

# FUTURE PRIMITIVE

31 MAY - 30 JUNE 2019

SALVATORE ARANCIO

MIRIAM AUSTIN

CHRISTIAN BANG JENSEN

ASTRID MYNTEKAER

ROLF NOWOTNY

ANDREA ZUCCHINI

CURATED BY CATERINA AVATANEO

## PUBLIC PROGRAMME:

15 JUNE. 6PM

SCREENING -

*HYPERSTITION*, CHRISTOPHER ROTH  
AND ARMEN AVANESSIAN (2016)

23 JUNE. 6PM

LECTURE PERFORMANCE -

*TELL III*, PHILIP SPEAKMAN (2019)

# EXHIBITION TEXT

In the early XVIII century Italian Enlightenment philosopher Giambattista Vico stressed the centrality of culture in and for any intellectual venture, the natural sciences included. He claimed that knowledge relies upon understanding, and, in turn, understanding relies upon tacit beliefs, which are the result of the history of one's personal development within a variously-layered historical reality. Vico specified a fundamental "dialectical" structure regulating the historical development of human knowledge, represented as a moving spiral of *Occurrences and Recurrences* (*Corsi e Ricorsi Storici*) along which moments of collapse and regress in the human understanding of the Universe, are as unavoidable as the overall progress of the human species. History repeats itself, but never in an identical fashion, adding new steps to the old ones, and never erasing any.

Future Primitive takes on similar considerations and speculates on hybrid civilizations of trans-subjectivity where entropy paradigms manifest and devolute from ideologies of progress, going *back* to primitivism, ritualism and medieval superstition.

Geological rhythms and deep time introduce alternative temporal forms based upon acceleration, recurrence and retroaction. Epic history becomes quasi-religious and radically atheist as strange narratives mix, interconnecting and fantasizing on past, present and future. A time travel between fantasy peasant ecological sensibility and science fiction technological awareness leads to something yet un-discovered, or perhaps, something to be found again.

Thus there is the Inside, and the Outside, which is the inside of an outside. Loop.

Hallucinatory interchanges between human and its surrounding. A voyage in psychedelic caves. Dream.

Silicon skins, post-human leather hanging like a hunting trophy. Wormholes.

Spirulina, a super food and the oldest form of life on earth. Recurrence.

Traditions and poetical metaphors of human culture that give access to future systems of collectivity. Cycle.

Arrowheads forged by a medieval fletcher using a meteorite bought through Google. Glitch.

And so on...

# SALVATORE ARANCIO

1974, Catania, Italy - Lives and works in London

The main interest at the centre of Salvatore Arancio's artistic practice lies in the potential of images. Particularly in how the images and their meaning can be re-framed or re-viewed. He plays with symbols always aiming to retain a certain ambivalence in his work. Each facet of his practice contains an intertwining juxtaposition of the roots and representation of images: natural and artificial, mineral and vegetable, two-dimensional and three-dimensional, scientific and mythological. Departing from their literal meaning, Arancio creates new juxtapositions that are both beautifully evocative and deeply disquieting. His work functions like an Atlas of confusion, like figures in positivistic scientific volumes devoid of any substantial image and left only with a vague ambiguous frame.

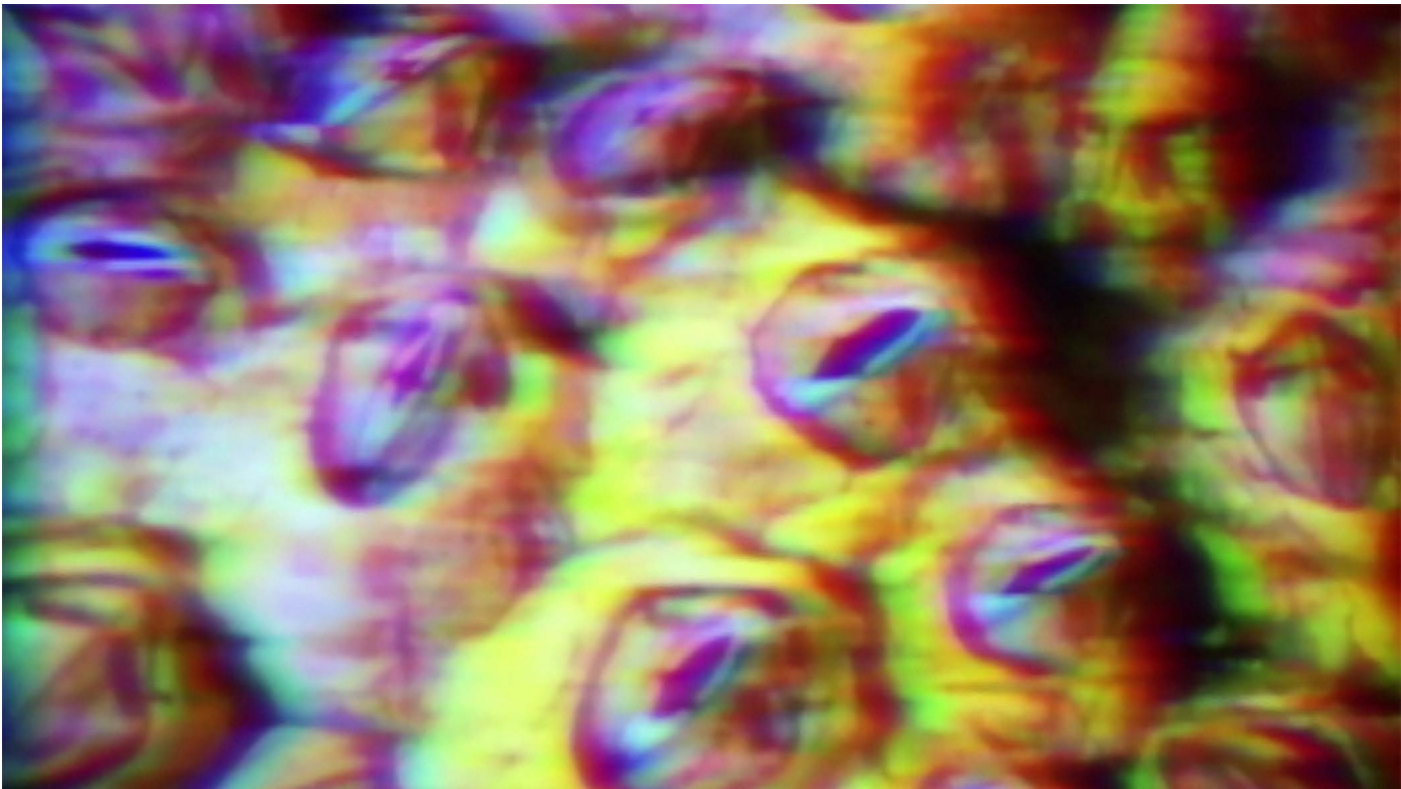
## SELECTED WORKS:

Video: *WHEN THE SAME ORGAN IS RIGOROUSLY COMPARED IN MANY INDIVIDUALS, I ALWAYS FIND SOME SLIGHT VARIABILITY*, 2015

The video *When the Same Organ is Rigorously Compared in Many Individuals, I Always Find Some Slight Variability* juxtaposes underwater creatures –larvae, jellyfish and molluscs– to psychedelic colours, internet imagery and rhythmic sounds. The sudden appearance of a barnacle goose in this marine world is a reference to the folklore surrounding these birds. Throughout the Middle Ages it was believed that these black and white geese –similar in colour and shape to barnacles– developed from crustaceans instead of eggs. Such passages between seemingly unconnected materials and animal kinds introduce topics of nature, species and evolution as they contrast to modern technologies, musical and science fictions. The playful title, taken from a letter of Charles Darwin written in 1850, highlights the extensive history of biological research into barnacles and their fascinating transformation from floating larvae to grainy rocks.

Video: *WE ARE A WAY TO KNOW ITSELF*, 2012

The video is made entirely from clips from the series 'The Cosmos' by Carl Sagan with a new soundtrack by Arancio. The film encompasses imagery picturing theories from physics, the human body and built environments through history and has the visionary, almost psychedelic, low-fi appearance of a 1980s vision of the future.



# MIRIAM AUSTIN

1984, New Zealand – lives and works in London

Miriam Austin explores the limits of the physicality and perception of the body in culture; of cycles of life and death; and of a recurrent desire to re-imagine our relationship with nature and our surrounding environment through ritual, myth and mysticism. Austin's practice involves working on a large scale with wax, rubber, metal and organic materials such as flowers and fish scales, producing work using casting processes that are intricate and complex. The work intervenes with bodily form, morphing skin and the human structure with objects from nature and process via hybridization. Working across video, performance, sculpture, painting and mixed media, she uses materials that appear alive on the body, imbuing her work with the unpredictability and transience of nature.

## SELECTED WORKS:

A series of skin-like silicon pieces that hang from the wall recalling some hunting trophy of cave man and some post-human skin at the same time. The fleshy quality of these works allows the organic matter to become indistinguishable from the bodily and the bodily from nonhuman matter. Tradition and progression are brought together re-imagining the human relationship with nature and its surrounding.



# CHRISTIAN BANG JENSEN

Lives and works in Copenhagen

Christian Bang Jensen's work deals with the act of collecting and reflects on discourses of knowledge production in various spaces and institutions. Rational modes of thinking are disrupted through associative mind processes and objects, art works and materials are often used to underline qualities of animism and rhizomatic connections to different regimes of knowledge production. There is an underlying interest in cultural syncretism, mythology and history.

## SELECTED WORK:

*Aimlessly Floating Through Space*, 2016.

Meteorite iron, various tree types & feathers, tar, arrowheads made by viking smith, arrows made by medieval fletcher

The arrows were made after the artist purchased via google search a meteorite, a-historical material that refers both to the origin the of earth and to science fiction, and thanks to the expertise in traditional culture of a medieval fletcher. The arrows could belong at the same time to a museum of medieval history, to a fantasy story, or to a videogame.

+ the artist will produce new work related to a residency in Chile in an oasis in the desert of Atacama, where the artists will be living with the local indigenous community



# ASTRID MYNTEKÆR

1985, Copenhagen - Lives and works in Copenhagen

Astrid Myntekær investigates the borders of the sensible and the knowable. Her work progresses from a laboratory-like situation, where materials, shapes and constellations are juxtaposed, studied and changed.

## SELECTED WORK:

### New commission

In her recent works, Astrid has been regularly using Spirulina powder, a greenish biomass of cyanobacteria (blue-green algae) that can be consumed by humans and other animals. Spirulina, food source for the Aztecs and other Mesoamericans until the 16th century and subsequently rediscovered by French researchers in the 1960s, also happens to be one of the oldest life forms on Earth. Today Spirulina is cultivated worldwide and used as a dietary supplement or super food and as a feed supplement in the aquaculture, aquarium, and poultry industries. Such periodical re-discovery of the material, its earthy colour and its futuristic metabolism-related qualities will be used in the show as an example of time glitches and loops that connect present, deep past and future in a non-linear way. Astrid, who already did pyramid-like structures using the powder, will be commissioned to produce something especially for the show.



# ROLF NOWOTNY

1975, Copenhagen – lives and works in Copenhagen

The horror of the contemporary body – the individual body as well as the body of societies – is the theme a Rolf Nowotny's sculptures and installations. He investigates and dramatizes how this body physically as well as socially becomes strange, or other. Rolf Nowotny's sculptures and installations reveal the post-human and Anthropocene perspectives from a personal and often autobiographical direction. The works present a scenery that merges the human and non-human in a odd biological mess, expressing a belief in a world where humans (as objects) and the objects they make, can coexist at peaceful odds with one another.

## SELECTED WORK:

A newly produced sculpture that, combining a cat's bed with a burnt helmet, hides the origins of the objects themselves and presents instead an assemblage of timeless objects belonging to the forest, the past and the future at the same time.





# ANDREA ZUCCHINI

1987, Brescia, IT – lives and works in London

Andrea Zucchini's work most often explores the relationship between humans and the natural environment that surrounds them. Through the process of pairing inherited rituals, historical artefacts of ancient societies with our era of space exploration and digital reproduction, Zucchini reveals objects as carriers of human knowledge throughout history. Objects become vessels for various temporalities and meanings; their ancestral powers and related craftsmanship have been commonly accumulated and are tightly linked to us and our future. Depicting an abandoned post-human landscape, both familiar and strange, a mirage of digital replicas of artefacts dominates the artist's practice and defies time and space restrictions in order to reframe the human's role.

## SELECTED WORKS:

Andrea Zucchini is working on a series of works that recollect his dreams, which similarly as psychedelia, allow to experience time slippage and "strange temporalities". He engraves vignette-like on thin fibreglass objects that look like archaeology find. He takes inspiration from paleolithic drawings and in particular the Camonica Valley at the bottom of the Alps in Northern Italy: a breath-taking collection of rock carvings, covering a time span of over 10,000 years. In addition to depictions from the Paleolithic to the Middle Ages, there are carvings from the 1930s, made briefly before the location became to be protected as a Unesco Heritage site.

This mirrors the interest of Zucchini for layers of history and an active participation in it.

On the occasion of the show, Zucchini will also present a new multichannel video installation work based on filmings of the Camonica Valley itself.

"My intention is to emphasise the layering of both the geologic and cultural time found in these sites. Rather than relating to this place by way of a scientific and historical viewpoint only, I will attempt to thoroughly access the landscape by intuitive and emotional means. The work will capture atmospheric sounds and employ filming/ editing techniques that imitate the surfaces of the rocks, both fractured and smooth. Through this process I will attempt to provoke a further, alternative story of the place and the knowledge that it holds, alongside questioning our contemporary understanding of history as linear and the past as something fixed.

This work will further my preoccupation with addressing how past cultures treated artefacts from previous societies as alive and malleable, imminent to their own present and culture. The video will equally present a non-linear narrative interpretation of the sites, accompanied by experiments evoked by the experience of roaming and dwelling in the place myself."



*When night is made as bright as day,*  
2017

Dreams carved onto polyester resin,  
pigment, bleach, grease  
47 x 115 x 31 cm

# PUBLIC PROGRAMME

*HYPERSTITION*, CHRISTOPHER ROTH  
AND ARMEN AVANESSIAN (2016)

Screening 1h 40m

Christopher Roth's and Armen Avanesian's *HYPERSTITION* is a filmic involution into the narratives and temporalities that both condition and resist the accelerating tempos of global capitalism, a film about time and narrative, speculative realism and accelerationism, transmodernism and xeno-feminism (featuring Ray Brassier, Iain Grant, Helen Hester and many others). Tread carefully: the deterritorializing intensity of machinic desire and speculative thinking may not be safe for some viewers.



*TELL III*, PHILIP SPEAKMAN (2019)

Lecture Performace

We're increasingly told we live in dark and troubled times. Whether or not this is to be believed, in actual dark times, people group around a fire and tell stories, making tools out of narratives which might help elucidate an uncertain present or future. Strangers might construct transient communal identity around the ritual sharing of histories, myths, current affairs and personal encounters, combing these forms into viscous materials to be told and retold elsewhere.

If Future Primitive uses visual references to evoke time glitches and time loops where past, present and future are interconnected then we might think of Tell as using narratives to enact these same time loops, collectively inhabit these loops as each story is told.

For Future Primitive Philip Speakman will invite artists to tell stories which engage with the ways of relating to time, futurity and primitivism found within the exhibition. This would include a story by Caterina Avataneo as an introduction to the exhibition, Philip Speakman as a way of introducing some of the ideas of Tell, as well as stories told by Jess Heritage, Rosie Woodhouse, Isobel Adderley, Lucie McLaughlin, Gonçalo Lamas and Andrew Wyatt, and others depending on scheduling.

# CATERINA AVATANEO (CURATOR)

1989, Torino. Lives and works in London

Curator based in London. Studied Architecture at Politecnico of Turin, IT (2014), before holding an MA in Curating from The London Metropolitan University, delivered in conjunction with Whitechapel Gallery, London, UK (2017).

She was awarded the 2017 NEON CURATORIAL AWARD by The Neon Foundation and Whitechapel Gallery and her curatorial projects have appeared in Institutions and galleries including: Zabłudowicz Collection, London UK; Kunstraum, London, UK; White Crypt, London, UK. She has been collaborating with Serpentine Galleries, Whitechapel Gallery and the Lithuanian Embassy in London and currently she is Associate Curator at Arcade, London and Assistant Curator of the Lithuanian Pavilion for the 58th Venice Biennale, winner of the Golden Lion.

## CURRENT AND UPCOMING SHOWS/PROJECTS:

### *SUN AND SEA (MARINA)*

Lina Lapelyte, Rugilė Barzdžiukaitė, Vaiva Grainytė  
Lithuanian Pavilion 58th Venice Biennale  
(assistant curator)  
05 - 11.2019

### *CONFRONTING EVIL*

Series of Performances, video screenings and new commissions in occasion of the international Philosophy conference at École Normale Supérieure, Paris  
+ book editor (published by Bloomsbury)