

# Present Continuous Pasts

**Participating Artists:** Morehshin Allahyari (US), Kamilia Kard (IT), Oliver Laric (DE), Petros Moris (GR)

**curated by** Domenico Quaranta

**Fondazione Museo Pino Pascali**

**Via Parco del Lauro 119, Polignano a Mare (BA)**

**Opening: September 3, 2021, 7.30 p.m**

**September 3 – 30, from Wednesday to Sunday, from 4 to 8 p.m.**

**Production: Apulia Center for Art and Technology**

[www.museopinopascali.it](http://www.museopinopascali.it) - [www.lineafestival.it](http://www.lineafestival.it)

We live in an era characterized by a stratified, intersecting and confused temporality. The future has disappeared from our horizon with the approach of the new millennium, depriving us of any possibility of imagining it as anything other than an apocalypse or an unchanging repetition of the present in which we are immersed. The shock caused by the speed with which the future arrives, catching us unprepared, has been transformed into the shock of a present that engages and distracts us at a relentless pace, preventing us from looking elsewhere. Immersed in the present and deprived of the future, we watch the past return again and again: in the form of farce, in the form of natural, historical or biological relics regurgitated from the earth or released from rapidly melting ice, of plastic islands, open-air dumps, seed banks and DNA strings, of cultural heritages digitized and put on the web to train artificial intelligence or distract us during a pandemic. But duration obsesses us, and if on the one hand we struggle to believe in the near future, on the other we continue to create time capsules for the distant future, wondering what sense the traces of the present and the past will have for the intelligences - human, alien or artificial - for which they are intended.

Borrowing the title of a 1974 video installation by American artist Dan Graham that investigated the coexistence of different temporalities in a hypermediated environment, **Present Continuous Pasts** is a group exhibition that explores contemporary temporal atopy through the work of 4 international artists who engage with the digitization, modeling, hybridization, archiving, and rematerialization of cultural artifacts from the present and the past.

Iranian artist relocated to the United States, **Morehshin Allahyari** presents *Huma* (2016), a video installation that is part of the cycle *She Who Sees the Unknown* (2016 - ), an ongoing research project that uses the languages of 3D scanning, 3D modeling, 3D printing and storytelling in various declinations (linear narration, immersive environment in VR, online hypertext) to reconstruct and actualize the stories of five characters from Middle Eastern mythology: female or hybrid monsters and jinn, faithfully reconstructed based on existing iconography but often re-read through a personal filter. *Huma*, a jinn with three heads and two tails that “brings heat” to the human body, causing fever, becomes in Allahyari’s narration an emblem of a non-colonial response to global warming and environmental disaster: an attitude that is not expressed in the flight and conquest of new worlds, but in “staying with the trouble” (Donna Haraway), leveling and making its consequences more equal.

The recovery, through 3D modeling and printing, of female archetypes of the past also returns in the work of the Italian-Hungarian artist **Kamilia Kard**, who in the cycle *Woman as a Temple* (2017 - ) is inspired by the Paleolithic Venuses, emblems of femininity and fertility, not to reconstruct a fragment of archaeology of the past but to give solidity and concreteness to a hypothetical archaeology of the future. His headless and limbless busts, 3D printed with unnaturally colored plastic filaments, do not bear the wounds of erosion and time, but the scars of a translation process from digital to real, automated but still imperfect, in which – if no finishing touches are made – as in the trunk of a tree, the growth process of the sculpture and the difficulties encountered by the machine in solving some of the challenges posed by the model become legible.

The work of **Oliver Laric**, an Austrian artist based in Berlin, has focused for years on metamorphosis in its temporal dimension, in turn freely hybridizing memetics and genetics, history of forms and theories of evolution, fiction and physics, treating every level of reality as part of a continuous flow. *Betweenness* (2018) reflects and expands this poetics of hybridization and continuous transformation, along time and out of time, ringing in an infinite loop various episodes of mutation, hybridization, growth or passage of state. The choice of merging heterogeneous sources (documentary images, Japanese anime) through a uniforming aesthetic solution (a black linear drawing on a white background); the hypnotic soundtrack (realized in collaboration with the musician Ville Haimala); and the use of an animation technique based on the fluidity of vector graphics, converge to generate a sense of suspension, of an intermediate state.

The recent work of the Greek artist **Petros Moris** is based on the belief that knowledge of the past and prescience of the future can be extracted from the underground. The *Future Bestiary* cycle (2020) originates from the photogrammetric scanning of some funerary artifacts found in the ancient cemetery of Kerameikos, near Athens. The sculptures of the series are made with marble from various quarries in Greece, but they depart from the realism of the original scans (used in the video loops of *Future Bestiary (Kerameikos)*, 2020) by accentuating to the extreme the stratifications that emerge during the printing process with numerical control machines, until they are converted into tectonic clods, which build a low-resolution ghost of the original artifact. The sculptures are placed on steel plinths carved with words that speak of the present or future, such as “realtime”, “simulation”, “extinction”; and adorned with stickers and other linguistic signs that reflect hopes and anxieties about issues such as environmental collapse, algorithmic control, and sociopolitical change.

# Artists' biographies

**Morehshin Allahyari** (US) is an artist, activist, writer, and educator. She was born and raised in Iran and moved to the United States in 2007. Her work deals with the political, social, and cultural contradictions we face every day. She thinks about technology as a philosophical toolset to reflect on objects and as a poetic means to document our personal and collective lives and struggles in the 21st century. Morehshin is the co-author of *The 3D Additivist Cookbook* in collaboration with writer/artist Daniel Rourke.

Morehshin has been part of numerous exhibitions, festivals, and workshops around the world including Venice Biennale di Architettura, New Museum, The Whitney Museum of American Art, Pompidou Center, Museum of Contemporary Art in Montreal, Tate Modern, Queens Museum, Pori Museum, Powerhouse Museum, Dallas Museum of Art, and Museum für Angewandte Kunst. She has been an artist in residence at BANFF Centre (2013), Carnegie Mellon University's STUDIO for Creative Inquiry (2015), Autodesk Pier9 Workshop in San Francisco (2015), the Vilém Flusser Residency Program for Artistic Research in association with Transmediale, Berlin (2016), Eyebeam's one year Research Residency (2016-2017) in NYC, Pioneer Works (2018), and Harvest Works (2018). Her work has been featured in *The New York Times*, BBC, Huffington Post, Wired, National Public Radio, Parkett Art Magazine, Frieze, Rhizome, Hyperallergic, and Al Jazeera, among others.

She is the recipient of The United States Artist Fellowship (2021), The Joan Mitchell Foundation Painters & Sculptors Grant (2019), The Sundance Institute New Frontier International Fellowship, and the Leading Global Thinkers of 2016 award by Foreign Policy magazine. Her 3D Additivist Manifesto video is in the collection of San Francisco Museum of Modern Art, and recently she has been awarded major commissions by The Shed, Rhizome, New Museum, Whitney Museum of American Art, Liverpool Biennale, and FACT. <http://www.morehshin.com>

**Kamilia Kard** (IT) is an artist and a researcher born in Milan. After earning a degree in Political Economy at the Bocconi University of Milan, she turned to art and received a BA in Painting and an MA in Net Art both from the Academy of Fine Arts of Brera in Milan. She is currently a Ph.D. candidate in Digital Humanities at the University of Genova. She teaches Multimedia Communication at the Brera's Academy and the Academy of Carrara. Her research explores how hyper-connectivity and new forms of online communication modified and influenced the perception of the human body, gestures, feelings, and emotions. Her work has been exhibited internationally, including Galerie Odile Ouizeman, Paris, Dimora Artica, Milan, Metronom, Modena, Victoria & Albert Museum, London, EP7, Paris, IMAL, Brussels, Fotomuseum, Winterthur, Switzerland, La Triennale di Milano, the Museum of Contemporary Art, Sao Paulo, Brazil, La Quadriennale of Roma at Palazzo Delle Esposizioni, Hypersalon, Miami and Museum del Novecento, Milan. She edited *Alpha Plus. An Anthology of Digital Art* (Editorial Vortex 2017). She was a speaker at the Machine Feeling conference (Transmediale and Cambridge University), a series of panels focused on AI, machine learning, and the new forms of social and cultural language they spawned. She was Visiting Fellow at Paris Sciences et Lettres EnsadLab in the research group of François Garnier Spatial Media, focusing on the themes of cognition and agency within VR environments. <http://kamiliakard.org/>

**Oliver Laric** (DE) was born in 1981 in Innsbruck, Austria, and lives and works in Berlin. He has had one-person exhibitions at S.M.A.K., Ghent; the Saint Louis Art Museum; Kunstverein Braunschweig, Germany; Schinkel Pavillon, Berlin; Secession, Vienna; Museum of Contemporary Art Cleveland; Austrian Cultural Forum, London; Hirshhorn Museum and Sculpture Garden, Washington, D.C.; and the MIT List Visual Arts Center, Cambridge, Massachusetts. He has also participated in group exhibitions at the Whitechapel Gallery, London; Albright-Knox Art Gallery,

Buffalo; Kunsthalle Fridericianum, Kassel; Palais de Tokyo, Paris; Kunstverein München; and the Massachusetts Museum of Contemporary Art, North Adams. Laric's work was included in the 2015 New Museum Triennial, 2016 Liverpool Biennial, 2018 São Paulo Biennial, and the 2018 Guangzhou Triennial. He will participate in the 2021 Seoul Mediacity Biennale. <http://oliverlaric.com/>

**Petros Moris** (GR) is an artist based in Athens. He has studied at the Athens School of Fine Arts and the Goldsmiths University of London. He has presented his work in solo shows at Fast Forward Festival - Onassis Stegi, ROOM E-10 27, the Embassy of Cyprus in Athens, Point Centre for Contemporary Art, DUVE Berlin and Project Native Informant. Recent group shows include the Singapore Biennale 2019, Singapore National Gallery 2019; the 7th Thessaloniki Biennale - Stasis, Alaca Imaret, Thessaloniki 2019; Digital Gothic, Centre d'art contemporain – la synagogue de Delme, Delme 2019; The Same River Twice, Benaki Museum, Athens 2019; Tomorrows, Le Lieu Unique, Nantes 2019; 2018 Triennial: Songs for Sabotage, New Museum, New York 2018 and Geometries, Onassis Cultural Foundation at the Agricultural University, Athens, 2018. He has been part of the art collective KERNEL and the curatorial projects Office SIM and Radical Reading and has been nominated for the DESTE Prize 2015 and awarded the Spyropoulos Prize 2012, the ARTWORKS 2018 Fellowship and the Onassis Foundation Scholarship. <http://petrosmoris.com/>

## The Curator

**Domenico Quaranta** is an art critic, curator and teacher interested in the ways in which the ongoing technological changes affect contemporary artistic practices. His texts have appeared in numerous magazines, newspapers, books and catalogs. He is the author, among other things, of *Beyond New Media Art* (2013) and *Surfing con Satoshi. Arte, blockchain e NFT* (2021) and editor of several volumes, including *GameScenes. Art in the Age of Videogames* (2006, with M. Bittanti). Since 2005 he has curated several exhibitions, including *Collect the WWWorld. The Artist as Archivist in the Internet Age* (Brescia 2011; Basel and New York 2012); *Cyphoria* (Quadriennale 2016, Rome) and *Hyperemployment* (MGLC, Ljubljana 2019 – 2020). He is a Professor of Interactive Systems and a co-founder of the Link Art Center (2011 – 2019). More information: <http://domenicoquaranta.com>.