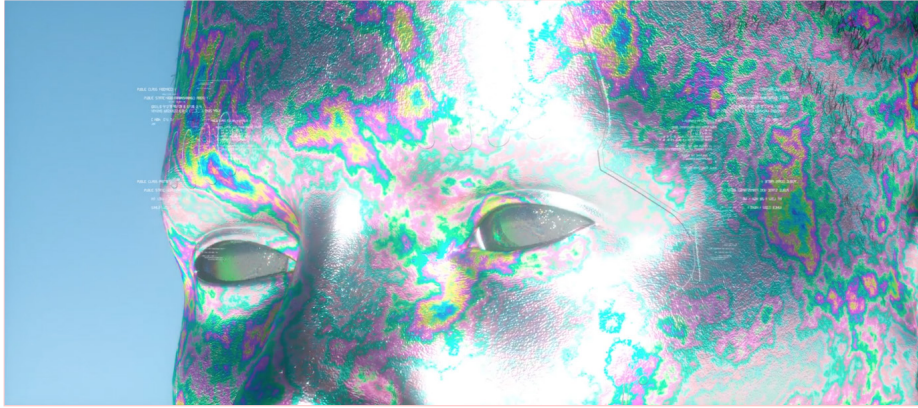


DOK Neuland Focuses on the Materiality of Digital Technologies

The Extended Reality exhibition and the industry programme DOK Exchange XR are moving closer together



Geomancy (Director: Sybil Montet) | DOK Leipzig 2025

The virtual world is not as immaterial as it seems. It consumes water and energy, is used in wars, exploits human creativity and labour, has a real effect on bodies, and influences social structures and political power relations. Under the title **“Immaterial”**, this year’s edition of **DOK Neuland** presents a total of eight works that explore the materiality of digital technologies.

Curated by Dana Melaver, the exhibition consists of four VR experiences, one 360° film, two media art works, and one AR installation. While one of the VR experiences will once again be presented at the Museum of Fine Arts Leipzig, DOK Neuland is heading west, presenting the other seven works in the Plagwitz district. The public exhibition will be accessible free of charge from **28 October to 2 November 2025** at Westkreuz/Heilandskirche.

The experimental science-fiction film **“Geomancy” (2024)** by French artist and filmmaker Sybil Montet changes based on real-time weather data from around the world. This interaction between computer graphics and nature reveals data streams as invisible structures of our physical world.

Based on an anti-feminist conspiracy theory in South Korea in which a hand gesture was supposedly degrading men, the VR experience **“Downfall of the Virtual Human” (2025)** exposes patriarchal structures in both terrestrial and digital spaces. In this digital fever dream of numerous (pop) cultural references, director Jimmy Vu explores the self-reinforcing dynamics within online platforms.

In the documentary VR experience **“Another Place” (2025)**, Swiss-Thai director Domenico Singha Pedrolì tells the story of trans woman Renée, who fled her home country of Thailand to France in 2022 and applied for asylum there. While invisible to the immigration system and the passers-by of Paris, Renée and her impressions take centre stage in Pedrolì’s work. With the help of VR headsets, exhibition visitors can take on Renée’s perspective as their own.

The walls in **“The Dollhouse” (2025)** may be made of paper, but they bear a heavy load. In deceptively delicate animation, Charlotte Bruneau and Dominic Desjardins invite visitors into 9-year-old Juniper’s home, which she shares with her parents and housekeeper Magnolia. In this interactive VR

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story, disobedience and play open up a new perspective on how power relations arise within the intimacy of our homes.

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A train ride into total abstraction: In the 360° film **“Volume” (2025)**, Niklas Poweleit uses short AI-generated clips to create a hypnotic experience which beautifully demonstrates that AI images are abstract architectural structures rather than mere replicas of reality.

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In the augmented reality installation **“For Iron I Gave Gold” (2025)**, German-Ghanaian 3D artist and fashion designer Keke Opata addresses electronic waste as an expression of neo-colonial dependencies and the physical implications of our digital world.

The video sculpture **“Blindspot” (2025)** makes visible what cannot be seen with the naked eye: using high-resolution cameras that no longer capture light and movement in individual frames but process them as a continuous data stream. In poetic images, artist Justin Urbach imagines the future of seeing as hybridised, while the monitors scarred by laser etching also raise questions about machine vision and overly detailed perception. The DOK Industry Get-Together on 31 October will feature a musical performance by Alexander Koenig and William East who did the sound design for the work. The event is open to accredited guests, with a limited number of tickets available to the general public.

In the hyper-sarcastic VR experience **“Revival Roadshow” (2025)**, 17th-century Dutch explorer Abel Tasman returns to conquer new land for Dutch climate refugees after a devastating flood. Between satire and criticism, a collage-like narrative about colonial history unfolds in a museum of the future – overflowing with stories and clashing perspective. The story follows the viewer’s gaze, compelling them to decide, amid the flood of images, what to pay attention to and what to ignore. “Revival Roadshow” was presented in 2024 while still in development at the DOK Exchange XR Prototyping Zone and can now be seen as a finished piece at the Museum of Fine Arts in Leipzig.

DOK Neuland and **DOK Exchange XR**, the industry programme for interactive and immersive storytelling, **are moving closer together with this festival edition**: both the public Extended Reality exhibition (with the exception of “Revival Roadshow”) and the events for XR professionals will take place in 2025 at Westkreuz/Heilandskirche. Further, **a joint episode of the DOK Industry Podcast** has been released today. Curated and hosted by Weronika Lewandowska (curator and coordinator of DOK Exchange XR), it features Dana Melaver (curator of DOK Neuland) and Prodromos Tsiavos (Head of Digital and Innovation at the Onassis Cultural Centre). The conversation analyses the challenges of creating and curating XR works for the youngest audiences.

Also new this year is the close **collaboration between DOK Exchange XR / DOK Neuland and CPH:DOX/LAB**. The aim of these joint activities around immersive and interactive media is to establish a meaningful European distribution network, foster talent, and share knowledge. DOK Leipzig will present a new award as part of CPH:LAB 2026, in which a selected CPH:LAB project will be presented at DOK Exchange XR at the 69th DOK Leipzig Festival next year. A collaboration centered around the CPH:LAB think tank is also planned.

DOK Exchange XR will once again be held over two days in 2025 (30-31 October). The programme includes the XR Conference, XR Showcase, and

XR Prototyping Zone. Across all events, Extended Reality will be examined in the context of politics of memory, innovation, digital literacy, ethics, and neuroplasticity.

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The **XR Conference** will feature four keynote presentations and three panel discussions for all accredited guests. The invited experts will discuss how immersive practices influence cultural narratives and power structures. Moving away from traditional formats, the focus will be on experimental XR storytelling and hybrid media. In their keynotes, Rūta Kazlauskaitė, Katharina Haverich, Marcel van Brakel, and May Abdalla will speak about VR and propaganda, Extended Reality in the context of digital literacy, hybrid narratives, and the influence that stories experienced with the whole body have on our perception of ourselves and others. One of the panel discussions will focus on accessibility in game design, while another will look at the use of audience testing to improve the projects presented in the XR Prototyping Zone. The third panel discussion, “What Lasts? Building a Future for XR and Immersive Arts”, organised in collaboration with the British Council, will bring together XR producers, curators, and cultural decision-makers from Germany and the UK to discuss how the sector can develop beyond short-term projects.

Four works from Taiwan, Canada, and Europe were selected for this year’s **XR Showcase**. In a collective brainstorming session, creators have the opportunity to present their projects in development and discuss them with six experts and conference visitors.

The **XR Prototyping Zone** gives creators the opportunity to present their works-in-progress to experts, distributors, and industry professionals. They can test interactive elements, narrative structures, and user interaction under real-world conditions. This year, a total of three prototypes will be presented.

DOK Exchange XR is supported by SEE NL, the British Council, the French Institute as part of the Novembre Numérique programme and the Creative Europe Desk Berlin-Brandenburg. DOK Exchange XR collaborates with CPH:DOX/LAB. The panel “Accessibility in Game Design” takes place in partnership with MOIN Filmförderung Hamburg Schleswig-Holstein and Inclusive Gaming GmbH.

DOK Neuland came to life again through the support of Sächsische Medienanstalt (SLM), MDR Media and Mitteldeutsche Medienförderung. In the context of The Netherlands as this year's XR Country in Focus, DOK Neuland is also supported by the Embassy of the Kingdom of Netherlands and SEE NL. In addition, DOK Neuland is supported by the French Institute as part of the Novembre Numérique programme.

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DOK Neuland: Immaterial

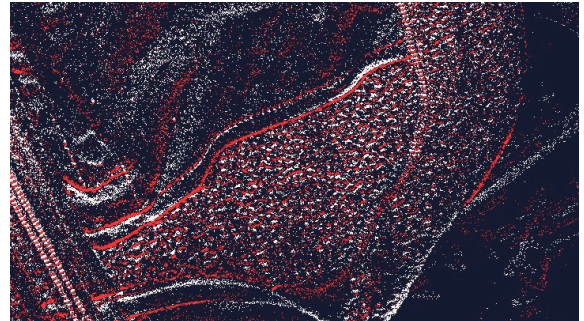


Another Place

Domenico Singha Pedrolì
France 2025 | 19 min
German premiere

Die trans Thailänderin Renée ist auf der Suche nach Asyl. In den nächtlichen Straßen von Paris ist sie für andere unsichtbar. Eine Einladung an die Zuschauenden, ihre Perspektive einzunehmen. – *A nighttime journey through the streets of Paris with Renée, a trans asylum seeker from Thailand. Through the dark of night, her lightness of being shines brightly.*

Language Thai, French, English
Subtitles English



Blindspot

Justin Urbach
Germany 2025 | 21 min
No Premiere

Wird die Zukunft des Sehens hybrid sein? Wie könnten wir sehen? Neuromorphe, ereignisbasierte Kamerasysteme verschieben in dieser poetischen Erkundung die Grenzen unserer Sehfähigkeit. – *A hypnotizing audiovisual experience filmed with neuromorphic event-based camera systems, which are able to see beyond human vision. Sensorial, scientific, and sweeping.*

Language without dialogue
Subtitles None



The Dollhouse

Charlotte Bruneau, Dominic Desjardins
Canada, Luxembourg 2025 | 23 min
German premiere

Die 9-jährige Juniper navigiert durch vielschichtige Erinnerungen: In einer Papierwelt entfalten sich ungerechte Machtverhältnisse im Umgang mit einer Bediensteten der Familie. – *Untangling complicated memories through dolls and play, 9-year-old Juniper recalls the time Magnolia came to stay. A paper house is heavier than it seems.*

Language French, English
Subtitles None



Downfall of the Virtual Human

Jimmy Yu
South Korea 2025 | 30 min
International Premiere

Inspiziert von einer Verschwörungstheorie: Eine virtuelle Pop-Ikone soll Männer mit einer Geste beleidigt haben. Ein digitaler Fiebertraum patriarchaler Strukturen. – *Find out what happened to virtual pop icon Mizzy, in a digital fever-dream which highlights patriarchal structures across physical and virtual space.*

Language English, Korean
Subtitles English

DOK Neuland: Immaterial

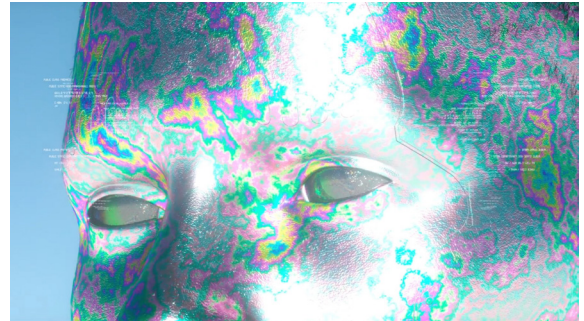


For Iron I Gave Gold

Keke Oyata
Germany 2025 | 5 min
World premiere

Angesichts der verheerenden Auswirkungen, die der europäische Elektro- und Textilmüll auf Ghana hat, hinterfragt diese Arbeit, was dort geopfert wird, um hier digitale Erlebnisse zu ermöglichen. – *Revealing the toxicity of e-waste and fast fashion through technology and fabric, this work reflects on the devastation European consumption imposes on the Ghanaian coast.*

Language without dialogue
Subtitles None



Geomancy

Sybil Montet
France, Germany 2024 | 10 min
No Premiere

Ein experimenteller Science-Fiction-Film, der sich ständig mit dem Wetter verändert. Er reagiert auf Echtzeitdaten aus aller Welt. Eine lebendige Interaktion zwischen Computergrafik und Natur. – *An experimental science fiction film which constantly changes with the weather, responding to real time data from around the world, listening and reacting to nature.*

Language English
Subtitles English

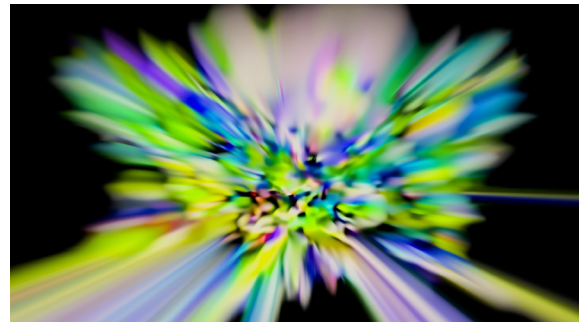


Revival Roadshow

Anne Fehres, Luke Conroy
Netherlands 2025 | 17 min
German premiere

Seefahrer Abel Tasman kehrt zurück, um neues Land für niederländische Klimaflüchtlinge zu erobern. Zwischen Satire und Kritik entspinnt sich ein collagenartiges Narrativ über Kolonialgeschichte. – *17th-century explorer Abel Tasman has returned to colonize new lands for Dutch climate refugees, in a hyper-collage of epic proportions where audio follows gaze.*

Language English
Subtitles English



Volume

Niklas Poweleit
Germany 2025 | 10 min
World premiere

Eine Zugfahrt, die in vollständiger Abstraktion endet: Der 360° Filmaus KI-generierten Clips lässt eine hypnotische Erfahrung entstehen und zerlegt die Bilder in ihre wesentlichen Bestandteile. – *A train ride into abstraction through degenerating AI imagery. On the edge of hallucination, the film is an implosion of reality as we've come to picture it.*

Language without dialogue
Subtitles None

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