

Selected works

MARGARITA MAXIMOVA

single screen

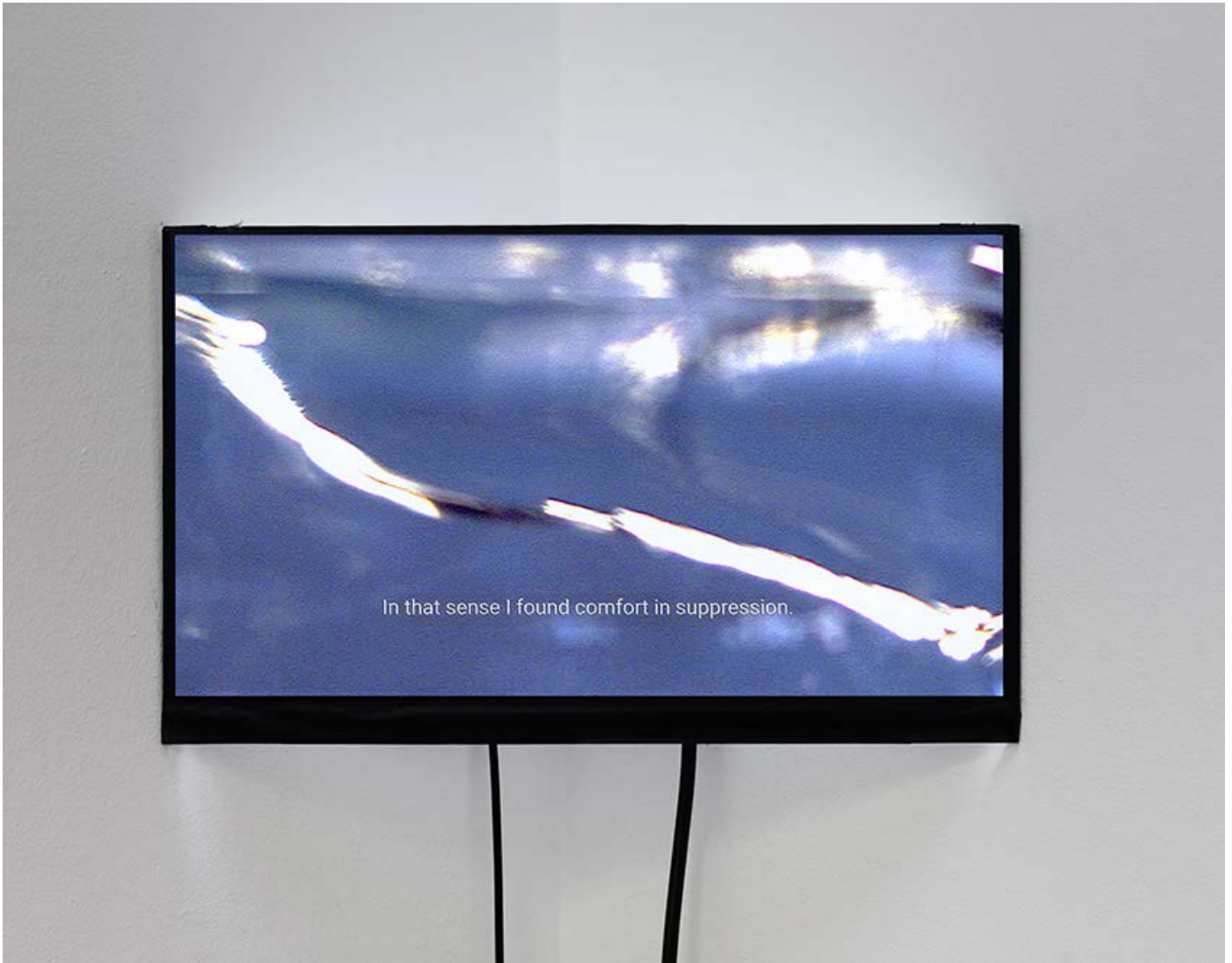
Whatever Exists Is Perishable



Stills

Whatever Exists Is Perishable departed from capturing a hornet while I was on a residency in Portugal. During the making of this film, I gathered the other footage with a question in the back of my mind. Should the hornet be released or killed? This question became the crux of the film. The video is a short visual poem that subtly illustrates the unbalanced power structures between humans and animals through small human gestures.

Madmen, informers, sleuths, seducers



Installation view at Damien & The Love Guru, Brussels

“We went to work but produced nothing [...] We only had irony and sarcasm.” The epitome of a meme-fed millennial working in late capitalism’s service economy, one might say. Ironically, these statements pertain to life in the Soviet Union as recounted by the mother of Russian-born artist Margarita Maximova in her video *Madmen, informers, sleuths, seducers*. The video revolves around the transcribed memories of the artist’s mother regarding life in the Soviet era, in light of Mikhail Bulgakov’s famously censored novel *The Master and Margarita*. Chronicling the role this novel had in creating a new collective consciousness in the USSR, Maximova’s video devises a mirroring effect through the use of her mother’s statements, and the latter’s description of people surreptitiously exchanging phrases from Bulgakov’s “profane bible.” Presented on a small screen with headphones, the video emphasizes this exchange of short sentences. They become the vectors that create a sense of togetherness in spite of the contingency of fragmented language. Mixing skillful shots of shimmering vodka and aerial views of Berlin’s former Soviet suburbs, the oneiric piece made for this duo exhibition with Aisha Christison, feeds upon the artist’s 2017 video, *Memorial*. In *Memorial*, Maximova reconstructed the identity of her estranged father by bringing together her mother’s recollection with images of a commemorative statue, and footage of East Berlin’s Plattenbauten.

Madmen, informers, sleuths, seducers



video stills

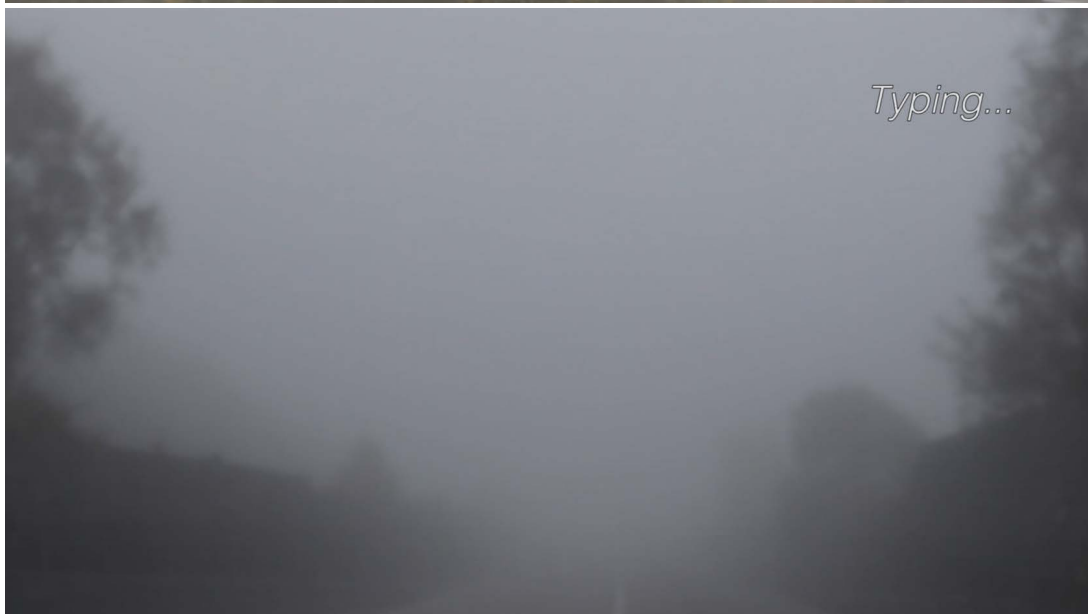
Just Call Him and See If He Picks Up



video installation at S.M.A.K., Ghent, Belgium

“The video thematizes the distortion of human emotional communication in the digital age in ‘Just call him to see if he picks up’. In this work, we witness a digital chat that actually took place between two sisters, against a background of something that at first seems like a dull road movie, and in which one sister claims that their father is dead. As the conversation – entirely typed out – unfolds, it seems that this claim had been based on feelings and paranoid assumptions expressed during another chat, which had nothing to do with reality. By the end of the video, both parties seem not only metaphorically to drown in their inability to communicate emotions, but it moreover seems painfully clear that this inability is largely affected by the kind of media with which they conduct the communication. In this almost purely registrative, quasi artificially constructed video, which in no way expresses any opinion, Margarita Maximova warns about the dangers of the use of social media technology in communicating emotional messages. Such technology is of course without hierarchy in its own right, and every (emotional) impulse is communicated in real time, with the result – in this case tragic – of trivializing something that might otherwise have been profound sadness.” Thibaut Verhoeven (researcher at S.M.A.K.)

Just Call Him and See If He Picks Up



video stills

A Profound Soul Contract



video stills

A Profound Soul Contract



Installation view at Lichtekooi, Antwerpen

In *Exiting the Vampire Castle*, Margarita Maximova shows a reworking of a video she made in 2018 as part of the installation *Modern Tongue Sweats*, an installation about the psychological and emotional concepts concerning the use of language in the internet age. In the video we hear the protagonist's (performed by artist Selin Davasse) faux and almost robotic voice echo the words 'feel, heal, up level wounds'. The work is engaging with poetry and a sense of language as soft and onomatopoeic; yet the setup of the scene has a plastic, shiny and white quality. The performance emphasises the facile nature of the YouTube persona so extremely as to make us question whether the "reality" underneath the zany smile exists at all.

Nadia Bijl, 2022

Memorial



installation view

In 'Memorial' (2016) the anonymous male statue is both fulfilling its inherent role as a memorial for the fallen soldiers of World War One and an imaginary embodiment of Maximova's estranged father. The subtitles in the film portray her father, as constructed from her mother's memory. While the statue functions as a canvas for the given characteristics, the descriptions simultaneously render a face to the otherwise forgotten soldiers. Similar to the statue, the social blocks in 'Memorial' function as a reminder of a collective memory of the communist era whether in the once Soviet occupied Marzahn (Berlin) where the film is recorded or in the similar looking suburbs in Moskou where Maximova grew up right after the Soviet dissolution.

video installations

Sway a way



Installation view at Damien & The Love Guru, Brussels

In *Sway a Way*, the film from a cell phone falling down an aircraft, GoPro cameras getting lost in the ocean, tumbling down rivers, or picked up by birds, come together in a continuous filmic whirlpool. Sampling these accidental excerpts from a camera operator's diary, Maximova's montage of found footage is the lockdown exercise of a contemporary kinok. Cameras severed from the body of their GoPro Heroes, turn the I into a machine, as the lost mechanical eye becomes the protagonist of a disembodied point of view.

However, what we observe on the overheard screen of her installation is not an autonomous mechanical vision, but rather, the more-than-human world with a movie camera. Its disorienting cinematography fueled by Joeri Bultheel's atmospheric score could be what happened if Jean Painlevé had Crittercams to make his surrealist Neo-Zoological Dramas. But, there is something more mediated about Maximova's video; something about the spiral of life merging with the vortex of the internet as we imagine her searching the web to collect other-worldly sequences. Emile Rubino

Sway a way



video stills

Killjoy Account



video installation at S.M.A.K, Ghent, Belgium

In the video installation *Killjoy Account* (2020), Margarita Maximova zooms out and reverses the gaze. Here, she doesn't wonder how and why we use the internet, but how our data are analysed, categorised and then manipulated and deployed for commercial purposes and political propaganda. Society's malleability becomes a reality. The dialogue is based on a true conversation between Alexander Nix, then CEO of Cambridge Analytica, and the whistleblower Christopher Wylie. They discuss the online profile of a randomly selected person, in this case a woman from Nebraska. By means of a double digital layer Maximova visualises the woman's data as a nightmare, a vague reflection against the background of a cool and desolate landscape. Nadia Bijl

Killjoy Account



video stills

The Vast, The Land, The Liquid



installation view at S.M.A.K Ghent

“The Vast, The Land, The Liquid is a silent video with landscape images that the narrator wants to reconsider, as indicated by the subtitles: the sky, the mountains, a wavy sea. However, because the computer literally couldn’t handle this footage, subtitles like “the waves seemed to get stuck” get much more ambiguous: they stand for the faltering pixel formations in the image, but also the inability to show the landscape accurately, and even more, boredom is found in the fixed gaze of the narrator herself when viewing these phenomenons.

The inability to find a flight or escape in the magnetizing images. The image, the remaining image comes to stand literally in front of the landscape: as a frustrating obstruction. As a result, the pixels themselves become sad waves, a disturbing and even an unsustainable abstraction remains.”

Tom Van Imschoot

Range of Clues



installation view, Art Brussels

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Tom Van Imschoot

Modern Tongue Sweats



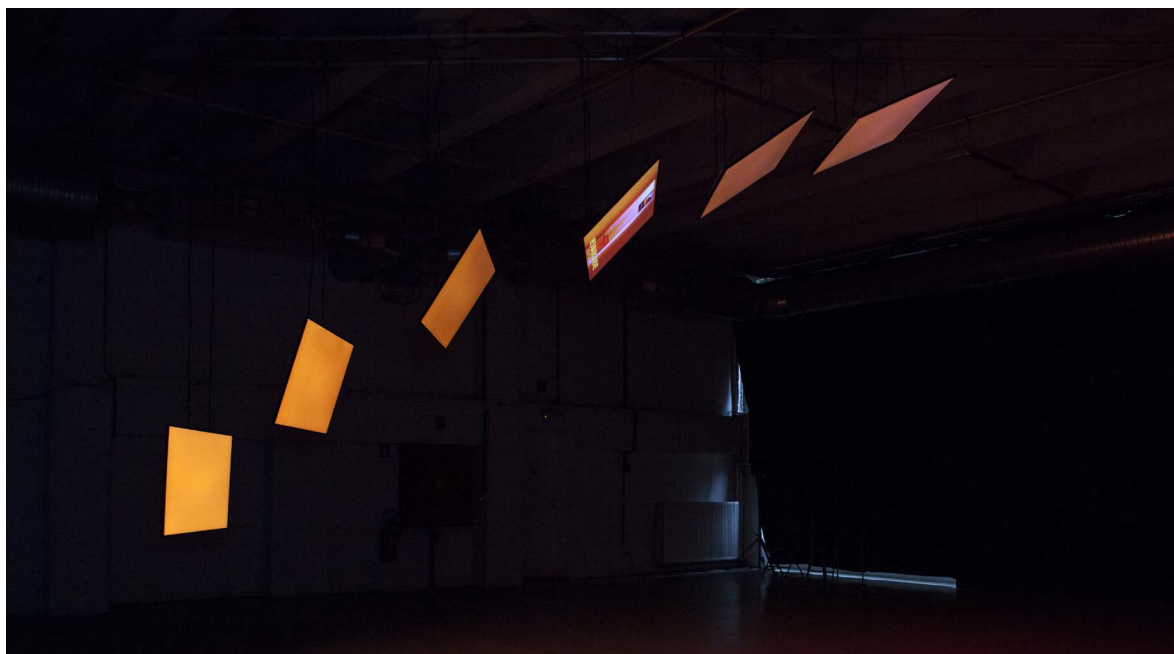
installation view Beursschouwburg, Brussels

In her video installation, "Modern Tongue Sweats" Margarita Maximova (b.1990, Moscow) reveals a flood of expressions of emotions circulating around the Internet, which are taking on an ever more important function. We subject ourselves to psychological clickbait tests, consult search engines to get answers to our most personal questions and send out emotional messages without considering their physical impact. For every possible emotional issue, dozens of answers can be found online. Vague descriptions of physical problems seem to apply to us all, and if they don't, we appropriate them anyway. What experiences are left that are all our own? This Belgian-Russian artist digs through a multiplicity of diagnoses, words and definitions. She analyzes psychological and emotional concepts and investigates how the difference between the personal and the public becomes blurred and constantly needs to be redefined.

Modern Tongue Sweats



installation view Het Bos, Antwerp



video still

augmented reality installation

The Loss of A Stable Horizon

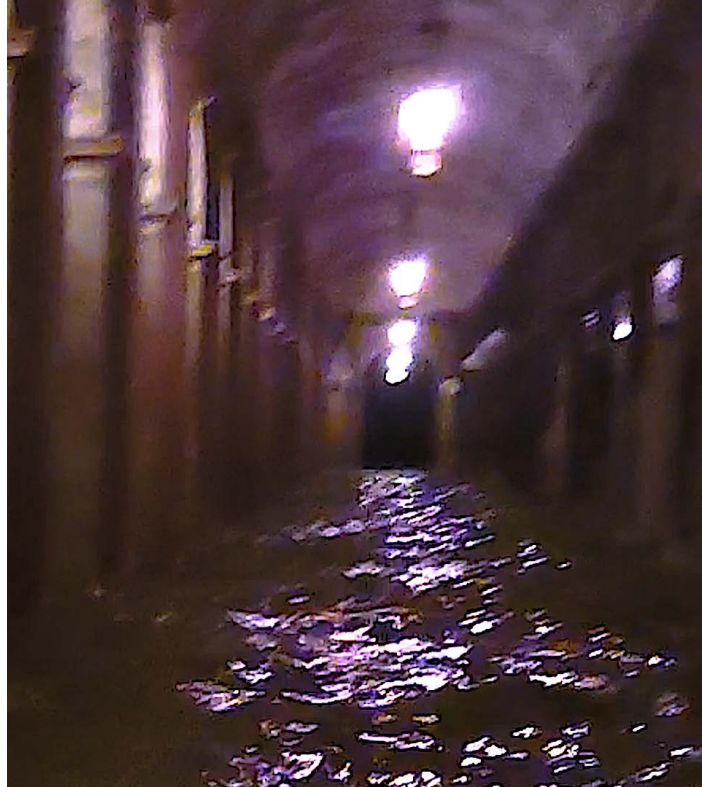


augmented reality view

'The Loss of A Stable Horizon' as part of 'Navigating AquaGranda'
 A Digital Community Memory Virtual group show. Venice in collaboration with Science
 Gallery Venice, Ca' Foscari and the European Project Odysseus running from 22 May
 2021 – 21 April 2022.

To download her contribution, download the AquaGranda app on the App Store (for
 Android and iOS) and open 'The Loss of A Stable Horizon' This will download 500 MB of
 files onto your device.

The Loss of A Stable Horizon



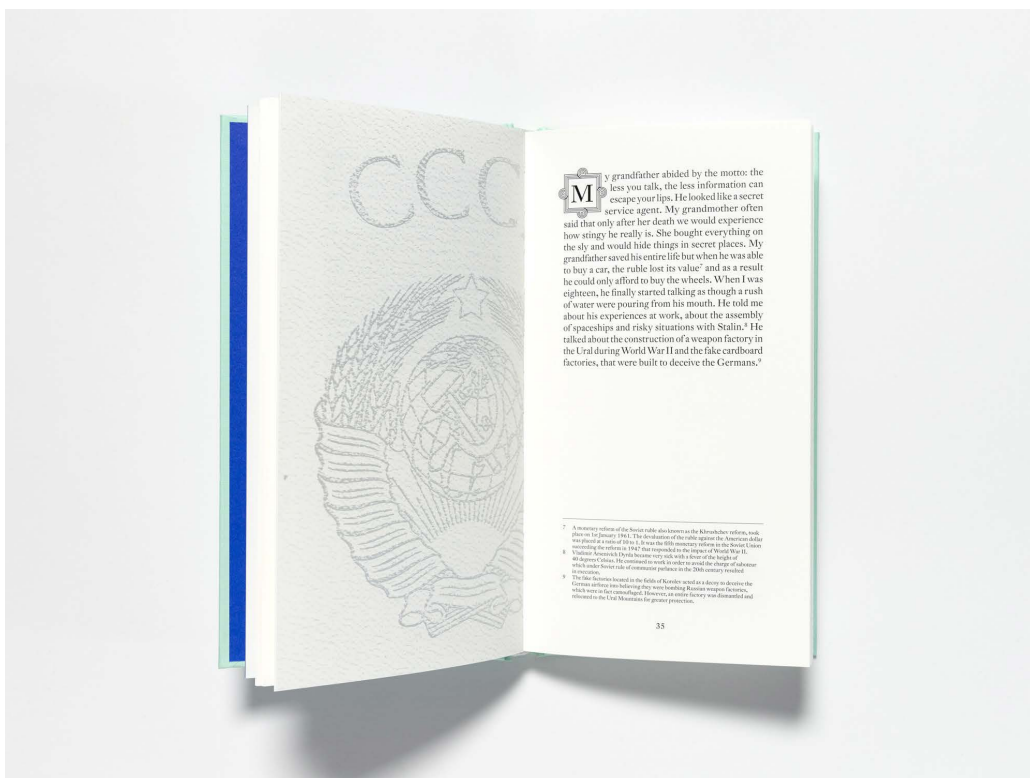
augmented reality view

The Aqua Granda Community Memory is a living system, which allows anyone to access, augmented and (re) interpret its contents in relation to an ever-changing present. The basis is there but now it is in the hands of all those who care about Venice to further expand and use it as a tool to commemorate the Aqua Granda's events and to find a path towards the future livability and sustainability of this unique city.

The project "Aqua Granda, a Digital Community Memory" has been launched on 12 November 2020 by the H2020 EU Odyceus project, Ca' Foscari University and Science Gallery di Venezia.

book

You Have Within You Something Stronger and More Numinous



Margarita Maximova's first book, *You Have Within You Something Stronger and More Numinous* discloses a collection of excerpts from letters sent to her by her mother over the previous decade. The selection of translated texts describes her mother's venturesome relocation from Russia to Belgium, her childhood in the Russian dachas, close observations of the landscape and her pursuit to retrieve the connection with her ancestors. Set amongst the political landscape and cultural fabric of the Soviet Union, the telling of her experience reveals the nuances of intimacy, displacement, motherhood and the psychic traumas that are so often inherited from previous family generations.

You Have Within You Something Stronger and More Numinous



pictures Kristien Daem

collaborative projects

Theatrum Algarium (by Annemarie Maes)



Massaging the artist Ria Pacquée



Food experiments

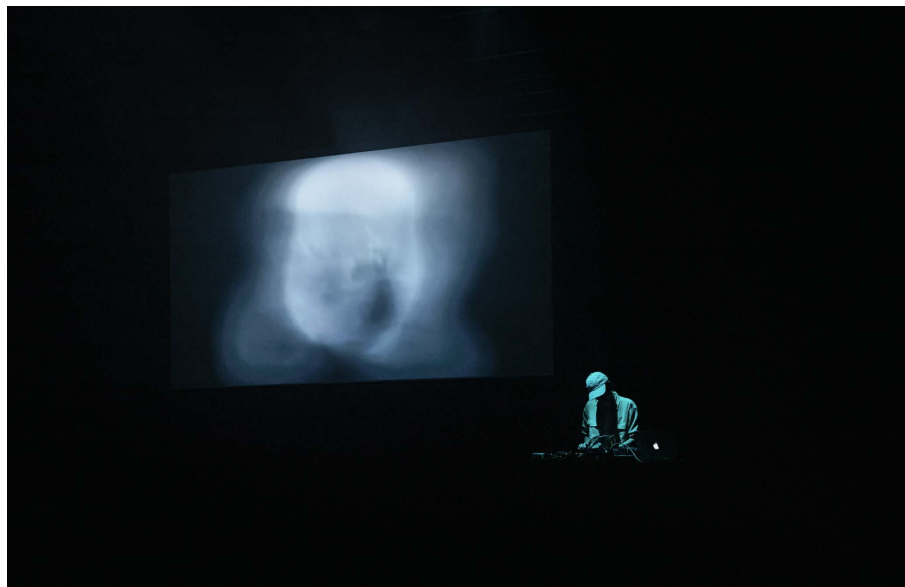
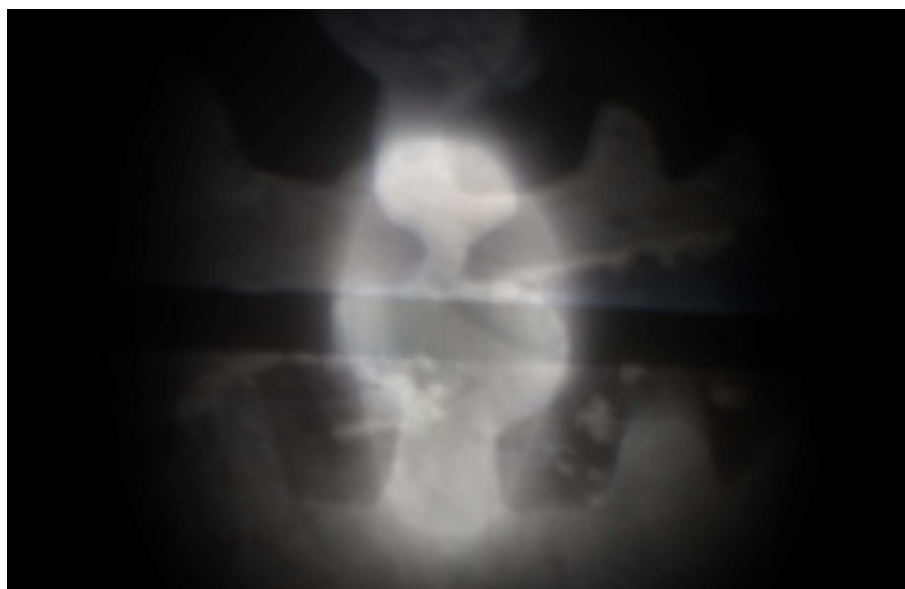
performed with Margarita Maximova & Mieke Franquet

Early in the morning and late in the evening, between low and high tide, the Theatrum Algarium rises from the sea. Metal frames hold the fluttering weeds. Glass jars fill up with seawater, their round shapes are acting like a lens and focus on the morphology of the floating algae.

Theatrum Algarium works with organisms of the sea. In an associative way, we meander through the algarium and create a narrative that is woven from the threads of past, present and future. For this performance initiated and organized by artist AnneMarie Maes, I was asked to prepare food made with algae from the North Sea for her durational performance and to create moments of intimacy through hand massages made with sea sand scrubs and through conversation with the audience..

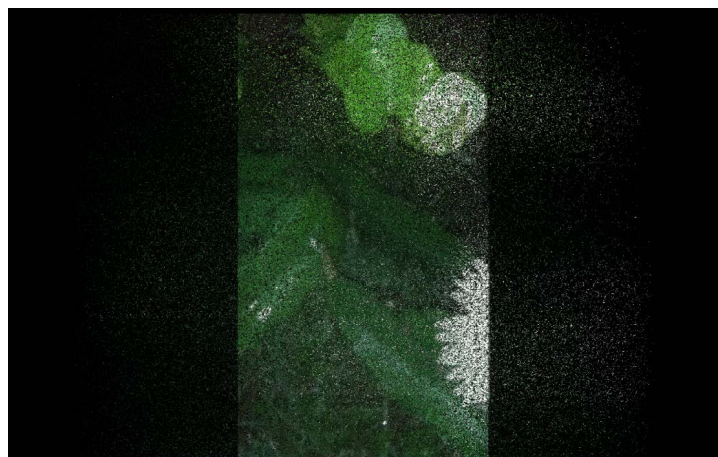
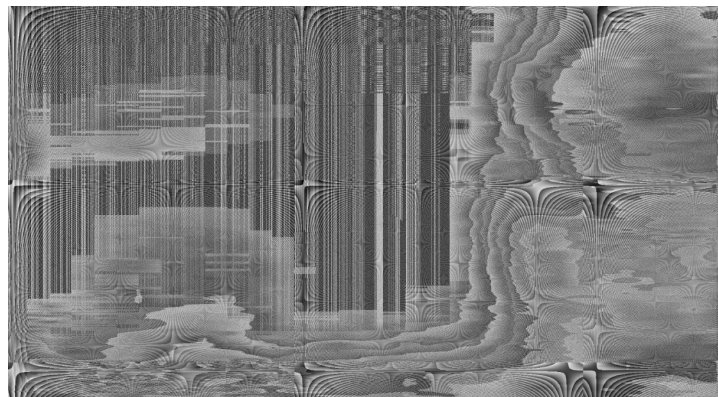
Performed at Pleasure Island, Ostend, Belgium

rush trace tracks

*Performance at Viernulvier, Ghent**video stills*

Following a fertile residency together at Botanique, SKY H1 & Margarita Maximova present a live audio-visual work to celebrate the release of the debut album of SKY H1. In their respective forms, each artist circles the intricate emotive surfaces of contemporary life in all of its mediated intensity. On the occasion of SKY H1's debut album they've collaborated on a work that takes the content of the album and deciphers its poetics into an alluring live performance. SKY H1 debuted on Berlin's Creamcake label in 2015, and soon after signed to PAN's sublabel, Codes, releasing the widely acclaimed 'Motion' EP.

OST SUITE

*video stills**Performance at Els Roelandt's House*

New collaborative project of ξapos and video artist Margarita Maximova aka OST SUITE. ξapos's music veers between abstract, experimental compositions and more beat driven tracks, all held together by a defined aesthetic of sonic impurities and random patterns thrown up by algorithmic computations. In ξapos's music compositional decisions are not merely reliant on himself but also on a range of processes from constrained randomness to full fledged neural networks. Making her own patches, Margarita Maximova provides live visuals with images from her own archive and found footage that respond to the music in real-time.

Upcoming	Performance lecture, Double Minutes, 2024 (Location TBA) Brussels, BE Performance lecture, Soft Power, 2024, Berlin, DE Orangery of Care, nGbk, 2024, Berlin, DE
Solo & duo exhibitions	The Young and the Beautiful, Screening with Rose Lowder, Cinema OFFoff, 2022 Ghent, BE Harm and Charm, with Aisha Christison, Damien & The Love Guru, 2021, Brussels DE The Affect Heuristic, Solo show, De Vereniging (S.M.A.K), 2020, Ghent, BE A Cycle of Sustain and Decay, with Shana Moulton, Tick Tack, 2020, Antwerp, BE Ten Slotte, Het Bos, 2018, Antwerp, BE You're On Your Own And All Over The Place, Beursschouwburg, 2018, Brussels, BE
Selected group exhibitions	Collection Presentation, Groupshow, Mu.ZEE, 2023, Ostend, BE Bloch / Video Confrontation, Frac Bretagne, Group show with Basma Alsharif, Raymond Hains, Alain Le Querrec, Alain Rivière, Erika Vogt, FRAC, 2023, Bretagne, FR Screening of Forest Wide Time at Reykjavik International Film Festival, 2023, Reykjavik, IS Exiting the Vampire Castle, Lichtekooi, 2022, Antwerp, BE Spring Equinox, suns.works, 2022, Zürich, CH Courtisane Festival, Sphinx Cinema, 2021, Ghent, BE Screenings X Forum, Royal Danish Academy of Fine Arts, Copenhagen, DK Matchmaker, hosted by Damien & The Love Guru for Various Others, Loggia, 2021, Munich, DE Navigating AquaGranda, A Digital Community Memory, Science Gallery, 2021, Venice, IT Fifth Wave, Garage Museum of Contemporary Art (MCA), 2021, Moscow, RU Just Call Him And See If He Picks Up (screening), Super Dakota, 2020, Brussels, BE Shelter in Place, Thomas Schulte Gallery, 2020, Berlin, DE Martians Send Videos Home, Power Station of Art, 2019, Shanghai, CH Artificial Scarcity, Video Club Stedelijk Amsterdam, 2019, Amsterdam, NL Objects In Love With Humans, hosted by Damien & The Love Guru and Waldburger Wouters for FOAF, Lucie Drdova Gallery, 2019, Prague, CZ Art Brussels, invited by Damien & The Love Guru, 2019, Brussels, BE Tenants, Giorgio Galotti, 2019, Turin, IT She Brought Me In Complexity Of Words, DOK, 2018, Ghent, BE
Lectures, workshops & readings	Audio show: Soon The Flesh, 2023, Sloppy Radio, Ostend, Be Podcast: NICC To Meet You, Shervine Sheikh Rezaei, 2023, NICC, Antwerp Reading: Reading of You Have Within You Something Stronger and More Numinous, Grazer Kunstverein, 2022, Graz, AT Workshop: Writing: A Waste Of My Time, Royal Danish of Fine Arts, 2021, Copenhagen, DK
Awards & Funding	Honorary Mention for the artistic project AquaGranda: A Digital Community Memory, Ars Electronica, 2023, Linz, AU Flemish Government Funding Grant, 2023, BE Long-listed for ars viva prize, 2023, DE Flemish Government Funding Grant, 2020, BE Flemish Government Funding Grant, 2018, BE Laureate, first prize of Coming People 2014, S.M.A.K, 2014, Ghent, BE Laureate Thesis Prize for auto fictive book 'I Was In A Hurry', Luca School of Arts, 2013, Ghent, BE
Publications	You Have Within You Something More Stronger And More Numinous, edited by Margarita Maximova and Charlotte Norwood, essay by Emile Rubino, designed by Atelia Brenda, published by Damien & The Love Guru, 2021, Brussels, BE
Published writing	Le Chauffage #1, edited by Emile Rubino and Felix Rapp, designed by Francesca Percival and Felix Rapp, 2020, Brussels, BE
Education	MA Visual Arts, Sint-Lucas, 2013, Ghent, BE
Residencies	Escola Das Transições, 2023, Vila Real, PT KHM Cologne, Paidia Institute, 2013, Sardinia, IT Migrating Art Academies, Goethe Institute, 2012, Nida, LT
Press	Tique Magazine, Six Questions for Margarita Maximova, 2023 Honorary Mention for the artistic project AquaGranda: A Digital Community Memory, Ars Electronica, 2023 Nieuwe aanwinsten voor Mu.ZEE in 2022, 2022 19 kunstwerken voor collectie Vlaamse Gemeenschap Opgesloten labels en andere mogelijkheden, Bas Blaasse, Glean, 2021 Matchmaker, Art Viewer, 2021 Aqua Granda Una memoria collettiva digitale / Aqua Granda A digital community memory, 2021 Art Brussels 2019, Art Viewer, 2019 Eerste solo van Margarita Maximova in nieuwe exporuite Beursschouwburg, Christine Vuegen, Glean, 2018 'Margarita Maximova at Beursschouwburg: Parodied personalities and the limits of language', Ruby Reding, The Word Magazine, 2018 'Margarita Maximova onthult haar meest obscure video stills', Celine Mathieu, Vice, 2017