

Glitch: Ontological Exhaustions & *System Failures:*

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Joana Moll

Katrin Leitner

Nadja Verena Marcin

Michael Betancourt

Ian Keaveny

Niklas Washausen

Spazju Kreattiv,
Valletta, Malta
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Curator:

Verena Voigt M.A.,

PLATFORM

GLITCH AESTHETICS/ GFZK e.V.

Glitch:
Ontological
Exhaustions &
System Failures

CREATIVE REVOLUTION: ART AS A FORCE FOR CHANGE

Spazju Kreattiv, Malta's National Centre for Creativity, has long been at the forefront of social discourse, harnessing the power of the arts to spark meaningful conversations that foster social justice and positive change. Through creativity, our programme seeks to engage, challenge, and inspire, offering a space where dialogue flourishes and perspectives evolve. The collective exhibition *Glitch: Ontological Exhaustions and System Failures* aligns perfectly with this mission, inviting visitors to reflect on pivotal historical events that led to societal upheaval. It serves as both a commentary on the past and a reaction to the complexities of today's world. Through an immersive multimedia experience, audiences are encouraged to deconstruct entrenched socio-political systems, examine diverse political ideologies, and challenge long-held dogmas. By decoding historical moments that have shaped social norms, the exhibition opens new pathways for discourse and critical analysis, prompting us to reconsider the present through the lens of the past.

Interweaving creative expression with Germany's socio-political landscape over recent decades, *Glitch* resonates far beyond its immediate context, engaging with broad governance debates across the Euro-Mediterranean region and beyond. It highlights how art can spark discussions and inspire transformation, empowering individuals to share their stories and actively shape the future.

In a world still grappling with questions of identity, shifting priorities, and urgent calls for greater openness and understanding, *Glitch* offers a space for reflection, dialogue, and hope - reminding us that through creativity, we can reimagine the world and drive meaningful change.

Daniel Azzopardi
Spazju Kreattiv Artistic Director

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

PLATFORM GLITCH AESTHETICS / GFZK e.V. would like to express its gratitude to the artists Ruth Bianco (Malta), Joana Moll (Barcelona/Cologne), Katrin Leitner (Kassel, GER), Nadja Verena Marcin (Berlin/New York), Michael Betancourt (Savannah, USA), Ian Keaveny (Ireland), and Niklas Washausen (Berlin/Greifswald, GER) for their elaborate productions and collaborations, as well as for making their artifacts available. Our thanks also go to the editorial designers Luis Borchardt & Dean Schwarz (Berlin) for designing the catalog.

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Our sincere thanks go to the Valletta Cultural Agency & Valletta Design Cluster for accommodating Katrin Leitner during her mini-residency in Malta, to the Aksioma Gallery (Ljubljana) for the technical provision of the video "Joana Moll: Data Extraction, Materiality and Agency, 2022," and to Esta Lingua Ltd. for planning and executing the simultaneous translation of Ines Geipel's reading and discussion.

Verena Voigt, Investigative Curator
PLATFORM GLITCH AESTHETICS / GFZK e.V.

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Glitch- Exhaustions- Systems

With the group exhibition *Glitch: Ontological Exhaustions & System Failures*, Spazju Kreativ transforms into an amplifier for reflections on digitality & resistance, history & remembrance. Aesthetic “disruptions” (glitches) created in the exhibits challenge the audience to think critically and historically about the state of our technology-dependent society, enabling an international comparison of protest movements over the past 100 years.

Glitching reveals the fragile boundaries of existence we no longer perceive as our own but as belonging to technology—a discomfoting realm of technocracy and external, authoritarian control. We encounter a world of the non-physical, one

that we neither fully understand nor control, where surveillance, automation, and algorithmic dependency creates complex states of exhaustion and learned helplessness, which leads us down uncertain passages.

How old is the glitch? If we believe historical sources, it has always existed. The *Tractatus de Penitentia* (c. 1285) by Johannes Galensis (John of Wales) introduces a subversive demon named *Titivillus*, the “patron demon of scribes,” who collected errors: omitted, mumbled, and mispronounced words—especially those that clerics were said to have “stolen from God” during their morning prayers. He carefully preserved these glitches for their indictment at the end of days.

The history of resistance in East Germany demonstrates that it is indeed possible to rewrite a hegemonic canon that was meant to be forgotten. With the help of powerful but glitching programs, the erased self-assertion of forgotten resistance fighters can be reinscribed into the historical record of European literature. For digital artists, Glitch Art provides a metaphysical toolkit to visualize, interpret, challenge—then deconstruct—technocratic, dictatorial, or repressive systems and their neoliberal, communist, and capitalist designs for human capture/control.

The glitch leads the viewer into paradoxes of knowledge that make disturbances understandable as expressions. At the

same time, it creates an interpretative expectation that embraces ambivalence as part of an overcomplex system of interpretation, which is both accepted and enjoyed. Michael Betancourt highlights this in his book *Glitch Theory: Art and Semiotics* (2023), in which he also develops and explains the concept of “Ontological Exhaustion.”

„Glitch Art is made from those things that are usually seen as errors or breakdowns. It exploits how this identification can become a potentially critical response to the normally hidden operations of machines. While Glitch Art continues the lineage of historical abstraction and new media art, its reliance on a doubled identification of errors as expressive and as

malfunctions separates it from other types of digital art.“ (*Michael Betancourt, 23th January 2025*) *How is this to be understood?* The glitch brings us close to those sensitive boundaries of existence that we no longer perceive as our own but as belonging to technology—the technocratic, the digital, the externally determined. The glitch leads us into the uncanny world of the a-physical, which we neither fully understand nor control. Digital life induces complex states of exhaustion, fosters algorithmic addiction, controls our private lives, and leads us into uncertain transitions. At the same time, these experiences enable a critical digitality. Ultimately, discomfort arises from the uncertainty of whether we are moving in a meta-nature, a

meta-organological space, or in an AI-generated machine technocracy—one that is not free from malfunctions, hallucinations, unexpected glitches, and bugs.

The technical glitch, when viewed reflectively, provides us with profound knowledge of the systemic weaknesses and breaking points of the digital realm. It also locates our understanding of the world within the metaphorical framework of the a-natural, experimental, supernatural, and mechanical, granting insights into the “Black Box” of algorithmic systems.

From this accumulation of knowledge about a-physical errors emerges, alongside deconstructive knowledge, an aes-

thetic expertise in vulnerability, deconstruction, fragility, and decomposition—both on the part of the artist and the viewer. Just as culture has accumulated knowledge over centuries regarding the functionality of the organic in nature, we are now able to decipher the functioning of the digital world from its dysfunctions.

What does this mean for Glitch Art? The glitch provides the digitally working artist with a metaphorical toolkit to expose, deconstruct, visualise, and interpret technocratic, dictatorial, and repressive systems, as well as neoliberal, communist, and capitalist designs of inhumanity. The programs and methods developed by Glitch Artists and activists—along with their dig-

ital manipulation possibilities, misalignments, distortions, misregistrations, and mechanical failures—provide visual resources that can be philosophically linked to a system critique in the tradition of Critical Theory.

Glitch Art continues the tradition of critical art movements of the 20th century (Postmodernism). It offers a critical response to the replacement of human judgment and skill that continues the challenges first raised to these replacements by technology, such as photography, and continuing the lineage of earlier art movements that employed the transformations of collage in the historical movements of Dada, Fluxus, Conceptual Art, and Appropriation Art, and connects with literature,

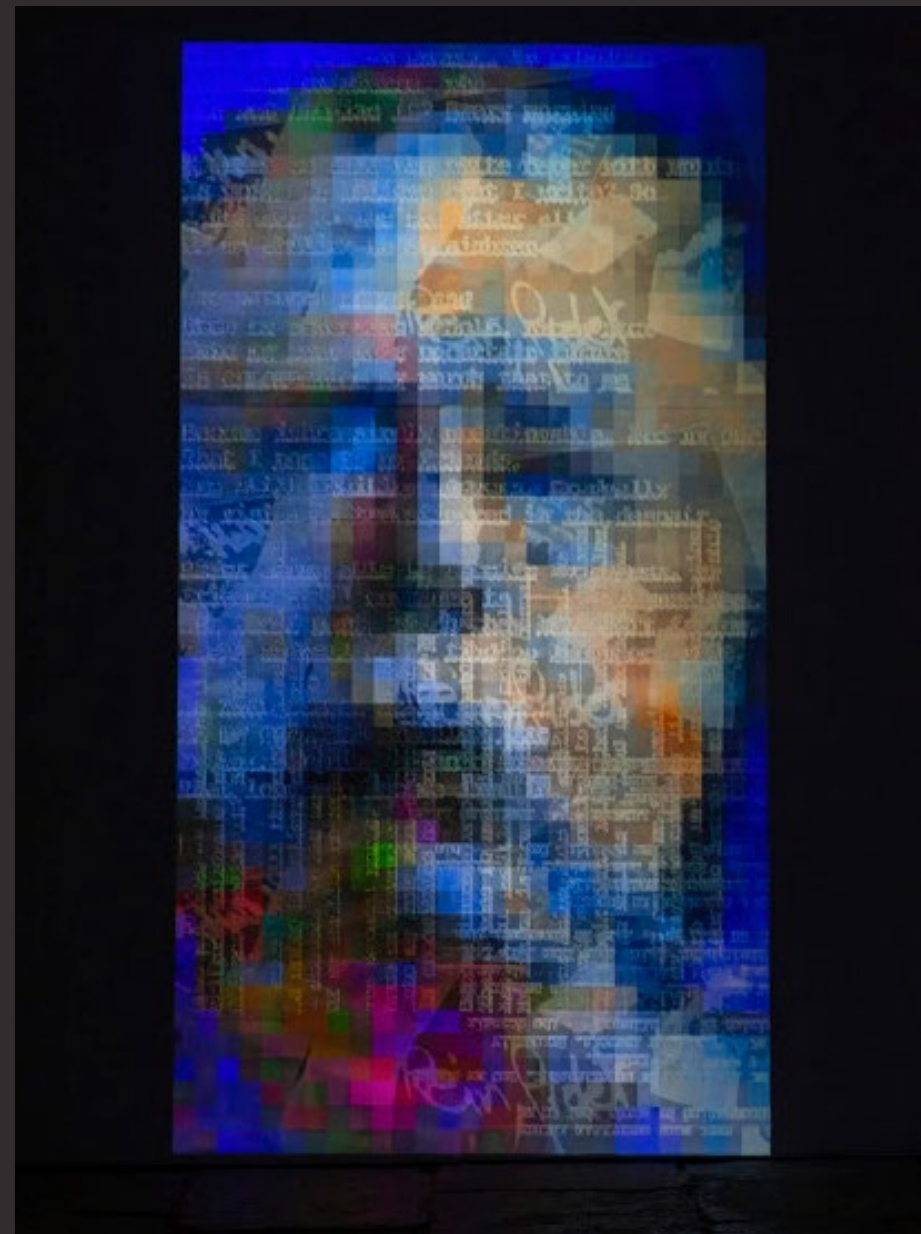
music, and performance to create “total works of art.” Thus, Glitch Art can be understood as a digital development of synesthesia. Michael Betancourt coins a new term for this: “Technesthesia”. It describes the technical translation of different kinds of data to produce new sensations that are products of the interpreting system itself. *The exhibition “Glitch: Ontological Exhaustions & System Failures”* demonstrates that Glitch Art is much more than a flickering or flashing screen. Through the collaborative works of Michael Betancourt, Ian Keaveny, and Niklas Washausen, we experience an expansion of the modernist and formal perspective. The practical experience of the glitch in purely technical analysis (for example, as a failure in video

code or transmission medium, which should be fixed to maintain the “purity” of the medium) is shifted into a semantic-contextual perspective. In this way, meanings become transportable within the medium of art.

“Ontological exhaustion identifies escapes from the authoritarian control created by appeals to the “innate nature of things” whose circular logic attempts to capture and limit understanding in advance, but is undone by alternative re/organizations and disruptive counter-readings.” (Michael Betancourt, 23th January 2025)

The exhibition not only makes the glitch palpable as a conscious artistic expression but also creates, through newly de-

veloped glitch programs, tools to perceive destruction, decomposition, surveillance, technological control, or the failure of modern systems as processes. Distortions, morphing, and deconstructions are not seen as errors but as statements; new grammars of digital societal critique emerge to challenge not only the digital media we know from social networks, but the emerging AI media that is spreading rapidly. (VV)



Collaboration (MB, IK, NW, VV). Dedicated to Wolf

Biermann (2025) *Interview with Wolf Biermann*

(November 16, 1976, NDR) *Photography*

© Elisa von Brockdorff. Courtesy © Spazju Kreattiv & The Artists.

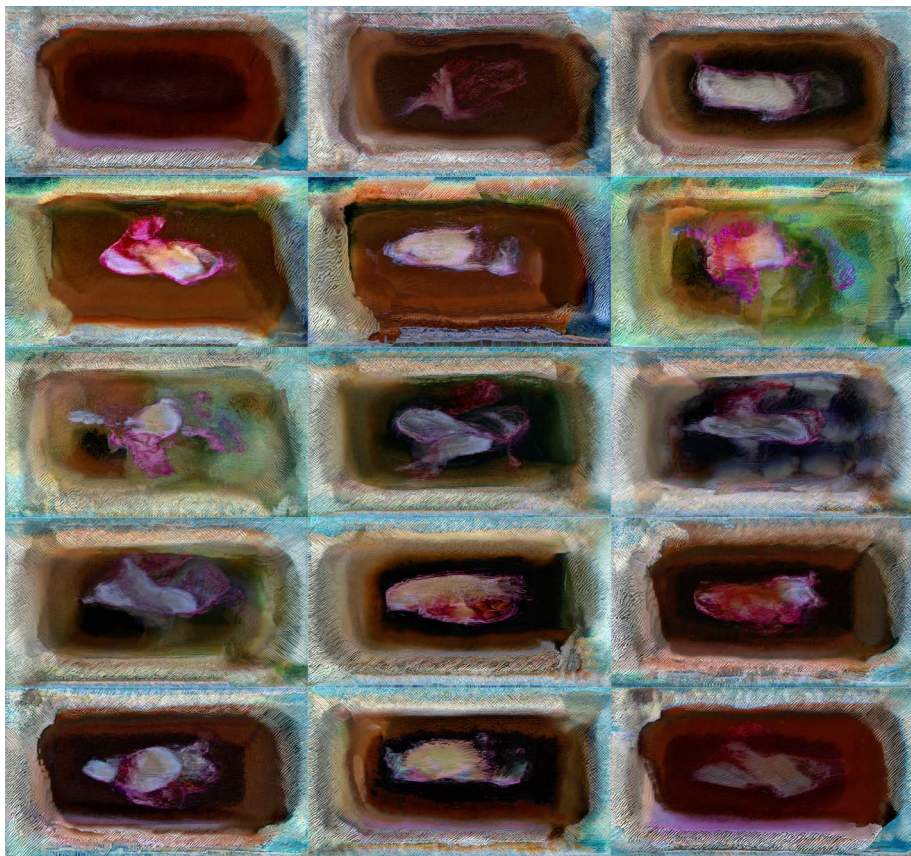
MICHAEL BETANCOURT

*Research
Artist, Critical
Theorist,
Savannah,
GA (USA)*

Michael Betancourt is a Cuban-American research artist and critical theorist who has cultivated a conceptual-theoretical practice that combines media art production with discursive, critical analysis focused on art history, digital technology, and capitalist ideology.



Michael Betancourt, Memory Hole, 2025, Movie, 2:00 min. loop, silent; 1920×1080p. Videostill. © 2025 Michael Betancourt / courtesy Artists Rights Society (ARS).



Michael Betancourt: **Memory Hole (2025)**
Movie, 2:00 min. loop, silent;
1920×1080p. *Videostill/frames group*

Michael Betancourt:

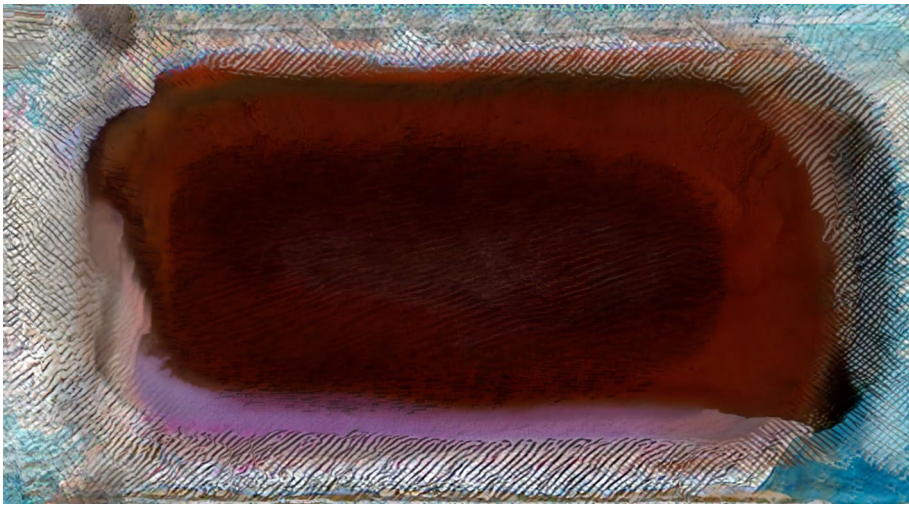
I break things and play with the pieces; I realize this act is an historically nihilistic gesture, but that is not my interest: the flash of recognition—faces, words, stories, spaces—is my focus. My work challenges understanding the computer as only an instrument of valorization, seduction, or assault. The reason I began systematically corrupting and damaging media in 1990 was to create a critical expression by rupturing the illusionistic perfection of technical images, but my intentions are irrelevant to my semiotic approach: the audience will see what their hopes and fears, education and desires taught/allow them to see. The immanent give-and-take between those quotations the audience recognizes, what's called "intertext," and what's produced using the medium, the "text," connects glitches to the visionary tradition by crafting a dramatic art from perception itself—the shapes and patterns of this iconography are performers whose actions can neither be anticipated nor described in advance, but arise directly from digital technology—an unknown adventure in an unknowable space. Yet I'm not interested in technological determinism, formalist exploration, nor anything arbitrary and capricious: I'm interested in articulating basic human emotions—ecstasy, sensuality, fascination—via glitches that encourage viewers to find poetic meaning in their everyday life.

Memory Hole:

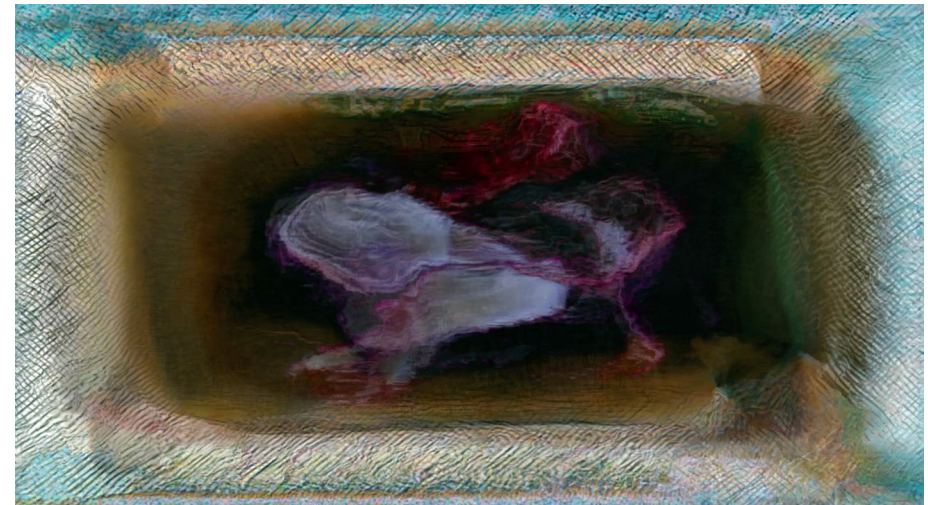
The work visualises the state of being erased, forgotten, and suppressed for political or social reasons as a dynamic glitch video. Invented by George Orwell's novel 1984, it describes a process of complete and undetectable substitution of propaganda for reality. The past is systematically distorted, replaced, and destroyed to create alternative facts and histories. The hallucinatory imagery emergent throughout this movie reflects the viewer's own desires for coherence and comprehension.

Glitching AI models evoke a kind of technological unconscious, where the unpredictable outcomes of algorithmic processes parallel historical interests in chance operations and automatic writing. The results suggest a machine dreamscape where familiar elements are constantly reassembled into new and unsettling configurations.

Generated using AI and projected on the floor, this movie has the proportions of a grave: it accentuates an unsettling sense of false depth that mirrors the ungrounding of a history and its attendant amnesia. Like memories being actively suppressed, the abstract imagery evoking a body is contained in a paradoxical space where representation and abstraction, erasure and emergence become indistinguishable. Its rhythms mark cyclical time in a realm where past and future collapse into an eternal and immediate present.



Michael Betancourt: **Memory Hole (2025)**
 Movie, 2:00 min. loop, silent;
 1920×1080p. *Videostill.*



Michael Betancourt: **Memory Hole (2025)**
 Movie, 2:00 min. loop, silent;
 1920×1080p. *Videostill.*

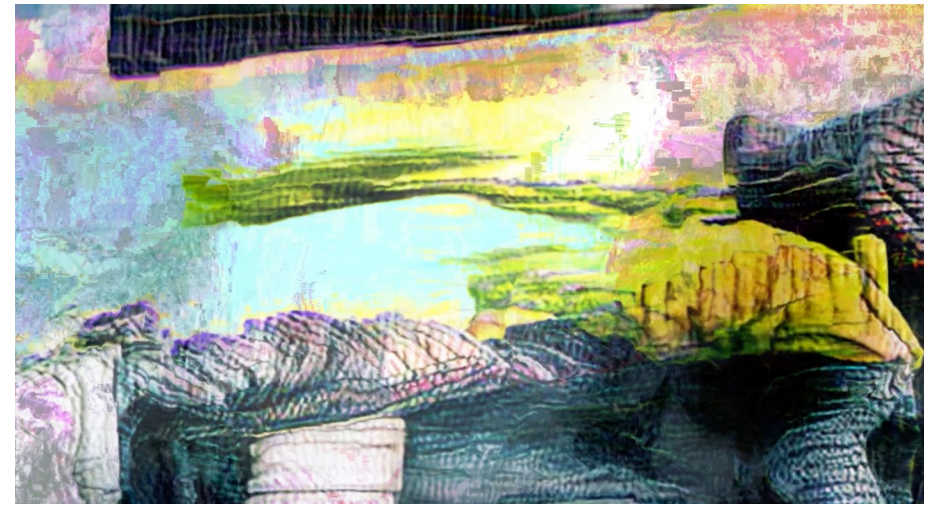
Eastalgia:

The work develops from/as an historical revelation, via an exploit of digital processing, and meditates on the tension between power and liberation by manipulating four declassified Stasi photographs documenting a confiscated personal computer from 1980s East Germany. The title is a translation of the German term “Ostalgie” that identifies a nostalgia for aspects of life in East Germany. Bureaucratic images originally intended as evidence of sedition are transformed through multiple layers of glitching that meditate on power, memory, and control. These police photographs document both a threat and a promise: to the state, personal computers were dangerous instruments of a revanchist and subversive Western influence, while to their owners, they offered a vehicle of escape. These documentary images undergo a metamorphosis into fluid abstractions where the recognizable forms of the computer, its keyboard, printer, and manual bleed into abstraction.

The glitch is the breach beneath the surface of recognizable imagery. This systematic application of multiple glitch processes—including data bending, data moshing, and AI generative glitches—creates a resistant current of pixels pulsing and sliding under the surface of the images, revealing distortions as resistance, and the state of tension between representation and abstraction, control and corruption, memory and reality. The documented evidence of subversion is itself subverted, transformed into painterly animation. These “animorphs” organize the movie to reveal the transactional nature of that historical moment, when the mechanisms of control were mirrored by human ingenuity turning tools of oppression into instruments of freedom.

My use of competing LoRA models is a novel approach to generative art. Rather than using AI simply as a tool for image generation, the piece employs the tensions and conflicts between different AI models as a fundamental creative force. This approach suggests new possibilities for artistic applications of machine learning, where the imperfections and contradictions in AI systems become a source of aesthetic value rather than technical problems to be solved. This is a process that can only be run ‘locally’ rather than on the commercial timeshare AI systems. It depends on a higher degree of control over the system and its processes than commercial systems such as Midjourney, Gemini, et al. provide. These Almaglitches emerge from the intersection of several contemporary dialogues: the role of AI in artistic creation, the nature of consciousness and memory, and the relationship between technology and human perception. By using AI models to create work about human memory and perception, the piece raises questions about the similarities and differences between machine learning and human learning, digital and organic memory, and artificial and natural consciousness.

This technique exploits the tendency of LoRA models to produce “overfit,” where the model is trained so it only is able to produce a small or even singular result. By placing models that exhibit signs of overfit into a series, each successive model counteracts the previous ones. This is an actual glitch in these systems, apparent in how they ignore any prompts



Michael Betancourt: **Eastalgia (2025)**
Movie, 2:00 min.,
silent; 1920×1080p. *Videostill.*

given. The resulting images are reflections of the data processing and its dynamic response to both the numerical diffusion seed and any control net images that guide the composition. The resulting images vary depending how the degrees of freedom given to the system and the individual weights specified for each of the LoRA models.

Michael Betancourt is an artist, historian, theorist, and curator. His essays have been translated into Chinese, French, German, Greek, Italian, Korean, Persian, Portuguese, and Spanish; journals such as *The Atlantic*, *Make Magazine*, *Millennium Film Journal*, *Leonardo*, *Semiotica*, and *CTheory* have published his essays; he has edited five books on visual music technologies invented by artists such as Thomas Wilfred, Mary Hallock-Greenewalt, and Oskar Fischinger; and written more than fifty other books. In the course of his research into visual music, he discovered the oldest surviving hand-painted abstract films, done in 1916 by inventor and artist Mary Hallock-Greenewalt. His interest in visual music was foundational for the first in-depth monograph on motion graphics, *The History of Motion Graphics: From Avant-Garde to Industry in the United States*, published in 2013.

As an artist, he has exhibited his movies, site-specific installations, and non-traditional art forms in unseen, unusual, or public spaces since 1992. His movies work with the techniques of optical printing, but in a digital medium. His movies have been shown at in galleries, festivals and art fairs internationally. The second edition of his book on his own movies, *Structuring Time*, came out in 2009.

Beyond Spatial Montage: Windowing, or, the Cinematic Displacement of Time, Motion, and Space, concerned with juxtaposed and composited screen imagery was published by Focal Press in 2016. This theoretical monograph is the result of twenty-five years of studio work is a comprehensive analysis and historically-based heuristic theory for a wide range of approaches to motion imagery that is juxtaposed, composited and displaced on screen that have found direct application and exploration through my historical work with avant-garde film, visual music and motion graphics.

His work with critical theory, collected in *The Critique of Digital Capitalism* by Punctum Books in 2016, identifies how digital technology has captured contemporary society in a reification of capitalist priorities. The theory proposed in this book is the description of how digital capitalism as an ideologically “invisible” framework realized in technology. Originally a series of articles published between 2003 and 2015, it provides a broad critical scope for understanding the inherent demands of capitalist protocols for expansion without constraint—regardless of social, legal or ethical limits—that are increasingly being realized as autonomous systems no longer dependent on human labor or oversight and implemented without social discussion of their impacts. The digital illusion of infinite resources, infinite production, and no costs appears as an “end to scarcity,” that digital production eliminates costs and makes everything equally available to everyone. (MB)

Michael Betancourt



Michael Betancourt, Eastalgia, 2025, Movie, 2:00 min., silent; 1920×1080p. Videostill.

Publications:

“Computer Creates a Cat: Sign Formation, Glitching, and the AImage” *Semiotica: Journal of the International Association for Semiotic Studies* (2024) DOI: <https://doi.org/10.1515/sem-2023-0108>
Glitch Theory: Art and Semiotics (I'm Press'd, 2023)

CMYK – 52 Typoems: 4 typefaces / 4 letters / 4 sections (Timglaslet, 2023, ed. 99)

Cinematic Articulation in Motion Graphics [Routledge Studies in Media Theory and Practice] (Routledge, 2021) DOI: <https://doi.org/10.4324/9781003188599>

KATRIN LEITNER

*Multimedia
Artist, Kassel
(GER)*

Katrin Leitner defines fundamental questions about the present, past & future, existence, space & time. Her artistic research shows “storage locations” for the transmission of knowledge and experiences within human communities. Art and archaeology merge into an archetypal imagery of post-futurism in the echo of critical digitality. Art appears as an antidote and an essential part of life. Art creates culturally interactive information carriers for future generations. Her productions show how an intuitive, highly sensitive and sensual approach to artistic material can become the basis of utopian designs.



Katrin Leitner, **PFA-BLACKTERRAPLATTES-BODYDISSOLUTION-MATRIXGLITCH**, 2022 © *Katrin Leitner*



Katrin Leitner, **NEO GEO – cognitive drifts (as far as anyone could recall)**, Rauminstallation, *Fridericianum Kassel*, 2016, Photographer: **Niels Klinger** © *Katrin Leitner*

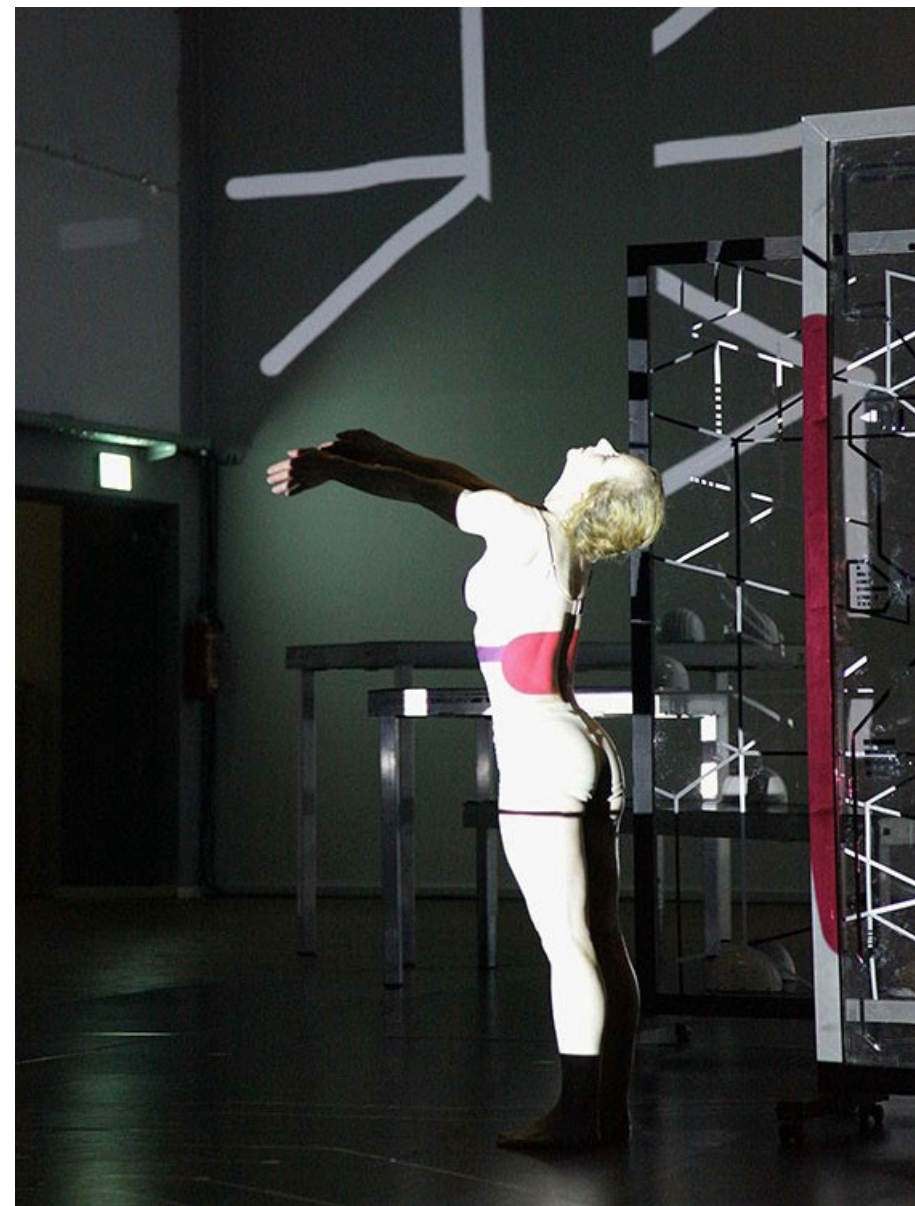
Katrin Leitner deals with analogue dismantling scenarios of digital over-structuring in the medium of ceramics. In work cycles lasting several years and long-term projects, she combines material and immaterial media such as ceramics, video projection, text in words and images. The results of her multi-material, interdisciplinary working methods condense into variable, space-related installations and performative stagings. Designed in a modular and situational manner, the viewer is repeatedly involved in situations full of artistic artifacts, which helps to form a deeper understanding of the complex structures and connections of human existence.

Katrin Leitner works in the fields of fine arts, painting, drawing & sculpture, video & multimedia installations and spatial installations. She studied fine arts and visual communication at the Kunsthochschule Kassel with Rob Scholte, Udo Koch, Olaf Nicolai, Daniel Richter, Jason Rhoades, Marlene Dumas, Hans Platscheck and Ursula Panhans-Bühler and was a master student with Rolf Lobeck. She has received teaching assignments and guest professorships at the Sichuan Fine Arts Institute in Chongqing/China and in the field of Newmedia Art & Design, the University of Beihang in Beijing and works as a lecturer at the Institute for Aesthetic Education at the University of Kassel.

POST-FUTURISTIC ARCH AEOLOGY (PFA) is the title of a series of works in which Katrin Leitner deals with the storage media, traces, symbols, glyphs, graphics and codes left behind by humanity, which archaeologists must later interpret. The GLITCH (or BUG) in the system of digital communication technologies evokes a distorted view of virtual reality. The broken ceramic plate in blue, pink-white and brown underlines the fragility of techno-society.

Exhibitions (selection): Since 2000 she has developed numerous exhibitions and projects which are site-specific, multimedia installations, drawings, paintings, objects as well as performative and participatory interactions. With the project "Vilem Flusser im Bau" she was the first recipient of a scholarship from the Walter Heilwagen Foundation, Kassel (2006). Other exhibitions: "As far as anyone can remember", 2016, Fridericianum, Kassel; "Life Paths", Kasseler Kunstverein, 2018; "Spaces", Sailing Art Space, Beijing, China, 2019; "Retinal Collapse", Gallery Studio 44, Langenthal, Switzerland, 2019; "The first time for the second time", Marburger Kunstverein, 2020; "domestic space", Augsburg Contemporary, Berlin branch, Augsburg, 2021; "Terra Glyphs. Time Glyphs. Traces and signs in burnt earth, Prösitz Artists' Estate, 2022.

In 2023 she received the Kassel Art Prize from the Dr. Wolfgang Zippel Foundation. In 2020 she received the sculptor's grant from the Künstlergut Prösitz and the one-year grant from the Stadema Foundation in Munich, as well as a working grant from the Hessian Cultural Foundation. (VV)



SIMKA-Katrin Leitner & Mirjam Henß, **“Bruchstück:2”**, multimediale Performance-Production, Kulturhaus Dock 4 Kassel, 2018 © *Katrin Leitner*



Katrin Leitner, **TECTONICA-GIS,
TECTONICAL PLATES,** Kasseler
Kunstverein, Installationsansicht,
2018 © *Katrin Leitner*



Katrin Leitner, **PFA-Red Terra Glyphs,
Bricks, Digi-Fragments** 2022/21,
Installationsansicht,
Künstlertgut Prösitz © *Katrin Leitner*

CRASH-STOP AKA IAN KEAVENY

*Glitch Artist,
Activist,
Curator,
Cultural
Worker
@crash-stop
(IRL)*

The Glitch Artist & Activist Ian Keaveny is a painter, illustrator and photographer. Keaveny works under the name crash-stop. His work is based on the ideas of remix culture developed by Lawrence Lessig, and the abuse and exploitation of errors in software and hardware.

In his artistic research he is interested in the unexpected events in the glitch, the reorganization, compression and the creative sharing of losses.

Platforms:
[bsky](#), [mastodon](#), [tumblr](#), [youtube](#)



*Ian Keaveny, Requiem for a Dream
(New bones for old work 2),
2025, Instagram post, 12th November 2024*

REQUIEM FOR A DREAM (2025)

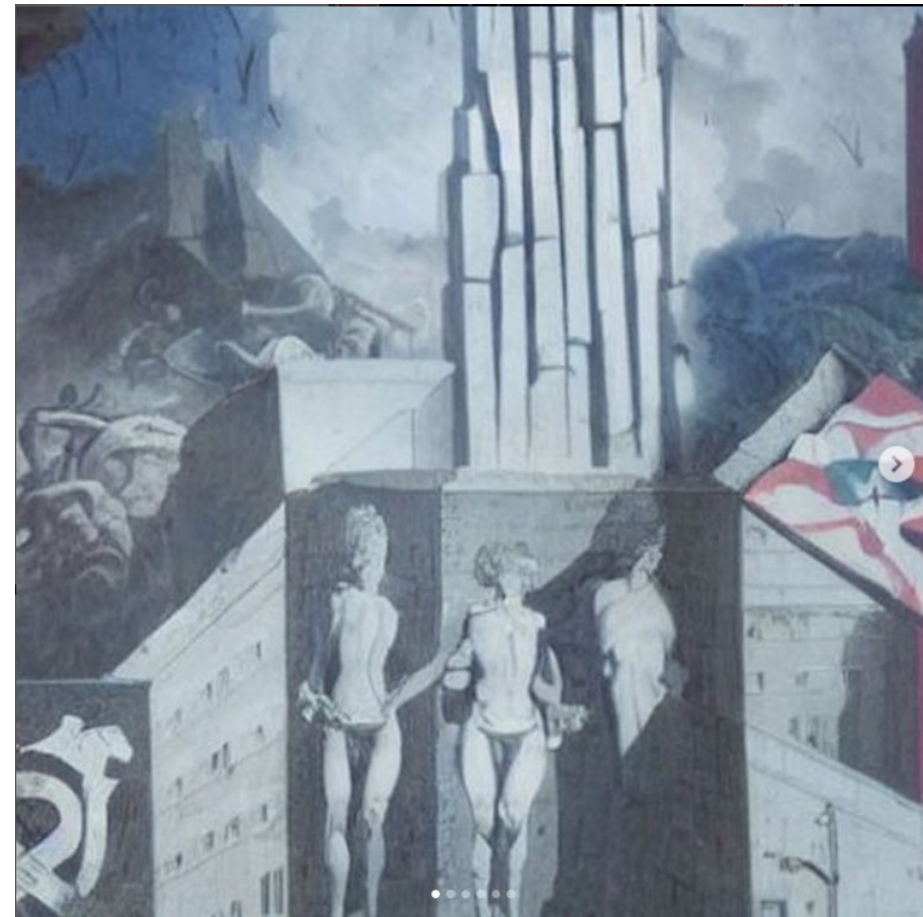
*Video-Essay on Meta, algorithmic censorship, shadowbanning
and Meta's problem with glitch art.*

What happens when an algorithm takes over the de-canonization of art? The video essay Meta documents this: Ian Keaveny, aka crash-stop (glitch artist, activist, Fu:bar curator, GAC admin), was shadow-banned by META's algorithm on Instagram. The trigger was a post featuring three stylized Graces. While we are debating fact-checking and freedom of speech, META has long since left the field to AI. The GAC community explains that META's algorithms have a specific issue with Glitch Art. Using filters (pixelating offensive content) has been a method to bypass (necessary) censorship. The "blind" algorithm responds by flagging it as "nudity, sexual activity," etc.

Technical details:

Video Essay Installation: 25:44 min loop

Software: LMDE os, Libre Impress, Gimp, simplescreenrecorder, kdenlive, handbrake, scripts using gnucoreutils and imagemagick.



Ian Keaveny, Requiem for a Dream
(2025) Instagram post, *11th November 2024*

Algorithmic Censorship: Glitch Art Between Realism and Repression: Last but not least, the invisible changes in social media in recent weeks and months have shown: Meta's social media platforms (Facebook, Instagram, Threads) largely determine which art remains visible and which does not. Glitch Art, an art form that exists in the digital realm, is particularly vulnerable to algorithmic misclassification as "problematic" content. The case of Ian Keaveny, one of the world's most important Glitch artists, illustrates how Meta's moderation practices amount to a subtle form of censorship: shadow banning, content demotion, and algorithmic misjudgments deprive certain artists and art forms of visibility.

Ian Keaveny

Meta bases its content moderation on so-called "Community Standards," which supposedly protect diversity and freedom of expression. In reality, however, these guidelines reflect an American, often puritanical, perspective on art. Particularly revealing is Meta's exception for "real world art": digital art, such as Glitch Art, does not fall under this protection and is more easily flagged as a violation. This distinction recalls the concept of "Socialist Realism" in the former East Germany or the Nazi classification of "Degenerate Art": only certain forms of art, deemed "realistic" or "acceptable," are tolerated, while others are marginalized or suppressed through institutional measures.

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The consequence of this practice is a creeping Gleichschaltung of artistic expression. Meta's algorithms are not neutral – they reflect societal and economic power structures and actively determine which art remains visible. Through automated decision-making, entire artistic movements are marginalised, while content containing hate speech or political propaganda often slips through the cracks. These mechanisms of algorithmic censorship foster a culture of self-censorship: artists must conform in order to avoid being excluded from platforms.

Keaveny's case makes one thing clear: whoever controls the parameters for “visible” art dictates which aesthetics, ideas, and narratives are allowed to

Ian Keaveny

exist in the digital public sphere. In this sense, the algorithm becomes the modern censor—not through overt bans, but through the invisible hand of digital erasure. The complete video essay by Ian Keaveny can be found here: *Paralipomena: Meta - Requiem for a Dream*, 2025. (VV)

GHOSTS OF PROPAGANDA (2024)

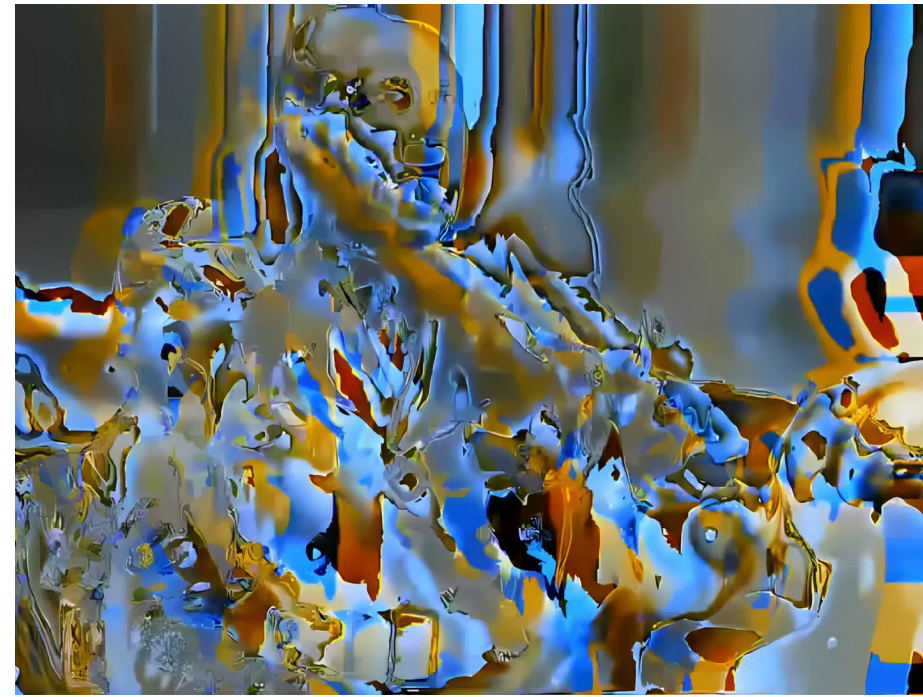
In the video *Ghosts of Propaganda*, Keaveny detoxifies Leni Riefenstahl's 1935 propaganda film *Triumph of the Will*. Using Glitch Art, the film's propaganda elements are neutralised and neutralized: movement and gestures are reduced, Nazi symbols removed. At the same time, however, there is an acknowledgment that the "fascist ghosts" inherent in the film's ideology have not disappeared but rather persist as distortions in discourse.

Technical details:

Videoinstallation: 01:12:04 loop.

Software: Gnuinos os, Devuan 5 os, ffmpeg/ffplay, Cheese webcam booth, handbrake, scripts using gnucoreutils and imagemagick, Upscayl, kdenlive, handbrake.

Hardware: Dell Wyse 5010 Thin client DxOD (X11 poisoning), vga to hdmi converter, hdmi to usb3 converter, Nvidia 1050/1060



Ian Keaveny, Ghosts of Propaganda, 2024. Glitched and X11 poisoning of found digital video based on Leni "Riefenstahl's" propaganda film Triumph of the Will (1935). *Videostill. © 2025 Ian Keaveny*

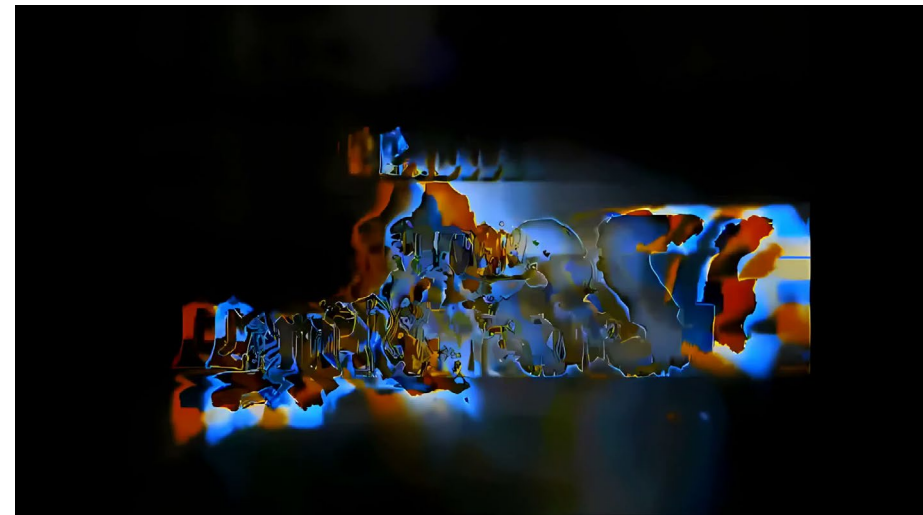
THE ECSTASY OF RESISTANCE (2024)

*Displacement mapping , colourshift and X11 poisoning of
Leni Riefenstahls Triumph of the Will (1935) and Ekstase (1933)
with actress Hedy Lamarr.*

The video „Ecstasy of Resistance“ overlays and poisons two films with opposite meanings: Leni Riefenstahl's "Triumph of the Will" and the film "Ekstase" with the actress Hedy Lamarr. The goal is to negate the meaning of one with the message of the other— a cinematic entanglement of thesis, antithesis, and synthesis. At the same time, it recognizes that even in dark times, there are always voices of resistance, such as Hedy Lamarr's, who will fight against the darkness.

Technical details:

Displacement mapping, colourshift and X11 poisoning of
Leni Riefenstahls Triumph of the will (1935) and Extase (1933) with actress Hedy Lamarr
Software: Gnuinos os, Devuan 5 os , ffmpeg/ffplay, Cheese webcam booth,
handbrake, scripts using gnucoreutils and imagemagick, Upscayl, kdenlive, handbrake.
Hardware: Dell Wyse 5010 Thin client DxOD (X11 poisoning),
vga to hdmi converter, hdmi to usb3 converter , Nvidia 1050/1060.



Ian Keaveny: Ecstasy of Resistance (2024) Videoinstallation,
01:24:49 loop. *Videostill.*

NEW ANCESTORS (2024) 7 VIDEO-INSTALLATIONS

*2d to 3d conversion and animation of images of
censored and imprisoned East German writers (1945-89):*

Susanne Kerckhoff (1918-1950)
Edeltraut Eckert (1930-1955)
Inge Müller (1925–66)
Jutta Petzold (1933–2020)
Hannelore Becker (1951–1976)
Jürgen Fuchs (1950–1999)
Günter Ullmann (1946–2009)

Technical details:

Software: Gnuinos os, Devuan 5 os, ffmpeg/ffplay, Cheese webcam booth, handbrake, scripts using gnucoreutils and imagemagick, Upscayl, kdenlive, handbrake.

Hardware: Dell Wyse 5010 Thin client DxOD (X11 poisoning),
vga to hdmi converter, hdmi to usb3 converter, Nvidia 1050/1060.

The video gallery *New Ancestors* is a digital “resurrection” of portraits of censored and imprisoned East German writers, presented through 2D-to-3D conversion and animation. Someone once said that history is written by the victors—and that history often presents the ideas of ancestors who are officially regarded as the precursors of the present. But what happens when these victors themselves become the vanquished, as occurred after the fall of communism in Eastern Europe? Can these official ancestors be replaced? Can the suppressed and censored voices—the good spirits of the past—finally be heard and seen again?

New Ancestors is a portrait gallery of young authors who are

considered part of the “Suppressed Literary History in East Germany 1945-89”: Susanne Kerckhoff, Edeltraut Eckert, Jutta Petzold, Hannelore Becker, Inge Müller, Jürgen Fuchs, and Günter Ullmann. The digital reconstructions of individual life stories are highly personal approaches—executed by the Irish artist Ian Keaveny.

We have included these writers because their fates have touched us anew with every engagement. Each fate is unique in its own way. Their biographies are particularly significant because some of them died so young, leaving behind a fragmented body of work, as in the case of Edeltraut Eckert. Jutta Petzold’s “glitched” prose and the arrhythmic nature of her

Ian Keaveny

poetry particularly resonate with us as Glitch activists; we were also deeply moved by the change in her facial expression (from 1958 to 1965). The journalist Susanne Kerckhoff concerns us because even in her late reception (2020), her political motivations were erased. In Inge Müller, one can study the effects of dual dictatorship and trauma. Hannelore Becker’s story exemplifies the phenomenon of social detachment. The biographies of Jürgen Fuchs and Günter Ullmann were chosen as exemplary cases for understanding what an “OV” (Operative Procedure) was.

Ian Keaveny has worked with low-resolution image material, transforming fading 2D templates into 3D artifacts. These

digital approaches to various traumas enabled ghostly inner perspectives on these extraordinary individuals. If animation means revitalisation, we have attempted to bring the victims of the regime back to life. With the title *New Ancestors*, we want to express that we seek to revive them as our sisters and brothers in spirit. Our intense engagement was only possible because Ines Geipel and Joachim Walther (Ges-
perrte Ablage, Unterdrückte
Literaturgeschichte in Ost-
deutschland 1945-1989, 2015/
2024) has accomplished invaluable archival and editorial work over the past three decades, preserving their memory for us. Each of the *New Ancestors* provides a lens into East German contemporary history. Their

Ian Keaveny

fates reveal the fractures of the system; their reappraisal highlights the different atmospheres of the dictatorship decades (1949-1989) in the “experimental field” of history. (VV)



Ian Keaveny, **New Ancestors, Installation**
view of *Glitch: Ontological Exhaustions & System Failures*, Spazju
Kreattiv, 2025, Photography © Elisa von Brockdorff. Courtesy © Spaz-
ju Kreattiv & The Artist. **Michael Betancourt,**
Eastalgia, 2025 (in the middle)

SUSANNE KERCKHOFF (1918-1950)

In 1950, the young GDR was undergoing a phase of intense political consolidation. Under Walter Ulbricht, the SED had secured control over all societal spheres in the preceding years. The treatment of recent history, particularly National Socialism and the Holocaust, was politically highly sensitive. The GDR sought to establish itself as an anti-fascist state, portraying socialists as the true victors over National Socialism and fascism. This led to the so-called “Buchenwald Legend.”

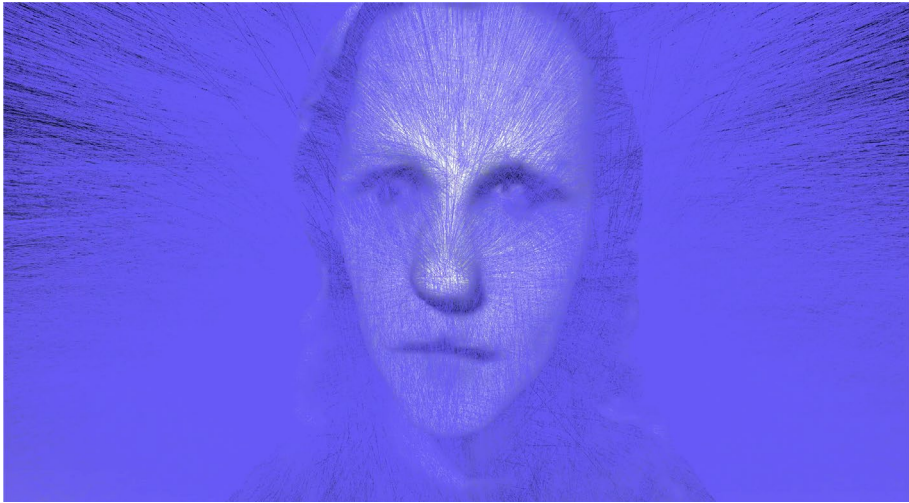
Ian Keaveny

Susanne Kerckhoff (1918-1950) was a significant voice in the literary and political discourse of the postwar period. As the daughter of literary historian Walther Harich and musician Eta Harich-Schneider, she was exposed to political and cultural currents from an early age. After 1945, she initially engaged with the SPD, joined the SED in 1947, and moved to the eastern sector of Berlin. As an editor and head of the culture section of *Berliner Zeitung*, she advocated for critical engagement with postwar politics. She particularly opposed the distorted representation of National Socialist history in the East and rejected the official state doctrine that established “red antifascism” as the foundation of GDR identity.

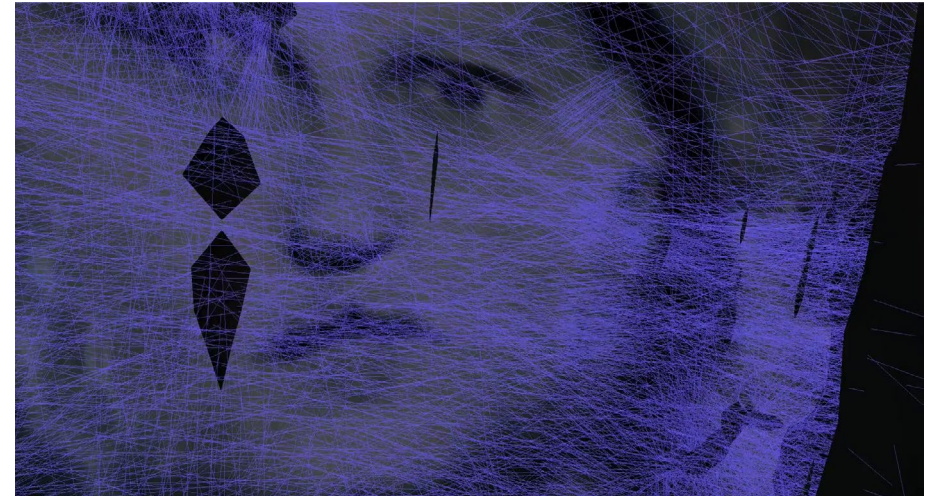
Kerckhoff had built a resistance network for Jewish friends under the Nazi regime and, after the war, had to witness the loss of many of them. In the Stalinist era, the new GDR leadership demanded that she suppress her memories, particularly regarding the Holocaust. She refused to accept this political distortion of history and vehemently opposed the erasure of the Holocaust from the East German narrative. This stance made her a target of the GDR leadership. Her confrontations with leading figures like Walter Ulbricht and Paul Wandel ultimately led to her complete erasure from public recognition.

In 1950, Susanne Kerckhoff took her own life, shortly after a final break with the party and her social environment. Her death and the ensuing political and societal silence are an early symbol of the suppression and erasure of committed female voices in the emerging socialist state. Her story, which also questions the “Buchenwald Complex,” remains an important yet often overlooked chapter in early GDR history, documenting resistance against political myth-making and historical revisionism.

After her suicide, she was deliberately erased from memory. Ines Geipel states: “The ‘Kerckhoff case’ can also be read symbolically: as a story of disappearance. Contrary to all mainstream interpretations, it is also a story of the early disappearance of engaged femininity in the East. It was only the beginning. In 2020, her ‘Berlin Letters’ (1948) were reissued; to this day, her political motivations are ghosted.



Ian Keaveny, **New Ancestors, Susanne Kerckhoff (1918-1950), 2025,**
Videostill © *Ian Keaveny*



Ian Keaveny, **New Ancestors, Susanne Kerckhoff (1918-1950), 2025,**
Videostill © *Ian Keaveny*

EDELTRAUT ECKERT (1930-1955)

The death of Edeltraut Eckert on April 18, 1955, occurred at a time when the GDR was increasingly solidifying itself as a restrictive surveillance state. In early 1955, the dissolution of Soviet special camps began, from which many survivors were transferred directly to GDR prisons like Bautzen or Hoheneck. Simultaneously, the Ministry for State Security (MfS) intensified its control to systematically persecute ideological deviants.

Ian Keaveny

Politically, April 1955 marked a turning point in GDR foreign policy: On April 7, 1955, the Council of Ministers adopted the “Declaration on the End of the State of War with Germany,” underscoring the GDR’s claim to statehood. This step was a direct response to the planned admission of the Federal Republic into NATO, which took place on May 9, 1955. Domestically, the GDR leadership sought to suppress any dissent—particularly from young intellectuals like Edeltraut Eckert, whose critical thoughts posed a danger to the state. Her death symbolically represents the harsh crackdown on dissenters in the early GDR.

We look back: In the summer of 1950, Edeltraut Eckert and her fellow students learned about the existence of NKVD camps, the special camps established in East Germany by the Soviet secret service after 1945. NKVD stood for the People’s Commissariat for Internal Affairs (Narodny Kommissariat Wnutrennich Del) of the Soviet Union. Her faith in the young GDR project was shattered by this knowledge.

Together with three friends, Edeltraut Eckert founded a small resistance group. Information, codes, establishing contacts with the West, distributing leaflets. However, before the group could take any action, they were discovered—denounced by Edeltraut Eckert’s neighbor.

In July 1950, the trial against the four took place in Potsdam, behind closed doors. No exculpatory witnesses, no defense. Accordingly, the verdict was harsh. Edeltraut Eckert was sentenced to 25 years in prison and forced labor, as well as the confiscation of all her personal belongings at the time of her arrest. First, she was sent to the penitentiary in Bautzen, then to Waldheim, and finally to the women’s prison in Hoheneck.

Drastic prison conditions, hunger, the arbitrariness of daily life behind bars, still reeling from the shock of her arrest, the extraordinarily severe sentence—though typical for that time—a life abruptly cut off. At the age of twenty, Edeltraut Eckert had to come to terms with an extreme situation in which the exception was the rule. How could she endure it? “I am so wrapped up in my verses, melodies, and sentences,” she wrote to her parents. While still in Waldheim, she was given a small octavo notebook—just once—and tried to resist with words. She wrote 101 poems.

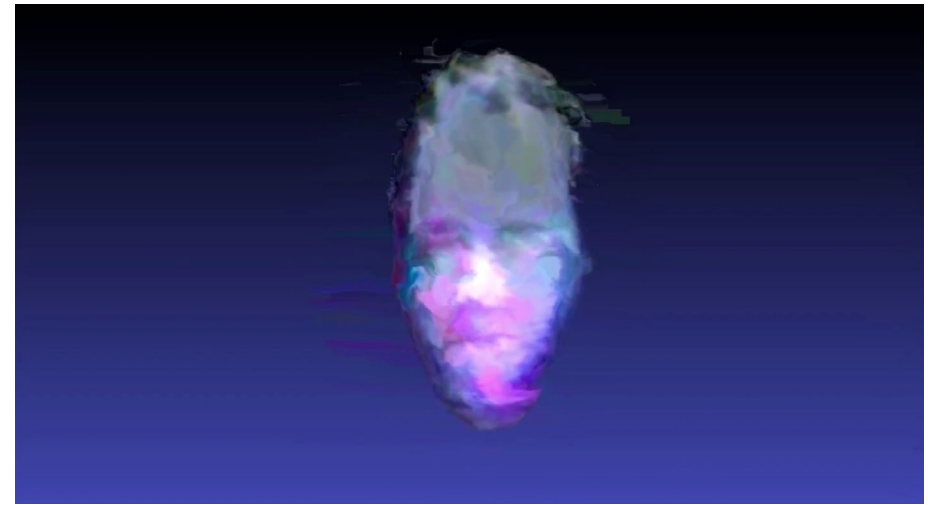
The Hoheneck correctional facility was the largest women’s prison in the GDR. Next to the guard post, a sign read: “The content and organization of the penal process are determined by the humaneness of the socialist state.” The reality? The worst hygienic conditions, suffocating confinement, the most primitive commands, the harshest working conditions. The little private property the prisoners had was kept under their pillows.

Edeltraut Eckert was placed in the eastern section of the prison fortress, in a detention room with 120 women, and was assigned to work as a mechanic in the sewing workshop. Assembly line work in a three-shift system. On January 24, 1955, the large industrial wave in the workshop was running at full speed. The late shift was particularly hectic. The mechanics had their hands full when a bobbin case fell under the wave. To prevent the machine from stopping and causing a production

delay, Edeltraut Eckert reached for the bobbin. Her hair, which she had left loose that day—by coincidence—was caught in the drive shaft and pulled into the machinery. Her scalp was torn off over a large area.

Since there was no female warden present at night, the wound could not be disinfected. It became infected. After several skin grafts at the prison hospital in Leipzig-Meusdorf, Edeltraut Eckert died of tetanus on April 18, 1955. Two days later, she was cremated, and her urn was buried in a secret mass grave. Her parents received neither a death certificate nor an official notification—only a package in the mail. Inside: the suit Edeltraut Eckert had been wearing when she was arrested, a few belongings, and the octavo notebook with her poems.

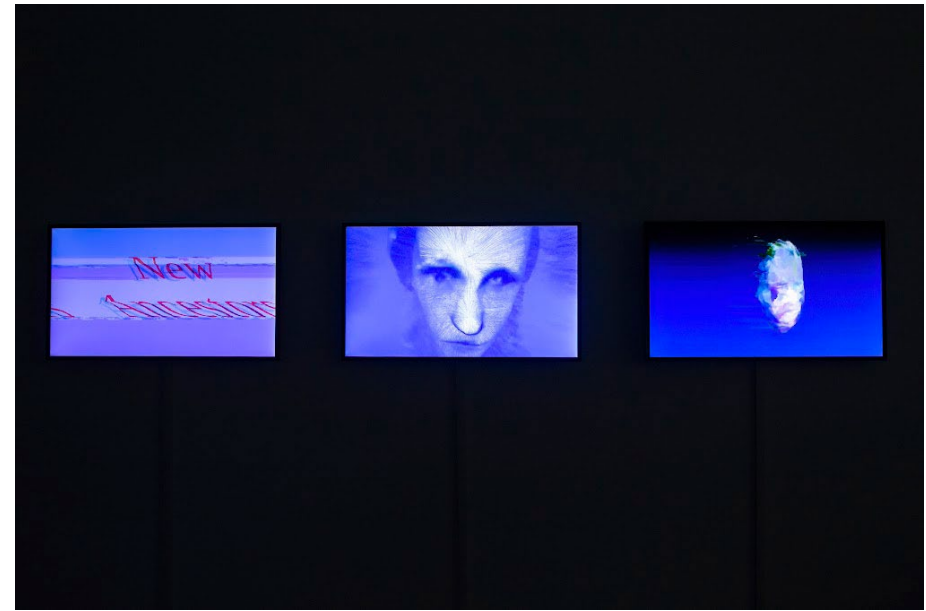
Source: Ines Geipel, *Verfemte Dichterinnen, Emma*, 2020



Ian Keaveny, **New Ancestors, Edeltraut Eckert (1930-1955), 2025,**
Videostill © *Ian Keaveny*



Ian Keaveny, **New Ancestors, Edeltraut Eckert (1930-1955), 2025,**
Videostill © *Ian Keaveny*



Ian Keaveny, **New Ancestors, Installa-
 tion view of** *Glitch: Ontological Exhaustions & System
 Failures, Spazju Kreattiv, 2025, Photography* © *Elisa von Brockdorff.*
Courtesy © *Spazju Kreattiv & The Artist.*

INGE MÜLLER (1925–1966)

Inge Müller (1925–1966) was a writer who not only experienced the political and social conflicts of her time but, above all, endured the horrors of war firsthand. The central trauma of her life was the experience of being buried under rubble in Berlin in 1945—trapped between life and death for three days, suffocating in the dust of the shattered city. This event, this direct confrontation with death, became ingrained in her language.

Ian Keaveny

Every line of her poetry, every dialogue in her plays, bears witness to this existential experience—the impossibility of leaving the war behind. It became a part of her, an inescapable obsession that surfaced repeatedly in her work. Her literature is permeated with images of confinement, oppression, and the struggle for breath.

The postwar years did not bring liberation, but a new kind of restriction. Inge Müller tried to establish herself as a writer in the GDR but found little room for her radical, unrelenting perspective. The official literary movements demanded optimistic visions of the future, collective rebuilding, and socialist pathos. But Inge Müller did not write for the collective; she wrote about the individual, crushed under the weight of the past. Her characters—like herself—were prisoners of a history that would never let them go.

Her marriage to Heiner Müller, often described as a symbiosis of two creative forces, was marked by struggle—just like her writing. Where he chose grand, often cynical gestures, she sought quiet, unsettling tones. Her perspective was that of a woman who did not see war as heroism or ideological confrontation, but as a profound, irreparable rupture in human existence.

After several failed suicide attempts, Inge Müller ended her life in 1966. However, her works—rediscovered and recognized by Ines Geipel and others—live on. They reveal a writer who never stopped searching for words to express the unspeakable.

Anyone who reads Inge Müller encounters not just a forgotten writer, but a voice that speaks to us from the darkness of the 20th century—of confinement, suffocation, and the insurmountable boundary between life and death.

On March 13, 1925, she was born. The day before the opening of the exhibition, her 100th birthday will be commemorated.



Ian Keaveny, **New Ancestors,
Inge Müller (1925–66), 2025,
Videostill** © *Ian Keaveny*



Ian Keaveny, **New Ancestors,
Inge Müller (1925–66), 2025,
Videostill** © *Ian Keaveny*

JUTTA PETZOLD (1933–2020)

The year 1968 is internationally synonymous with protest, upheaval, and fundamental social change. In West Germany, student protests escalated, and after the assassination attempt on Rudi Dutschke, demonstrations reached their peak. The Emergency Laws were passed, while the APO (Extra-Parliamentary Opposition) debated the “long march through the institutions.” West of the Wall, society was moving—sometimes explosively, sometimes gradually—toward liberalization.

Ian Keaveny

In the GDR, however, 1968 did not signify an opening, but rather the final consolidation of a totalitarian strategy. The response to the Prague Spring was a dogmatic commitment to harshness. The state power crushed any hopes for reform at the root, institutionalising new mechanisms of repression. The SED leadership had learned from past events: open violence was used less frequently, and instead, the Stasi perfected the method of “Zersetzung”—a psychological warfare tactic. Critical thinkers were no longer physically eliminated but mentally broken.

1968 also marked a decisive turning point in Jutta Petzold’s life. Her literary drive, which for years had been a form of resistance against political constraints, fell into an existential crisis. The paranoid atmosphere of the GDR, where mistrust, surveillance, and manipulation were omnipresent, seeped into her prose. “Die Verfolgung” (The Persecution) did not just describe the feeling of being watched; it captured the disturbing experience of a world in which language had lost its reliability.

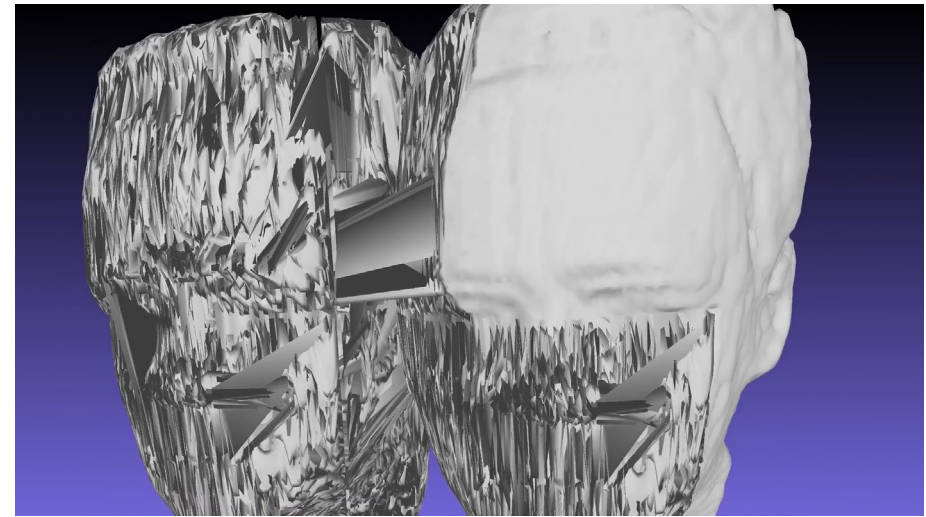
Her isolation became total, until her language began to glitch: “Peeled foliage church nape. Solmitur just try. Glaudiärwoitek relapse. Sormatik mesodratik. Muskolosamt alienating effect. Stanislaus merowingsting lapiszula todremtokwi halun. I know your silent, hopelessly lost world. Hatokdedei marbus o sei. Vilfosugen half astor see Jutta is beautiful. Mobile standing warning committee. Crystal man be. Kolnu okei. Writing by day and staying by night. Fapis morun kandis what to do. Lose the Otto, your little Hotto. Shroud the special celebrations in veils. Miskorwita o dulada. Sibirskonu falukitu. Misorbetrit o wegzogzit. Forget the forest, it is cold there. Surround constant mourning with walls. Lose the baggage that came with you.” Source: Ines Geipel, Verfemte Dichterinnen, Emma 2020

But Jutta Petzold did not only write about persecution—she was persecuted herself. Her literary attempt to create a “system against powerlessness” ultimately failed against the real structures of power. Psychiatry became the final station of this process. In a society that increasingly labeled nonconformist artists as mentally ill, her admission to the Charité hospital marked her complete disenfranchisement. Misdiagnosis, isolation, loss of language—what was happening to GDR society as a whole was mirrored in Petzold’s fate in its most radical form.

While in West Germany, the young generation in 1968 was searching for new forms of expression and leftist intellectuals were changing the country, the GDR froze in a period of rigid control. Those who refused to conform disappeared—into files, into cells, or into madness. Jutta Petzold was one of many, but her work remains a testament to an experience that the official historiography of the GDR preferred to render invisible.



Ian Keaveny, **New Ancestors, Jutta
Petzold (1933–2020), 2025,
Videostill** © *Ian Keaveny*



Ian Keaveny, **New Ancestors, Jutta
Petzold (1933–2020), 2025,
Videostill** © *Ian Keaveny*

HANNELORE BECKER (1951–1976)

After the transfer of power from Ulbricht to Honecker in 1971, the GDR seemed more stable than ever. However, control became more refined, and surveillance more comprehensive. Opposition groups were no longer openly dismantled but rather isolated through targeted subversion. Particularly in the cultural sphere, the Ministry for State Security relied on infiltration. Young talents were recruited, often under moral pressure. Hannelore Becker, born in 1951, was one of them: disguised as IM “Clementine.”

Ian Keaveny

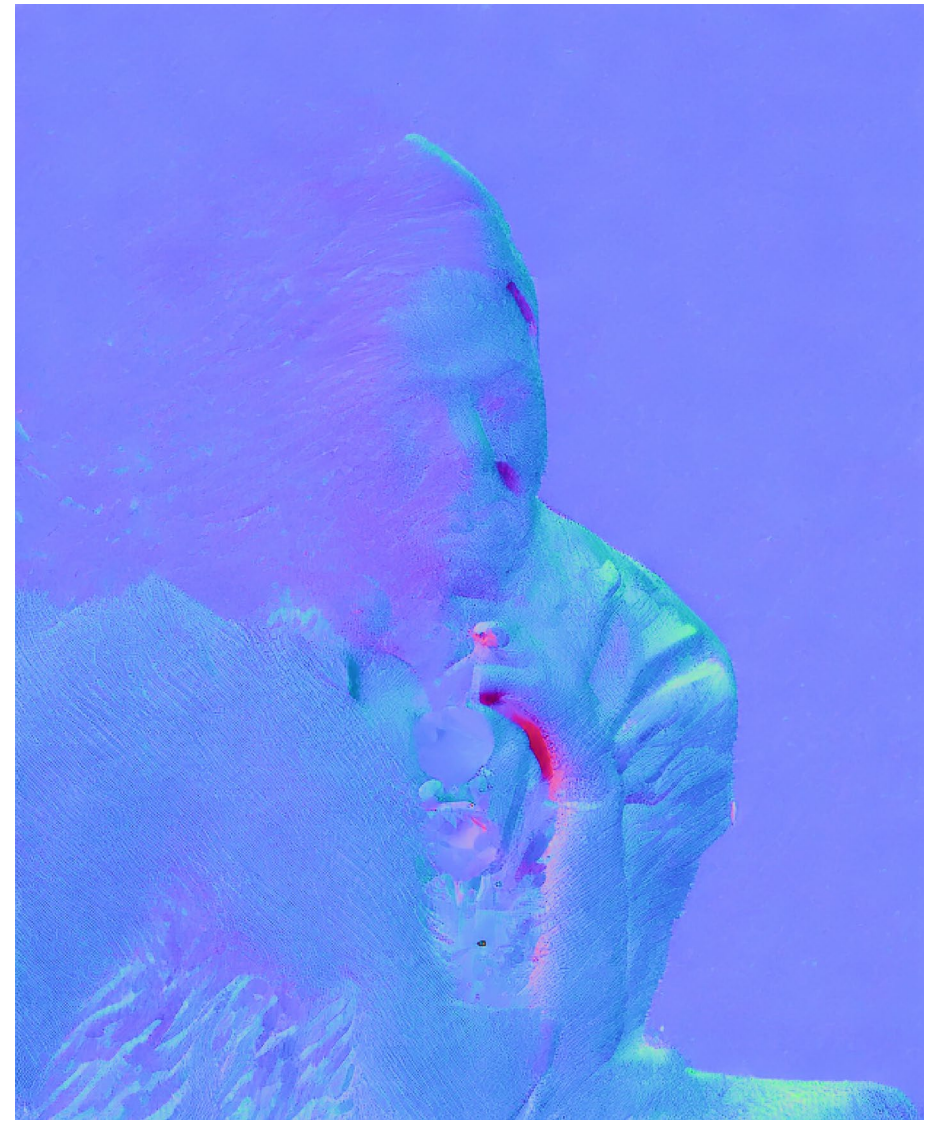
“Hannelore Becker provided the Ministry for State Security (MfS) with the information it needed operationally. She reported from the university, from folk song club workshops, from the Friedrichshain Literature Club, from the Poet Seminar in Schwerin, and on the 1973 World Festival of Youth and Students in East Berlin. The tone of her reports was clear, pointed, and convincing. From Autumn 1971, she received specific assignments to infiltrate opposition circles. These included the writers Jürgen Fuchs and Franz Fühmann, as well as the philosopher Wolfgang Heise. These encounters were not without consequence. In May 1974, Hannelore Becker stopped submitting regular reports. She no longer attended scheduled meetings at the Stasi’s covert apartment and withdrew.

After nearly four years of working for the secret service, she requested to be released from her duties. Her request was granted. However, her texts reveal that the break was not merely external. It was as if she had to relearn how to walk and to learn a new language once again. Her poems search for silence, speak of contemplating sound, of exhausted spaces and deformed time.” (Quote: Ines Geipel, Verfemte Dichterinnen, Emma, 2020)

Yet once part of the system, she remained trapped—in loyalties, mistrust, and self-doubt. Her writings revolved around masks, puppets, and external control. On February 13, 1976, she took her own life. Her death was not an isolated case: many intellectuals were broken by a state that did not destroy its critics outright but suffocated them within themselves.



Ian Keaveny, **New Ancestors, Hannelore
Becker (1951–1976), 2025,**
Videostill © *Ian Keaveny*



Ian Keaveny, **New Ancestors, Hannelore
Becker (1951–1976), 2025,**
Videostill © *Ian Keaveny*

JÜRGEN FUCHS (1950–1999)

“Saying what is” was Jürgen Fuchs’ credo. It meant loyalty to reality, emotional documentation, unwavering courage, and writing “with destructive intent,” as Fuchs put it, in open resistance. (Quote: GES-PERTE ABLAGE, 148)

The writer Jürgen Fuchs was one of the most prominent civil rights activists in the GDR. His life path exemplifies the disillusionment many committed Marxists felt with real socialism. A particularly formative event was the expatriation of singer-songwriter Wolf Biermann in November 1976—an event that led to his own arrest and later forced expatriation. Through his works, Fuchs documented the crimes of the SED regime, mobilising civil rights movements in both East and West.

Ian Keaveny

Born in 1950 into a working-class family, Jürgen Fuchs initially identified with the socialist structures of the GDR. However, a turning point in his perspective came during his military service in the National People’s Army (1969–1971). In his writings, he later explored the contradiction between official ideology and the reality of a repressive system. After his military service, he began studying social psychology but was increasingly monitored by the Ministry for State Security (MfS) due to his critical writings and was ultimately expelled from the university in 1975, shortly before completing his degree.

Fuchs was among the first signatories of the protest resolution against Wolf Biermann’s expatriation. This led to his own arrest, months of interrogations by the Stasi, and his eventual forced expatriation in 1977. He later chronicled his experiences in custody in the Interrogation Protocols (1978)—one of the most compelling literary testimonies of the psychological erosion tactics used by the GDR secret police. In West Berlin, Fuchs worked with fellow dissidents such as Roland Jahn to support opposition movements in the GDR. At the same time, his writings expanded to address international issues of peace and human rights.

Even in the West, he remained under Stasi surveillance: besides standard monitoring, there were indications of possible health impairments due to targeted radiation exposure. Like other dissidents—including Rudolf Bahro and Gerulf Pannach—Fuchs developed a rare form of cancer in the late 1990s. Whether his imprisonment played a role remained unclear. Until his untimely death in 1999, he tirelessly pursued the reappraisal of the SED dictatorship, working for the Stasi Records Agency. His connection to Wolf Biermann not only marked a turning point in his own life but also established him as one of the most influential voices against GDR repression.



Ian Keaveny, **New Ancestors, Jürgen Fuchs (1950–1999), 2025,**
Videostill © *Ian Keaveny*



Ian Keaveny, **New Ancestors, Jürgen Fuchs (1950–1999), 2025,**
Videostill © *Ian Keaveny*

GÜNTER ULLMANN (1946–2009)

On November 19, 1976, three days after Biermann's expatriation, Günter Ullmann spontaneously traveled to Grünheide near Berlin to visit the Fuchs family, who had taken refuge with the blacklisted regime opponent Robert Havemann. Ullmann was arrested in front of Havemann's property. The "Ministry for State Security" (MfS) released him—though not for long. (...) Biermann had been expatriated; his friend Jürgen Fuchs was in custody.

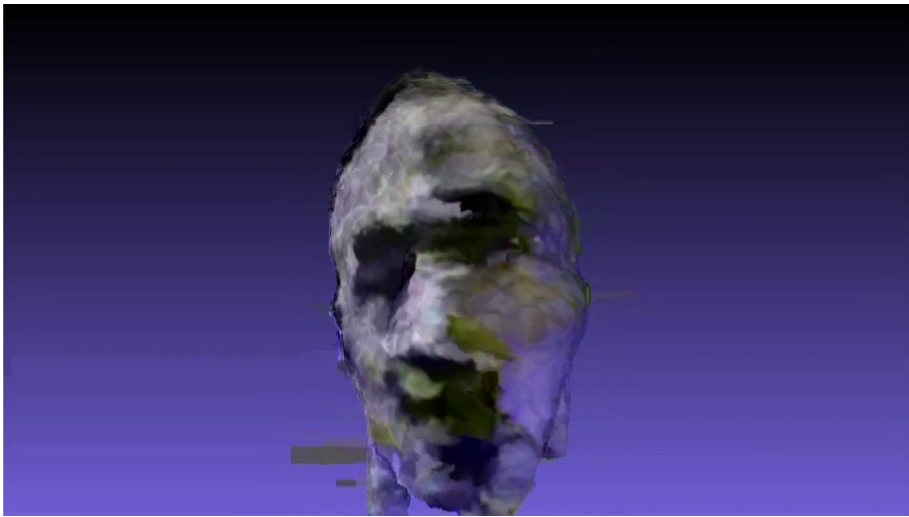
Ian Keaveny

For Ullmann, this was unbearable. He went on the offensive, writing petitions to the State Council, the Council of Ministers, the Writers' Association, and the Association of Visual Artists. In vain. No response came—only the secret police.

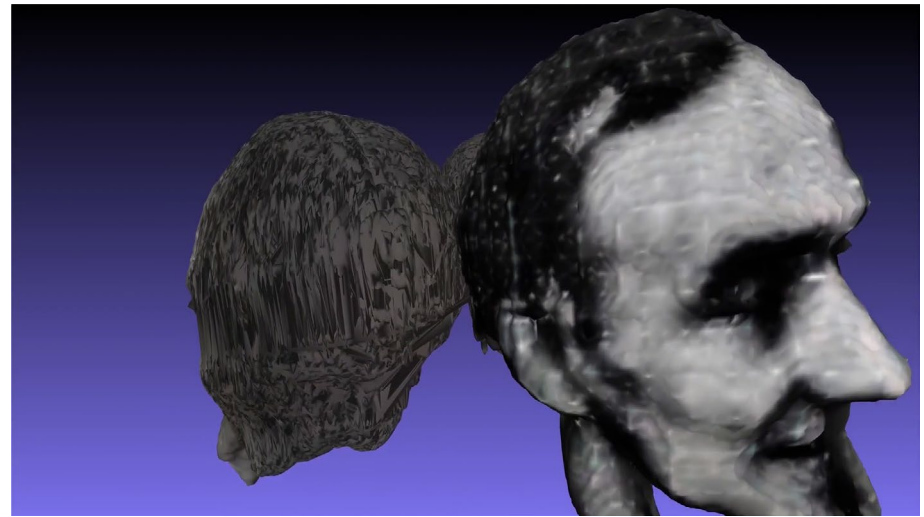
While Jürgen Fuchs was subjected to months of continuous interrogations in the Stasi prison in Hohenschönhausen, Ullmann was taken to the "Department of Internal Affairs" in Gera. He was interrogated 7 times—about his relationships with Reiner Kunze, Fuchs, and Ibrahim Böhme. Ullmann was confronted with details, private information, and intimate thoughts that only his closest friends could have known. He realized that one of his best friends—Böhme—had to be an informant. Later, Böhme was exposed as IM "Paul Bonkarz"; informants did not operate under their real names.

"During the interrogations, I still felt strong," he recalled, "but at home, it got bad. I always thought someone was following me." The Stasi's meticulously calculated subversion plan intensified the pressure. Ullmann's apartment was monitored around the clock: every raised blind, every opened door was noted, every visitor photographed, his mail confiscated. – IM Bonkarz observed the effects of his "poison" and proudly reported to the authorities that there had been "psychological destabilisation of the hostile-negative person." Believing the secret police knew his innermost thoughts, Ullmann began cutting out newspaper faces resembling his friends—a premonition of betrayal. He cut wires in his basement—thinking they were listening devices. He had his teeth pulled—believing they were bugged. He went to Berlin in search of his imagined King Solomon and attempted suicide twice.

Ullmann spent the following years in psychiatric hospitals in Rodewisch, Stadtrode, and Jena. Despite these extreme interventions, he produced 14 manuscripts in the 1970s and 1980s, initially for the drawer. After the fall of the Berlin Wall (1989), he was able to publish many of his manuscripts, publicly read his poems, and exhibit his paintings. But the years of persecution weighed heavily. Betrayal, fear, and pain remained, returning as "spawned black suns." Ullmann passed away 2009 in Greiz (Thuringia) at the age of 62. (Text based on: INES GEIPEL, GESPERRTE ABLAGE, 2015/ 2024, p. 148/149)



Ian Keaveny, **New Ancestors, Günter Ullmann (1946–2009), 2025, Videostill** © *Ian Keaveny*

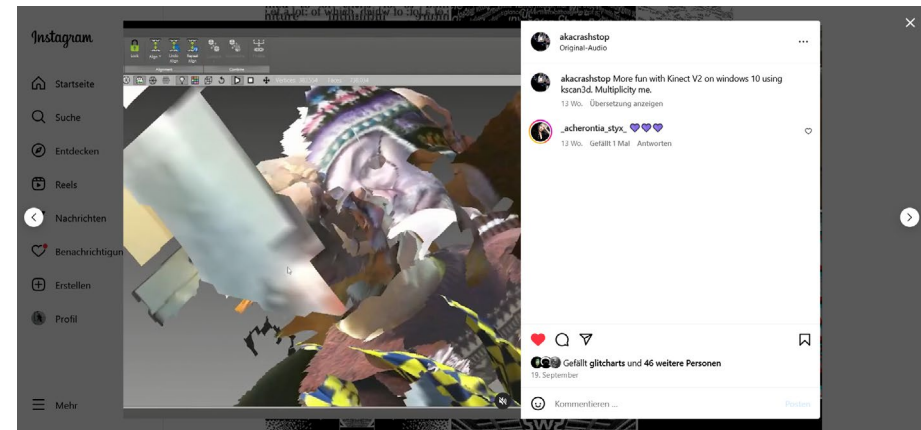


Ian Keaveny, **New Ancestors, Günter Ullmann (1946–2009), 2025, Videostill** © *Ian Keaveny*

Conclusion:

“Literary resistance in the GDR was not something that could be passed down. It had to be reinvented time and again, emerging from itself—by a new generation, under shifting political conditions, through different aesthetics, through silence and taboos. The classic narration of the 1950s was followed by the aesthetics of fear after the construction of the Berlin Wall. Not immediately, but gradually, an insistent literature emerged—one that spoke of fear, yet was no longer gripped by it. A literature that made it possible ‘to look into the exterior and interior of power and powerlessness’ (FN 179, GA p. 147), as Herta Müller wrote. (Text based on: INES GEIPEL, GESPERRTE ABLAGE, 2015/ 2024)

Ian Keaveny



Ian Keaveny, Selfportrait, 2024

NIKLAS WASHAUSEN

*Artist,
Art Educator,
Researcher
(GER)*

*Is the glitch
still a safe
passage?*

Niklas Washausen studied at the Caspar-David-Friedrich-Institute of the University Greifswald where he graduated with his thesis: “Moving Disturbances - Artistic approaches to image-immanent disturbances of 21st century videography”. He has been a research assistant in English didactics at the University of Greifswald from 2022 to 2024 and is currently researching at the University of Potsdam in the field of digitisation-related arts education.

He is a board member of the artists' union (BBK e.V.) in Mecklenburg-Pomerania since 2023. His works were shown in London, Berlin, Linz, Winnipeg, Barcelona, Schwerin, Rostock and Freiburg and have been acquired by the state of Mecklenburg-Pomerania.

Nomadic body biographies inscribe their traces in spaces for posterity, while at the same time lending powerful meaning to those sites of agency. Glitch moves almost identically on this border between the visible and the invisible (Jakko Kemper). At the same time, the glitch marks the moment of its occurrence as the demise, the destruction or decay of the machine (“always-already dead”, Marc Olivier). In the revelation of the material fragility of a complex (spatial) system, glitch represents the ambassador of the raw/mortal/real/unavailable in contrast to the smooth/perfect/immortal/fake/available.

The rough, rebellious presence of selected GDR artists unfolds in technical poetry that is unsettled in the panoptical passage of present circles and past crosses. The sometimes trauma-burdened places where they lived and worked function here as a spectral call-and-response relationship to the artists who existed in them. The screens shown, with their spectral qualities immanent to the image, function as an capitalise Ouija board that allows the spirits of the GDR artists in their political and artistic impact and suffering to speak and be heard.

In a mapping project conceived together with the curator, I visited various places in Potsdam (Brandenburg, Germany) based on the publication *Gesperrte Ablage* by Ines Geipel and Joachim Walther, where the GDR artists spent a defining time of their lives. I documented these places photo- and videographically, drawing on practices of field research. Referring to the individual biographies and ordeals, demands for liberating interventions and disturbances were needed in order to let each artist speak through the glitch in a dignified manner. The following GDR artists are presented: Edeltraut Eckert (†), Sylvia Kabus, Ralf-Günter Krokiewicz (†), Eveline Kuffel (†), Jörns Pfeiffer (†), Renate Wullstein. (NW)

EXCURS

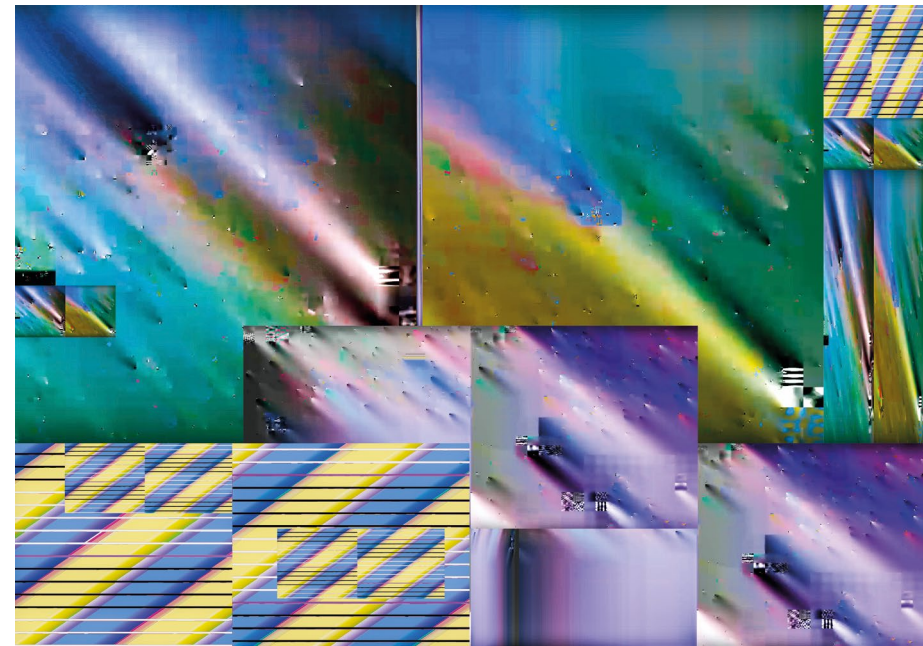
ABOUT substantial losses

Niklas Washausen, Tides X-sponged, 2024

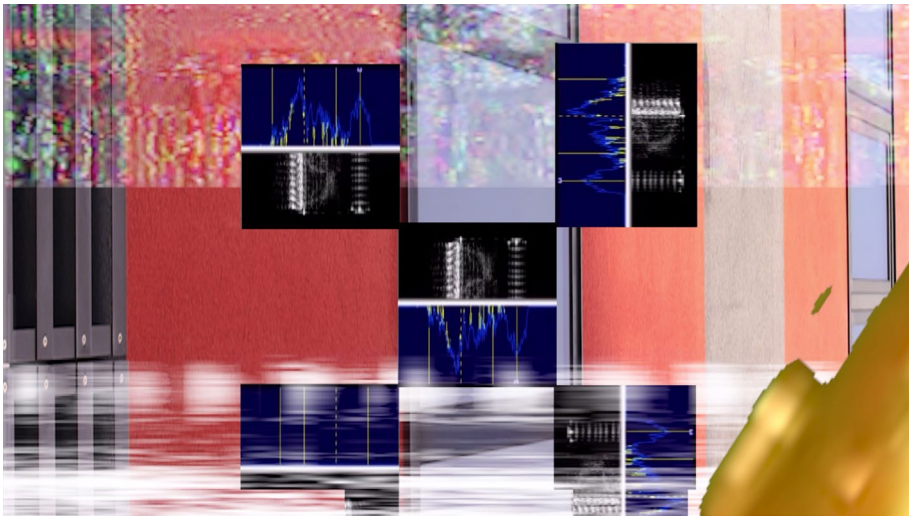
Niklas Washausen’s glitch aesthetics leads into the world of media and digital spaces, whose perceptual worlds are explored by him semantically, performatively and linguistically. It is about existential questions of glitch as an indicator of system deficits & previously undocumented functions. He dealt with the aesthetic and social effects of visual image disturbances in his study “Moving Disturbances - Artistic approaches to image-immanent disturbances in 21st century videography” at the University of Greifswald (2022).

As part of his glitch research, he investigated systemic breaking points. He is particularly interested in alienations that challenge image design generators and push them to their limits. This is where processes of controlled loss come into play through algorithmic filtering processes.

Niklas Washausen says: “Memes, which are often seen as viral images, have been shared and inserted so often by their original environment due to their social characteristics that they have lost their original meaning; this substantial loss is re-visualized in the work process. The



Niklas Washausen, **Tides X-sponged, 2024**



Videostill of Niklas Washausen: **Krolkiewicz_**
Glitch, 2024, (Rolf-Günter Krolkiewicz, 1955 – 2008,
Hans-Otto-Theater, Potsdam).

glitch takes on a new profile in these cognitive processes: It appears as a signal-like end point that clears the field for reductions, both digital and analogue.

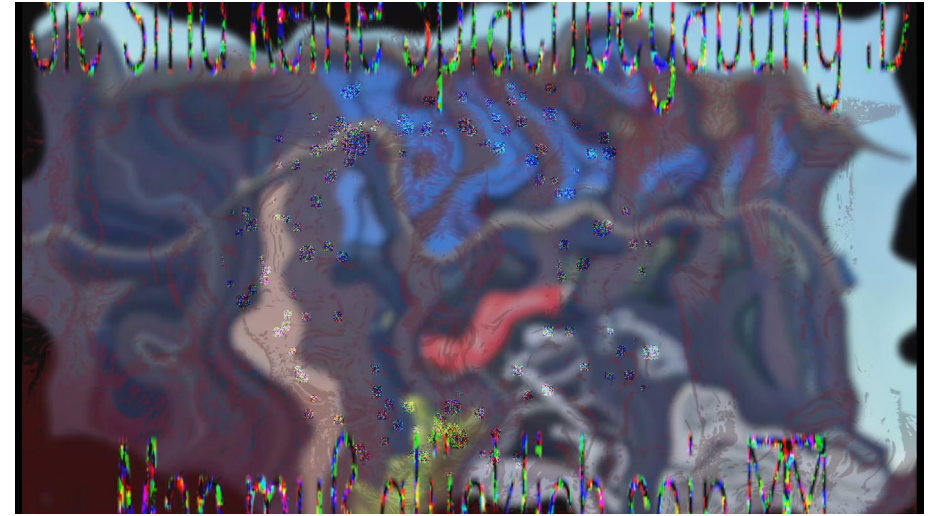
He explains the title of the artifact *Tides X-sponged*: A play on words with “expunged” (deleted/blackened, related to the origin of the motif) and “sponge” (to scrounge, but also: to wash with a sponge, read in a design sense). “Tides” refers both to the image motif (structures in the upper left half of the image are reminiscent of ripple marks caused by water movements in the sand or along stones in the sand) and thematically to highs and lows / successes and failures through technology (technology as a problem-solving tool, but also devastatingly dangerous), as well as the mysticism behind the tides, how they work and the presumed effects of the moon on the human psyche or the metaphor of the tides as a therapeutic model and course of life.

Publications + Exhibitions

- UNANGEBRACHT – 35th state-wide art exhibit, Rostock, 2025
- Open Studios, Atelierhaus Salzamt, Linz, 2024
- Academy Selection by HR Group, Pullman Schweizerhof, Berlin, 2024-25
- DYADE, Kulturforum Schleswig-Holstein-Haus, Schwerin, 2023
- BETWIXT AND BETWEEN - 33rd state-wide art exhibit, Stralsund, 2023
- ORACLES, The Holy Art Gallery, London, 2023
- Fubar 2022, Glitch Art Exhibition, Online, 2022
- Allerbeste Aussichten, Paul Ege Art Collection, Freiburg, 2022-23
- Hier & Jetzt - Young Artist Prize Mecklenburg-Pomerania, Schloss Plueschow, 2022
- Reconstructing Reality, Nida Art Colony, Nida, Lithuania, 2022
- Open Art Space, Fulbright Offices, Berlin, 22



Videostill of Niklas Washausen: **Eckert_Glitch,
2025, Videostill**
(*Edeltraut Eckert, 1930 – 1955, Kaiser-Friedrich-Straße 67a, Potsdam*)



Videostill of Niklas Washausen: **Kabus_Glitch,
2024** (*Sylvia Kabus, *1952, August-Bebel-Straße 26-53, Potsdam*)

OV
(Operativer
Vorgang
[Operational
Procedures]),
2024/25

*By Michael
Betancourt,
Ian Keaveny,
Niklas
Washausen*

Betancourt, Keaveny, and Washausen have crafted a digital monument that honours the resistance to Wolf Biermann's expulsion, because after signing, many of the letter's signatories faced imprisonment. This homage glitches and morphs their faces into one another in a continuous loop—an aesthetic approach designed to both protect and empower these historical figures:

*(in order of appearance) Wolf Biermann, Ekehard Schall, Christiane Ufholz, Christian Kunert, Franz Fühmann, Jutta Hoffmann, Erich Arendt, Eberhard Esche, Fritz Rudolf Fries, Gerhard Wolf, Cox Habbe-
ma, Günter Kunert, Gerulf Pannach, Jurek Becker, Jürgen Böttcher,
Eva-Maria Hagen, Thomas Schoppe, Bettina Wegner, Susanne Kerck-
hoff, Katharina Thalbach, Hans Joachim Schädlich, Heiner Müller,
Käthe Reichel, Klaus Schlesinger, Kurt Bartsch, Kurt Demmler, Man-
fred Krug, Nina Hagen, Rolf Ludwig, Rolf Schneider, Stefan Heym,
Stephan Hermlin, T.K. Tragelehn, Thomas Brasch, Ulrich Plenzdorf,
Volker Braun, Angelika Domröse, Christa Wolf, Christian Schoppe.*

Interview with Wolf Biermann
(November 16, 1976, NDR):

Shortly after learning that he would not be allowed to return to East Germany following his concert in Cologne, Biermann remarked:

My face is a bit wrecked right now. But I shouldn't sit in front of a camera because too many fools would think I'm broken just because I look broken. At the moment, I'm somewhat broken with happiness. That may sound exaggerated. I am very happy ... ever since I learned how vast and encompassing the solidarity with me is across all social and educational classes of the East German population.

Journalist asks:

Can you even see a future for yourself here in West Germany or elsewhere in Europe or the world?

Wolf Biermann:

Yes and no. I am in exile now. And these are problems that others before me have faced and had to deal with in their own way.

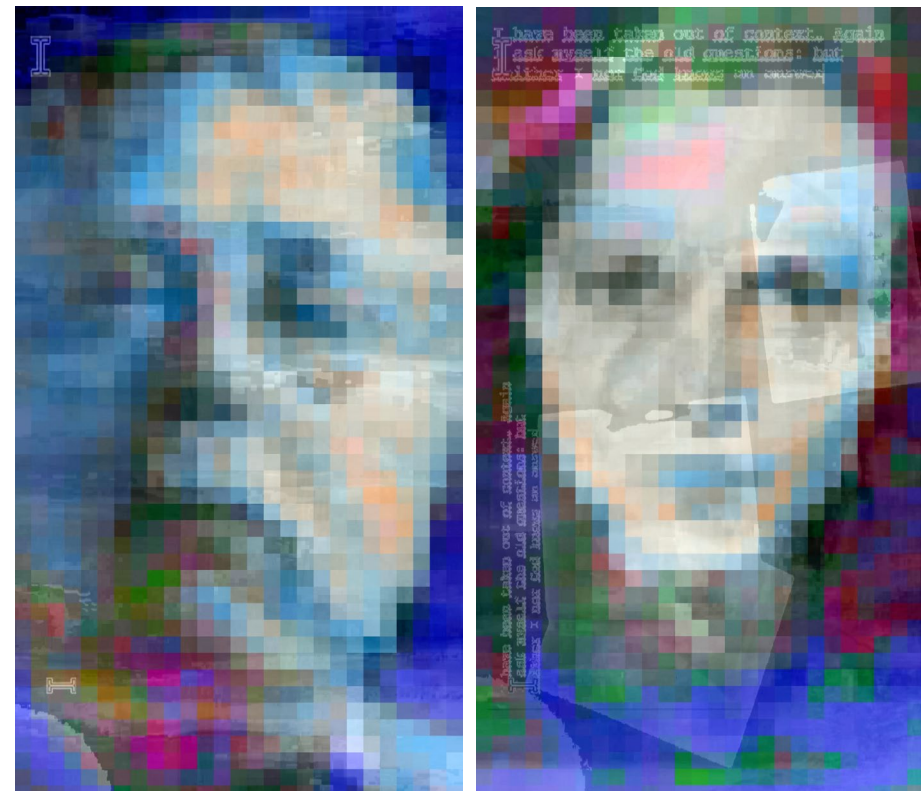
SONG:

Looking homeward from exile. Exile.

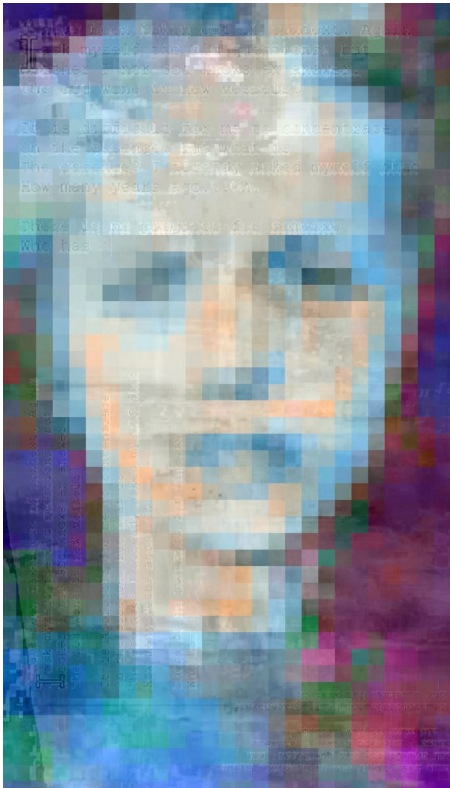
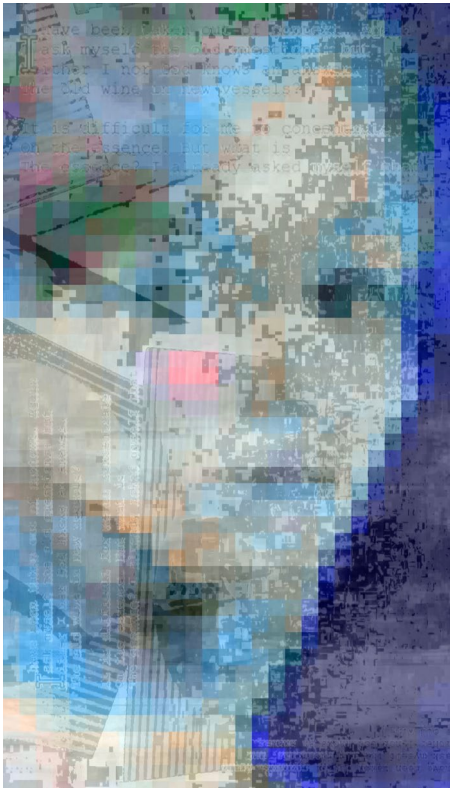
Wolf Biermann:

I actually didn't want to sing today. I'm not just some concert fool. (Gernulf) Pannach has been arrested, (Christian) Kuhnert too, both in Leipzig. In Jena: six students, probably even more. The heroes. (...)

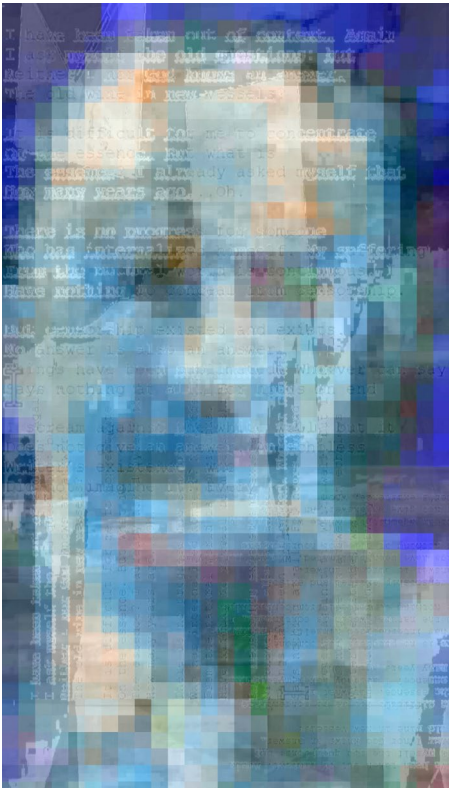
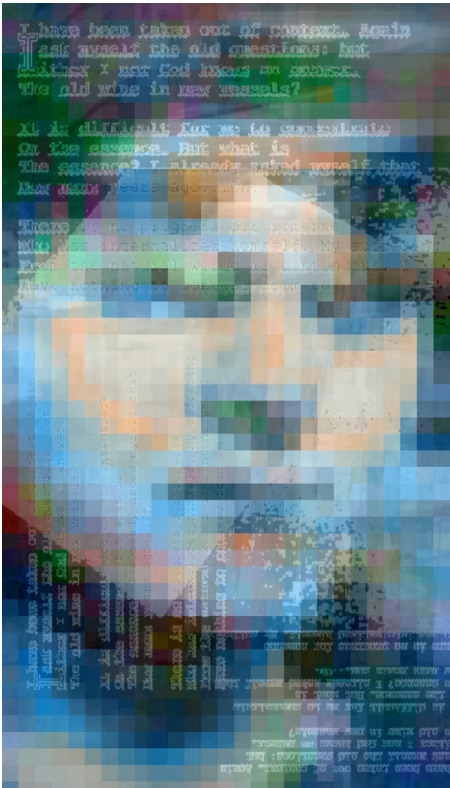
With each step, the viewer approaches the video installation OV at the end of the corridor that centers on the signatories of the so-called “Wolf Biermann Letter” (November 17, 1976). Conceptually, this collaboration between artists Michael Betancourt, Ian Keaveny, and Niklas Washausen serves as a kind of spine booster. Emerging from their work on East German resistance in the 1970s is a monument to the writers and artists who protested the expatriation of singer-songwriter Wolf Biermann.



Michael Betancourt, Ian Keaveny, Niklas Washausen **OV**
(Operativer Vorgang [Operational Procedures]), 2025



Michael Betancourt, Ian Keaveny, Niklas Washausen **OV**
 (Operativer Vorgang [Operational
 Procedures]), 2025



Michael Betancourt, Ian Keaveny, Niklas Washausen **OV**
 (Operativer Vorgang [Operational
 Procedures]), 2025

RUTH BIANCO (MT)

*Multidisciplinary
Research
Artist,
Art Educator
in Art-in-
Architecture*

*Daria's Vision,
2011, 2025*

Ruth Bianco is a multidisciplinary artist whose work in contemporary fine art explores themes of space, territory, and transboundary movement. She has exhibited widely, traveling to participate in prominent exhibitions and national representations. In 2024, she took part in the Art in Democracy project at the EP Hemicycle and Parliamentarium in Brussels. Her piece, Lines of Migration, was selected for inclusion in the permanent contemporary art collection of the European Parliament in Brussels.



Ruth Bianco: Daria's Vision, 2011, Multimedia Video Installation, Installation-View. *St James Cavalier, Centre for Creativity (Spazju Kreattiv), Valletta. © Ruth Bianco*



Ruth Bianco: **Daria's Vision, 2011,**
Multimedia Video Installation,
Installation-View. *St James Cavalier, Centre for Creativity (Spazju Kreattiv), Valletta. © Ruth Bianco*

Her work is held in numerous prestigious collections, including Heritage Malta at the National Museum Art Collections in Malta; Tate Britain Archive and Special Collection, London; Victoria and Albert Museum, Archive and Special Collection, London; Royal College of Art, Archive and Special Collection, London; the University for the Creative Arts and the University of Kent at Canterbury Special Library Bookarts Collections, Kent; Rencontres Internationales in Paris; the Communication Design Association of Korea in Seoul; The John Mackintosh Hall in Gibraltar; Bank of Valletta, Malta; HSBC Malta; the Embassy of Malta in Paris; and other private and public collections.

The video collage *Daria's Vision* by Ruth Bianco reworks a scene from Antonioni's 1970 cult film *Zabriskie Point* to explore global tensions of 2010/11. It contrasts the Arab Spring with the countercultural unrest of the 1960s/70s, highlighting the film's striking Death Valley landscapes and New Wave aesthetics. Antonioni's work emerged from the Vietnam War protests and student uprisings, while *Daria's Vision* links these past struggles to contemporary upheavals. Viewed from 2025, it appears as a premonition, urging us to reconnect with history in slow motion.

The video juxtaposes the protagonist's rebellious vision of an unjust capitalist society with imagery from the Arab Spring protests. Using the film's iconic explosion scene and Pink Floyd's soundtrack, the loop distorts time by blending archival footage with found media. *Daria's* head shifts between past and present, merging filmic and real-world explosions, culminating in a sunset that resets nature's rhythm against political instability.

As a conceptual détournement, *Daria's Vision* plays with history's cyclical nature, reconfiguring *Zabriskie Point*'s explosion scene into a split-screen format. The rebellious spirit of the 1970s is transported into the present through black-and-white insertions of modern protests. These layered superimpositions make the past film's future our present.

Bianco explores glitch aesthetics through collage, film, and pre-digital artistic techniques. In her book *Camouflage Revolution & Desire* (2012), co-authored with Richard Davies, she developed an analogue glitch aesthetic influenced by the 1960s radical New Wave film movement to explore new prospects in the collage language through digital intervention. Referencing theorists such as Paul Virilio, Flusser, Dada, and Fluxus, she reinterprets media manipulation and historical recurrence. *Daria's Vision*, originally shown in 2011 at Spazju Kreattiv (St. James Cavalier), remains relevant in the glitch art discourse, where glitch and collage illuminate each other.

The project was part of 3 Artists - 3 Composers, initiated by the Malta Association for Contemporary Music. The video was exhibited with a live vocal intervention on July 10, 2011, followed by a sound and video projection until July 23. The soundtrack, composed by Mariella Cassar, integrates violin and cello recordings synchronised with the imagery's tempo and ambiance. During the first live performance, soprano Marisa Galea's vocal improvisations echoed a lament from the original film script, heightening the emotional resonance of the work.



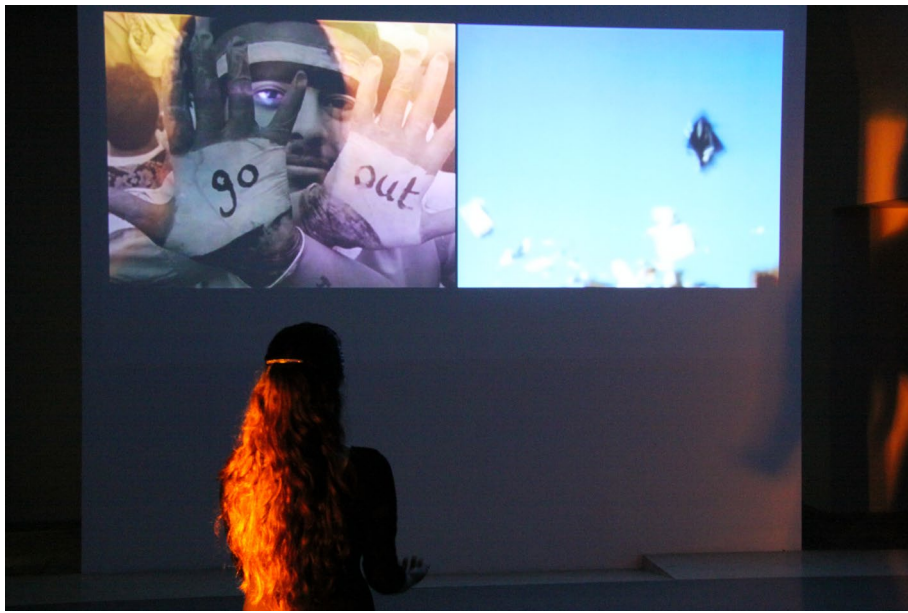
Ruth Bianco, **Daria's Vision, 2011,**
Multimedia Video Installation,
Installation-View,
Collage Panel *St James Cavalier, Centre for Creativity*
(Spazju Kreattiv), Valletta. © Ruth Bianco

SATELLITE EVENT 2: Ruth Bianco + Verena Voigt
Daria's Vision: Resistance, Spatial Dissolution, and Slowness
May 4, 11 a.m.

The artist talk explores concepts of resistance, spatial dissolution, and slowness. A moderated tour of the exhibition with curator Verena Voigt allows for comparisons of space and time.

Ruth Bianco approaches GLITCH ART through collage, film, and pre-digital processes. Her book *Camouflage Revolution & Desire* (2012) developed an analogue glitch aesthetic inspired by the radical New Wave in filmmaking of the 1960s as a topical medium to explore new prospects in the collage language merging tactile, digital and spatial practices. In her installation, Bianco transforms the final explosion scene from Michelangelo Antonioni's *Zabriskie Point* (1970) into a 14-minute video collage, linking the 2011 Arab Spring protests with coded interpretations of global disquietudes and recurring social unrest.

Daria's Vision plays with memory, media, and history. Using split-screen techniques, Antonioni's iconic images are overlaid with journalistic footage of the 2011 protests. Past and present merge into a new, future narrative. First shown in Valletta in 2011, the installation highlights how glitch and collage can inform each other.



*Ruth Bianco, Daria's Vision, 2011,
Multimedia Video Installation,
Installation-View,
Collage Panel* *St James Cavalier, Centre for Creativity*

(Spazju Kreattiv), Valletta. © Ruth Bianco



*Ruth Bianco, Daria's Vision, 2011,
Multimedia Video Installation,
Installation-View,
Collage Panel* *St James Cavalier, Centre for Creativity*

(Spazju Kreattiv), Valletta. © Ruth Bianco

JOANA MOLL (ES/GER)

*Artist and
Researcher,
Professor of
Networks,
Academy of
Media Arts
Cologne,
ES/GER*

Joana Moll researches techno-capitalist narratives and influence structures of the literacy of machines, humans and ecosystems. Her main research topics include internet materiality, surveillance, social profiling, energetic sustainability and critical interface politics. She is co-founder of the Critical Interface Politics Research Group at HANGAR (Barcelona). In the two-year intensive research project Carbolytics, 2022, she investigated global data economies, “invisible” cookie technologies, advertising tracking systems and hidden value chains.



Joana Moll, Carbolytics (12), Courtesy
Gallery Aksioma, 2022, © Joana Moll.
Photo: Damen Pal

Joana Moll has presented her work in renowned institutions, museums, universities and festivals around the world such as Venice Biennale, Art Basel, MAXXI, MMOMA, MACBA, Laboral, CCCB, ZKM, Bozar, The Natural History Museum in Berlin, Austrian Museum of Applied Arts (MAK), Ars Electronica, HeK Basel, Photographer's Gallery, Korean Cultural Foundation Centre, Chronus Art Centre, New York University, Georgetown University, Berkman Klein Centre at Harvard University, Rutgers University, University of Cambridge, Goldsmiths University of London, University of Illinois, Concordia University, Universitat Autònoma de Barcelona, ETH Zürich, École d'Art d'Aix en Provence, British Computer Society, The New School, CPDP 2019, Transmediale, FILE and ISEA among many others. Her work has been featured extensively on international media including The New York Times, The Financial Times, Der Spiegel, National Geographic, Quartz, Wired, Vice, The New Inquiry, Netzpolitik, El Mundo, O'Globo, La Repubblica, Fast Company, CBC, NBC or MIT Press.

She is the co-founder of the Critical Interface Politics Research Group at HANGAR [Barcelona]. She's been a research fellow at BBVA Foundation, a fellow at The Weizenbaum Institute in Berlin, and an artistic researcher in residence at the Critical Media Lab at HGK in Basel. Currently, she holds a professorship position in the Art Department at KHM in Cologne, is a visiting lecturer at Escola Elisava in Barcelona, and a fellow at Disruption Network Lab Insitute in Berlin.

Data Extraction, Materiality and Agency, 2022

Our so-called networked society has so far failed to bring the logic of interconnectedness into our lives. Citizens are becoming more machine-like and data-dependent, threatening the connection between humans and their natural habitats. Although most of our daily transactions are carried out through electronic devices, we know very little about the apparatus that facilitates such interactions, or in other words, the factory behind the interface. In this talk, we discuss the interface as a well-engineered capitalist machine that disconnects users from the material complexity of global chains of commodity and data production – and also social reproduction – in order to maximise economic profit. It is therefore necessary to trace the connections that exist between things – as well as the workload involved in the basic maintenance of these connections – if the user is to fully understand the systems in which they operate, in order to balance and repair the profoundly asymmetrical distribution of agency, energy, labour, time, care and resources within these planetary networks. ([Aksioma](https://aksioma.org/new.extractivism))

carbolytics.org/

Carbolytics is a project at the intersection of art and research that aims to raise awareness and call for action on the environmental impact of pervasive surveillance within the advertising technology ecosystem (Ad-Tech), as well as to provide a new perspective to address the social and environmental costs of opaque data collection practices. Online tracking is the act of collecting data from online user activity, such as reading the



Joana Moll: **Data Extraction, Materiality and Agency, 2022** *Artist talk by Joana Moll*

at Cukrarna gallery in Ljubljana 16 February 2022

Part of Tactics & Practice #12: New Extractivism

<https://aksioma.org/new.extractivism>
Video-Screen, 36:52 min. loop. Courtesy Gallery Aksioma

Joana Moll: Data Extraction, Materiality and Agency, 2022:
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=PGtQT_PGeGQ

news, purchasing items, interacting on social media or simply doing an online search. It is known that tracking and recording users' behaviour has become a major business model in the last decade. However, even though the societal and ethical consequences of abusive online surveillance practices have been a subject of public debate at least since Snowden's revelations in 2013, the energy and environmental costs of such processes have been kept away from the public eye. The global data collection apparatus is a complex techno maze that needs vast amounts of resources to exist and operate, yet companies rarely disclose information on the environmental footprint of such operations. Moreover, part of the energy costs of data collection practices is inflicted upon the user, who also involuntarily assumes a portion of its environmental footprint. Although this is a critical aspect of surveillance, there's an alarming lack of social, political, corporate and governmental will for accountability, thus a call for action is urgent. ([Report](#))

The Invisible Costs of the AdTech Industry: The Carbon Footprint of Online Tracking: In a digitised world where nearly every online interaction is recorded and analysed, the AdTech industry is increasingly coming under critical scrutiny. While the social and ethical aspects of online tracking are already being discussed, one crucial factor often remains overlooked: the significant ecological costs of these surveillance practices. The art and research project Carbolytics sheds light on this blind spot and calls for a critical examination of the energy consumption and environmental impact of the AdTech industry.

The Energy Hunger of Data Capitalism: Online tracking has long since become the core business model of the tech industry. Whether reading news, shopping online, or using social media—each of these activities leaves data traces that are collected, analysed, and resold. This process requires an immense technological infrastructure: server farms, cloud storage, AI-driven analysis systems, and real-time data processing. The energy expenditure needed to process and store this data is enormous, leading to a continuously growing CO₂ footprint for the industry.

Hidden Environmental Costs and Lack of Transparency: Although the societal and ethical risks of data surveillance have been intensively debated since the Snowden revelations in 2013, the ecological footprint of these technologies remains largely unexplored. Companies in the AdTech industry rarely disclose information about their energy consumption or the emissions associated with their systems. Yet, the global data apparatus is a resource-intensive construct that not only consumes electricity, often from fossil fuels, but also involves significant environmental consequences related to the production and maintenance of hardware in data centers.

Users as Involuntary Contributors: A key aspect that Carbolytics highlights is the involuntary participation of users in the energy consumption of the AdTech industry. The collection and processing of their data often happen unnoticed in the background, utilising not only central data centers but also energy from end-user devices. Every automated ad request, every tracking cookie interaction, and every personalised algorithm demands additional computing power, thereby increasing both individual and global energy consumption.

The Urgency for Change: Despite the severe environmental consequences, awareness of the carbon footprint of online tracking remains alarmingly low. Neither governments nor corporations show serious efforts to quantify or mitigate the environmental costs of these technologies. The AdTech industry must be held accountable by introducing transparency obligations and promoting sustainable alternatives.

Carbolytics thus calls not only for a rethinking of data practices but also for a political and social debate on the ecological consequences of digital surveillance. The CO₂ footprint of the AdTech industry can no longer remain hidden—it is time to make these invisible costs visible and develop sustainable solutions.

Carbolytics (2022): A project by [Joana Moll](#) commissioned by [Aksioma](#) in the framework of [konS - Platform for Contemporary Investigative Art](#), and in collaboration with [Barcelona Supercomputing Center \(BSC\)](#) and in partnership with [The Weizenbaum Institute + Sónar +D](#). Including texts by [Matthew Fuller](#) and [Marta Peirano](#). In addition, the publication [PostScriptUM #40. Analysis, Exposure and Addition: The Aesthetic and Ecological Logics of Joana Moll's Carbolytics](#), edited by Aksioma, can be ordered [here](#).

Technical Development: Ramin Soleymani
Research Team at BSC: Fernando Cucchiatti, Patricio Reyes,
Marta Esteban Fernández & Carlos García Calatrava
Commissioned by Aksioma – Institute for Contemporary Art, Ljubljana, 2022
In the framework of konS – Platform for Contemporary Investigative Art.
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Investigative Art and Culture Centres”. The investment is co-financed by
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NADJA VERENA MARCIN

*Visual Artist,
Filmmaker,
Researcher,
Founder/
Director of
Cultural
Organization
(GER / USA)*

Nadja Verena Marcin (Berlin/
New York) is a visual artist, film-
maker, researched and lecturer
based in Berlin and New York.
Her artistic research addresses
gender, history, morality, psy-
chology, and human behaviour
through an intersectional anal-
ysis of feminism and emotional
architecture in theatrical and
cinematic contexts.



*Nadja Marcin, Zero Gravity. Videostill,
2013 © NVM & Bildkunst-AG,
Videography: Violetta D'Agata*

In *Zero Gravity* (2013) Marcin floats in the space of a jet over Tampa Bay in Florida. In a black jumpsuit with a white collar, representing a space organisation like an astronaut with patches of the American and German flags, she daringly flies under the roof of the interior, quoting fragments from Nietzsche's text *God is dead*. The tale of *The Mad Man* from 1882 remains a widely known atheism manifesto. Ironically, Marcin quotes the text in this moment where the consequences of lost religious belief have become apparent. The weightiness and emotionality of the text meet a voice enlightened by endorphins – as a physical reaction to the weightlessness in which she experiences an explosion of feelings of happiness.

Nadja Verena Marcin: "The video explores the alienation inherent in capitalism—the feeling of being lost within its structures and the struggle to break free from its oppressive forces. In this context, Legacy Russell's definition of glitch—"In moments of near-catastrophe, the system exposes itself."—resonates deeply, because Marcin reveals the system's cracks and exposes its underlying mechanisms of control."

The artist alludes to the forlornness of humanity in a period of innumerable possibilities of consumption, in which a short feeling of happiness often takes the place of deeper contentment, and a long-term orientation is lacking. For Marcin, the gravity of this text contradicts weightlessness – physical or mental – as a human symptomatology. Metaphorically and figuratively Marcin becomes a crash test dummy in a heavenly situation and tries to give impulses for the rediscovery of our inner voice, deeper human needs and desires.

Best known for her performances "OPHELIA" and „How to Undress in Front of Your Husband“. In her artistic work in video, photography, films, performances and installations, Marcin subverts representations of women found in the media and historical contexts to magnify ideological systems of power and psychological effects within their creation. Addressing ecological and human rights concerns through an often absurdist, surreal, bare re-purposing of relational imagery and source material to create thought-provoking encounters, her work highlights norm shifts and is a re-evaluation of social constructs and predominant world models.

Nadja Verena Marcins work has been shown worldwide at Onassis Stegi (Athens), Ars Electronica (Linz), Gropius Bau (Berlin), Fridman Gallery (New York), Garage Museum (Moscow), ZKM Museum (Karlsruhe), Himalayas Museum Shanghai, Museum Ludwig (Cologne); ICA Philadelphia, Kunstmuseum Bonn; Berkeley Art Museum, SCHAUWERK Sindelfingen, Dortmunder Kunstverein, National Museum La Paz, IMPAKT (Utrecht), Museum of Modern Greek Culture (Athens), Fridericianum (Kassel), Haus der Kunst, (München) and WRO Art Centre (Wroclaw). She has received grants from the Berlin Senate, New York State Council for the Arts, Stiftung Kunstfonds, EMAP, and the Film- und Medienstiftung (Düsseldorf); has been reviewed in Artnet News, Hyperallergic, VICE, HuffPost. She has been invited to speak at Queen Mary University of London, School of the Visual Arts (New York), Brooklyn College,

Warsaw Biennial, Cabiria Festival (Rio), Centro Cultural Simón I. Patiño (Santa Cruz), CUNY (New York). She taught at Wellesley College, University of Potsdam, Burg Giebichenstein, and has been a critic at the Int. Centre for Photography ICP in New York, Rhode Island School of Art and Design, and is represented by Art Claims Impulse in Berlin and AKArt in San Francisco. Marcin is the founder of the social impact company KUNSTRAUM, headquartered in Brooklyn, New York.

Monographies:

P.Friese, A.Dongus, A.Huffman, "Nadja Verena Marcin – #SOPHYGRAY", Essen: Kunstverein Ruhr (2023)

K.Battista, L.Gillick, S.Silas, K.Rhodes, „Nadja Verena Marcin – OPHELIA“, Dresden: Sandstein (2019)

Catalogs:

Ulrike Buck, Margareth Kaserer, Festung Franzensfeste, "In the Body of Language – Im Körper der Sprache – Nel Corpo del Linguaggio", Venedig: Bruno Books, p.48–51, 159, 252–255. (2024)

Verena Voigt, "GLITCH PHENOMENA 3.0", Potsdam: EMBLEMATIC PI*\$@H, p. 19-26 (2023)

"The Ulterior Narrative Cinema", Antwerp: TICK TACK, p. 52–54. (2022)

Kathy Battista, "New York New Wave: The Legacy of Feminist Art in Emerging Practice", New York: I.B.Tauris, p. 77–79 (2019)

Reviews:

Ariana Dongus, "Can We Create an Intersectional AI?", New York: Hyperallergic, 15 Jan 2024 (2024)



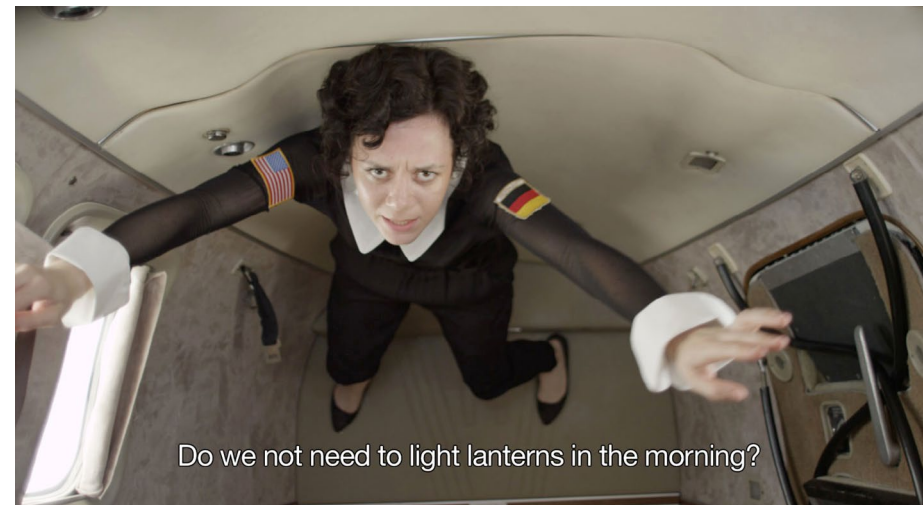
Nadja Marcin, **Zero Gravity. Videostill (1),**
2013 © NVM & Bildkunst-AG,
Videography: *Violetta D'Agata*



Nadja Marcin, **Zero Gravity. Videostill (2),**
2013 © NVM & Bildkunst-AG,
Videography: *Violetta D'Agata*



Nadja Marcin, **Zero Gravity. Videostill (3)**,
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Videography: *Violetta D'Agata*



Nadja Marcin, **Zero Gravity. Videostill (4)**,
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Nadja Marcin, **Zero Gravity. Videostill (5)**,
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Nadja Marcin, **Zero Gravity. Videostill (6)**,
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Nadja Marcin, **Zero Gravity. Videostill (7),**
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Videography: *Violetta D'Agata*

QUOTE

LEGACY RUSSELL: GLITCH FEMINISM: A MANIFESTO (2020)

01 – GLITCH REFUSES

The etymology of glitch finds its deep roots in the Yiddish gletshn (to slide, glide, slip) or the German glitschen (to slip). Glitch is thus an active word, one that implies movement and change from the outset; this movement triggers error. The word glitch as we now use and understand it was first popularized in the 1960s, part of the cultural debris of the burgeoning American space program. In 1962, astronaut John Glenn used the word in his book *Into Orbit*: “Another term we adopted to describe some of our problems was ‘glitch.’ Literally, a glitch ... is such a minute change in voltage that no fuse could protect against it.” The word resurfaced some years later in 1965 with the St. Petersburg Times reporting that “a glitch had altered the computer memory inside the US spacecraft Gemini 6”; still again in the pages of *Time Magazine*: “Glitches—a space-man’s word for irritating disturbances.” Later, in 1971, “glitches” appears in an article in the *Miami News* about Apollo 14’s failure to perform when a glitch had nearly botched a landing on the moon. Traversing through these origins, we can also arrive at an understanding of glitch as a mode of nonperformance: the “failure to perform,” an outright refusal, a “nope” in its own right, expertly executed by machine. This performance failure reveals technology pushing back against the weighty onus of function. Through these movements, technology does, indeed, get slippery: we see evidence of this in unresponsive pages that present us with the fatalistic binary of choosing to “kill” or “wait,” the rainbow wheel of death, the “Sad Mac” iconography, a frozen screen—all indicative of a fatal system blunder. (15_Emilie Siner, “What’s A ‘Glitch,’ Anyway?: A Brief Linguistic History,” NPR, October 24, 2013, npr.org. //16_lbid.)

Ines Geipel
The German Double Helix of Memory
March 19, 7 p.m.

Reading and discussion with Ines Geipel on Beautiful New Sky (2022 / Engl. translation 2024), presented as part of the exhibition Glitch: Ontological Exhaustions & System Failures.

The history of Germany's 20th century is marked by entangled continuities—an intricate double helix of memory, where past regimes cast long shadows over the present. One of the most audacious, ambitious, and incredibly arrogant ideas of the Cold War era was the extension of communism's influence into space. Spurred by Hitler's defeat and the competitive rivalry with the United States, the Soviet space program experienced a frenzy of scientific activity aimed at demonstrating communist superiority beyond Earth's boundaries. In the 1970s GDR, top-secret military laboratories were established to create the optimally standardised bodies that cosmonauts would require. The New Human – the modern colonist of space – was rigorously trained to endure years of weightlessness. Experiments were conducted in prisons, hospitals, barracks and in sports to engineer the perfect body: self-sufficient and capable of withstanding extreme conditions for as long as possible. To exert dominance over space, it was first necessary to exercise total control over those being trained to conquer it.

Ines Geipel unravels this largely unknown and extraordinary story by delving into East German military records and speaking with those who bear the scars of this state-imposed trauma. Some of the older scientists conducting experiments had already served under the Nazi regime; others threw themselves into military research programs and cooperation with the Stasi to avoid confronting the emotional legacy of the war. This continuity of ideological coercion, spanning from the Third Reich into the GDR, exemplifies the German Double Helix of Memory—where past and present remain inexorably intertwined. Written like a thriller and infused with the empathy of someone who has personally experienced the crippling effects of state-managed doping programs in the former GDR, this book uncovers some of the most unsettling episodes of Germany's recent past.

The reading and moderated discussion will take place with a translator. Afterwards, there will be an opportunity for an informal Walk & Talk through the group exhibition, together with Ines Geipel and the curator.

Presented by the German-Maltese Circle Valletta and the Goethe-Institut Rome.

Ines Geipel

Ines Geipel:
Writer, Publicist, University, Professor

The German writer, publicist, and university professor Ines Geipel reconstructs in her essayistic research the strategies of organized forgetting and suppression in post-war East Germany up to the present day. Through intensive archival research, including in the Stasi Records Archive, she succeeds in tracing the gaps in memory surrounding a forgotten literary resistance. In doing so, she counters the fading prehistory of the “Peaceful Revolution” of 1989. By recontextualizing more than 100 suppressed literary biographies from 1945 to 1989 in *Gesper- te Ablage* (2025/2024, edited in collaboration with Joachim Walther), she brings to light silenced narratives of a “third East German literature.” What emerges is a vibrant resistance movement that was not supposed to exist—and whose protagonists were later absent during the period of reunification. Her work served as the theoretical foundation for the new productions of the entire exhibition.



Ines Geipel, **The German Double Helix of Memory**, *Reading and discussion in the installation Carbolytics of Joana Moll, in the exhibition* *Glitch: Ontological Exhaustions & System Failures*, Spazju Kreattiv, 2025, Photography © Elisa von Brockdorff. Courtesy © Spazju Kreattiv

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CRASH-STOP AKA IAN KEAVENY

Paralipomena: Meta – Requiem for a Dream, 2025

Meta - Requiem for a dream

1. *Meta - Requiem for a dream*
2. *To see and be seen*
As artists we have come to rely on social media platforms like Instagram, Facebook and others. These platforms allow us to build reputation within a community, to have work seen and commented on by peers, to exchange ideas, methodologies, opportunity's and to place our work in the public eye. They also help us to show curators a body of work when applying for exhibitions, to advertise events, in short to see and be seen.
3. Glitch Art as an art form exists primarily online, without that network it cannot easily spread or propagate. Glitch Art networks within social media provide spaces to discuss, share and see work. Social media is controlled by corporations, for the most part based in America.
4. Most social media platforms have rules governing what can and cannot be posted, moderation for the most part is conducted by algorithms. If work is misidentified by an algorithm as going against the platforms rules it can lead to shadow banning, outright bans and the visibility of work being reduced. In this environment the algorithm is the gate keeper.
5. *Shadow banning*
Shadow banning is the practice of blocking or partially blocking a user or the user's content from some areas of an online community in such a way that the ban is not readily apparent to the user, regardless of whether the action is taken by an individual or an algorithm....
"shadow banning" originally applied to a deceptive sort of account suspension on web forums, where a person would appear to be able to post while actually having all of their content hidden from other users. In 2022, the term has come to apply to alternative measures, particularly visibility measures like delisting and downranking.
By partly concealing, or making a user's contributions invisible or less prominent to other members of the service, the hope may be that in the absence of reactions to their comments, the problematic or otherwise out-of-favour user will become bored or frustrated and leave the site, and that spammers and trolls will be discouraged from continuing their unwanted behavior or creating new accounts.
https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Shadow_banning

6. *What is an algorithm?*
Simply put 'Algorithms are used as specifications for performing calculations and data processing. More advanced algorithms can use conditionals to divert the code execution through various routes (referred to as automated decision-making) and deduce valid inferences (referred to as automated reasoning).' <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Algorithm>
In the context of Meta (and other platforms) algorithms are used to decide on content to recommend or boost within feeds and to filter content to decide whether the content contravenes 'Community rules and standards'.
7. *Meta 'Community standards'*
As Meta states on its website: 'Meta recognises how important it is for Facebook, Instagram, Messenger and Threads to be places where people feel empowered to communicate, and we take our role seriously in keeping abuse off the service. That's why we developed standards for what is and isn't allowed on these services.
These standards are based on feedback from people and the advice of experts in fields such as technology, public safety and human rights. To ensure that everyone's voice is valued, we take great care to create standards that include different views and beliefs, especially from people and communities that might otherwise be overlooked or marginalised.'
8. *Community standards*
Of course, these 'community standards' are inherently biased and subject to change, as they have recently in response to events in America, it is cultural imperialism of the most insidious type.
- 9.

Community standards

To quote from the section which applies to the strike that seems to affect glitch art the most (Adult nudity and sexual activity)
'We restrict the display of nudity or sexual activity because some people in our community may be sensitive to this type of content, particularly due to cultural background or age.....
Under this policy, we remove real photographs and videos of nudity and sexual activity, AI- or computer-generated images of nudity and sexual activity, and digital imagery, regardless of whether it looks "photorealistic" (as in, it looks like a real person). As noted above, we also make careful allowances for real world art and certain medical, educational and awareness-raising content, and these are detailed in the policy.' <https://transparency.meta.com/policies/community-standards>

Community standards

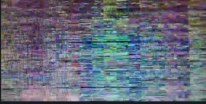
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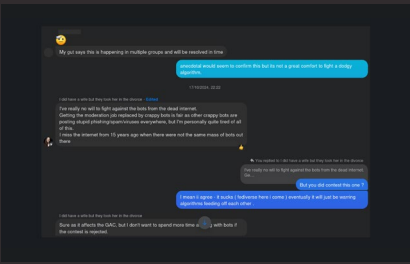
Meta has a problem with glitch art

10. *Meta has a problem with Glitch Art*

Work by Maelle Lencot posted in Facebook group Glitch artists collective misidentified as porn



- 11. *Work by Maelle Lencot posted in Facebook group Glitch Artists Collective misidentified as porn*
- 12. *Work by Maelle Lencot taken down 17/10/2024*
- 13. *Which in turn endangers the Facebook group of near 100000 members (Glitch Artists Collective)*
- 14. *Image only*
- 15. *Image only*
- 16. *Image only*
- 17. *Image only*



- 18. *Image only*
- 19. *You can ask for a review*
- 20. *And sometimes it works*
- 21. *The left hand doesn't know what the right hand is doing*
- 22. *Still Restricted.*
Maelles' work was restored (3 months after take down), apologies given, but the group is still restricted. One of the most important groups for sharing and disseminating Glitch Art online, at near 100000 members and hugely influential , for something the algorithm misidentified – this restriction is a form of shadow banning it can also lead to 'content demotion'
- 23. *Meta 'Content demotion'*
As Meta states : 'Types of content that we

demote:
...our Content Distribution Guidelines describe the types of content that we think may either be problematic or low quality, so we reduce its distribution in Feed for everyone. These reductions, also called demotions, are rooted in our commitment to the values of responding to people's direct feedback, incentivising publishers to invest in high-quality content, and fostering a safer community.'
<https://transparency.meta.com/en-gb/features/approach-to-ranking/types-of-content-we-demote/>

- 24. *Meta 'Reduced distribution'*
'Reduced distribution may vary depending on the number of times that the poster or commenter has violated our rules previously, the degree of confidence of our systems' predictions, among other things. While the majority of our reduced distribution enforcements are applied around the world equally, we also recognise that in certain situations we cannot always take a one-size-fits-all approach to enforcement.'
<https://transparency.meta.com/en-gb/enforcement/taking-action/lowering-distribution-of-problematic-content>

What just happened?

- 25. *What just happened?*
- 26. *Arguing with algorithms*

Glitch art is often misidentified by Meta's algorithms

- 27. *Glitch Art is often misidentified by Metas' algorithms*
- 28. *Algorithms Learn*
Each time Glitch Art is misidentified as porn or against community standards, the algorithm could be reinforced, leading to more misidentification creating a feedback loop leading to further takedowns and account shadow banning or account bans.
<https://themarkup.org/automated-censorship/2024/03/01/how-automated-content-moderation-works-even-when-it-doesnt-work>
- 29. *Has Glitch Art glitched metas' algorithm?*
- 30. *Caution and fear of loss is the breeding ground for self-censorship*
- 31. *No Notifications*

- 32. *Add to your story*
- 33. *What did the algorithm see in my work?*
This was a (non Glitch Art) Instagram post that was taken down as the algorithm claimed it contained nudity and sexual activity and thus went against their community standards. The image wasn't taken down on threads. This was after Maelle Lencots' work had been removed
Which started me thinking what did the algorithm see ?
This begins to be worrying when you start to see these kind of algorithms being used in facial recognition, policing , welfare decisions etc.
- 34. *Image only*
- 35. *Arguing with the algorithm*
- 36. *Image only*
- 37. *The more you notice something the more it happens*
So after that post I started noticing that more and more of my Glitch work was being taken down or shadow banned on Instagram and that more of my friends were reporting anecdotal evidence of this happening on Meta platforms specifically and more generally in places like Tik Tok. Posting the same images on tumblr did not yield the same results.
- 38. *The hall of algorithmic rejection*
Image
- 39. *Requiem for a dream*
Image



- 40. *Work less likely to be seen*
Image
- 41. *New bones for old work*
Image
- 42. *Consider editing or removing one or more items*
Image
- 43. *Visibility is everything*
Should we then self censor, or alter our work to please the algorithm which misidentifies the work ? Or protest to the same algorithm which has made the mistake ?

Glitch art is a process

One of my approaches in Glitch art is to look for the edges in software and hardware and where they break revealing some of what they are beneath the surface, then leveraging what I find to make work – in Meta's case this became more about the algorithm.

- 44. *Glitch Art is a process*
One of my approaches in Glitch Art is to look for the edges in software and hardware and where they break revealing some of what they are beneath the surface, then leveraging what I find to make work – in metas case this became more about the algorithm.
- 45. *Image only*
- 46. *A post about a post being taken down gets likes*
Image
- 47. *Black boxes*
- 48.

What is an algorithm
A blind censor
A tool purposed
An intended consequence
A weapon shaped
To poison thought
Denier
Breeder of hate and grief
A tool to shape us all
Round pegs in square holes

- What is an algorithm*
A blind censor
A tool purposed
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Breeder of hate and grief
A tool to shape us all
Round pegs in square holes
- 49. *This is a weapon*
- 50. *Diagram of late capitalist imperatives*
Image
- 51. *When the glitch becomes the working environment not the work*
- 52. *An algorithm reflects the biases of those who make and use them. Meta is an American corporation with American biases, ideas on free speech and what constitutes censorship. Meta's algorithms (Facebook, Instagram, Threads) are particularly problematical.*

Why bother with fact checking

53. *Why bother with fact checking*
Image based on this article
<https://about.fb.com/news/2025/01/meta-more-speech-fewer-mistakes/>
Text: 'Meta will get rid of factcheckers, “dramatically reduce the amount of censorship” an recommend more political content on its platforms, including Facebook, Instagram and Threads founder Mark Zuckerberg has announced. Zuckerberg said Meta’s “factcheckers have just been too politically biased and have destroyed more trust than they’ve created”. The tech firm’s content moderation teams will be moved from California to Texas “where there is less concern about the bias of our teams”, he said. He admitted that changes to the way Meta filters content would mean “we’re going to catch less bad stuff”. He cited Europe as a place with “an ever increasing number of laws institutionalising censorship and making it difficult to build anything innovative” and said: “Latin American countries have secret courts that can order companies to quietly take things down” Nothing like Kowtowing to wannabe fascists and white nationalists to kill off your userbase.
54. Allowing more speech
Image
55. *By denying more speech*
Image screenshot from facebook linking to this article on 404 media
<https://www.404media.co/meta-deletes-trans-and-nonbinary-messenger-themes/>
56. *Whilst encouraging hate speech*
Image screenshot from <https://gcn.ie/meta-policies-misinformation-hate-speech/>
57. *Censorship what censorship ?*
Image screenshot from :<https://www.usermag.co/p/instagram-blocked-teens-from-searching>
58. *Shadow banning information screenshot of this page* <https://www.theguardian.com/world/2025/jan/29/abortion-pills-instagram-shadow-banning>
59. *Less ‘freedom of speech’ more ‘hate speech’*
Screenshot of this page <https://www.nbcnews.com/tech/social-media/meta-new-hate-speech-rules-allow-users-call-lgbtq-people-mentally-ill-rcna186700>
60. *Paying bullies for a place at the table*
screenshot of this page <https://www.bbc.com/news/articles/c79d74nppvpo>
61. *This is a weapon*
You and your data are the tools with which they forge it
62. *Tech bro alt right philosophy and forbidden words*
Link to article: <https://www.404media.co/forbidden-words-github-reveals-how-software-engineers-are-purging-federal-databases/>
63. *Rewriting or removing mentions of topics and ideas the regime does not like*
Image taken from above link
64. *Hiding inconvenient truths*
screenshot of this page <https://www.404media.co/archivists-work-to-identify-and-save-the-thousands-of-datasets-disappearing-from-data-gov/>
65. *Gleichschaltung*
‘The Nazi term Gleichschaltung, meaning “synchronization” or “bringing into line”, was

the process of Nazification by which Adolf Hitler—leader of the Nazi Party in Germany—established a system of totalitarian control and coordination over all aspects of German society “from the economy and trade associations to the media, culture and education”...... Gleichschaltung is a compound word that comes from the German words gleich (same) and schaltung (circuit) and was derived from an electrical engineering term meaning that all switches are put on the same circuit allowing them all to be activated by throwing a single master switch.[4] Its first use is credited to Reich Justice Minister Franz Gürtner.[5] It has been variously translated as “coordination”, [6] [7] [8] “Nazification of state and society”, [9] “synchronization”, [5] and “bringing into line” ‘ <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Gleichschaltung>

66. *A master switch thrown by tech platforms to activate algorithms to deny the very thing they claim to be protecting*
67. *Gaming Google to warp the truth*
screenshot of this page <https://www.theguardian.com/us-news/2025/feb/06/ice-us-immigration-deportations-google>
68. *This is a weapon*
You, your data and your attention are the tools with which they forge it
69. Algorithmic genocide – colonialist complicity (video)
70. Requiem for a dream

Titivillus, Avatar of Paradoxical Glitching

*by Michael
Betancourt*

TYTINILLUS.



*Canonicas Horas, si devote legis, oras.
 Tunc orantur Horæ, si corde legentur et ore
 Littera neglecta vel syllaba minime testat
 Colligit hæc Sathanas, si non cum corde laboras.
 Fragmina verborum Lyténillus colligit horum
 Quæque die mille viribus se sarcinat ille,
 Quid facis extra Chorum qui debitor officiorum
 Es divinarum? cur indidis aeta Vagorum?
 Desine stare foras quia Christus ponderat Horas.
 Et nominando, moras, distinguit qualiter oras.
 Qui psalmos resecat, vel verba Davidica curtat,
 Displicet ille DEO, dum placuisse putat.
 Cum Domino psalles, psallendo tutius speres.
 Dirige cor sursum, profer bene, respice sensu.
 Nunc lege nunc ora nunc cum fervore labora
 Nunc contemplare, nunc Scripturas meditare.*

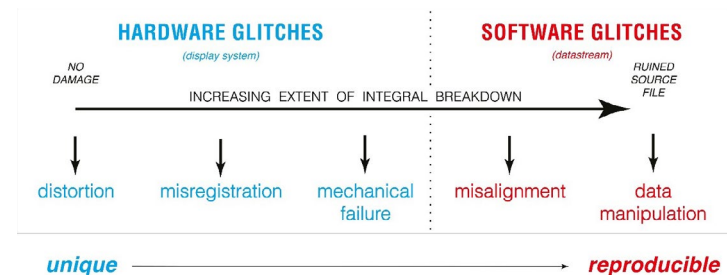
Glitch Art has an anthropomorphic avatar in the mythical Titivillus, the “patron demon of scribes” who is responsible for the insertion and creation of those unauthored errors that disrupt meaning, but do not destroy semiosis [Figure 1]. This animistic figure resolves the uncomfortable ambiguities and unstable relations between the intended and unintended dimensions of glitched semiosis by proffering an answer to *who is responsible?* by identifying all glitches as intentional interventions demonically posed as disruptions of meaning: Titivillus is a pathetic fallacy who reveals a deep seated awareness of the problematics these transformations between signal::noise have always posed for questions of intention. This justification for the presence of glitches is not just an escape from responsibility for producing errors, but a recognition of their potential to signify despite their being unintentional ‘noise.’ Ascribing / glitch/ to a mythical figure neutralizes its transgressive power and destabilising force.

But the mythical Titivillus masks another problem: assuming the recognition of glitches should be understood as critical interventions or violations of the normative transparency of media is a category mistake. Their expressive articulation derives from an intentional fallacy that imposes order, but confuses the disruptions of ‘noise’ for an expressive, formal use of the medium. This conversion of disruption into an expressive “signal” requires the interpreter to not consider it diagnostically but syntagmatically—as an utterance—yet the encoded meaning it “contains” is not a property that resides in the object, but must be invented by the audience. The category mistake arises, however, because *malfunctions* are unintended, autonomous products; when errors converge on symbolic form they must simultaneously occupy distinct and incompatible categories—the duplicity that distinguishes Glitch Art as a double recognition, as *malfunction* and as *misfunction*. Titivillus creates the conventional stability of signification that leads to the circularity of glitches whose expressive poetics are intended, but whose identification as glitched undermines that intention because being a glitch depends on a diagnostic recognition of an unintentional disruption of normal function—an encounter with ‘the real,’ rather than encoded meaning. These are metaphysical problems of signification. What would normally be a stable change of address becomes an unstable and shifting set of identifications: to proceed as-if any glitch is expressive (and not an error to ignore) that error must first be admitted to the realm of signification via an assumed author—such as Titivillus—who justifies its admission into semiosis; however, Glitch Art superposes this recognition of expressiveness with the diagnostic recognition of these features as-errors. Expressive glitches thus enable a belief in a prior signification that should have occurred, but was blocked by the error—an ambivalent slippage at the threshold between signifying and insignificance that cannot be readily resolved.

Although the ‘material markers’ that designate these forms originate with the medium (the range of physical sources for technical failure identified in Figure 2), their symbolic articulations are identified by a

transformation into the ‘material function’ that depends on abandoning without rejecting their diagnostic identifications as-errors. This knowledge provided by the audience’s technical fluency reconsiders them as expressively or intentionally produced. Glitch Art exploits this moment of differentiation where the choice to engage the glitch as *misfunction* becomes a reciprocal demonstration of the act that views it as-if it was encoded, a tautology. The need for Titivillus arises from this duplicity. This internal decision to recategorize a *malfunction* as-expressive defines the shift from a diagnostic to symbolic interpretation produces the ontological exhaustion specific to expressive glitching.

Justifying the expressiveness of Glitch Art raises familiar questions about agency and intent for technical media in general, but its problematics arise precisely and exactly because the semic role of glitches depends on an instability in how audiences act to separate the operations of the machine from the human agency (intentions) of the operator. This transitive instability illuminates the role of expressive glitching in relation to the longer history of ludic play that is interpretation. As engagement changes address from a diagnostic of error to the as-if considerations of expressive encoding, it separates the ‘intentional function’ as a qualitatively different value than the vernacular concerns with ‘intention’ that identify assumptions about the metaphysical and subjective desires or beliefs of the presumptive encoder. Semiosis begins with each elemental part as a discrete but integral unit whose re/arrangement into recognizable and familiar forms produces meaning as a continually shifting and changing field of potential interpretations. What is apparent in the agency granted to Titivillus is a resolution to the problematics of un/intentionality that have been extensively theorised, but must remain distinct from the ‘intentional function.’ Glitch Art exploits this ambivalent shift into the symbolic mode that entangles these superficially unintended artifacts with how perception and apperception are engaged via enculturation and their role in semiosis. Titivillus thus provides a mythic foundation for Glitch Art by acknowledging the instability of interpretation and the metaphysical transformations of meaning made possible by human desires for communication. This foundation does not require a return to fantasies of an enchanted world, instead, it refocuses attention on the necessary role of human desires for order, and the critical capacities for resistance and transcendence that reside in individual consciousness.



©Michael Betancourt

Glitch: Ontological Exhaustions
& System Failures

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