopher, cultural theorist and gender scholar. She is a professor at the Department of Social Sciences and head of the Laboratory for Studies of Visual Culture and Contemporary Art at the European Humanities University (Vilnius, Lithuania). Her research interests include the genealogy and methodology of visual studies, semiotics, gender representations in cinema and visual arts, art and politics. She is the author of *Umberto Eco: Paradoxes of Interpretation* (2000) and editor of several collective volumes: *Gender and Transgression in Visual Arts* (2007), *Visual (as) Violence* (2008), *Belarusian Format: Invisible Reality* (2008.), ‘Après Simone de Beauvoir: Feminism and Philosophy’ (a special volume of the journal *Topos*, 2010), ‘TechnoLogos: Social Effects of Contemporary Bio- and Informational Technologies’ (with Tatyana Shchyttsova, *Topos*, 2014), ‘E-Effect: Digital Turn in Social Sciences and Humanities’ (with Galina Orlova, *Topos*, 2017), ‘Roland Barthes’s Time’ (with Veronika Furs, *Topos*, 2019) and others.

Tekla Aslanishvili is an artist, filmmaker and essayist based between Berlin and Tbilisi. Her works emerge at the intersection of infrastructural design, history and geopolitics. Tekla's films have been screened and exhibited internationally at the Tbilisi International Film Festival; Loop Video Art Festival, Barcelona; NTU Centre for Contemporary Art Singapore, Tbilisi Architecture Biennial; Neue Berliner Kunstverein; Baltic Triennial 14, Vilnius; Short Film Festival Oberhausen; Kunsthalle Münster; Videonale 18, Bonn. She is the nominee for Ars-Viva Art prize 2021 and the recipient of the Han Nefkens Foundation - Fundació Antoni Tàpies Video Art Production Award 2020.

Medina Bazarǵali is a Kazak transdisciplinary contemporary artist, fem- and queer-folk politics activist, steppe cyber-warrior, coder and researcher. Born in 2001 in independent Kazakhstan, Bazarǵali operates at the intersection of decolonisation, feminism and political activism, practically experimenting with AR, video, 3D graphics, installation, web development, visual programming, cyber-physical systems, computer vision and neural networks. In their artistic practice, Bazarǵali finds themselves in the process of researching ironic and exaggerated political realities where the Internet, new algorithmic superstructures and (post-)totalitarian regimes swirl in a whirlpool of glocalization; where Soviet stiffness, digital revolution and the revival of national identity go together like a 3-in-1

product sold at the supermarket. Through their artworks and research, Bazaržali wishes to find a sustainable frequency

Anna Engelhardt is an alias of a research-based media artist and writer. Her practice examines post-Soviet cyberspace through a decolonial lens, with an overarching aim of dismantling Russian imperialism. These investigations take on multiple forms of media, including video, software and hardware interfaces. In tandem, she pursues lecturing and publishing to situate digital conflicts within a broader colonial matrix. Her works and activities have been featured at transmediale festival, Venice Biennale Architettura, Ars Electronica, Digital War journal, Funambulist magazine, and Kyiv Biennial.

fantastic little splash is a collective based in Ukraine, comprising journalist/artist Lera Malchenko and artist/director Oleksandr Hants. The collective combines art practice and media studies and is interested in utopias, dystopia, the collective imagination and its incarnations, projections, delusions and uncertainties. Established in 2016, their projects have been exhibited at transmediale, post.MoMA, Plokta TV, Ars Electronica, Liste Art Fair Basel, Construction festival VI x CYNETART, KISFF, MUHI and Docudays among others. They also participated in the transmediale x Pro Helvetia Residency 2022.

The event will be filmed.

The project is financed by Lithuanian Culture Council

Partner European Humanities University (EHU)

Sponsors: Goethe-Institut*, EU programme 'Creative Europe', Exterus, Fundermax, Hostinger

Media sponsor Artnews.lt

**The project is incorporated into a comprehensive package of measures for which the Federal Foreign Office provides funding from the 2022 Supplementary Budget to mitigate the effects of the Russian war of aggression against Ukraine.*

Image credits: images from artwork 'see also: a set of compressed images and feelings' by fantastic little splash (2023)