



Bio Art Forum Program

May 16 - 18, 2024

SKUP, Creative District, Novi Sad, Serbia

Bulevar despota Stefana 5

Day I

Thursday, 16.5.

9.30 - 10.00

Gathering and introduction

Adrienn Újházi and Bojan Kenig

10.00 - 10.50

Talk

Hybrid Art and the Democratization of Science

Prof. Polona Tratnik Ph.D. (SI)

Biotechnological artists who have responded to the advancements in biotechnology in “the biotech century” have entered laboratories and started using them as their studios, or established their laboratories as art studios. Art has converged with biotechnology. This has affected the shape of art projects, artistic methodologies, and epistemologies, as well as artistic tools and materials. Nevertheless, not only has art approached biotechnology and the institution of art has changed, but the formation of science has also gone through a profound transformation which has opened up possibilities for science to collaborate with art. Has art



become biotechnology, or worse still, its mere promotor? What is the function of art addressing biotechnology?

Polona Tratnik, PhD in philosophy, is a full professor at the Faculty of Arts at the University of Ljubljana and senior researcher at the Institute IRRIS.

10.50 - 11.50

Inspirational Panel Session

Living Art

**Margherita Pevere (DE); Dorotea Dolinšek (SI); Robertina Šebjanič (SI);
Moderator: Sonja Jankov (RS).**

Living materials, systems, and processes create art that constantly transforms, blurring the line between creation and decay. Artists, researchers, and institutions are in a collaborative exploration to develop innovative solutions for nurturing and sharing bio art's perspectives. We will explore the unique challenges and beauty of creating these artworks, redefine how we interact with them, and pave the way for the future of this captivating art form.

12.15 - 13.00

Talk

Three Laboratories as One

Jurij Krpan (SI)

In the early 2000s, the Kapelica Gallery established numerous connections with research institutions and the university to facilitate artistic work with living systems. However, these connections very quickly proved useful only as informational and advisory. Therefore, in 2010, the Kapelica Gallery began to prepare and equip a special space that would allow artists to prepare their projects in which they required strictly controlled conditions for the cultivation of microorganisms, plants, and animals, which acted as subjects of expression in the works of art. With this space, called BioTehna, we created the conditions for the development of artistic projects that we could present in a developed/grown form in the gallery. It soon became apparent that the living systems with which artists collaborate are so diverse that we cannot use



only one space for their cultivation. Thus, BioTehna was joined by Rampa - a mechatronics laboratory, and Vivarium - a bionics laboratory.

In his lecture, Jurij Krpan, Program Director of the Kersnikova Institute and curator at the Kapelica Gallery, will present the challenges faced by curators in the process of artistic research and creation of artworks, and the advantages and challenges presented by laboratories in which artists, scientists and engineers co-create.

13.00 - 14.00

Inspirational Panel Session

Keeping Art Alive

Olga Majcen Linn (HR); Stevan Kojić (RS); Dalila Honorato (GR)

Moderator: Petar Laušević (RS), Center for the Promotion of Science (CPN)

This session tackles the unique challenges of curating bio art - keeping it alive while ensuring its message endures. Artists, researchers, and curators dissect the challenges of keeping these living artworks vibrant and share their perspectives on creating conditions for them to thrive. Join the discussion and discover how institutions can nurture collaboration, education, and the future of bio art, ensuring accessibility for future audiences.

15.00 - 16.00

Interactive Talk Session

New Reproductive Technology and the Human Germline Commons

Dr. Adam Zaretsky (USA)

The interactive session will show wet lab bio art workshops for non-biologists, delving into transgenic human co-creation, germline aesthetics, and reproductive technology. These labs merge biology with creative arts, addressing legal, ethical, and social implications. They aim for mutant baby production as bio art, integrating time-based sculptural practices. The workshops explore novel archiving technologies like Cryogenic Storage and Human Colonies. Join us in redefining boundaries between art, science, and humanity.



Adam Zaretsky Ph.D. is a Wet-Lab Art Practitioner mixing Ecology, Biotechnology, Non-human Relations, Body Performance, and Gastronomy. Zaretsky stages lively, hands-on bioart production labs. His art practice focuses on an array of legal, ethical, social and libidinal implications of biotechnological materials and methods focusing on transgenic humans. Principal at VASTAL (Vivoarts School for Transgenic Aesthetics Limited), Researcher at NADL Inc., Chief Executive Officer at psyFert (the psychic fertility clinic), Founder of BEAK (The Bioart Ethical Advisory Kommission), and proud member of the World Congress on New Reproductive Technology Arts (WCoNRTA) of thGAP.

19.00 - 20.00

Film Projection

Location: Cinema hall - Museum of Contemporary Art of Vojvodina, Dunavska 37, Novi Sad

K-9_topology: Through the Lens of a Long-Term Care of an Artwork

Video essay by Maja Smrekar, 2022, 54'

A video essay presents the 'K- 9_topology' series by Maja Smrekar and offers an insight into approaches to the development, production, and exhibition of artworks that include living organisms and biomaterials, along with the challenges that artists and other professionals face when re-installing and archiving such works. The documentary is accompanied by the opinions of the following curators and theorists: Jens Hauser, Ida Hiršenfelder, Martin Honzik, Lucie Strecker, Jessica Ullrich, Jurij Krpan, and Eva Smrekar.



Day II

Friday, 17.5.

9.30 - 10.00

Gathering and introduction

Bojan Kenig

10.00 - 10.50

Talk

DIYBio is dead, long live DIYBio

Roland van Dierendonck (NL/UK)

Do-It-Yourself Biology was a dream. It promised accessible, affordable, shared lab spaces with open-source tools and protocols, enabling everyone to learn and do biology, democratizing the life sciences. What is the state of DIYBio and did it deliver on its promises? Bio art and its ways of operating are living on in art school laboratories.

Roland van Dierendonck is an artist and researcher. He investigates new ways to relate to, experience, and understand microorganisms in his practice. He is a PhD candidate at Lab4Living, Sheffield Hallam University, using touch and time to connect with microbial presence and movement. Next to his PhD, he works as a senior researcher in Responsible Applied AI at the Rotterdam University of Applied Sciences, bridging AI and ethics.



10.50 - 11.50

Inspirational Panel Session

Art for Change

Maya Minder (CH), Ewen Chardronnet (FR)

Moderator: Kristijan Tkalec (SI), Kersnikova Institute

This session dives into the world of DIY, biohacking, and DIWO approaches to bio art. Discover how artists are pushing boundaries with affordable tools and open-source knowledge. We will tackle how biohacking empowers individuals to explore the potential of biology in artistic creation and becomes a catalyst for social change. Explore the potential of community bio labs and learn how DIWO fosters collaboration and community engagement in bio art projects.

12.00 - 15.00

Practice-based session I

Transformative relations - intertidal moment

Facilitators of research module I: Gjino Šutić & Filip Grgurević (HR), *UR Institute*

Facilitator of research module II: Sunčica Pasuljević Kandić (RS)

Conceptual framework and moderation: Sunčica Pasuljević Kandić

Transformative Relations is a 2-day event of practice-based sessions (intertidal moment & zone) where participants engage in an experiential walking exploration of relations between humans & non-humans through the case study of the Danube environment. Embodied data and biological samples from the Danube environment will be gathered through 2 research modules: DIY biotechnological sampling and embodied ethnographic sampling. Bio artists, researchers, and antidisciplinary practitioners will guide participants through hands-on sessions, equipping them with new insights and methods. Fostering an approach of hybrid methodologies *Transformative Relations* promotes collaboration across disciplines and species.



Day III

Saturday, 18.5.

9.30 - 10.00

Gathering and introduction

Bojan Kenig

10.30 - 11.20

Talk

Biomediality and Microperformativity: A Genealogy of a Contemporary Paragone

Jens Hauser (FR/DK)

Process-based art of transformation in vivo or in vitro that manipulates biological organisms, materials, or functions at discrete levels (cells, proteins, genes, nucleotides, etc.) to create displays that allow audiences to engage with them emotionally and cognitively pose manifold epistemological and aesthetic challenges. From an art historical perspective, such practices continue the long-standing quest for aesthetic life-likeness, animation, or aliveness – beyond imagination, representation, and simulation. Then, they are also epistemic indicators of a continually changing concept of media, which do not just represent, control, transmit, store, or process something concerning which they are supposed to be indifferent (information, text or images, sound and so forth), but which produce what they pretend to merely mediate. Biomediality denotes all factors from technical manipulation or appropriation of living organisms or organic entities, elements, and processes.

Jens Hauser is a Paris-based media studies scholar, writer, and art curator focusing on the interactions between art and technology. He is currently a researcher and has been a Professor in Art History at the Karlsruhe Institute of Technology (KIT) since 2022. He is also a researcher at the University of Copenhagen's Medical Museion and a distinguished faculty member of the



Department of Art, Art History and Design at Michigan State University, where he co-directs the BRIDGE artist in the residency program.

11.20 - 13.20

Practice-based session II

Transformative relations - intertidal zone

Moderator: Jelena Joksimović (RS), with the help of the facilitators.

Equipped with various samples and impressions from the outdoor exploration of the previous day, the participants will engage in its collective transformation. While exploring the Danube environment, they had the opportunity to delve deeper into the relationship between humans, other organisms, and the ecosystem, grounding in the presence of ecological entanglement. Drawing from that acquired knowledge they will be guided to convey a collective message, action-thought answer. During this practice-based session, participants from two research modules will be mixed to exchange and transform their samples. The goal is to enable multiple points of view, experiences, and knowledge to cross-pollinate to position the current flow of transformative relations collectively and where we seek to take us.

13.45 - 14.30

Talk

Art and Immunology: A lifelong love affair

Marta de Menezes (PT)

The work of de Menezes explores the possibilities modern biology offers to artists. In the lecture a special emphasis will be given to the development of collaborative projects between the artist and the different fields within biology she has worked with to question how our genetic composition is (di)similar to various other organisms, as well as the concept of self and non-self in immunology which challenge our conception of identity. Marta has been developing strategies not only to portray the recent advances of biological sciences, but also to incorporate biological material as a way to convey an artistic discourse not possible with a different medium: DNA, proteins, and cells offer an opportunity to explore novel ways of representation and



communication. More importantly, they allow for a very necessary re-problematization of concepts and issues that we have been working on and thinking about since the beginning.

Marta is a Portuguese artist, with a Degree in Fine Arts from the University of Lisbon and a MSt from the University of Oxford. De Menezes is the director of Cultivamos Cultura, the leading institution devoted to experimental art in Portugal and Ectopia, dedicated to facilitating the collaborative work between artists and scientists.

14.30 - 15.30

Closing Session

Cultivating the Future

Moderators: Milica Rašković (RS), CE DESK, and Dobrivoje Lale Erić (RS), Center for the Promotion of Science (CPN)

The Bio Art Forum concludes with a forward-looking discussion. Having explored the world of living art, participants – artists, researchers, and curators – will come together to cultivate the future of the field. Expect dialogue on bridging the gap between artistic vision and bio art's unique needs. Can DIY and collaborative approaches democratize bio art creation? How can art catalyze environmental awareness and social change?