



#Who wanna live forever



#Who Wanna Live Forever

Aging in the 21. Century
Part of SPEKULA FESTIVAL

Art & Science exchange Austria & Slovenia

Paula Flores * Anna Lerchbaumer
Zoran Srdić Janežič & Tilen Žbona

Curators Jiří Kočica & Denise Parizek

Open discussion 11.12.2025 5 pm
Vernissage 11.12.2025 7 pm
Duration: 12.12. – 21.12.2025

Galerija Insula in Izola
Smrekarjeva ulica 20, 6310 Izola
Opening Hours
Monday – Friday 10:00–13:00 & 17:00–19:00
Saturday 10:00–13:00

<https://pogmahon.com/exhibitions/who-wanna-live-forever-2/>

„Who Wanna Live Forever“ is a unique collaboration featuring Vienna-based artists Paula Flores and Anna Lerchbaumer, along with Zoran Srdić Janežič and Tilen Žbona from Koper and Ljubljana, Slovenia. The project is curated by Denise Parizek (AT) and Jiří Kočica (SI).

The artists explore themes such as demographic change, the aging population, Dorian Gray syndrome, cosmism, life in the age of AI, genetic engineering, and migration. These themes are examined through both daily life in Central Europe and broader global perspectives. The exhibition will debut in Vienna in 2024 and subsequently be showcased in Galerij Insula in Izola in December 2025.

This exhibition reveals how art and science intersect to reflect humanity's quest for eternal life. It promises a thought-provoking and engaging experience.

„Who Wanna Live Forever“ highlights issues like demographic change, aging, Dorian Gray syndrome, cosmism, AI, genetic engineering, and migration. The exhibition demonstrates how these topics impact both everyday life in Central Europe and the global community. It features artistic interpretations of scientific processes, performative experiments, and guided tours. Central to the exhibition is the human quest for immortality, explored through historical myths and modern scientific advancements. The aim is to provoke thought and inspire new perspectives on these complex subjects.

This project is supported by the Austrian Cultural Forum Ljubljana, Slowenisches Kulturinformationszentrum SKICA, Gallerija Insula.

Who wanna live forever

Although the title „Who wanna live forever“ does not directly refer to the individual artworks in the exhibition, most scientific endeavors today are focused on technologies that ultimately strive for some aspect of eternity and immortality. Whether through biotechnological research in genetics and the various possibilities arising from new discoveries, or through the development of less sensitive technological tools, prostheses, even construction, urban and rural landscapes, mobility and so on, many of these human activities reflect aspects of what the oldest recorded myth of Gilgamesh emphasized as crucial: man's confrontation with mortality and his desire for immortality. In the works of the artists, each of whom presents their own approach. We can observe this range and scale of activity in which science and art research the questions of contemporary life. The artists are increasingly exploring the language and methods of science, creating and developing new aspects of visual language that reveal perspectives on modern life in complex social situations — sometimes proposing solutions to the problems of the modern world, sometimes simply commenting on or ironizing these phenomena.

Jiří Kočica /Curator



Zoran Srdić Janežič



Paula Flores



Paula Flores

SYNTHETIC MOONS AND MOTH HYSTERIA

Many modern moths show erratic behavior at night. They don't fly smoothly. They fly in a nonsensical way that gets them nowhere. They fly in circles around what they think is their guide.

Their natural guide is the moon, but now we are surrounded by millions of synthetic moons, also known as lightbulbs. All of them are calling them "COME HERE, COME HERE".

They become pests because they can't find their path. They lose their freedom because they get lost.

<https://paulafloresart.com/>



Anna Lerchbaumer

The Sound of Running Currents 2025

The work pulls together the hiss of machines and the restless murmur of water, letting them collide, overlap, and flirt with each other. White, brown, and pink noise—those familiar hums from AC units, detuned televisions, and radios drifting between stations—slip into the endless flow of running water. Rather than offering a tidy narrative, the piece invites the audience into a state of attentive drifting. Terms like current, flow, and resistance are not explained but heard—translated into a shifting sonic field that behaves with the stubbornness and softness of both electricity and rivers. It is a work about listening as a physical act, about surrendering to the perpetual “passing-by” that usually escapes our notice. In this space, noise is not a disturbance but a companion: persistent, grounding, and strangely calming—an invitation to tune in, or simply to let go.



Zoran Srdić Janežič

Medauroidea extradentata – 1 leg links + one link: head and body

Zoran Srdić Janežič will present a lecture performance from the Biobot opus. Biobot is a multi-year process of creating a cybernetic being that intertwines the organic and the technical. The project develops a form of hybrid intelligence in which in-vitro neural cultures merge with artificial intelligence that generates robotic structures, movements, and behavioral responses.

The system combines several layers of intelligence: neural impulses from the cell culture, algorithmic body design through RoboGrammar, and emergent motor strategies formed through DIAYN. Together they create a new, singular entity — a non-human actor, in which the artist's role shifts from author to caretaker of a developing hybrid being.

The lecture performance introduces these conceptual foundations and the transition from an artistic object to an entity with its own agency.



Tilen Žbona

Tilen Žbona deals with various areas of visual art: from abstract compositions that incorporate figurative drawings, video and explorations of images on the Internet, to sound research, where he collaborates with scientists studying this physical phenomenon. In these projects, he is particularly interested in the relationship between material, membrane-like objects that either block or transmit sound waves, as well as the dematerialization of physical artifacts when he introduces them into sound fields and transforms these recordings from analog to digital forms.

The installations he creates in his works and artistic research include all these aspects, which sometimes vary due to specific research phases and sometimes due to spatial conditions. In this extensive body of research, which encompasses many aspects of the transition between material, membrane-like sculptural works in space and sound scans, digitization and the reconstruction of images through the introduction of various aspects of sound visualization, Žbona repeatedly touches on the primary human endeavor to visualize, demonstrate and thereby reshape notions of a world that is not necessarily directly visible.

Living forever

The myths of eternal youth and immortality run like a red thread through the centuries, from blood sacrifices, the blood countess, to Elon Musk's fantasies of his eternity and the conspiracy theories during the Covid pandemic, which told of underground tunnel systems where children were locked up to vegetate as blood preserves.

Demographic forecasts in both Slovenia and Austria show that the ageing population cannot be halted by immigration alone. Birth rates are declining in both countries, and due to the problems of climate change and socio-political uncertainties, birth rates will not increase in the near future. The desire for immortality is on the rise, especially in the 1% of the super rich people.

For example, Dorian Gray Syndrome (DGS), which refers to a cultural and social phenomenon characterised by a man's extreme pride in his personal appearance and the fitness of his body, which is accompanied by difficulties in coping with the demands of psychological maturation and the aging of his body. DGS is characterised by a triad of symptoms that overlap and thus combine diagnostic signs of dysmorphophobia, narcissistic traits and the immaturity of disturbed development. The syndrome is mainly associated with white, affluent people who consume cosmetic products and services, hair growth products, sexual enhancers and cosmetic surgery.

Or stem cell therapy, in which stem cells are regenerated and re-injected into the body with the promise of improved organ function and rejuvenation.

The 19th century Russian philosopher Nikolai Fedorov, whose posthumously published text put forward the bold thesis that death was little more than a design flaw – a flaw that could be corrected by advances in science and technology. Fedorov also believed that this goal of correction – to achieve immortality – would unite social groups whose mutual fear of death had historically brought them together.

'Our task,' Fedorov wrote, 'is to turn nature, the blind force of nature, into an instrument of universal revitalisation and to become a union of immortal beings.' This visionary philosophical movement became known as Cosmism. It emerged during the Industrial Revolution – a time of unprecedented social change – and sought to redefine human-

relationship to technology and progress, with the ultimate goal of regulating the forces of nature so that humanity could achieve unity and immortality. The movement offered a more spiritual alternative to both Futurism and Communism.

Although interest in Russian Cosmism quickly faded, the movement has gained new life in the 21st century. It is perhaps even more relevant today than it was at the beginning of the 20th century. Fedorov and Svyatogor's joint call for space colonisation to save humanity from earthly disasters, for example, is a direct parallel to Elon Musk's promise to put humans on Mars.

The artists and curators ask the audience why people long for eternal life and what they are prepared to do for it.

One of the perspectives from which the problems are examined and from which certain solutions, proposals and ways of dealing with these issues emerge is the significantly increased interest of artists in science and in scientific findings or research. The language of art is thus constantly changing, growing, searching for ways and possibilities for action, developing models, theories and forming a language with which the problems of the modern world can be recognised and consequently also introduced into society as a proposal for new ways of self-organisation and self-reflection of the status quo.



Anna Lerchbaumer



Paula Flores

Artists search and wander through different systems, fields, different areas of human activity, they try to represent certain scientific processes symbolically, sometimes allegorically. Sometimes artists 'speak' with the language of Duchamp – they translate certain scientific processes directly into gallery spaces and make them available to the public's interpretation. In doing so, they set in motion a rethinking or change of perspective in the viewer.

Denise Parizek / Curator



Zoran Srdić Janežič



Tilen Zbona



Anna Lerchbaumer

Anna Lerchbaumer explores the intersection of gender, technology and environmental issues. Implementing the inspiration from the historical and contemporary dynamics of femininity, domesticity, and the role of technology in both she is shaping and obscuring these narratives.

She graduated in art&science at the University of applied art Vienna at Virgil Widrich. Since then she participated in various exhibitions and performances, at the Vienna Art Week, the Donaufestival, Steirischer Herbst, also including shows in China, India, and Japan. Her sound works had been aired on radia.fm and Austrian national radio program. The cassette "Love, Lullabies & Sleeplessness" was published with eminent observer incorporating sound recordings from my own experiences of motherhood.

Paula Flores was born in the bustling border town of Tijuana, Mexico, and grew up in Tijuana and San Diego. She holds a bachelor's degree in fine arts from the Universidad Autónoma de Baja California and a master's degree in art and science from the University of Applied Arts Vienna. Flores' works are part of the permanent collection of the Museum of Contemporary Art in San Diego, USA, the collection of ARTOMI, New York, USA, and private collections around the world. Paula Flores is a storyteller of an archaic, shamanistic nature. Her installations are composed of a kind of modules, adapted and interpreted to suit the theme and the space. She uses stones, branches, plants, bacteria and fungi as signposts and storytellers about the history of the world and the symbiotic relationships that had to be established and kept in balance for the existence of what we know as nature. Paula Flores urges herself to abandon the concepts and convenience of either/or.

Zoran Srdić Janežič is a sculptor, intermedia artist and puppet designer at the Ljubljana Puppet Theatre.

In his work he employs new materials and technologies, like animatronics, moving mechanisms in conjunction with biological materials, 3D virtual design, virtual reality installations with AR codes, sculptural work combining different materials and technologies. In the development of artistic projects, he collaborates with experts in the fields of programming, artificial intelligence, biotechnology, nanotechnology, i.e.. He lives and works in Slovenia and international and was participating at the Ars Electronica Festival in Linz, Bozar in Brussels, Centquatre in Paris. Some of his sculptures are part of the permanent collections of prominent galleries. He won an open call by the Municipality of Ljubljana and created a public monument in the city center. His sculpture work was awarded a prize at the international festival in Kranj and in 2020 he was selected for the S+T+ARTS residency program.

Tilen Žbona lives and works in Koper where he has founded the art&science department at the University of Koper. He graduated in painting at the Academy of Fine Arts of Venice under the guidance of Professor Carlo di Raco and obtained the master in New Media at the Academy of Fine Arts and Design of the University of Ljubljana with Professor Srečo Dragan. In 2012 he received an official award for his works from the University of Ljubljana, and since 2015 is member of the Artistic Committee for the Slovenian Rectors Conference. In 2017 he achieved his Ph.D in Educational Science at the faculty of Social Pedagogy of the University of Ljubljana. He is associate professor at the faculty of Education of the University of Primorska. He took part to numerous national and international festivals, such as: Pixelpoint, Nova Gorica (Slovenia), Istanbul Biennial (Turkey), ArtNetLab & Le Génie de la Bastille, Paris (France).



Tilen Zbona

IMPRESSUM

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