

Press release, 13.11.2011

## Exhibition program 2022

This year the exhibitions take a look at the digital changes in our world from different perspectives – from the influence of social media to ecological change or the influences of artificial intelligence on society. Our exhibitions are complemented by a varied and interactive program consisting of numerous events as well as educational activities. HEK has been invited to curate an exhibition for the Capital of Culture Esch2022 in Esch-Belval in Luxembourg. A former steel mill is currently being converted into an exhibition building to offer a focus on media art next year. With *Earthbound: In Dialogue with Nature*, HEK is realizing an exhibition on the theme of nature and the environment, which will subsequently also be shown in Basel in a modified form and with partly different artists.

Below you will find the detailed media releases for the following exhibitions:

### ***Swiss Media Art: Marc Lee, Chloé Delarue, Laurent Güdel – Pax Art Awards 2021***

12.02.-24.04.2022

Opening: Fri, 11.02.2022, 7pm

Press tour: Fri, 11.02.2022, 11am

### ***Emmanuel Van der Auwera: Seeing is Revealing***

14.05.-07.08.2022

Opening: Fri, 13.05.2022, 7pm

Press tour: Fri, 13.05.2022, 11am

### ***Earthbound: In Dialogue with Nature***

03.09.-13.11.2022

Opening: Fri, 02.09.2022, 7pm

Press tour: Fri, 02.09.2022, 11am

Images are available on request for all exhibitions.

## Swiss Media Art: Marc Lee, Chloé Delarue, Laurent Güdel – Pax Art Awards 2021

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Marc Lee, *Corona TV Bot*, 2020 - ongoing, online project, screenshot

The exhibition *Swiss Media Art: Marc Lee, Chloé Delarue, Laurent Güdel – Pax Art Awards 2021* offers an array of works by the prizewinning artists in three parallel solo exhibitions. Marc Lee's current works revolve around themes of biology, the human body and our relationship with nature. Chloé Delarue stages novel works from her ongoing TAFAA cycle, with evocative installations that invite viewers to explore future scenarios between magic and dystopia. Sound is central to Laurent Güdel's practice, which draws particular attention to the contexts of presentation and dissemination accompanying sound productions. Thanks to the support of the Pax Art Awards, the artists have been able to produce new works that are on view here for the first time.

The influence of information technologies on our understanding of the world, and how this constantly affects our social behaviour, is of particular interest to **Marc Lee**. His investigations follow the emergence of the World Wide Web through to the development of social networks. The artist's kaleidoscopic staging of videos from the Internet in immersive and interactive installations allows the flood of information of our time to become remarkably palpable. The exhibition presents a selection of his current works that primarily deal with biology and nature. His latest work *Ocean*, produced for this occasion, looks at how our oceans are polluted by industrial fishing and how fossil fuels cause their acidification. Marc Lee (\*1969) received the 2021 *Pax Art Awards* main prize of CHF 30,000.

Most of **Chloé Delarue's** works form part of a large cycle of works entitled *TAFAA – Toward A Fully Automated Appearance*, inspired by an article by economist Fischer Black on the automation of the stock market from 1971. For the exhibition at HEK, Delarue coherently expands her *TAFAA* cycle with an especially produced new installation. Questions of technological progress and its effects – the automation of labour, cloning, artificial intelligence and how these processes may affect biological life – are central to the artist's work, which materialises in form of installations. Her heterogeneous assemblages of elements, ranging from recycled industrial materials, videos, neon tubes to latex prints, resemble dystopian environments familiar from science fiction films. Delarue (\*1986) received the 2021 *Pax Art Awards* prize of CHF 15,000 for emerging artists.

Sound is central to Laurent Güdel's work, which reaches beyond fascination with acoustics to look at the social, political and historical dimensions of sound. The artist and composer embarks on multidisciplinary and collaborative practices, while incorporating reclaimed and found material. In the exhibition at HEK, Güdel presents a series of recent works that form part of his State Music cycle. As the title suggests, the cycle explores how political interests, the evolution of new technologies and development of experimental music are connected, specifically looking at how electronic music originated in the publicly funded studios of national radio stations. His most recent work, *Over the horizon*, created especially for the exhibition, is a sound composition based on an online archive of sound samples from radio waves and their graphic visualisation ([sigidwiki.com](http://sigidwiki.com)). Güdel (\*1984) erhielt 2021 den mit CHF 15'000 dotierten Preis der Pax Art Awards for upcoming artists. Delarue (\*1986) received the 2021 *Pax Art Awards* prize of CHF 15,000 for emerging artists.

**Curator:** Boris Magrini

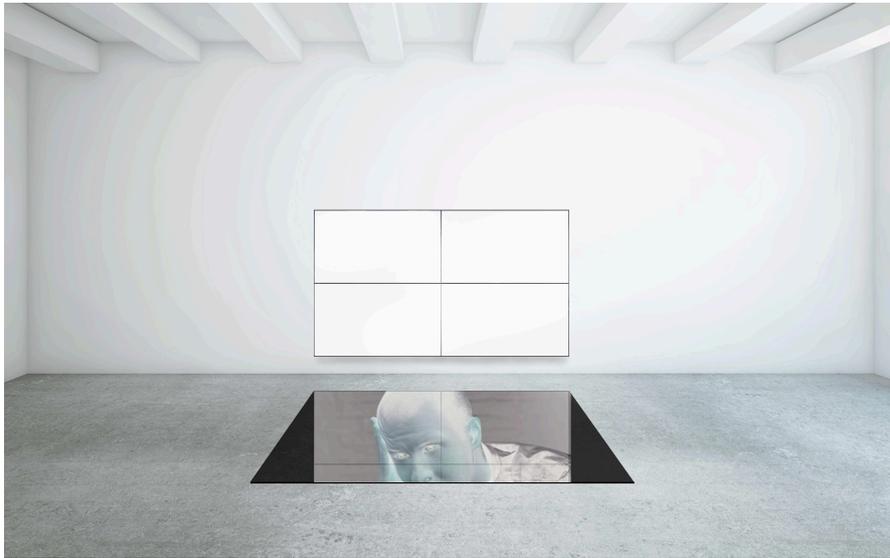
#swissmediaart #marclee #chloedelarue #laurentguedel #hek\_basel #artfoundationpax

### ***Emmanuel Van der Auwera: Seeing is Revealing***

14.05.-07.08.2022

Opening: Fri, 13.05.2022, 7pm

Press tour: Fri, 13.05.2022, 11am



Emmanuel Van der Auwera, *VideoSculpture XIV (Shudder)*, 2017,

Courtesy Emmanuel Van der Auwera and Harlan Levey Projects

The HEK is pleased to present Switzerland's first solo exhibition of Belgian artist Emmanuel Van der Auwera (\*1982). In his video installations and sculptures, Van der Auwera explores how technological developments change the way we see and understand the world. Employing documentary film material from the internet and social media, his works explore questions of perception through the construction or deconstruction of images, often in relation to current political topics or events. His video sculptures involve a unique artistic practice that intervenes with the mechanics of the screen itself. By destroying the screen's imaging filter, Van der Auwera creates a cinema of the negative, where images only become perceptible through filters placed in the space; therefore inviting us to take a new look at the images that define our visually saturated world and see our mediated reality in a critical light.

The Belgian artist is an attentive observer of our time. His video installations and video sculptures reflect on current media events or social media trends. Gathering material from the unbridled image production of our global screen culture, he collects confessional video streams, documentary video material on streaming platforms such as Periscope, which he wrests before expiry of its 24-hour storage period, or material from news channels and image databases of commercial providers. Like a chronicler, he employs the flow of material generated by countless users to focus his gaze on the tragedies and taboos of our mediated world. Van der Auwera's narratives skilfully combine the genres of documentation, reconstruction and fiction in order to decontextualise and dissect how these images are engineered. In doing so, he looks at the most pressing questions of our time, ranging from the dwindling freedom of the press to the expansion of the surveillance state.

In his video sculptures, the screen itself becomes the material. A few years ago, Van der Auwera

began manipulating LCD screens, cutting up their imaging filter, and eventually removing it altogether to reveal its underlying mechanics. The screen, our window to reality, now seems empty to the human eye. However, images viewed through the polarising agents of filters, such as glass plates placed on the floor or set up on tripods, are rendered visible again. Their visual worlds appear as a cinema of the negative. Van der Auwera's video sculptures require activity from viewers, since the stories held in their initially invisible flood of images only become accessible once one has adjusted one's perspective to find the right angle of vision through the filters. In this need to position oneself, the body also becomes a primary place of knowledge and engagement.

Van der Auwera's first solo exhibition in Switzerland also showcases several new works. A new video sculpture – related to *VideoSculpture XIV (Shudder)* from 2017 – is dedicated to the use of new imaging techniques and artificial intelligence. The work is conceived as a 2-channel video installation, viewable through a large glass plate on the floor. Other works on show include *The Death of K9 Cigo* (2019) and *The Sky Is on Fire* (2019). Both address the 2018 tragedy of the Parkland school massacre in Florida, using footage shot or produced on mobile phones. This includes video footage shared by witnesses or onlookers via the streaming service Periscope, as well as 3D scans of settings at the school generated by Van der Auwera himself using an app. From the assembly of these thousands of still images born on site the artist forges his digital world. Another new work deals with the use of artificial intelligence.

Emmanuel Van der Auwera lives and works in Brussels, Belgium. In 2015, he was a laureate of the Ghent University of Fine Arts (HISK) as well as receiving the Langui Prize for Young Belgian Art. His work has been shown in numerous exhibitions, such as WIELS (Brussels, Belgium), Centre Pompidou (Paris), Palais de Tokyo (Paris), Centro per l'Arte Contemporanea Luigi Pecci (Prato, Italy), Ars Electronica (Linz, Austria), Casino Luxembourg – Forum d'art contemporain (Luxembourg, and Mu.ZEE (Ostend, Belgium). Van der Auwera's work has been acquitted by various renowned collections such as the Dallas Museum of Art (Dallas, TX, USA), KANAL Centre – Pompidou (Brussels, Belgium), Mu.ZEE (Ostend, Belgium), and the Jordan Schnitzer Museum of Art (Eugene, OR, USA). In 2019, the artist had his first solo show in the United States entitled *White Noise* at 214 Projects (Dallas, TX), followed by two solo exhibitions in Brussels at Harlan Levey Projects and Botanique in September 2019.

**Curators:** Sabine Himmelsbach and Boris Magrini

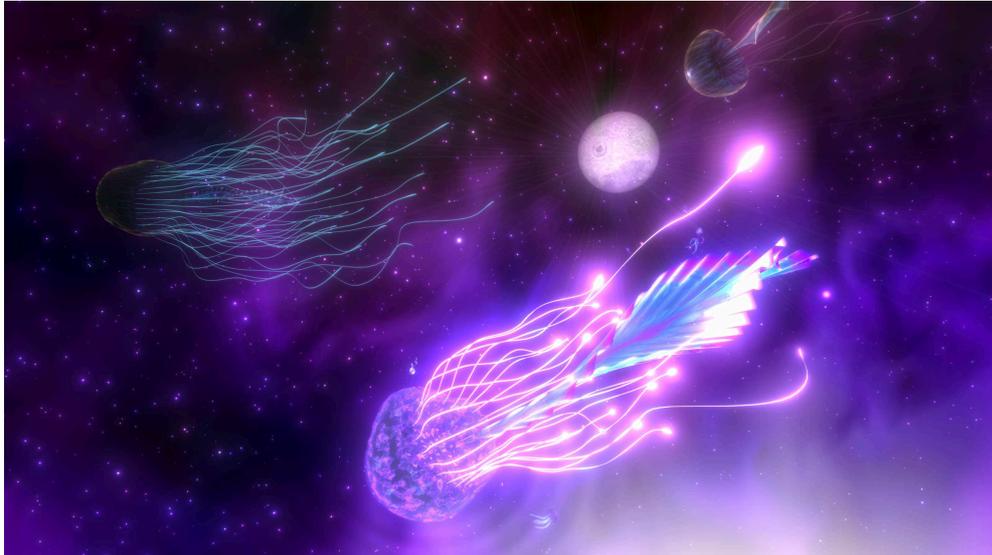
#EmmanuelVanderAuwera #hek\_basel

***Earthbound: In Dialogue with Nature***

03.09.-13.11.2022

Opening: Fri, 02.09.2022, 7pm

Press tour: Fri, 02.09.2022, 11am



Mélodie Mousset, Edo Fouilloux, *The Jellyfish*, 2020. Screenshots from VR. Courtesy of the artist

The international group exhibition *Earthbound* will present the most recent works by contemporary artists that offer a reflection on urgent environmental issues, and more particularly on the complex relationship between human activities and the ecosystem.

The first decades of the 21st century were marked by a discussion on environmental issues that was strongly imbued with the controversial and still debated concept of the Anthropocene, namely the idea that we are in a new geological era in which human activities have a lasting impact on climate and the environment. And indeed, the pressing problems generated by human activities, such as global warming, pollution, uncontrolled waste generation, loss of biodiversity and natural resources, require structural changes that are only possible through a radical change of mentality and habits. Our global ecosystem is threatened, and so are we humans, and we need to find ways to be more sustainable in our use of resources. These changes require alternative models for thinking about our co-existence in relation to the environment.

The transformations are emblematic of global developments that require reflection and adjustment concerning the balance between society, technological progress and the environment. The digitisation process that has affected all sectors – from the economy to information and cultural production – cannot be considered an abstract phenomenon that does not have an impact on the territory. It is essential to continue reflecting on this process, on its meaning, on the opportunities it offers and on the challenges it generates.

These questions lie at the heart of the exhibition project and the accompanying program of *Earthbound*. How can we think and forge our digital tools for a sustainable use of our resources? How do we shape our coexistence, understood as cohabitation between us humans, but also between us and the ecosystem, the other species on the planet, and with a technology that is increasingly taking a role of an active and autonomous agent? The digital revolution has undeniably changed our existence, our habits and not least our identity. It is essential that we pause to question this ever-changing identity and give ourselves the freedom to reflect on ways of thinking about it in unconventional terms.

This is where the exhibition *Earthbound* comes in. It presents artists who, in dialogue with science, technology and society, address the complex issues of our time and point to possible visions, opportunities and solutions by redefining national, cultural, geographical and social boundaries. It presents artistic works and projects that actively engage in current social debates, that conduct its own research and presents visionary innovative approaches to solutions in order to initiate social and political change. This often involves an interdisciplinary approach and collaboration with specialists and experts from a wide range of fields, such as geologists, meteorologists, oceanographers. Art offers us tools for reflection, discussion and awareness of the important issues of our time; it creates new ways of thinking about the world.

*Earthbound* focuses on the dialogue between mankind and the ecosystem, emphasizing the need to reconsider the dialogue through new forms of interaction, of which the artists offer alternative models. Most importantly, the works in the exhibition question the very concept of humanity, as we are accustomed to think of it. Refusing to consider our presence in the world as an isolated one, and inviting us to abandon an egocentric perspective, the exhibition invites us to explore a plurality of possible coexistences between human beings, the ecosystem and the autonomous technologies that constitute the three poles of this synchronism. Intelligent and creative use of digital media and new technologies such as AI, interactive and immersive installations, virtual and augmented reality, multimedia sculptures and multi-channel digital video characterize the artists' approach, thus offering an engaging, playful but also critical way for the public to engage with the themes, as well as to experience first-hand the possible interactions with different organisms. Indeed, many of the included projects invite the public to take an active part, which contributes to an engaged reflection in the process of rethinking our relationship with nature.

HEK invited some artists to produce new works that respond specifically to the theme of the exhibition. As part of the exhibition, a comprehensive catalogue will be produced that documents the works in the exhibition and which will also include scientific and philosophical contributions on the topics of sustainability and diversity.

**Artists:** Refik Anadol, Donatien Aubert, Tega Brain, Melanie Bonajo, Persijn Broersen & Margit Lukacs, Maria Castellanos & Alberto Valverde, Gil Delindro, Gilberto Esparza, Alexandra Daisy Ginsberg, Mary Maggic, Marc Lee, Markus Maeder, Mélodie Mousset, Sabina Ratté, Rasa Smite & Raitis Smits, Sissel Marie Tonn, and others.

**Curators:** Sabine Himmelsbach and Boris Magrini

#earthboundbasel #hek\_basel

**Information:**

HEK (House of Electronic Arts)  
Freilager-Platz 9, 4142 Münchenstein/Basel

Opening hours: Wed-Sun, 12-6pm

Admission: 9 / 6 CHF (reduced price); Happy Hour (free admission): Wed-Fri 12-1pm

Public guided tours: every Sunday at 3pm (German)

For more information visit: [www.hek.ch](http://www.hek.ch)

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**About the HEK (House of Electronic Arts)**

HEK (House of Electronic Arts) in Basel is Switzerland's national competence center for all art forms that employ or reflect on new technologies and media. The HEK's interdisciplinary approach offers a broad public with insight into art production from various genres at the conjunction between art, media and technology. In a diverse program of exhibitions, smaller festival formats, performances and concerts, the HEK is dedicated to taking a closer look at current social issues and questions as well as technological and aesthetic developments. In addition to organizing exhibitions and events, the HEK is concerned with the methodology of collecting and the preservation of digital art.