

# Mateusz Janik

portfolio

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2026

**Mateusz Janik** (he/him, b. 1997, Cracow) is a visual artist whose practice navigates the increasingly porous boundary between digital and physical realities. He graduated with a degree in Photography from the Magdalena Abakanowicz University of the Arts in Poznan in 2023, where he currently holds an assistant position in the Faculty of Art Education and Curatorial Studies. Since 2024, he has been a member of the international research team at the Art & Science Node foundation in Berlin.

Janik's work engages with the fluid dynamics of identity in an age shaped by algorithmic logic, hybridized presence, and the aesthetics of the interface. Operating within a phygital framework – where tactile and screen-based worlds coalesce – his interdisciplinary approach mobilizes photographic strategies, appropriation, and acts of recontextualization to interrogate notions of authenticity, embodiment, and persona. Through still and moving image, sculptural objects, and augmented reality environments, he constructs critical interventions into the performative architectures of selfhood, shaped by meme culture, pop imagery, and platform-native semiotics.

Blending internet-native visuality with post-digital poetics, Janik constructs speculative narratives that oscillate between sincerity and irony, intimacy and cringe. His work functions as an accessible yet incisive lens on contemporary conditions, exposing the infrastructures that choreograph subjectivity across social, cultural, and technological vectors.

Janik has exhibited his work in Poznań, Warsaw, Bratislava, and Berlin. In 2021, he was awarded Third Prize in the inaugural New Situations National Art Competition. In 2022, he received the Audience Award at the second edition of the Digital Ars competition. He was also nominated for the 43rd Maria Dokowicz Prize for best diploma at UAP, as well as the international Blurring the Lines award for outstanding photographic graduation projects. Since 2025, he has been the principal investigator of the project “The Death of the Avatar: The Condition of Digital Identity After Losing Access to a Social Media Profile,” funded by the Polish National Science Centre. His works are held in private collections.



## Solo exhibitions

- 2026 (upcoming) *The Death of the Avatar*, Rodríguez Foundation, Poznan
- 2023 *Poles. Dialogues of Young People: OTHER – 7th edition*, Municipal Gallery Arsenal, Poznan (duo with Klara Woźniak)
- 2023 *Contents in the Mirror Are Closer than They Appear*, Rodríguez Gallery, Poznan
- 2022 *Social Distancing*, Rotunda Gallery, Poznan
- 2021 *Sensitive Points*, Scena Robocza, Poznan

## Selected group exhibitions

- 2026 *Fragility in the Eye of the Beholder*, The Wrong Biennale, Scottish Embassy, \_VOID Gallery, Aberdeen
- 2025 *BOOKiE. Studying Photobooks*, Pf Gallery, Poznan
- 2025 *LOOSTRO 2025*, BWA Ostrowiec Świętokrzyski
- 2025 *Fragility in the Eye of the Beholder*, The Wrong Biennale, Scottish Embassy, \_VOID Gallery, Glasgow
- 2025 *AI ID*, The Wrong Biennale, Polish Pavillion, online
- 2025 *Digital Sculpture Biennale*, Pryzmat Gallery, Cracow
- 2025 *Feed Your Page*, 48 Stunden Neukölln, Berlin
- 2025 *TRUCHŁO*, Galeria Dług, Poznan
- 2025 *Turnus Butik vol. 2*, Turnus Gallery, Warsaw
- 2025 *Change*, Aula Gallery, Poznan
- 2025 *IMPORT/EXPORT*, 14th Graphic Art Biennale, Municipal Gallery Arsenal, Poznan
- 2024 *PERSONA INCOGNITA*, 15 OFF Bratislava, Bratislava
- 2024 *Young Art Biennale Fisheye 11*, Small Gallery, Slupsk
- 2024 *Everyday it wakes me*, Złącze Gallery, Poznan
- 2024 *Wateriness*, Centrala Gallery, Poznan
- 2024 *Pipistrelli in fiamme*, Nowa Scena Gallery, Poznan
- 2023 *Bouquet of Hope...Hopelessness*, Turnus, Warsaw
- 2023 *EXTRA LIFE*, Solatorium, Warsaw
- 2022 *Art, Human, AI, ART WALK*, Warsaw
- 2022 *Visit*, ZAMEK Culture Centre, Poznan
- 2022 *Sometimes Making Nothing Leads to Something*, Galeria AT, Poznan
- 2022 *NEW TALENTS 2021*, Photographic Exploration Project, Kommunale Galerie, Berlin
- 2021 *Revival*, Galeria Apteka Sztuki, Warsaw
- 2021 *Artificial Patho-intelligence*, TRAF0 Center for Contemporary Art, Szczecin
- 2020 Publications Section exhibition *How I Learned to Stop Worrying and Love the Virus* during TIFF Festival, Recepcja, Wroclaw
- 2020 *A Celebration of All Occasions*, Turnus & Sandra w Trawie, Zachęta - National Gallery of Art, Warsaw

## Publications

- 2023 Mateusz Janik, *The Textile Turn Towards Phygital Matter*, "Zeszyty Artystyczne", 2(44)/2023

## Screenings

- 2021 *Artificial Patho-intelligence*, MOS Cinema, Cracow

## Awards/Stipends

- 2025 Polish Culture Around the World, Adam Mickiewicz Institute
- 2025 Preludium 23, Polish National Science Centre
- 2024 Polish Culture Around the World, Adam Mickiewicz Institute
- 2023 Nomination for the 43rd Maria Dokowicz Competition for the Best UAP Master's Diploma
- 2023 Nomination for the international Blurring The Lines competition
- 2023 Nomination for the national ArtNoble competition
- 2022 Audience Award in the 2nd edition of the Digital Ars competition
- 2021 3rd Prize in the 1st National Art Competition Nowe Sytuacje - *Revival*

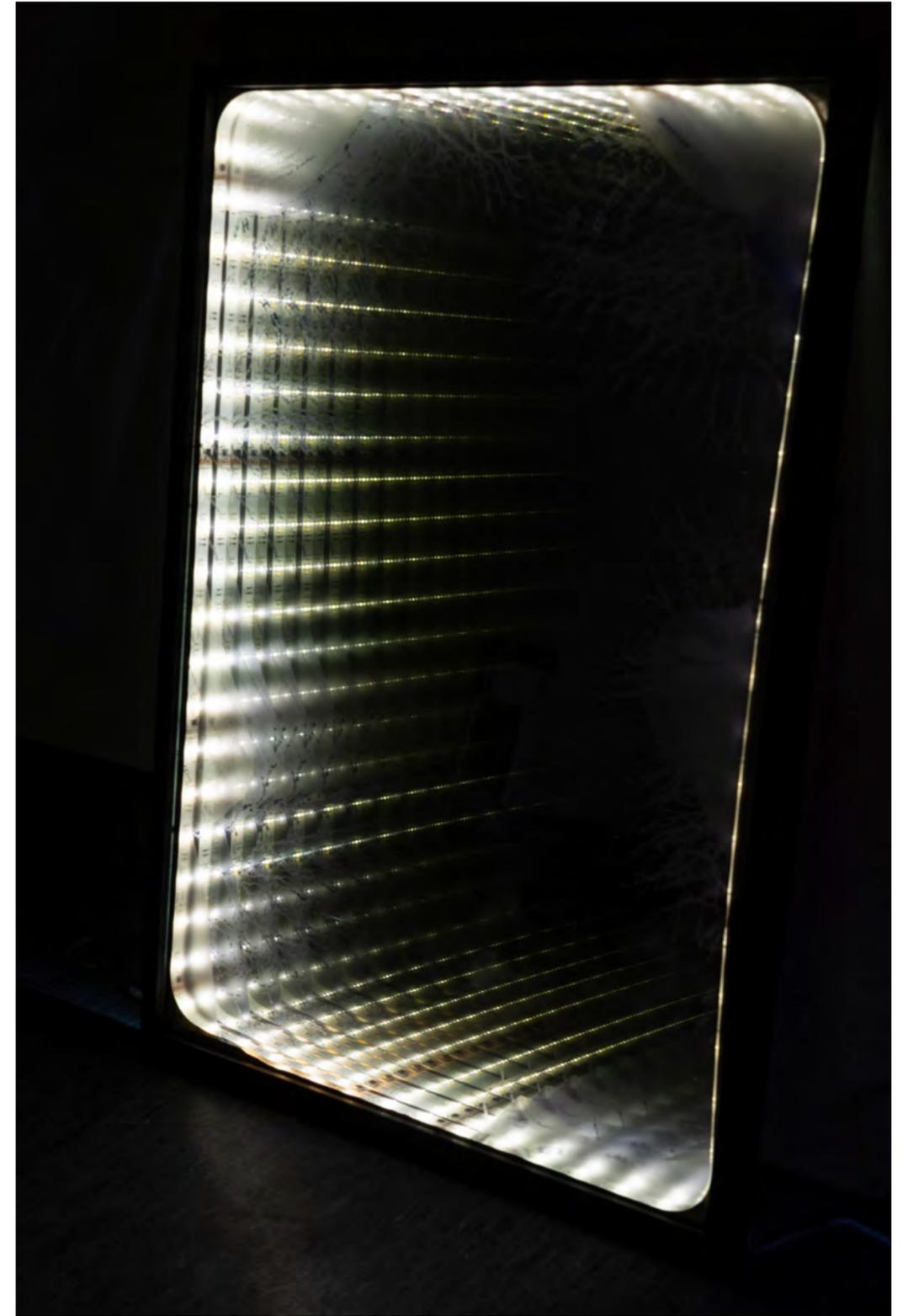
## Practice

- 2023- Assistant in the Studio for Transdisciplinary Projects and Research, Magdalena Abakanowicz University of the Arts Poznan

## ***Principle of Assignifying Rupture***

two-way mirror, LED strips, UV print;  
50x70 cm,  
2026

A two-way mirror illuminated with LED strips bears a UV-printed pattern derived from Gilles Deleuze's notion of the rhizome. Within the reflective surface, multiplied social media profiles endlessly replicate, merging into a seemingly infinite tunnel whose destination remains indeterminate. The profiles were reduced to favicon scale and used to construct a custom digital brush, with which a mycelium-like structure was drawn across the mirror's surface. Reflected within the mirror, the LED strip evokes the interior circuitry of a computer, framing hardware as the underlying infrastructure through which the experiences of networked reality are mediated.



Year  
Concentration

Residence:  
Mailbox:

Phone:

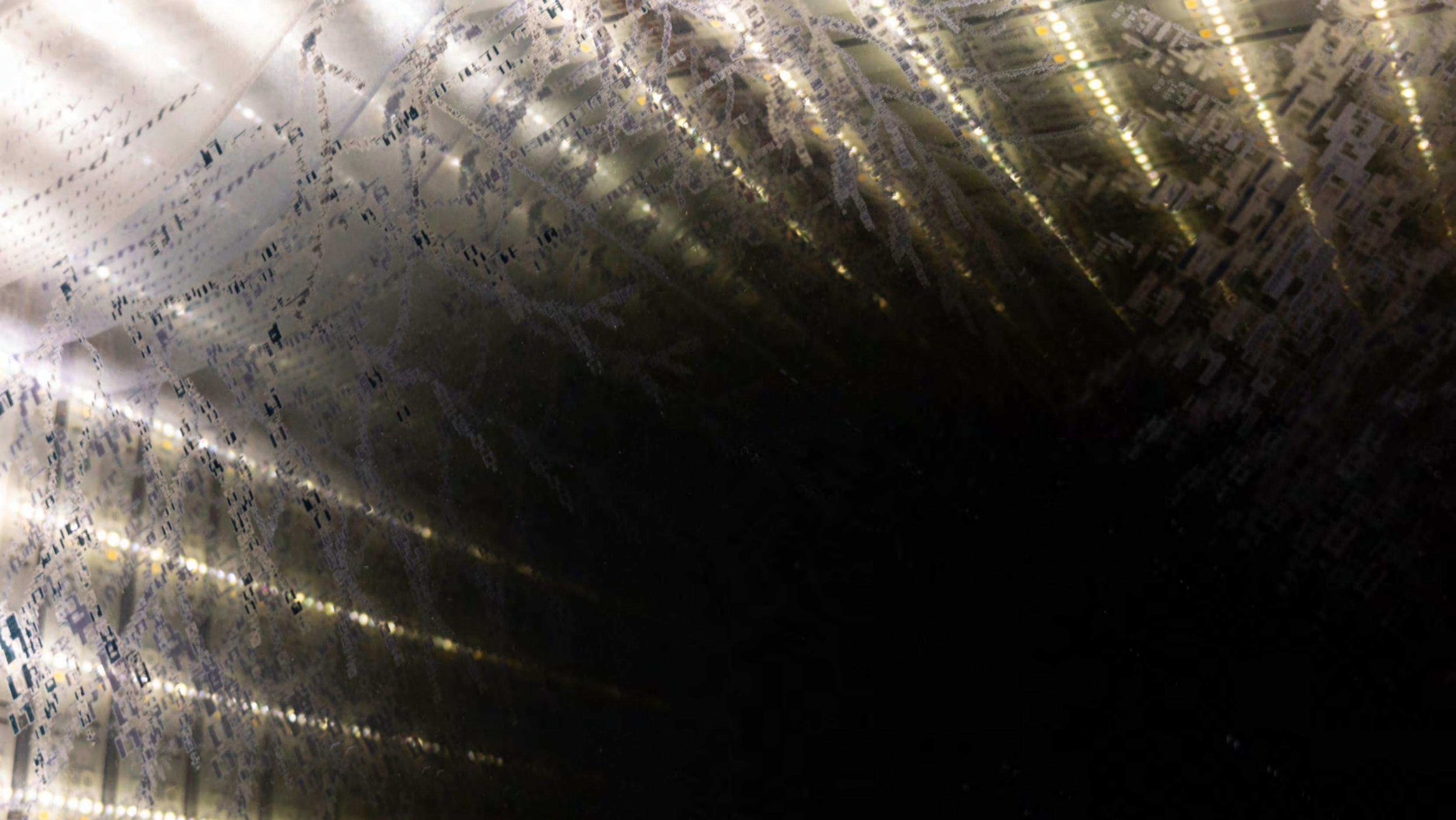
Birthday:  
Home Town:

High School:

**Extended Info:**

Screenname:  
Looking For:

Requested in:  Full  
Requested in:  Profile





## Farewell

UV print on artificial linen, 84x270 cm,  
2025

As part of an ongoing research-based art project, I investigate the evolution of user interfaces on major social media platforms – from MySpace to TikTok – tracking how modes of self-presentation have shifted from the inception of each platform through to 2024. By mapping out structural affordances of digital selfhood across multiple ecosystems, I reflect on what it means to lose access to one modality of presentation within an interlinked, multisite identity.

During archival research conducted via the Internet Archive, I encountered a MySpace profile from 2007 in which several user-uploaded assets had vanished, replaced by the message “403 Forbidden.”

In *Farewell*, I translated screenshots of the profile into vector graphics, further stripping away visible data and anonymizing the original user. The composition was then UV-printed onto synthetic linen, scaled to the proportions of the Shroud of Turin (84x270 cm), evoking the act of endless scrolling as both ritual and residue. The work stages a paradox: our digital identities are never entirely ours, nor entirely lost—they persist as spectral data, scraped and recombined by non-human agents beyond our control.



installation view at *Feed your page* exhibition  
during 48h Neukölln Festival in Berlin





metal urn, chrome paint, engraving, glitter, nano tape,  
foam, QR code with online content; 32x28 cm,  
2025

The work engages with the notion of digital identity and its memorialization within the context of late capitalism. Drawing on Jill Walker Rettberg's concept of "computational selfhood," it interrogates the processes through which human life is transmuted into quantifiable data: step counts, sleep hours, GPS coordinates. These metrics collectively constitute a quotidian logbook generated by our devices and applications.

Concurrently, we leave behind traces in the digital sphere – our "data exhaust." Yet the ontological status of these residues remains precarious, contingent upon platform owners, proprietary algorithms, and opaque business models. Digital identity can be erased, obscured, or commodified.

At the center of the installation is an urn reminiscent of both a trophy and a consumer artifact – an object oscillating between monumentality and product design. Contained within is a QR code leading to a fictional corporate interface offering "digital remembrance" services for the deceased, refracted through the numerical lens of their online activity.

The urn is filled with glittering "dust" – a metaphorical stand-in for data. Utilizing a conceptual conversion rate of 1 byte = 1 nanogram, the work renders tangible the weight of the average individual's digital footprint: approximately 300 grams, or 300 gigabytes.



installation view at Dług Gallery, *TRUCHŁO* exhibition

link to online content: <https://19216874203.cargo.site>

## ***The Death of Sincerity***

nitro transfer, cyanotype and engravings  
on 4 metal plates, 50x50 each,  
2025

The work draws on a now-deleted Tumblr post by artist Ethel Cain, who described an epidemic of irony. In today's platforms, she noted, every comment must function as a meme – sarcastic, indirect, performative. There is no space for sincerity. Vulnerability becomes unreadable.

To explore this tension, I used This Meme Doesn't Exist, an AI tool trained on nearly a million human-made memes. It produces meaningless, absurd outputs – dumb but funny, as the creators say. I then subjected the generated images to deep-frying – compressing, distorting, and degrading them until they barely function as images.

Transferred onto metal plates using nitro solvent and chemically stained with cyanotype, the memes are no longer digital. They are now physical residues. Toxic relics. Their garish surfaces evoke the triangle backgrounds of early 2000s meme culture – forming a full circle from memetic birth to visual decay.

Each plate includes engraved text referencing “edgelord” internet culture – the aesthetics of provocation, detachment, and irony. As scholars Chloë Arkenbout and Idil Galip suggest, such memes are not only absurd. They also expose the failures of AI, challenge authority, and destabilize narratives of technological supremacy – one joke at a time.



When you  
don't have  
my money

Logging  
in low er ca s e

SALE  
EIGHT

Playing  
fortnite

Playing  
oh lol

When you  
don't have  
try making



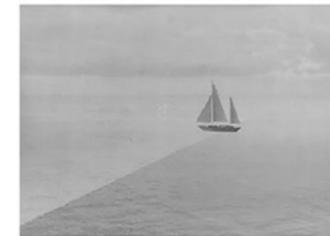
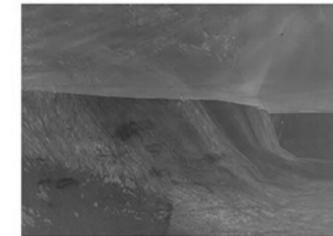
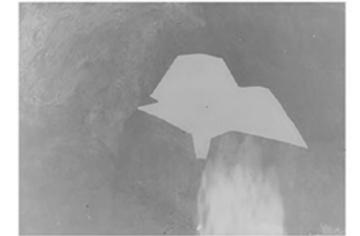
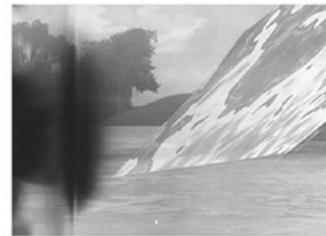
## ***Flashes from the Submersion***

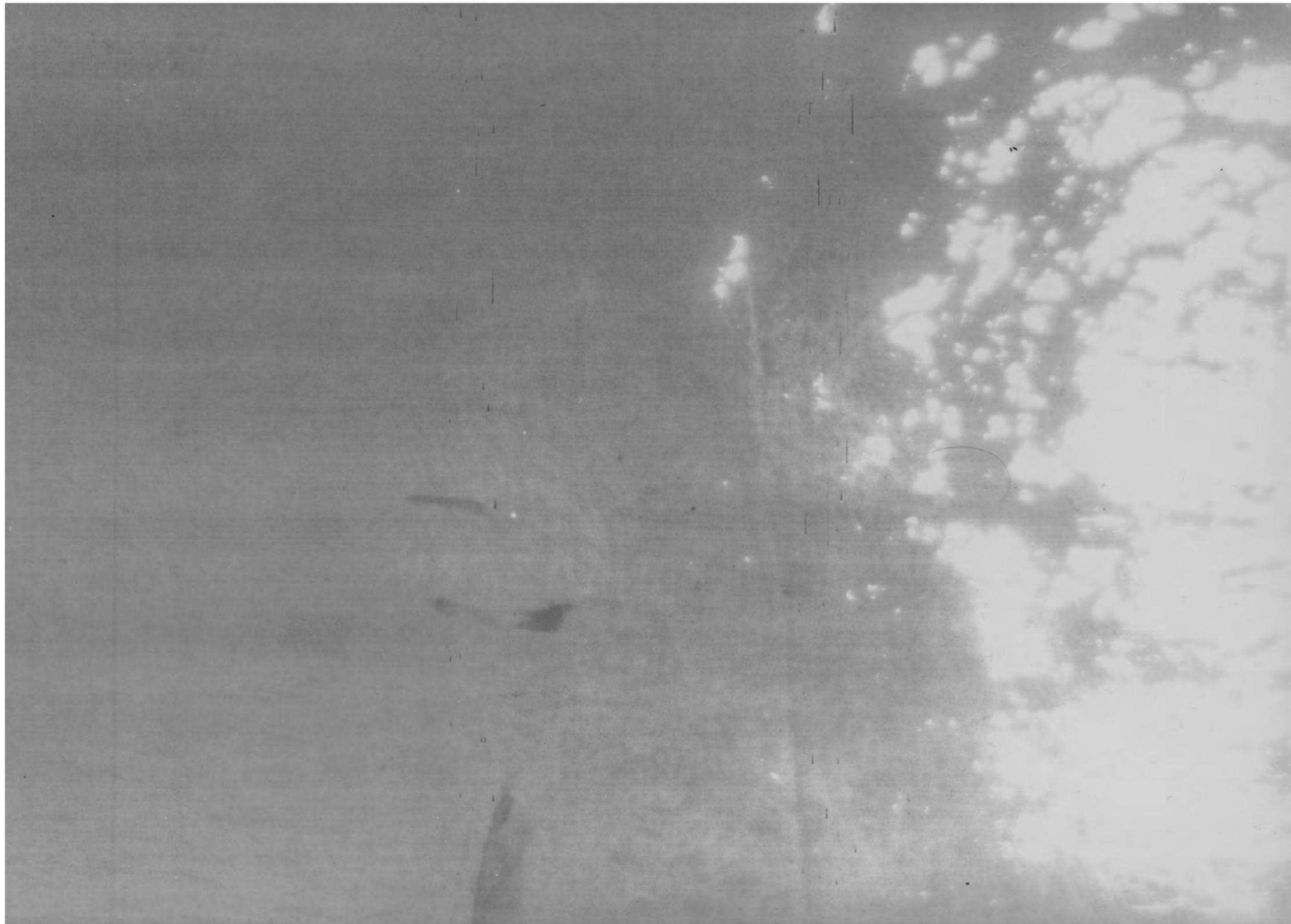
photographs from video games transferred onto  
photosensitive paper, 20x30 cm each,  
2025

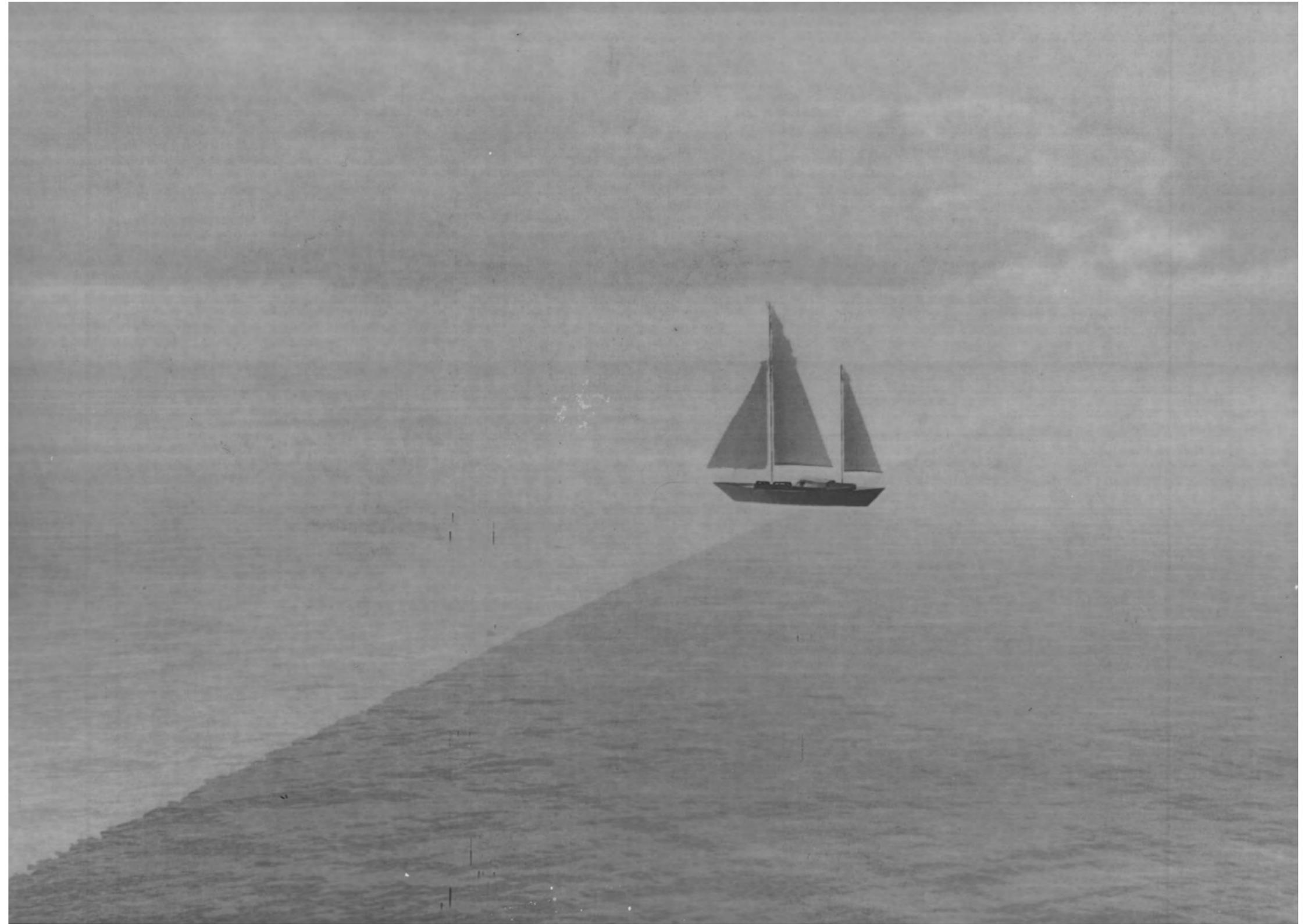
This series of photographic works engages with the aesthetics of liminality, rendering surreal, placeless architectures that exist in a state of ontological suspension. Drawing from digital 3D engines as source material, the artist employs a process evocative of the photogram – an indexical technique traditionally tied to analog photography – recasting it within a post-digital framework.

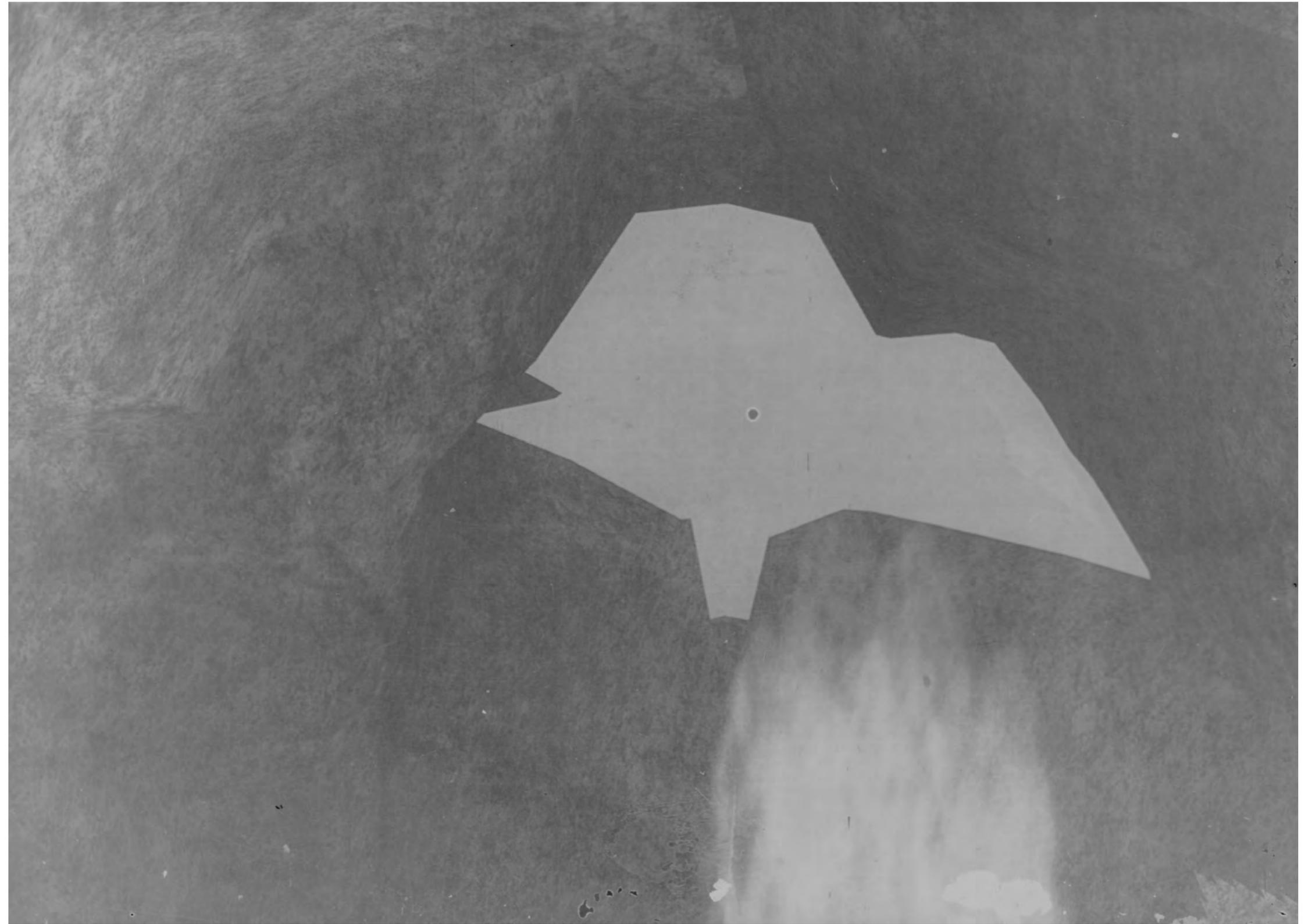
These images resist spatial anchoring, functioning as visual residues extracted from non-places: speculative architectures, procedural voids, and algorithmically generated terrains. Hovering between simulation and presence, each image becomes an artifact of in-betweenness – a surface where the virtual and the material coalesce in a fragile equilibrium.

By foregrounding the ambiguity of origin and authorship, the works destabilize the hierarchies of image production and challenge the ontology of the photographic medium itself. Neither fully digital render nor traditional photograph, they occupy a space of unresolved potential – echoing the affective dissonance of contemporary subjectivity shaped by immersive technologies and fractured temporalities.









## ***In Progress***

a 7-second video recorded on Snapchat  
stretched over 365 days, live-streamed,  
2024

On the day I ended a multi-year relationship, a courier delivered a new laptop to me. Without a clear reason, I recorded a Snapchat for my friends, peeling off the factory film from the untouched screen.

Two years later, I reverse this process, stretching the original clip frame by frame over 8760 hours, streaming it continuously for a year with only one day off.



stream: <https://strimm.com/MateuszJanik/InProgress>

## ***Contents in the Mirror Are Closer than They Appear***

objects, video and interactive installation,  
2023

In contemporary times, the face as our representation begins to fade. This is not the first time in the history of culture, and according to Belting, this time the responsibility lies with the media era, which massively fits the face into a certain template, flattening it. A good example of this is the phenomenon of the selfie, which over the past decade has become one of the transparent means of communication, much like a text message. In seeking a new, digital representation for ourselves in the phygital era, I come to the conclusion that it is widely understood content that we receive, modify, and share: we influence it, and it influences us.

In my work, I use memes and internet interfaces as mirrored self-portraits, where everyone can find themselves. Each material in my series pretends to be another material, as if they were trying to present themselves. Thus, a seemingly chromed object, upon closer inspection, turns out to be a painted 3D print, a video mimics a photograph, and tempered glass imitates the dimensions of the iPhone 13, revealing traces of device usage that we overlook in daily life.



exhibition view, Rodríguez Gallery

In this way, I weave a narrative about a fluid reality where there is no longer room for binary thinking: what matters is what lies between the two poles, and the digital and material worlds are one. At the same time, I shed the label of Narcissus from individuals expressing themselves on the internet because they mark their presence in the same way the body does for us every day. Hence, the finale of the exhibition is an interactive installation in the form of a Venetian mirror, which, with the help of a face-detection app, throws a flare onto the person standing in front of the mirror—a quote from amateur photos in the mirror using a flash. In this seemingly senseless action, I observe a poetic perspective on our online activity: showcasing oneself is not always about egocentrism or narcissistic tendencies, but about marking our presence here and now, even when only we see the photo.





1988

1988

F F

## **Pepe.obj**

object: 3D print, chrome paint,  
35x24x28 cm,  
2023

The 3D print object is a deformed meme figure inspired by Pepe the Frog. It is covered with a mirror finish where you can see your reflection. Set as a counterpoint to the other objects inspired by the Swole Doge, it presents the reversed state of affairs: the frog from memes, often quoted in stories about being a loser, is much more massive than the „plumpy” dogs, which, in opposition to it, are hung on the wall like scaled flies. Nothing is zero-one.







## ***There Are Two Doges Inside of You***

objects: 3D prints, chrome paint,  
10x13x4 cm each,  
2023

Next objects that simulate heavy and cold matter. Swole Doge from memes, based on juxtaposing strong and weak features, is downscaled relative to the frog and duplicated, creating a flawed replica. The memetic template transferred onto the wall is simultaneously a quote from memes about the inner struggle of two wolves within us. Does either ever win, and do they truly differ so greatly?





***rererererere...rere.ico***

object: thermoplastic, chrome paint,  
40x13x1 cm,  
2023

Crafted from thermoplastic, the chain resembles a growth protruding from the wall. Its links consist of deconstructed arrows reminiscent of icons from online interfaces used for sharing, reposting, and remixing. Each is unique, together forming a chaotic and uneven network.



## ***nutildet.txt***

objects: thermoplastic,  
various dimensions,  
2023

The thermoplastic objects relate to textual content and artificial intelligence. When I once asked the DALL-E generator to create an image for a nihilistic meme, I received a black image with white text in the classic meme format: at the top and bottom. However, the text only simulated letters without conveying any coherent meaning, as AI thinks in images, not text, while generating graphics. Inspired by this, I created a series of words devoid of specific meanings (or perhaps containing all meanings), which again appear to dissolve and emerge from the walls, evoking associations with divination as well.



100

100

***untitled***

object: tempered glass, thread, mounting tape,  
14.6x7.5x0.76 cm,  
2023



I treat the object suspended in the air as a ready-made. It consists of tempered glass that I removed from my smartphone after a year of use. All the cracks, smudges, dust, and fingerprints were „embedded” in twenty-four other tempered glass pieces, achieving the proper thickness of an iPhone 13 through multiplication.

***frogshopping.jpg***  
full HD 9:16 video, loop,  
2023

The video is an animated photograph inspired by the still movies genre. In the video, I pose with a frog object, and our faces dissolve, establishing a connection and intertwining with each other.



<https://www.instagram.com/p/Cv992JelfOp/>

## ***untitled***

installation: TV, Venetian mirror, smartphone,  
augmented reality filter app,  
115x59x3 cm,  
2023

In contrast to the narcissistic label often attached to individuals expressing themselves online, I've created an interactive Venetian mirror installation, incorporating an augmented reality app. When a person stands in front of the mirror, the app overlays a luminous reflection onto their face, quoting the lighting effect of amateur selfies taken in front of mirrors with flash. This seemingly senseless gesture highlights a reflection of our online behavior. It's not about constant self-promotion, but about marking our presence here and now.



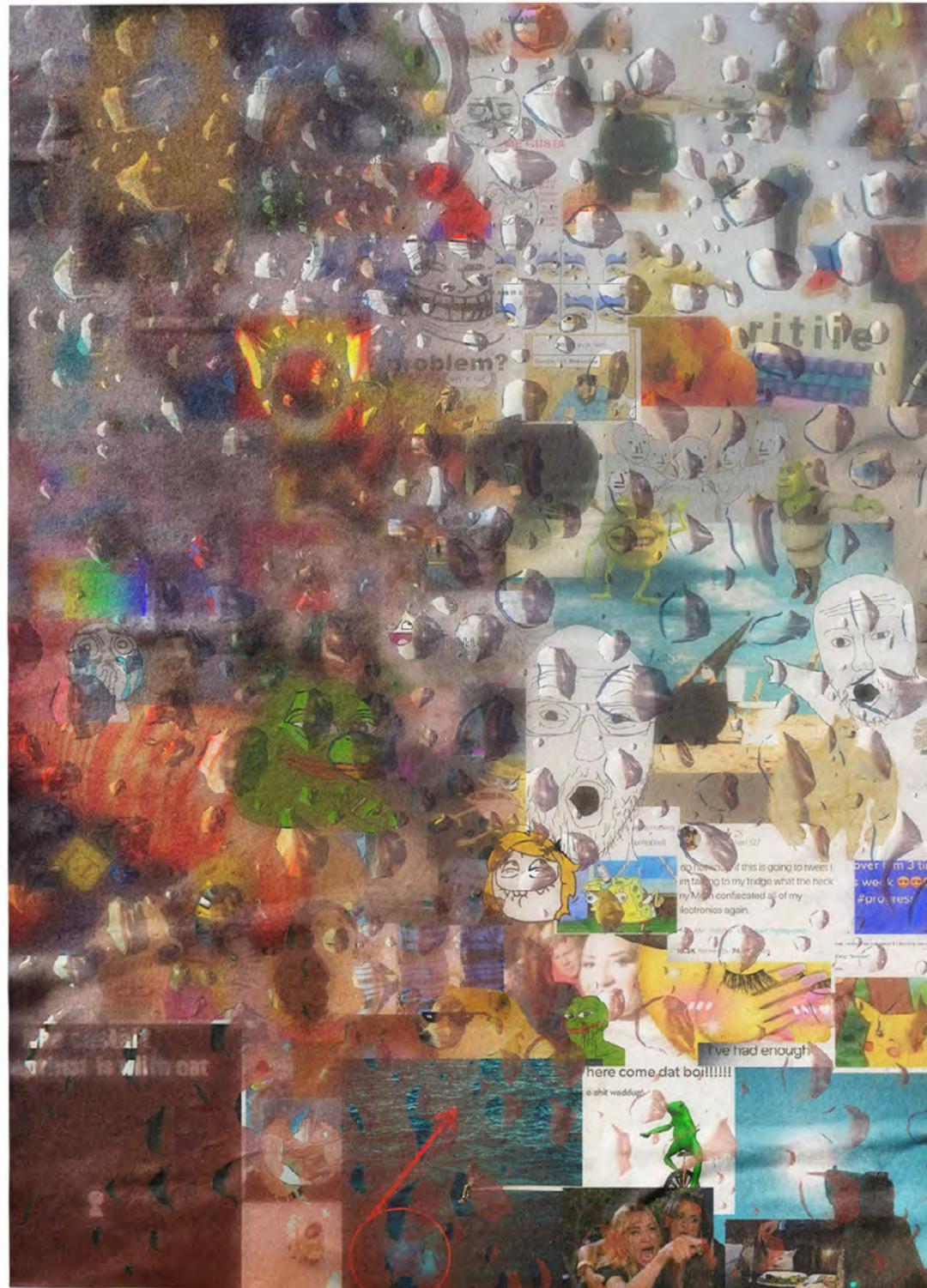
## **META-**

four-track EP, 16 minutes, damaged CD in packaging,  
approximately 12x12 cm,  
booklet-poster, 30x40 cm,  
video installation, 4 screens, full HD 9:16, 16 minutes,  
5 NFC sensors with online accessible content,  
DIY hologram: animation, loop, plastic, approximately  
12x12x15 cm,  
2023

Remix culture is built on reproduction and transformation. The nostalgic spiral rotates like a whirligig composed of an immense array of cultural texts. It spins and consolidates, and at its core, we can't distinguish the new from the old. theM., a digital entity created for the project, behaves similarly. Through it, I recorded an album mostly consisting of content appropriated from the internet. I use these materials to construct an audiovisual landscape seamlessly blending new content with that which contemporary culture is based on. Accompanying the EP is a poster with texts co-written in collaboration with artificial intelligence. By sampling stereotypical associations with selected cultural figures, the AI generated song lyrics in their style, ranging from Lana Del Rey to Derrida. I pose the question of how much of our identities are comprised of unique qualities and how much is based on others and what has been. We are mostly made of water, and what about our digital personas?



EP: <https://on.soundcloud.com/xHa4j>



The internet, a mirror of desire  
 A reflection of our life's fire  
 We're up there, each word  
 A thought, a desire, a need  
 We post ourselves around  
 But in this game, reality is awry  
 An image right in a never-ending game  
 Of mirrored souls, trapped in the same  
 The internet, a mirror of desire  
 A reflection of our life's fire  
 We're up there, each word  
 A thought, a desire, a need  
 We post ourselves around  
 But in this game, reality is awry  
 An image right in a never-ending game  
 Of mirrored souls, trapped in the same

From the old to the new  
 A blend of the familiar and the taboo  
 We take bits and pieces,  
 And make them our own  
 With a touch of nostalgia,  
 And a hint of unknown

Sampling, sampling  
 It's the way of the future  
 Sampling, sampling  
 We're making our own culture

A beat from the past,  
 A melody from the now  
 We mix and match,  
 And watch it all come around  
 The songs are all new,  
 Are now our own creations  
 With a touch of the vintage,  
 And a hint of new sensations

Sampling, sampling  
 It's the way of the future  
 Sampling, sampling  
 We're making our own culture

We're taking the old,  
 And making it new  
 With every sample,  
 We're creating something true  
 So let's embrace the past,  
 And pave a new road  
 With every sample,  
 We're building our code

Sampling, sampling  
 It's the way of the future  
 Sampling, sampling  
 We're making our own culture

So let's keep sampling,  
 Let's keep creating  
 With every sample,  
 Our future is shaping

Memes, a play on signs and meaning  
 A deconstruction of language and being  
 A viral sound, a language shared  
 But beneath the surface, a deeper love shared

In a world of endless replication  
 The meme, a constant cousin from generation  
 A commentary on the world we know  
 But the message, open to interpretation's flow

We come to cope, to make sense of it all  
 But in its repetition, a new meaning may befall  
 A joke, a satire, a way of escape  
 But in its proliferation, a new meaning is shared

A digital culture, a culture of reuse  
 A world of signs, without their meaning, it loses  
 A digital movement that breaks free  
 A disruption of what is and what's to be

Beyond reality, a new dimension  
 Where the boundaries blur, and imagination  
 Is the only limit, welcome to the metaverse  
 Where anything can happen, it's a universe

In the metaverse, we're free to be  
 Our virtual selves, wild and carelessly  
 We can build and create, let our minds roam  
 In the metaverse, anything is possible, we're in our own zone

A digital world, that feels so real  
 A place where we can make our own deal  
 We can fly, we can teleport, we can be  
 Anything we want to be in the metaverse, wild and free

In the metaverse, we're free to be  
 Our virtual selves, wild and carelessly  
 We can build and create, let our minds roam  
 In the metaverse, anything is possible, we're in our own zone

In the metaverse, we'll leave behind  
 The limitations of our physical minds  
 We'll create a new reality, for us to unfold  
 In the metaverse, anything is possible, we'll break the mold

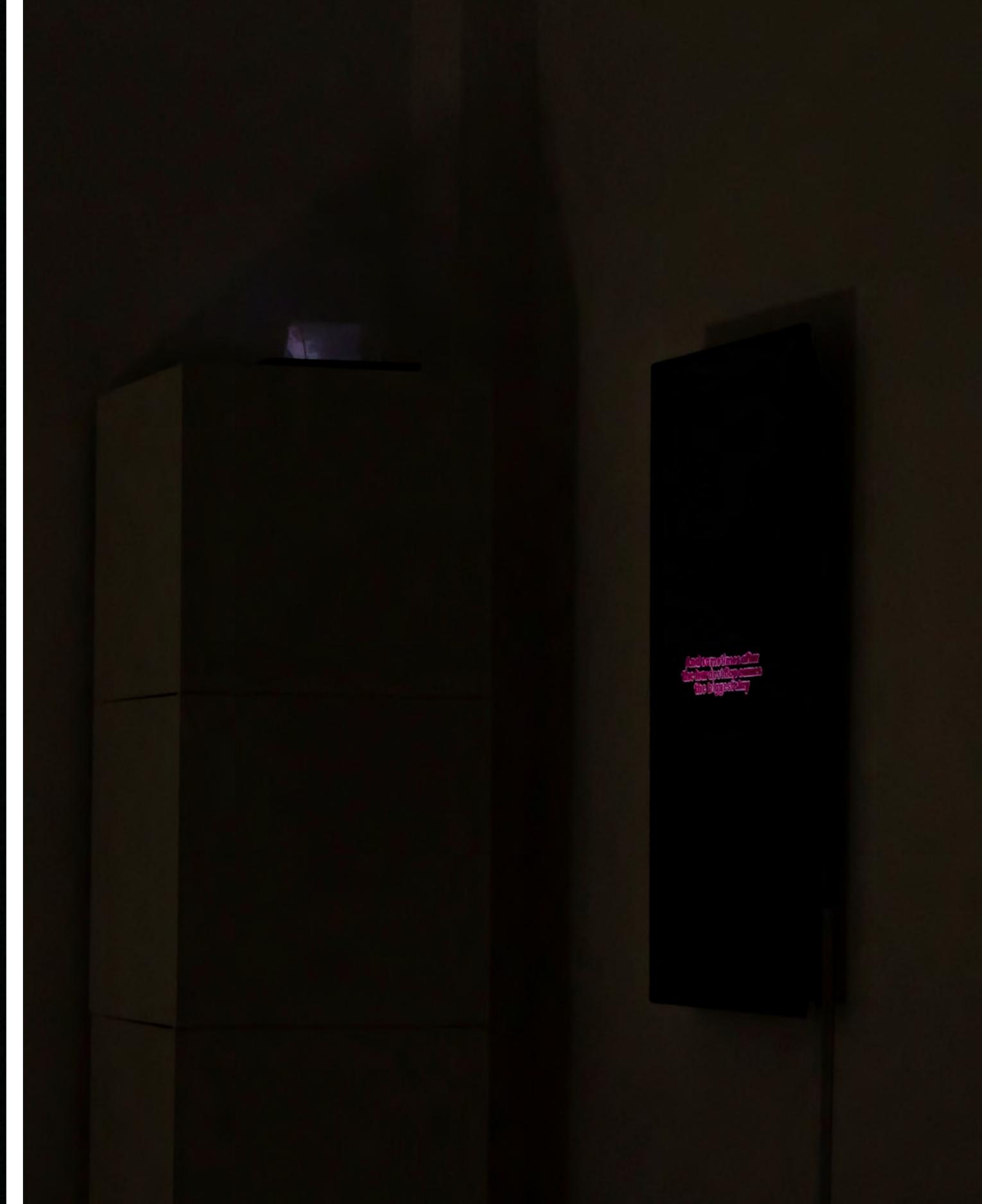
In the metaverse, we're free to be  
 Our virtual selves, wild and carelessly  
 We can build and create, let our minds roam  
 In the metaverse, anything is possible, we're in our own zone

In the metaverse, we're no longer bound  
 To the limits of our physical surroundings  
 A place where anything can happen,  
 and we're free to create our own destiny.





video documentation:  
<https://vimeo.com/900179115>

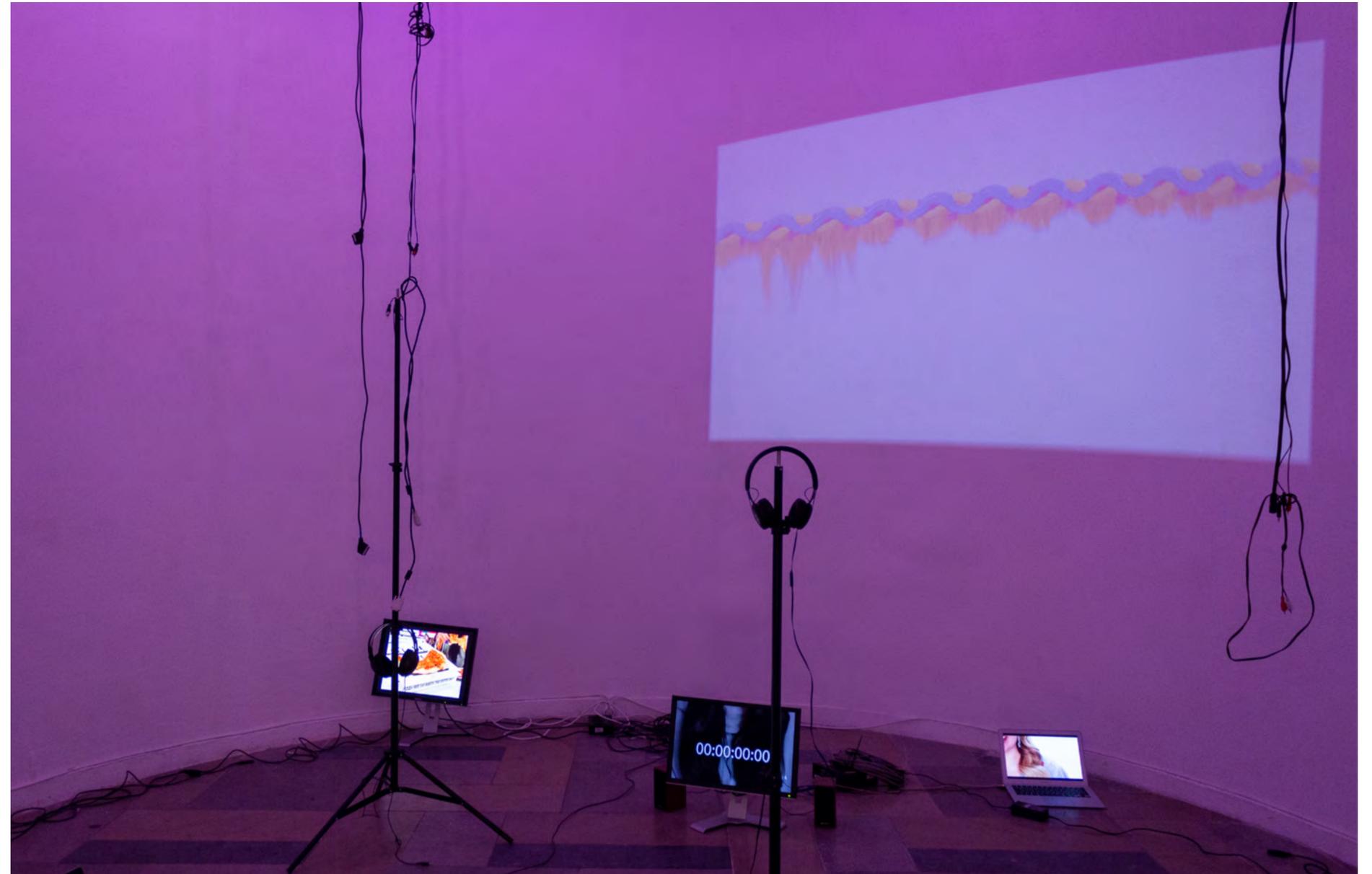


## ***Social Distancing***

ten-channel video 5'14",  
sound 5'14",  
looped animation,  
2022

#influences#discountcodes#asmr  
#cables#violet#influ#hair#loop  
#mukbang#image#ad#screens#fair  
#foryou#fy#youtube#haul#collaboration

The project tells about the need to build a filter in oneself that separates us from the overwhelming influences on our image. Appropriated materials from social media, which I downloaded and recorded on my screens, I bring outwards. Later, I filter them and turn them into ASMR. Screens intertwine with cables, also in the animation with a cable intertwined in a rotating braid, from which hair grows. I want to turn the exhibition space into a symbolic battlefield for the influences flashing from each screen. Am I already drawn into it or not yet? How to distance oneself from something that is always within reach?







videodocumentation of exhibition at Rotunda Gallery:  
<https://vimeo.com/779103044>

## ***screensaversymphony***

8 screen savers for macOS and Windows,  
video documentation of the action, 3'15",  
website,  
2022

The project revolves around the concept of screen savers in the workplace, which are often associated with a form of control over employees' activity while also contributing to the company's image. However, I approach the situation differently: my screen savers encourage employees to seek forms of relaxation in the office. Additionally, they are accompanied by a sound mix of employees' conversations. By trying to escape control in the workplace, they paradoxically use this energy to be controlled and productive in other areas, including the productive use of free time dictated and documented by smartphone applications. The screen savers sing awkwardly, engaging in a conversation based on popular pop songs.

# screensaversymphony



<http://screensaversymphony.tumblr.com>



Check your DMs

## ***Cursed Images for the Cursed Times***

5 albums, 20x27 cm, 58 pages each,  
2022

Edition of five fake photo albums collecting a series of cursed images found online. The albums were released into the public space and can be searched for on the streets of selected Polish cities. The negatives are included in the books, pretending that one person with a wealth of experience is behind all the events in the photos. What do cursed images say about us when they are created in times of absurdity and bending of reality?



video documentation of the publication:  
<https://vimeo.com/682628523>



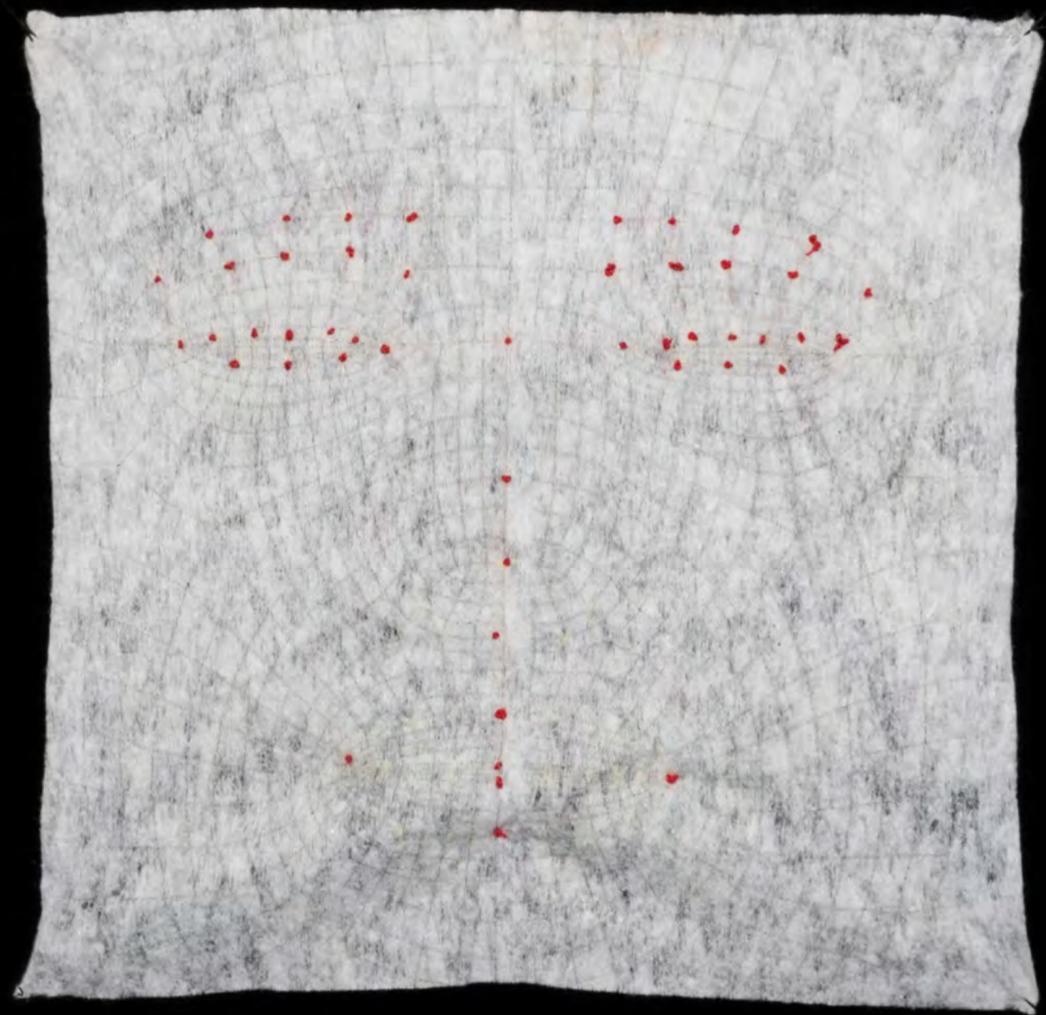
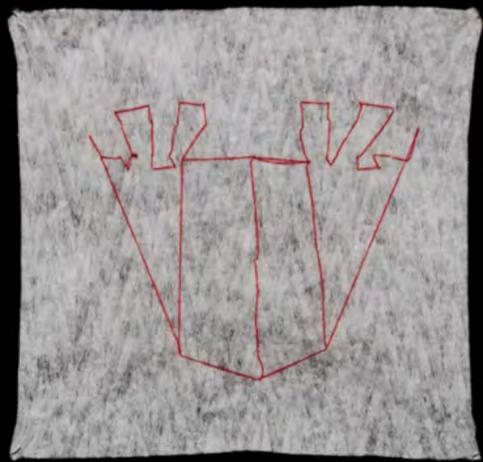


## ***Sensitive Points***

objects, threads, facial cleansing wipes,  
nitro transfer, black frames, approx. 40 x 41 x 0.5 cm,  
on-camera action, 16'53",  
gif, AR face filter, 2021

In my bachelor's diploma, I am searching for a visual definition for psychological masks, which I juxtapose with imagery related to artificial intelligence, attempting to find interdependencies between the two and the persona. The means of expression I use - from red thread, through performative actions, to elements of augmented reality - present the mask as a wide spectrum of meanings present in our everyday life, although sometimes elusive. Sensitive points are the points that a face detection scanner is sensitive to. I capture this meaning and take it further: to all the points of our personality - those that others around us "scan" and notice, as well as those hidden deep inside us that we are afraid to bring to the surface.

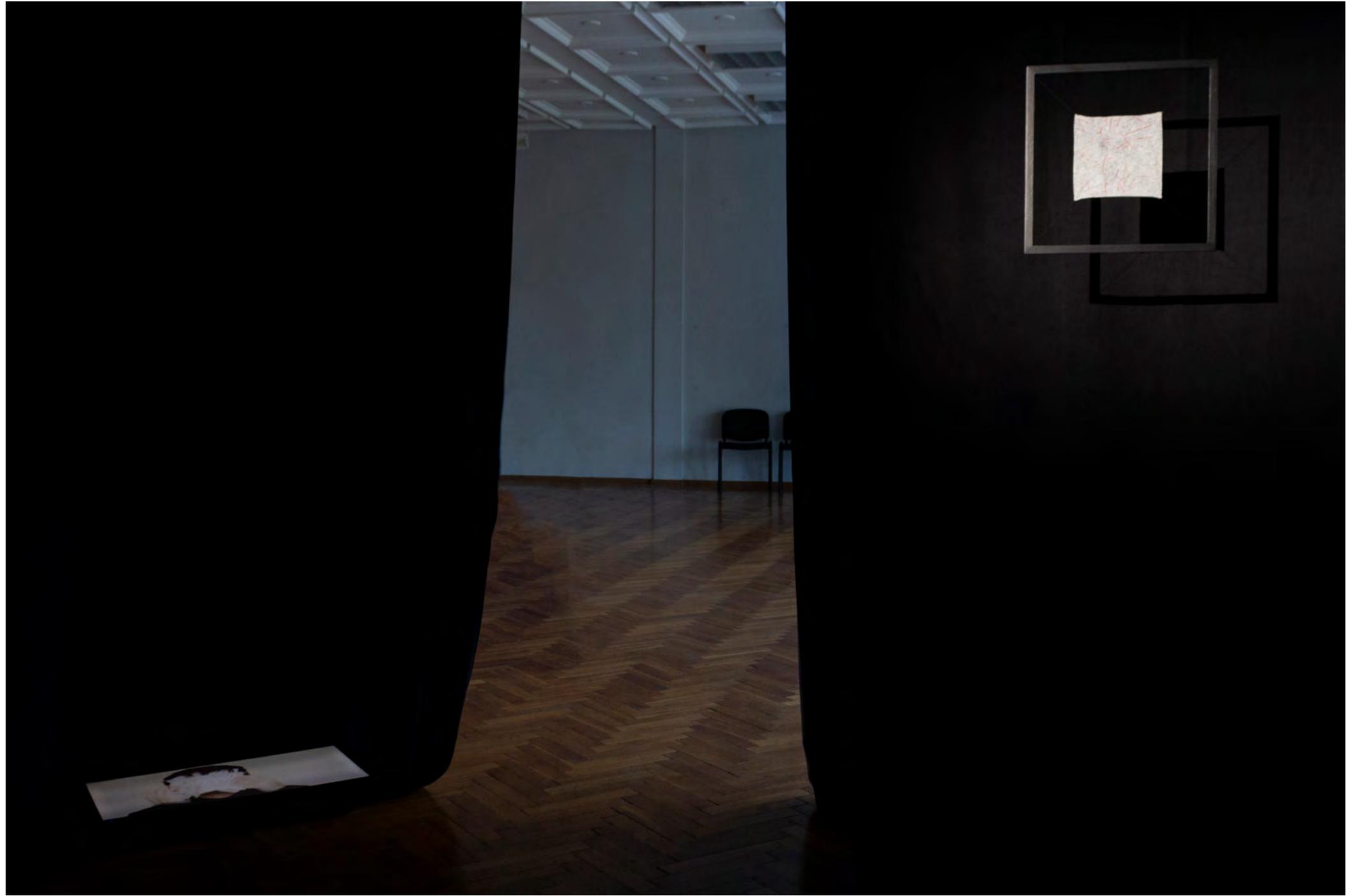






video artwork:  
<https://vimeo.com/568398629>





## **No title / Beauty blender**

video, 4'46"

2021

The video takes us to a television studio where a non-binary bot presenter tries to comment on products designed by artificial intelligence in a binary stereotypical way, while citing the well-known dilemmas of social media users monitored by algorithms.

The work was created in collaboration with Marcin Kosakowski as part of the *Artificial Patho-intelligence* project, premiered at the TRAF0 Art Station in Szczecin. Curator: Piotr Kopik.



<https://youtu.be/wURFo2SithY>



exhibition view, TRAF0 Center for Contemporary Art in Szczecin, 2021