S()fia Braga

S()fia Braga is a transdisciplinary italian artist based in Austria. She develops her artistic research between Digital and Post-Digital practices, focusing especially on the social impact of web interfaces and the subversion of centralized social media platforms, dealing with topic such as Interveillance and the rediscovery of the potential of the bodies through the use of new technologies.

S()fia's identity is constantly changing and goes hand in hand with the narratives she creates within her projects: over the last 3 years she has been an artist, a cyberstalker, a researcher and has mutated several times into a monstrous creature.

She graduated in Visual Arts (BA, MA) at the Academy of Fine Arts of Bologna (IT) and in Interface Cultures (MA) at the University of Art and Design of Linz. In 2020 she is one of the finalist of the Share Prize (Turin, IT). In 2021 she is co-founder and co-curator of the Next Cloud Residency and Next Cloud Atelierhaus hosted by the net culture initiative servus.at. In 2022 she is one of the selected artists by Bank Austria for the Bank Austria Studios Program through which she currently got a studio at the Atelierhaus Salzamt in Linz.

Her works have been exhibited at Ars Electronica Festival (AT), Xie Zilong Photography Museum (CN), XII Video Vortex Conference (MT), WRO Media Art Biennale (PL), Deutsche Bank (IT), Schlossmuseum Linz (AT), Pinacoteca Albertina di Torino (IT) and more.

Featured in:
↘ *TBD Ultramagazine*
↘ *ATP Diary*
↘ *i-D Italy*
↘ *Exibart*
↘ *Artribune*

Interviews:
↘ *Artribune*
↘ *Droga Magazine*
↘ *Rivista Segno*
↘ *(video)confessions of a post-digital generation by Giada Centazzo (Mind the Gap Catalog)*

Contributions:
↘ Pandemic exchange: how artists experience the Covid-19 Crisis.
Edited by Josephine Bosma.
Institute of Network Cultures (NL)

Prizes & Grants:
↘ Bank Austria Studios, 2022
↘ *Share Prize*, finalist, Turin, 2020
↘ *Swiss Original,* selected project, Milan, 2019
↘ *OMA - Open Media Award*, selected project, Linz, 2018
↘ *Art Prize CBM,* finalist video-art category, Turin, Prague, London, 2015
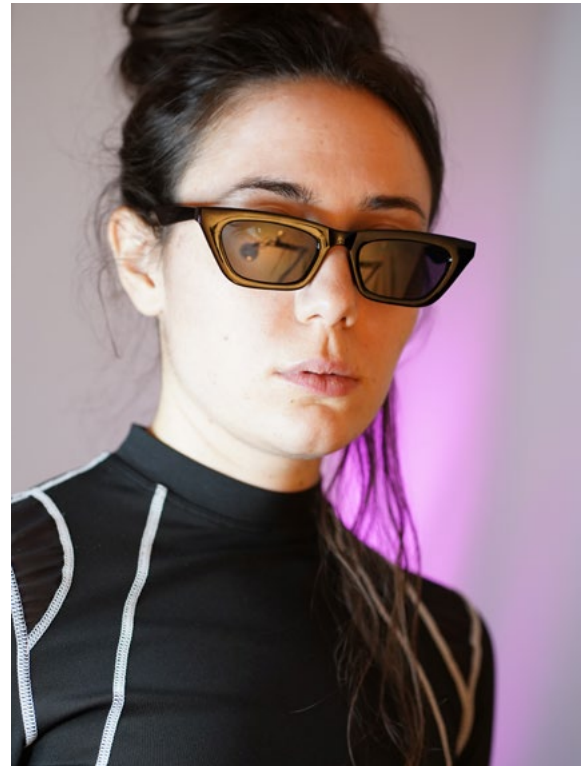
Personal Information

Phone number
+43 670 603 0552

Email address
write@sofiabraga.com

Website
sofiabraga.com

Address
Theresianumgasse 14
Vienna, 1040 (AT)

Place of Birth
Parma (IT)

Date of Birth
11/07/1991

Nationality
Italian

Solo Shows

2020
Die Verwandlung, TBD Ultramagazine Ultra Event, curated by TBD Ultramagazine

2018
You Are Running Out of Battery, Link Cabinet | Link Art Center, curated by Matteo Cremonesi

Group Shows

2022
Rechannelled Corporealities, Virginia Bianchi Gallery (IT)
After Party, Art City Bologna - Mock Jungle, Palazzo Re Enzo, Bologna (IT)
Kunstverein, Linz (upcoming) (AT)

2021
The Struggle is Real, GreenCube Gallery (IT)
OUR BODIES, OUR DATA, curated by FACES and Das Frauenkulturbüro Nordrhein-Westfalen
ArtVerona 16th edition, Modern and Contemporary Art Fair, Stand TBD Ultramagazine, Verona (IT)
Art Layers, AR exhibition, Artribune, curated by Valentina Tanni
Metacinema 2021. Festival delle audiovisioni ibridanti, Bologna (IT)
Subterranean Virtualscapes, Virginia Bianchi Gallery (IT)
Digital Square, Europark Salzburg (AT)
WRO - Wro Media Art Biennale 2021, Wroclaw (PL)
Maratona di Visione, Turin (IT)

2020
BILLY - Wanja Hack, Linz (AT)
Share Festival 2020 – Riots, Here We Are, Turin, (IT)
Ibrida Festival 2020, Forlì (IT)
VALIE EXPORT X Cyber Art, OÖ Landes-Kultur, curated by Anika Meier
Ars Electronica Festival 2020, Linz (AT)
Metacinema 2020. Festival delle audiovisioni ibridanti, Bologna (IT)
Kultur braucht Kunst, Schlossmuseum Linz (AT)
AMRO Festival - Art Meets Radical Openness 2020, Linz (AT)
Ricalcolo, KB 1909, Gorizia (IT)

2019
Swiss Original, Overstudio, Milan (IT)
BEST OFF, Kunstuniversität Linz (AT)
XII Video Vortex conference, Spazju Kreattiv, Malta (MT)
Berlin Art Week, Bitkom, Berlin (DE)
Ars Electronica Festival 2019, Linz (AT)
Casting Screens, HFBK Hamburg, Hamburg (DE)
Xie Zilong Photography Museum, Changsha (CN)
OMA - Open Media Award (screening), Ars Electronica Center, Linz (AT)
Best Before: 17.01.19, Splace am Hauptplatz, Linz (AT)

2018
Speculum Artium 10, New Media Culture Festival, Trbovlje (SL)
Ars Electronica Festival 2018, Linz (AT)
Rundgang, Kunstuniversität Linz (AT)
The Internet Yami-Ichi, HeK - Haus der elektronischen Künste, Basel (CH)

2017
Pink Pink Moon, The Wrong - New Digital Art Biennale
The Internet Yami-Ichi, iMal - Center for Digital Cultures and Technology, Brussels (BE)
Maison Laponte collection launch, Vogue Fashion Night, Milan (IT)
Connections, A bit of History 2017, MRF, Torino (IT)

2016
Paesaggio Futuro, Deutsche Bank, Milan (IT)
One Step Beyond, Porto dell'Arte, Bologna (IT)
Accept / Decline, Gallleriapiù, Bologna (IT)
Dronica, Gallleriapiù, Bologna (IT)
Space. Inside and Outside the limits, NoD Gallery, Prague (CZ)

2015
Space. Inside and Outside the limits, Pinacoteca Albertina, Torino (IT), curated by Art Prize CBM
Secondo Livello, oTTo Gallery, Bologna (IT)
Terzo Allestimento, Accademia di Belle Arti di Bologna

Curatorial Projects

2022
↘ Next Cloud Atelierhaus, servus.at cloud, Linz (AT)

2021
↘ Next Cloud Residency, servus.at cloud, Linz (AT)

2020
↘ Internet Yami-Ichi, Ars Electronica Festival, Linz (AT)

2019
↘ Internet Yami-Ichi, DAS - Dispositivo Arti Sperimentali, Bologna (IT)
↘ Internet Yami-Ichi, Ars Electronica Festival, Linz (AT)

Artist Talks

2022
↘ Dive In: Performance in the immersive Environment, AN-ICON International Conference,
   University of Milan and Pirelli HangarBicocca (IT)

↘ Human Rights in the Digital Age, Applied Human Rights Department
   Die Angewandte, University of applied Arts, Vienna (AT) (Lecture + Workshop)

↘ DATA BODY panel, CIVA Vienna Media Art Festival, Vienna (AT)

2021
↘ Memestetica w/ Valentina Tanni, Tank Serbatoio Culturale, Bologna (IT)

2020
↘ Post Digital Strategies, Casa Cavazzini – Museum of Modern and Contemporary Art of Udine (IT)
↘ Share Festival 2020, Turin (IT)

2019
↘ IAMAS - Institute for advanced Media Art and Sciences, Ogaki (JP)

Forehead Vulva Channeling Research

Transmedia storytelling performance, Augmented Reality,
2021 - ongoing
watch the video

Forehead Vulva Channeling Research is a speculative transhumanist research which is developing advanced studies on human bodies potential to reach lifelong emotional well-being through the re-calibration of pleasure-centers by channeling hidden organs through the use of specialised technologies.

Started as a series of Forehead Vulva Channelers – a specific Augmented Reality specialised technology– and promoted via a performative online campaign, The Forehead Vulva Channeling Research found within centralised social media platforms relevant support and success, creating as a result a spontaneous world wide online performance: just within 24 hours, the first Forehead Vulva channeller released, was used by 10.000 users and got more than 250.000 impressions.

The project is an ongoing online performance that reflecs on the potential of technologies to create new bodies identities, dealing with topics such as technogender identity and highlighting at the same time problematics related to data sovereignty, surveillance and repression within online platforms.

Next Cloud Residency & Next Cloud Atelierhaus

Curatorial project, Online residency
2021, 2022 - on going
https://atelierhaus.servus.at/

Next Cloud Atelierhaus is a one-month online residencies program hosted in the servus.at cloud, curated by S()fia Braga, Davide Bevilacqua and Matthias Pitscher, in which five artists, Danae Tapia, eeefff, Cristina Cochior, Mary Maggic and aaajiao have been invited to use the servus.at infrastructure to create a project, engage and collaborate with each other. The participants were invited to use all the tools in the cloud instance, which is a content collaboration platform build around the idea of cooperating with the others: it allows communication channels such as chats and video conference, and it has specific tools to organize group workflows.
During the residency period we also had special guests: the art critics Régine Debatty and Vincenzo Estremo, and Aileen Derieg and Gabriela Gordillo that led the artists through a virtual tour of the city of Linz, where the servus.at server – and thus the cloud – is physically based.

Within The Next Cloud Atelierhaus, we aim at creating a short-term digital institution whose role is to enrich online residencies through online means - fostering digital art and supporting its needs. As a curatorial experiment of self-made institution, the project investigates what can be the role of the Atelierhaus – or the studio house – in the online spaces.

The Next Cloud Atelierhaus is funded through LinzIMpORT 2021 - Linz Kultur & Kunst und Kultur im digitalen Raum - Land Oberösterreich.

From the Residency to the Atelierhaus
Throughout 2021 we have been organizing the "Next Cloud Residency", curated by S()fia Braga and Matthias Pitscher, consisting of an online folder in the servus.at self-hosted cloud, that every month was given to one artist. They could upload new content, or modify and delete what was already there, and thereby engage with each other's work with an open source and creative commons spirit.
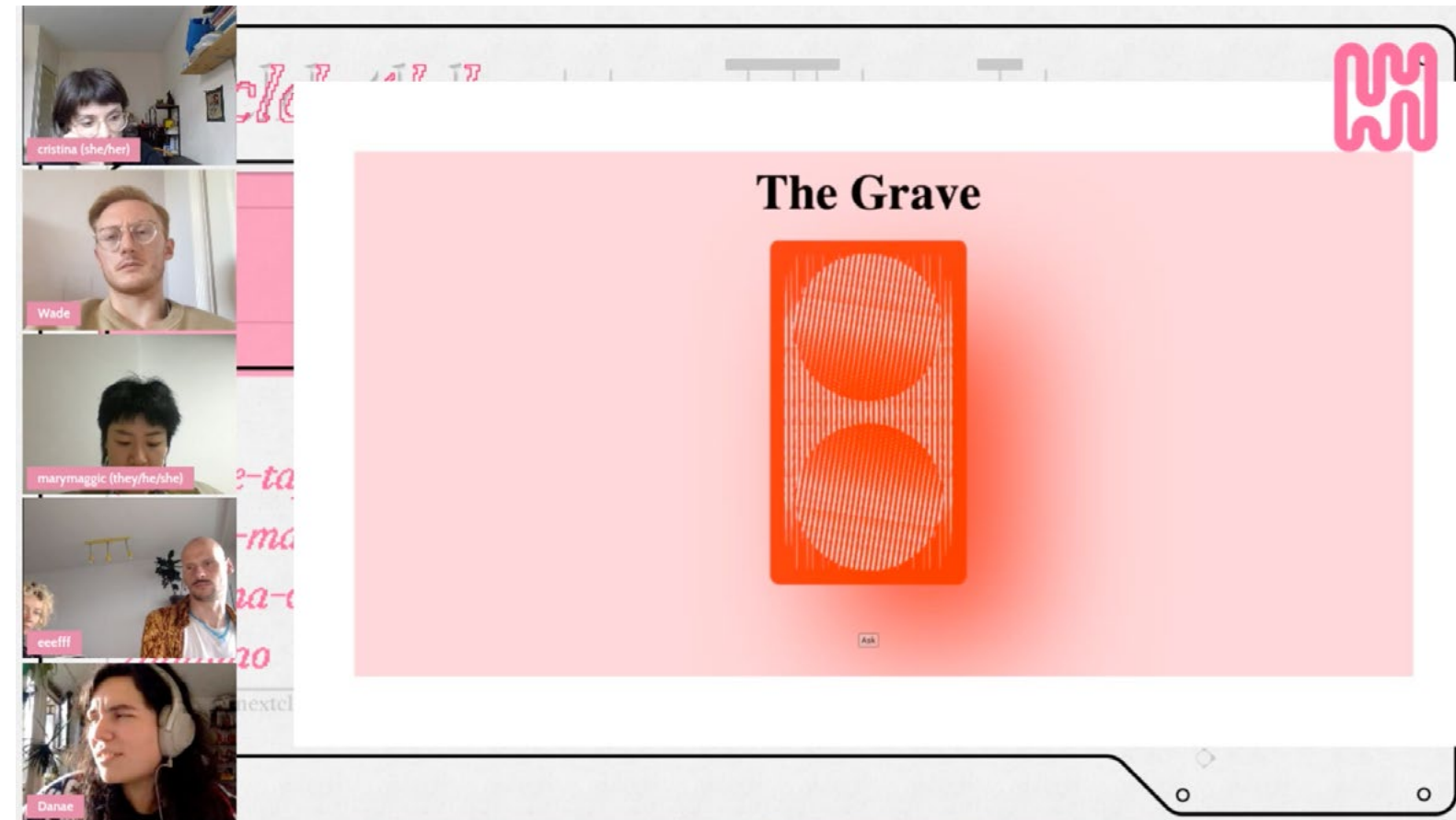
↘ Next Cloud Atelierhaus, Open Studio Visits | Danae Tapia - The Grave, A Marxist Oracle, 2022
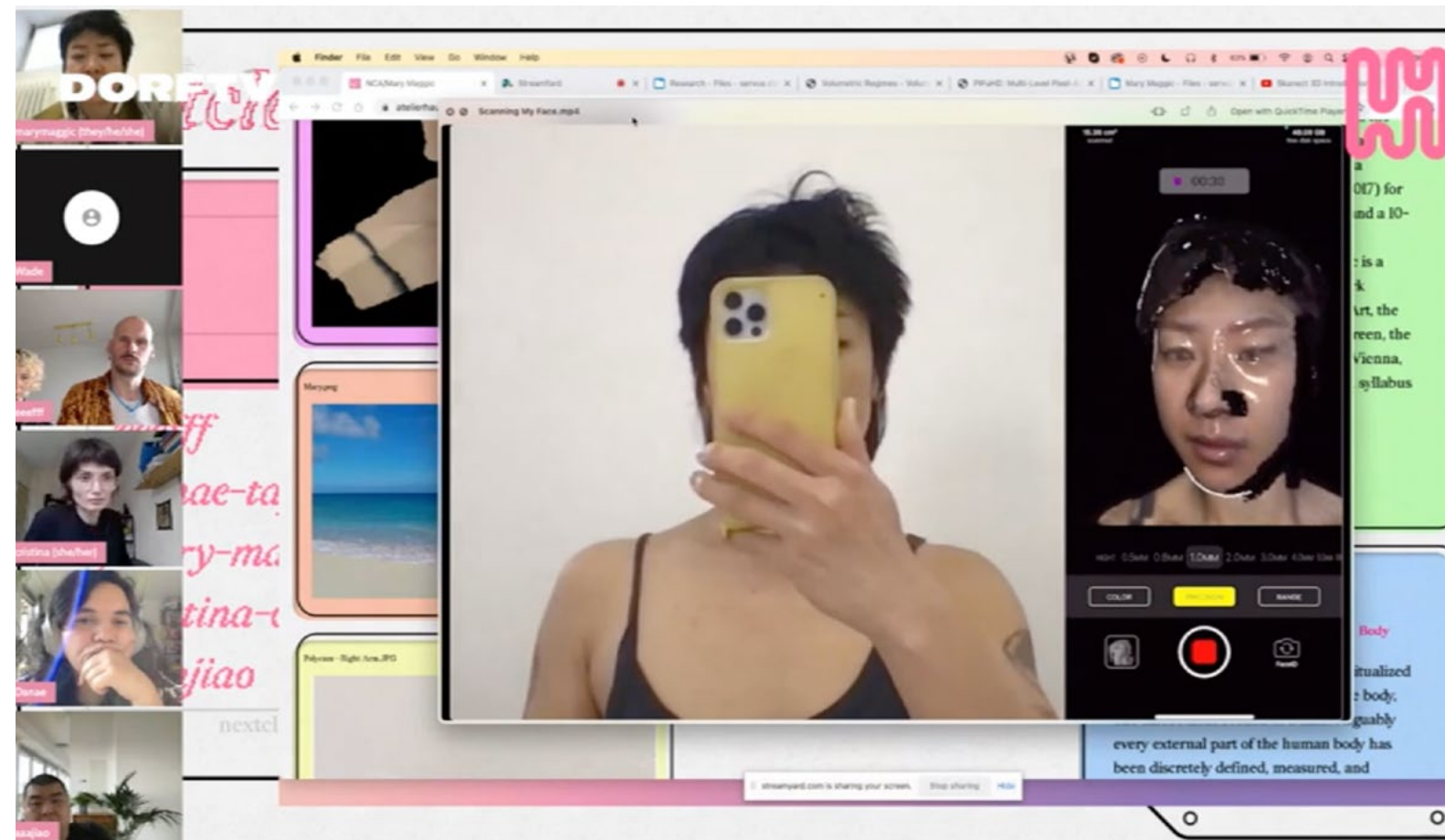
↘ Next Cloud Atelierhaus, Open Studio Visit | Mary Maggic - Archiving the Disobidient Body, 2022

I'm Just Asking for your Attention

Installation, Guerilla communication intervention, 2021

I Am Just Asking for Your Attention is a guerilla communication intervention which aims to show how the techniques of advertising have invaded and corrupted the public sphere. The project focuses on the problematics related to cognitive bombardment, and the underestimated consequences of information overload on the consumers as well as the problematic role of stereotypes.
The project focuses especially on the perception of the bodies and gender roles within advetising leading the discussion towards the idea of technogender.

Olia Svetlanova was born as an online presence in August 2017 in a hot Italian digital summer from a CGI photogrammetry lost in the deepest fabric of the Internet. Since that day it has changed countless times the appearance and shape of its virtual body, continuously producing new ones through the use of CGI. Inspired by imagery from science fiction, Olia constantly reimagines itself in the context of a limitless opportunity to render.

↘ Detail, EUROPARK Salzburg (AT), 2021. photo © Indiara di Benedetto

Meanwhile in China

Multimedia Installation, 2019

Meanwhile in China is a video installation created by the fictional duo Sai Bao and Yang Mu (S()fia Braga and Matthias Pitscher).
Douyin's AI recommendation algorithm generates a list of videos that is optimized for engagement. The artists decontextualize those found images without any alteration to give visitors the space to reflect upon them. Using the app from different locations, in different times and with different accounts the project aims to gain insight into the mechanism of the platform trying to break through the great firewall of China, a conbination of legislations to regulate internet domestically.

The wall behind the screen is covered with a collage of graphs and data points found online, showcasing the exploding growth and user distribution on the platform. The graphs themselves are stripped of any labeling, making them unreadable within common sense.

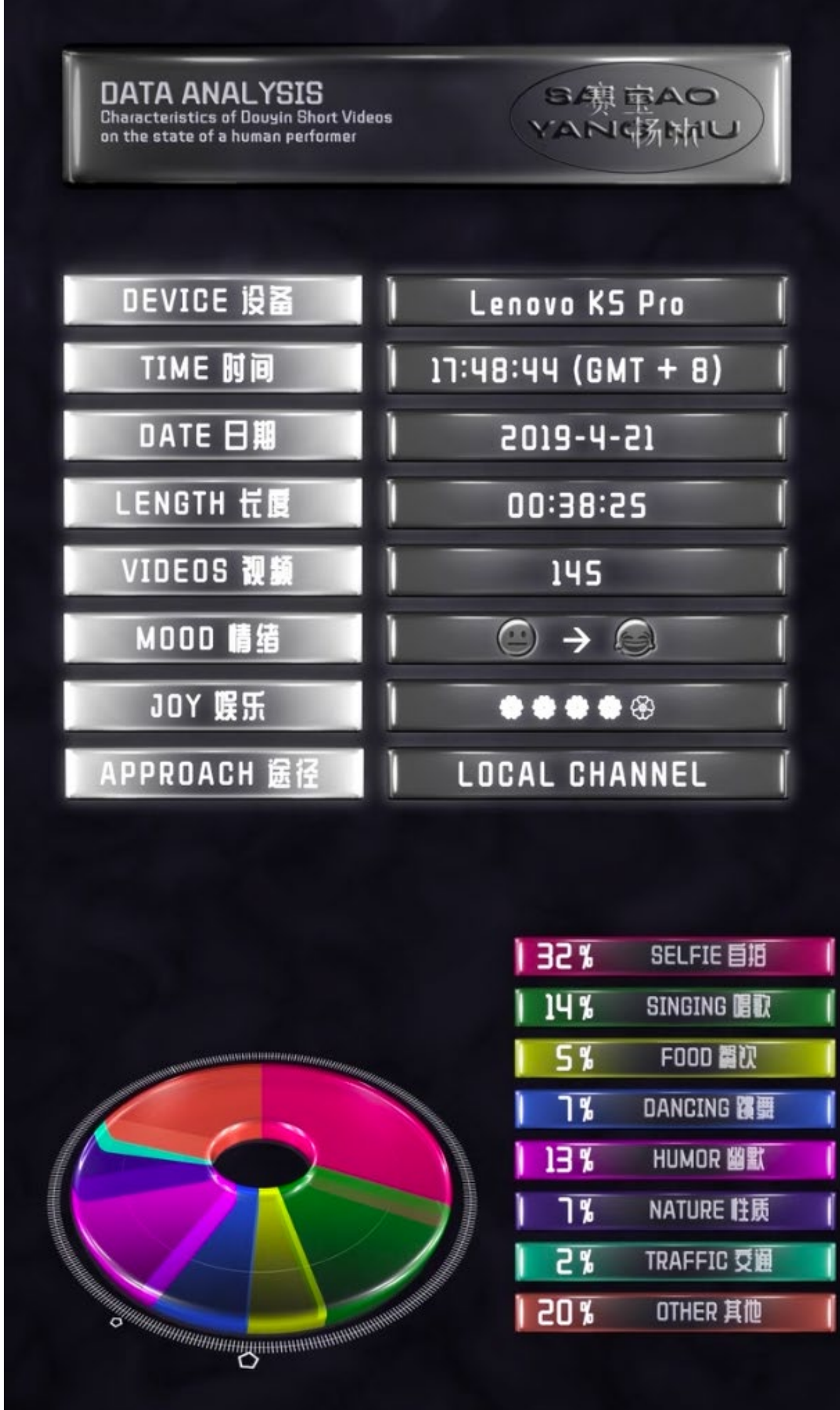↗ Installation view, Ars Electronica Festival 2019, Linz (AT)

↘ Installation view, Xie Zilong Museum, Changsha (CN), 2019

↗ Frame from video, Data analysis of the short videos screen recorded

I Stalk Myself more than I Should

Video Installation, 13' 34'', 2019
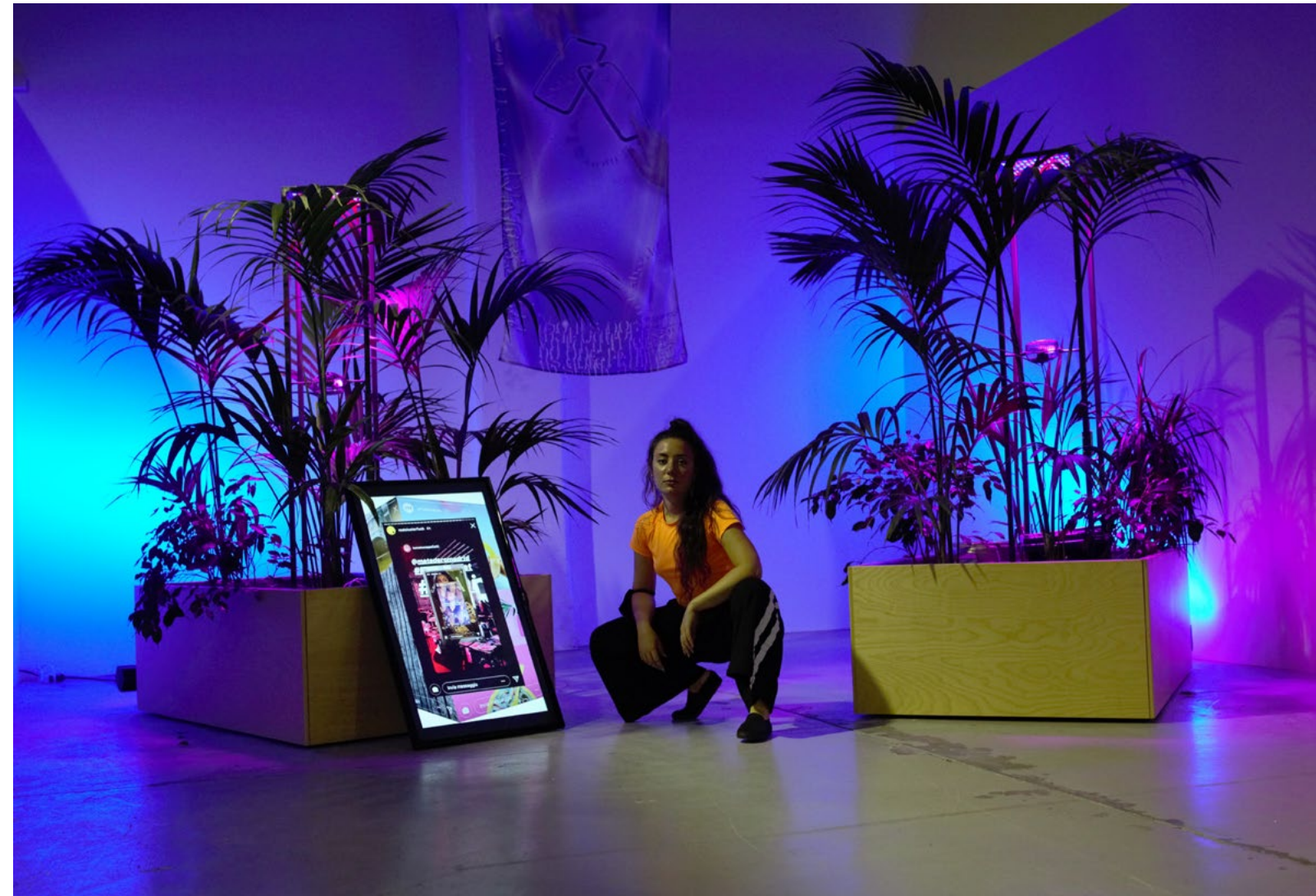watch the video

There is a narcissistic aspect in surveillance which empowers internet users to monitor their behaviors daily, overcoming the fear of being observed. Sharing structured, rationalized and complex private content with intimate details online places users in a digital panopticon. This content is not easily read and is subject to multiple interpretation, hence it is possible to find various starting points for speculative stories.

I Stalk Myself More Than I Should is an archive of expired memories that were meant to die within 24 hours. The work displays a selection of Instagram Stories preserved through the use of screen recordings. Going against the nature of this feature, the project investigates appropriation, interpretation and representation, as well as qualities and hierarchies of humans memories shared and stored online.

The project discloses how Social Media Platforms and their features are an incentive to enable the so called "Interveillance" and the overproduction, and thus collection, of personal data as well as a way to control and prevent people's behaviours and ways of express themselves. Often unaware, users become an active part of this power structure that is no longer based on control and repression of the bodies, but on prevention through the promotion of beliefs and habits that leverage on processes of identification, that manifest themselves in the form of viral trends.
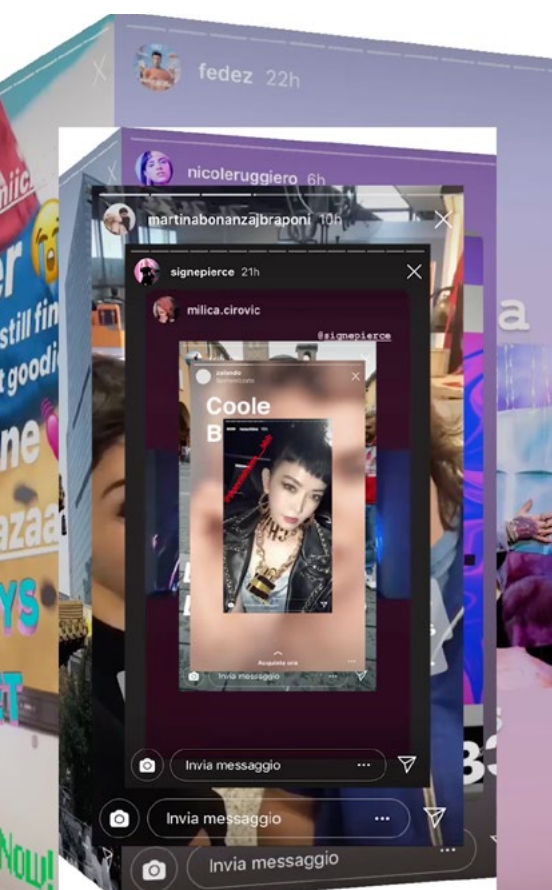
↘ Installation view, Share Festival 2020, Turin (IT)

↘ Frames from video

Welcome to My Channel

Video, 6' 26'', 2020

The intrinsic dynamics of social media make it ideal spaces to recreate an idealized version of the user online. Starting from this assumption, the project delves into the vast world of video sharing, in which the telling of stories online, through the use of extremely intimate and confidential (but at the same time standardized) videos, seems to have become a necessity to achieve visibility and gather views. Within this context, mental distress itself becomes a dangerous narrative tool in which it is difficult to delineate the boundary between reality and fiction.

Through the appropriation of video blogs downloaded from one of the most famous video sharing platforms on the net, the video reflects on the contemporary condition of confiding online.

In *Welcome to My Channel,* six young people narrate their personal journey towards healing. In a mix of compassion, narcissism, personal promotion and sponsorship, the video consists of a selection of self-told stories where raw and disturbing realities are narrated in well-decorated bedrooms or well-studied set ups. Not all the selected videos, however, are professionally shot, and it is precisely these stylistic differences that highlight the economic differences between the users.
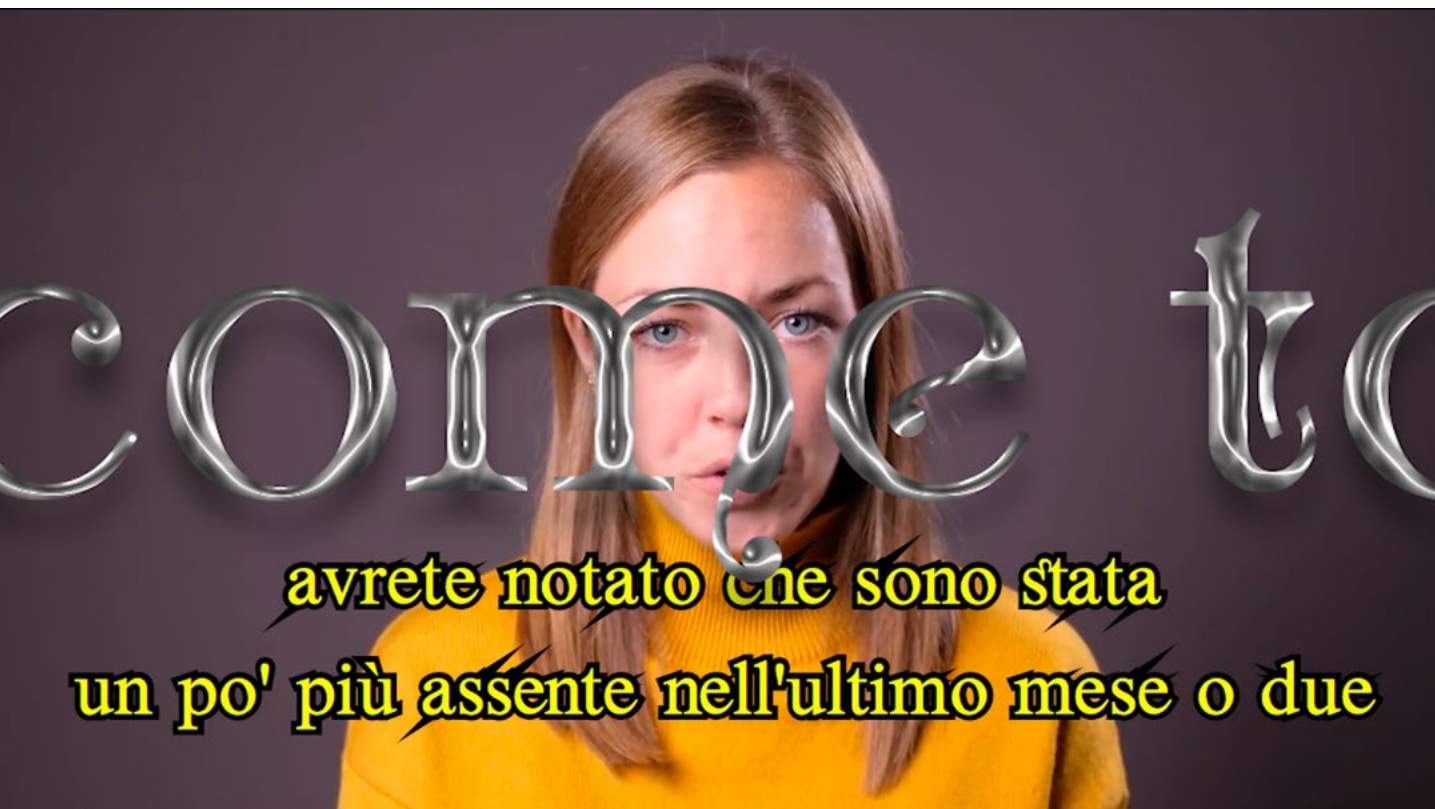
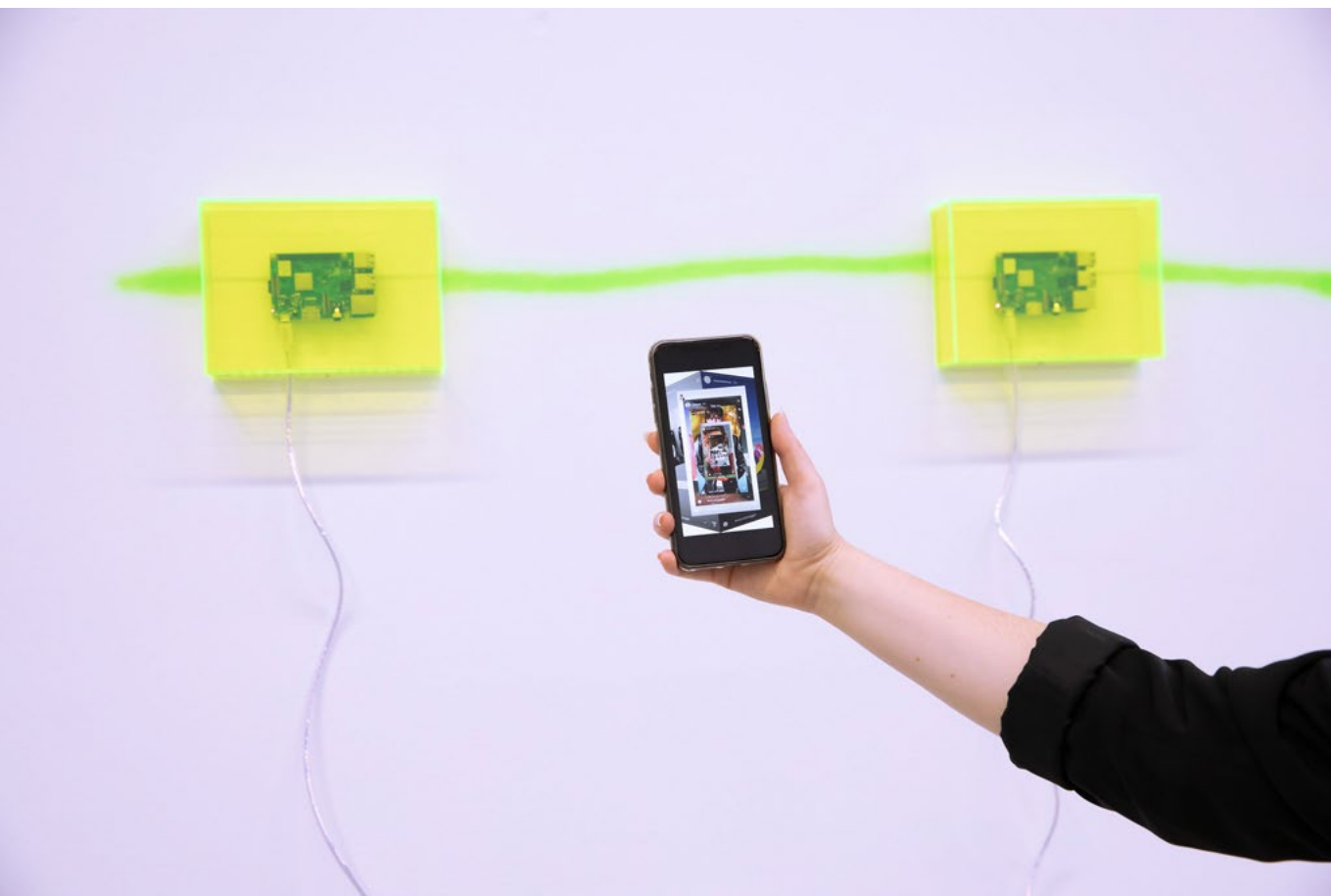↘ Installation view, Billy, Wanja Hack, Linz (AT)

SSID: @tagme

Multimedia Installation, Offline exhibition, 2020

By connecting to the routers you can watch the videos *I Stalk Myself more than I Should*, *Welcome to My Channel* and *Waiting Room*.

The series of videos investigates appropriation, improper use of private content published on the internet and online nihilism.

Detail, Ars Electronica Festival 2020. photo © Florian Voggeneder
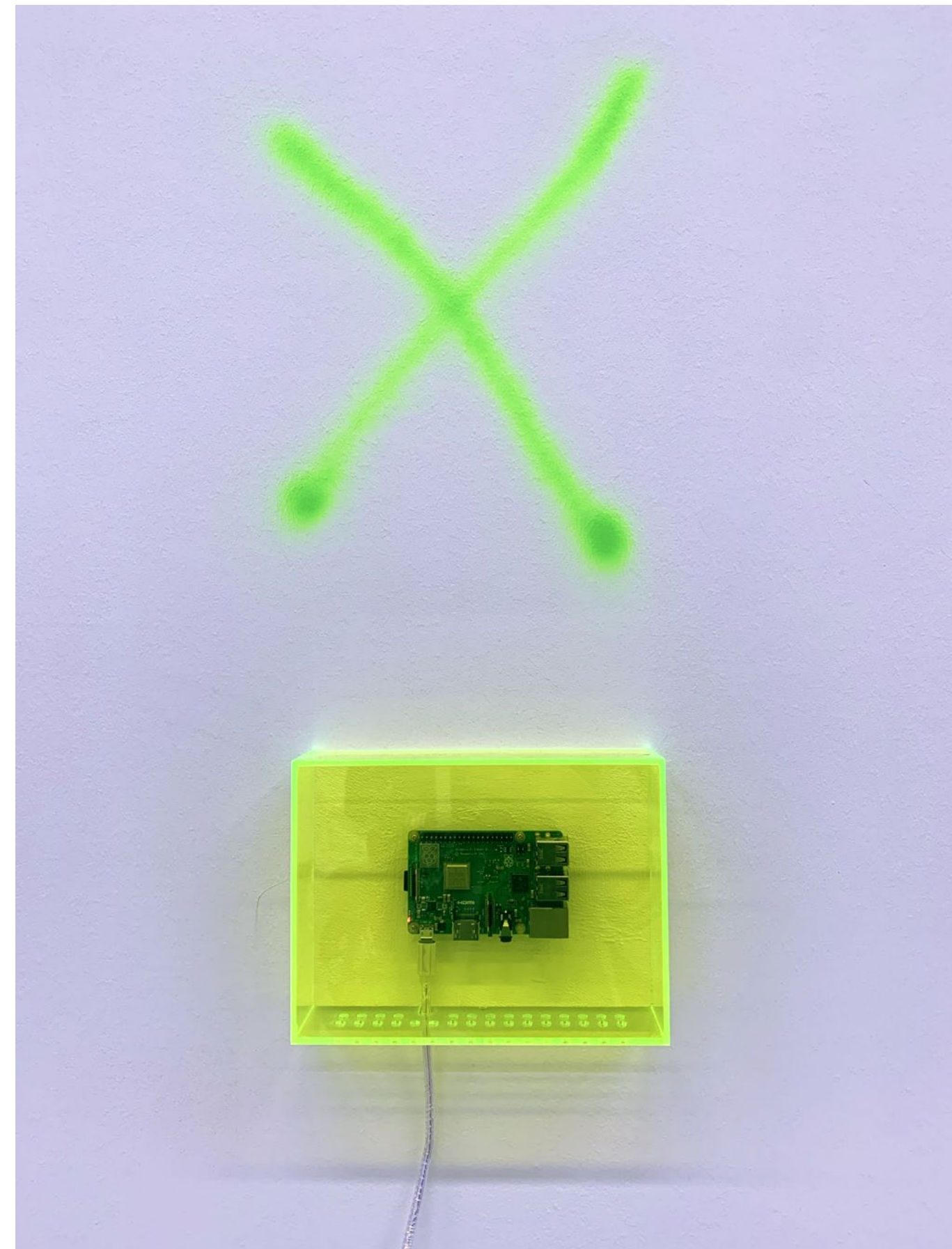
↘ Detail, Ars Electronica Festival, 2020

Die Verwandlung

Short movie for Instagram Stories / Online Performance, 2020
watch the video

"Braga uses the Instagram stories medium to narrate a 24 hours day set in an apartment.
The day is divided it in three acts: morning, afternoon and evening.
These three narrative moments, as they were part of a film's storyboard, testify the progressive distortion of the perception of the domestic environment and the self through an ascending climax, continuously alternating re-mediated screens and altered visions.

Throughout the narrative, the house and the body get less and less familiar, bringing the protagonist towards a growing anxiety, dictated by the inability of recognizing the home and the body of her own. Also the elements coming from the outer side of the dwelling play a fundamental role, manifesting themselves as threatening, uncanny and mysterious entities.
The reference made by the artist of the famous text the metamorphosis of Kafka in the title of the work is inserted in this frame.
In the short film the sound contributes to emphasise the uncanny and anxious atmosphere, recalling the typical audiovisual aesthetics of horror and weird films.

The fragmented sequence of photos and videos culminates in a choice-driven final, double and unexpected, that gives to the entire project a playful feeling.
The artist gets typical gimmick of gamebooks and videogames and of Instagram interface itself, and with a possible plot twist she invites the user-viewer to be a protagonist in the episode, facing a choice that could be fatal: "exit" or "continue"?"
TBD Ultramagazine

↘ screenshot from the IG short movie, fake ads for TBD, 2020
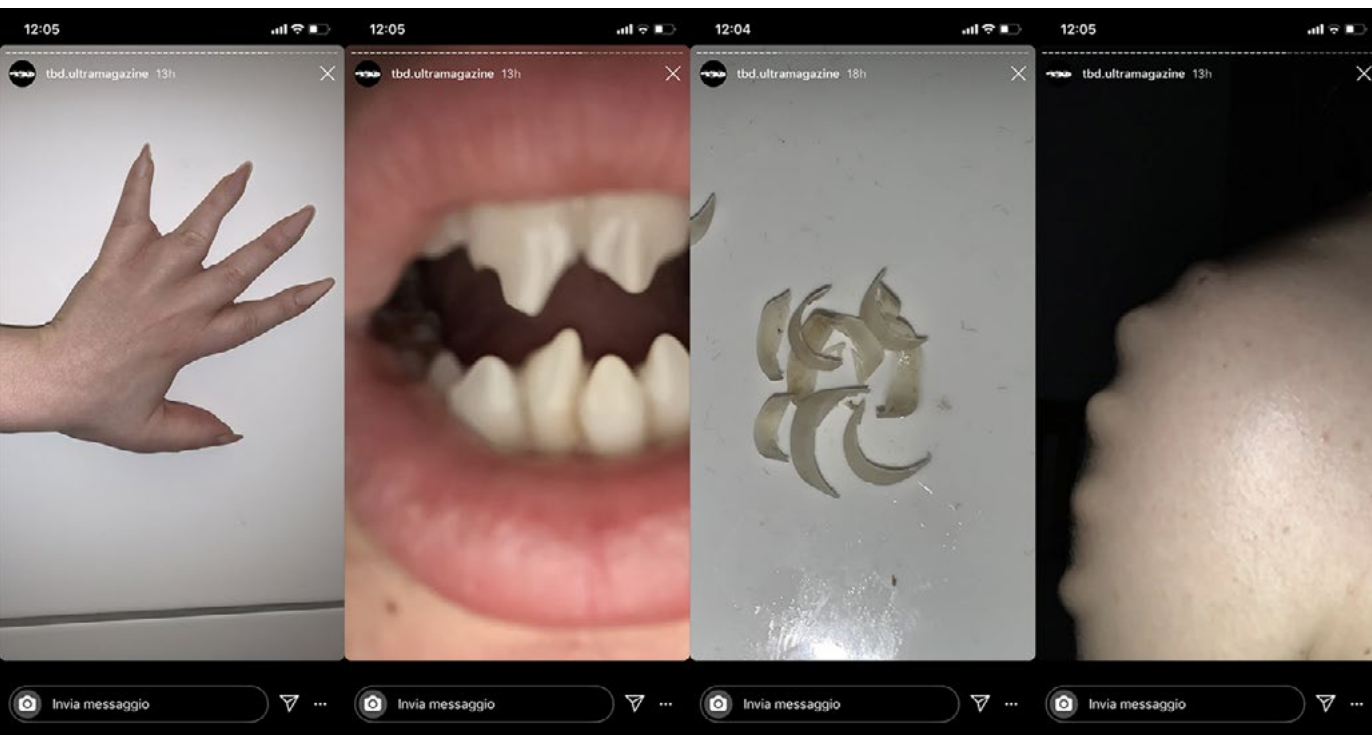
ASMR for Earthly Survival

Video, 10' 00'', 2020
watch the video

ASMR for earthly survival explores the potential of ASMR
(Autonomous Sensory Meridian Response) as a tool for the creation
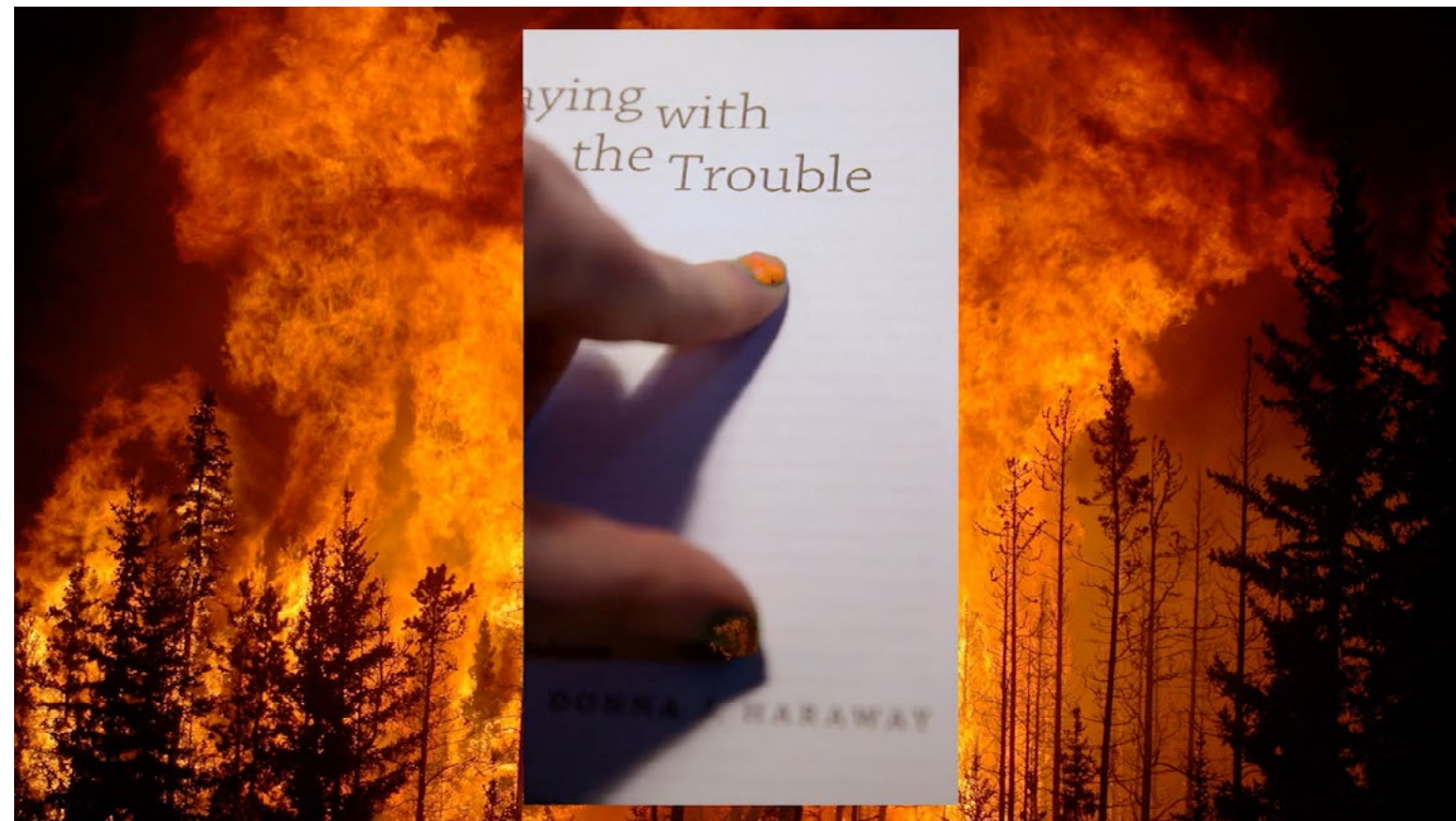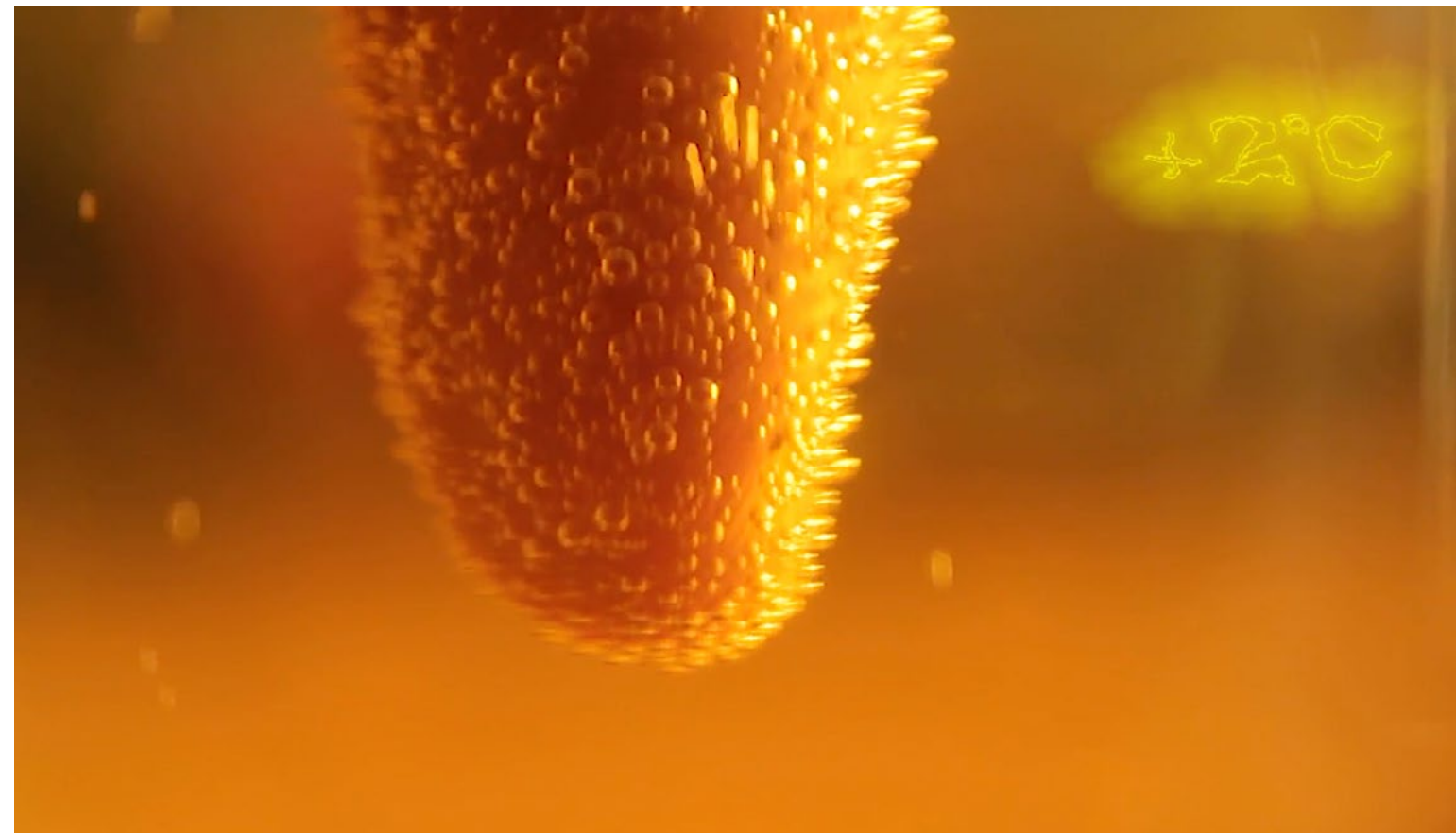of intimate science fiction storytelling narratives.

Soft voices and soothing sounds will take the audience on
a sensory audiovisual journey through a dystopian near future.

The resulting work is based on the collaborative composition and
exploration of intimate fears and tribulations related to current
climate change narratives.

↘ Frames from video

Enter Promocode

Series of pictures and videos commissioned by
OÖ Landes-Kultur, 2020

"My artistic work centers on the human body as a medium of information, as a signal bearer of meaning and communication. I occupy myself with the pictorial representation of mental states, with the sensations of the body when it loses its identity when the ego gnaws its way through the scraps of skin when steel casings straighten the joints and the worn-out identity is nailed with steel pins to modern mythomania… I try to shape the social structures (power current) and standards (mutilations) of life into a metanoia of pictures."
VALIE EXPORT

Enter Promocode is a response to the projects Body Configurations' and 'The Birth Madonna'. In 'Body Configuration' VALIE EXPORT focuses on the place of women in public spaces trying to fit her body by curving, stretching, and forcing it in unnatural positions, in an architectural environment based on the male gaze. The power structures that VALIE EXPORT was unraveling are also present in social networks that are extensions of our current society.
The first and foremost actor being the male gaze in these power structures, we can observe the same problematic patterns and symptoms in these platforms.

Almost hidden away by the algorithms that decide on what is shown to personalized feeds, the underlying power structure is a creeping omnipresence. While the overarching structures are still there, why circumnavigate around it to try and find an empowering stance?
If the goal is to go against these said structures, disrupting the comfortable flow of carefully curated imagery becomes a very effective method.
Within this attention economy of consuming images, I disrupt by impressing and disgusting the user at the same time as VALIE EXPORT was doing throughout her artistic practice.

You Are Running out of Battery

Multimedia Installation, Offline network, 2018
go to the website

The installation appears as a relaxation area within the exhibition space: air mattresses, pillows, posters depicting beaches and plants, aroma diffusers and phone chargers. In this calm and safe environment the audience can lie down, charge their devices and connect to the offline network *You are Running out of Battery*.

Visitors can connect to the offline network and disconnect from their online lives and the exhibition. Information overload is a common problem shared by the web and exhibitions, spaces that are saturated with large amounts of stimuli, that can become chaotic, stressful and overwhelming.

This site-specific installation has various objectives. The first one is to deconstruct web interfaces and disrupt the users' experience in order to observe the everyday nature of the web from a different point of view, while reflecting on the impact that these immaterial interfaces have on different aspects of life, such as: personal and emotional sphere, public and social life, politic, economy and culture. The second one is to create a space, within the exhibition, where it is possible to reflect on exhibited works in order to give visitors the time to digest information and share opinions, remarks and complaints.

The project has a very ironical connotation. In fact, the website, which should lead the visitor through a mindfulness meditation, is actually quite anxiety-inducing because of it's glitchy aesthetic. This specific characteristic calls the idea of finding relaxation through technology into question.

Unsociable Networks

Mobile App, 2018
watch the video

Unsociable Networks and Tider for "I am single by choice" are three apps for Android that aim to deconstruct the web interfaces and disrupt the users' experience of three of the most famous social networks: Facebook, Twitter and Tinder.

The empty dashboards can become chaotic interfaces through the use of gestures - one tap, double taps, long tap, swipe - that lead to different reactions. The user is the only one that has momentarily control of the dashboard even though it is not thier own. The works reflects on the impact of social networks' interfaces on people, from their personal and emotional sphere to public, social and cultural life, showing how a naive and immaterial gesture can lead to material repercussions.