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# LEAP



## 谁的世界? BEYOND THE ANTHROPOCENE

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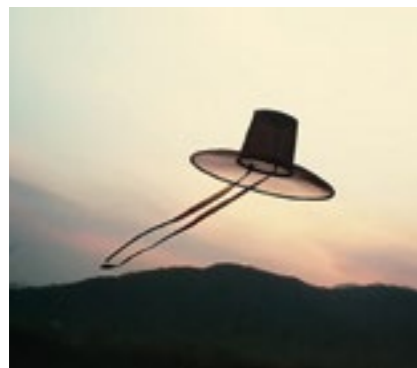


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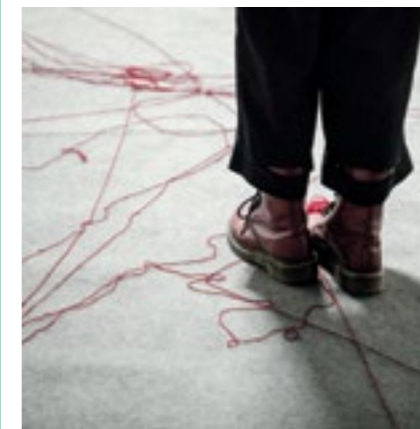
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# 异物

## alien matter

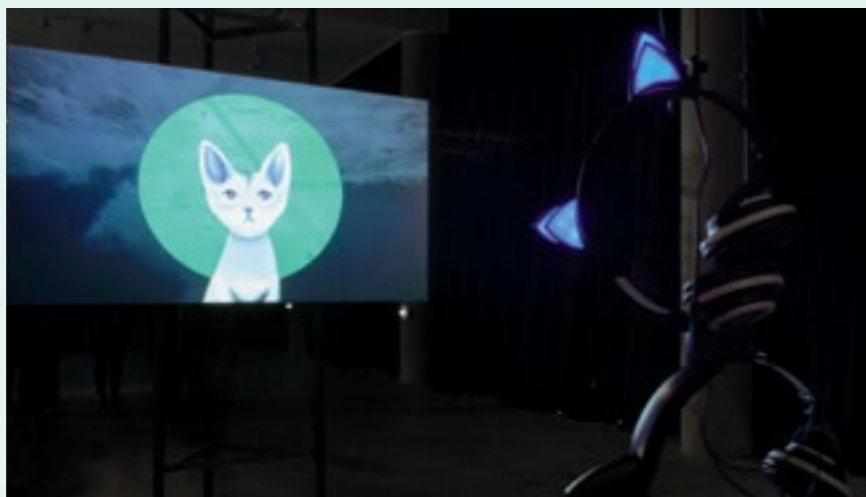
柏林世界文化中心  
HKW, BERLIN  
2017.2.3—2017.3.5

“异物”展览是柏林世界文化中心主办的“转译媒体艺术节”的一部分。展览通过三十位国际艺术家的作品对人工智能这一新兴的、尚难预测并且不完全为人类所掌握的技术产物进行思考。

马克·莱基的影像作品《绿屏冰箱行动》(2010)中,一个黑色冰箱发出哀怨的声音:“在黑暗中这么冷/在黑暗中如此孤独/可我们仍然都在这里。”在高清照片拼贴背景下,我们跟随冰箱去寻找它的亲友,从黑色电脑机箱到麦加的天房。这个智慧的冰箱经过很多次尝试仍然没能成功,最终沦为技术失败的象征。而冰箱的外形也令人想起库布里克电影《2001太空漫游》中标志性的黑色巨石,巧妙地为作品注入了“后”数字革命时代生活带来的怅然若失却不乏诙谐的忧郁情绪。

技术中的情动这个主题反复出现在展览的一些作品里,并且常常附着于声音之中,就像莱基的作品那样。在伊格纳斯·科隆勒维修斯的影像作品《硬体交易》(2015)中,我们的视线一边徘徊在空中拍摄的梦幻般美丽的山区风景中,耳边听到计算机生成的语音生硬地问一些诸如“当糖果消除游戏管你要钱的时候,你了解那种感觉吗,宝贝儿?”的问题。当我们意识到耳边这空洞而抑扬顿挫的声音比眼前像极了计算机桌面背景的壮丽的自然风光更加真实的时候,作品便产生一种哀伤的情绪。乔普·范·里弗兰的作品《影像宫殿#44——隐藏的宇宙》是一个两万盘VHS录影带制成的巨大纪念碑。这一作品也勾起人面对技术的迅猛发展感受到概念化的怀旧与异化感交织的类似情绪。

这几个作品模糊、诗意的悲伤气质尚可玩味,然而除去这种感受并无深层次的东西可言,因为它们归根结底缺少批评的锋芒。而展览上其他人则竭尽全力地试图加以弥补。皮纳尔·约尔达什的影像作品《用于治理的人工智能,猫咪人工智能》(2016)让一个可爱的小猫承载起从保罗·维希留到恐怖谷理论等一系列学术渊源,其表现风格故意设置在差不多十年前的感觉。约尔达什的命题很耐人寻味:在未来,人工智能将比人更善



皮纳尔·约尔达什,《用于治理的人工智能,猫咪人工智能》,2016年,录像  
Pinar Yoldas, *Artificial Intelligence for Governance, the Kitty AI*, 2016, video  
PHOTO: Luca Girardini, CC BY-SA 4.0

于治理社会。但是作品对复古风格小猫的运用有些令人不解:(比如)它声称“我们千禧一代不懂得匮乏和节俭的概念”、“我们经历的暴力只在电子游戏里/我们经历的失去只是丢失了苹果手机而已”。在一个危机和战争无休止的世界中,用一个麻木的中产阶级少数群体代表了我们整个时代似乎是很有误导性的。而多层制作的复古数码影像和现场观众佩戴的小猫形象耳机构成的最终效果并不那么深刻,反而有些让人困惑。

在另外一个雄心勃勃的作品里,这种对特定的“我们”群体的假定则成为了致命的弱点。尼古拉斯·麦格雷和玛丽亚·罗什科夫斯卡的《艺术预测机》(2016)是一个能够用当下话语通过算法生成新艺术观念的作品,在展览上的呈现形式很有创意,是一大片小型风扇。其生产的诸如“一个削弱加速主义可信度的后数字时代秘密社会”等观念显得非常荒诞,揭示出算法和人类一样只能通过重新组合现有元素来创新。然而,这次展览本身就汇集了众多难以捉摸但在不同程度上取得了成功的观念。《艺术预测机》置身于这样一个展览之中,这种艺术学院派内部笑话式作品的价值便值得被质疑。

所以,在这个展览上一些作品通过这种

方式担任了本不该它们担任的注脚功能。其他比如埃文·罗思纪念碑式的雕塑作品《葬礼》(2015/17)——用两公里长的光纤电缆组成的无穷大符号——其冲击力在于自身的简单。康斯坦特·杜拉特的系列照片作品《无聊的梦》(2017)以同样复杂的手法将谷歌的深梦技术反向应用。深梦技术通过增强特征进行面部、物体和语音识别,而《无聊的梦》的算法反向运行,将图像分解成诡异的一片片光影。这一作品对于利用技术不断加强的监控活动发出了现实挑战,实现了很有冲击力的美学效果。

苏珊·特雷斯特的作品《园丁HFT》(2014-15)一点也不简单。作品非常详细地讲述了一个投资银行家将自己的意识与算法智能结合起来使他变成成功艺术家的故事。叙事奇怪地以无聊的BBC艺术家纪录片风格展开。一系列令人惊叹的多彩的思维导图代表着商业和医药科技世界的交织,形如动植物群一般。在一个汇集了从伪学术控到漫无目的的怀旧与科技焦虑情绪的展览中,特雷斯特的作品的古怪而不同寻常是有积极意义的。它与其他作品放置在一起共同造就了一个发人深思的展览,即便在这个展览中,“异物”(这个说法)始终有些太过迥异。

克里斯蒂安·维斯特鲁普·麦迪森(翻译:张昭)

Hosted by Berlin's Haus der Kulturen der Welt as part of the annual transmediale festival on art and digital culture, the exhibition “alien matter” showcases works by thirty international artists that reflect on artificial intelligence in technological artifacts as kind of new, unpredictable material, not entirely within our control.

“It's so cold here in the dark/Alone here in the dark/All of us here still” says the pleading voice of a black refrigerator in Mark Leckey's film *GreenScreenRefrigeratorAction* (2010). Against the backdrop of HD photo collages, we follow the refrigerator's search for friendly relatives from a black computer case to the Kaaba of Mecca. Never realized in spite of many attempts, the intelligent fridge is an emblem technological flop, just as its visual reminiscence of the iconic black monolith of Kubrick's *2001: A Space Odyssey* skilfully imbues the work with the disappointed, yet humorous melancholy of living “after” the digital revolution.

The theme of affect in technology recurs in a suite of the works in the exhibition, often attaching itself, as in Leckey, to the grain of the voice. In Ignas Krunglevicius' video *Hard Body Trade* (2015) crisp computer generated speech asks, among other things, “Do you know that feeling, honey, when Candy Crush is asking for your money?” as we pan over surreally beautiful aerial shots of mountain landscapes. This work becomes sad as we realize the hollow cadence is more real to us than the obscene natural splendour, bringing to mind more than anything else computer desktop backgrounds. Joep van Liefland's *Video Palace #44 – The Hidden Universe*—a large monument made out of 20,000 VHS cassettes—plays to a similar emotion at the intersection of generalized nostalgia and alienation in the face of rapid

technological progress.

These works are enjoyable in their vague, poetic sadness, but with nowhere to go from this feeling, ultimately lack a critical edge, which others attempt, rather desperately, to make up for. Pinar Yoldas' video *Artificial Intelligence for Governance, the Kitty AI* (2016) channels a host of academic references from Paul Virilio to the Uncanny Valley through a cute kitten, intentionally rendered in the style of ten or so years ago. Yoldas' premise is intriguing: a future in which artificial intelligence systems will be better at governing societies than people. But the perspective of the retro-kitten is confusing: “Us millennials don't know concepts like scarcity and frugality,” it says, “We had experienced violence, but only in video games/We had experienced loss but only when we lost our iPhones.” In a world of neverending crises and war, it seems misguided to refer to the apathy of a middle-class minority as at all representative of our time, and the intersecting meta-layers of the retro-digital rendering and the kitten-headphones worn by the audience, in the end, are more bewildering than incisive.

The presumption of such a particular “we” is the Achilles heel of another ambitious work in the show, Nicolas Maignet and Maria Roszkowska's *Predictive Art Bot* (2016)—an algorithm that sources current discourses to generate new concepts for art, creatively displayed for the exhibition on an army of small fan ventilators. The concepts, e.g. “A post-digital secret society undermining the credibility of accelerationism,” are hilariously absurd, and reveal that algorithms, like humans, can only innovate through the recomposition of existing elements. But the value of this art-academic inside

joke is questionable, especially considering its place in an exhibition with so many of such elusive concepts at play to varying degrees of success.

While, in this way, some works have taken on more footnotes than they can juggle, others, such as Evan Roth's monumental sculpture *Burial Ceremony* (2015/17)—two kilometers of fiber-optic cable laid out in the shape of the infinity sign—are striking in their simplicity. In an equally sophisticated gesture, Constant Dullaart's photo series *Dull Dream* (2017) turns Google's Deep Dream technology on its head. Where Deep Dream is used to recognize faces, objects and speech by intensifying characteristics, *Dull Dream*'s algorithm does the opposite, dissolving images into eerie planes of shadow and light. This work poses a practical challenge to increasing surveillance and regulation through technology to a striking aesthetic effect.

Not simple at all is Suzanne Treister's *HFT The Gardener* (2014-15), an elaborate story of an investment banker who merges his consciousness with algorithmic intelligence allowing him to become a successful artist. The story plays out in a curiously boring BBC-style artist's documentary, and a series of stunning colorful mind maps indexing the worlds of business and pharmaceuticals as if they were flora and fauna. In a show that ranges from pseudo-academic indulgence to aimlessly nostalgic tech-anxiety, Treister's work is eccentric and unusual in the best sense. Along with a host of the other works, it makes for thought-provoking exhibition, albeit one in which “alien matter” remains rather too alien. **Kristian Vistrup Madsen**