

**CONTEMPORARY ART
IN THE POST-BIOLOGICAL AGE**

The International Video Documentation Archives

PROJECT TERMS**Dmitry Bulatov**

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The National Centre for Contemporary Arts (Federal Agency for Culture and Film, Russian Federation) is proud to announce that the International Video Documentation Archives, "Contemporary Art in the Post-Biological Age" is currently compiling materials for its off-line collection. Art projects which use high technologies of the XXI century as a medium of implementation – robotics, bio- and genetic engineering and nanotechnology – are being sought.

Aim of the project

The Archives' main goal is to create a database of Post-Biological Art projects which provide an analysis of the range of influence that advanced technological developments have on human beings and the cultural strategies that restore a person's sense of implication within current innovations and technological processes. While compiling the Archives, close attention is being given to the documentation of new types of material carriers of the artistic message as well as the implementation of new strategies in the field of contemporary art and institutional politics.

Problems

What is radicalization and redundancy of technological and scientific progress? What is the evolutionary potential of the basic technological trends of the XXI century – robotics, genetic engineering, nanotechnology - like? Each of these trends actualize the traditionally formed boundaries of beginning and end of human existence, the demarcation of norm and pathology and the distinction of the non-(or semi-)organic model or entity. These – and many other issues – cannot be taken into consideration without the experience of contemporary techno-biological arts; the representatives of which do not so much confirm the technological versions of contemporaneity, as determine their boundaries. Art that is created under the new conditions of postbiology – under the conditions of an artificially fashioned lifespan – cannot help but take this artificiality as its explicit theme. However, time, duration, and life cannot be shown directly but only as documentation. The dominant genre of postbiological art is thus technological documentation: plans, drafts, and videos. It is precisely at this point where documentation becomes indispensable, and produces the life of the living thing: the documentation inscribes the existence of an object in history, and gives the object a lifespan which this existence (independent of whether this object was "originally" living or artificial).

Members of the International Coordination Council:

- Roy Ascott (Professor of Technoetic Art, President Planetary Collegium, University of Plymouth, United Kingdom);
- Dmitry Bulatov (Curator of the Archives, The National Centre for Contemporary Arts, Kaliningrad branch, Russia);
- Oron Catts (Artistic director, The Art & Science Collaborative Research Laboratory at The School of Anatomy & Human Biology, University of Western Australia, Perth, Australia);
- Ken Rinaldo (Professor at the Ohio State University, Art Department, Columbus, Ohio, USA);
- Olga Shishko (Curator, Director of the Centre for culture and art "MediaArtLab", Moscow, Russia);
- Stephen Wilson (Professor at the San Francisco State University, Art Department, California, USA).

Activity

The National Centre for Contemporary Arts (Kaliningrad branch, Russia) and the "MediaArtLab" Center for Art and Culture (Moscow) are planning the following events:

- International Exhibition, "Contemporary Art in the Post-Biological Age," in the National Centre for Contemporary Arts (Kaliningrad branch, Russia) <http://www.ncca-kaliningrad.ru>;
- Noncommercial educational screening in the framework of the IX MediaForum 2008 – one of the official programs of the XXX Moscow International Film Festival (MIFF) <http://mediaforum.mediaartlab.ru>;
- Special Art Exhibition in conjunction with the Third Moscow Biennial of Contemporary Art <http://2nd.moscowbiennale.ru>.

Catalogue

A practical part of the International Anthology, "Evolution Haute Couture: Art and Science in the Post-Biological Age," will be published based on the materials collected. This is the second publication from the series, "The Third Modernization," of which the book, "BioMediale. Contemporary Society and Genomic Culture," (NCCA: Kaliningrad, ISBN 5-7406-0853-7, <http://www.ncca-kaliningrad.ru/biomediale>) was published in 2004.

Regulations and criteria

- Video documentation of projects implemented with the use of technologies providing evolutionary “plasticity” of living creatures, acquiring artificial qualities and aiming at the organization of non-organic life are accepted;
- Video documents are selected based on their use of robotics, bio- and genetic engineering, nanotechnology, etc. as a art project medium of implementation;
- The Archives’ activity is focused on the documentation of authors’ ideas and projects but not on the documentation of arranged art exhibitions;
- Works of Video Art are not accepted;
- Each video documentary film must be entered in one of the following Archive categories:
 - **Limits of Modeling** (Artificial Life & Evolutionary Design)
 - **Shining Prostheses** (Robotics)
 - **Body as Technology** (Technobody modification, WearComp, Biomechatronics, Implantology)
 - **Nothing but Terminals** (Neuroengineering)
 - **More than a Copy, Less than Nothingness** (Bio- and Genetic Engineering)
 - **Semi-Living** (Tissue and Stem Cells Engineering)
 - **Post-Sodom and Post-Gomorrah** (Nanoengineering)
- Participation is free of charge;
- Video documents are selected by the Archives’ curator and are based on personal letters of invitation or recommendation by members of the International Coordination Council;
- DV-AVI files in PAL format (720x576 px) on CD and DVD are acceptable;
- Duration of video document should not exceed 10 minutes (in particular circumstances, exceptions can be made);
- Video documentary films must be submitted with a detailed application form, 2-3 stills from the film in high resolution (publication quality) and a photo of the artist with consent for use (e-mail submissions are accepted);
- Multiple submissions are accepted;
- If the original version of the video is not English, the document must be subtitled in English in order to cater to an international audience;
- All packages must be declared: "NO COMMERCIAL VALUE – FOR CULTURAL PURPOSES ONLY";
- Video documents will not to be returned to participants but will be kept in the International Video Documentation Archives of the NCCA (Kaliningrad Branch, Russia);
- All entrants will be notified about final decisions;
- The materials sent to the Archives may be used for educational purposes on a non-commercial basis;
- All materials are subject to the author’s consent.

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