

Audio" in a limited space in the center of the speakers. But we can also walk through the exhibition parallel to the projection, turn our backs on it and step into the corner – creating our own unique sound experience. Because as you will probably notice for yourself, while Ditopia KIBLA may have something to do with "film", the accompanying music has little to do with film music, at least not in the way we are used to.

#### INVITATION

If you recognize someone from the past or present on the projection who is not standing next to you or somewhere in the gallery, tell them to come and see the installation. When the film is available online, everyone will see and hear it a little differently.

– Marko Košnik

(1) The man with the camera

<https://www.mg-lj.si/si/dogodki/1823/predavanje-marko-kosnik/>

Ditopia is generally used as an abbreviation for dystopia, the opposite of utopia, in this case as a separation between the digital and the analog, the virtual and the real in a web of images and sound and space-time.



## BIOGRAPHY

**Marko Košnik** has been active as a polymedia artist since the 1980s. He composes electroacoustic music, develops synthetic instruments for the live manipulation of sound and digital video, directs and produces solo and group performances, builds poetic platforms and installations, which he expands with social and technological layers, up to interactive environments, which he prefers to program himself.

Since its foundation in 1986, the Institute Egon March (IEM) has been working with various collaborators on individual projects according to the founding principles of collective work:

- the collaboration is based on the individual artistic positions of the collaborators;
- only IEM projects are produced. Under certain conditions, they can be combined with independent productions by invited collaborators;
- the documentation of the realized productions is kept by IEM. The publication of the archive material is based on the principles of Creative Commons;
- if the organizers cannot meet the conditions for organizationally and technologically advanced productions, IEM and its collaborators build platforms that enable realization through the exchange of equipment and knowledge.

In this way, IEM has realized (by 2023) 72 productions, 28 of them international, with more than 30 international collaborators in 16 countries on the European continent as well as in Mexico, Japan and Indonesia.

Marko Košnik

Ditopia KIBLA (remix) 2024

26 July–24 August 2024

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.

# Marko Košnik

## DITOPIA KIBLA (REMIX) 2024

26 July–24 August 2024

MMC KIBLA/KiBela

*Premiere of a photo animation with original music in a "spatial audio" setup Ditopia KIBLA (remix) 2024*

#### Analog environment of digital images

Between 2007 and 2011, polymedia artist Marko Košnik created an extensive body of work in numerous locations, for which he obtained the visual material by photographing while walking and traversing topographically connected public spaces and events. He presented the works in the spaces of the organizers at these locations as interactive installations and/or improvisations for a video instrument and for music collaborators.

In this way he created *Ditopia Display*, an interactive environment in which the audience could participate in the tracking interface video presented at MMC KIBLA in 2009, and *Ditopia Displacement*, a video concert with Irena Tomažin at KiBar in 2011.

DITOPIA FRAGMENTS 2008–2009; <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Kb2JHr2lXgM>



*Ditopia KIBLA (remix) 2024* is a photo animation with over 1,700 photos, created on the basis of 15-year-old material, combined with more recent images of events at KiBela and artKIT.

– Peter Tomaž Dobrila

*Here are some related and unraveled thoughts from the author about the film, which we can only identify with if we participate in it without performing, and then, when we see it, maintain and even reinforce the perspective of our first-hand experience.*

#### DITOPIA

Ditopia is generally used as an abbreviation for dystopia, the opposite of utopia. If utopia promises a future with infinite positive dimensions of life and being, then dystopia is a bleak view of the possible future, a certain kind of denial, the tearing apart of utopian projection.

I first used this term in 2004 for an interactive installation, in the sense of a complete separation of the digital and virtual world from the physical analog reality. Not in the sense that they are necessarily mutually exclusive, but that they remain strictly separate, although they can also support each other.

#### DE-IMMERSIVE REALITY

If by "immersive reality" we mean immersion in an artificially created (virtual) "reality" – what some cyber art theorists in the 1990s called "the nature of the fourth order", although it still stands on the shoulders of the first, gravity-driven or primordial nature – then "de-immersion" suggests a solution for a person drowning in the depths of the virtual to be washed to the surface so that they can swim back to the

good old shore. In this sense, I place the understanding of ditopia in a dynamic relationship between immersion and splashing around on the surface, beyond drowning in utopias or dystopias.

#### DITOPIA DISPLAY

"Folded images? Frozen moving images? A topographical film? Expanded cinema? Extended video? A man with a camera? Walking the space? A portrait of a commissioner 'in situ'? A self-contained system? A projection of the here into the here-and-now?"

(An announcement of the interactive installation *Ditopia Display with audience participation at KiBela*, in 2009: <http://www.kibla.org/dejavnosti/kibela/arhiv/kibela-arhiv/2009/marko-kosnik/?0=>)



#### DIGITAL ENVIRONMENT

10 years had passed since I started using the software for real-time recording, processing and playback of digital video as a "beta tester" to create the first artistic productions based on these technologies back there in 1996. Over a period of six years, I had to change three software environments. All three were developed by brilliant individuals like Miller Puckette, David Rokeby and Tom Demayer, but they could not keep up with the constant updates to the systems and many other standards that came with the changing video formats. Around 2002, I and the other pioneers of video instrumentalism realized that the digital environment was the least stable environment for long-term upgrading of work done or for storing (complex) data in specific formats. And worse, that we would not be able to continue our work on software upgrades for more than a few years – only to go back to working with solutions that had proven themselves in the past. Drown or retreat?

#### THE DYING AND NEW FORMATS OF DIGITAL PHOTOGRAPHY AND FILM

Taking a photo every three steps with a Nikon D40X in 2007 resulted in a digital photo with a width of 3872 pixels and a height of 2592 pixels (ratio 3 : 2). In the same year, there were video cameras that were affordable but still too expensive for the average consumer to capture images up to 1280 pixels wide. Today, a video in the so-called 4K video format can be 3840 x 2160 pixels. Hello, can you hear me? Can you please read the last paragraph again and compare the width of the photo (Nikon D40X) with today's 4K video format? Although the former is 17 years older and is not a video standard but a photo standard, it still wins by 34 pixels in width compared to the 4K dimension.

The question of how to preserve the works for the future, which I asked myself in 2006, was based on a much greater discrepancy between the images captured then and those transmitted a few years later. Although until 2001 I was shooting with a horrendously expensive (for me) digital camera in a DV format that was 720 to 756 pixels wide in the European (PAL) version, in order to process the computer video live I had to reduce the video to less than 360 pixels wide, even on the fastest laptops of the time.

#### LEAPS FROM THE PAST TO THE FUTURE (AND BACK?)

So one day I decided to take a leap from the past into the future. It was a challenging project, not only in terms of technology, but also aesthetically, conceptually and thematically.

Both classical and experimental film and video art are based on leaps through space and time, with cuts between "scenes", even if we omit the dialog and accompanying text. In film, the continuity of space and time is not only a non-existent category, it is also quite uninteresting to the general audience. For most, it is pure boredom. So the option I finally decided on had to go against the logic of universal "comprehensibility" and watchability of the material. A spatially continuous video with live actors filmed in everyday life is only interesting insofar as the people who appear in it see it, especially if it was filmed in an environment where they live and work. They can then relive their personal memories, which are unique to all of them, actors and viewers. This kind of material only comes to life through a personal projection that refrains from imposing on us those film elements that suggest an internalized identification with the heroes as defined by the genre.

This kind of concept is completely at odds with the prevailing conception of contemporary art, which is supposedly understandable and inspiring everywhere and for everyone, if not in the present, then in the

future. Or even better: from the past.

The solution: Prepare a unique work for each environment in which it is presented.

Really? Is it really that simple?

#### DITOPIA 07 NOVIGRAD

*Taking a photo every three steps is of course also a kind of performance. [...] When I began the first major project of this kind for the Mediascape Festival 2007 in Novigrad during the high season, I not only encountered astonished tourists who tried in vain to avoid my camera, with which I routinely walked through the streets of the city without paying attention to the choice of subject. The first locals who plucked up the courage and were overcome with curiosity and eventually approached me to inquire what this unusual task I was pursuing with such persistence was all about, confided their concerns: that perhaps I was from the city council and was photographing illegal extensions to houses they had built over the years. Fortunately, I was able to take the time to talk to anyone who showed interest, because the "walk motion" can be set to any amount of time between two shots and the footage still works later as a spatially and temporally continuous animation.*

*In four days, a small town in Istria was transformed from a suspicious doubter into a friend. With morning greetings, respectful glances, encouraging smiles and even the occasional cup of coffee. The locals became more and more relaxed, looking into the camera and telling me stories that rarely leave the embrace of the local community. They knew full well that they were the protagonists, just like the streets, and that the interactive film will celebrate their everyday life – that unnoticed everyday life on the margins that lives silently and invisibly below the threshold of the tourists' consciousness, who are in reality far too often prisoners of the global image conveyed to them by the calorie-rich media constructs that emanate and radiate from the media centers. On a vacation on the edge of Europe, they can only survive their leisure time by briefly becoming the heroes of the films they watch at home in the evenings.*

(From the text *Electropera?*. Available in Slovenian at [https://bit.ly/electropera\\_knjiga](https://bit.ly/electropera_knjiga), published in English in a publication by KIBLA entitled *X-OP European eXchange of Art Operators and Producers: Interdisciplinary art as a cultural paradigm*, edited by Aleksandra Kostič, Maribor, Association for Culture and Education KIBLA, 2011, ISBN 978-961-6304-28-3.)



#### MUTATION OF INTERACTIVE VIDEO INTO A "CLASSICAL" (?) FILM

For the Arteria Festival in Novigrad in August 2020, I created a film with musical accompaniment from a photographic animation that was first presented in interactive form and computed live in 2007 and 2008. *Ditopia KIBLA (remix)* is a new project of this kind.

Who is missing in these successive photographs, which were always taken on a continuous and circular path, but nevertheless jump here and there for a few hours or days, in the part in question even for 15 years? The photographer himself, the man with the camera! To my surprise, however, I recently saw myself in one of the photos from the documentation I had created during my "walk laps" in 2009. (<http://www.kibla.org/si/dejavnosti/kibela/arhiv/kibela-arhiv/2009/biljana-durdevic/>).



From one photo to the next, we can recognize several other KIBLA collaborators and visitors, some of whom have aged 15 years in the three step leaps and some of whom we hardly see anymore or who are unfortunately no longer with us.

#### THE SOUND OF SPACE AND THE SPATIALITY OF SOUND

The only way to experience the sound of a space other than the one we are in is to amplify that sound. Together with the KIBLA team, we are doing our best to "faithfully" present the 3D sound composed and recorded for this project. It is true that you can only really experience both "Dolby Atmos" and "Spatial