

Sašo Sedlaček

OBLOMO

15 April–14 May 2022

MMC KIBLA / KiBela

Oblomov is the central character of Goncharov's eponymous 1859 classic and is undoubtedly the laziest hero in world literature and the source of the synonym for Oblomovism, which denotes deep-seated apathy and laziness. In the first 50 pages of the book, he barely manages to move from the bed to the chair. *Oblomo* by Sašo Sedlaček, who sought inspiration for the title in this lazy protagonist, develops and builds on the idea of laziness as something useless, negative and wasteful. Laziness can be eco, he argues. And healthy.

The project identifies the visionary representation of Russian realism in the individual of the 21st century, who will be – or already is – replaced in physical work by robots and artificial intelligence. The project also carries an environmental and health message due to the destructive impact of humans on the environment and the lack of reflection resulting from continuous activity.

In *Oblomo*, Sašo Sedlaček uses the same technologies that otherwise force us to be constantly active – such as biometrics – to explore the issues of the fast-approaching work-free society. How can we adapt the latter to economic structures based on sustainable growth? How can we earn money, buy goods and pay bills without working? Is it possible to turn non-work into productive activity? Can doing nothing be the ultimate form of labor in the age of automation?

The *Oblomo* cryptocurrency platform is based on the combination of blockchain and machine learning technology; it rewards users for not working with its own cryptocurrency. Every time the app detects the users' inactivity, it rewards them by depositing Oblomo crypto coins into their e-wallets. Users can also spend these coins in the platform's online shop, using their »laziness« to buy a variety of goods and services.

When we engage with *Oblomo* – be it in a gallery or from the comfort of our home sofa – our inactivity, immobility and laziness become a rewarding activity. Once privileged values reserved for the ruling classes of society are democratized. Laziness is no longer perceived as a despicable but as a noble trait. As such, it also acquires economic value and purchasing power.

The project dates back to November 2019: in the *Om for Coin* performance, three individuals – the »miners« – performed a meditation of the Om mantra in front of machine learning software and a real audience. This event created the first coins in the platform's ecosystem, resulting in the first 2,000,000 oblomo coins, which are now available to the

public for mining and trading. The *Oblomo* platform is a browser-based web application, so anyone can use it on his or her phone, tablet or computer, virtually any device with an internet connection and a webcam.

The exhibition at the KiBela, space for art, presents *Oblomo* in production by Aksioma – Institute for Contemporary Art, which first presented the project as part of the one-year program *Hyperemployment – Post-Work, Online Labor and Automation*. *Oblomo* was first presented in autumn 2020 at the Exportdrvo Gallery as part of *Dopolavoro*, the flagship project of Rijeka 2020 – European Capital of Culture, and at the Aksioma Project Space.



www.oblomo.si

BIOGRAPHY

Webpage



Sašo Sedlaček graduated in Sculpture and Video at the Academy of Fine Arts and Design, University of Ljubljana, where he has been working as an Associate Professor in the Video, Animation and New Media program since 2015. He has received various awards for his work, including the Trend Award for Outstanding Achievements in Visual Culture (Ljubljana, 2012) and VIDA 11 (Fundación Telefónica, Madrid, 2008). His work is included in various private and public collections, including the Museum of Contemporary Art (MSUM) and the Museum and Galleries of Ljubljana (MGML). Since 2001, it has been exhibited in Slovenia and abroad in various venues, the most recent of which are: Museum of Fine Arts in Split (2021), Espace Multimedia Gantner, Bourougne, France (2020), Dopolavoro, Rijeka 2020 – European Capital of Culture (2020), Pistori palace in Bratislava (2020), City Gallery in Ljubljana (2019), Espace Apollonia in Strasbourg (2018), Contemporary Art Palazzo Torriani, Gradisca d'Isonzo (2018), Autostrada Biennale Prizren (2017), Handel Street Projects in London (2017), Maribor Art Gallery (2017), Museum of Contemporary Art in Ljubljana (2016), AND Festival in Manchester (2015), Wro Art Center in Wroclaw (2015), Ars Electronica in Linz (2014), Transmediale in Berlin (2014).

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MMC KIBLA / KiBela, Ulica kneza Koclja 9, Maribor
Opening hours: Monday–Friday: 10 a.m.–6 p.m., Saturday: 10 a.m.–2 p.m.