

Extended reality exhibition DOK Neuland to be hosted again at MdbK Leipzig

DOK Leipzig shows XR works on dealing with contemporary challenges between excessive individual demands and collective responsibility

PRESS RELEASE
4 October 2022



DOK Leipzig 2022 | [Posthuman Wombs] (Directors: Anna Fries & Malu Peeters)

From 18 to 23 October, an immersive space for critique and vision will unfold with DOK Neuland at the Museum der bildenden Künste Leipzig (MdbK). “THX 4 Nothing” will feature six VR experiences, two AR experiences, and a 360° film with themes that expose rigid patterns of thought and behaviour, break down outdated structures, tell stories and map out optimistic future scenarios.

Present-day challenges — such as climate crisis fallout, human rights violations, corrupt systems, persecution and flight, limiting gender roles and a lack of safe spaces — have gained worldwide attention. Access to knowledge and opportunities for exchange are also at an all-time high. Yet all too often, nothing changes.

This observation forms the foundation of the curatorial concept developed by Lars Rummel and Marie Hinkelmann. The exhibition focuses on both inaction at the political and institutional level, as well as individual responsibility and the limits of personal agency. The work of the featured artists sheds light on different realities of life and asks what condition we want the world to be in when we hand it over to future generations.

„By experiencing with the whole body, XR works move and touch very directly. They turn spectators into participants,“ say curators Rummel and Hinkelmann, who believe that the works have the potential to make knowledge tangible in a special way.

Three of the XR works share the theme of humans and nature. The AR experience „Seven Grams“ disassembles smartphones into their individual parts — with the help of participants' own smartphones. It takes visitors to the Democratic Republic of Congo and reveals which natural and human resources the tech industry needs for its innovations. The VR parable „The Miracle Basket“ begins with a past in harmony with the earth contrasted with the carelessness of Western consumer society, which follows the

65th International Leipzig Festival for Documentary and Animated Film

17 October to 23 Octoberr

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absurd conviction that humans can live independently of nature. Here, blind consumption and destruction meet with hope. In "Kusunda", the Nepalese shaman Lil Bahadur and his granddaughter Hima dedicate themselves to reviving his mother tongue. Beyond simple communication, the work is about identity, tradition and awareness of one's own history. Through interactive voice control, visitors can become a human archive of this indigenous language.

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Queerness is at the centre of three other works that report on marginalising and discriminatory spaces of experience. The autotheoretical essay „[Posthuman Wombs]“ questions stereotypical notions of pregnancy and speculates on non-binary reproductive scenarios. The AR experience „Dragzina“ centres on the queer community in Russia, which faces an increasingly hostile social climate, where it is tabooed and criminalised. It offers a digital safe space for the local drag scene to perform without fear of violence. Finally, the 360° film „In the Mist“ turns a group sex scene in a gay sauna into a real-surreal stage for lust and reflection about sex-positive spaces, individual desire and a personal sense of morality.

The exhibition is completed by three works that serve as projection surfaces for fears, insecurities, and the need for control. The VR experience „Control Negative“ subjects visitors to a psychological experiment: a voice that does not allow any backtalk triggers an increasing sense of unease, exposing control as an illusion. In „All Unsaved Progress Will Be Lost“, text fragments float above a sea of flowers in a deserted city. Before they coalesce to form the story of a woman who refused to leave her home after the Chernobyl nuclear disaster, they open up an associative space of one's own fears. The VR experience „On the Morning You Wake (to the End of the World)“ is also based on a real incident: on 13 January 2018, 1.4 million people in Hawaii were warned of a nuclear threat via text message. For 38 minutes, everyday life came to a standstill and panic ensued until it became clear that the message was a false report.

The scenography of the exhibition has again been created in collaboration with the artist Paula Gehrmann. Her modular installation „Display“ (THX 4 Nothing, 2022) places the individual works of the group exhibition in relation to each other, creating a holistic sense of space.

During the festival week, „THX 4 Nothing“ will be presented in the basement of the MdbK from Tuesday to Sunday (18 to 23 October) with free admission. The exhibition is regularly open from 11 am to 6 pm, and on Wednesday from 12 pm to 8 pm.

DOK Neuland is part of DOK's young talent programme, created in cooperation with SLM. DOK Leipzig would also like to thank MDR Media, the US Consulate and HTC Vive for their support. As in previous years, the exhibition space has been provided by the MdbK. Many thanks also to all the artists involved in the exhibition and to the XR community in general.

The overview of the XR works presented here can be found in the following project list.

Download of poster design and logos: [Press Download](#)
Filmstills: on request to presse@dok-leipzig.de

The 65th edition of DOK Leipzig will take place on site from 17 to 23 October, 2022. Accredited participants worldwide can also view the majority of the film programme online. After the festival, a selection of films will be available online throughout Germany in the DOK Stream from 24 to 31 October. This year, the DOK Industry programme will again be primarily held on site, but will offer various online access to the events.

Press accreditation for DOK Leipzig 2022 by 5 October:
[via DOK Leipzig Press Area](#)

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Wir danken für die Unterstützung

Thank you for your support

DOK
Hauptförderer



Stadt Leipzig



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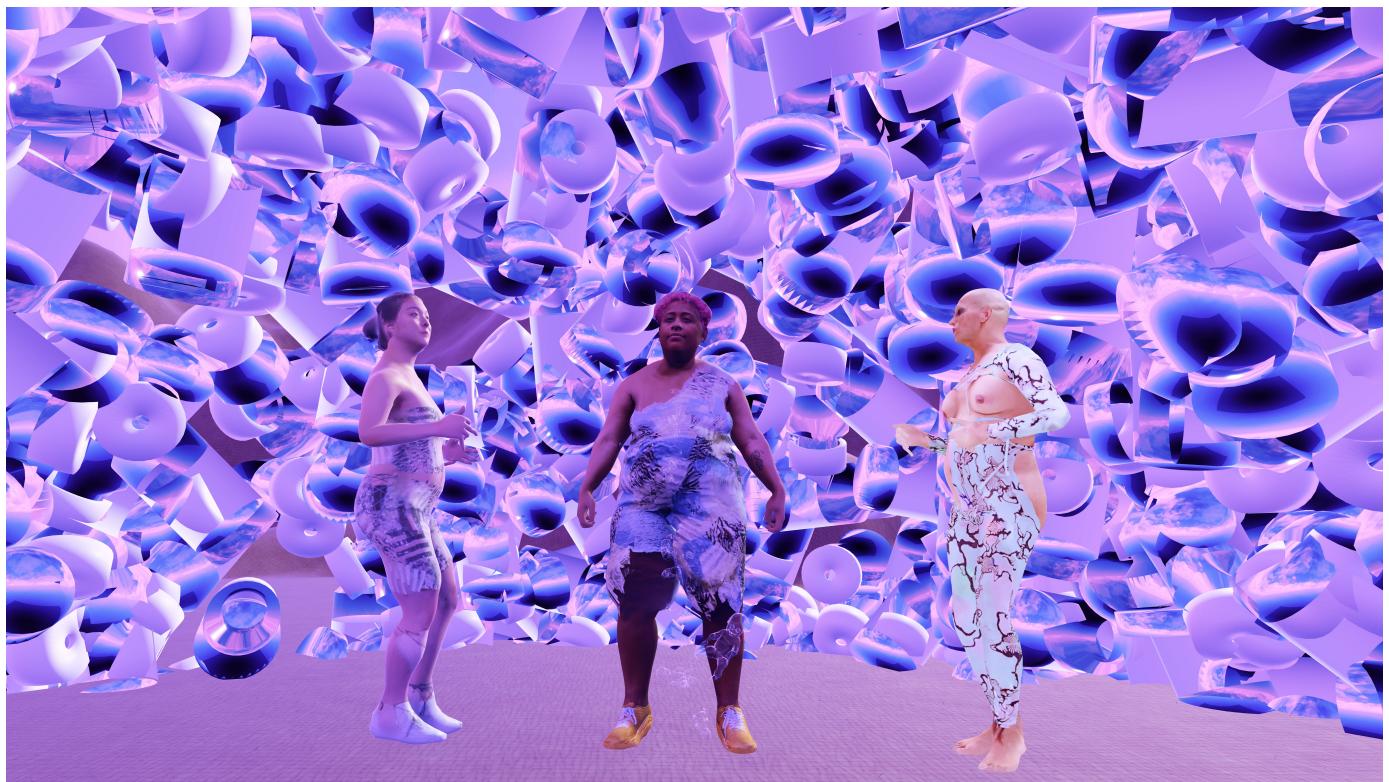
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[Posthuman Wombs]

Anna Fries, Malu Peeters

**Germany, Netherlands, Switzerland 2021 | 20 min, Colour
German premiere**

Dieses autotheoretische Essay erkundet den Bauch eines Posthumans, befragt stereotype Vorstellungen von Schwangerschaft und spekuliert über nicht-binäre Reproduktionsszenarien. – *This auto-theoretical essay explores the womb of a posthuman, questioning stereotypical ideas of pregnancy and speculating about non-binary reproduction scenarios.*

Language English
Subtitles

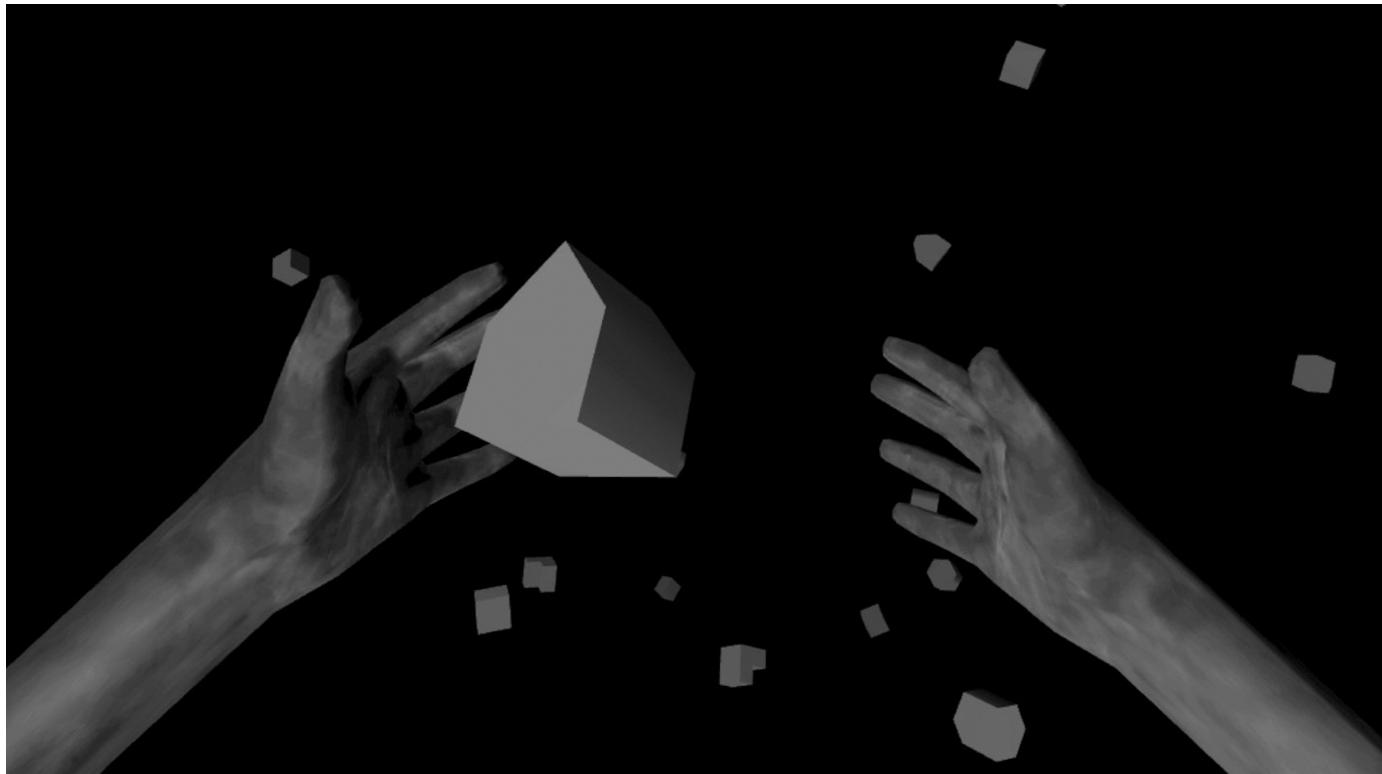


All Unsaved Progress Will Be Lost

Mélanie Courtinat
France 2022 | 10 min, Colour
World premiere

In einer menschenleeren Stadt schweben Textfragmente über einem Meer aus Blumen: die Geschichte einer Frau, die sich weigerte, ihre Heimat nach einer Katastrophe zu verlassen. – *In a deserted city text fragments float over a sea of flowers: the story of a woman who refused to leave her home after a disaster.*

Language English
Subtitles English



Control Negative

Monika Masłoń

Poland 2022 | 30 min, B&W

World premiere

Eine VR-Erfahrung als psychologisches Experiment: Sie konfrontiert uns mit Gefühlen wie Frust, Hilflosigkeit, Überforderung, Wut und Trauer und entlarvt die Kontrolle als Illusion. – *A VR experience as a psychological experiment that confronts us with feelings such as frustration, helplessness, stress, rage and grief, and debunks control as an illusion.*

Language Polish, English

Subtitles



Dragzina

Nikita Shokhov, Masha Vorislav
USA, Russia, UK 2022 | 12 min, Colour
German premiere

Wo sind Orte für LGBTQIA2S+-Kultur in Russland? Die AR-Erfahrung eröffnet der Drag-Szene einen digitalen Schutzraum, in dem sie performen kann, ohne Gewalt fürchten zu müssen. – *Where are the spaces for the LGBTQIA2S+ culture in Russia? This AR experience opens a digital safe space for the drag scene where they can perform without fear of violence.*

Language English, Russian
Subtitles



In the Mist

Tung-Yen Chou

Taiwan 2020 | 15 min, Colour

German premiere

Eine Gruppensexszene in der Schwulensauna wird zur real-surrealen Bühne für Begehrten und Reflexionen: über sexpositive Räume, die eigene Lust und das eigene Moralempfinden. – *A group sex scene in a gay sauna becomes a real-surreal stage for desire and reflection: on sex positive spaces, our own lust and our own sense of morality.*

Language English, Chinese

Subtitles



Kusunda

Felix Gaedtke, Gayatri Parameswaran

Germany, Nepal, Sweden, Switzerland, Taiwan 2021 | 23 min, Colour
No Premiere

Ein nepalesischer Schamane und seine Enkelin widmen sich der Wiedererweckung der indigenen Sprache Kusunda. Wir dürfen aktiv mitwirken – und werden selbst zu menschlichen Archiven. – *A Nepalese shaman and his granddaughter have dedicated themselves to the revival of the indigenous language of Kusunda. We get to participate – and become human archives ourselves.*

Language English, Nepali, Kusunda
Subtitles



The Miracle Basket

Abner Preis

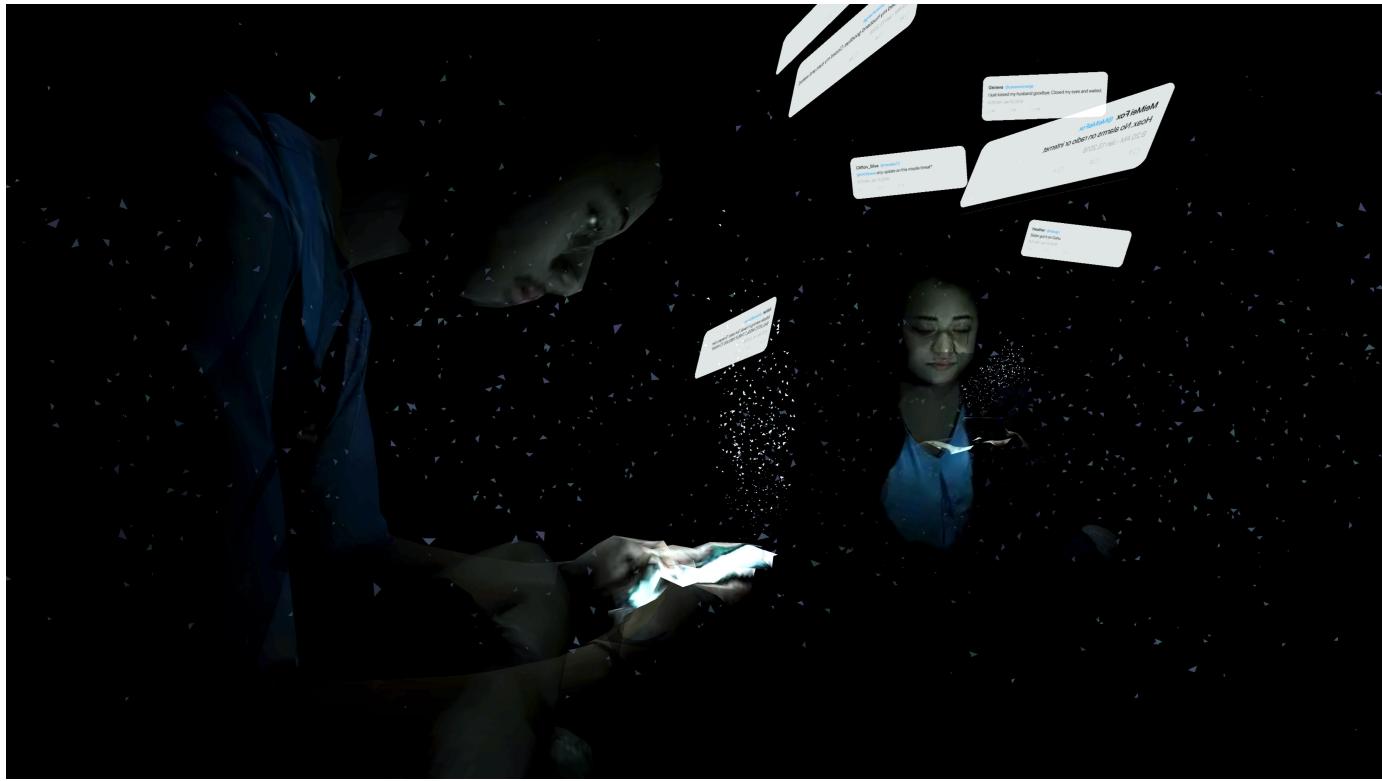
Netherlands 2021 | 14 min, Colour

German premiere

Die VR-Parabel erzählt von einer Vergangenheit im Einklang mit der Natur. Hier finden wir nicht nur Ausbeutung, Zerstörung und blinden Konsum, sondern auch Hoffnung. – *This VR parable tells of a past in harmony with nature. We find not only devastation and destruction, but also hope.*

Language English, Dutch

Subtitles



On the Morning You Wake (to the End of the World)

Mike Brett, Steve Jamison, Pierre Zandrowicz, Arnaud Colinart

France, UK, USA 2022 | 42 min, Colour

German premiere

Die atomare Bedrohung wurde für 1,4 Millionen Menschen auf Hawaii real. Am 13. Januar 2018 warnte sie eine Textnachricht vor einer Rakete. Die Nachricht war falsch, aber folgenschwer. – *The nuclear threat became real for 1.4 million people on Hawaii. On 13 January 2018, a text message warned them of a missile. The message was false, its consequences momentous.*

Language English, French, German, Korean, Japanese, Norwegian

Subtitles English



Seven Grams

Karim Ben Khelifa

France, USA, UK 2021 | 24 min, Colour & B&W

No Premiere

Smartphones sind aus dem digitalen Alltag nicht mehr wegzudenken. Aber welche natürlichen und menschlichen Ressourcen braucht die Tech-Industrie für diese Innovation? – *Our everyday digital life is unthinkable without mobile phones. But what natural and human resources does the tech industry require for this innovation?*

Language English, French, German
Subtitles
