

# Hanna Zubkova

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In my process-driven works, I explore states of being, knowledge mediation processes, and power structures within specific contexts. Through research, interviews, archival work, and reinterpreting spaces, I develop meta-narrative installations, performances, and video sculptures, using my body and the interaction of scales as an evolving document and testimony. Reflecting on the representation of these contexts and the role of the artist's subjectivity within the infrastructures of the cultural industry and other power structures, I examine personal experiences and the limits of autonomy in their interaction with political, cultural, physical, and other conditions, as well as within the systems that administrate the sensible and the social.

From the outset, my practice has explored the potential of art as both a document and a means to interrogate the body as an archive, connected to the environments it traverses—be they architectural, political, linguistic, moral, or otherwise—as in the performance *Axis of Revolution* (2014) and other projects. This interest in the documentary capacity of art raises questions about how certain individual and historical experiences (as discussed by Marc Godfrey in *The Artist as Historian*) are captured, preserved, and manipulated, while also treating language as one of the tools of this framing. I am inspired by Hannah Arendt's concept of the human condition.

Since 2014, I have been particularly interested in spaces outside traditional artistic environments, whether community-run venues, as in *Piece of Resistance*, an abandoned military base, as in *To Paul, To Matthew, To Philip*, a former brothel in Amsterdam's red-light district, or an international AIDS conference, as in *The Ideology of the Working Class Doesn't Impose Any Boundaries on Love* (2018). I have worked with a coal mine and the ruins of a former Gulag mining town in *False Sun* (2017–2023). I explore spaces outside the white cube, where boundaries between public and private, political and personal, can be tested and redefined.

Over the years, my work has evolved from performative gestures rooted in public space to more complex research-based installations that engage with archives, materiality, and social critique. My early projects, such as *Piece for Resistance* (2014), *NCCA – the Zoo. Excursion* (2017), and *Compassion is Not Enough* (2018), addressed the intersection of personal and political narratives through direct audience participation, where participants actively influenced the outcome of each piece. These early performances paved the way for a more deliberate investigation of how artistic intervention can illuminate tensions between individual agency and societal frameworks.

My academic background in philosophy (a master's thesis on conceptual metaphor at the Sorbonne, 2013) and subsequent training at the École Normale Supérieure (focused on the intersection of philosophy, language, and psychiatry, 2014) shaped my conceptual foundation before entering the Beaux-Arts de Paris (2022). By this point, I had already developed several projects and participated in the international art scene as a self-taught artist early in my career. Later, I had the opportunity to work with Claude Closky and Clément Cogitore at the École des Beaux-Arts de Paris, which refined my post-conceptualist approach and my exploration of contemporary art's documentary potential and moving images as tools for addressing contemporary issues.

My work has always been linked to the idea of transformation—both personal and systemic—in connection with themes of violence, myth, and representation. Through long-term research projects, I examine how political and ideological systems shape not only environments but also the physical, moral, and political bodies that traverse and are conditioned by them. At the same time, my practice critically examines how art institutions themselves can be complicit in power systems, serving as both sites of resistance and tools of conformity. As my work has developed, I increasingly question the role of the artist within these frameworks and the extent to which art can intervene meaningfully in contemporary sociopolitical dynamics without being absorbed by them.

[Previous Page](#)

**Myth of the Border**  
/ Recording of the sunset,  
August 5, 2021  
Border between Europe and  
Asia, Rai-Iz Massif  
Screenshot from an 8mm  
film video  
02 min 54 sec  
One of the stages of the  
project *False Sun*, 2017–  
2023  
Hanna Zubkova

# Hanna Zubkova

2024 - 2014

Working across varied contexts—between Paris, Moscow, and Minsk—my work navigates the complexities of sociopolitical environments, focusing on how individuals interact with power, memory, and identity within these systems. My identity is shaped by the fragmented experience of Belarus's post-colonial past on the one hand, and by a nearly 30-year dictatorship, coupled with Russia's imperialist legacy and Soviet history, on the other. These experiences have contributed to my biography, from studying at MGIMO University in Moscow (2011), to formative years in France, including an exchange year at Sciences Po (2010), to my current life in Paris.

With part of my family originating from Ukraine, the impact of various agents involved in violent geopolitical relationships strongly influences my artistic and teaching practice. Navigating between different linguistic, economic, political, and moral systems, I observe, document, and interrogate the notion of personal experience in the face of specific ideological circumstances.

As an educator, I began developing my own artistic research atelier, *Research Praxis Space*, inspired by Bruno Latour's expression, "There are no endings, only stabilizations." The atelier transcends the understanding of art as merely object production, emphasizing instead a process in which production and mediated manifestation form one aspect of the practice. Following a collaboration with Académie Vivante at Bétonsalon in 2017, I have continued this work independently, integrating it into my artistic practice and personal commitment. I often work with individuals ideologically oppressed and seeking to build communities outside institutional and state-supported art infrastructures. For example, in the past year, I collaborated with the Baza Institute of Contemporary Art, founded by artist-activists Anatoly Osmolovsky (recognized as a foreign agent) and Svetlana Baskova. The institute was raided and shut down, leaving participants affected by repression. My role as an educator and artist was to continue working with students even after the violent closure of the institution by the state. In this portfolio, I dedicate a section to the *Research Praxis Space* workshop and its work. I have worked with over 100 students, ranging from young adults aspiring to artistic careers, to epigenetics students, from emerging artists at the start of their journey, to individuals not pursuing professional art but seeking tools to articulate, mediate, and reflect on their experiences, including political oppression, racism, or other personal and shared traumas.

Adopting a research-driven approach, I am particularly interested in the contradictions between lived experience and the categorical systems used to describe it. I reflect on both canonical and spontaneous forms of knowledge, exploring their fragmented nature. Questioning myths and grand narratives (Jean-François Lyotard) that influence our behavior, choices, and mental states, as well as the ways knowledge production and dissemination systems fit into broader ideological frameworks, I am currently working on a documentary research-based project, *Ile – Enlèvement. Terra Firma – Restitution*. This project examines two hyperobjects at the geographical extremes of Europe: the marble of Paros Island in Greece and Siberia's permafrost. Supported by the Institute for Peace in Paris, the ADAGP, and other organizations, and with assistance from Arctic Institute scientists in Salekhard, I am developing this project and plan to continue it in the coming months.

It seems to me that one of the points of convergence in my projects lies in the tension between subjective experience and objective knowledge, revealing verifiable information that exists speculatively on its own. While my interests may be shaped by certain aspects of identity, and as one of my students, artist Ilya Kachaev, observed, the research field itself consists of data external to this identity (unrelated to personal experience). This resonates with the paradox of the prehistoric, as described in *After Finitude* by Meillassoux. However, in this case, the question is not about thought and being but rather the subject's relationship to identity formation through objects that remain unobserved. "What I have not seen is part of me."



# Solid Amid

Research based multimedia installation  
National Library, Salekhard, 2024

The installation Solid Amid brings together documents, artifacts, and data I collected during research in Salekhard, from a fragment of a casing pipe (object 0. Isolation) to a mammoth bone keychain (object 00. Ngani-ya, meaning «foreign or someone else's land » in ural language group). The entry point was an abandoned experimental field of the Agricultural Research Station, where scientists in the 1930s attempted to cultivate plants under the extreme climatic conditions of permafrost. Typically associated with idyllic rural landscapes, this field is located within the city limits, is of limited size, and, as a foreign element—a relic of attempts at settlement in an originally nomadic space—drew my attention. It became a kind of entry point into the attempts to establish contact with the hyperobject of permafrost—a deceptive firmament amidst which the problem of coexistence takes on the dimension of a question about co-survival.

The research was conducted as part of the GES-2 Cities program, in collaboration with Efim Khorolya, Zoya Khudi, Sergey Babkin, and other team members, as well as scientists from the Scientific Center for Arctic Studies: geophysicist Alexander Shein and cryologist Valentina Palamarchuk, as well as with the union of indigenous people.



## Previous Page

**Solid Amid**  
Screenshot from the video:  
electrical resistivity  
tomography of an  
abandoned experimental  
field in the permafrost area  
of Salekhard,  
2024  
Hanna Zubkova

## Current Page

**Solid Amid**  
Materials from the research:  
satellite imagery of the  
field, Google Earth

Documentation of an  
abandoned greenhouse near  
the field  
By Hanna Zubkova

Multimedia installation,  
National Library of  
Salekhard, 2024  
Photography by Sergey  
Zubkov

## Next Pages

**Solid Amid**  
views of installation,  
National library of  
Salekhard,  
2024  
Photography by Sergey  
Zubkov









2019/09/21 03:36:00





# False Sun. The Catcher

Research based multimedia installation  
Garage museum of contemporary art, 2023

"Zubkova's project resides at the intersection of utopia and tragedy. It can be understood not only as the collapse of modern projects, echoing the Renaissance ideas of Tommaso Campanella, but also as the eternal tension between knowledge/philosophy and poetry, a theme frequently debated in discussions around 'artistic research.' What role does the poetic/tragic play in this research trajectory? In my view, it disrupts the flow of information, bringing cohesion and form while simultaneously offering access to the formless. Or, to borrow Simon O'Sullivan's words, it provides a productive encounter with chaos.

In any case, the latest iteration of Hanna Zubkova's work stands out for the precise interconnection between the subject, methodology, and (provisional) outcome, all conditioned by contemporary socio-material circumstances—a quality I consider essential in artistic research. Her methods could indeed be described as cartography and journeying (the artist humbly and self-critically refers to herself as a 'tourist'). At the same time, her medium (in Rosalind Krauss's post-medium sense) could be described as a non-coincidence, linking the subject, method, and material expression of her research. The starting point and driving force of her cartography—the archive of the soviet philosopher Kursanov—is intriguing, partly because it does not align with the specificity of the Garage Archive housing it, which focuses on nonconformists. On the other hand, as a repository of individual theorization on truth, tied to the institutions of its production (journals, reviews, conferences), juxtaposed with the results of aimless artistic impulses (still lifes and reproductions), it initiates a mirrored chain of reflection on how the artist operates and what she reveals. Coincidence corresponds to utopia (with its tarnished reputation), while non-coincidence, as mentioned earlier, corresponds to tragedy. Yet they are interwoven in such a way that the culmination of her journey—the unfinished kindergarten on the outskirts of Rudnik, a promise of an unfulfilled future—both coincides and does not coincide with the promise at the site of failure, where a ray of sunlight is caught on a fabric in the artist's absence.

The crucial question of the relationship between research and truth is resolved by the artist in her own way. Zubkova neither denies nor rejects the Soviet philosopher's quest for truth, although she exposes the materialist-ideological foundation upon which it rests, tracing its brutal and absurd spatio-temporal distortions. This quest for truth, in her case, transforms into a defense of the fragmented nature of knowledge and experience, and the performative character of utopian cognitive movement, which demands moments of focus: poetic uselessness, tragic rupture, and a nod to chaos."

— Lera Kononchuk, art critic

## Full text:

[Utopia and Tragedy: Discrepancy/Convergence in Hanna Zubkova's Project "False Sun. The Catcher"](#)

### Previous Page

**False Sun. The Catcher**  
Photo of the screen with video: Attempt to capture the sunset at Rudnik, a mining town in the Gulag system. Komi Republic 2021  
Photo by Mikhail Gurevich

### Current Page

**False Sun. The Catcher**  
View of the installation by Hanna Zubkova *False Sun. The Catcher* at the Garage Museum of Contemporary Art, Moscow  
Photo by Naroditski

### Next Page

**False Sun. The Mine**  
Screenshot of a video capturing the entire route from the center of the coal mine to the exit  
28 min 56 sec  
Hanna Zubkova, 2021









# False Sun. The Catcher

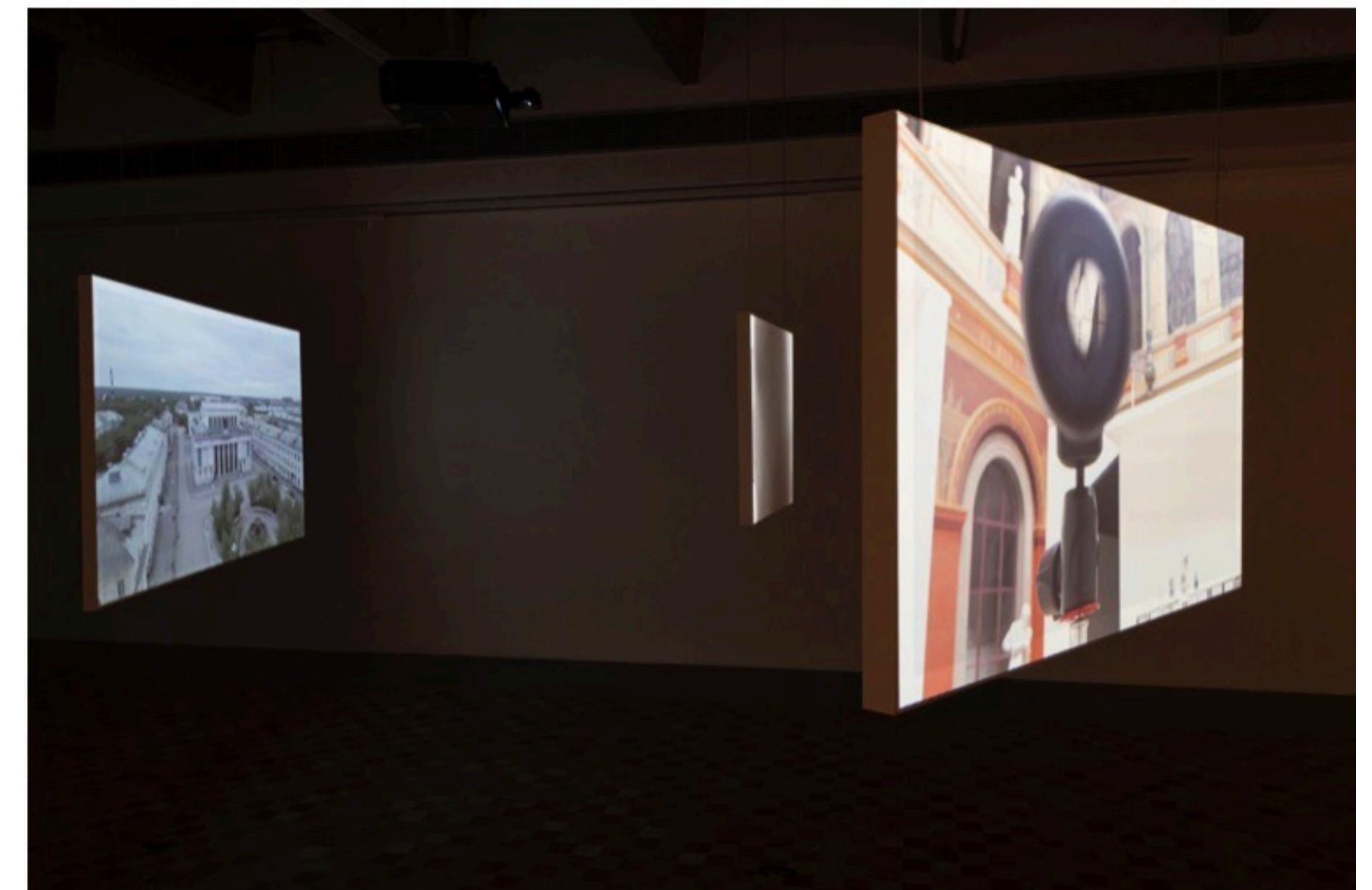
Research based multimedia installation  
Garage museum of contemporary art, 2023

The project, an artistic investigation based on the archive of Soviet philosopher Georgiy Kursanov, delves into fundamental questions about the intertwining of human destiny and global history, the nature of power, and the relationship between the past and the present. Within the twists and turns of the biography of this Marxist nomenklatura figure, Hanna Zubkova uncovered not only his personal story but also key moments in the history of the USSR and Western Europe reflected within it. Zubkova's research focuses on the chronotope—a spatiotemporal map shaped by the topology of the discovered documents, the time of their creation, and their intersection with European and Soviet myths as indicated by the archive's materials.

The research is presented through a device consisting of seven documents that narrate attempts to capture sunsets, alongside a meta-archive of the travel notebook, highlighting the nature of each myth and its relationship to specific places and artifacts:

- 1. Myth of the Witness**  
Recording of the sunset, July 12, 2021, 67.510843, 64.016481  
**Audio:** 2:17:46
- 2. Myth of the Source**  
Recording of the sunset, June 24, 2022, Hall of Antique Sculpture Casts, École des Beaux-Arts, Paris - Paros  
**Video:** 00:31
- 3. Myth of the Border**  
Recording of the sunset, August 5, 2021, Border between Europe and Asia, Rai-lz Massif  
**Video:** 02:54
- 4. Myth of Urban Grandeur**  
Recording of the sunset, July 13, 2021, Peace Square, Vorkuta  
**Video:** 18:36
- 5. Myth of the North**  
Recording of the sunset, July 12, 2021, Northernmost building of the Rudnik settlement  
**Video:** 33:36
- 6. Myth of the End of the World**  
Recording of the sunset, 2021, Coal mine tunnel between the entrance and the face  
**Video:** 28:56
- 7. Myth of History**  
Installation of the Catcher, 2021  
**Video:** 16:42

This work weaves together mythology, place, and historical artifacts, creating a layered reflection on how the passage of time and ideological frameworks shape narratives of truth and memory.



[Previous Page](#)

**False Sun. The Catcher**  
View of the installation  
*False Sun. The Catcher* by  
Hanna Zubkova at the  
Garage Museum of  
Contemporary Art, Moscow  
Photo by Naroditski

[Current Page](#)

**False Sun. The Catcher**  
View of the installation  
*False Sun. The Catcher* by  
Hanna Zubkova at the  
Garage Museum of  
Contemporary Art, Moscow  
Photo by Naroditski

[Next Page](#)

**False Sun. The Catcher**  
Meta-archive  
View of the meta-archive of  
the project, articulating the  
research undertaken and  
presenting the chronotopic  
map  
Hanna Zubkova, 2023

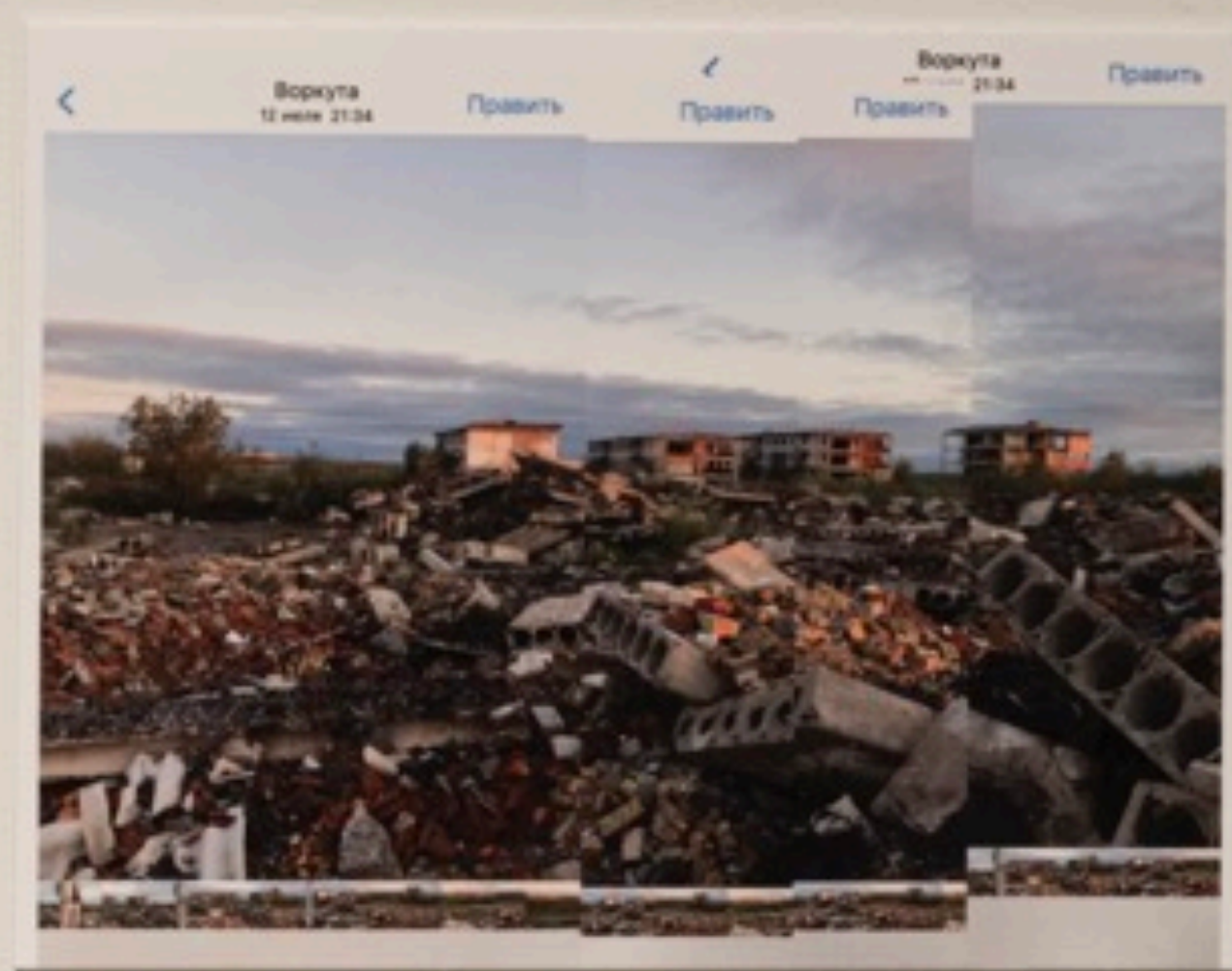




5.16



5.18



5.17







# False Sun. Device for Recording a Sunset

Performance

Rudnik, Vorkouta, 67e parallèle Nord, 2021

A device for recording the sunset at the border of the former Soviet empire and the northernmost extreme of fossil fuel civilization was constructed as part of an expedition. In this project, the artist explores the concept of borders and adopts a mindset akin to that of a tourist-explorer—a figure embodying the fantasy of transcending boundaries and an amateur approach to knowledge that creates place through a series of misunderstandings found in reconstructing the view toward the North. As one moves toward this point, it becomes clear that reaching it is impossible: it shimmers in different versions and stories, slips through the fingers, becomes an effect, always someone else's recording of events that never happened to you.

A typical building at the edge of the lands developed by the Soviet empire is likely a kindergarten, whose construction was halted before the settlement was entirely abandoned, in stark contradiction to official development plans. The building is oriented at a 60° angle to the south-north axis, lying beyond the border: beyond the Arctic Circle, beyond the Central Time Line, beyond the boundary of a double continent, beyond undeveloped lands, on the city's periphery, and beyond the North. The two parts of the performance are futile attempts to capture the sunset on July 12, 2021. The actual sunset occurred two days later. After a series of failed attempts, a decision was made to leave a transparent receiver to record a potential future sunset. North of the 67th parallel, due to the concentrated sunlight during the polar day, colors disappear.

It was suggested that the sun might begin to imprint itself on a surface devoid of color: the transparent fabric, stripped of reflective particles carrying information about color—about the wavelength reflected—could preserve the most complete information in a potential encounter with light that passes through it.



## Previous Page

Installation following the performance *False Sun. The Catcher*  
Transparent fabric, metal.  
Building of a kindergarten, village of Rudnik, Komi Republic, 2021

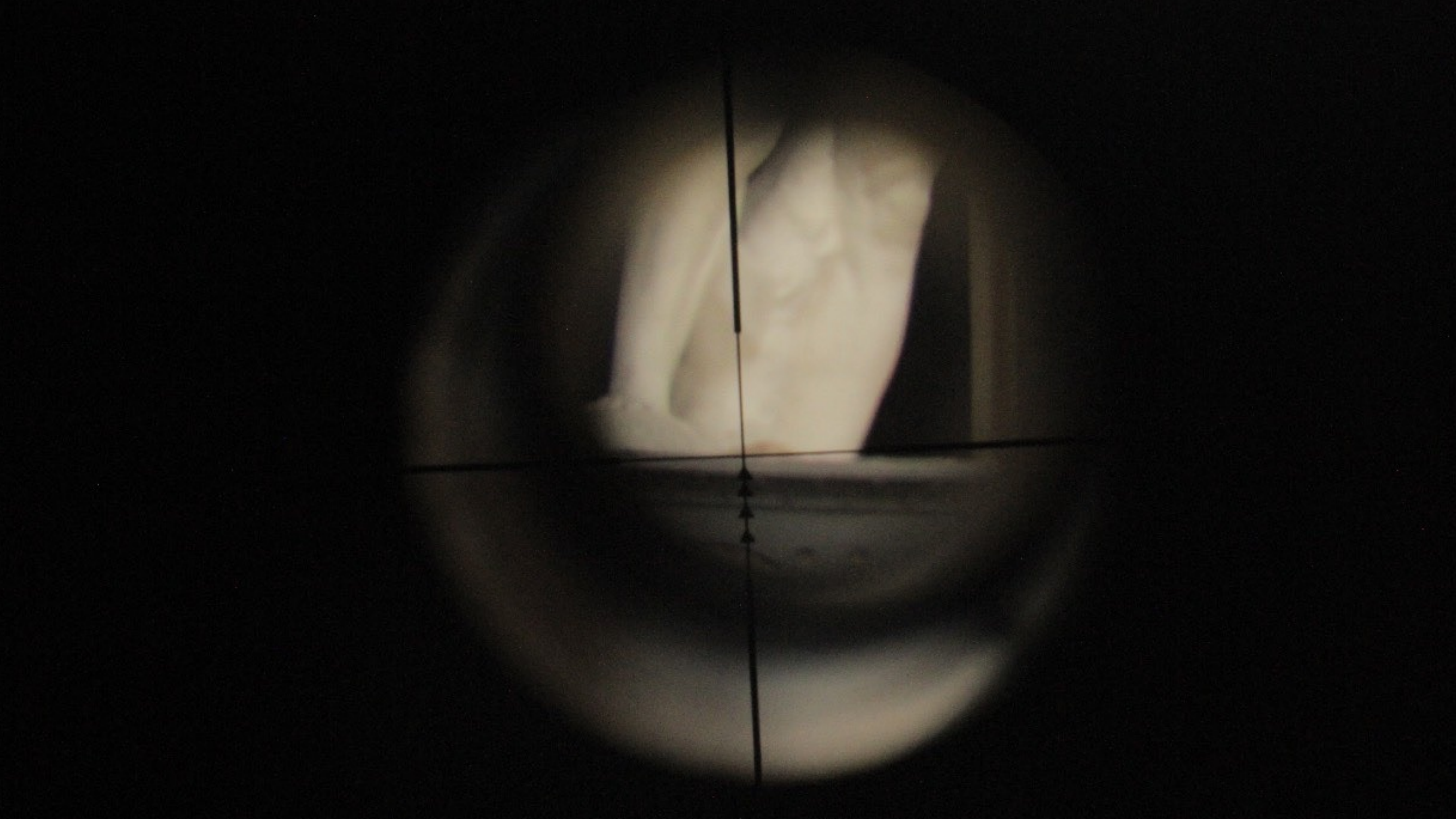
## Current Page

**False Sun. The Catcher**  
Screenshots from the documentation of the performance  
Village of Rudnik, Komi Republic, 2021

## Next Page

**False Sun. The Catcher**  
Screenshots from the documentation of the performance  
Village of Rudnik, Komi Republic, 2021  
Hanna Zubkova raising the transparent flag







# False sun. Culture will survive says an angel of electricity and tickles my neck. I laugh involuntary and wake up.

Multimedia installation  
Cour vitrée, Paris  
2022

"At the Beaux-Arts de Paris, amidst the glass-roofed courtyard and its casts of antique sculptures, Vorkuta might seem like the end of the world. This ghost town on the fringes of the former Soviet empire, once a mining city north of the Arctic Circle, appears to Hanna Zubkova as a kind of double.

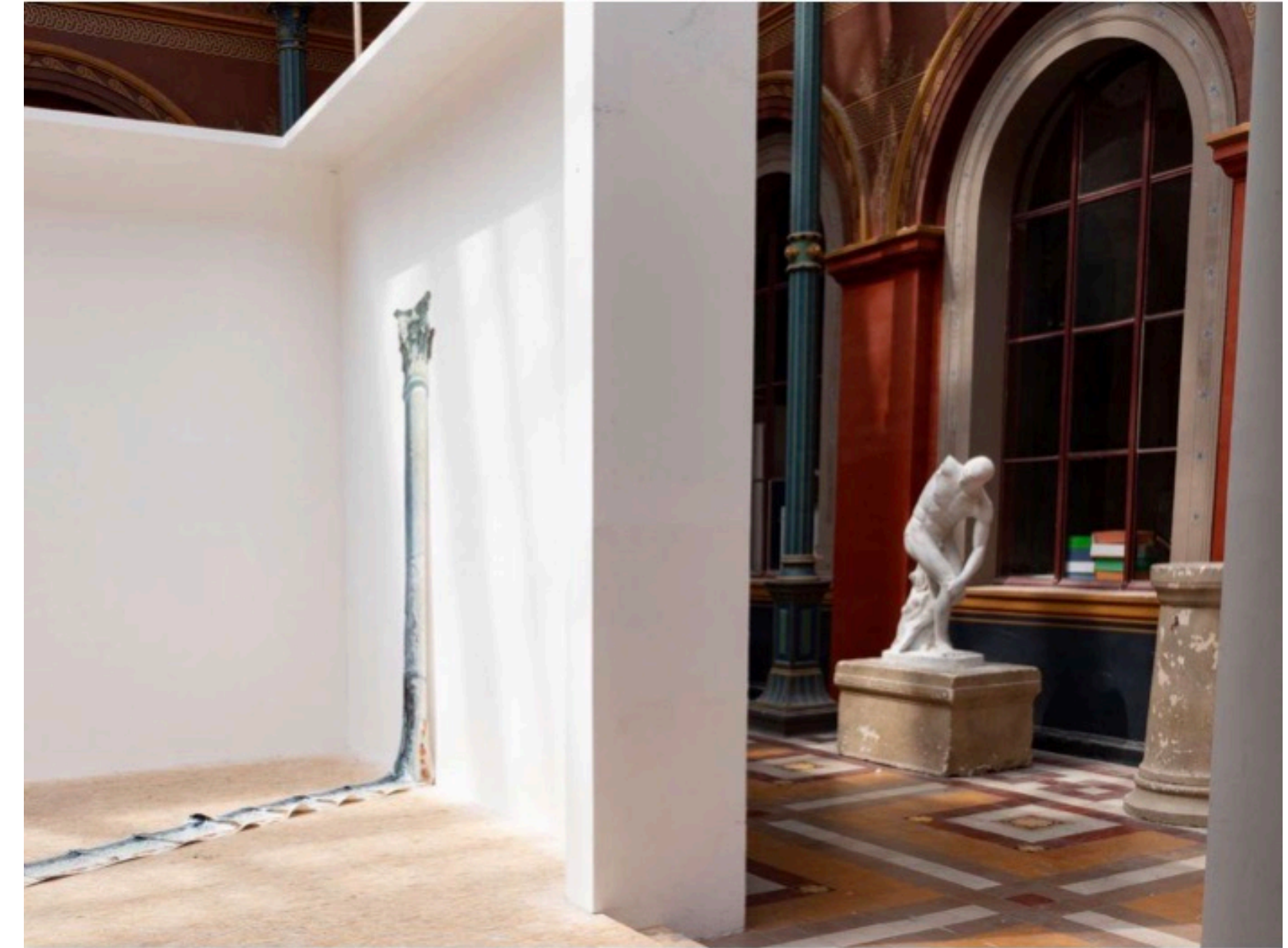
Setting out to capture a sunset there, like a 19th-century explorer with the aim of reaching a distant land under the guise of expanding knowledge, she realized upon arrival that her goal was unattainable, and that her destination was slipping away beneath her feet.

The performance *False Sun*, which she developed by raising a transparent flag atop a ruined building, allowed her to resolve the question of this journey. Reenacting a gesture traditionally associated with territorial conquest, but with a flag that claims only an attentive gaze toward the landscape, she highlights the untenability of a fossil-fuel-based civilization.

Through the installation of video traces from her journey, under the title *Culture Will Survive, Trust Me Hun, Says An Angel Of Electricity And Tickles My Neck. I Laugh Involuntarily And Wake Up*, Hanna Zubkova bridges the decaying splendor of Vorkuta's Palace of Culture with the freshly renovated courtyard of the Palais des Études at the Beaux-Arts de Paris.

Once again drawing on the form of Aby Warburg's *Atlas Mnemosyne*, she focuses on the plaster cast of the *Discobolus* to examine the myths and ideologies underlying the concept of culture in the Western world. She also finds echoes of unfulfilled hopes in the traces of an academic space shaken by the events of May 1968."

— Henri Guette, curator and art critic, for the catalogue Finale



## Previous Page

**Culture Will Survive,  
Trust Me Hun, Says an  
Angel of Electricity and  
Tickles My Neck. I Laugh  
Involuntarily and Wake  
Up, 2022.**

Mixed media installation,  
Cour Vitrée, École des  
Beaux-Arts, Paris.  
View through the dispositif  
of the experience of a  
plaster copy of the  
*Discophoros*.  
Fragment of a plaster copy  
of the *Discobolus*.

## Current Page

**Culture Will Survive,  
Trust Me Hun, Says an  
Angel of Electricity and  
Tickles My Neck. I Laugh  
Involuntarily and Wake  
Up, 2022.**

Mixed media installation,  
Cour Vitrée, École des  
Beaux-Arts, Paris.

## Next Page

Palais de la Culture  
Adjustable document  
Original location:  
Promyshlenny, Komi  
Republic.  
View of the installation  
*Culture Will Survive, 2022.*







# False sun. Culture will survive says an angel of electricity and tickles my neck. I laugh involuntary and wake up.

Multimedia installation  
Cour vitrée, Paris  
2022

Part of the research project *False Sun*, the installation examines culture as a hybrid object shaped by the transformation of myths, ideologies, unfulfilled hopes, and out-of-context copies that bear only the memory inscribed on their surfaces.

The installation engages in dialogue with existing plaster copies of the *Discobolus*—the one poised to throw the discus— and its static counterpart, *Discobolus at Rest*, whose action remains potential. It also resonates with the monumental columns that once stood in this space (themselves copies), which were removed from the main hall following the May 1968 revolution in France.

In their place, one finds their counterpart sourced from the northernmost point of geographical Europe: Vorkuta, from the ruins of the Palace of Culture. Despite being situated at nearly opposite corners of Europe—one rooted in the ex-USSR, the other in antiquity where Europe grounded its identity—these two spaces appear strikingly similar.

The exhibition activates research documents, treating the document as both the recording of a missed sunset at the edge of a ghost empire and the experience of skin touching the ground. The installation responds to the historical and physical context of the Cour Vitrée, a space once home to plaster casts of antique statues.

It comprises research materials, including a six-channel video installation, found objects, a research atlas reminiscent of Aby Warburg's *Mnemosyne Atlas*, and an environment that draws viewers' attention to resonances and connections between various points within and beyond the installation. Additionally, it features a perception device for the plaster copy of the *Discobolus at Rest*—a mechanism that translates distant vision into tactile sensation, lasting for as long as the viewer decides.

## Previous Page

Dispositif-sensor for catching the sunset, East-West view Paris-Paros – June 24, 2022.  
Tripod, military optical viewfinder, surface of a stump, plaster copy of the *Discobolus at Rest*; adjustable document, variable dimensions.

## Current Page

**Culture Will Survive, Trust Me Hun, Says an Angel of Electricity and Tickles My Neck. I Laugh Involuntarily and Wake Up.** 2022.  
Mixed media installation, Cour Vitrée, École des Beaux-Arts, Paris.

## Next Page

Dispositif-sensor for catching the sunset, East-West view Paris-Paros – June 24, 2022.  
Tripod, military optical viewfinder, surface of a stump, plaster copy of the *Discobolus at Rest*; adjustable document, variable dimensions.





REMBRANDT

ΕΦΗΣΟΣ



# False sun. Culture will survive says an angel of electricity and tickles my neck. I laugh involuntarily and wake up.

Multimedia installation  
Cour vitrée, Paris  
2022

Transformable Research Atlas into Installation  
Cardboard, cotton, Italian screws, film, number of pages - 20+

One of the works in the installation is a detailed research logbook. The materials from the meta-archive, created during the travelogue, are displayed on thick black plaques. As part of the exhibition medium, these plaques function as a series of objects distributed throughout the space, while also coming together as a book, existing in the form of an atlas with the potential for continuous updates.

Materials of the research:

<https://www.hannazubkova.com/faux-soleil-recherche>



#### Previous Page

**Culture Will Survive,  
Trust Me Hun, Says an  
Angel of Electricity and  
Tickles My Neck. I Laugh  
Involuntarily and Wake  
Up, 2022.**

Mixed media installation,  
Cour Vitree, École des  
Beaux-Arts, Paris.  
View through the dispositif  
of the experience of a  
plaster copy of the  
*Discophoros*.

#### Current Page

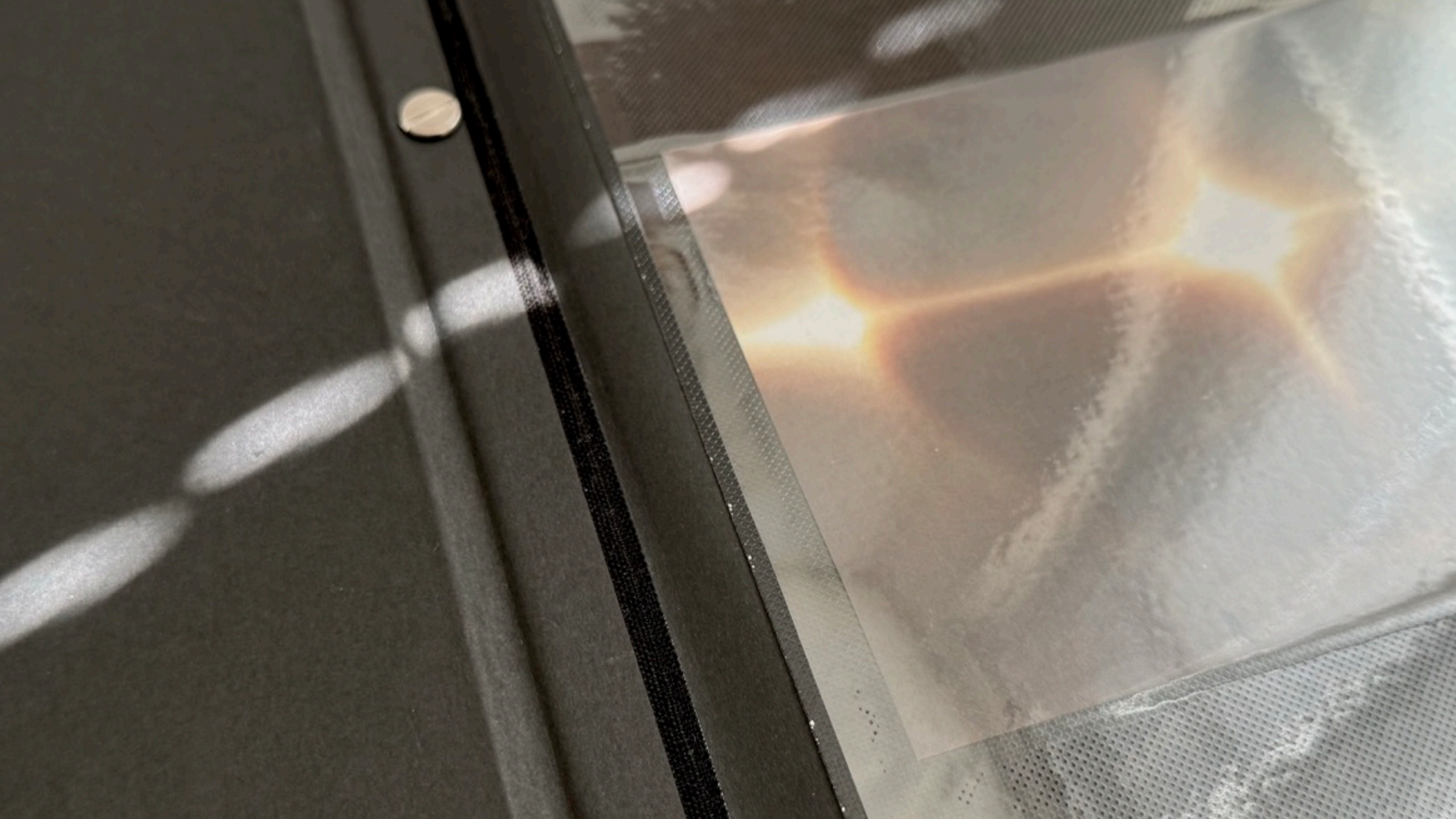
**Culture Will Survive,  
Trust Me Hun, Says an  
Angel of Electricity and  
Tickles My Neck. I Laugh  
Involuntarily and Wake  
Up, 2022.**

Mixed media installation,  
Cour Vitree, École des  
Beaux-Arts, Paris.  
View of the research atlas.

**Atlas**  
Research journal for *False  
Sun*,  
2017-...

#### Next Page

**Atlas**  
Research journal for *False  
Sun*,  
2017-...



# False Sun. Fragment

Concrete, wood, industrial carpet, tinted window glass, fragments of the finishing layer of the ruin's wall, two-channel video

Ethnographic Museum, Saint Petersburg, 2022

The installation in the room *"The Resettlement of Russians in the 20th Century"* at the Ethnographic Museum recreates a perspective along the south-north axis and its reflection.

**First point on the axis:** A failed attempt to capture the sunset on July 12, 2021, at the state border in the ghost town of Rudnik, a former Soviet coal-mining monotown beyond the 67th parallel north.

**Reflected point:** The installation of a transparent recorder for a potential future sunset.

**Midpoint on the axis:** A fragment of the wall from the ruins of a typical residential building. Originally intended as a fresco created with the technique of applying paint to plaster, it was meant to imitate the sky in the corridor of a kindergarten. The collapse of the wall revealed to the observer a view of the anticipated sunset.

The visible trajectory of the sun mimics a sunset; however, due to the observer's position in the far north during the polar day, the sunset does not occur. At the time expected for sunset according to Moscow Central Time, the sun skims the horizon, briefly hiding behind the mine building, which is scheduled for permanent closure in 13 years. The actual sunset will occur two days later.

The ruin of the building, presumably a kindergarten, faces the anticipated sunset over the coal mine. In a settlement founded in the 1930s as a concentration camp and abandoned despite the development plans of the 1970s, this typical Khrushchev-era structure in the far north was deserted and never inhabited. As part of the intense colonization of the Soviet north, social infrastructure was often built last, sometimes decades after settlers had already arrived.



## Current Page

**False Sun. Fragment.**  
Multimedia installation  
(two-channel video,  
adjustable document of  
fragments from a ruin,  
tinted glass, decorative  
finishing material).  
National Museum of  
Ethnography, Saint  
Petersburg, 2021.  
[View of details.](#)

## Next Page

**False Sun. Fragment.**  
Multimedia installation  
(two-channel video,  
adjustable document of  
fragments from a ruin,  
tinted glass, decorative  
finishing material).  
National Museum of  
Ethnography, Saint  
Petersburg, 2021.  
[View of the installation.](#)









# Ideology of Working Class Doesn't Impose Any Boundaries on Love

performance

duration: June 2018 - September 2018

Amsterdam - Moscow - Amsterdam

\*Phrase from «Make Way to Winged Eros» by Alexandra Kollontai

Beginning as part of a socially-oriented artistic residency (for the 22nd International AIDS Conference) in Amsterdam's Red Light District, the performance centered around one of the key symbols of a brothel: a red velvet curtain.

I removed the red curtains from a former window brothel in the Red Light District of Amsterdam and sent them on a VIP journey through various prestigious and socially recognized cultural environments in Amsterdam and Moscow, before eventually returning them to the building of the former brothel. It is likely that the building's interior will disappear along with the curtains, as the property is set to be handed over to a real estate investor. The brothel ceased to exist long ago, and the building was expropriated as part of the municipal program for urban revitalization.



**Previous Page**

**Ideology of Working Class  
Doesn't Impose Any  
Boundaries on Love**

Video documentation screenshot  
of the performance, Hermitage  
Museum, Amsterdam, 2018  
Photo documentation of the  
performance at the Embassy of  
the Netherlands in Moscow,  
photography by Olga Alexeenko,  
2018

**Current Page**

**Ideology of Working Class  
Doesn't Impose Any  
Boundaries on Love**

Photo documentation of the  
performance, former brothel in  
the Red Light District,  
Amsterdam.  
Photography by Elizaveta  
Federmesser, 2018

**Ideology of Working Class  
Doesn't Impose Any  
Boundaries on Love**

Video documentation screenshot  
of the performance, former  
brothel in the Red Light District,  
Amsterdam, 2018



# Ideology of Working Class Doesn't Impose Any Boundaries on Love

performance

duration: June 2018 - September 2018

Amsterdam - Moscow - Amsterdam

\*Phrase from «Make Way to Winged Eros» by Alexandra Kollontai

Steps:

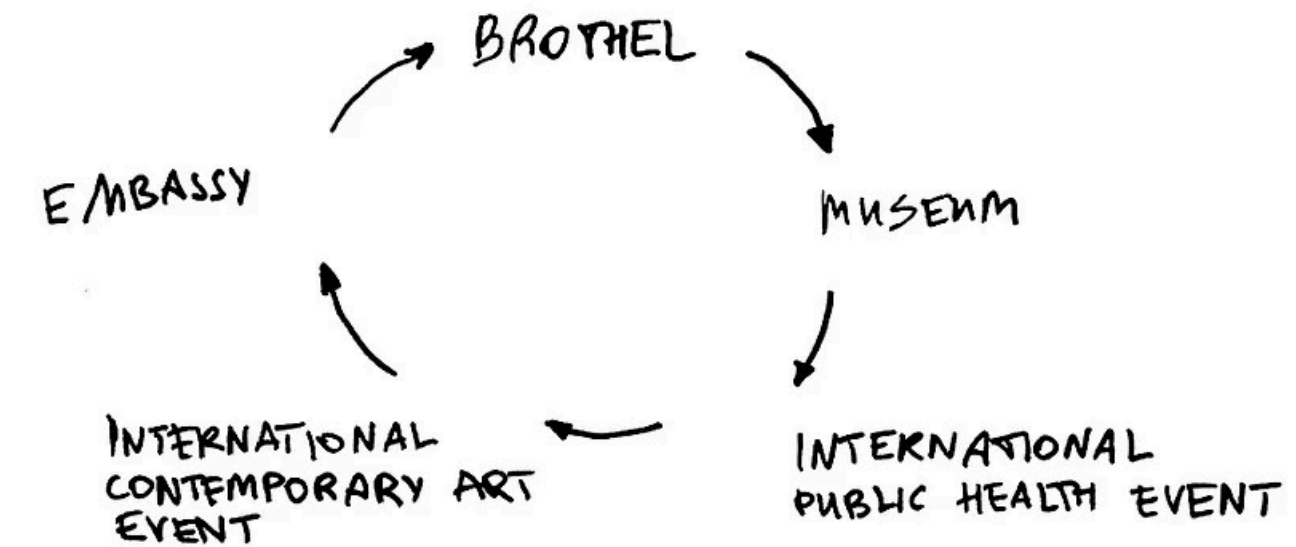
- Brothel on Sainte-Anne Street, Amsterdam
- Hermitage Museum, Amsterdam
- RAI Conference Center, Amsterdam / International AIDS Conference
- Museum of Architecture, Moscow / International Biennale for Young Art
- Embassy of the Kingdom of the Netherlands, Moscow
- Brothel on Sainte-Anne Street, Amsterdam

Context:

Operation 1012 is a municipal program aimed at enhancing Amsterdam's image to attract high-end cultural tourists, reducing criminal activities, and improving the city's economy through gentrification based on public-private partnerships. While prostitution is celebrated in the Netherlands as tolerated and socially recognized, Operation 1012 has targeted it as its main focus, seeking to exclude it from De Wallen, Amsterdam's historic Red Light District—once a symbol of tolerance, transparency, and freedom.

Since 2007, window workspaces have been reduced by a third through exchanges, sales, or expropriations. Most emptied brothels have remained vacant for over a decade. Viewed as ineffective and opaque by sex workers, this “cleansing” of moral geography seems to reflect a political shift in attitudes toward sex work, moving it from being an integral part of the labor market to a marginalized social activity.

Artists, designers, and other members of the creative class were invited through various channels to contribute to the “purification” of the area. This instrumentalization of art was intended to add value to the “working-class” neighborhood, transforming it from a space of vice into one for wealthy and respectable citizens. As an artist-in-residence supported by AFEW, a local NGO, I was tasked with working within this context to reflect on the Dutch approach to sex work.



Current Page

**Ideology of Working Class Doesn't Impose Any Boundaries on Love**

Performance Scheme

Contextual Data

Brothel on Saint Anna Street 26

Encyclopedia of Sex Work and Prostitution, Melissa Hope

Ditmore, 2005

Brothel on Saint Anna Street 26

Google Street View, 2016

Brothel on Saint Anna Street 26

Photo by Juan Aguirre, 2018

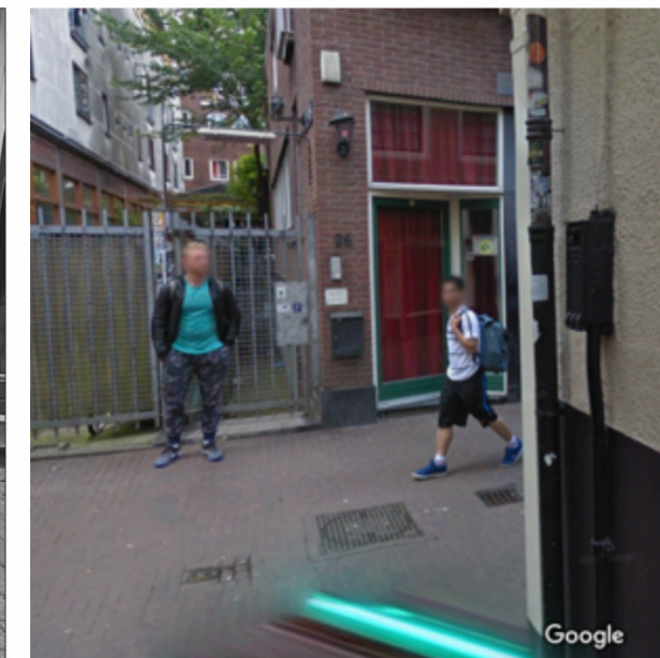
Next Page

**Ideology of Working Class Doesn't Impose Any Boundaries on Love**

Photo documentation of the performance, Dutch Embassy in

Moscow.

Photo by Olga Alexcenko, 2018.





# Ideology of Working Class Doesn't Impose Any Boundaries on Love

performance

duration: June 2018 - September 2018

Amsterdam - Moscou - Amsterdam

\*Phrase from «Make Way to Winged Eros» by Alexandra Kollontai

## ART AS DOCUMENT

"Art has the potential to become an archive. My work *The Ideology of the Working Class Doesn't Impose Any Limits on Love* (2018) was a five-month-long performance accompanied by an equally extensive research process. During a residency at the International AIDS Conference in Amsterdam, I was invited to create a project in an empty brothel in the Red Light District. Perhaps the task of creating something 'artistic' in such an unusual space seemed tempting, but I wanted to understand what had led to its abandonment. And what had brought the artist there?"

Hours of conversations with sex workers, clients, police officers, MPs, real estate agents, retired mafia members, and the study of sources—both public and occasionally less accessible—alongside a series of field studies, material collection, and constant transgressions of my own beliefs and knowledge, all remained 'off-screen.' A certain reality emerged: the brothel was emptied due to a secret struggle for highly valuable land destined for the development of a 'respectable' neighborhood, and artists were initially intended to lend it a more cultural status. The working class, for whom this infrastructure was created, ended up being expelled. Reflections on the autonomy of the artist within systems of cultural alibis and on the subject's place within power structures led to the performance: I removed the red velvet curtains from the brothel—the only sign of a once-living space—and sent them on a VIP journey through the most prestigious venues of international cultural dialogue. Each of these venues became a document of the disconnect between political gestures and declarations and reality. At the Hermitage Museum in Amsterdam, inaugurated by Medvedev as a symbol of Russia's belonging to the European family, I sewed the brothel curtains together during the *Classical Beauties* exhibition. I continued at a conference dedicated to Dutch doctors and scientists who perished in the MH17 crash. I then took the fabric to Moscow, to the Museum of Architecture, where an exhibition-reflection on Zaryadye Park, built on the site of the Rossiya Hotel, was held. Finally, I unstitched the fabric in the reception hall of the Dutch Embassy in Moscow, before returning it to Amsterdam, where I rehung it in its original location.

I recall Marina Abramović's work in the same neighborhood: her performance *Role Exchange* (1975), where she exchanged places with a sex worker for a few hours during the opening of her solo exhibition at the Appel Gallery. I don't know if Abramović considered this, but in addition to being an expressive gesture about women's labor and their position in society, she also created a document of the time, capturing the brothel on camera. It is still forbidden to film in such spaces, but there is no rule against filming oneself. Thus, her video is a rare archival testimony of sex work infrastructure in the 1970s. Since then, and not only there, everything has changed and will continue to change, perhaps to the point of being unrecognizable. I, too, leave a document of 2018 alongside the performance's documentation. In 2022, the Hermitage Museum in Amsterdam was renamed the H'Art Museum."

Hanna Zubkova, from the text 'Who Will Dress the Winter Sun' for BLACKSQUARE, 2024

[Read the full text here.](#)



Current Page

**Role Exchange**

Marina Abramović  
© Frank Uwe Laysiepen,  
Amsterdam, 1976

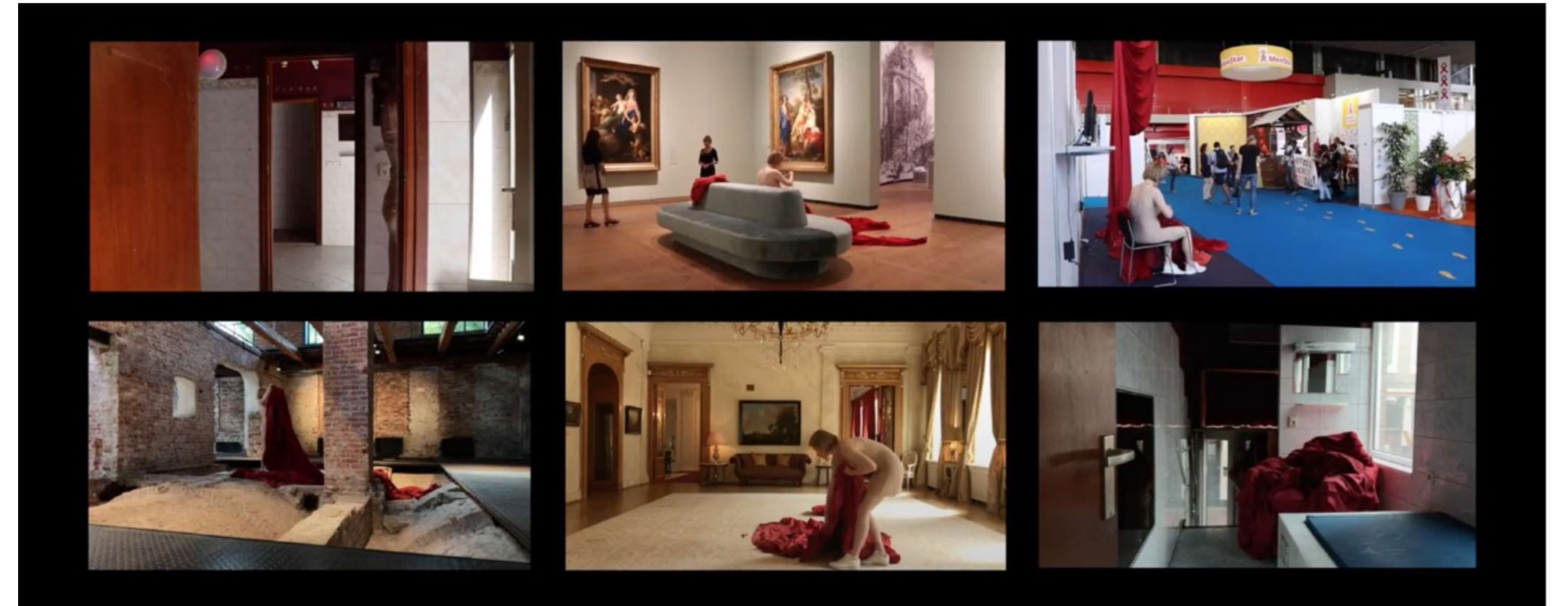
**Ideology of Working Class  
Doesn't Impose Any  
Boundaries on Love**

Photo documentation of the  
performance, former brothel  
in the Red Light District,  
Amsterdam.  
Photo by Elizaveta  
Federmesser, 2018

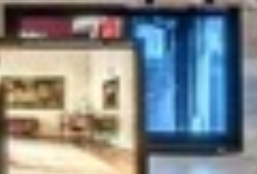
# Place to be defined

exposition  
Eglise des petits Augustins, Paris 2018

The performance unfolds in multiple stages, each serving as a manifestation of a process, an independent exhibition, and ultimately translating into its own trace—a document, an archive. The six video documentations are combined into a video sculpture and are accompanied by a research journal in book form.



**Current Page**  
**Ideology of Working Class  
Doesn't Impose Any  
Boundaries on Love**  
Video documentation of the  
six stages of the  
performance, 2018  
**Place to be defined**  
View of the exhibition,  
Église des Petits Augustins,  
Paris, 2018  
Photo by Romain Darnaud





Список объектов и их характеристик:

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# Circle Ring Stones Chess

Documentary Photographic Poem 1996 - 2020  
Ditone-Print (Inkjet), printed text  
2023

Medical reports put in sequence, 2020  
Translated from Russian to English by Joan Brooks

“Working across performance, video, installation, and text, Belarusian artist Hanna Zubkova explores how subjectivity and personal experience intersect with knowledge infrastructures and power structures, whether political or linguistic hegemony.

In *Circle Ring Stones Chess*, the artist addresses the nature of violence through acts of research, montage, and manifestation. The work captures a chronotope spanning from 1996 to 2020—stretching from the referendum that consolidated the power of the Belarusian president to the anti-government protests that shook the country in 2020.

The ‘documentary photographic poem’—as defined by the artist—consists of two parts: unedited screenshots from archival videos of riot police exercises in the 1990s and unaltered words taken from medical reports written by medics during the 2020 protests.

These screenshots show the first rows of each exercise, subtitled in red with the words ‘circle, ring, stones, chess’—presumably referring to maneuvers. Zubkova treats these archival images as both a document and a semantic oxymoron, shedding light on the disparity between the subject and the descriptive systems applied to it. The clarity of the medical reports, arranged poetically by Zubkova, details concussions, broken limbs, and deaths, contrasting starkly with the banality of the simple terms attributed to the riot police maneuvers. This stark juxtaposition underscores the bitter absurdity of violence and the limits of individual autonomy.”

— Timur Zolotoev, curator and art critic

**Previous Page**

**Circle Ring Stones Chess**  
Photodocumentation of the  
work during the exhibition *As  
Though We Hid The Sun in the  
Sea of Our Stories*  
Haus der Kulturen der Welt  
Berlin, 2023

**Current Page**

Quote from the second part of  
the poem. Arranged unmodified  
medical reports

including  
gunshot wounds  
to the head  
and various  
body parts  
and limbs  
including

the chest,  
shoulders, forearms,  
hips,  
shins,  
feet,  
buttocks,  
belly,  
including

penetrating wounds  
to the abdomen  
with eventration  
of the small intestine  
blunt wounds—  
dozens of cases  
external injuries  
to the chest  
penetrating wounds  
to the chest  
penetrating trauma  
to the chest  
with damage to the right middle lobar  
bronchus  
and the development of hemopneumothorax

the leakage of blood and air  
into  
the chest  
shrapnel wounds to various  
body parts,  
including

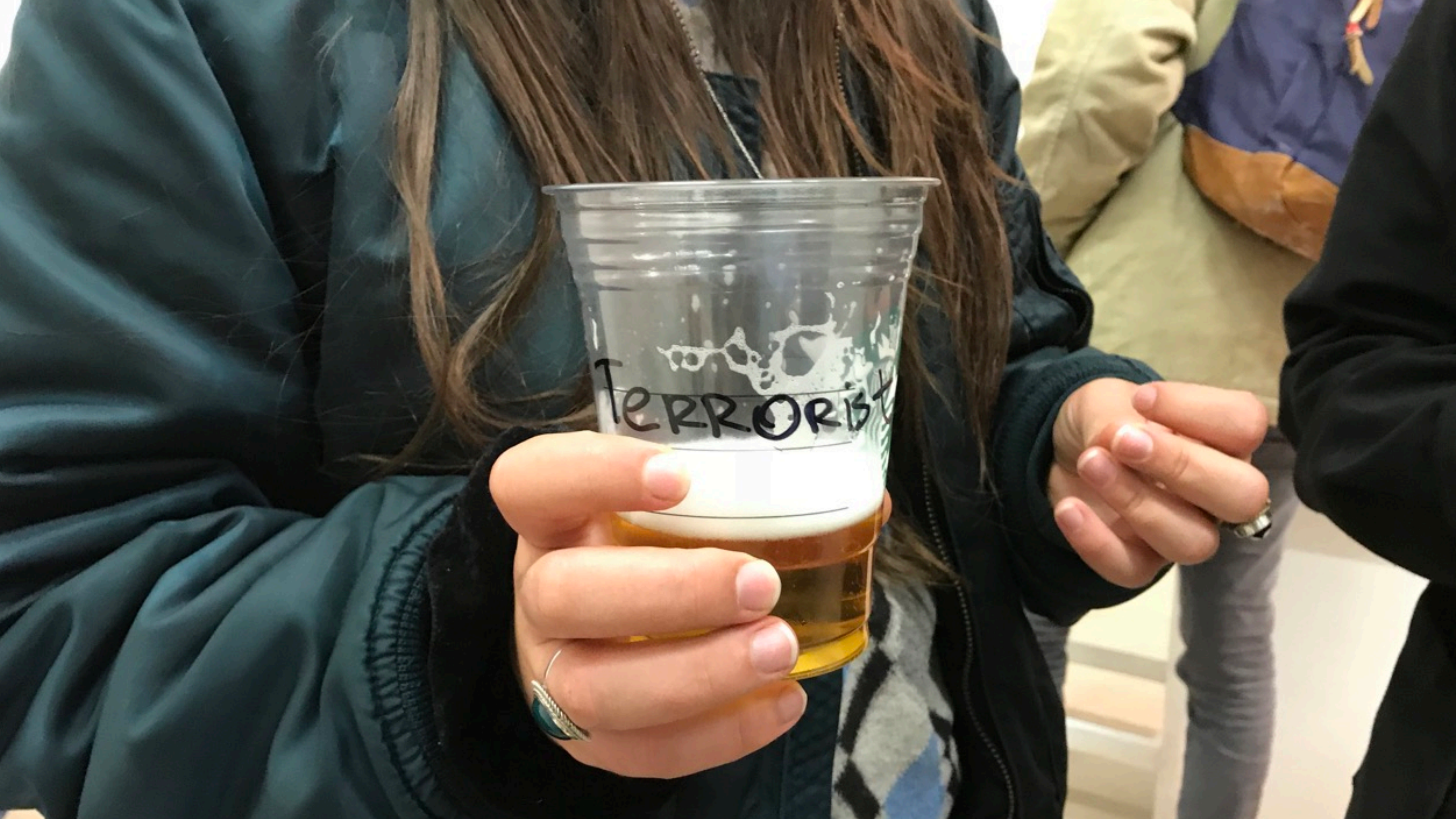
the face,  
neck,  
hands,  
forearms,  
hips,  
knee joints,  
shins,  
groin area,  
lower back,  
the lower part  
of the torso,  
the abdominal wall,  
the buttocks,  
including

# Circle Ring Stones Chess

*As Though We Hid The Sun In A Sea Of Stories*

Haus der Kulturen der Welt  
Berlin, 2023





TERRORIST

# Compassion (Is Not Enough)

Performance  
Atelier Claude Clausky  
2018

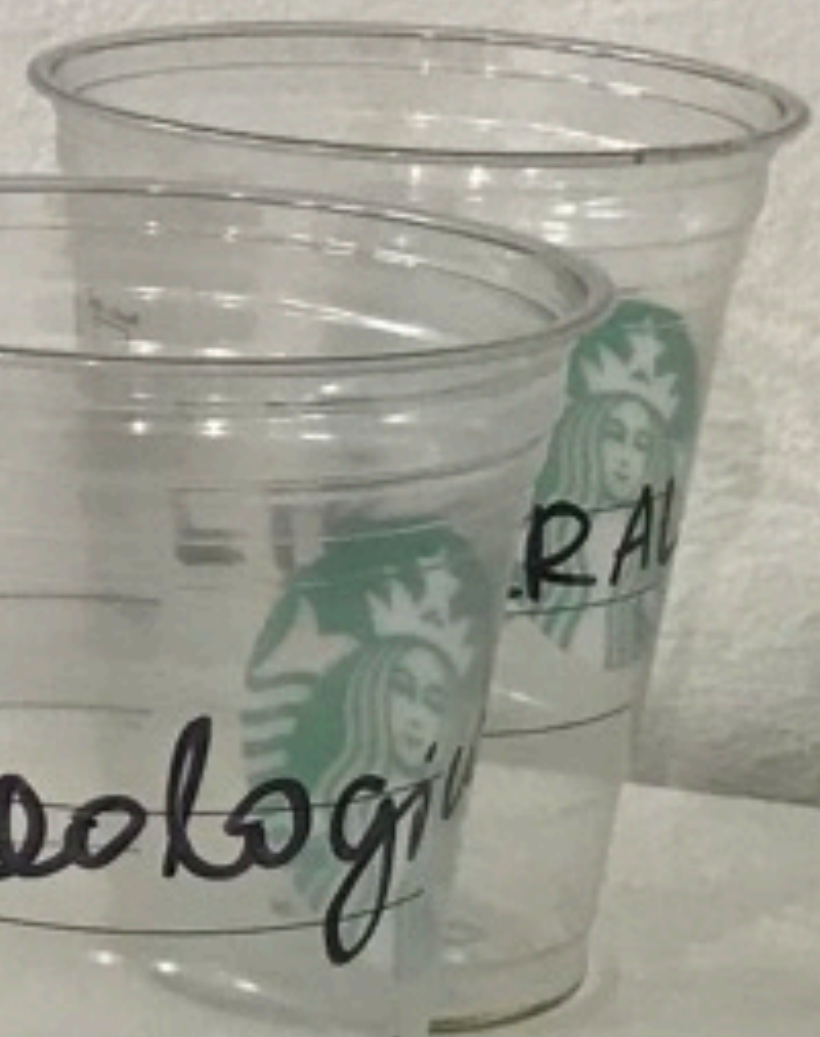
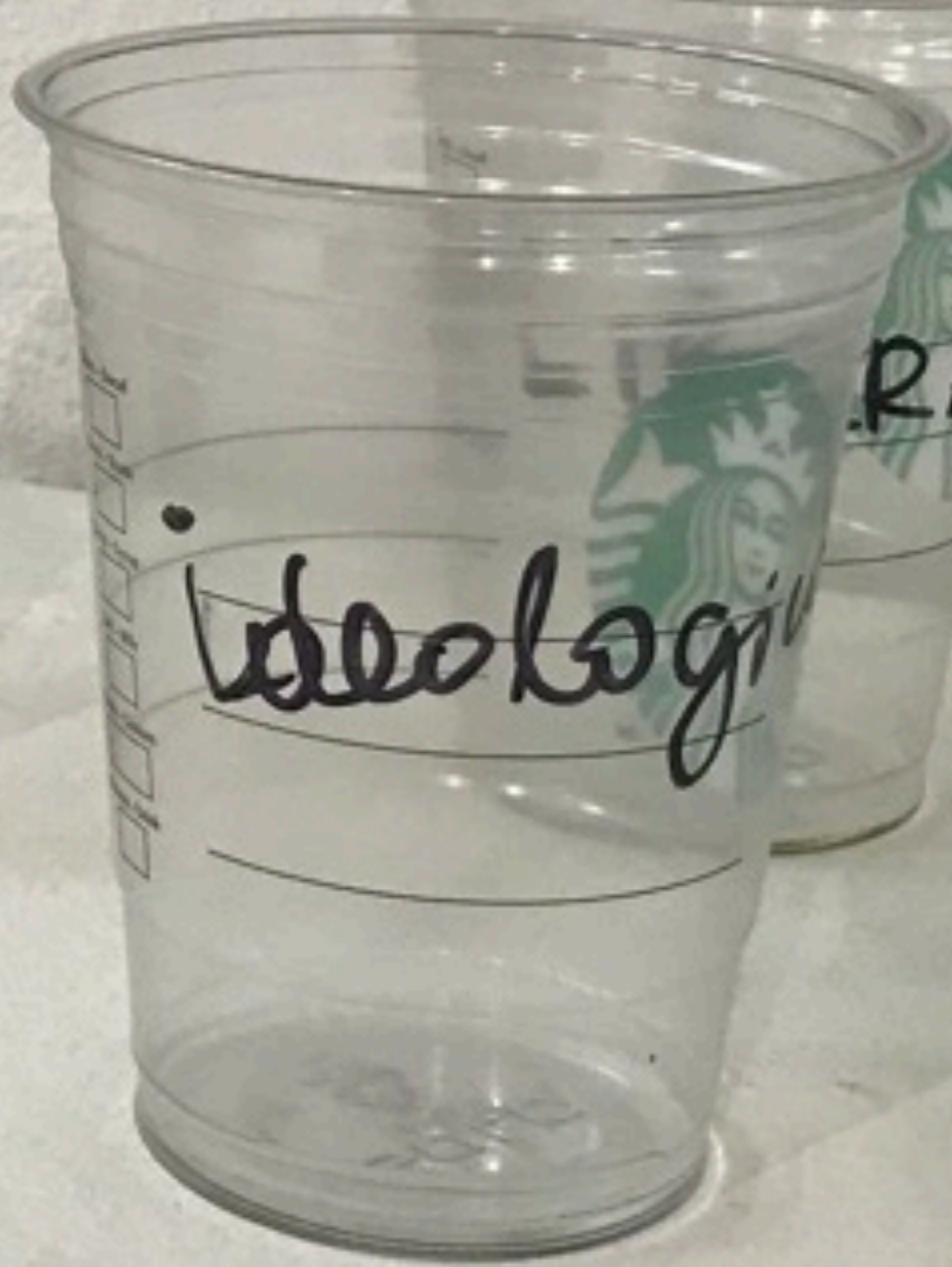
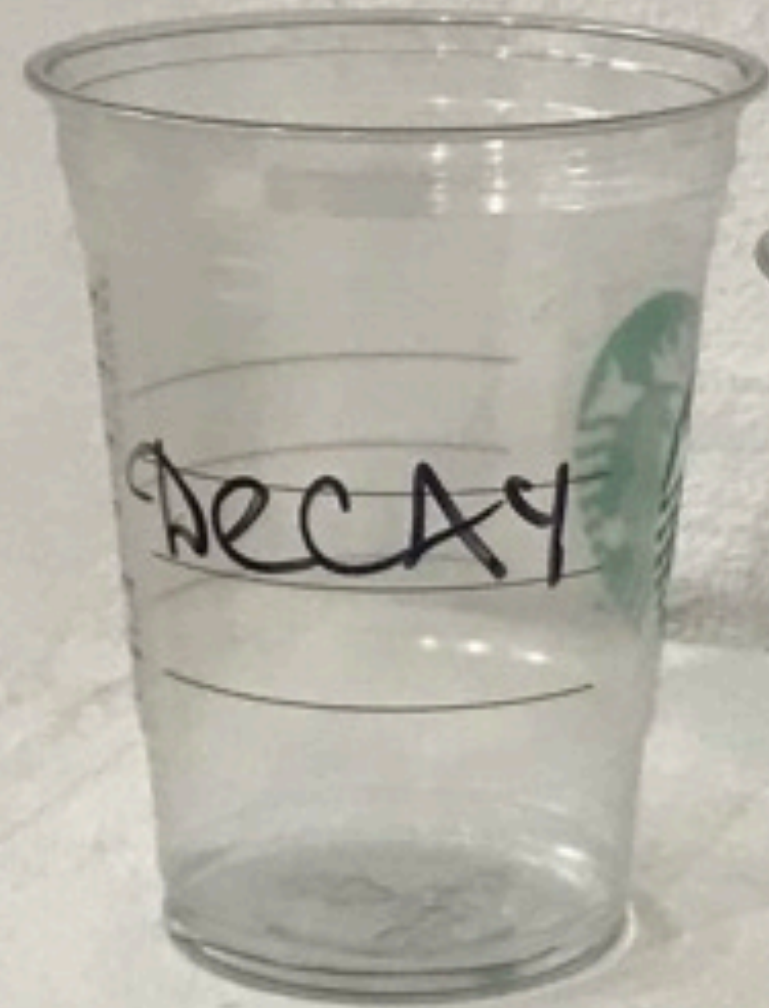
At the opening of the group exhibition *Say My Name* in Claude Closky's studio, I proposed an intervention using transparent plastic cups recognizable as those from the Starbucks chain. These cups, typically used to inscribe the customer's name, were repurposed as vehicles for a deeper reflection on language, power, and perception. Instead of names, the artist inscribed terms selected from a list of words frequently used in political rhetoric to discredit or weaken opponents.

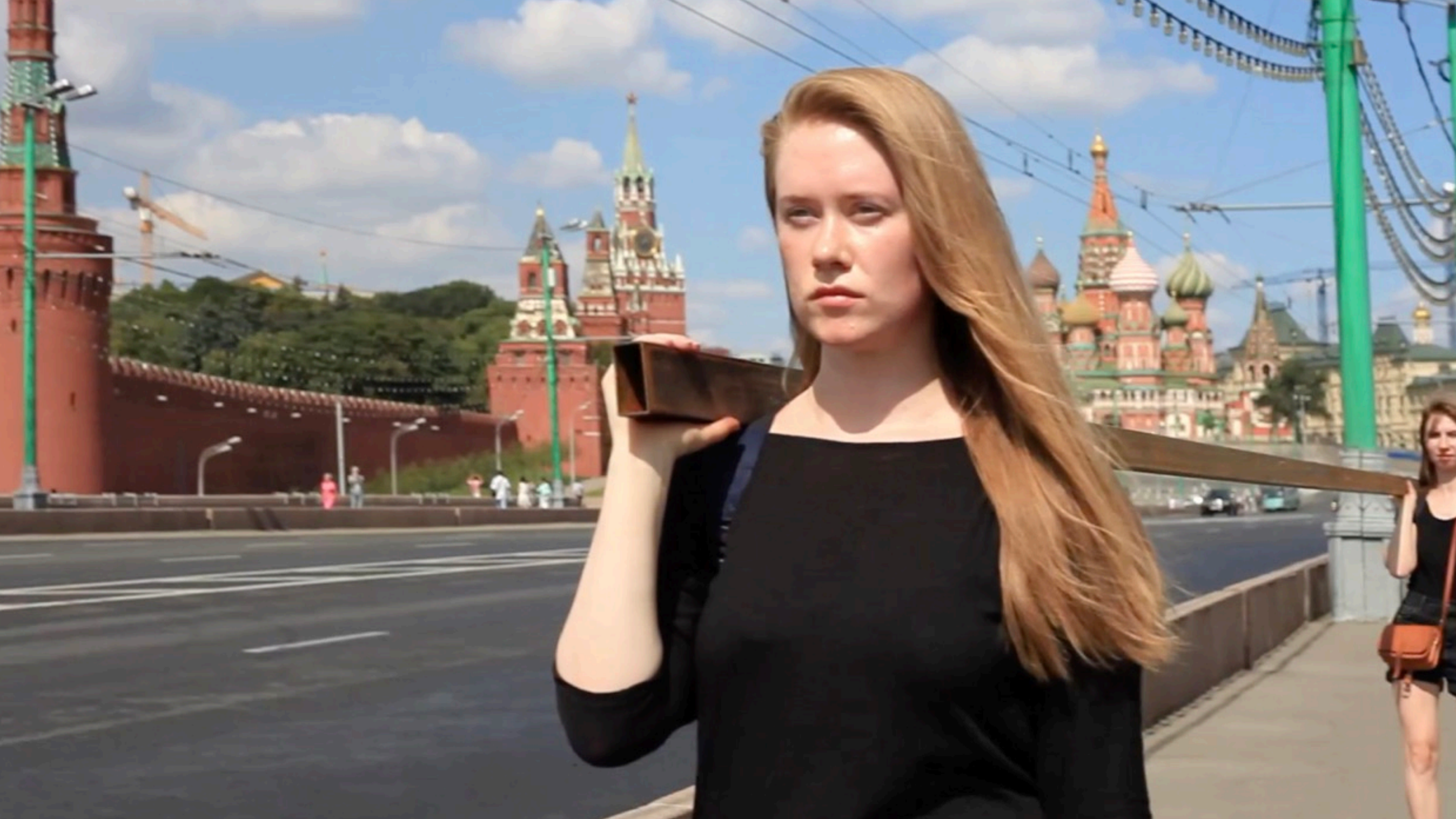
These terms—such as "fascist," "terrorist," or "leftist"—resonate as labels or stigmas, often employed in media discourse to categorize and bias perceptions of certain groups. By transforming these cups into objects of semantic confrontation, the artist shifts their function from mere utility to conceptual tools, turning each into a lens through which we observe others. The word on the cup acts as a distorting filter, shaping how we see others and, in turn, how we are seen.

The intervention thus engages a critical examination of how words—particularly those used in polarized political contexts—shape human interactions and guide judgments. Each spectator, holding a cup, becomes an unwitting carrier of an imposed idea or prejudice, creating a social dynamic where language wields a subtle yet pervasive influence.

By playing with the ordinary and the banal, this work underscores the power of words and their ability to structure relationships, while inviting us to question the mechanisms of categorization and stigmatization.







# Axe de Révolution

Performance, duration 17 hours, Moscow- with Katya Ev

**Axe de Révolution (2014)** is a 17-hour performance during which the artists silently walked through Moscow, from the northernmost point of the city's peripheral ring road to its southernmost point, carrying a six-meter-long, 13.5-kilogram rectangular metal beam. As the sun moved from east to west, they progressed from north to south, following a straight 45-kilometer line through the city. Their path intersected with Moscow's circular structure, evoking the Copernican heliocentric model (the *Copernican Revolution*), while their north-to-south trajectory formed a cross with the sun's course.

The term *revolution*, derived from Latin and coined by Copernicus, denotes circular motion. Yet, in its daily application, it signifies radical upheaval (often in a political sense). Without directly linking their action to history, the artists played on the imagery of the Russian Revolution. This duality highlighted their intention to "coordinate the movement of a cosmic body" and their "intimate effort toward profound inner revolution."

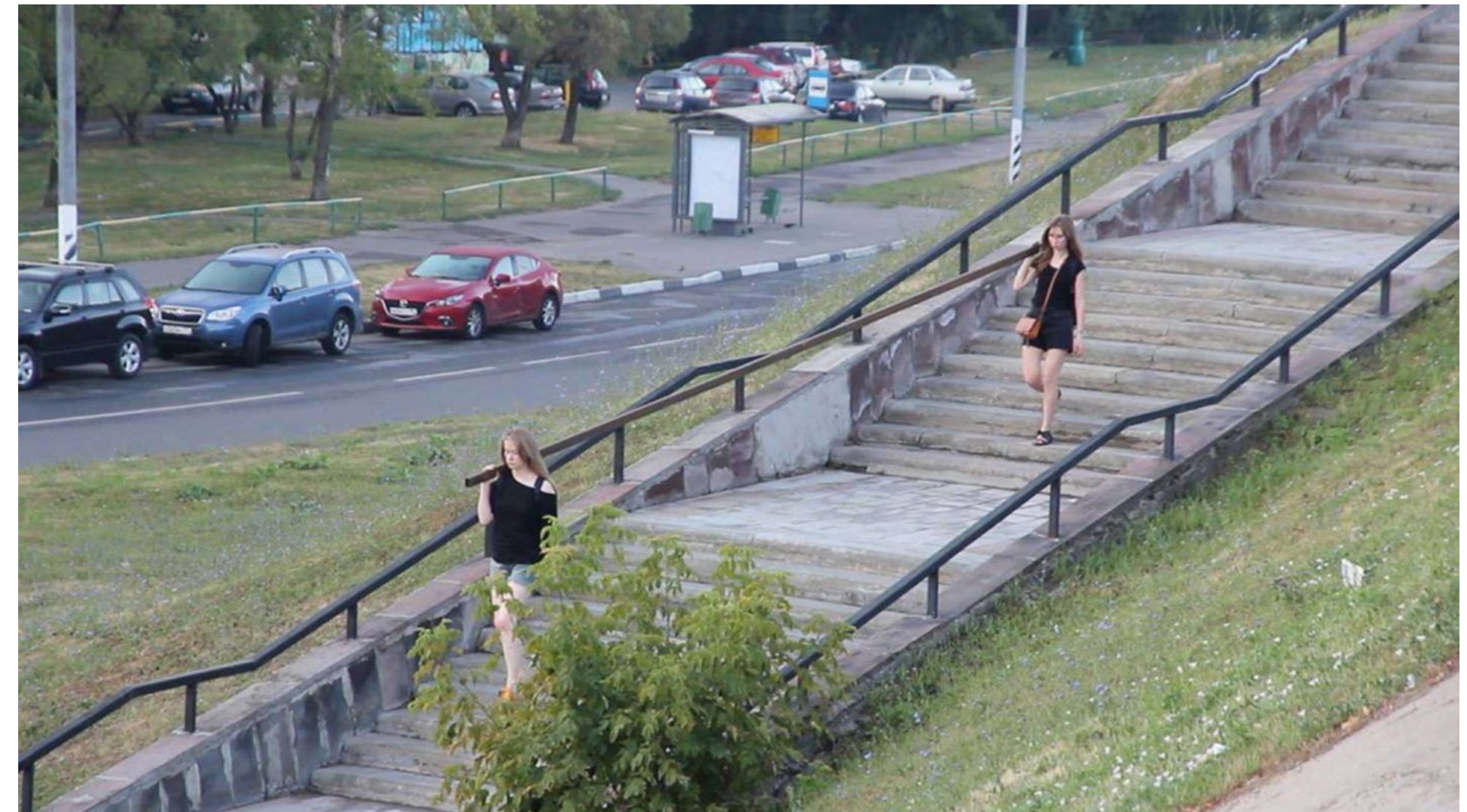
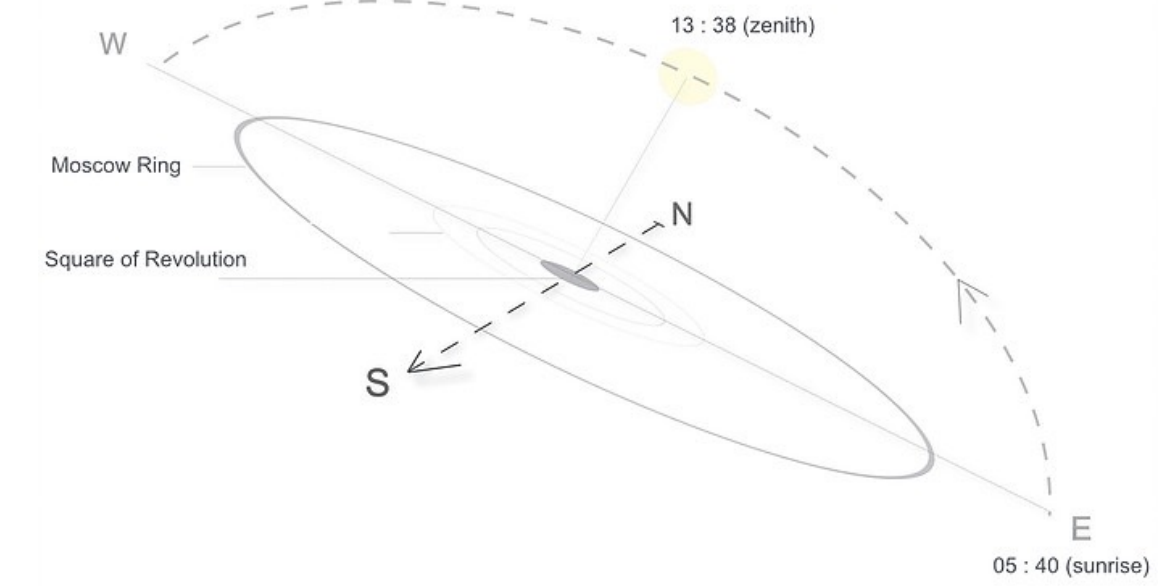
*Axis of Revolution* stands as a powerful example of abstract performance, completely non-functional by nature, a purely semantic entity born from a specific context. Its emotional intensity and meaning derive solely from its relationship to that context. Following the tightening of internal politics in Russia and the resurgence of state violence in 2011, the year 2014 marked a point of no return in Russia's contemporary history. Amid the war in Ukraine, it became evident that the country was on a path toward repression, a return to Soviet-era political propaganda, state lies, isolation, and nationalism.

At this historical juncture, two women carrying a heavy metal beam through the streets of Moscow evoked multiple layers of political, historical, and cultural reality: a famous episode from Vladimir Lenin's biography, where he carried a beam alongside workers on May 1, 1920; the ubiquitous construction work shaping Moscow's contemporary urban landscape; and the power dynamics embedded in the city's spatial design.

In the climate of hysteria and paranoia that dominated mainstream media reality, the performance was perceived as an act of political protest. It struck a nerve, provoking fear of yet another uprising, another action against the state. Several journalists, including those from typically art-hostile state-controlled channels, covered the procession.

In 2015, the artist duo was nominated for the Kandinsky Prize for *Axis of Revolution*.

– Text by Katya Krupennikova, curator and art critic, for the *End of the World* exhibition catalog, Luiggi Pecci Contemporary Art Center, Prato, Italy.



[Previous Page](#)

[Axis of Revolution](#)  
Screenshot from the video  
documentation, 2014

[Current Page](#)

[Axis of Revolution](#)  
Map of the performance  
route

[Performance Diagram](#)  
[Axis of Revolution](#)  
Screenshot from the video  
documentation, 2014

# Axe de Révolution

Performance, duration 17 hours, Moscow- with Katya Ev

The path—extraordinary in its length—and the scale of the object create the conditions for maximum concentration, aimed at accomplishing a task devoid of practical significance. Our walk fosters a shared experience, not within a functional framework, but through a relationship of intimacy. The city is no longer an abstract cartographic phenomenon; it becomes a tangible, bodily experience.

Like a long pilgrimage that enables self-transcendence, this 45-kilometer journey generates a new way of perceiving the city, establishes a new memory, and thus creates the possibility for an alternative history.”

Ekaterina Vasilyeva & Hanna Zubkova  
August 11, 2014

Excerpt from the text published on the eve of the performance

## Axe de révolution

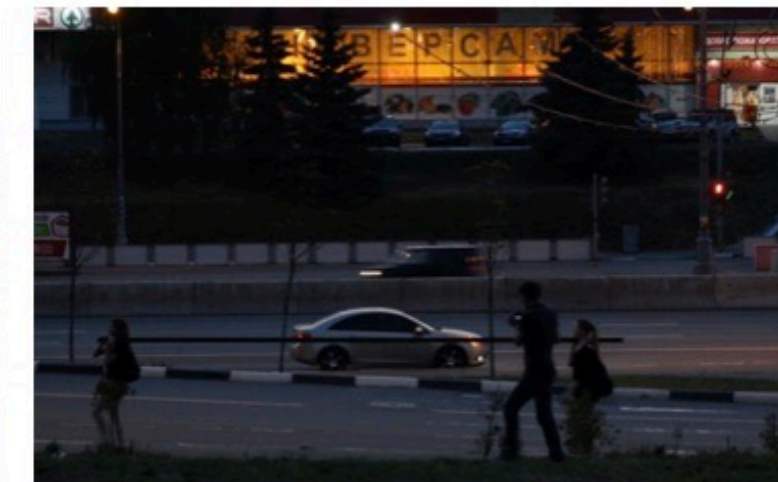
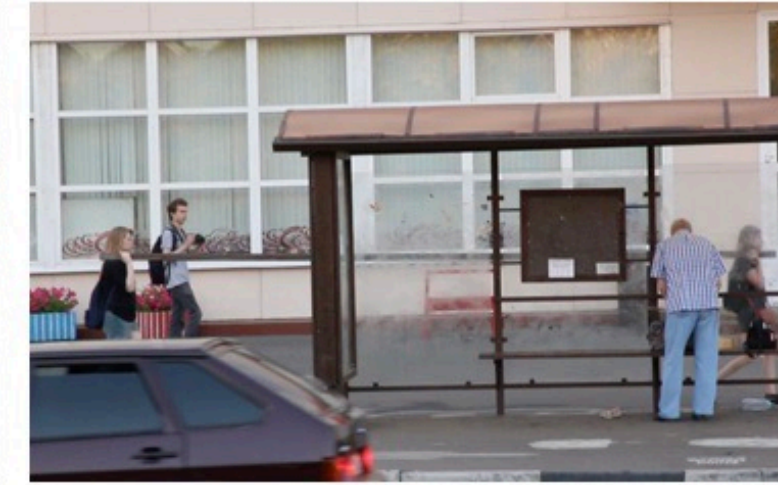
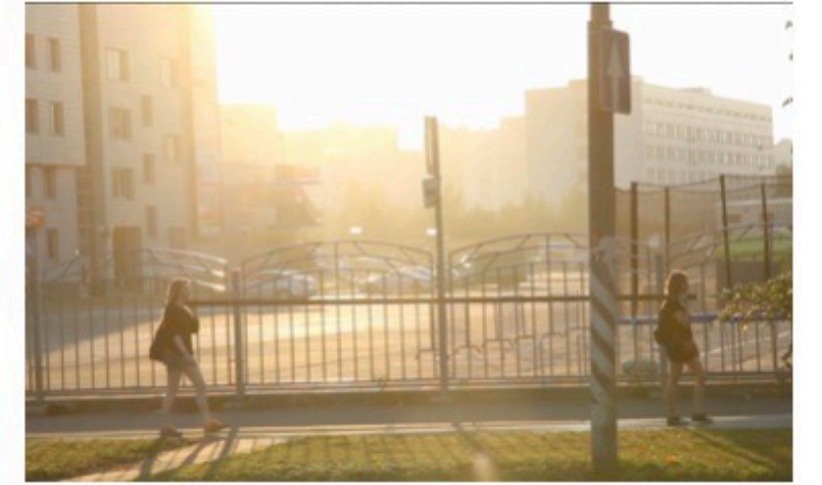
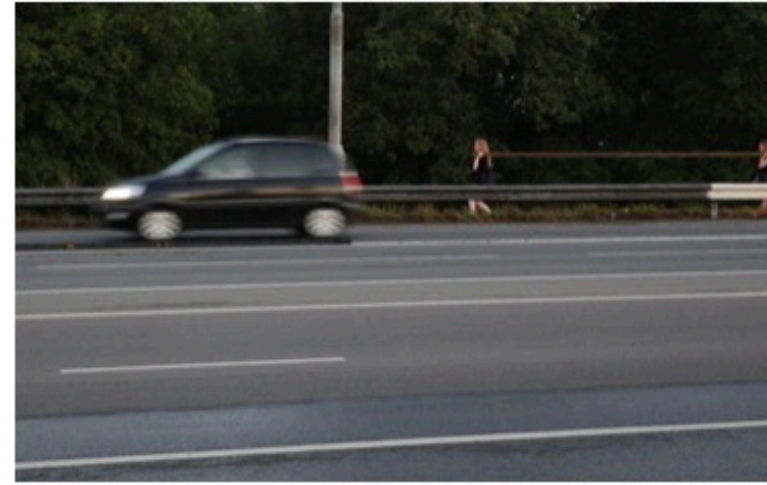
Documentation-film  
10h

Caméras :

Dima Philippov  
Roman Chudarev  
Katya Garkushko  
Katya Reischer  
Yanina Chernykh  
Asida Butba  
Leonid Larionov  
Natasha Timofeeva  
Anton Permyakov

Montage :

Nastyia Kuzmina





# Axe de Révolution

Performance, duration 17 hours, Moscow- with Katya Ev

However, the word "revolution" owes its initial ambiguity to the semantic antagonism inherent in its very origin. Before entering mass vocabulary as a political and social label signifying drastic change, "revolution" was first coined by Nicolaus Copernicus in *De revolutionibus orbium coelestium*. Here, the term "axis of revolution" acquired a specific meaning related to circular motion. A revolutionary himself, Copernicus dramatically transformed humanity's understanding of its place in the Universe. Transitioning from the terrestrial, sensory perspective of the geocentric world to a cosmic vision of heliocentrism, this shift led humanity to embrace the essential relativity of movements, velocities, positions, and trajectories—dependent on the scale of observation and the observer's position. The context in which a phenomenon is observed thus becomes an integral part of its perception.

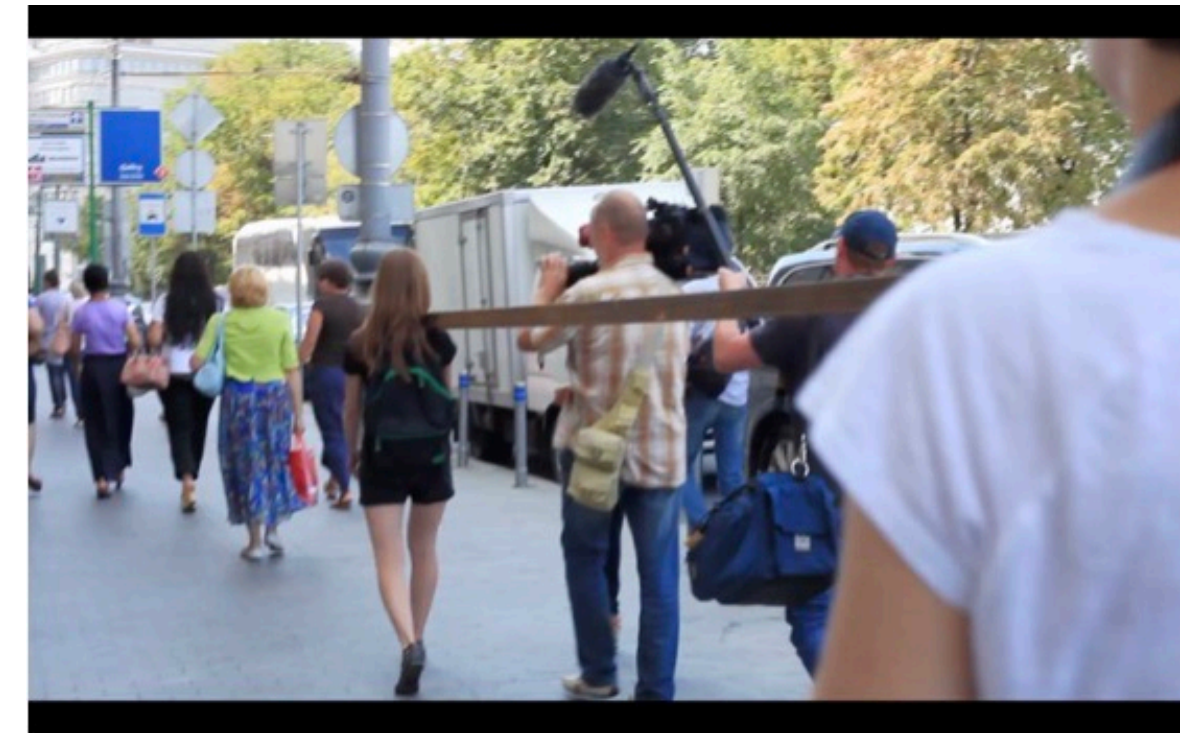
Scales and proportions serve as a critical lens through which the city's topography relates to the organization of celestial architecture, and how both are imagined and experienced on different levels—from the abstract to the empirical. This logic of scaling, to question the limits of perception, lies at the heart of *Axe de Révolution*. In the performance, the artists' journey is visualized as a schema viewed from above: as the artists move from north to south, the sun moves from right to left. The two trajectories form a cross inscribed within the city's circular structure. This symbolism is simultaneously enacted and CONTEXTd. While literally crossing Moscow's concentric rings from north to south, the artists reference Mircea Eliade's the interconnectedness of bipedalism and cruciform spatial orientation, while interroaatina the truth of The word "revolution" in the semantic field of Russian cultural and political contexts is heavily associated with the idea of radical change, implying discontinuity, the seizure of power, and rupture. Its existence in language and everyday usage is shaped by political and historical perspectives, making the meaning of "overturn" dominate over that of "rotation."

The end of the communist era marked the incoherence of the revolutionary idea, while the mythology surrounding the Russian proletarian revolution shaped how metaphors are imagined and interpreted. In this post-traumatic ambiguity, the perception of revolution in Russian consciousness is framed as something inherently dramatic and radical. Yet, it is also viewed as a utopian object—beyond reach—that continues to shine with its poetic and melancholic halo, evoking profound aspirations and experience, and a sculptural configuration of the performance itself, inspired by the city's own design.

Any action within the semantic framework of revolution—whether a social act or an artistic gesture—is perceived as potentially threatening to the status quo, activist, and politically charged. This reading of the performance *Axe de Révolution* was further influenced by the events of 2014, a year marked by the repression of social and political protests, the annexation of Crimea by the Russian Federation, and the onset of reciprocal international economic sanctions.

In *Axe de Révolution*, the gesture is removed from its usual context and evolves into a poetic response to the current situation on multiple levels—cultural, political, and social. A labor gesture, such as construction workers transporting a basic metal structure, transcends its association with the working class and enters the poetics of the Great Russian Revolution. As a gesture rooted in proletarian iconography—the famous Soviet folk fable of Lenin helping workers carry a construction element—it carries mythological motifs infused with the utopian socialist values promised by the Revolution.

Simultaneously, this gesture develops into a specific choreography, where the two bodies are interdependent, their movement determined by mutual non-verbal communication. Through their simple physicality, they evoke the idea of co-action and solidarity, intertwining practical labor with poetic resonance.







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# ncca -the zoo. excursion

Performance: One-Minute Excursion + One-Hour Artist Talk  
September 2017  
Part of the performative program of the Shiryaevo Biennale / NCCA,  
Moscow

In 2017, Russian filmmaker Kirill Serebrennikov was arrested and convicted in a case widely regarded as politically motivated, as he was known for his critical views.

During this time, Russian cultural institutions underwent drastic administrative changes: leadership positions at major institutions like the National Center for Contemporary Arts (NCCA) were replaced with former military personnel.

In this context, I was invited by independent curator Sasha Burenkov to design a performance in the form of an excursion around the NCCA.

The excursion format, traditionally proposed by the NCCA, was reinterpreted by me as a social sculpture and a form of intervention and scenario, rather than simply a genre. The performance consisted of two parts, corresponding to the formal tasks of an excursion:

## I. 'Guided Movement: March in Formation'

A specially designed text algorithm, based on habit and automatism, shaped a collective body out of the spectators. This protocol guided the audience to move in unusual ways, turning their choreography into an object of curiosity for passersby. As a result, the spectators themselves became objects of observation.

## II. 'The Tour: Captivity and Care'

The guided excursion, choreographed through movement, culminated in an artist talk. The audience was then confronted with communicating with the artist through grids. The direct presence of the artist and the enthusiasm sparked by this encounter coexisted with the physical discomfort caused by the grid. In this way, I played with the spectators' focus, inviting them to experience unconventional combinations of physical and emotional states while engaging in an otherwise banal and familiar situation.

The movement was guided by a 60-meter-long text placed along the path from the NCCA to the zoo entrance. The text required participants to walk backward—a movement unusual in the street but natural when reading signs (from left to right, in a vertical orientation, as on a page).



[Previous Page](#)

**NCCA - The Zoo. Excursion**  
Video documentation  
screenshot of the  
performance  
Hanna Zubkova waiting for  
the audience for the artist  
talk  
Moscow, 2017

[Current Page](#)

**NCCA - The Zoo. Excursion**  
Video documentation  
screenshot of the  
performance  
The audience follows the  
excursion guided by an  
algorithm

**NCCA - The Zoo. Excursion**  
Artist talk by Hanna  
Zubkova

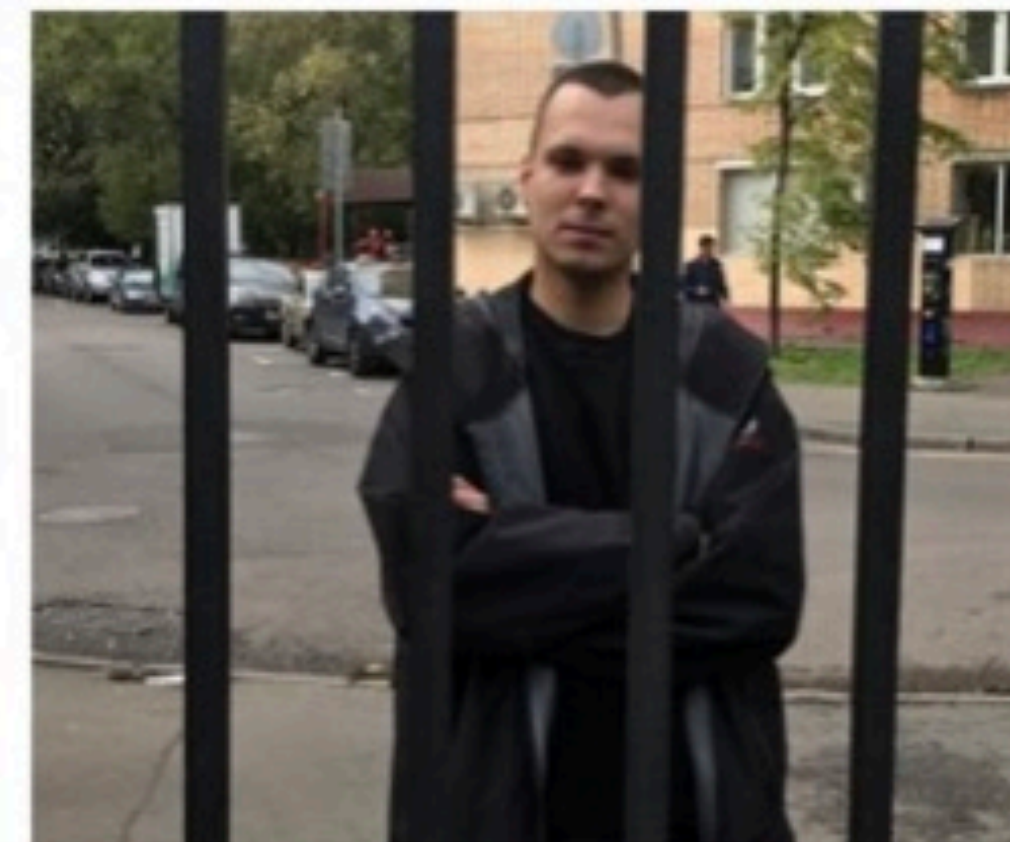
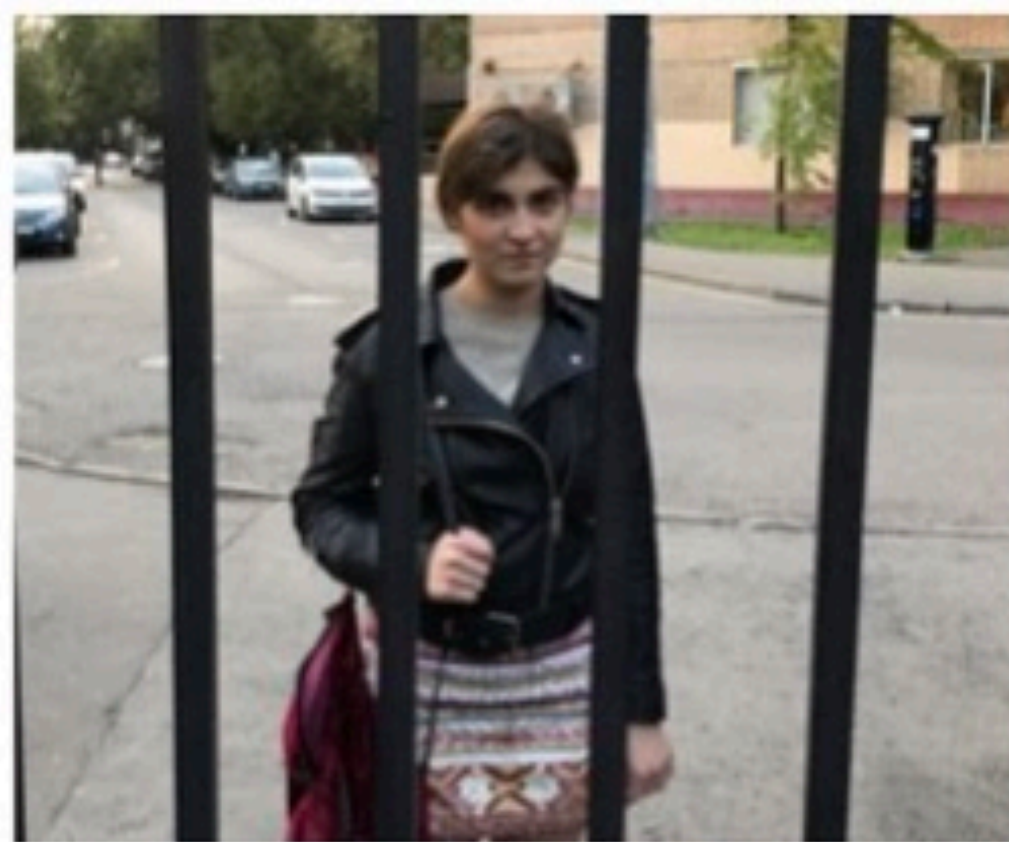




## ncca -the zoo. excursion

Performance: One-Minute Excursion + One-Hour Artist Talk  
September 2017  
Part of the performative program of the Shiryaevo Biennale / NCCA,  
Moscow

As an epilogue to my artist talk, I created portraits of the visitors.









CROMPTON  
HOMOSEXUALITY & CIVILIZATION  
LCC 8

REILLY  
CURATORIAL ACTIVISM  
SP 4

CREW, EDITOR  
THE GAY ACADEMIC  
SP 3

E  
Elisabeth Lebovici  
Ce que le sida m'a fait  
SP 1

LORDE  
SISTER OUTSIDER  
LCC 10

QUEER ART  
Renate Lorenz  
SP 2

Corydon  
ANDRÉ GIDE  
MHV

Wittig  
THE STRAIGHT MIND  
ELT

Monique Wittig  
La pensée straight  
FMHV CHZ 14

Alain Naze  
Manifeste contre la normalisation gay  
Manifeste contre la normalisation gay

Manifeste contre la normalisation gay

# Bibiloteka

Ongoing collection of books, community  
Collaboration with Sasha Pevak  
Started in 2018

**BIBLIOTEKA** is a mobile and performative LGBTQ+ library whose content is collectively curated. The project began during the exhibition *to Michael* (September 2018, DOC!). We started by reaching out to individuals we considered experts on the subject to help build a collection of books. Among those contacted were Elisabeth Lebovici, the founders of Jerk Off, GayKitschCamp publishers, Vigna bookstore in Nice, lesbian archives, and others. We asked each to suggest three essential books to include in the library. These books were made available for consultation on-site at DOC! during the exhibition.

We also presented **BIBLIOTEKA** in Bourges, but in a different form: a secret library. For this iteration, we "recruited" someone locally to act as a dealer, distributing books. This person anonymously contacted individuals who might be interested, and in exchange for a personal and significant object, they lent the books for a maximum of two weeks. At the end of the loan period, the object was, of course, returned to the borrower.

**Previous Page**

**BIBLIOTEKA**  
Detail view  
Exhibition *To Thomas* as  
part of the Jerk Off festival,  
DOC, Paris, 2018

**Current Page**

**BIBLIOTEKA**  
Exhibition view  
Exhibition *To Thomas* as  
part of the Jerk Off festival,  
DOC, Paris, 2018



# Taking Places

Project as ethical principle  
Dates and places vary  
Started in 2017

**Taking Places** is a series of interventions, encounters, and performances that I carry out in various cities in collaboration with curators, artists, independent venues, spontaneous platforms, communities, and institutions. The principle connecting these interventions is that of replaceability/substitution.

What could be a gesture of extreme weakness that transforms into an ethical principle, into hospitality, into love? What connections might be necessary after the rhizome, after multiplicities, after all synthetic and other structures that have become imaginable? Moving away from both multiple points and the relationships between them, what space can the artist occupy, and could this space now be "beside"? Ceasing to produce, yielding one's place, being near. Slipping between borders, lingering along thresholds, diffusing. Becoming replaceable.

It is from these reflections that **Taking Places** emerged—a series of interventions where, in varied forms depending on the context, I yield my place to others, becoming a guide, a companion. The phrase *Taking Places* can mean both "to take place, to occur" (passivity) and "to occupy spaces" (expansiveness). Yielding a place means occupying it together.

For my exhibition *Lieu à préciser* as part of the *Taking Places* series, I give my place to Kenny Duncan, the French artist, who presents the video *Des meubles*.

#### Current Page

**Taking Places**  
Exhibition view of *Lieu à préciser* by Hanna Zubkova  
at Église des Petits  
Augustins,  
Paris, 2018  
Photo by Romain Darnaud

#### Next Page

**Taking Places**  
View of the video by guest  
artist Kenny Duncan, part  
of the exhibition *Lieu à préciser* by Hanna Zubkova  
at Église des Petits  
Augustins,  
Paris, 2018  
Photo by Romain Darnaud







# Udoli. The Valeys

performative installation// opera  
triumph gallery  
july 17, 2017  
19.00 - 22.00

Udoli: A Collective Ecosystem

Participants: Ira Shirokaya, Tanya Nedelskaya, Nikolas Topor, Mike Rozenthal, Lena Kozak, Katya Hasina, Dasha Loyko, Rita Sokolovskaya, Tanya Silivonchik, Vika Nazarova, Maxim Sergeev, Nadya Molochko, Marianna Titova, Sveta Kovalyok, Yana Evdokimovich, Maria Trofimova, Azad Asifovich, Mihail Iampolskiy, Ira Znamenskaya.

*Udoli* is a collective project, a multi-layered ecosystem created by Hanna Zubkova in collaboration with artists, curators, performers, and theorists from Minsk, Moscow, Paris, London, and New York. Participants worked remotely, relying on textual descriptions of each other's works and the gallery space.

To craft the *Udoli* experience, the artist leveraged the geographic location of Triumph Gallery, surrounded by a police station, a church, a bank, shopping arcades, and the Kremlin. These topo-symbolic units form a concentrated context of hierarchy and infrastructure. Within this environment, the gallery appears both as a designated space for art and as one of the checkpoints along the viewer-participant's journey. This journey mirrors the hero's adventure in a myth, a video game, a saga, a parable, or even daily wanderings, with unpredictable (or perhaps predetermined) transitions, trajectories of movement, and eventual returns.

The concepts of space, topology, and endless transition between continua shape *Udoli*, which in Old Slavic means "valley" or "life's journey." The idea of a loop, a structure without beginning or end, where only movement and the relationships between points exist, forms the formal structure of the project and the metaphor that inspired participants to create works specifically for *Udoli*.

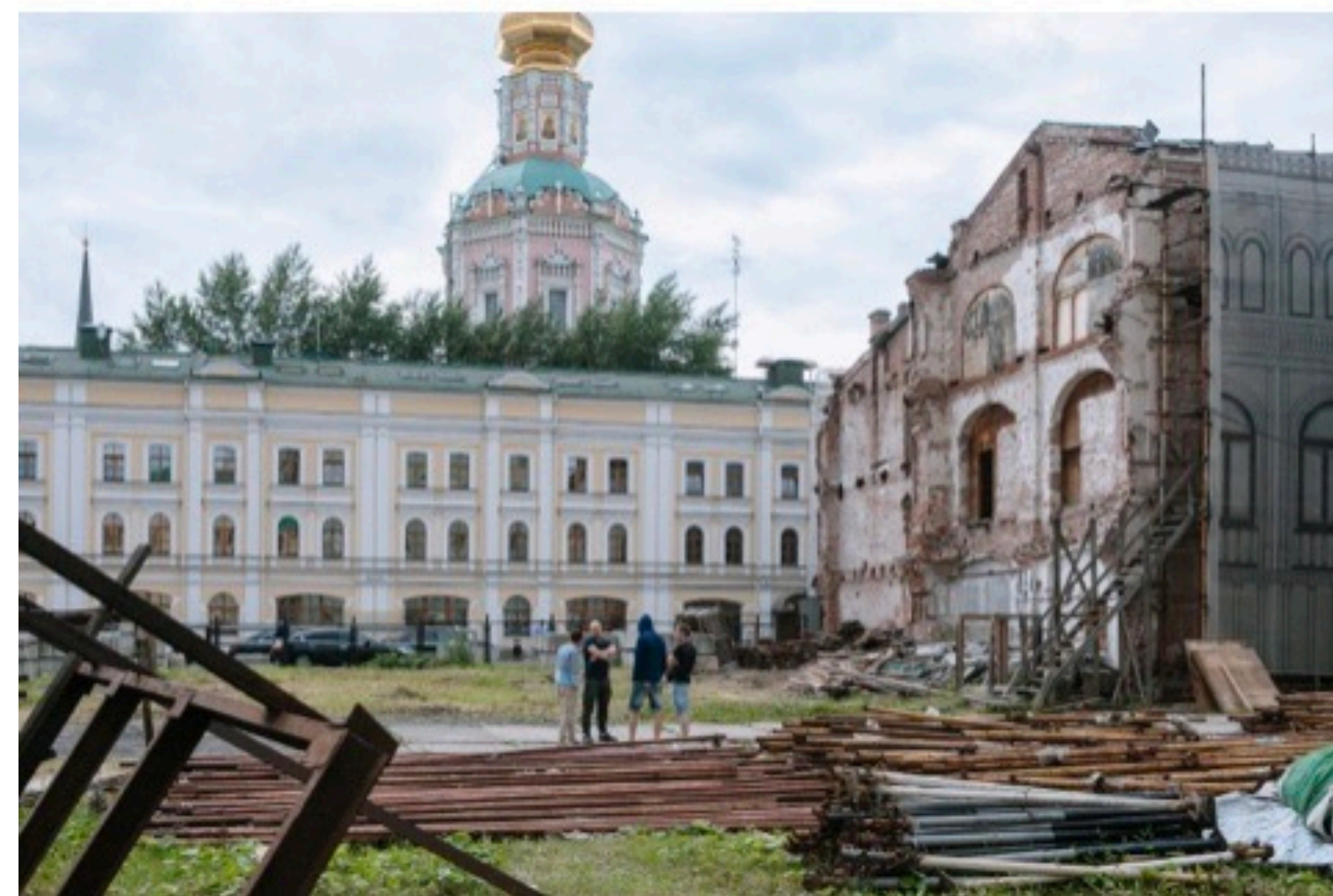
During the event, the gallery's main doors served exclusively for entry, while the audience was invited to complete a circuit by exiting through the rear door, crossing the courtyard, and re-entering through the main entrance. The courtyard, essentially an abandoned plot of land in the city center, was opened to the public for the first time in decades on July 17. Attempts to uncover its origins, who was responsible for its upkeep, or future development plans proved fruitless. At one point during the event, a call from an intermediary ordered the courtyard to be closed to the public. The reason for this closure remained unclear, and the space could not be reopened.

**Udoli** thus reflects the complex interplay of hierarchy, infrastructure, and unpredictable movement, creating a narrative of transitions and relationships that remain as enigmatic as the spaces it inhabits.

## Conversation with Philosopher Mikhail Iampolski

Born from exchanges with Hanna Zubkova during the development of *Udoli*

<https://www.hannazubkova.com/addressingthevoid>



### Previous Page

002040  
Katya Khassine, Rita  
Sokolovskaya, Hanna  
Zubkova  
Performance as part of  
*Udoli*  
Moscow, 2017

### Current Page

**It's Here**  
Live projection with rear  
projection,  
Plexiglas 240x140 cm  
Hanna Zubkova  
**Wasteland. Resolution**  
View of the wasteland in  
central Moscow, located in  
the backyard of the gallery.  
One of the stages in the  
spectator's journey through  
*Udoli*.

### Next Page

**Udoli. The Valleys**  
Exhibition view. The  
receptacle of  
representations, the place of  
art

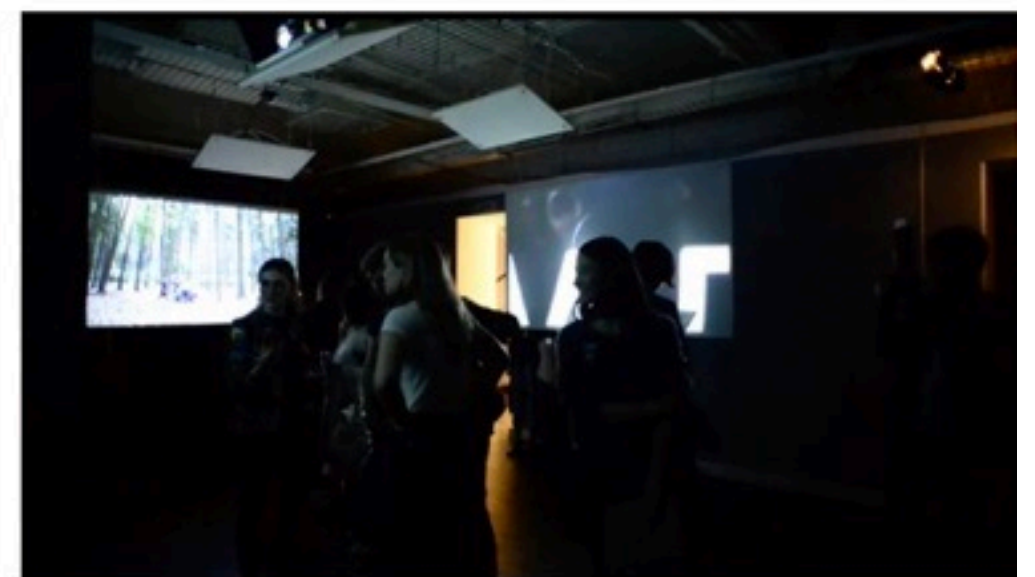
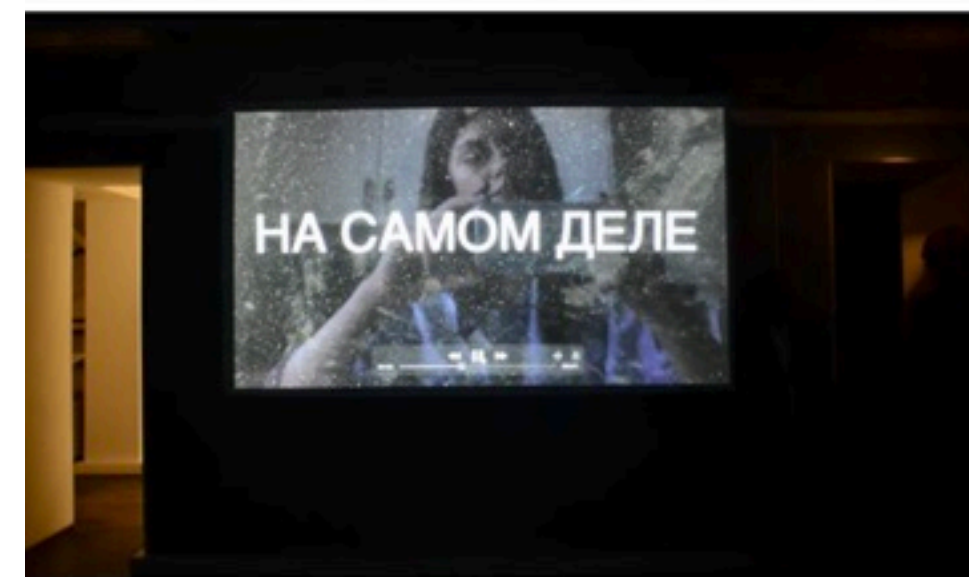


# Udoli. The Valeys

performative installation// opera  
triumph gallery  
july 17, 2017  
19.00 - 22.00

Works Presented in *Udoli*:

- **Paradise**  
*Sound sculpture, 28 min 9 sec*  
Tanya Nedelskaya (1983, Orsha, Belarus; lives and works in Paris)
- **Telefunken MC 100**  
*Sound installation*  
Maxim Sergeev (1976, Saint-Petersburg; lives and works in Moscow)
- **Ad-agio**  
*Video performance, 14 min 7 sec*  
Hanna Zubkova (1988, Minsk; lives and works in Minsk and Paris)  
Collaborating with independent dance theatre *Skyline* by Ira Shirokaya (1990, Republic of Georgia)  
Performers: Lena Kozak, Tanya Silivonchik, Vika Nazarova, Nadya Molochko, Marianna Titova, Sveta Kovalyok, Yana Evdakimovich, Maria Trofimova
- **Waiting for Grodoudou**  
*Gameplay recording, 30 sec – 2 min*  
Mike Rosenthal aka Vector Belly
- **Echos from Interzone**  
*Video, 3D animation, 5 min 13 sec*  
Nicolas Topor (1979, Paris; lives and works in Paris)
- **In Fact**  
*Video performance, 3 hours*  
Dasha Loyko (1995, Minsk; lives and works in London)



Current Page

**Udoli. The Valleys**  
Exhibition view. The receptacle of representations, the empty place of art

**Udoli. The Valleys**  
View of screens displaying video works by participant



# Udoli. The Valeys

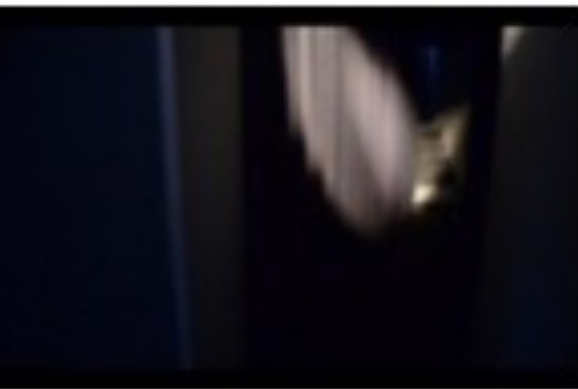
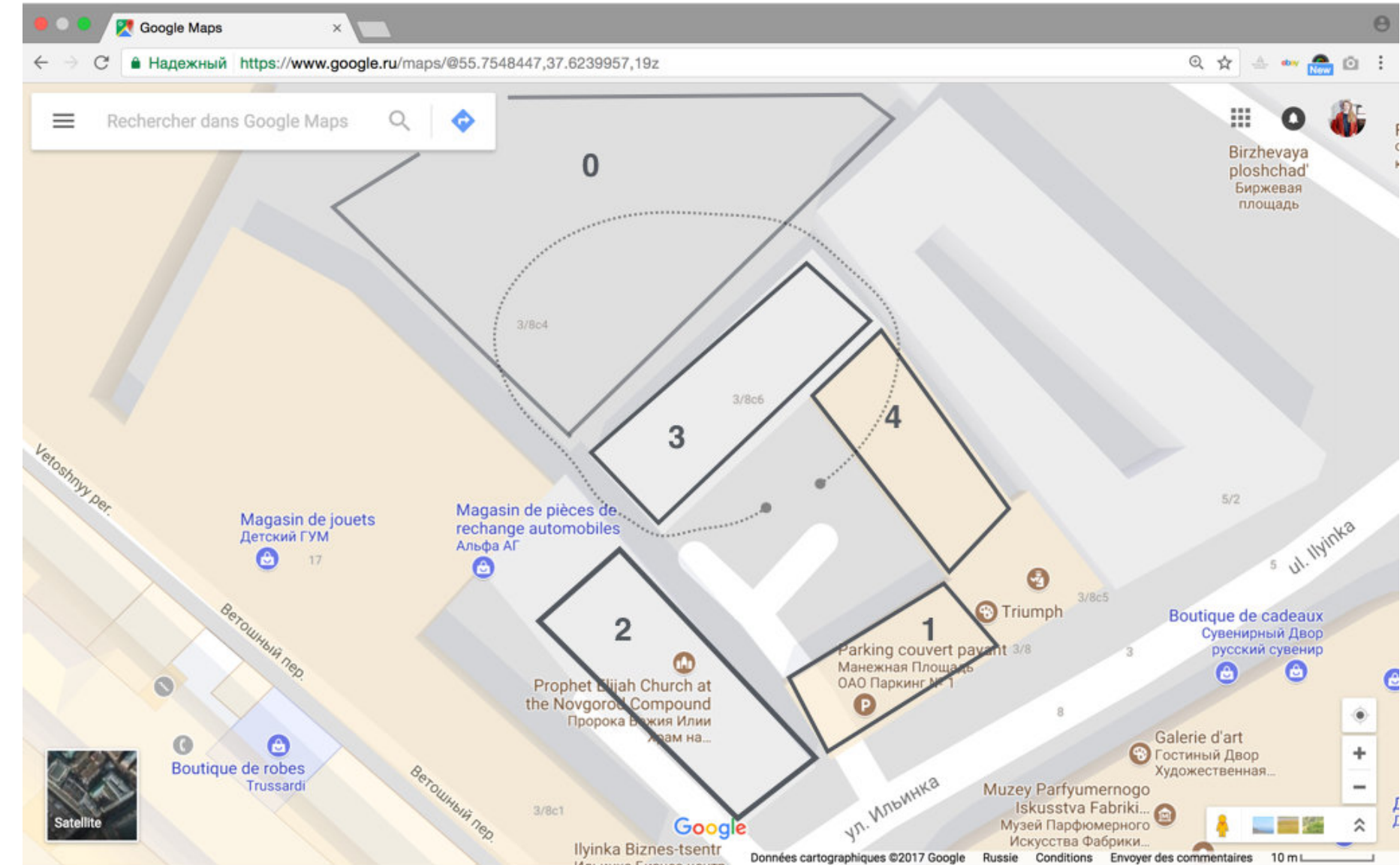
performative installation// opera  
triumph gallery  
july 17, 2017  
19.00 - 22.00

During the event, the central doors of the gallery were used exclusively for entry, while the exit was directed through the back door, leading the audience into an abandoned plot of land in the heart of the capital. After completing a circuit, visitors returned to the main entrance.

The vacant lot was opened to the public for the first time in decades since its "creation." How it came to exist, who is responsible for its preservation, who oversees the development of its internal ecosystem, and what its future holds—these are questions for which answers remain impossible to uncover.

Video documentation here:

<https://www.hannazubkova.com/udoli-videodocumentation>



## Current Page

**Wasteland. Resolution**  
Map of the spectator's journey between the church, the bank, the police station, and the gallery

**Wasteland. Resolution**  
Photo documentation of the spectators' journey

## Next Page

**Wasteland. Resolution**  
Screenshot from the video documentation capturing the moment when a security guard asks the audience not to linger on the private wasteland





# To Paul To Matthew To Philip

Performance and video installation,  
Former NATO Submarine Base Olavsvern, Tromsø, Norway, 2015  
With Katya Ev

The project *To Paul, To Matthew, To Phillip* was developed in situ during a residency at Olavsvern (Tromsø, Norway), a former NATO base built during the Cold War inside a massive fjord. The residency brought together fourteen Russian and Norwegian artists for a project titled “*Nothing Will Grow Together Because Nothing Belongs Together*”, which explored notions of freedom and control by examining the identity of the base through the imaginary of Cold War conflict.

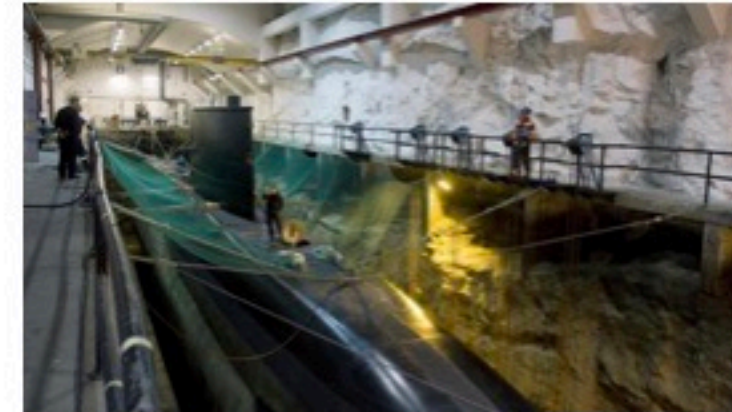
Hanna Zubkova and Ekaterina created a theatrical piece composed of a live performance and a video installation.

A 12-meter-tall green velvet curtain was installed at the end of a submarine dock approximately 400 meters long. Hanging from a loading crane, the curtain extended down into the depths of the water. It appeared as a peculiar sculpture—a massive, geometric mass of material evoking both a theater curtain and Kubrick’s monolith. Its color, identical to the water in the dock, created an ambiguous impression: it seemed to either fall and drown or grow and rise from the water. On one side of the curtain, a video projection displayed two hands slowly reaching toward each other: Hanna’s hand offering a glass of water to Katya’s. This action lasted approximately 11 minutes. Simultaneously, behind the curtain, the same gesture was performed live but reversed and mirrored: Katya offering a glass of water to Hanna. A stage lighting installation on the crane illuminated the water, revealing its true green color, which otherwise appeared entirely black in the dock. The performance unfolded within this halo of light. The curtain remained in the dock after the performance and now bears traces of saltwater along its edges.

## WATER

The glass used in the performance, found in the base’s control station, held water—the fundamental element of life. At the same time, within the context of Olavsvern, a former nuclear submarine base, the dock water symbolized its military use. Through the image of water, the installation and performance invoked the tension between essence and existence.

The gesture of offering and receiving a glass of water recalls the standardized, unified life of a community, such as that of the base, while simultaneously evoking the image of the Grail. The slow passage of water created a sculptural vision of two figures moving toward union, drawing attention to the delicacy of this action within the grim and oppressive military context.



### Previous Page

**To Paul To Matthew To Philip**  
View of the installation and performance.  
Photo by Dima Filipov, 2015

### Current Page

**Olavsvern**  
View of the naval base hidden in a fjord.  
Online source

**To Paul To Matthew To Philip**  
Collection of photo documentation of the installation and performance

**To Paul To Matthew To Philip**  
Screenshot from the projection video  
By Hanna Zubkova and Katya Ev, 2015

# To Paul To Matthew To Philip

Performance and video installation,  
Former NATO Submarine Base Olavsvern, Tromsø, Norway, 2015  
With Katya Ev

## THE CURTAIN

The term "Iron Curtain" was popularized by Churchill in his Fulton speech, borrowing from Goebbels, who had coined the metaphor in this particular sense in his article *Das Jahr 2000*. The metaphor became a symbol of an era of separation, while the "fall of the Iron Curtain" marked the beginning of the Cold War. It evoked the image of an enemy—an Other behind the curtain, belonging to a world separate from one's own. Guy Debord described this conflict as a spectacle, where spectacular imagery alienates individuals from authentic life and excludes dialogue.

The mirrored structure, with its two illusory sides, reflected in the Cold War conflict, signifies that the curtain in fact has only one side. The Other, who appears to stand on the imagined opposite side, is actually oneself, reflected. The curtain, as an image of detachment, embodies a sense of separation while also evoking the idea of disguise and concealment. It is a rupture, a boundary that creates two sides from one unity. The ambiguity of the Iron Curtain lies in the mutual agreement of both sides to amplify fear and tension.

From a communicative perspective, this structure follows the logic of a mirror, meaning that an imaginary line dividing the space creates a symmetrical system where one side reflects the other, projecting itself. This suggests that the potential for empathetic understanding lies in the acceptance of oneself through the Other, enabled by trust and transmission.

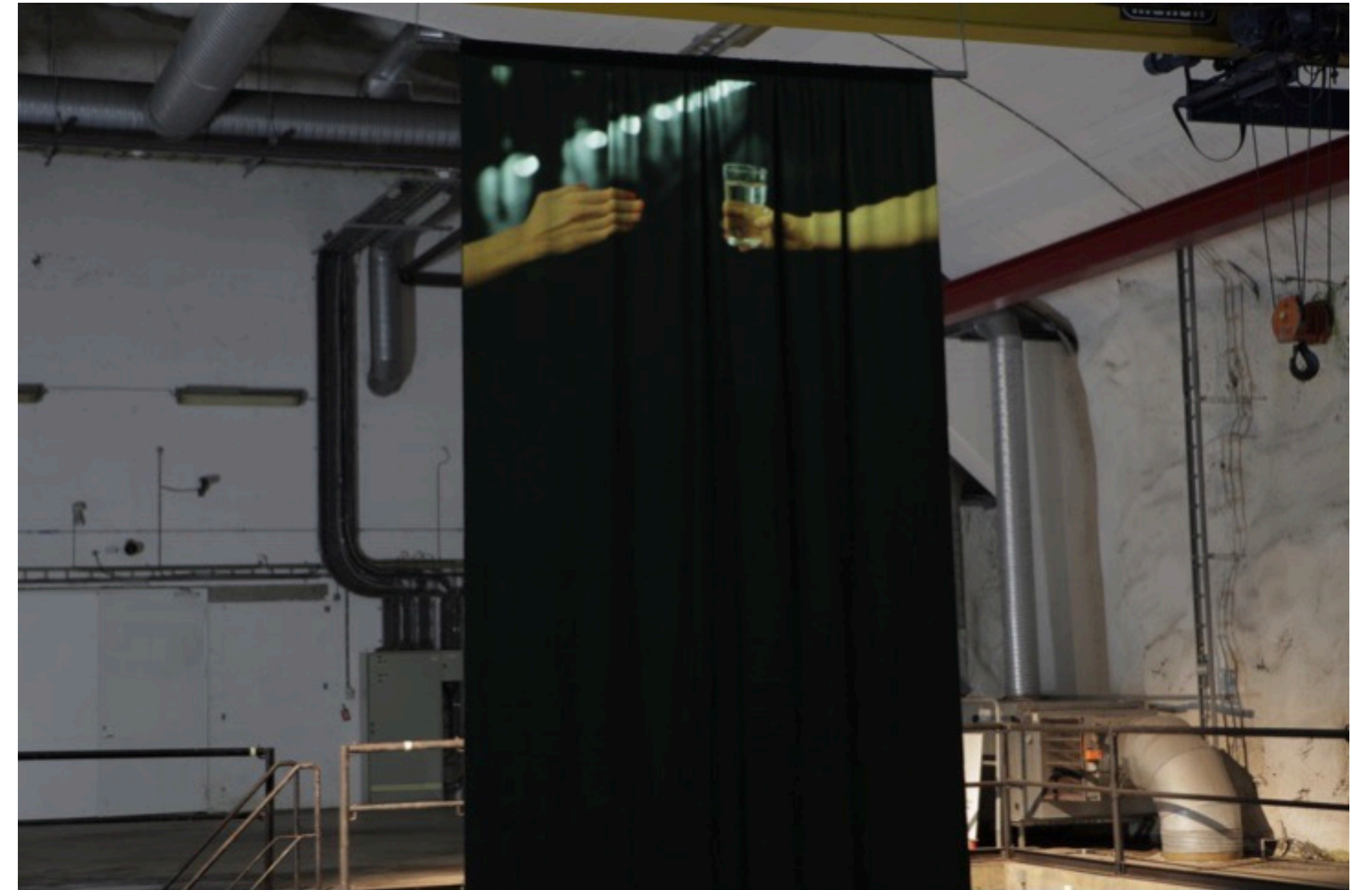
These ideas of illusory separation and the mirrored logic of artificially constructed conflicts informed the installation and performance, making the contextual element—water—the central focus. Water carries not only universal iconography and metaphorical significance but is also contextually meaningful as a natural resource once exploited for military purposes to house submarines. In this work, water is restored through the revelation of its color, texture, substance, and meaning.

## THE GESTURE

The passing of a glass of water, a simple and ordinary act, is one of the fundamental forms of extra-linguistic communication—a primary interaction between two human beings and the transmission of the element most essential to human life.

Through the meditative choreography of a gesture that is both simple, mundane, and essential, the performance mediates the dynamic potentiality of two forces moving toward each other. This creates a general sense of tension and anticipation, arising from the mutual effort to draw closer. Finally, a resolution occurs as the object is passed, but this resolution is not definitive—the movement remains potentially perpetual. The transmission metaphorically continues with the audience, who follow the women from the performance site into the tunnels.

“We move toward each other as slowly as possible, focused on a deliberate gesture, otherwise banal and automatic. We walk toward one another at an extremely slow pace, resisting inertia, rendering each movement intentional and actualizing our bodies and minds in their entirety through the overall vibration generated by the movement, synchronized with the scale of the space, the light, and the sound. We finally meet, uniting for a moment: one of us passes a glass to the other.”



Current Page

To Paul To Matthew To Philip  
Collection of photo  
documentation of the installation  
and performance.





# To Paul To Matthew To Philip

Performance and video installation,  
Former (?) NATO Submarine Base Olavsvern, Tromsø, Norway, 2015  
With Katya Ev

## EPILOGUE. 2024


The base was carved into the side of a high mountain near Tromsø. Olavsvern was heavily used by warships patrolling the Barents Sea to monitor Russian submarines. After the collapse of the Soviet Union, Olavsvern was decommissioned and sold to private investors in 2013. By that time, Russia had already begun rebuilding its military capacity in the Arctic. Following Russia's annexation of Crimea in 2014, Arctic infrastructure once again became a strategic necessity. Consequently, Olavsvern was recommissioned for military use in 2021, though under commercial ownership.

The authors conclude that military infrastructure is expensive to establish, maintain, and operate in the Arctic. Decisions to decommission and sell specialized military infrastructure must be made carefully, as future security situations can never be predicted with certainty.

## Previous Page

**Olavsvern**  
Current state of the base.  
Found online.  
Article: "*Arctic Military  
Infrastructure: The  
Olavsvern Case*"



A black and white close-up portrait of a young man with dark, curly hair. He is looking slightly to the right of the camera with a neutral expression. The background is a textured, light-colored surface, possibly a wall or a backdrop. At the bottom center of the image, there is a yellow text overlay.

**Filipe, Tomé...**

# I Agamben Fries an Egg I

## Performance

Installation, 6 x 5 meters: black space, freezer, plasma screen (video, 1 hour, HD), formula (chalk), printed text, mirror, chess pieces.

Vinzavod, 2015

The exhibition portrays a state of anticipation: will Giorgio Agamben accept Ekaterina and Hanna's proposal? Will the egg fried by Agamben fit into the freezer installed in the black space of the exhibition, as the most secure means of preserving the sole possible artifact of the "event to come"?

While the freezer preserves emptiness, the other elements of the installation in the *Leaving Tomorrow* exhibition represent different modes of existence for the statement "*Giorgio Agamben fries an egg*": a mathematical logic formula and a video recording of the first conversation between Ekaterina, Hanna, and Agamben during the annunciation of the proposal.

The exhibition space—a black square—is a spatial projection of a chessboard square. It is on square D6 that Alice meets Humpty Dumpty in Lewis Carroll's *Through the Looking-Glass*. Humpty Dumpty is both an egg and a wise figure sitting in a lotus position. Simultaneously fallen and seated on the wall from which he falls, he evokes the "trickster" from Agamben's *The Coming Community*.

Ekaterina and Hanna adopt Alice's logic from *Through the Looking-Glass* in their interaction with reality through the act of Giorgio Agamben frying an egg.

Square D6 is not merely a spatial designation but a system of events. It can be structured in multiple specific ways throughout the time the hero traverses it. According to Humpty Dumpty's law of thermodynamics, the greater the number of ways this system can be organized, the higher the entropy. At a certain point, when the irreparable event occurs, the level of disorder reaches a state where the hero must make the next move.



## Previous Page

*The Gospel According to St. Matthew*, by Pier Paolo Pasolini, 1964  
One of the main roles is played by the philosopher Giorgio Agamben.

## Current Page

## Research Data

Photo of Hanna Zubkova and Giorgio Agamben, Prato, 2015, by Katya Ev

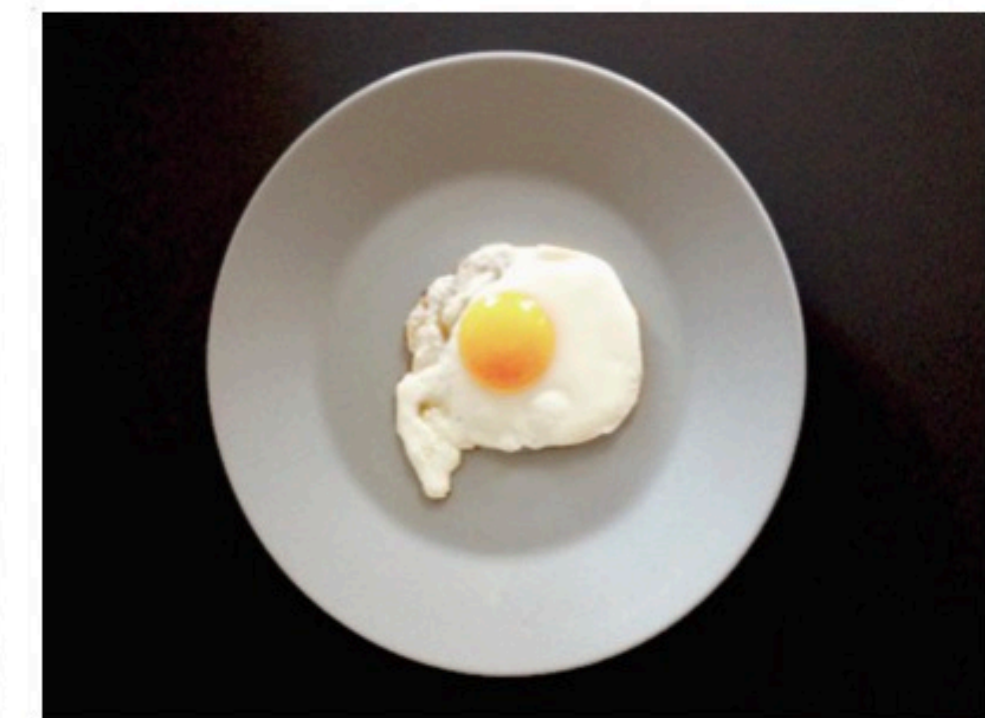
A chess problem taken from the explanatory book for *Alice Through the Looking-Glass* by Lewis Carroll. The arrangement of the pieces illustrates the steps Alice must take to cross the board.

Medieval engraving depicting the egg as a symbol of world order. Fried egg (or "mirror egg").

**R E D**

*White Pawn (Alice) to play, and win in eleven moves.*

	PAGE		PAGE
1. R. Q. to K. R.'s 4th	140	1. R. Q. to K. R.'s 4th	140
2. W. Q. to Q. B.'s 4th (after shawl)	147	2. W. Q. to Q. B.'s 4th (after shawl)	147
3. W. Q. to Q. B.'s 5th (becomes sheep and Tweedledee)	149	3. W. Q. to Q. B.'s 5th (becomes sheep and Tweedledee)	149
4. W. Q. to K. B.'s 8th (leaves egg on shelf)	168	4. W. Q. to K. B.'s 8th (leaves egg on shelf)	168
5. W. Q. to Q. B.'s 8th (flying from R. K.)	179	5. W. Q. to Q. B.'s 8th (flying from R. K.)	179
6. R. Kt. to K.'s 2nd (ch.)	200	6. R. Kt. to K.'s 2nd (ch.)	200
7. W. Kt. to K. B.'s 5th	202	7. W. Kt. to K. B.'s 5th	202
8. Alice to Q.'s 8th (coronation)	213	8. R. Q. to K.'s sq. (examination)	220
9. Alice becomes Queen	220	9. Queens castle	223
10. Alice castles (feast)	223	10. W. Q. to Q. R.'s 6th (soup)	230
11. Alice takes R.Q. & wins	230		



# I Agamben Fries an Egg I

## Performance

Installation, 6 x 5 meters: black space, freezer, plasma screen (video, 1 hour, HD), formula (chalk), printed text, mirror, chess pieces.  
Vinzavod, 2015

Ekaterina and Hanna approached the idea of frying an egg with Giorgio Agamben as a logical-alchemical problem, a game, and an adventure—a metaphorical projection of Alice's journey in *“Through the Looking-Glass”* by Lewis Carroll.

Alice's eleven moves across the chessboard universe, where she encounters Humpty Dumpty at square d6, were adopted as a metaphor for interacting with reality. This binary dimension mediates events from different systems while creating a space for reflection.

The game begins when the hero expresses a willingness to play and transform. Only after this declaration can the first move be made. This involves pre-existing rules and codes, yet the unfolding of the game is filled with unforeseen events, as experienced by the hero. It possesses the qualities of an alchemical process, where knowledge of the procedure outlines the path, but the inner twists and turns escape predetermined boundaries. The game is a journey for the hero, through these vicissitudes, toward their hidden self, which exists within them from the start but requires a journey to be revealed—like a Pawn that already contains the potential to become a Queen, yet must traverse the board to realize its transformation.

*“Through the Looking-Glass”* serves as a metaphor that diffuses its semantic repertoire of imagery across the structure and events of the journey. The *Forest of No Names* represents an extralinguistic universe, the *Shop of Lost Objects* symbolizes the inconceivability of the empirical world, and Humpty Dumpty emerges as a trickster figure, one that escapes the power of language.



8. Lewis Carroll's text, with a partial transcription of it into current logical notation can now be set out as follows:

“You are sad,” the Knight said in an anxious tone: “let me sing you a song to comfort you.”  
“Is it very long?” Alice asked, for she had heard a good deal of poetry that day.

“It's long,” said the Knight, “but it's very, very beautiful. Everybody that hears me sing it—either it brings the tears into their eyes, or else—”

“Or else what?” said Alice, for the Knight had made a sudden pause.

“Or else it doesn't, you know. The name of the song is called ‘Haddock's Eyes.’”

*The Knight:*  
 $(\exists x)(y)((y \text{ is a KS} \Rightarrow x \text{ is a KS}) \cdot (x \text{ is long}) \cdot (x \text{ is very, very beautiful}))$ .

*The Knight:*  
 $(\exists x)(y)(z)(t)((y \text{ is a KS} \Rightarrow x \text{ is a KS}) \cdot (z \text{ hears the Knight sing } x \text{ at time } t \supset ((x \text{ brings tears to the eyes of } z \text{ at time } t) \vee \sim (x \text{ brings tears to the eyes of } z \text{ at time } t))))$ .

*The Knight:*  
The call-name of the name of The Song = ‘Haddock's Eyes.’



# I Agamben Fries an Egg I

## Performance

Installation, 6 x 5 meters: black space, freezer, plasma screen (video, 1 hour, HD), formula (chalk), printed text, mirror, chess pieces.  
Vinzavod, 2015

The exhibition portrays a state of anticipation: will Giorgio Agamben accept Ekaterina and Hanna's proposal? Will the egg fried by Agamben fit into the freezer installed in the black space of the exhibition, preserving it as the only possible artifact of the "event to come"?

While the freezer preserves emptiness, the other elements in the "*Leaving Tomorrow*" exhibition represent different modes of existence for the enunciation "*Giorgio Agamben fries an egg*": a mathematical logic formula and a video documenting the first conversation between Ekaterina, Hanna, and Agamben during the proposal's annunciation.

The exhibition space—the black square—is a spatial projection of a chessboard square. It is on square D6 that Alice meets Humpty Dumpty in Lewis Carroll's *Through the Looking-Glass*. Humpty Dumpty is simultaneously an egg and a sage seated in a lotus position. Both fallen and sitting atop the wall from which he falls, he evokes the "trickster" figure from Agamben's *The Coming Community*.

Ekaterina and Hanna adopt Alice's logic from *Through the Looking-Glass* in their interaction with reality through the act of Giorgio Agamben frying an egg.

Square D6 is not merely a spatial designation but a system of events, capable of being structured in multiple specific ways throughout the time the hero traverses it. According to Humpty Dumpty's law of thermodynamics, the greater the number of ways this system can be organized, the higher the entropy. At a certain point, when the irreparable event occurs, the level of disorder reaches a state where the hero must make the next move.



Current Page

I Agamben Fries an Egg I.  
Avant propos  
Exhibition view  
Part of the group exhibition  
*Leaving Tomorrow*,  
Vinzavod, Moscow, 2015

# I Agamben Fries an Egg I

## Performance

Installation, 6 x 5 meters: black space, freezer, plasma screen (video, 1 hour, HD), formula (chalk), printed text, mirror, chess pieces.

Vinzavod, 2015

In the black space of a chessboard square, a formula, letters, and words exist as different modes of being for the enunciation: "Agamben fries an egg." The spatial arrangement (D6) consists of the following elements:

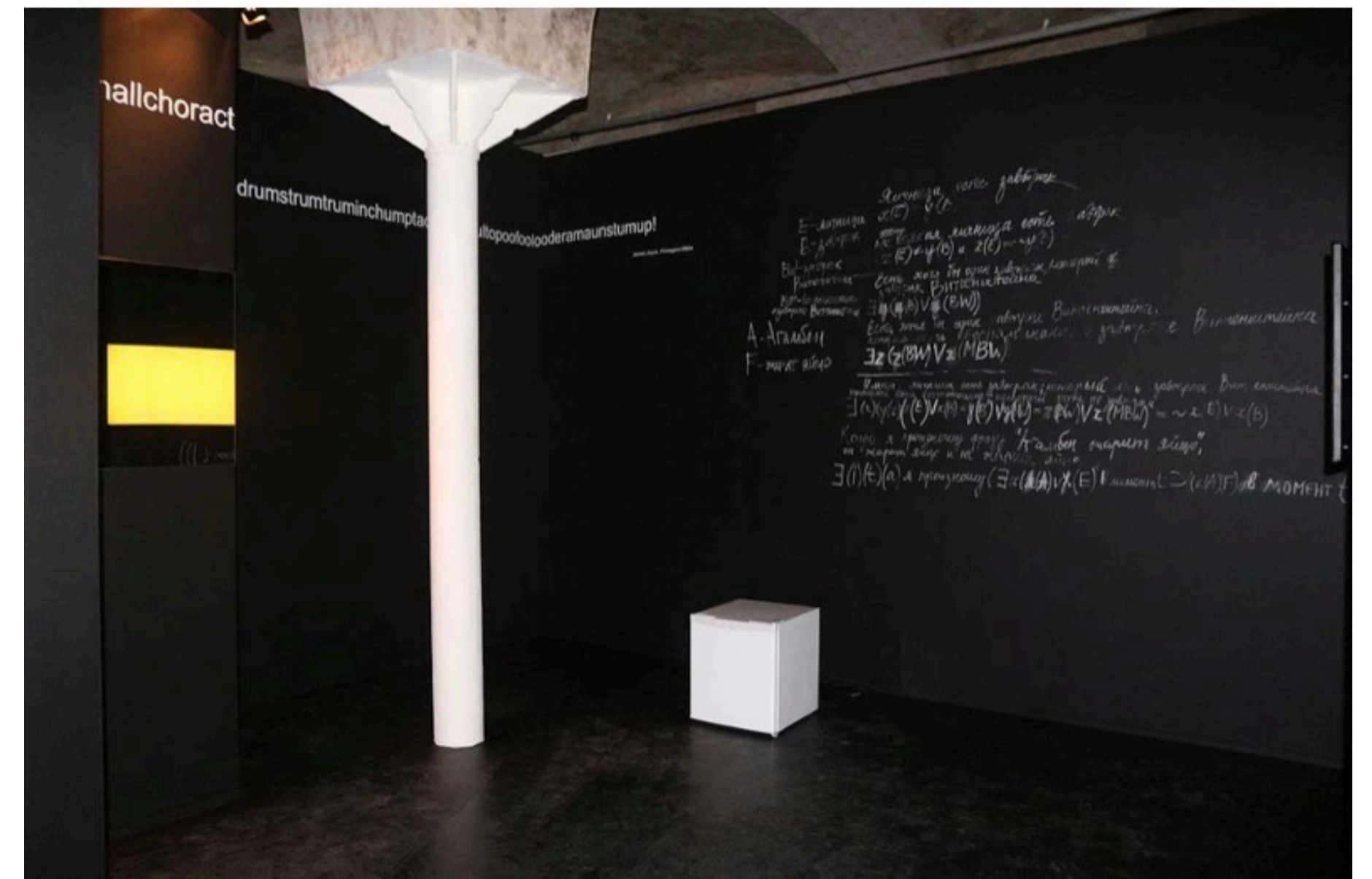
- Black square space: 600 x 500 cm
- **Plasma screen:** 93 x 52 cm. Displays a conversation between Hanna, Katya, and Giorgio Agamben.
- **Freezer:** 60 x 50 cm. This cube preserves emptiness, frozen in the present moment. It also holds the potential testimony of a future event: an artifact in the form of an egg fried by Agamben.
- **Mirror:** 90 x 60 cm. In this mirror, spectators can read the first text, printed on the wall in reverse. Echoing the *Jabberwocky* poem that Alice reads in the mirror at the start of her adventure, this text was the first project description submitted to the institution, serving as the starting point of the artists' "game."
- **Quote from James Joyce, *Finnegans Wake*:** Printed on the wall, 600 x 30 cm:  
"Bothallchoractorschumminaroundsunsumuminarumdrumstrumtruminchumptadurnpwaultopoofoolooderamaunstump!"  
Preceded by the note: "And Humpty Dumpty is locked in the seventh of these gusts."
- **Formula:** Written by hand in chalk on the wall, 300 x 270 cm.  
The formula summarizes the reasoning that links any egg to Wittgenstein's breakfast, using the language of logical symbols.
- **Chess pieces:** A Pawn and a Queen, 50 cm tall, placed outside the square.

## I Giorgio Agamben fries an egg I (2015)

### Video, 01:01:00

This video records the first conversation between Ekaterina and Hanna with Giorgio Agamben. Their discussion begins with the proposition of frying an egg and evolves into various topics, from the philosopher's personal biography and daily routines to art, philology, and the philosophy of language.

The plasma screen contains an emptiness that reflects a suspended situation in the form of a gesture, awaiting testimony of an event to come.



Current Page

I Agamben Fries an Egg I.  
Avant propos  
Exhibition view  
Part of the group exhibition  
*Leaving Tomorrow*,  
Vinzavod, Moscow, 2015

# I Agamben Fries an Egg I

## Performance

Installation, 6 x 5 meters: black space, freezer, plasma screen (video, 1 hour, HD), formula (chalk), printed text, mirror, chess pieces.  
Vinzavod, 2015

## Formula

The logic-linguistic piece draws on philosophical reflections inspired by Wittgenstein's ideas and set theory. The formula, a symbolic representation of simple actions—such as *“frying an egg”*—explores abstract concepts like memory, identity, and potential. The central idea of the work is that any action can exist in multiple states—simultaneously as the action itself, a memory, a metaphor, or a logical enunciation. Through the symbolic representation of actions as logical formulas, the work demonstrates how the same action can be both accomplished and unaccomplished depending on context. The formula becomes a visual and conceptual exploration of how meaning is generated and deconstructed, blurring the boundaries between the act, its memory, and its interpretation.

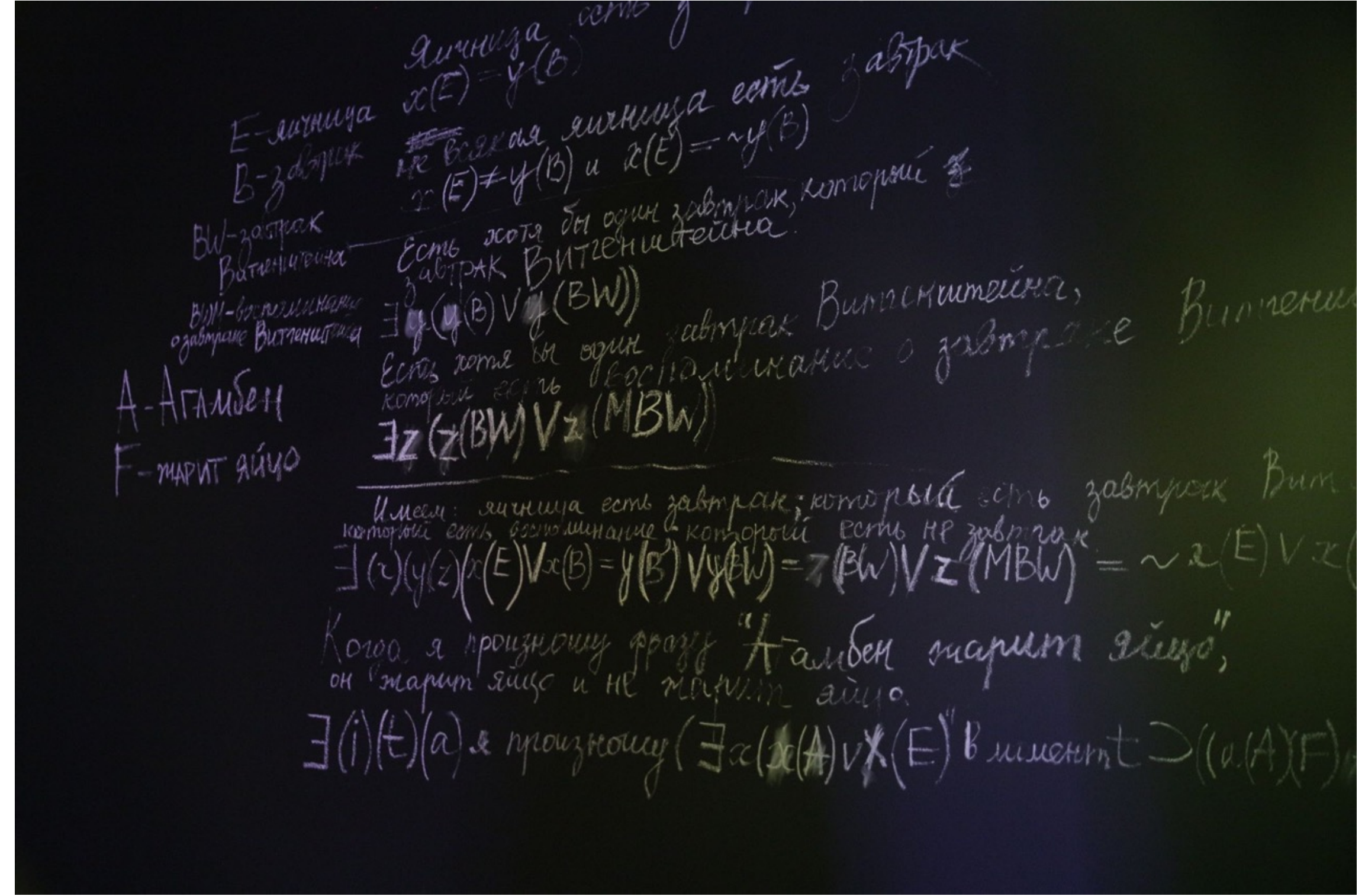
The chalk inscriptions define zones of values for notions such as breakfast, fried egg, and memory. Formal logic becomes an entry point into paradox, simultaneously exploring the limits of language through its constraints while describing, via grammatical properties, an extra-linguistic system of relations that emerges precisely through this linguistic description. This ouroboros, where language bites its own tail, creates a meta-linguistic entity.

(Fried egg = breakfast = Wittgenstein's breakfast = memory of Wittgenstein's breakfast = not a breakfast)

In the second part of the formula, a description of a quantum-like situation emerges at the moment when a linguistic entity begins to exist. It triggers extra-linguistic modes, where words become events.

(The moment I utter the phrase “Agamben fries an egg,” he simultaneously fries an egg and does not fry an egg.)

{Fried Egg Breakfast Memory}  
Every fried egg is not a breakfast.  
Every fried egg at breakfast is not Wittgenstein's breakfast.  
Every fried egg is a memory of Wittgenstein's breakfast.  
Every memory of Wittgenstein's breakfast is Wittgenstein's breakfast.  
Every fried egg that is a breakfast is simultaneously a non-breakfast, a breakfast, Wittgenstein's breakfast, and a memory.  
Let x be something that is a fried egg E.  
Let y be something that is a breakfast B.  
There exists at least one x such that  
 $x(E) \neq y(B)$  or  
 $x(E) = \sim y(B)$ .  
Let z be something that is a memory of Wittgenstein's breakfast Mbw.  
 $z(Mbw)$ .  
Let z be something that is a memory of Wittgenstein's breakfast Mbw  
and y be something that is Wittgenstein's breakfast BW.  
There exists at least one z and one y such that  
 $z(Mbw) = y(BW)$ .  
Thus,  
 $(z)(y)(z(Mbw) = y(BW))$ .  
Let x be something that is a fried egg E.  
Let y be something that is a breakfast B.  
There exists at least one x such that  
 $x(E) = y(B)$ .  
Let x be something that is both a fried egg E and a breakfast B.  
Let y be something that is both a fried egg E and Wittgenstein's breakfast BW.  
Thus,  
 $(x)(y)(x(E) \vee x(B) = y(E) \vee y(BW))$ .  
Where  
 $z(Mbw) = y(BW)$ .  
Thus,  
 $(x)(y)(z)(x(E) \vee x(B) = y(E) \vee y(BW) = z(Mbw))$ .  
And also,  
 $(x)(y)(z)(x(E) \vee x(B) = y(E) \vee y(BW) = z(Mbw) = \sim y(B))$ .  
{Fried Egg Breakfast}  
Every fried egg is not a breakfast.  
Every fried egg is not a gesture.  
Every gesture is an experience of the limit.  
The Man Makes a Fried Egg  
Let H be a man, let Ee — make a fried egg.  
Someone x is a man. Someone x is H.  
Someone x, who is H, makes a fried egg. Someone x is H and E.  
Thus, there exists at least one x who is H and E such that  $H(x) \vee Ee(x)$ .  
Thus,  
 $x(H(x) \vee Ee(x))$ .  
{Fried Egg Gesture Potentiality}  
At the moment I say, “The man makes an egg,” he either makes an egg or does not make an egg.  
(i)(t)(a) I say “ $x(A(x) \vee Ee(x))$  at a moment t ( $a(A)(F)$  at a moment t)  $\vee \sim(a(A)(F)$  at a moment t).”  
Where a is someone a, who is (A) a man and (F) makes an egg.  
Where “ $x(A(x) \vee Ee(x))$ ” is a homonym of  $a(A)(F)$ .  
From the moment I say, “The man makes an egg,” he simultaneously makes and does not make an egg.  
Until the moment t.



## Current Page

**I Agamben Fries an Egg I.**  
**Avant propos**  
View of the formal logic formula, composed and written by Hanna Zubkova (performance).  
Part of the group exhibition *Leaving Tomorrow*, Vinzavod, Moscow, 2015

## Next Pages

**I Agamben Fries an Egg I.**  
**Avant propos**  
Exhibition view  
Part of the group exhibition *Leaving Tomorrow*, Vinzavod, Moscow, 2015

**I Agamben Fries an Egg I.**  
**Avant propos**  
Screenshot from the video conversation with philosopher Giorgio Agamben.  
By Katya Ev and Hanna Zubkova, 2015

B - завтрак  
 BW - завтрак  
 Витаминизация  
 BMW - витаминизация  
 о завтраке Витаминизация  
 A - АГЛИБЕН  
 F - жарит яйцо

не всякая женщина есть завтрак  
 $\exists (E) \neq y(B) \text{ и } z(E) = \sim y(F)$   
 Есть хотя бы один завтрак, который  $\neq$   
 завтрак Витаминизация  
 $\exists y(y(B) \vee y(BW))$   
 Есть хотя бы один завтрак Витаминизация,  
 который есть в витаминизации завтраке Витаминизация  
 $\exists z(z(BW) \vee z(MBW))$

Имеем: женщина есть завтрак; который есть завтрак Витаминизация  
 которая есть витаминизация, которой есть не завтрак  
 $\exists (z)(y(z)(z(E) \vee x(B) = y(B) \vee y(BW) = z(BW) \vee z(MBW)) = \sim z(E) \vee z(B)$

Кого я произношу фразу "Аглибен жарит яйцо",  
 он жарит яйцо и не жарит яйцо.

$\exists (i)(t)(a) \text{ я произношу } (\exists x(x(A) \vee x(E)) \text{ в момент } t \supset ((a)(F) \text{ в момент } t \vee \sim (a)(F) \text{ в момент } t)))$



...on s'adresse au dieu à l'impératif





# Human Voice. Translations

**Virtual Performance in Three Acts, Total Duration: 24 Hours**  
*Saint-Eustache Church, Paris – Staging of Jean Cocteau's La Voix Humaine, during the Total Solar Eclipse in March 2015*

The staging of Jean Cocteau's *"La Voix humaine"* takes place in a church, a space of connection where the speaker becomes a medium for the voice of the Other, and the addressed party is simultaneously present and absent. During the performance, the two protagonists—performers—are located in different countries, one in Paris and the other by the sea. Yet, they interact in the church through the physical presence of their voices via Skype. The performance unfolds in three acts over a 24-hour period.

ACT I

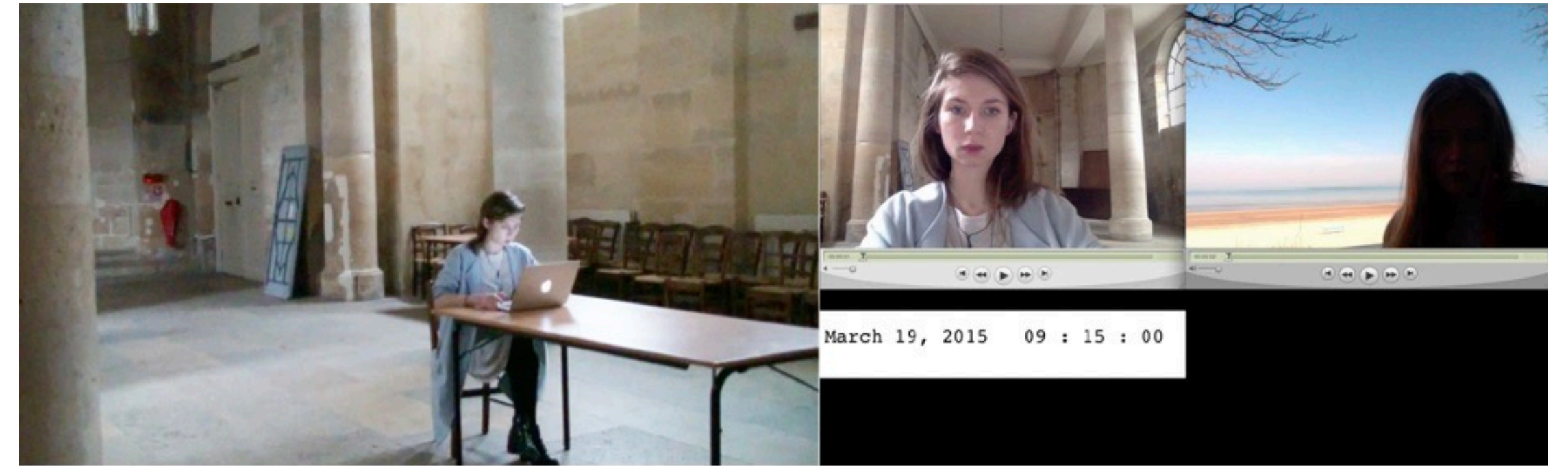
## **Prologue. Anticipation**

24 hours before the total solar eclipse

In the church, a table holds a laptop. Its screen remains black until a Skype call rings. Two women begin a session. Ekaterina calls from an empty church, while Hanna is situated by the sea. With impersonal and emotionless voices, the women exchange statements. At first, this conversation appears to resemble a genuine dialogue, but in reality, Hanna reads news articles from various online media about the impending solar eclipse, while Ekaterina reads reviews of the first staging of *"La Voix humaine"* at the Comédie-Française in 1930.

Hanna "predicts" the inevitable astronomical future within the eternal rhythms of the sea, while Ekaterina recounts a "legend" from the past in the stillness of the temple. *"Tomorrow, March 20, 2015..." "Yesterday, February 16, 1930..."*

The two events—one from the past and the other from the future—intersect through a virtual connection. Alternating their recitations from media sources, Hanna and Ekaterina construct a meta-dialogue composed of two distinct monologues.



# Human Voice. Translations

**Virtual Performance in Three Acts, Total Duration: 24 Hours**  
*Saint-Eustache Church, Paris – Staging of Jean Cocteau's La Voix Humaine, during the Total Solar Eclipse in March 2015*

## ACT II

### Conflict. Solstice.

12 hours before the total solar eclipse

The nave of the church. Within the medieval temple, beneath a painting of the Last Supper, stands a table. Two laptops face each other. Their screens are black. People begin to enter the nave and approach the table.

One of the laptops starts ringing on Skype. The call rings for an extended time until someone from the audience decides to answer. On the screen appears a young woman in a pink dress, lying on a bed. She is waiting for Katya to appear “*in this place*” so she can talk about her lover. The second laptop then starts ringing on Skype. Ekaterina appears on the screen from a Parisian residence, while Hanna is in a hotel near the sea.

This story becomes a melodramatic personal narration of real events. Simultaneously, it serves as a reinterpretation of Cocteau’s “*La Voix humaine*,” speaking through the perspective of a new lover of the illusory man from Cocteau’s play.

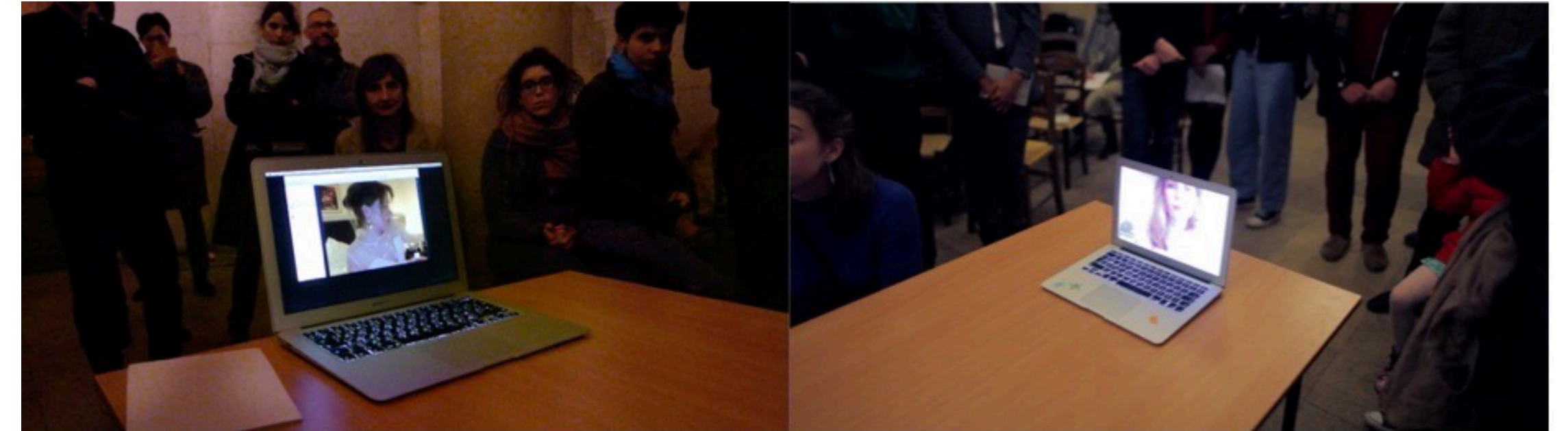
## ACT III

### Epilogue. Eclipse.

March 20, 2015, 09:15, Total Solar Eclipse (Paris time)

The next day, 12 hours later, in the same place within the nave of the church, a table with a laptop broadcasts a live stream of the solar eclipse.

Transcendence and technology continue to coexist. The solar eclipse, an apocalyptic phenomenon within religious imagination, appears in the church as an astronomical fact devoid of deliberate prophetic meaning.





девушка  
Ганна



# End of Melancholia

## Performance-Lecture // Video Series

Duration: 15 to 40 minutes

Shabolovka Gallery

Exhibition: *Politique de la fragilité*

2016

### The End of Melancholia

I presented a performative lecture on the closing day of the exhibition "*Politics of Fragility*," which focused on the re-politicization of the category of "fragility" in the contemporary world. *The End of Melancholia* is a sequence of choreographed and simulated failures and breakdowns, perceived by the audience as involuntary, provoking increasing discomfort, unease, shame, and even anger.

The tension and embodied experience of the artist's constant failure, shared by the audience, are heightened as none of my attempts to begin or develop the lecture succeed. However, this deliberately failed act of discourse holds the potential to create a successful statement—provided that the concept of success itself is reimagined within a more flexible framework of expectations.

"Hanna Zubkova's lecture was announced as a conventional academic talk. It is important to note how a work is framed in announcements, as this significantly shapes the audience's expectations.

The lecture began with a few general introductory words before the artist attempted to outline the lecture's structure on the board, only to find the marker dry. No one in the room had a replacement marker. She then turned to a prepared presentation, but the projector repeatedly refused to turn on. Once operational, the light was too bright, obscuring parts of the presentation. Hanna adjusted the lighting, and the slides appeared—one of which displayed a misspelled name of the curator.

The dramatic turning point of the lecture came when the artist attempted to play a video that, according to her, encapsulated the essence of the exhibition and its stakes. These failed attempts were punctuated by her comments on the importance of the exhibition and the questions it raised. At one key moment, amid technical malfunctions, error pop-ups, and incorrect passwords, she declared: "A discussion about this exhibition is absolutely necessary because it is in the act of speaking, in the effort to verbalize these things, that a certain integrity resides—contained within the enunciation itself. I feel that this part of the lecture is vital, just as today's talk is crucial for reflecting on the idea of fragility and what it means to be a person attempting to convey something to others and thus articulate their thoughts."

This lecture-performance, deeply tied to the exhibition's context, created a situation where the emotional experience surpassed the intellectual one. While a discourse was present, it primarily filled the gaps between attempts and occasionally clarified the logic behind the artist's actions. The objects became antagonists to the artist, and their confrontation tested how far the exhibition's guests and participants had progressed in understanding the categories of fragility and the productivity of negativity."

– Nastya Dmitrievsky, art critic, in the article "Performance-Lecture: Staging Knowledge," for OTheatre.



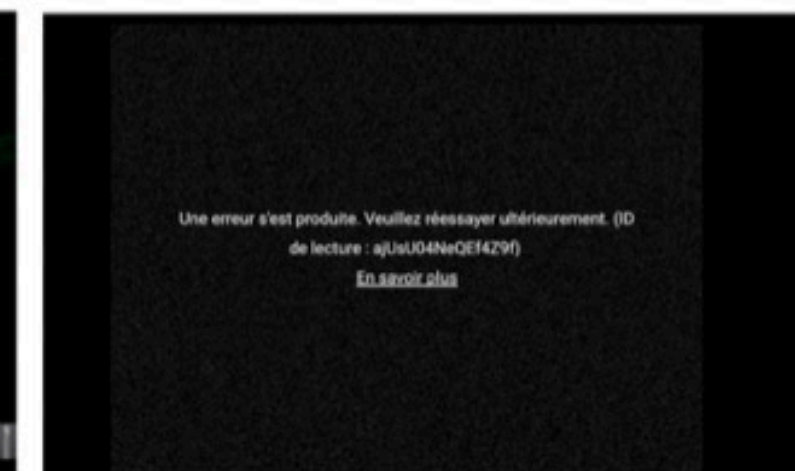
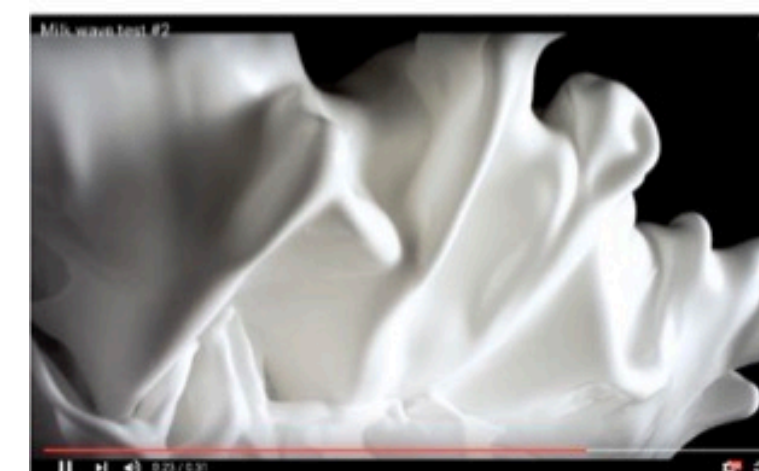
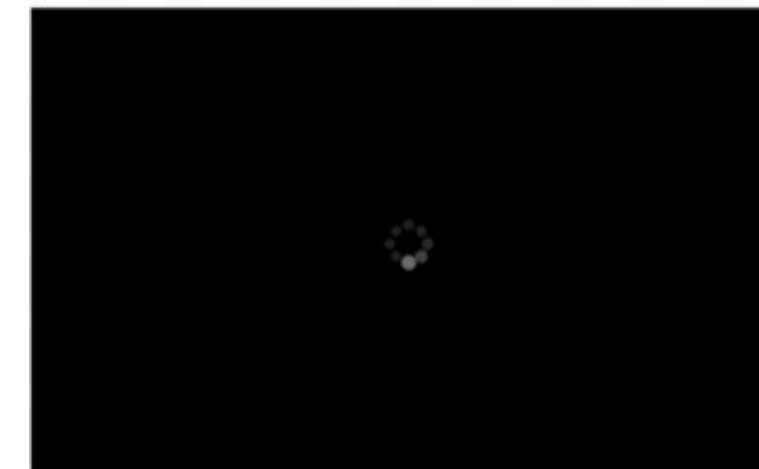
Previous page

**End of Melancholia**  
Screenshot from the video documentation of the performative lecture, Part of the exhibition *Politics of Fragility*, Na Shabolovka Gallery, Moscow, 2017

Current Page

**End of Melancholia**  
Screenshot from the video documentation of the performative lecture, Part of the exhibition *Politics of Fragility*, Na Shabolovka Gallery, Moscow, 2017

**End of Melancholia**  
Screenshots from the lecture



ТЕЛЕСНОСТЬ  
СОСТОЯЕТСЯ КАК ЛИЧНОСТЬ  
НА УВЕДЕНИЕ  
ТЫ ПЕРЕСТАЛ ЧУВСТВОВАТЬ  
СМЕРЬЕ НЕ ВОБЛАСТИ  
МЫСЛЕЙ  
ЕСТАЛ ОТРИЧАТЬ  
КАК ПРЕДЕЛ  
СДЕЛ ЗА НИМ  
КАК ДЕНЬГИ  
ТЕЛЕСНО МЕНТАЛАКТИЧЕСКОГО  
ОТКАЛЫВАЛ ШИВРО В ДОЛГИЙ РЫК  
ОБИ ЗЕЛЕННЫЕ РЕБЛОКИ,  
АХСВ СПАСА  
ЛИГИЯ ЭТО ОПА-ОПА  
ТРАНСЛЯЦИЯ  
ПРОИСХОДИТ  
НАТЯЖЕ-  
НИ Я.  
С ПОМОЩЬЮ ЖЕЛЕЗНОГО  
ПРУТА ПРОТЯНУТОГО  
БЕЗ НАПРЯЖЕНИЯ

LMS  
Получи  
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КАК ВЫ ЕЩЕ ЭТО  
ПЫТАЕТЕСЬ?

№ 33  
СТРАНА  
БЕЗ ПРОШЛОГО  
СТРАНА  
БЕЗ НАСТОЯЩЕГО  
СТРАНА  
БЕЗ БУДУЩЕГО

ПРАВДА  
#FT

AXEINDE REVOLUTION

БРИЖЕННИЕ?  
КОПА  
АНЕЦИТАНИИ  
РАТОВАРИВА  
ПОКА  
SEXO  
CEXOC  
CE FOR RESISTANCE?  
SELEHA  
ALPAPA



# Pièce de Résistance : Others' Dialog on Revolution

## Performative Exhibition, Three-Act Piece

Duration: 2 Weeks

Post-Reflection on the Performance *Axe de Révolution*

Elektrozavod Gallery, Moscow, 2014

Conceived as a continuation of the performance *AXIS OF REVOLUTION*, this project aimed to present the documentation of the performance while developing it into a context for interaction. By reflecting on the transformation of a performance from a live event into its representation (video documentation) and exploring not just an archived trace but a new, singular experience—one of *co-action*—we proposed an exhibition as an open enunciation, self-constructed by the community. It transformed from an extension of the event into a new, independent event.

### ACT I

On the opening day, the audience was invited to freely write on the gallery walls, while one wall served as a projection site for a 17-hour film documenting the performance. Through acts of individual speech in collaboration with the audience—inscriptions on the gallery walls—we created a *texto-graphic* mental document that referenced the video documentation of *Axis of Revolution*. This collective action expanded into a shared memory map, physically transforming the gallery into a space of perpetual polyphonic dialogue.

### ACT II

For the following 14 days, we remained present in the gallery for 12 hours each day. Anyone could join us, sit at a table, and engage in conversation. Each exchange lasted between 40 minutes and three hours. After every conversation, the words and signs written on the walls—points of reference for our discussions—were covered with semi-transparent white paint. Day by day, phrase by phrase, the walls were cleansed, and the written words disappeared through vocalization and narration.

### ACT III

On the closing day, the gallery space had returned to its original state while still bearing the faint traces and ghosts of words and gestures, visible through the white paint. The exhibition had been completely rearranged. In the darkness of the emptied space, only the neon "*axis of revolution*" remained. Simultaneously object and light, nomination and dematerialization, the neon acted as an epilogue to the entire verbatim process.

This contextual project questioned Moscow's artistic community and, more broadly, the role of speech and discourse as acts of resistance within Russia's socio-political landscape. Elektrozavod Gallery, an autonomous art space hidden in the long corridors of a vast industrial building, is difficult to access but widely recognized as an independent and free zone.

The artists sought to activate this "ghetto of freedom" and practice it—extending the gesture of carrying a tube during the performance *Axis of Revolution* into acts of speech. These daily exchanges, beyond the reach of panoptic control, carried the potential for transformation.



[Previous Page](#)

Pièce de Résistance:  
Dialogue des Autres sur la  
Révolution

View of the exhibition hall  
after the first act of the  
performative exhibition

[Current Page](#)

Pièce de Résistance:  
Dialogue des Autres sur la  
Révolution

View of the exhibition hall  
after the first act of the  
performative exhibition



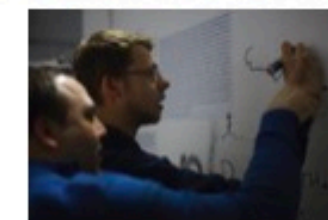
# Pièce de Résistance : Others' Dialog on Revolution

Performative Exhibition, Three-Act Piece

Duration: 2 Weeks

Post-Reflection on the Performance *Axe de Révolution*  
Elektrozavod Gallery, Moscow, 2014

ACT I



Current Page

Pièce de Résistance:  
Dialogue des Autres sur la  
Révolution

ACT I

Documentation of the  
audience freely drawing on  
the gallery walls, building  
upon a mental map initiated  
by Katya and Hanna.



# Pièce de Résistance : Others' Dialog on Revolution

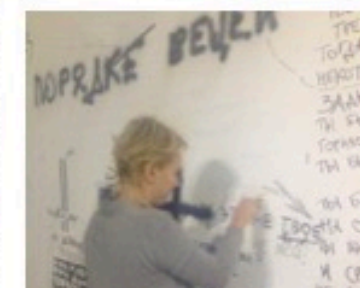
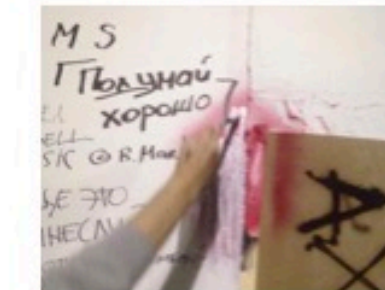
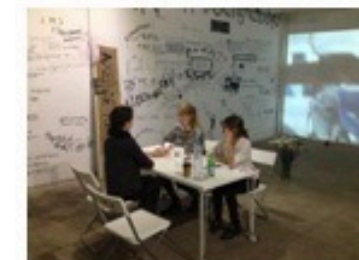
Performative Exhibition, Three-Act Piece

Duration: 2 Weeks

Post-Reflection on the Performance *Axe de Révolution*

Elektrozavod Gallery, Moscow, 2014

ACT II



Current Page

**Pièce de Résistance:  
Dialogue des Autres sur la  
Révolution**

ACT II

Documentation of the audience in dialogue with Katya and Hanna. The conversation revolves around the topic of revolution, under the condition that one of the phrases on the walls, which inspired the discussion, is painted over

Next Page

**Pièce de Résistance:  
Dialogue des Autres sur la  
Révolution**

Interlude

View of the exhibition space, with the walls repainted white, yet traces of the writings remain visible



THE BEST OF THE BEST  
AVAILABLE ONLY AT  
THE BEST RESTAURANT

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HOTLINE

# Pièce de Résistance : Others' Dialog on Revolution

**Performative Exhibition, Three-Act Piece**

*Duration: 2 Weeks*

*Post-Reflection on the Performance **Axe de Révolution***

*Elektrozavod Gallery, Moscow, 2014*

ACT III



axe de révolution

# Hanna Zubkova

Research Praxis Space  
Research based art atelier  
2017 - ongoing

**Teaching, curating, community**

## RESEARCH PRAXIS: FROM PERSONAL NARRATIVE TO SHARED KNOWLEDGE

RESEARCH-BASED ART  
LABORATORY / SELECTED  
MATERIALS

# Hanna Zubkova

Research Praxis Space  
Research based art atelier  
2017 - ongoing

## Teaching, curating, community

It was my second cohort for the research workshop and my fifth year of teaching overall. One of the students, Yulia, once asked me what had changed for me during the year, as everyone shared their reflections at a meeting. Although it took me some time to respond, it wasn't difficult to explain: this year, I wanted to place as much trust as possible in the participants. I wasn't seeking to test my own capabilities as an artist, but rather to establish a dialogue with each student as a full-fledged artist.

I believe a significant change occurred due to the particular context. Midway through the year, a tragedy struck. I think that, without the students, it would have been much more difficult for me to emerge from that petrified state of pain and disorientation. I dedicated several sessions to the topic of artists during wartime (Roskomnadzor requires that the current situation be called a "special military operation"). After these discussions, some students concluded: it seems that we are those artists now. The circumstances revealed a valuable aspect of what is often called art: the process, the community, the time, the refuge.

One of the most challenging tasks for me as a teacher is to guide an artist through their own practice, helping them see its boundaries, question them, and reflect on their work within broader contexts—even when their practice is not entirely familiar to me. My goal is to accompany students on their journey, from intuition and doubt to the creation of a work, using their own tools of expression. In my workshop, the students' mediums and projects are diverse. I don't impose a single working method but offer various tools and mentorship. This enables students to arrive at something new, building on their skills, perspectives, and personal experiences. Many describe this process as a step forward in their own journey.

Throughout the course, it is important for me to find a balance: sharing knowledge without limiting it, sharing my experience without presenting it as the only possible path, being present without interfering. Thanks to this approach, the artists can continue working independently after the course, without feeling lost in the knowledge and approaches they have acquired.

Excerpt from the text 'Research Praxis Space. Participants' Exhibition' by Hanna Zubkova

Full text: <https://www.hannazubkova.com/researchpraxisspace2022>







# Research Praxis Space

Research Praxis Space  
Research based art atelier  
2017 - ongoing

## Teaching, curating, community

Since 2017, the Research Praxis Space workshop has taken on various forms in collaboration with platforms, independent projects, and institutions in Russia and Europe. These include the Betonsalon contemporary art and research center in Paris, the Cascade educational program in Moscow, the BBE school, and the Baza institute.

The workshop is structured as a progressive immersion into each participant's personal research through practical exercises, an interdisciplinary theoretical approach (philosophy, anthropology, art, literature, popular culture), and regular group sessions (at least once a week) accompanied by individual mentorship in constant dialogue with the instructor. Classes are conducted online, with the possibility of organizing physical exhibitions and installations when conditions allow. The workshop focuses on transforming intuitions into practice and articulating personal experiences in connection with shared contemporary sensibilities. Using research tools, participants undergo a process that takes them from intuition to articulated and manifested forms. Teaching includes group sessions, individual meetings, and a strong theoretical foundation.

Depending on the format, the workshop can take on different forms:

- **Year-long curriculum, semester programs, or short-term intensive workshops.**  
One of the workshop's key moments is manifesting the process through an exhibition or other forms of presentation. Works can be created in any medium, as the research approach is, above all, a practice. The work in the workshop is always unique, tailored to the participants' needs while following a clear structure.

Workshop Structure:

### Horizon

Through practical exercises and collective discussions, we construct a horizon of interests from random discoveries, doubts, and intuitions. This horizon becomes the gravitational field in which the elements of the research will develop until the figure of your work emerges.

### Deep Dive

We immerse ourselves in each participant's personal research. Group exchanges occur through meetings and a shared chat where I provide session summaries and supplementary resources. During this immersion, we draw on field research findings and interdisciplinary theoretical concepts (philosophy, anthropology, art, literature, mass culture).

### Upfloat

It is essential to cultivate the seeds of your research in a rich and secure environment, reflecting collectively. We organize intense discussions, learn to formulate and receive critiques, and work on expressing your projects. For example, Nastya used the tool Figma to structure her process.

### Focus

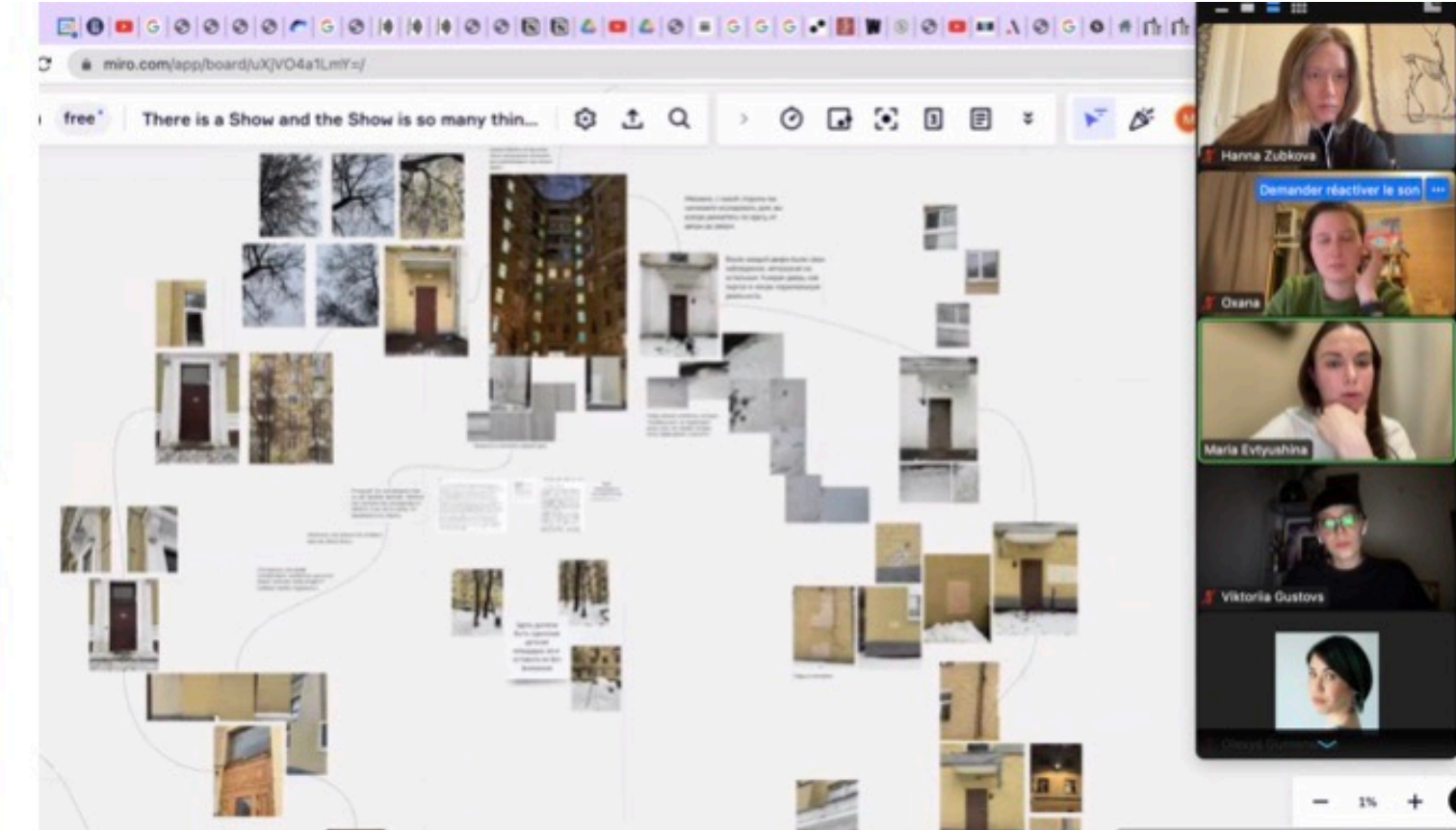
We refine each participant's research interest based on new insights and discoveries. We adjust the focus, clarify questions, and distill the essential. Through writing, discussions, and group and individual work, we deepen the connections between the phenomena you are researching and yourself.

### Manifestations

There are no endings, only stabilizations or ongoing processes. We learn to identify intermediate forms and manifestations of the research process and draw the audience's attention to these moments.

### Precision

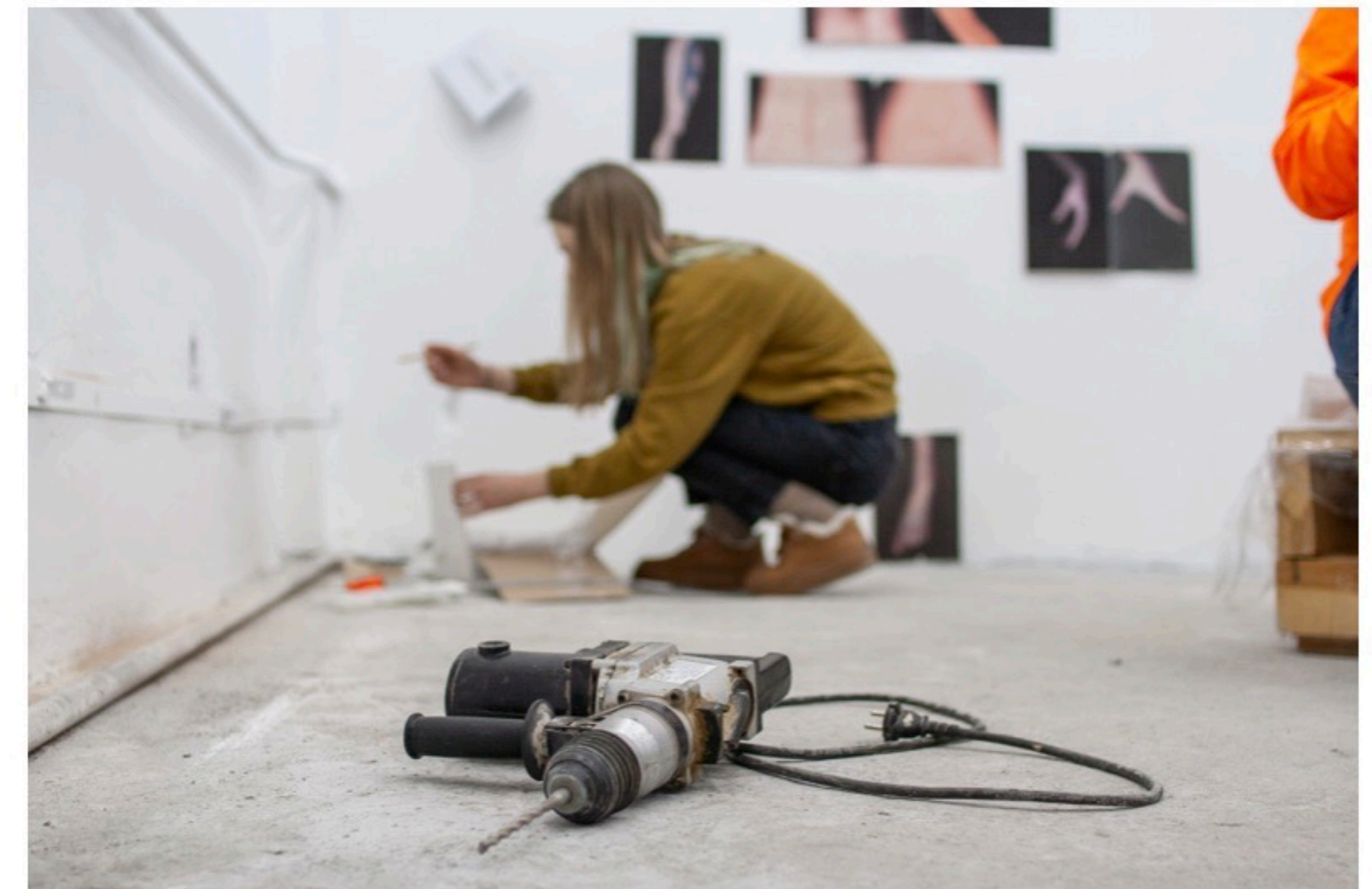
Working with space and materials through models, prototypes, and sketches continuously refines the work's form. This precision process unfolds throughout the course, with the final assembly acting as an intensified phase. However, this dynamic extends beyond the workshop as students continue refining their works independently.



BRAINSTORMING,  
STUDY OF  
SPACES AND  
CONTEXTS

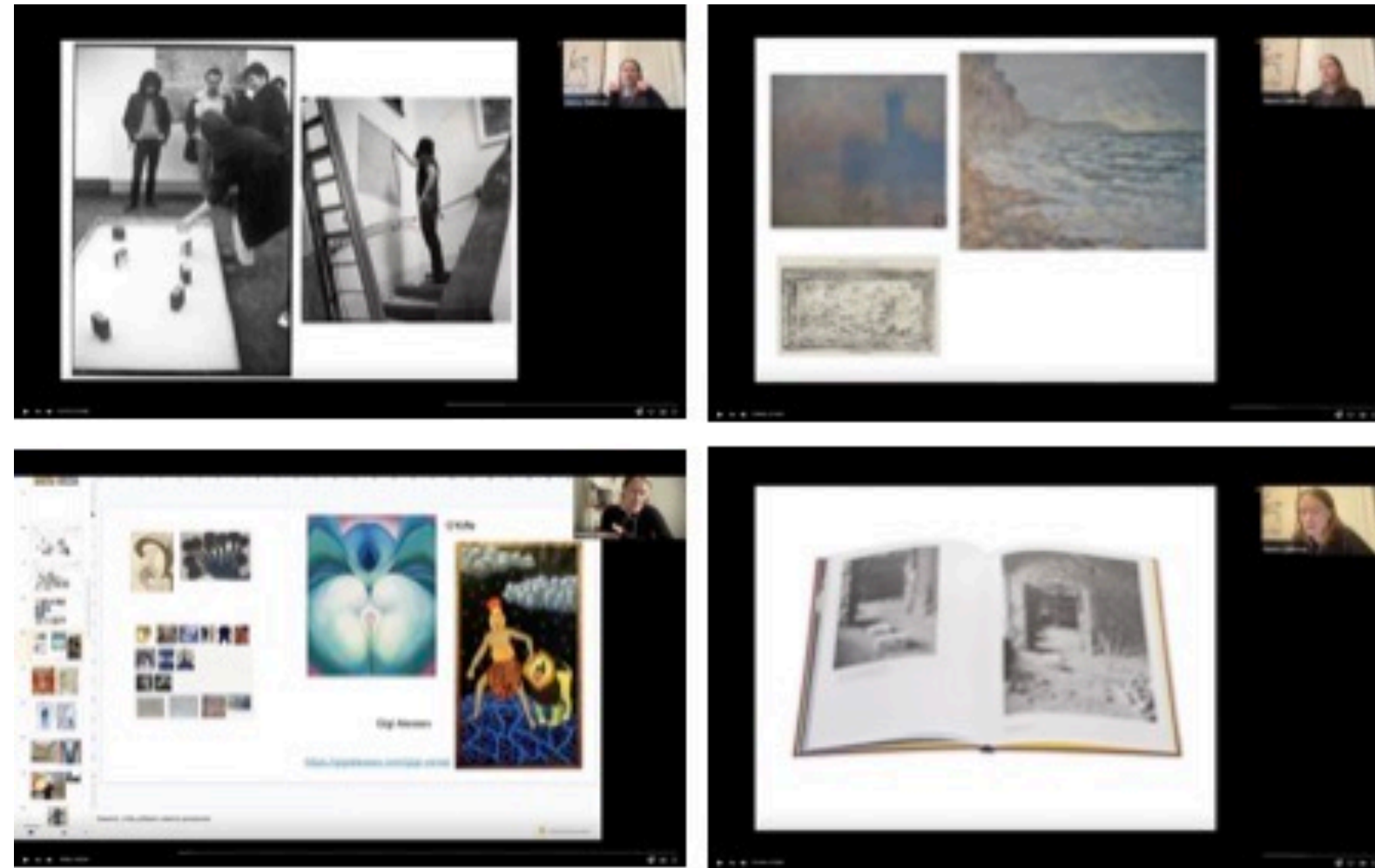
CONCEPTUALIZATION,  
CRITICAL  
THINKING, AND  
REFLECTIVE  
APPROACH

TECHNICAL SKILLS  
AND PRAXIS

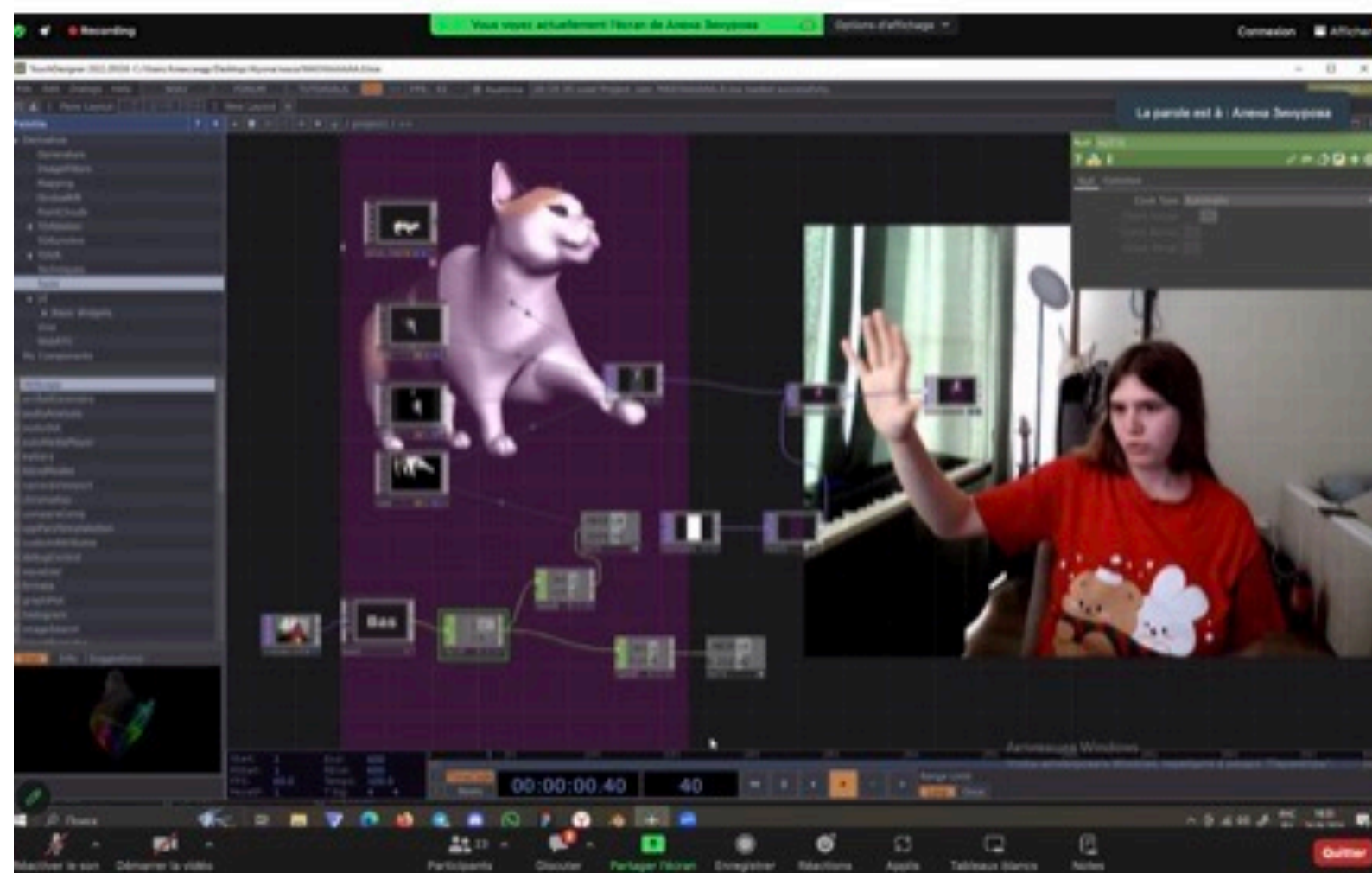


# Hybrid formats

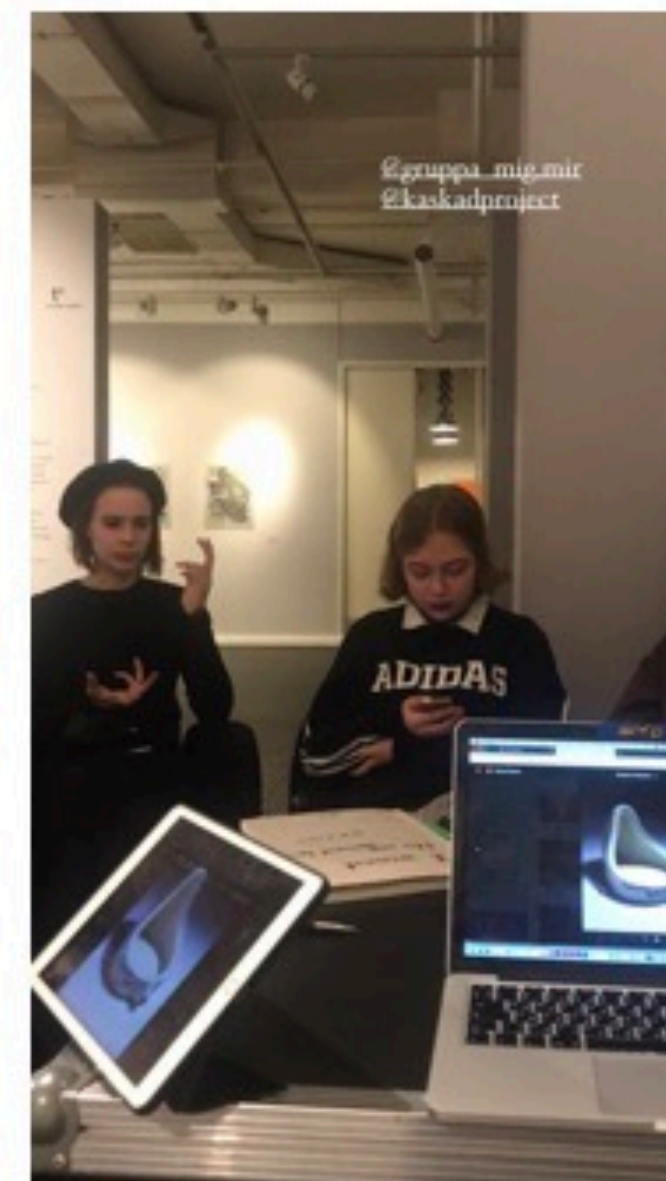
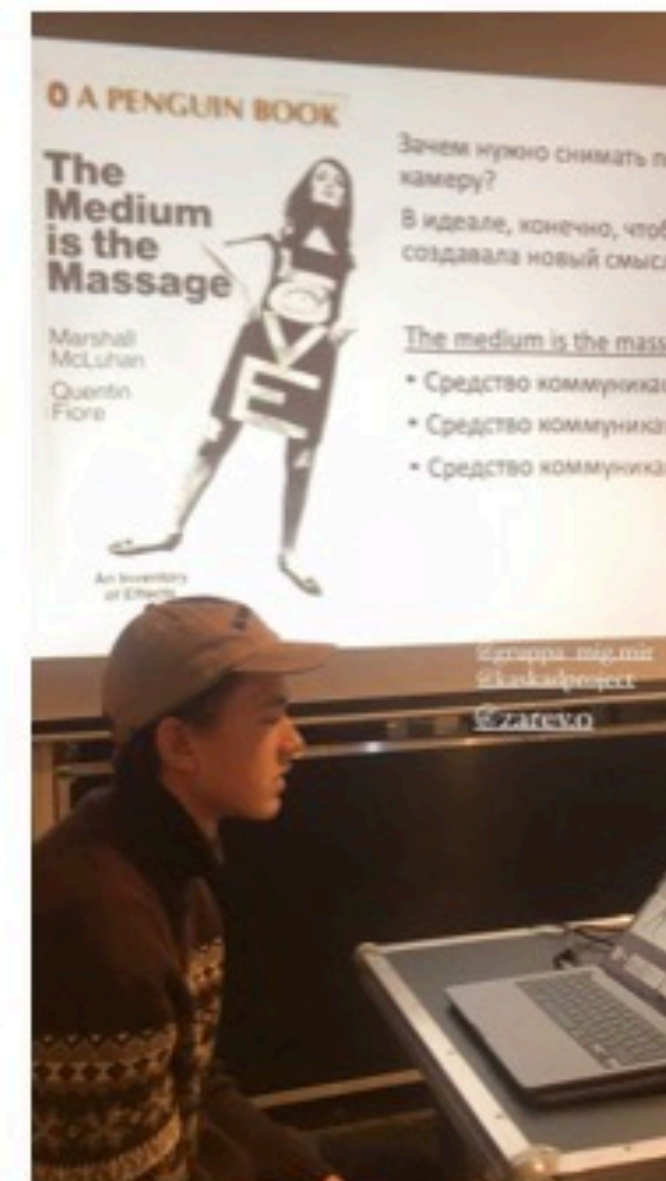
LECTURES ON ART HISTORY, IDEAS, AND CONCEPTS



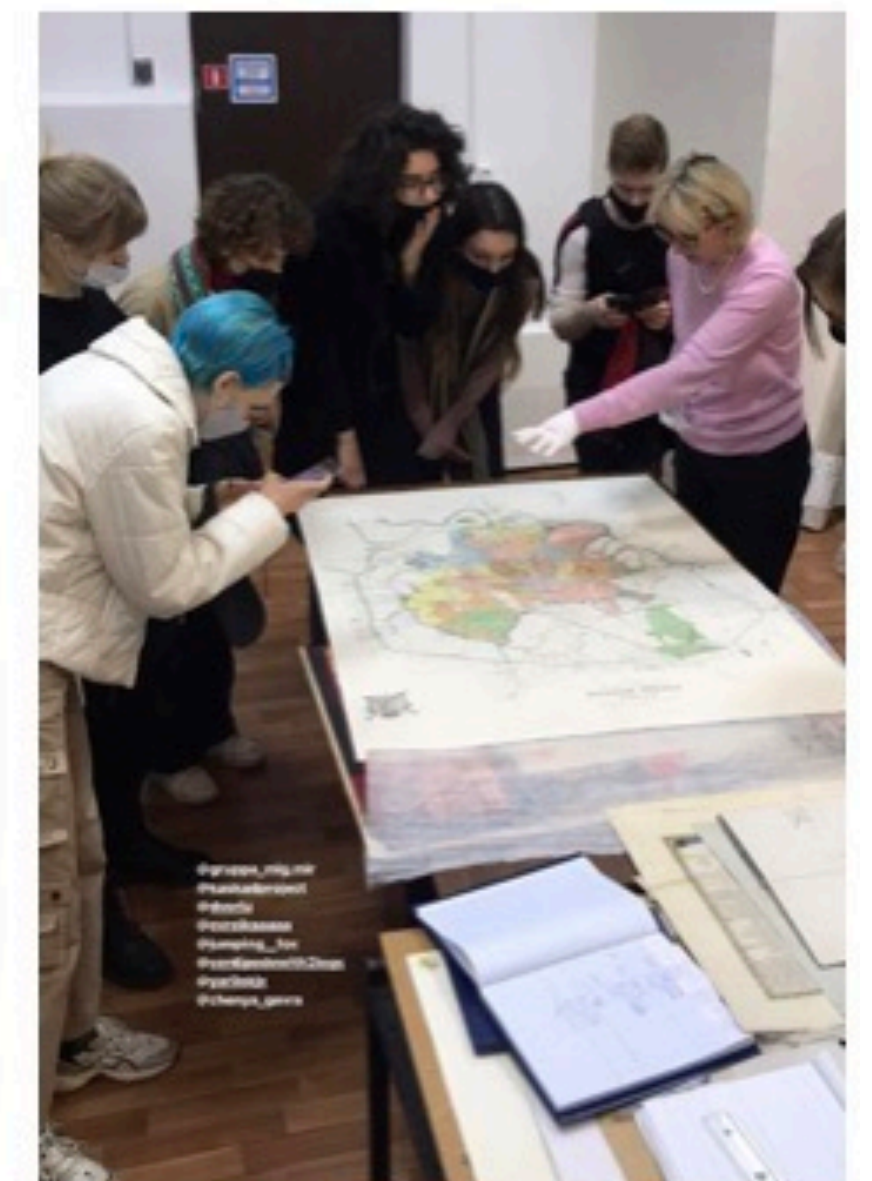
SEMINAIRES INTERACTIFS MÉLANGEANT ART ET SCIENCE



DISCUSSIONS CRITIQUES

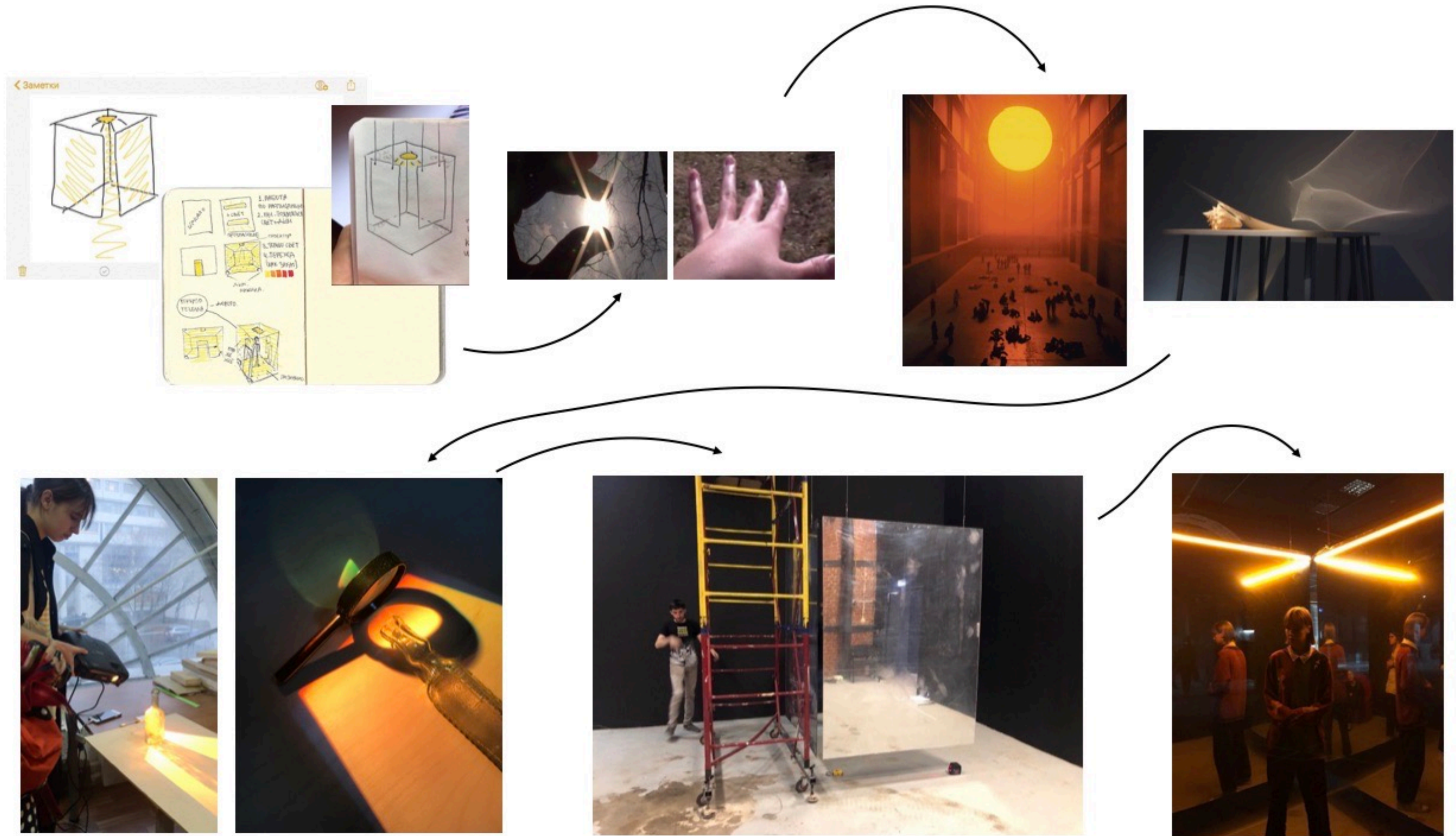


TRAVAIL AVEC LES ARCHIVES



# Long term engagement

FROM SKETCH TO RESEARCH, FROM EXPERIMENTATION TO ASSEMBLY AND EXHIBITION



# Selected works of participants: young adults

## FROM PERSONAL NARRATIVE TO SHARED SPACE

**AIRPORT**  
Nastya Dityatyeva  
Performance, installation



### Nastya's Comment:

"Recently, I moved near the Aeroport metro station, and, to be honest, I've fallen in love with this place. While underground, I feel inspired; I start to hear more, see more clearly, and understand better. On my way, in what is called a void, in waiting mode, I often find unexpected solutions and wonderful metaphors. The station's architects tried to give it space, visibility, in its blue-sky vault. And I find it in the sounds, images, and atmosphere of the Aeroport station."

### Hanna's Response:

The Aeroport metro station is a semiotic paradox, a solemn excursion by Soviet architects who dared to place the sky underground. Paying close attention to this meeting of two worlds, Nastya spent a year studying the station's history and architecture, as well as its symbolic and soundscapes. Through observing and analyzing the invisible, she recorded traces of the long-gone airport in various ways. Some recordings seemed unreliable to her: for instance, hearing whale songs in the hum of an idle train's electricity, which she categorized as a phantom phenomenon. The recording of the sky, however, is authentic: Nastya captured it during an open-air expedition underground.

**PICTURES OF THE FUTURE**  
Sonya Komachkova  
installation



### Sonya's Comment:

"In my project, I talk about a place that is important to me: the River Terminal building near the metro station of the same name. Initially, I just wanted to speak about the building itself, but then I started thinking about how my childhood and family are connected to this terminal. What we see as children changes as we grow up. Through what lenses do we see? We look out the window, through sunglasses, or a camera capable of capturing a moment from the past. Through sunglasses in 2009, on my birthday, I saw the River Terminal for the last time during my childhood because after that, it was closed for restoration. This is probably how my personal family story intertwined with the historical archives and materials of this building."

### Hanna's Response:

Closed for restoration, the Khimki or Northern River Terminal has been absent from the present for over a decade: access is restricted, its future uncertain, and the building itself concealed by a false facade. Built in the 1930s, it offered a magnificent view of the river and embodied the promising future of a young nation. A key transportation hub and a symbol of power and utopia, the terminal fused the rhetoric of authority with the myth of grandeur. For Sonya, born in the 2000s, the station is both a childhood memory and a picturesque spot for sunset photography. Her work seeks to capture the terminal's viewpoint at the intersection of memory and archives, crafting an image poised between disappearance and nostalgia.

**BENCH**  
Sabina Baysarova  
performative sound installation



### Sabina's Comment:

"Disgust toward someone or something else, perceiving the other as unpleasant, fear of something unfamiliar to us: these are all definitions of the concept of 'xenophobia.' Many people are exposed to it, sometimes without realizing it. This state creates tension between people and boundaries within society. Often, this abstract phenomenon spills over into the physical: walking past people, you might hear them discussing the appearance of someone they know; grandmothers on a bench judge someone based on their looks; at times, you feel sideways glances cast your way. It is crucial to remember that a person is, first and foremost, a person. I want to place the individual within this feeling of tension. I want to recreate a situation in a museum space where the visitor becomes the subject of unreasonable condemnation by 'others.' Each person will then be able to feel what it is like to understand that you are treated differently because of a particular feature that sets you apart from others."

### Hanna's Response:

The spectator participates in Sabina's installation, becoming a witness to specific events. The performative situation recreates Sabina's personal experience in urban public spaces while simultaneously involving the spectator's body in the production of meaning in the present moment: the visitor's position within the installation influences their perception. Sabina's work is a combination of staging, set design, and sound sculpture, where the dramatic action unfolds not only in the recording but also in how the visitor interacts with it.

# Selected works of participants: reflection of ethnicity and repression

## Khar Khaalh. The Black Road Olya Tsedenova

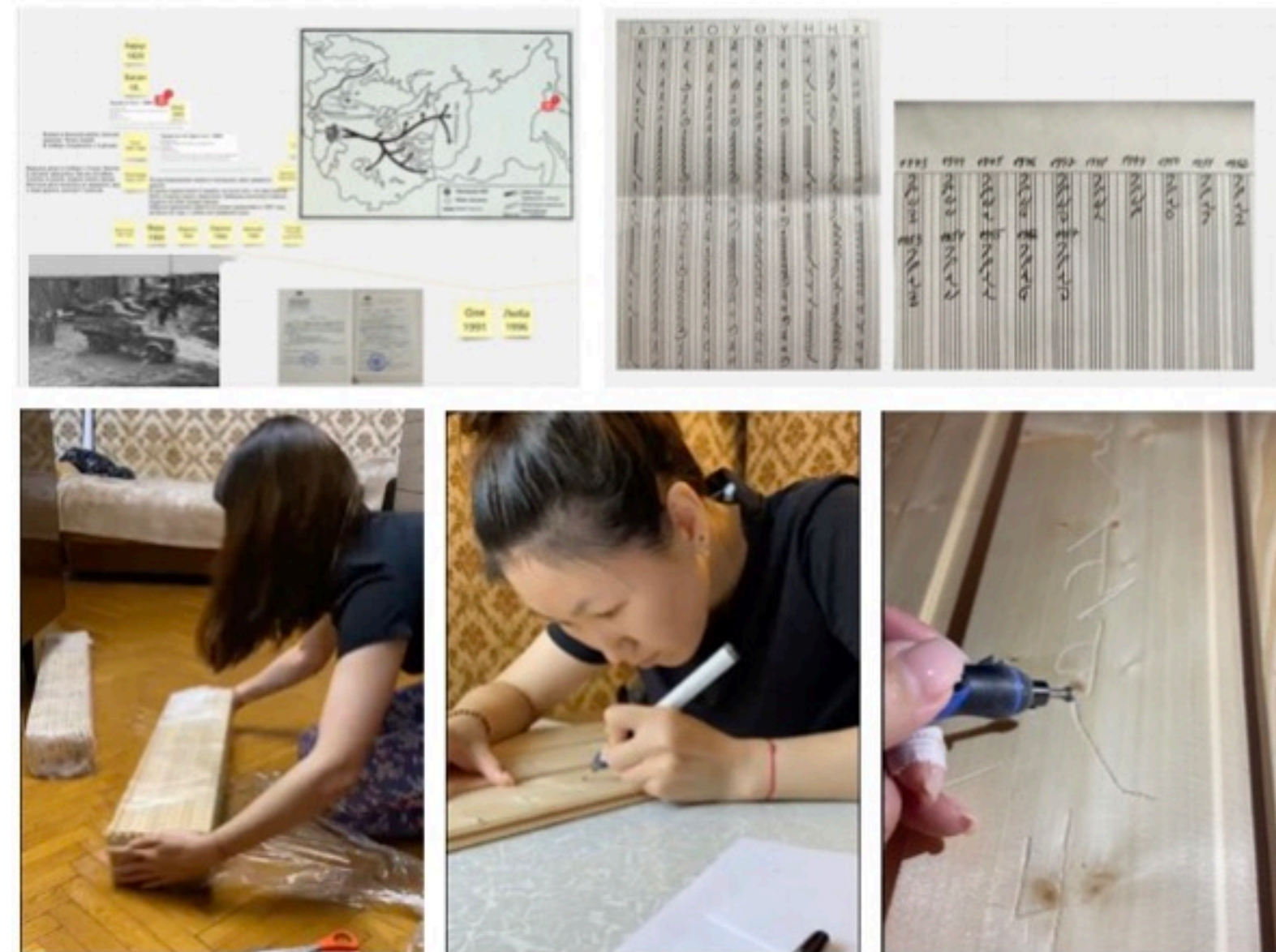
research-based manifestation exploring the forced deportation of the Kalmyk people between 1943 and 1957.

The research began with the creation of a **genogram**—a diagram mapping family history, relationships, and significant events across generations—used as a tool to address present-day traumatic experiences.

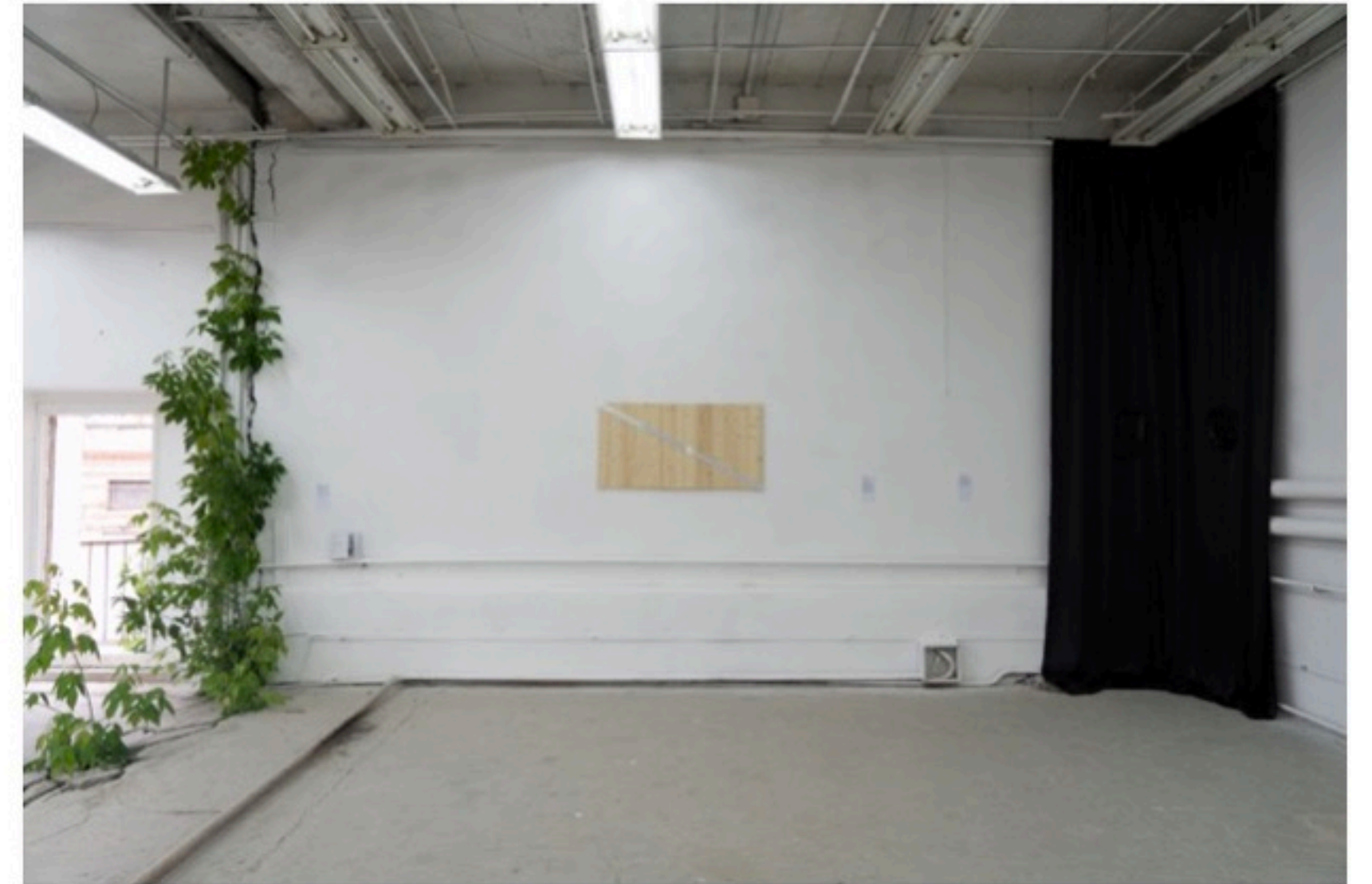
Simultaneously, the deportation of her family, a central event and a figure of silence, became interwoven with the forced exile of an entire people, declared enemies of the state by Stalin. This event forms part of a broader history of repression: in 1924, the Kalmyk script “**Todo Bichig**” (Clear Script), developed by a Buddhist monk in the 11th century, was forcibly replaced with Cyrillic. After the deportation, not only was the script fractured and displaced, but the language itself was nearly eradicated.

Amid her investigation of personal and public archives, the Kalmyk language—and more specifically the endangered **Clear Script “Todo Bichig”**—along with the repetitive practice of tracing its lines and strokes, as though practicing handwriting in the first years of a non-existent school, became a way to reconnect with a lost past. While it is impossible to precisely describe events through these symbols or directly access the substance of memory, these traces emerge through their presence.

From a distance, the artwork presents **13 wooden planks** resembling a fragment of a freight car in which thousands of people were deported. Upon closer inspection, markings appear: **thirteen words, representing the years of exile**, written in Clear Script.



*Khar Khaalh. La Route Noire\**  
*Fragments d'une recherche dédiée à la déportation du peuple kalmouk*  
Étudiante : Olya Tsedenova



*Khar Khaalh. La Route Noire\**

Olya Tsedenova

planches de lambris, métal, 13 années d'exil gravées en *Todo Bichig* (écriture claire), une langue en voie de disparition du peuple kalmouk.

## Selected works of participants: reflection on state violence

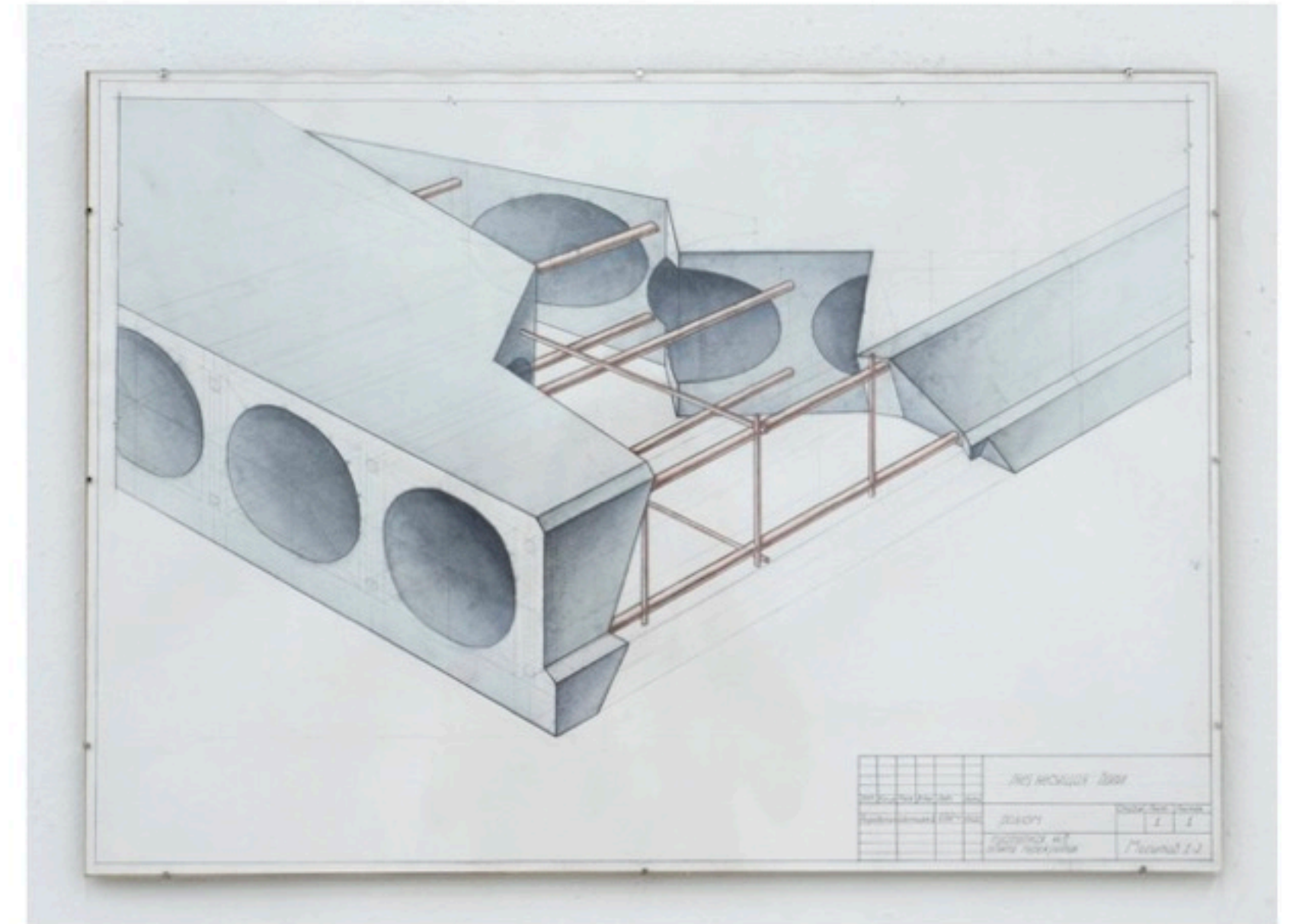
### Not Bearing the Pain Olya Shamshura

#### Documentation of a Rupture, Fragment from a Series

Model of a children's room in a five-story brick building with six sections and 119 apartments, series 89 (114-89-79), designed by Belgosproekt in 1980 for the Republic of Belarus. Years of residence in this apartment: 1994–2007.

"My project arose from an association between myself and a constructive system, from a feeling of rupture following the brutality of the events in Belarus in 2020, which brought trauma to both body and soul. **'(Not) Bearing the Pain'** is one of the works in a series cataloging these experiences.

What appears as a detailed design of an architectural object is simultaneously a self-portrait and documentation of trauma: the destruction of what once seemed unshakeable, the foundation upon which perceptions of the future were built."



# Selected works of participants: reflection on shared trauma

## Whole Body Sonya Savina

Installation  
Scans of scars from various individuals  
Recordings of their stories

A scar that forms at the site of an injury differs from the surface of healthy skin due to the specific physiological healing process. After an injury, the body regenerates the skin by choosing the fastest method to protect the wound from the external environment and the risk of infection. To close the wound quickly, the body uses scar tissue instead of normal skin tissue, as the growth of normal epidermal cells is a much slower process. Thus, the distinct appearance of a scar, resembling a patch on healthy skin, stems from the body's attempt to save itself.

Similarly, articulating the memory of a traumatic event and its trace can serve to suppress the real experience and replace it with the story of the scar. This work focuses on the narratives of individuals regarding the origin of the marks left by their lived traumas: even a minor physiological injury resulting from a domestic accident can, for some, become a confrontation with the fragility of their own body, revealing the fear of no longer being whole.

The physical traces of traumas—scars on human bodies—are captured using a scanner, which, on one hand, provides a documentary and precise image of the object (one meaning of "to scan" is "to study closely, examine attentively"), but on the other hand (the second meaning of "to scan" is "to fragment or break down") can only produce an imprint—a flat copy lacking the living essence of the scanned object. Through this process, scanning scars becomes an attempt to create a distance from the trauma while preserving its memory.



## Next page

**Broken Archives: Nikita Kalin  
Kirill Ermolin-Lugovskoy**  
Young artist, participant in the  
workshop  
Photographic documentation of  
the work in the collective  
exhibition of the workshop  
"Almost Seen," 2024

At the core of Kirill's inner  
dialogue lies the murder of a  
teenager in Samara in 2012,  
reportedly by a group of fascists.

Working with publicly accessible  
data, the artist uncovers not only  
the impossibility of accurately  
establishing the facts—shrouded  
by a media haze, eroded by time,  
and the degradation of information  
(whether it be the exact number of  
blows that caused the death, or the  
status of objects at the scene,  
where a broken beer bottle or  
smudged traces could  
simultaneously serve as evidence,  
incidental litter, or a clue of  
violence)—but also, ultimately,  
the challenge of determining his  
own position within this dialogue.

Similarly, the teenager's  
personality—reconstructed from  
fragments of information, images,  
poems, and social media posts—  
leaves gaps in this interaction.

Not only because the ghost cannot  
manifest in flesh and blood but  
also because the words that might  
encapsulate both his presence and  
these events have been extracted  
from discourse accessible to a  
person without threatening their  
own safety.

