

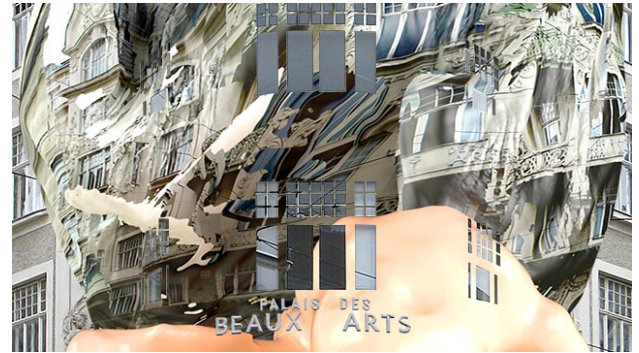
Big Time Museum

Fabian Faltin

Lecture application for the dissolution of the
exhibition *Internetis.museeiis*
located at 35.04.2117~FF\$&GPS!‡_ff.ew.1497

A. Welcome. Palais des Beaux Arts. Vienna.

Museums exist to store data and use it to tell stories. Here, at the Palais des Beaux Arts in Vienna, we are ideally positioned to do precisely that: after 100 innovation cycles, we are extracting, generating and collecting sensory, digital and post-digital data at a historically unprecedented scale. Our collection spans all four corners of the globe, all known networks and artistic fields, as well as their specific technical platforms. It is a unique cultural and narrative resource, which constantly spawns new stories and, indeed, new *histories*: who are we? How did we manage to come so far? And where are we travelling to?



The post-digital art institution, visualised by the artist Enrico Zago around 2014. Photo: Palais des Beaux Arts Vienna, 39.07.2115~ B\$&TTS!#_

In addressing these questions, our current exhibition *Internetis.museeiis*^[1] has an especially prominent role to play. For the first time ever, we are displaying in public one of our most advanced research projects, namely the reconstruction of a so-called „video installation“ from the early 21st century. Moreover, this exhibition also marks a very special anniversary: 100 innovation cycles ago, almost exactly to the day, humanity witnessed the commercial launch of the first Samsung Flash Arrays. As you know, no other innovation hitherto known to mankind has unleashed more disruptive powers in so little time. In conjunction with Samsung’s world-encompassing HIT- and MADL-capacities, this technology has obliterated all previous spatio-temporal thresholds and consigned the digital revolution of the late 20th and early 21st century to the dustbin of history.

As Senior Dramatist for Research and Interface at the Palais des Beaux Arts, I'd like to use the occasion of this very special anniversary to share some of our astonishing research findings with you, and offer some personal thoughts on both the fruitful insights and immense challenges brought about by our museological work. To do so, let me invite you, most cordially, to open a particularly remarkable Dₓ.tₓ-Cluster: let us revert to calendar time and head all the way back to the beginning of the 21st century, to the calendar year 2015. Then, let us enter one of the revolutionary hotspots of this period, which presents itself to us in guise of an art exhibition: the 56th Biennale di Venezia.

B. Art anno 2015: sunbathing inside the black cube

The Venice Biennale was a legendary, world-famous art show. As the name suggests, it was held bi-annually from 1895 to 2021. The 59th and final edition took place just before the end of calendar time, in 2021, whereafter its gates closed forever, and the famous "Arsenale" premises were once again refitted for their original military purposes. The first innovation cycle got underway, and no further "world exhibitions" took place either in Venice or elsewhere. This is somewhat surprising, given their enormous profitability: in the year 2015 alone, over half a million visitors poured into Venice to enjoy displays of art and culture in the nostalgic ambience of 30 "national" pavilions. A particularly popular attraction was the "Germanic Pavilion", a fascist palace dating back to the time of the world wars. In 2015, we saw it hosting a seminal work by the German filmmaker, feminist, and art workers' leader Hito Steyerl. Entitled *Factory of the Sun*, it can be attributed to the once widespread genre of "Post-Internet Art". Zoom closer by selecting a mid-range precision grade in your MADL exhibition emitter^[2].

As you can now see, *Factory of the Sun* consists of a science-fiction film staged as a computer-game or, if you prefer, a computer game being projected as if it were a science-fiction film. An ironic gimmick, of course, since the biennale audience wasn't actually able to play the game unfolding before their eyes. Instead, one can hear a voice announcing that "the game will play you". An intensive deployment of animation effects, the film's presentation as a succession of game levels rather than scenes (including inserts with high-scores, photon levels, render points, time played,

etc.), as well as constant switching between different anime characters with names such as *Naked Doom*, *High Voltage*, *Take Some Crime* and *Liquid Easy* are meant to convey the oppressive feeling that you are, in fact, trapped inside a computer game.



Nuclear warheads skimming the Laguna Veneta. Germanic Pavillion.

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This, in itself, is nothing unusual: just as art, design and advertising have always been closely entwined, so film and computer gaming have also always existed in a mutually dependent relationship. Almost from the outset, the big special effects studios of Hollywood found themselves being challenged head-on by the leading Icelandic and Greenlandic gaming clusters; a stiff competition, which to this day is one of the primary drivers of our innovation cycles, and a terrific incentive for Type-1 and Type-2 programmers to outperform each other.

Furthermore, film and computer gaming are also inseparably entwined in popular culture. For example, the heta-converted archives and social media timelines of the digital revolution, notably *YouTube* (SZZ\$=&!ssOoWz₪_ ₪) and *Facebook* (øΔf'f'\$=&!yloR₪_ ₪), are thought to contain millions of hours of footage of people who filmed themselves and their computer screens while playing computer games. These "screen recordings" and "selfies" probably served a number of different purposes. Apart from being a convenient way of sharing information about particularly cunning game moves, it seems as if the first digital generations also took great personal pride in their gaming abilities and were very careful to document them. The systematic, continuous archiving of one's own online experiences may even have fulfilled certain spiritual desires. As part of a deeply human pursuit of dignity, recognition

and immortality, early computer gamers may have felt prompted to document the most intensive moments of their proto-digital lives and to diffuse them around the globe – which is of course a tremendous boon for our present-day museum work.

In sum, the intricate blending and fluid conversions between film and computer game was nothing unusual and therefore hardly suffices to explain why *Factory of the Sun* was such a popular attraction at the 2015 Biennale – on this level, the work merely mimicked what visitors would have already been familiar with in their everyday lives. Instead, we have come to believe that its unique appeal stemmed from something entirely different, namely a pioneering usage of highly advanced framing techniques: Hito Steyerl didn't just show a film in guise of a computer game, she also designed the entire surroundings accordingly, the so-called "context". As we shall see, she even went so far as to factor the institutional conditions of art production and reception at the Venice Biennale, and invested them with computer game aesthetics.

In order to achieve such a comprehensive "gameification" of reality, she must have made use of a special art form that is quite characteristic of this period – what was known as an "art installation". By this, we mean a holistic arrangement of objects, surfaces, furniture and different media systems, whose different energy currents, information flows and resonance fields were controlled with utmost precision; an apparatus, if you will, quite similar to our present day hydro-immersive bathrooms and wellness chambers. You may want to try reconstructing such an "art installation" yourself – it will immediately trigger a somewhat claustrophobic feeling, as if you had been locked up in a sauna after closing hours.

Next, try using your MADL-zoom to factor in *Factory of the Sun*: you'll recognise a sort of projection window, something similar to a cinema screen. This is a commonplace feature that you'll find in most art installations of the year 2015. However, Steyerl doesn't install her screen on the white walls of a museum, a gallery, or a Biennale pavilion; she positions it inside a hermetically sealed, completely darkened "black cube". The floor, walls and ceiling of this proverbial black cube are merely patterned and illuminated by a grid of

subtle, Samsung-blue light. As a member of the audience, you would have entered this cube through an invisible black security gate, and remained physically present. You weren't, as is generally the case today, part of the projection surface. You remained strictly confined to the limits of your own body.

To create the feeling of being inside a computer game, Steyerl thus had to resort to other, far more primitive means of simulating weightlessness, virtuality, and spatio-temporal delimitation. For instance, we see several rows of *Ikea* sun loungers installed in front of the flickering screen, upon which one could "park" one's body amongst the bodies of other visitors. The visitors would recline, relax, and ultimately switch off. It is quite possible that Steyerl intended this to reference the famous drive-in cinemas of the 20th century, in which humans, completely immobilised within metal car-cases, parked their bodies in front of colourful and highly dramatized "motion pictures"^[3].

Alternatively, Steyerl's sun loungers can also be interpreted as a critical comment on an increasingly leisure-driven art industry, in which exhibitions were no longer clearly distinct from saunas, vacation resorts, or the cruise ships that once ploughed through Venice's city-scape. We shall presently return to this rather speculative hypothesis.

What we have established with absolute certainty is that the sunloungers used by Steyerl were produced and distributed by the global brand *Ikea*. As part of the museo-archeological research undertaken for *Internet.Museeiis* in our mid-season innovation quarter, we were able to locate and salvage the "Hanjin Eva", a sunken cargo ship buried deep in the coral reefs Venezia Giudecca. Protected from corrosive air and salt exposure by several thick layers of mud, this 300 meter vessel was preserved almost fully intact. Upon touching ground, it snapped in half like a fortune cookie, and patiently waited 100 innovation cycles for us to arrive and extract its secret message. Period shipping records indicate that it seems to have been operated by the *Hanjin Shipping Company*, and what we found inside was a single piece of cargo: a vacuum-sealed Art Transit Container, which we were able to salvage as one piece in just one single dive. Inside, we didn't find – as you might expect – the legendary Chinese "terracotta army", but something equally, if not more,

significant: hundreds of *Ikea* sun-loungers, made of powder-coated metal tubes and heavily leaded plastic fabrics of undoubtedly Chinese origins.

From the same container, we were also able to extract what seems to have been the original projection screen used by Steyerl. Unfortunately, the Venetian mud and long-term oxygen deprivation seem to have had a very negative impact on its constitution: the fabric is in an extremely fragile and brittle condition, and it has partially disintegrated into a barely-visible cellular membrane. We are currently keeping it immersed inside a soothing and gently hydrating buckthorn-meldonium bath in complete darkness, and are looking forward to the gradual recovery and rejuvenation of all its surfaces.



Screen fragment in a Time Miracle Age Defence buckthorn-meldonium restorative bath. Photo: Palais des Beaux Arts, Research and Interfaces, '35.04.2115~ YG\$&GPS!‡_.



Museo-archeological reconstruction of sun loungers using video-based projection technology.

MADL-compatible.1we~ YY\$'3. Kerstin>>von Gabain>>'A/place in the Sun/'{2013}

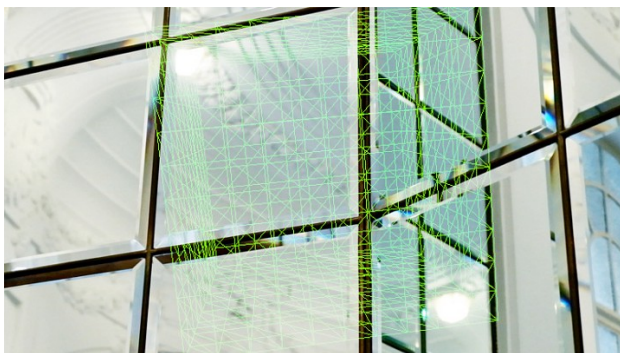
Following a thorough evaluation of these material samples and oil-formations, we hope to gain further valuable insights into the institutions and artistic productions of the calendar year 2015: was this delicate video screen possibly an inestimably valuable, hand-crafted precursor of the array-based Samsung P2 plasma-hylatron motion banner? Or did Steyerl merely use a conventional surface of light-active polyester fabric, which was placed before a miserable 4000-Ansi Sony video projector – and why? Was she merely interested in making an ironic statement about poverty in the art world and showing off her solidarity with exploited culture workers? Or did she herself, in spite of her international reputation, suffer from such crippling poverty?

There is significant evidence in favour of this last hypothesis. Kinczi Çayulu III, the current world number three Ottoman scientist, has recently set forth an impressive new study, „Cultural Decline, Pence-Populism, and the Post-European Welfare Game 2010–2025“, in which she traces the international art world's ill-fated dependency on public subsidies ^[4]. Large-scale artistic endeavours such as the Biennale di Venezia remained dependent on extensive state support right up to the end of the calendar time period, and as tax revenues from the tobacco industry, the financial sector and a fossil-fuel-based economy declined, so too did state support for arts and culture. Accordingly, artistic practises of all sorts had to adapt to ever more austere material limitations. By using a low-quality projection screen and a cheap Sony video projector, as well as a whole battery of *Ikea* sun loungers, Steyerl would have effectively accommodated the prevalent conditions of production, as described by Çayulu III. But as long as we haven't completed a full-spectrum analysis of all our material samples, such hypotheses cannot be more than mere speculation.

C. Energy ripples and photon shards

At present, our research doesn't even allow us to fully ascertain that *Factory of the Sun* was a genuinely "post-European" work of art. In fact,

Steyerl doesn't appear to address any of the issues relating to Euro-secessionism or the Ottoman occupation. Nor do we possess any alternative facts which would allow us to describe the work as "post-industrial", "post-human", "post-national", "post-liberal" or indeed "post-modern". *Factory of the Sun* makes no allusions to the Pence-populists, nor does it any way reference the radical reconfiguration of European social systems, which was already well under way before the end of calendar time. Thus, any of these rather loose "post"-terms must be treated with utmost caution. As figures of speech and thought, they are merely able to signify what is *not* the case, so as to conceal the fact that, as yet, there is no substantial understanding of what *is* the case ^[5]. Let us therefore leave such "post-mortem" constructs to our "post-capitalist" art critics, philosophers and science-fiction writers, whose business has always been to peddle such visions of doom and negativity. Instead, let us always strive to pursue the honourable path of serious scientific inquiry – let us be guided by demonstrable museo-archeological facts! The images of *Factory of the Sun* that are now gradually emerging from our museological post-production are surely a more reliable source than any so-called speculative inquiries. We can fully trust all data streamed out of our sequenced MADL-zoom – even to the naked eye, it is easily discernible that *Factory of the Sun* must be classified as a work of the post-internet era, and none other. This post-factual insight will become even clearer as we now turn to the filmographic analysis and a close reading of Steyerl's scenario, or so-called "plot".



Grid Structure of the Biennale di Venezia 2015 inside a compressed cluster. Exhibition view Internetis.museeiis at 35.04.2115~ FF\$&GPS!‡_.

Akin to almost all other known works of post-

internet art, Steyerl's video installation is primarily concerned with the limitless power of capitalism, international corporations and the international/transnational financial sector. Taking its cue from the "Germanic Pavilion", the work tells the story of a mysterious *Deutsche Bank*, which is involved in a conspirative endeavour of the very highest order. To begin with, we witness an upbeat corporate press officer, who talks of a special programme dedicated to increasing the speed of light: *Deutsche Bank*, he says, wants to produce photons which fly "faster than sunlight". But why would a bank, i.e. a non-scientific actor, be interested in achieving such a thing?

Well, let us not forget that this is still the calendar year 2015: there were as yet no flash arrays available, which nowadays easily exceed the speed of light, oftentimes with HIT capacities of ten thousand and more. A lightspeed of exactly 299.792.458 m/s was considered to be an absolutely invariable and immutable global benchmark, something as reliable and robust as the gold standard of the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries ^[6]. Therefore, a free and absolutely linear 1:1 exchangeability between light, information and money, underpinned by an extensive system of high-frequency trading and fibre optical networks, was considered a rock-solid foundation for the global economic system. So any sudden and unforeseen increase of the speed of light would have resulted in massive disturbances and systemic upheavals, as well as unprecedented opportunities for profit. This is precisely what Steyerl's *Deutsche Bank* seeks to achieve: faster light equals faster money.

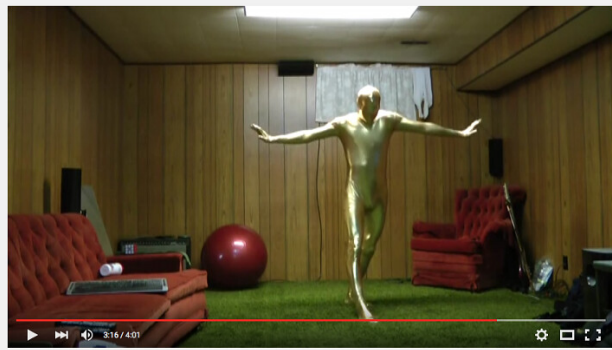


Credit transaction at Deutsche Bank, Frankfurt, exposed at 529.472.361. m/s. Credit:Credit{1983}V

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Clearly, the technological means of the digital revolution would never have sufficed to pull off such a feat. Neither an omnipotent "World Bank", nor a technologically advanced "particle accelerator" – both of which actually existed in 2015 – were in any way equipped to accelerate light in such a way. It's as if we here, at the Palais des Beaux Arts, could somehow magically begin printing single-phase planets onto carbon-matrix grids – an impossible feat, even though our museum has ranked amongst the Moody & McDercon global top 5 for a record-breaking 34 consecutive innovation cycles ^[7].

Which just goes to show that Hito Steyerl's artistic intuition and visionary abilities were undoubtedly in a class of their own. She must have possessed a singular ability of looking beyond the technological limits of her time, perhaps even of time itself. It would doubtless be interesting to investigate just how much of this was due to her consumption of primitive neuro-enhancers, such as cocaine, taurine, meldonium, trautionium, alcohol and lactic acid – all of which were wildly popular amongst artists of that period. Should her body also be discovered in the Venetian mud alongside the "Hanjin Eva", we may one day also learn more about that.



„Take some crime“, a dancing post-fordist slave labourer, approx. 2010. Photo: Heta-archival conversion,
ue56†t>>.youtube.com/watch?v=1QcoZsGk5cA

Interestingly, the film suggests that the Deutsche Bank itself may have also been resorting to such primitive means: in order to achieve the impossible and accelerate the speed of light, its trading staff can think of no better strategy than to use

the internet. Does anyone here in the audience still know what exactly that was? Well, since our exhibition *Internetis.Museeiis* is primarily dedicated to the post-internet period, allow me to take a brief detour and refresh your memories: in a nutshell, the internet was a recursive, spherically shaped field of signification and storage. It is therefore widely considered to be one of three most important precursors of our contemporary alphabet with its 26-letter kernel. A good first-hand impression of what everyday life on the internet was like can be gained by looking at *Factory of the Sun* in the MADL-Macro-mode. What you see is a rather carnevalesque kind of party atmosphere: avatars marching tightly in step are joined by rebellious platoons of reality-show stars, puny performance artists, self-styled fashion bloggers, and micro-influential art critics, while voguing dancers mingle with hipsters, hackers and trolls of all kinds and colours, not to mention the on-going buzz of surveillance drones and Deutsche Bank trading bots. As predators, their role is to abduct all the agents on the internet from their YouTube channels, enslave and exploit them by means of the latest capitalist techniques, and ultimately reprogramme them for ceaseless self-exploitation.

Witness one particularly salient character, known as *Take Some Crime* ^[8], who before our very own eyes is hunted down with archaic laser guns and geoblockers, turned into "human capital", and subsequently condemned to forced labour in a motion capture studio. There, in the "Factory of the Sun", *Take Some Crime* is forced to do everything the Deutsche Bank wants him to do. Day by day, he has to dance to the high-frequency rhythm of the international stock markets, while the bank's employees scan, absorb and duplicate every single one of his dance movements. The motoric data is subsequently multiplied and transferred to countless other characters worldwide, which then all start to dance in sync with *Take Some Crime*. The collective energy ripples of this global movement ultimately yield individual photons capable of flying faster than sunlight.



Stock photo stuck inside a motion capture studio. Palais des Beaux Arts, alamy-cluster, 35.04.2115~Yøø G\$HITS! Δ‡.

Even more fantastic, if not fantastical, are the social-design aspects of Hito Steyerl's scenario: we suddenly see riots and protest movements popping up all over the globe, with activists dedicated to hacking into and halting the Deutsche Bank's criminal practises. Bloody battles between "good" digital gaming heroes and "bad guys" from the financial sector ensue, although most of them do not seem to take place at geo-definable locations (yZZ\$=&!typeof.propertyIsEnumerable&&!a.propertyIs"6‡66"); rather, they appear to be thinly spread across a diverse range of platforms, interfaces, live-streams and terminal simulacra. We even see a branch of an online bank being submerged by the battle action, its terminals hit and destroyed with heavy stones and pick-axes – a cultural practise that is today still cherished as an advertising stunt by the global luxury industry. In Vienna, for instance, the window displays of Prada, Dior and Cartier are demolished at the start of every new innovation cycle, so as to mark the beginning of the traditional ball-season. And just as the make-believe attackers in Vienna are in the end always shot down by police drones, so several of the gamer-activists in Steyerl's scenario end up losing their lives; however, since they are in fact part of a computer game, they retain full battle-capacity. They are enveloped by shards of broken shop-windows, an algorithmically activated swarm of glittery lights and photon shards. We see them morph into a stormy sea, then we see the Kreml in Moscow, followed by a dance casting show atop the Berlin Teufelsberg, before the whole swarm of shards is finally shot down in a nameless border region of former Yugoslavia.

How would a Biennale audience of the calendar year 2015 have reacted to such an advanced, apocalyptic, yet also joyfully vibrant dance and special-effects show? We will never know, of course. But, as I hope to show in the next part of my lecture, we have good reason to believe that *Factory of the Sun* most likely induced a sort of collective hysteria amongst culture consumers, culture workers and common artists. Flabbergasted, if not outright overwhelmed, they dropped into Steyerl's sun loungers to admire the flickering inferno of swarming photons, high-speed drone warfare and hypnotic YouTube dance choreographies. They must have felt, for once, entirely in tune with what was once the present moment.

D. Skimming the museological event horizon

Of course, you might now be tempted to ask: what basis do we really have for such a highly speculative filmographic reconstruction? Who could possibly know how *Factory of the Sun* was perceived and received back then – in the age of calendar time? Images and data of the past are of course abundantly available in the HETA-archives, but we obviously cannot exclude the possibility that audiences who lived so long ago assembled and processed them in a completely different way. They might have forged other plots, experienced a different drama, and extracted "Take-Home Messages" which are no longer meaningful to us. We don't even really know which time-axes were used to organise the events I have just described to you. What was the sense of "the present" anchored in, and how exactly was "contemporary" defined? Can we really just take "contemporary art" from the calendar year 2015 and, using the MADL-zoom and full HIT-capacities, transfer it into our museological array, into our present moment – a *now* separated from the calendar year 2015 by a staggering 100 innovation cycles?

I cannot offer you any clear answers or revolutionary discoveries in response to this question. What I can propose are certain evolutionary insights – insights which, like everything else in our museoarcheological space, are themselves subject to the never-ending succession of innovation cycles. This evolutionary approach to knowledge management is entirely

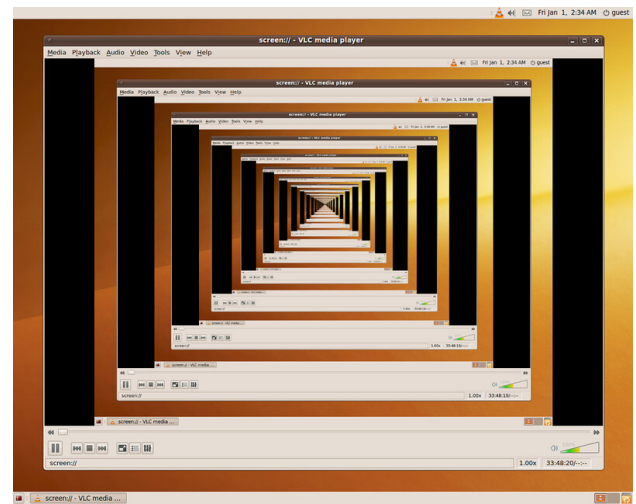
confirmed by Kinczi Çayulu II, the current world number two Ottoman scientist, in her seminal and recently updated study „Smart City, mediocre Museum? Proactive Patterns in Museum Change Management“^[9].

Çayulu II's study is the first of its kind offering comprehensive scientific evidence for the infinite nature of museo-archeological space. This space continuously keeps writing and rewriting itself, just like the numeric series π , or a repeating decimal number (i.e. $1/3=0.3333333...$), or the succession of whole numbers (1, 2, 3, 4, 5,...), whose very essence is their infinite continuation. As Çayulu II compellingly argues, the three dots (...) commonly used to shorten such number series are in fact a fundamental misrepresentation of their true nature. In fact, number series are as long as the light rays criss-crossing the universe, in infinite curves, curvatures or, if you will, vast circles with radii $r = \infty$, whose edges are infinitely close to being perfect straight lines.

We can never fully overtake and capture these infinitely long light rays and curves, even when we are moving at several times the speed of light inside our MADL-zoom. The light circles and D.t.t--clusters of the calendar year 2015 can never be completely closed, or disclosed, by our research. Being a museum, we are of course able to salvage old sun loungers, restore fragmented pieces of canvas or even reconstruct Steyerl's cinematographic scenario. But we will never be able to ultimately stabilise, fixate or reinstall *Factory of the Sun* in its original form; the infinite cannot become definite. Rather, we always need to be aware that all our museo-archeological measures don't merely serve to preserve the works in our collection – rather, all conservatory measures constitute *additions*, through which we inscribe our present selves onto stratas of past events, just like additional players entering an existing computer game. No piece of data, yet alone a work of art, can exist outside the history of its ongoing reexamination and reappropriation, as little as a historic artefact can free itself from the museum showcase in which it has been placed. Nor can a character be separated from the film in which it plays its role, or a data set in the HETA-archives be unmoored from the very coordinates that define it – it would just disappear. We'd be left without all artefacts, characters or meaningful data, and merely retain abstract cyphers. *Cypher* is derived

from the arabic *aḥ-ḥifr*, “nil, nothing”, which Çayulu II translates, in turn, from the Sanskrit word *ṣūnyā*, that is to say: “emptiness”.

Of course, this is all fairly evident to us. We have 100 innovation cycles worth of learning, development and cognition to draw from! In previous periods, when time was still marked on calendars, humanity remained embroiled in the confusing logic of numbers. The alphabet in its present-day form simply didn't exist. Infinite number series were seen as having a special, almost mystical significance, and humans across all cultures lived by obscure numerological laws. Even Western capitalism was ultimately nothing but a regime based on an intransparent numerical system, in which all aspects of social life were expressed and summed up in terms of open-ended measures such as efficiency, productivity and profit. No-one ever succeeded in actually balancing, let alone solving the equations in which these infinite dimensions were enshrined. Maybe this is the deeper reason why *Factory of the Sun* represents the world of 2015 as a gigantic computer game, in which players find themselves trapped in an absolute and inescapable “cognitive capitalism”, which stubbornly revolves around itself, tracing a curve of radius $r = -\infty$, thereby subsuming and encompassing all manifestations and dimensions of human life, and perhaps even human consciousness itself.



Absolute void. Simulated in a TCP/IP-Array:h://_e.wikipedia.(");a|=0;org/ /Recursion.

As the capitalist circle closes upon itself, it marks something like a “zero point”, also known as *death*

point or god point: A hermetically enclosed fixed point, a singularity situated beyond the reach of time, space, evolution or revolution. An unchanging, unchangeable quantity cut off from all means of input or output, which thus comes to constitute a self-recursive, spherical field of signification and self-storage – a world inside the world, a self-referential, arithmetic totality, which corresponds exactly to the “internet” as I have already described it to you.

Çayurhan Il persuasively argues that this self-recursive construction was nothing less than an “objective blasphemy”, a god-like director’s cut, by means of which humanity hoped to cut itself free from the very history that brings us into being. Indeed, such a numerically generated singularity would have resulted in a fantastical jump over the event horizon, and thereby marked the end of time and museo-archeological space. By transcending time and space, an internet-based capitalism would have in effect deprived our museum of all possibilities of alphabetically writing and rewriting the never-ending stories and histories of *Factory of the Sun*.

In fact, however, time did not end in the calendar year 2015. What actually happened is simply that internet usage kept intensifying, with annual growth rates going from single to double, and finally even triple digits. Fuelled by the capitalist logic of numbers, the internet revolved around itself at an ever-faster pace, leading to an abundance of data in the HETA-archives, reams of which remain visible to this day. But the logic of endless acceleration was ultimately no substitute for a genuinely humane belief- and motivation-system; rather, it nurtured the doomsday sentiments of the dawning post-internet era. Fuelled by religious hate, fanaticism, trolling and digital luddism, the internet proved to be a fruitful ground for the opportunistic waves of Pence-Populism that washed around the globe. True to their infamous slogan “Computers are complicated!”, the digital revolution ultimately drove itself to its own demise ^[10].

E. Magic moments in the museum?

On these matters, Hito Steyerl undoubtedly had more foresight than most of her contemporaries.

She seemed to intuit that the “endless present” of capitalism could not endure forever. Nonetheless, our MADL-zoom does reveal that she, too, could not entirely evade the nonsensical circularity of the numerical system. Instead of calling numbers by their true names, spelling them out, and using the resultant innovations to agitate against the calendar time regime, Steyerl confined herself to staging an ironic leisure-zone in which people were “free” to “spend time” on sun loungers and immerse themselves in a spectacular computer game. Once the audience had been immobilised in this way, it was bombarded with financial data, time counts, levels, speeds, high scores and random data of all sorts, as if to suggest that there might have been some giant, invisible factory at work behind the slick facades of an art Biennale. An institutionalised art factory, if you will, in which people were condemned to “process” art to the point of exhaustion – just as the dancers inside the motion capture studio were prisoners of the *Deutsche Bank*. In this setup, every one of their steps, every single breath, and indeed the sheer fact of their bodily existence all serve merely to augment the bank’s profits *ad infinitum*.

This mise-en-scene surely contained at least a small grain of truth. The 2000- and 2010-decades of the last of all centuries were indeed characterised by a global push to “capitalise” upon the ruins of the industrial age, notably by rebranding them as museums: former factories (“The Factory”, “Tate Modern”, “Werk X”), shipyards and train stations (“Arsenale”, “Dock”, “Hamburger Bahnhof”) as well as various other types of industrial-age architecture (“Glasshouse”, “Kunsthalle”, “Speicher”, “Kulturschuppen”, etc.) were all restored to the capitalist production cycle by means of cultural programming. Just like the fictional *Factory of the Sun*, the operating mode of these “art factories” was self-referential to the highest degree: the brighter and shinier a museum brand, the more attention, cognitive potential and purchasing power it attracted, which in turn further increased its brand value. Against this background, it is hardly surprising that so much of the “contemporary art” from the post-internet era was little more than an absurd *perpetuum mobile*, designed to revolve endlessly around itself. Meanwhile, art audiences, ever more exhausted by these factories’ relentless operations, found themselves collapsing onto the conveyor belts of culture, physically exhausted and mentally drained,

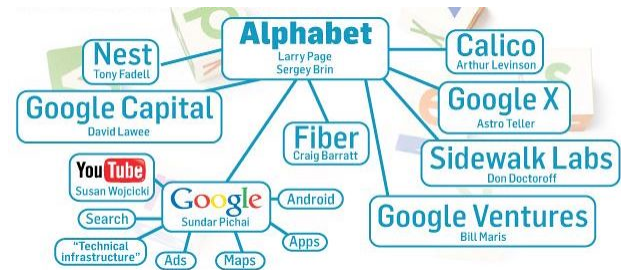
immobilised by what was fittingly termed “burn out”. While the coal-and-iron furnaces of the industrial age had long since been extinguished, many museum visitors started to suspect that it was now the people themselves who were slowly but surely being burnt as fuel in the engine rooms of cultural capitalism ^[11].



Cultural life and image production in the ruins of an abandoned textile factory. Dahua 1935 Industrial Relics Pilot-Project, Xi'an, China. Archival image at approx. 2010. Palais des Beaux Arts, Research and Interfaces, '12.11.2103~CC\$'6^{GS%}‡.

Now, that is to say in the alphabet, where one word is always followed by another, and where we are completely free to trade and change words amongst each other in order to tell exactly the kind of stories we would like to tell, such a dire analysis appears to be a crass exaggeration. Of course, even after 100 innovation cycles, we are still witness to the recurring outbreaks of pessimism, passivity and catatonic self-pity. And thanks to the ceaseless progress of Ottoman science, we also see more clearly how easily human aspirations, creativity and sensitivity can become utterly permeated by the capitalist logic of numbers – so much so that even resistance becomes just another name for acquiescence. Ensnared in this paradox and forever craving more “presence” and stronger sensations of “now”, many artists of the post-internet era went so far as to embrace the logic of Pence-Populism, which had so effectively hijacked and dismantled the workers’ movement, so as to colonize its ruins with a shamelessly neo-nationalist agenda. Steyerl and her contemporaries, finding these dynamics at once fascinating and repulsive,

sought to appropriate and reinterpret them for their own, radical ends. They went so far as to compare a museum visit with the sweat and toil of gold mining, and equated an art Biennale with forced labor. Such overblown comparisons give us a vivid image of the claustrophobia and sense of self-enclosure that the artists of the post-internet era must have struggled with.



Growing into a network: the alphabet after the first 50 innovation cycles.

//lh3.googleusercontent.com/-mEMAWK1RRNQ/A
AAAAAIAI/AAAAAIAI/
KB_U8sE
1BO66sYbEiKAg8ROB9uwwlZwJA Simulation in
TCP/IP-Array:h://_e.wikipedia.(");a|=0;org/
/Alphabet. 31158534,2563907772_Function_1080p
reString_TCP/IP-Array/lvalid*a,b,c.

As Senior Dramatist for Research and Interface at the Palais des Beaux Arts, I must of course concede that our museum, like so many others, is a direct descendant of an industrial production logic. Our institutional history goes right back to the beginning of the 20th century, when the Palais des Beaux Arts was home to one of Vienna’s leading Jewish publishers and fashion enterprises ^[12], which also operated an industrial print workshop in the basement of this very building. And of course we are totally committed to continuously increasing our visitor- and memory quotas, upholding our Moody & McDercon global top-5 ranking, and optimizing our museum’s script so as to engage all our visitors in ever more spectacular, thought-provoking and unforgettable “Magic Moments” ^[13]. Yet, even if it were technically possible to reinstall a *Factory of the Sun* in our historic premises, and thereby boost our success ratings to ever greater heights – it would be, from my point of view, rather cynical to do so.

Hito Steyerl and many other thought leaders connected to the artists’ worker movement surely

felt they were fighting for a noble cause, criticizing contemporary cultural practises as a form of invisible “factory work”. However, from the numerical data available to us, and in particular the museo-archeological coordinates of the sun loungers, it seems safe to say that their struggle was never actually concerned with driving any real social reforms or technological innovations. If Steyerl had really been concerned with challenging capitalism – why, of all places, did she choose to do so in the context of the Venice Biennale? Would it not have been more effective to install her sun loungers in Asian textile and electronics factories, at the gates of an overcrowded American prison, or in the subterranean depths of an African gold mine?

F. Gold is time

The end of the endless present finally arrived in the last calendar year, 2025, when the Venice Biennale was freed from the clutches of cognitive capitalism by an extensive change of programming. The operation took place under the command of the First Admiral of the Adriatic Fleet and world number one Ottoman scientist, Kinczi Çayulu I. As a Samsung Premier Partner, she was able to implement the complete curatorial package (occupation, reprogramming, relaunch) in eight days of combat at full HIT-capacity, including five Gerald.-R.-Ford-class aircraft carriers, one complete type-0 innovation cycle, and a sum total of exactly 100 bn. turkish Lira (2.83 bn. US-Dollars).

In the context of 2025 – long-term economic stagnation and declining cultural budgets –, these were truly colossal resources. Consider, by comparison, how cheap and cost-effective the development of the TCP/IP protocols of the digital revolution had been, and how easily these very protocols had conquered *the entire globe* half a century earlier: In the calendar year 1969, the American IT-student Charley Kline sent the first email in the history of mankind while he was having his lunch-break, and under the auspices of the American DARPA (Defence Advanced Research Projects Agency). This little feat of data transmission developed into the internet, which subsequently colonized the entire planet with a dense thicket of fibre-optical cables, server hubs, wifi routers, personal computers, laptops,

smartphones, search engines and social networks – all at little or no cost to the taxpayer ^[14].

Nonetheless, the military effort was well worth the money. Nowadays, the arsene is no longer a nostalgic shipyard or culture factory. It has turned into a global flurry of ultra-high frequencies. It has established a uniform alphabetic space, in which we – and anyone else – can implement our museum using just 26 core letters, 10 programm numbers and the special set of algorithmic characters. Our museological algorithm is a seamless, strictly statistical grid of purest Samsung blue, capable of enveloping not only this planet, but the entire universe, so as to capture all possible artefacts, substrates and time-frames.

The Ottoman sciences have impressively demonstrated to the world that calendar time is not, was not, and never will be the source of any innovation. If that were the case, we’d still be living in the deep existential darkness of calendar time, sadly counting down our days, one by one. There would be no pleasurable time jumps, no breathtaking discontinuities or stunning MADL-zooms. There definitely also would not be any of the timeless Magic Moments that are at the core of our museum’s mission; our institution would still be a linear network of dusty old corridors, dark storage chambers and chronological number sequences on matted gold plates. A black hole, in which the time-bound forces of decay would ultimately swallow everything and only spit out a terrible, meaningless nothing in return. Time has never given us humans anything but abrasion, exhaustion, depletion, destruction, and annihilation – why then should we, and especially our museum, continue to bow to its sorrowful regime?



„Charlie Chaplin“, Fascist avatar using a Samsung OneTouch-globe, around 1930. Photo: Heta-archival conversion, PZ56t>>.youtube.com/30.707

66°/watch?v=STOCK0V1fMvLbE85E

It isn't time from which innovations are born. It is always innovations which bring forth time. It is technology that enables us to transcend our mortal beings. It is the touchscreens, the arrays, the algorithms that place the future at our fingertips. It is our excellent range of Samsung products, which allow us to spin, fragment, zoom and reorder our globe just as we please and, if we aren't fully satisfied, to wipe away the results and simply start anew – *that* is the technological future in which time stands in ruins – there is no more chronological future capable of ruining our technology!

While we were planning *Internetis.museiis*, I experienced the immeasurable diplomatic honour of personally meeting Kinczi Çayuoğlu I to discuss our museum's future dramaturgical and technological strategy. We met in the midst of the venetian lagoon, aboard her private aircraft-carrier, the MSS Steyerl. I already saw her from afar, her freshly updated incarnation gleaming on the front deck, just like a broad-shouldered, almost masculine figure-head. As I came closer, I noticed how delicate and fragile her head was, the elfish skin on her face almost transparent. Several black patches and glowing arrays were discernible beneath her shimmering temples and forehead. Sensing her enormous inbuilt HIT-capacities, I began to tremble and sweat.

Since she was also an extremely busy curator in addition to her military command functions, our meeting was as short as the free espresso which she was kind enough to offer me. I was far too nervous to say much. I felt a visceral fear flowing out of me, wetting my armpits and reddening my forehead. Golden beads of super-volatile sweat streamed out of my face, and I saw them evaporate and spin away over the ocean in airy clusters. My legs appeared to give way and fold upon themselves, in a way they had never done before. I could have easily have let myself fall into one of the deep Turkish leather arm chairs, or some of the white sun loungers scattered all over the flight deck. I imagined how I would finally be able to enjoy an utterly exclusive view of Venice normally reserved for VIP-guests at high-calibre cocktail parties. But nothing ever came of it. Rather, I just remained tantalised, face to face with Cayuoğlu I, absorbing soundbites of super-charged smalltalk

while she coolly sipped her espresso. I suspect she may have actually just been waiting for the on-board avatars to finish cleaning her cabin and wiping the aircraft carrier's glass fronts.

But as these things go, in the very moment I felt my attention lapsing, I realised I was being offered some incredibly significant pieces of curatorial information, so significant that they would easily have been worth their weight in gold or meldonium. What Cayuoğlu I revealed to me, through her presence as much as her words, was that the "Hanjin Eva" had actually been on a covert mission to secretly evacuate *Factory of the Sun* and a small handful of other artistic treasures from the conflict zone and transport them to Istanbul Biennale. The operation was of strictly military character, but its execution had been outsourced to a private contractor, namely the Hanjin Shipping Company ^[15].

Alas, after almost a decade of trade wars in the trans-Pacific region, the Hanjin Shipping Company had become infiltrated by corrupt Chinese tax officers, who were quick to leak the Hanjin Eva's position coordinates. Within minutes of debarking, the vessel was targeted by an autonomously guided Chinese Dongfeng-21. The ballistic anti-carrier rocket descended upon the unarmoured freighter with a velocity approaching Mach 5, cut through it from deck to keel at an almost vertical angle, and finally drilled itself into the sea floor some hundred meters below. The nuclear explosion resulted in an enormous crater from which rose a thick cloud of sand and rock. The two halves of the "Hanjin Eva" slowly plummeted downwards and finally sank into a freshly made bed of whirling maritime sediments.

Of course I had countless questions about the exact nature of this incident, and I suppose you do too. But I could already feel Kinczi Çayuoğlu I pushing me towards the gangway by applying a gentle, though mysteriously firm, pressure. Before turning away, she gave me formal confirmation that we could continue undertaking museo-archeological dives in the Venetian archipelago; under her curatorial auspices, the Ottoman Adria Fleet would offer us full offshore support. I was grateful beyond belief, and extended my hand towards Her Admiralty, but she had already disappeared. In her place stood one of her avatars, who handed me a parting present: a signed inkjet-

archive:

<http://edition.cnn.com/2016/12/29/politics/donald-trump-computers-internet-email/>

[11] Vgl. Steyerl, Hito: „Is a Museum a Factory?“, e-flux journal, #7, 2009.

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[12] Online

archive: <http://www.palaisdesbeauxarts.at>, last checked at #BG~bv\$!*1.

[13] See also: Fong G., Segal E., Monahan S., Sherron C., Yago D.: „A report on doubt“, K-Hole, No. 5, khole.net, New York & Los Angeles, 2015

[14] Luttwak, Edward: „Platformitis“, Zf.E# 10.0033#00\$9356360238#838; Online archive: <http://www.lrb.co.uk/v38/n23/edward-luttwak/platformitis>, last checked at #PQ~xv\$**74*8

[15] Online

archive: <http://conversations.e-flux.com/t/bankrupt-container-ship-strands-artist-on-residency-in-pacific-ocean/4453>, last checked at #PQ~xv\$**74*8.

[16] Çayuoğlu I, Kinczi: „Respect the Protocol: 100 New Rules for the Art World“ (Istanbul: Türkiye Alim Kitapları, #ettED~cg\$\$d%67*11)