

# STEVAN KOJIĆ

## A Self-Sustainable System of Absurdity

26 August–20 September 2021

artKIT

Stevan Kojić's art is established in personal reflection on the possibilities of modern technologies and the capabilities of social relations, which are increasingly atomized, individualized, segmented, defined, targeted, which happens through processes arising from the general situation that is ours, everyone's and from time immemorial. The eternal theme of human and nature, our work in the environment, outgrows a simple reflection on ecology and technology. Stevan does not try to portray it idealistically or ideally but solely places it. It could be anywhere; there is an installation in the gallery that questions the complexity of living in attachments, apparatuses, objects, and their motion, movement, algorithms, and programming. What we are and what we do, what we do and what we can do... is that all? Turning lights on and off, receiving and sending messages, facilitating communication, propaganda, and marketing. What about life and especially – alive?

When Stevan Kojić sets up – he builds. Assembles and exhibits. He creates the homeliness of the interior and the warmth of the homeliness, which spreads it as real and imaginary, into the world of feelings and perceptions, into the field of moving and at the same time limiting, opening, and covering. A look, eavesdrop, thought can flutter freely, all over the place, while communicating along lines and protocols, disciplined and devoted. Like in the living room or the garden. Arranged landscape in one form or another acquires the role of our habitat, which can also be a laboratory or an ambiance for life on another planet, in which nature is a simulation, and individual elements are images, prints, and artifacts connected in a network that generates changing visual and sound »messages«. The artist questions existence in a technologically established habitat and triggers existentialist reflections not only on our lives but also on the meanings of technological integration and especially such sustainability, which in the name of development constantly develops and produces new platforms.

The art project *A Self-Sustainable System of Absurdity* (2010–2021) deals with topics such as: ecology, artificial intelligence and creation of self-sustainable systems, and also with the issues of private and public relations, the problem of perception of the content and changeability of information.

*A Self-Sustaining System of Absurdity* is an interactive-autonomous, hybrid and generative installation, a bio-technological structure that is an independent, self-sustainable and self-sufficient form, but at the same time also a futuristic experimental habitat, open towards potential external interactions or possible users and settlers. The interactive environment is constructed from active subjects, rejected organic and non-organic objects such as personal possessions: a bicycle, bathtub and the like, electronic waste and plants connected by means of sensors and computers, elements that become an interface of sorts, serving for the purpose of communication between a visitor and a computer. It constitutes an allusion to post-apocalyptic spaces, utopian/dystopian micro-communities based on a new cohabitation between man, nature and technology through an emphasis of the absurdity of some social relations.

Through *A Self-Sustaining System of Absurdity* we explore the principle of information transfer by means of various media, developing a system in which every element is linked to the next one, which spreads through space like a »virus«. The motoric impulse is transferred into the audio-video and electromagnetic signal, an analogue signal into a digital one, then the other way round, in relation to mutual contact and communication with the viewers. By means of movement within the autonomous system, what is initiated is a process of reaction of the internal elements, which continue their activities in a chain reaction, changing the initially given situation. Artificial intelligence participates in these processes by means of noting down, modifying and creating new information within the established hybrid system.

The concept is based on stimulating and maintaining continual activities, which lead to changes within that mechanism brought about by man or mutual impact of the elements. The installation continually solves the task going in circles, ceaselessly like a perpetuum mobile. There is no real task, only that motion should unfold continually, irrespective of possible derailments, changes within that space and interaction with the visitors. This perpetual machine allows free movement within the system, insists on changes, chance, expansion and inclusion of new possibilities and combinations, that is, the rhizomatic approach.

The initial position of the system lies in the author's critical attitude towards the bio-art practices up to now, preoccupied by the fetishization of scientific-technological innovations, and in an ironic approach to social and art norms.

## BIOGRAPHY

Webpage:



**Stevan Kojić** (1973, Kikinda) graduated from and obtained his MA Degree at the Department of Sculpture of the Faculty of Fine Arts in Belgrade. He completed his doctoral studies at the Academy of Arts in Novi Sad, where he is employed as a Full Professor at the Department of New Fine Arts Media. Through his artistic practice, he explores the relations between society, technology, science and nature. He most often realises his interdisciplinary research through hybrid installations, digital animation works and photography. He has exhibited within the framework of group and solo exhibitions in Austria, Bosnia and Herzegovina, the Czech Republic, Montenegro, France, Croatia, Italy, Japan, South Korea, Canada, Macedonia, Germany, Romania, the USA, Slovakia, Slovenia, Switzerland, Taiwan, Turkey and Serbia.

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artKIT, Glavni trg 14, Maribor  
Opening hours: Monday to Friday from 4 to 8 p.m.