DALIBOR KNAPP
PORTFOLIO 2011–2020
(selection of works)
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The video Metabolic structures (work in progress) was created to be installed in a gallery space. Animated graphs projected onto a large screen (or a dome) represent simultaneous processes that nourish the current world. They emerged from the sketches in the author’s diary he has kept in the past year (as the title suggests he still continues to do so). In some diagrams the author develops and describes his relations in the digital space (digital ethnography), in others he almost impersonally observes processes connected with the climate crisis or the future. He explores the relations of visible/invisible, close/distant, etc. Diagrams and graphs connect seemingly unrelated processes and forms - scaled from shouts analogies, struggles to formulate feelings to outcomes based on hard science. No process or form is superior or subordinate to others. This non-hierarchical description agglutinates otherwise fragmented processes and offers a more fitting image of the contemporary world.

Credits: Zdeněk Růžička

Link to the video [here](https://example.com)
Digital Ethnographic Dictionary is the first Czech book about digital colonialism. The author explores and examines the situation of the body in the digital space with the use of ethnographic methods. The digital space absorbed the old power structures and patterns and unfolded them into new forms of violence, dominance and exploitation. The seemingly neutral field of ones and zeros fostered a digital plantation on which, overseen by algorithms, our digital bodies labour.

The book is a play on analogies between colonialism and the so-called digital colonialism, which existence the author justifies by claiming that certain characteristics of colonial economics (e.g. unpaid or underpaid labour, applying certain forms of violence, economy monopolization or different thought constructs in the minds of the colonizers and the colonized) are still distinctly present also in the digital space.
The body is a tool of social-political change. It is both the initiator and the receiver of the change. The initiation of the change lies in a new, unseen performance of the body that needs to be visible. Through these newly created bodies and identities the system can be undermined for so long until they become a norm and the system will adapt to them. To not provide the possibility for change means to not enable the body to be seen.

Digital space makes the body invisible and thus creates a problem. John Perry Barlow in his Declaration of the Independence of Cyberspace from 1996 states that cyberspace is both everywhere and nowhere, but it is not where bodies live. His Cartesian construct of civilization of the Mind does not include the body.

If even the digital utopia disregards the body there is no reason to expect a different development in the future. Even the structure of the body of the digital space itself is hidden to the eye of the viewer. Eight hundred thousands kilometres of cables still lie on the ocean floor, every sent email still emits 4 grams of carbon dioxide to the atmosphere, DNS root servers are still run by the organisations managed by the American government.

The body is not taken into account. The hand of a Chinese woman still touches nearly every object we use, but the growing demands of the system are outgrowing the limits of her body. The system is altering its substance, throwing off the rest of its biological fuel that is becoming too worn out for the system’s demands. The body will continue to be stuck in the middle of this system, being unnecessary, it will be marginalized and it will become more and more invisible. Because mechanisation of the work in the past did not liberate the body from inequality, wars and not even the work itself.

If the digital space makes the body invisible, it also makes all the work the body does invisible. Startups feed off the code of the public commons but none of them takes care of the code itself. The owners of social networks employ still valid but outworn concepts of work when they commodify activity, relationships and even the whims of users mind without any reward. The mechanical Turk with his body hidden deep in the bowels still successfully pretends to be a perfectly functional machine.

Gamification defined as the application of game elements to non-game contexts results in the application of market elements to originally non-market contexts. If the body and the work it does are not visible then the digital space could really be there where the body is not. But what the unseen body still possesses, what determines it is its location, its region, its habitat.

Is the change possible? Is it possible to make the body in the digital space visible? Is it possible to disrupt the labours of love which are essential for functioning of the system but stay massively ignored?

If we look in history, the overvalue of the bodily modification in relation to work was connected with eroticization of the modified body part. Foot binding which was the most erotic allowed Chinese girls not to work. Eroticization liberates the body, at least for some time, from the structured time, as well as the production relations. Claws stick out to defend, claws stick out to attack.

Link to the video here
The exhibition After Body explores and examines the situation of the body in the digital space with the use of ethnographic methods. The digital space absorbed the old power structures and patterns and unfolded them into new forms of violence, dominance and exploitation. The seemingly neutral field of ones and zeros grew into digital plantation on which our bodies work under the supervision of algorithms.

The author presents three works of various forms - a video installation Ethnographic Study of Algorithms, a publication Digital Dictionary: An Ethnographic Dictionary, and a VR installation After Body: Situation. Each work uses different language to describe and analyse contemporary phenomena and processes that occur both inside and outside the digital space. The author summarizes them under the term digital colonialism.
ETHNOGRAPHIC STUDY OF ALGORITHMS (2017)

video, HD
3D animation, found footage
4:40 min
english / english subtitles
concept / writer

Ethnographic Study of Algorithms (3D animation, found footage) draws on the form and routines of classic ethnographic film. The plot is framed by an interview between the author — the observer and Mitsuku chatbot — the observed.

Found footage depicts the views of white men and women, representatives of the colonial tradition, who undisturbed observe black natives from their shelters. This flow is interrupted by scenes modelled in 3D, where the author meets El Negro de Banyoles, a stuffed black native hunter who was exhibited in the Museo Darder until 1991.

The growing parallels between algorithms and natives bring the question of who is actually the observer and who is the observed. The classic ethnographic relationship We vs. They is turned upside down. They are the algorithms that collect, categorize and record. The film directs the viewer’s view to the moment when the reassuring privilege of staring becomes the very opposite, when the viewer discovers that he himself is being observed, he is just a skin without body, surface without any identity.

Link to the video here
AFTER BODY: SITUATION (2017)

VR installation, 3D stereo sound concept

The body is a tool of political change; the body as an initiator of the change, but also a recipient of the change. However, digital space itself casts doubt on the body. After body: Situation is a game scene from a demonstration in a European city, where bodies of law enforcement personnel, protesters and also media representatives are missing. At the same time, the situation is experienced without any body; the body of the character controlled by the viewer is also missing. Is there a way to make any change in the digital space?

Link to the video [here](#)
DEFAULT SETTINGS:
CINEMA FOR TWO VIEWERS (2016)

video installation, HD
two tv screens, headphones
3:20 min, loop

english / no subtitles
concept / writer / narrator / technical solution

This is a cinema for two viewers. There’s no moving image, only the moving viewers. From the past to the future. The viewers are in different points in time. The first one is a future version of the second, the second one is a past version of the first. Face to face, they are both heading to the future. The situation of viewers’ bodies relates to the video. Body as a foundation stone of society. Physical experience as a condition of solidarity. This video explores relationships between body, future, language, image, perspective, solidarity and violence. For a better world more violence is needed. Far more.

Link to the video [here](#)
documentation of installation
exhibition Default settings: cinema for two viewers
Center for Contemporary Arts Prague / Galerie Jeleni
Prague, Czech Republic
13.9.–27.9.2016
documentation of installation
exhibition No Maps
Vlaams Cultuurhuis de Brakke Grond
Amsterdam, Netherlands
7.5.–26.5.2016
Link to the video [here](#)
THE SET (2014)
video, HD
feature film
8:20 min
english / no subtitles
custom / writer / director / actor / technical solution

It really does not matter if The Set is a main film or its own making of. The set is a film about a film - formally and thematically. The narrative is a motion from point A to point B - it is meant in a physical and in a linguistic sense as well. Inception, continuation, destruction over and over.

Only for cinema.

Credits:
Production: Ondřej Šejnoha, Studio Famu © 2014

Link to the video here
FILM ANIMAL (2014)

audio installation, MP3
mp3 player, headphones
3:58 min
czech/ no translation
concept / text / narrator

When you sit on high seat you become a viewer. To be an animal means to be observed - from birth till death and even after death - on a plate - the animal can't escape from others attention. A film about the animal which refused to be an animal. A Film which refused to be a film. Nevertheless, viewer can see them. Both of them. This installation was a part of residency program High seats, hunters and animal paths in Kravín Rural Arts, Hranice u Malče, Vysočina, Czech Republic.

documentation, site specific
Kravín Rural Arts
Hranice u Malče
Czech Republic
18.8.–24.8.2014
YOUR TH. MY TH. (2014)

video installation, SD
vcr, tv, vhs cassettes, videotape loop

czech / english subtitles
concept / writer / director / editor / technical solution

A universal and neverending story about Great future and about universal mechanism which is used against the Great future. Mine. Yours. Ours. The text in the loop is a dialogue at the same time. Technology is presenting the story, but technology itself is out of presence. New technology brings the future, the old one refers to the past.

documentation of installation, HD
exhibition On Repeat
Berlinskej model
Prague, 12.2.2014
Czech Republic
1:29 min

Link to the video here
EXPOSURE (2013)
video essay, HD
4:00 min
czech / english subtitles
concept / writer / director / dop / narrator / editor

The exposure time is the present. A video essay on horror, spaghetti, and the pyramid used to guide a plane. And also about other things. A study of a world where a direction of light is changed. The film is another attempt at offering testimony. Everything definitive evokes ridicule. The previous sentence is proof, as is this one. And this one.

Only for cinema.

Link to the video here
A video essay about image and language and about the impossibility of talking about them. This text is language. This text is image. And reality is really somewhere else. Reality is image. Reality is language.

Link to the video [here](#)
Attention is a deep inner mental process, which is constantly appropriated from outside. A change of the context reveals the ease of the appropriation. And this ease is ubiquitous.

Link to the video [here](#)
Dalibor Knapp is researcher and artist who makes video essays, texts and installations. In his work he deals with social and cultural layers of so-called reality and constructions of various languages that talk about it. In recent years, he has focused on technology and its impact on social and environmental relations.

EDUCATION
2010—2017 MgA. / Centre for Audiovisual studies / FAMU / Prague
2013 PhDr. / Department of Cultural studies / FFUK / Prague
2005—2010 Mgr. / Department of Cultural studies / FFUK / Prague

STUDY INTERNSHIPS
2016 New media atelier / Tomáš Svoboda / AVU / Prague
2013 Lensbased class / prof. Hito Steyerl / UDK / Berlin

WORK INTERNSHIPS
2015 Köken Ergun / Istanbul
2013 Clemens von Wedemeyer / Berlin

RESIDENCIES
2018 Egon Schiele Residency, Egon Schiele Art Centre, Czech Republic
2016 International Dresden Summer Academy for Visual Arts / Dresden
2014 Rezidence Artsalon S / Prague
2014 Posedy, hunters and animal paths / Kravin Rural Arts, Hranice u Malče

SOLO EXHIBITIONS
2019 Corticoid Tactics / Vitrína Deniska, Olomouc
2017 After Body / City Surfer Office, Prague
2016 After Body: Ethnographic study / Galerie Kino Art,
2016 Default settings: cinema for two viewers / Center for Contemporary Arts Prague / Galerie Jeleni, Prague

GROUP EXHIBITIONS
2019 Other Visions / Konvik, Olomouc
2018 Ontology of Encounter / Düsseldorf Photo Weekend, Düsseldorf
2017 Inferno / Galerie Hyberniska, Prague
2017 Your face sounds familiar / Galerie Favu, Brno
2017 AMIWHATIMTHINKINGABOUT? / 4+4 Days in motion, Kasárna Karlín, Prague

Dalibor studied the Center for Audiovisual Studies at Film and tv School of Academy of Performing Arts in Prague (MgA.) and the Department of Cultural Studies at the Faculty of Arts, Charles University in Prague (PhDr.). In 2013, he attended the Lensbased class of Professor Hito Steyerl at Berlin University of the Arts (UdK). Since 2015 he has been a curator of educational platform for digital culture, art and technology Transmit. Dalibor Knapp is as well a member of the Množina collective.
2013 Famufest, Prague, Czech Republic
2013 Echoes of Fascinations, Studio Béla, Prague, Czech Republic
2013 Jiřílava International Documentary Film Festival, Jiřílava, Czech Republic
2012 Famufest, Prague, Czech Republic
2012 Films of Famu, New York, United States
2012 Scope session #14, NTK, Berlin, Germany
2012 Fiskulet festival, Tvrz Holešice, Czech Republic

PUBLICATION
2018 “Is it possible to make a change?” in Body in video, ed. by Prototyp

CREDITS
2013 „Living Figures Dying“ / found footage research / author Clemens von Wedemeyer, exhibition The Cast, MAXXI, Rome

AWARDS
2018 The Most Beautiful Czech Book, 3rd place, Památník národního písemnictví, Prague, Czech Republic
2018 Best Avantgarde Film, Zlatý voči festival, Czech Republic
2018 Special Mention Award, German International Ethnographic Film Festival, Germany

TALKS
2019 Digital Colonialism / Palacký University / Olomouc
2018 Labours of Love / Conference Rage against the algorithm / Display Gallery / Prague
2018 Panel discussion with Nick Srnicek, Mark America, Louis Armand / Display Gallery / Prague
2018 Digital Colonialism / Philosophical Faculty / University of Hradec Králové
2018 Myths, Inhabitants and a Colonisation of a Digital Space / Fresh Eye / Prague
2018 Digital Colonialism / Metropolitan University / Prague