

ever elusive
thirty years of transmediale
2 Feb - 5 Mar 2017
HKW and various venues, Berlin



ever elusive **thirty years of transmediale**

Press Accreditation:

Press accreditation is open from 7 November 2016 until 8 January 2017

Press Kit:

High-resolution images and further information are available in our press kit.

Berlin, 3 November 2016

We are very pleased to announce the transmediale 2017 program titled *ever elusive*, led by artistic director Kristoffer Gansing in his sixth year with the festival. transmediale has grown from its beginnings as VideoFilmFest to one of the most important events for art and digital culture worldwide. This year, transmediale celebrates its 30 year anniversary with an entire month of activities. From 2 February to 5 March 2017, various events will be presented across the city of Berlin alongside the special exhibition *alien matter* at Haus der Kulturen der Welt.

transmediale is funded as a cultural institution of excellence by Kulturstiftung des Bundes. The special exhibition *alien matter* is funded by LOTTO-Stiftung Berlin.

On 2 February 2017, Haus der Kulturen der Welt re-opens its doors to host transmediale after a period of extensive renovation.

The approach taken to the anniversary is contemporary rather than retrospective: *ever elusive – 30 years of transmediale* aims to use the critical and artistic knowledge gained at the festival over the years to reframe questions about the role of media today. In a world where technology increasingly operates independent of humans, where does the power to act and mediate lie?

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The title *ever elusive* refers to the elusiveness of perpetually transitioning media cultures, and to transmediale itself as an elusive and dynamic project, constantly shifting ground. The representation and mediation of geopolitics are in a state of crisis. Bearing these turbulent times in mind, the festival invites participants to consider the value of rejecting stable identities and explore speculative positions beyond current dichotomies: human/nonhuman and nature/technology.

One month program

The 30 year anniversary of transmediale will be celebrated with a month of events across the city of Berlin. *ever elusive* opens on 2 February 2017 with a three-day festival program in parallel to the opening of the special exhibition *alien matter* at Haus der Kulturen der Welt.

ever elusive takes place from 3 February to 5 March 2017, encompassing a conference, screening program, workshops, and live performances.

alien matter runs from 3 February to 5 March 2017.

Extensions of the festival program continue throughout the month of February with three thematic excursions in Berlin entitled *Imaginations*, *Interventions*, and *Ecologies*. Each excursion targets specific aspects of *ever elusive* themes and will take place in different venues, conceptually linked to topics explored that day.

On 4 and 5 March 2017, the closing program ties together the various parts of *ever elusive*. The special exhibition, panel presentations, live performances, screenings, and excursions will be linked together in a final conclusion, reflecting upon past and future media languages.

Program Overview

Duration: 2 February – 5 March 2017

2 February: Festival and special exhibition opening, Haus der Kulturen der Welt

3–5 February: Festival weekend, Haus der Kulturen der Welt

3 February – 5 March: Special exhibition *alien matter*, Haus der Kulturen der Welt

Excursions

8 February: Excursion *Imaginations*, Langenbeck-Virchow-Haus

24 February: Excursion *Ecologies*, silent green Kulturquartier

Date & venue tba: Excursion *Interventions*

4–5 March: Closing weekend, Haus der Kulturen der Welt

First program announcements

Festival

The *ever elusive* program is curated by artistic director Kristoffer Gansing, Daphne Dragona (conference), and Florian Wüst (film and video).

Rasheedah Phillips and Moor Mother of Black Quantum Futurism are among the participants. They are a multidisciplinary collective who explore intersections of futurism, creative media, DIY-aesthetics, and activism in marginalized communities.

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The **conference** focuses on the changing role of agency in an era when the human and nonhuman are increasingly intertwined, exploring what it means to decenter "the human" today.

One keynote conversation features a meeting between new media scholar and author Richard Grusin and theorist and author Wendy Hui Kyong Chun.

Richard Grusin will talk about his latest work on "radical mediation." He will highlight the immediate and ubiquitous nature of mediation at the era of the nonhuman turn, connecting it to the elusiveness of the ongoing environmental changes and costs. Wendy Hui Kyong Chun, author and theorist, who recently published her latest book *Updating to Remain the Same*, will discuss how media today becomes "wonderfully creepy" as it moves from being "new" to "habitual" and therefore, natural and unnoticeable, inviting users to become machines themselves.

Speakers on the panel *Prove You Are Nonhuman* include media scholar and writer Finn Brunton, visual artist and software art pioneer Suzanne Treister, and software artist and writer Marloes de Valk. They will reflect upon the ongoing issues humans face attempting to understand machine intelligence, and explore possibilities for embracing a nonhuman and non-anthropomorphized point of view.

Additionally, writer, artist, and curator Armin Medosch and his working group Technopolitics will premiere their project *Technopolitics Timeline*, and host a panel discussion during the festival. The timeline consists of 500 entries that trace the evolution and genealogy of techno-political paradigms of the information society.

The festival's **film and video program** presents various contemporary and historical works. Among many others, the documentary *The Sprawl (Propaganda About Propaganda)* (2016) by the Dutch design and research studio Metahaven will be screened. The film is a paranoid digital trip and argues that the Internet has become a disruptive, geopolitical super weapon. *The Sprawl* asks: Who benefits from Social Media? Does Adobe software express an ideology? Is the Internet facilitating aesthetic terrorism?

Developed exclusively for transmediale is Basel Abbas & Ruanne Abou-Rahme's audiovisual performance *And yet my mask is powerful, Part 3* (2016). The project is based on 3D replicas of neolithic masks found in the West Bank. Along with other objects and materials taken from destroyed Palestinian places, the masks function as a counterpoint to dominant contemporary mythologies, activating a history of expropriation and resistance, extinction and return.

Exhibition

The special exhibition *alien matter*, curated by Inke Arns, focuses on neo-cybernetic couplings between humans, creatures and technologies, and human and nonhuman forces. In this way it considers the possibilities and limitations of artistic expression through media, taking concepts of agency beyond "the human" and new dimensions of materiality into account.

Technologies have become natural components of new object cultures that surround us. *alien matter* refers to a man-made, partly "intelligent" matter. Berlin based and international artists raise questions about the state of our current environment and whether it has already passed the tipping point, becoming "alien matter" replaced by artificial intelligence and synthetic materials. Included is a video by Ignas Krunglevičius's of peculiar stock images from an artificial looking snow-covered mountain, Mark Leckey's intelligent refrigerator, Suzanne Treister's hallucinatory prints based on an imagined, high frequency trader, and Pinar Yoldas's video of an animated AI cat from the year 2039.

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The recipients of the Vilém Flusser Residency for Artistic Research 2016, Morehshin Allahyari and Daniel Rourke, who focus on ecology and its contradictory relationship to new technologies, will exhibit *The 3D Additivist Cookbook*. The project, addressing the potential and materiality of 3D printed objects, was developed during the course of the residency, and will be on view in the group show *alien matter* and also in their solo exhibition hosted by the Ernst Schering Foundation.

Partner

The 18th edition of our partner festival **CTM – Festival for Adventurous Music and Art** takes place from 27 January to 5 February 2017. Under the title *Fear Anger Love* the program traces the complex (musical) relations between bodies, affect, and politics, making space for radical and extreme forms of musical expression and dissonant emotions. More information on the CTM theme [here](#).

Service/Info

Press accreditation is open from 7 November 2016 until 8 January 2017.

Our downloadable press kit contains further information about the history of the transmediale festival and biographies of the program team.

A detailed festival program will be released to the public in December 2016.

More information about the history of transmediale and year-round activities including the **Vilém Flusser Residency** and the **resource** platform are available online.

transmediale is a project by Kulturprojekte Berlin GmbH in collaboration with Haus der Kulturen der Welt. It is funded as a cultural institution of excellence by Kulturstiftung des Bundes.

The special exhibition *alien matter* is funded by LOTTO-Stiftung Berlin.

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