

## **LIMINAL MEMORIES**

*“Between your fingers, you hold a stone and throw it into flowing water. The effect might not be easy to see. There will be a small ripple where the stone breaks the surface and then a splash, muffled by the rush of the surrounding river. . . If a stone hits a lake, however, the lake will never be the same again.”*

~ Elif Shafak

What is memory? How do they form/disappear/change? Are they only the databases of the past? If so, how reliable are these databases? Is it possible to have false memories? What are the memories of the future? How do non-human entities enunciate memories? Why do we forget? Is it as vital to forget as it is to remember?

Memory is essential to human (*and perhaps non-human*) existence and intimately linked to identity. Who we are, what we think, and how we interact with our surroundings - are closely tied to our past and what we remember. However, how reliable is the process of remembering? According to science, every time someone recalls something from the past, the neural network in the brain slightly changes. That means one might not remember the same event from the past the same way every time one thinks of it.

***Liminal memories*** is an exhibition with the outcome of a one-month transdisciplinary residency program organized by Flusslab. Five artists from Argentina, Mexico, Spain, Taiwan, and Ukraine were invited to come to Coswig (Anh.) and realize a new project in situ. How different settings and surroundings change one's perception, thoughts, and behavior was the backdrop idea of the residency. In other words, the symbiotic relationship between the space and oneself and how they impact each other. Each artist's work resonates with the concept of memory, both biological and artificial. This open studio depicts the experience of liminality they shared together.

**A PLASTIC TREE WAITED TO BE IGNITED** by Viviane Roi (Taiwan)

*A plastic tree, video projection in loop, sound and the duration is 2 minutes*

*'A Plastic Tree Waited to Be Ignited'* is part of the long-term series 'Practical Guidelines for Gardening Maneuvers' that explores natural and fake plants as a metaphor to illustrate the interdependent appearances between humans and technology.

We are overloaded by data in the digital era in which sensory perceptions are constantly coded, mutated, and translated. Oftentimes we plunge ourselves into news feeds from unverified sources and consume them unconsciously. Fragments of information then linger in the memory and start garbling our senses. However, we are most likely not prepared or willing to converge them with the mind. Corresponding to the fake plant in this work, it keeps getting exposed to lightning and thunder that it is not ready for.

This project attempts to provoke a dialogue between constricted nature, data hegemony, generative behaviors, and digital indigestion. The artist stages the intertwined resonance of humans and technology by questioning how effortlessly we get immersed into the world of false information and the numbness caused by digital accessing, analyzing, evaluating, and creating.

## **MEMORIES OF A BROKEN MACHINE** by Florencia Vallejos (Argentina)

*Two-channel video in loop*

'Memories of a broken machine' is a two-channel video installation that explores the dichotomy in human and machine perception by posing the question - what do we/they (human & machine) see when we/they see? The artist used a compilation of images from her recent travels between Coswig and Berlin and ran them through an AI-based image-recognition software (YOLO), which detects objects in the photo. Then she inserted the exact keywords (detected by YOLO) into another AI-based software called DALL E. The intention behind using the beta version of both the software was to ridicule the "intellectuality" of the machine.

It is commonly acknowledged that the perception of the machine is quite objective, and human perception is rather subjective. However, this project attempts to interpret these machine-generated coincidences as possibilities to fantasize about the sensitivity of the machine. The artist calls them *accidental poetries* created by the machine. When the machine gets confused or interprets things as anything other than conventional, to her, it is the machine's own way of generating its own subjectivity.

**PAST FUTURE PAST** by Nataliia Lushnikova (Ukraine)

*Two-channel video and hair sculpture.*

'*Past Future Past*' is a two-channel video installation that portrays the state of perpetual wandering of the body and the mind. Since the Russian invasion of Ukraine, millions have been displaced and compelled to leave their homes and travel to uncertainty. It's a constant rumination between the past and the future; in the process, the present gets stolen.

In this work, the artist uses long hair playfully as a metaphor for memories (*of her root, identity, and heritage*) that she has been carrying around and wandering to find her place in the present.

## **ONE SUMMER IN COSWIG** by Aurora Domínguez Mata (Spain)

'*One Summer in Coswig*' is an installation of five golden ephemeral monoliths that appeared in five different locations around the city of Coswig. Their unexpected appearances lasted a few hours and seemed like someone was wrapped and hidden inside it. The ambient sounds, footsteps, and memories of the moments of the residents of Coswig were recorded throughout the entire period. In collaboration with a singer, the artist's feelings of hope, tranquility, anxiety, longing, and gratitude will be merged with the recorded sounds and realized as a soundscape. In December 2022, the complete work, along with the soundscape, will be presented in a successive exhibition at the Argentinian Embassy in Berlin.

In 2023, five rock sculptures in the shape of a monolith will take place at the exact locations where the ephemeral golden monoliths appeared in the summer of 2022. Each sculpture will have a QR code printed on it, which can be accessed via any mobile device. Once accessed, the image of the golden monolith will appear on the screen along with the soundscape created with the soundtrack recorded at that exact location. By following the map (*accessed via the QR code*), one can follow the artist's footsteps and experience what she experienced in the summer of 2022.

**Locations:** Town Hall Square, The train station, The bank of river Elbe, Nature park in front of Coswig (Anh.) Castle, and the area that was once the fisherman's quarter.

**NAKED, AS THE ANIMALS THAT ARE AFTER ME** by Misael Sámano-Vargas (Mexico)  
*Video, Sound, Poetry, and Experimental photographs on expired photo paper (lumen print) and rocks (cyanotype).*

*Video duration: 1 minute 19 second*

*“Everything I touch touches me back.  
Every. Single. Thing.*

*I am the embodiment of things far or near me, things that I can or cannot have. All the experiences I endure, the fears, the stares, the whispers - feel like feral animals. I cannot break them, cannot contain them, cannot even hold or caress them. They bite me back, piercing through the bones.*

*I wonder what kind of print animals leave behind in the wild?*

*I wonder what kind of prints everyone left on me?*

*Their breath sinks into my skin like a bite mark on an unconquered land.*

*I step forward to embrace the forest and leave the mark of my imperfect body. The marks I leave behind leave their marks on me. They chase me, like everything before and after them. I want to confront them, accept them as a phantom tear finds its way through the drought.”*

*'Naked, as the animals that are after me'* is a series of intertwined artworks reflecting the phenomenological principle that the body is constantly in flux. Every person we meet and every experience we endure - changes us a little bit. In this work, the artist imagines every feeling, thought, memory, and experience as a feral animal, which cannot be tamed or contained. And how they affect the understanding of the body. This project expresses his time spent in Coswig (Anh.) - what marks it left on him and what marks he left behind.

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Silencio, carne feral

Este cuerpo que es, pero es solo tierra y sal  
Con cicatrices como senderos violetas  
Flotando sobre la tierra sin conquistar

Un cuerpo hecho de huellas y batallas sin respuesta  
El doble despertar y coincidencia de miradas  
Atraviesan, cuidadosamente, el plexo solar

Mi cuerpo inundado de lágrimas fantasmas,  
La envidia ante la felicidad de los demás,  
Su distancia toma todas las formas de la paz

Al final el cuerpo se hace silencio, carne feral  
Desnudo, como los animales que me persiguen  
La lengua del sol me quema una vez más.

\*

Silence, feral flesh

This body is but is only made of dirt and salt  
With paths of violet-colored scars  
Floating on the unconquered land

A body made of traces and unanswered battles  
The siamese awakening, the gazes intertwined  
Carefully piercing this solar plexus of mine

My body flooded with phantom tears,  
Rising envy in the presence of everyone's joy  
Now, her distance takes the shape of all forms of peace.

In the end, the body turns into silence, feral flesh  
Naked, as the animals who are after me  
The tongue of the sun burns me once again.

# FLUSSLAB

ONSITE BERLIN-COSWIG

## Residents

**FLORENCIA VALLEJOS**  
Video Artist, Argentina

**MISAEEL SÁMANO VARGAS**  
Multidisciplinary Artist, Mexico

**AURORA DOMÍNGUEZ MATA**  
Media Artist and Designer, Spain

**VIVIANE ROI**  
Digital Artist, Taiwan

**NATALIIA LUSHNIKOVA**  
Multidisciplinary Artist, Ukraine

**Curated by**  
Mahzabin Haque

