

Symposium
5/6 June 2025

Aspects of Presence

*Art in Times
of Militarisation*

Thursday, 5 June

5:30–10 pm, Plenary Hall

5:30 pm Welcome addresses and introduction “Aspects of Presence”

Manos Tsangaris

President of the Akademie der Künste

Johannes Ebert

Secretary General of the Goethe-Institut

Johanna M. Keller

Head of Programming, Akademie der Künste

Anna Maria Strauß

Head of the Goethe-Institut in Lithuania

Valentinas Klimašauskas

Director of the Contemporary Art Centre, Vilnius

6 pm Keynote

War and Culture: 21st Century Problems

Tomas Venclova

Moderation: Johanna M. Keller

7 pm Break

7:30 pm Film screening

Oleksiy Radynski, *Where Russia Ends*

Ukraine, 2023, 25 min

8 pm Keynote

Necropolitics of Elemental Colonialism: From Mechanical to Decolonial Solidarity

Svitlana Matviyenko

8:30 pm Panel discussion

The Footprint of War: Ecological Threats and the Militarisation of Infrastructures

With Nabil Ahmed, Philipp Goll,

Svitlana Matviyenko

Moderation: Asia Bazdyrieva

10 pm Get-together, Clubroom

Friday, 6 June

3–10 pm

3 pm Project presentations, Clubroom

Artistic Strategies in Response to Militarisation

Magda Szpecht, Tobias Zielony

Moderation: Virginija Januškevičiūtė

4:15 pm Break

4:30 pm Panel discussion, Plenary Hall

Images of War: Technological Violence, Aesthetics & Archive

With Maithu Bui, Anna Engelhardt (online),

Ali Akbar Mehta

Moderation: Clara Herrmann

6 pm Break

6:30 pm Panel discussion, Plenary Hall

Militarisation and Its Impact on Societies

With Felix Ackermann, Teresa Koloma Beck,

Deimantas Narkevičius,

Natascha Sadr Haghighian

Moderation: Eglė Elena Murauskaitė

8:30 pm Live musical performance

Clubroom

Instructions for the Woodcutters and Other Songs

Lina Lapelytė

Film programme (ongoing)

daily from 11 am,

Liebermann Hall

Mohammed Almughanni,

An Orange from Jaffa, 2024

Anna Engelhardt & Mark Cinkevich, *Onset*, 2023

Bjørn Melhus, *I'm Not the Enemy*, 2011

Deimantas Narkevičius, *The Dud Effect*, 2008

Aspects of Presence Art in Times of Militarisation

Taking the current deployment of a German brigade to Lithuania as a starting point, the symposium “Aspects of Presence: Art in Times of Militarisation” addresses contemporary militarisation from an artistic perspective. Focusing on the situation in Central and Eastern Europe, international artists and scholars explore the intersections of military, ecological and technological developments – as well as related artistic practices – through lectures, panel discussions and artistic contributions. The symposium also raises the question of how militarisation is shaping our present and future. A film programme and a performance accompany the event.

The current deployment of the German brigade to Lithuania – for the first time in Bundeswehr history, soldiers are being permanently stationed abroad – is part of NATO’s strategy to reinforce its eastern borders in response to Russia’s ongoing military aggression against Ukraine. Over the coming years, approximately 5,000 soldiers, alongside civilians and families, will relocate to Lithuania, with the brigade expected to reach full operational readiness by 2027.

This deployment marks a significant geopolitical shift, reflecting profound transformations and historical continuities. The invasion of Ukraine reveals itself as deeply entangled with political negligence in ecological and economic policies, uncritical cooperation with authoritarian regimes, particularly in the energy sector, and the increasing influence of opaque (dis)information technologies. It also brings to the fore shifting perceptions and global entanglements, cultural conflicts and anxieties that extend far beyond the military sphere. Through artworks, discussions and texts, “Aspects of Presence” explores how contemporary life is affected by militarisation, reflecting on what led us here and the future that lies ahead. The project seeks to create space for artists and audiences to engage with the complexities and contradictions of this ongoing geopolitical shift.

The project “Aspects of Presence”, which is a collaboration between the Contemporary Art Centre (CAC) in Vilnius, the Akademie der Künste, and the Goethe-Institut in Lithuania, unfolds in three stages: this symposium at the Akademie der Künste in Berlin, an exhibition at CAC Vilnius and, ultimately, a publication.

Thursday, 5 June

6 pm Keynote

War and Culture: 21st Century Problems

Tomas Venclova

Moderation: Johanna M. Keller

Tomas Venclova (b. 1937 in Klaipėda, Lithuania) is a poet, essayist, translator, scholar and one of the most important intellectuals of the Baltic region. A prominent dissident and founding member of the Lithuanian Helsinki Group, he was forced into exile from the Soviet Union in 1977 and became a US citizen. From 1980 to 2012, he taught as Professor of Slavic Languages and Literatures at Yale University, where he now holds emeritus status. Venclova's prolific body of work – spanning poetry, literary criticism and cultural commentary – has been published in over 60 books and translated into numerous languages. He is also known for his influential translations of major literary figures into Lithuanian and his unwavering advocacy for democracy and human rights. Among many distinctions, he has received the Lithuanian National Prize, the Vilenica Prize, the Petrarca Prize, the Zbigniew Herbert Prize and several honorary doctorates. Since 2019, he has been living in Vilnius, where he is an honorary citizen.

7:30 pm Film screening

Where Russia Ends

Oleksiy Radynski

Ukraine, 2023, 25 min

Where Russia Ends is an essayistic road movie that interrogates the overlooked histories of settler colonialism and environmental destruction in Russian-occupied Indigenous lands. In 2022, previously unknown film materials were discovered at the Science Film Studio in Kyiv, documenting several filmic expeditions undertaken in the 1980s by a group of Ukrainian filmmakers to various parts of Siberia and the Far North. These materials are the starting point for the recovery of erased histories of multiple imperialist wars that Russia once waged against its future colonies. Exploring the extractivist ideology of development of natural resources, the film exposes the multiple modes of complicity with the Russian imperialist project. *Where Russia Ends* is a collaboration between filmmaker Radynski and researcher Philipp Goll.

Oleksiy Radynski is a filmmaker and writer based in Kyiv. His films have been screened in various settings, including at the International Film Festival Rotterdam, Kurzfilmtage Oberhausen, Docudays, Krakow IFF, Sheffield Doc Fest, DocAviv, Docs Against Gravity and DOK Leipzig and have received a number of festival awards. Since 2010, he has been a columnist at *Krytyka Polityczna* (Political Critique), and between 2011 and 2014 he worked as an editor of the Ukrainian edition of *Political Critique* magazine.

Necropolitics of Elemental Colonialism: From Mechanical to Decolonial Solidarity

Svitlana Matviyenko

This talk investigates the necropolitical logics of contemporary imperial formations through the intertwined lenses of fossil fuel colonialism and the crisis of solidarity. Focusing on the entangled infrastructures of extractivism and war, it maps how the Russian imperial state mobilises energy systems, particularly gas pipelines, not merely as economic tools but as catalysts of death worlds: assemblages that convert landscapes, bodies and futures into expendable, extractable resources. Tracing the historical and ongoing colonial violence enacted upon Indigenous peoples in Northern Asia (so-called Siberia), and the complicity of Soviet and post-Soviet actors – including Ukrainians – in these projects, the talk engages the notion of “fractal colonialism” introduced by Hito Steyerl to describe the recursive layering of colonial power relations across imperial cores and peripheries.

Svitlana Matviyenko is an associate professor of critical media analysis in the School of Communication and associate director of the Digital Democracies Institute at Simon Fraser University. Her research and teaching, informed by science and technology studies and the history of science, are focused on information and cyberwar, media and environment, critical infrastructure studies and postcolonial theory. Matviyenko’s current work on nuclear cultures & heritage investigates the practices of nuclear terror, the weaponisation of pollution and technogenic catastrophes during the Russian war in Ukraine. Matviyenko is co-editor of *The Imaginary App* (MIT Press, 2014) and *Lacan and the Posthuman* (Palgrave Macmillan, 2018). She is a co-author of *Cyberwar and Revolution: Digital Subterfuge in Global Capitalism* (University of Minnesota Press, 2019), a winner of the 2019 book award of the Science Technology and Art in International Relations section of the International Studies Association and of the Canadian Communication Association’s 2020 Gertrude J. Robinson Book Prize.

The Footprint of War: Ecological Threats and the Militarisation of Infrastructures

With Nabil Ahmed, Philipp Goll, Svitlana Matviyenko

Moderation: Asia Bazdyrieva

The Russian invasion of Ukraine is deeply intertwined with resource extraction, landscape destruction and the militarisation of civil infrastructures. It reshapes ecosystems and reinforces complex entanglements of military, political and economic power, often at the expense of the most vulnerable landscapes and communities. The panel with Philipp Goll, Svitlana Matviyenko, and Nabil Ahmed, moderated by Asia Bazdyrieva, will examine how the environment is not a passive backdrop to ongoing wars and multiple forms of exploitation of bodies and lands but is constructed through the inherently militant techniques of resourcification and energy control and the geopolitical imaginaries that enable them. By looking at infrastructures as actualisations of such politics, the speakers will also address the visual culture and aesthetics of operations as sites where these entanglements are exposed.

Nabil Ahmed is professor of visual intervention at the Trondheim Academy of Fine Art at Norwegian University of Science and Technology (NTNU). He is the Principal Investigator of the Research Council of Norway-funded project “Climate Rights: Designing Evidence for Climate Justice”. He is the founder and co-director of INTERPRT, a research agency and member organisation of Investigative Commons, which pursues environmental justice through spatial and visual investigations. INTERPRT conducts research and investigations on the environmental destruction and human rights violations resulting from extractive projects, nuclear tests and conflict in legal and advocacy contexts worldwide. He is the country lead for Stop Ecocide International in Norway and was previously on its international advisory board. He is a member of the International Council of Experts on the Investigation of Crimes Committed in Armed Conflict in Ukraine.

Asia Bazdyrieva is a scholar and writer with a background in art history and analytical chemistry. She explores the relationship between natural sciences and their seemingly neutral techniques, and the production of imaginaries that span social strata, while shaping politics and the poetics of the earth. In 2018–22, she co-authored ‘Geocinema’ – a collaborative project exploring the infrastructures for earth observation as co-productive forms of cinema. Bazdyrieva was a Fulbright scholar in 2015–17 at The City University of New York, and Digital Earth fellow in 2018–19; she was also a research fellow at the Bauhaus University Weimar. She is currently pursuing her PhD at the University of Applied Arts Vienna and serves on the advisory board of the *transmediale* festival in Berlin.

Philipp Goll is trained in media studies, Europe studies and European ethnology in Siegen, Wrocław (Poland), Berlin and Frankfurt at the Oder. He works as a freelance author and cultural researcher inspired by artistic methods of knowledge production in literature, film and somaesthetic practices. Since the Russian war of aggression against Ukraine, he has increasingly devoted himself to the history of the German-Russian gas trade, petro-aggression and Indigenous activism against extractivism in Siberia via the organisation of public events, lectures, articles and translations.

Friday, 6 June

3 pm Project presentations

Artistic Strategies in Response to Militarisation

Magda Szpecht, Tobias Zielony

Moderation: Virginija Januškevičiūtė, Curator CAC, Vilnius

Photographer Tobias Zielony will share insights from his ongoing research in the Lithuanian border region as part of the series “Aspects of Presence”. In light of the current political situation, marked by the Russian invasion of Ukraine and the heightened threat to Lithuania and the whole of Europe, his work explores what people see, imagine or fear about the future – what remains invisible but might already be foreseen. Theatre-maker Magda Szpecht presents her work at the intersection of hacking and performance, exploring new forms of artistic resistance in response to Russia’s war against Ukraine. As part of a virtual army of “elves” – anonymous volunteers fighting Russian trolls and propaganda – she sifts through an endless stream of fake news to uncover accurate information, transforming these insights into theatre pieces.

Magda Szpecht (b. 1990) is a theatre and opera director. Since the invasion of Ukraine, she has become a full-time cyber activist who has gained experience in performances such as *Cyber Elf* (2022), *SPY GIRLS* (2024) and *She Stands in the Middle of the Battlefield* (2025).

Photographer and video artist **Tobias Zielony** (b. 1973 in Wuppertal, Germany; lives in Berlin) deals with darkness as a physical, social and metaphorical phenomenon. His works explore the space between the illuminating moment of an image and the hidden information within it. Zielony became known for his staged documentary series about young people and youth subcultures in places as diverse as Kyiv and Los Angeles. Zielony studied documentary photography in Newport, Wales, and artistic photography at the HGB Academy of Fine Arts Leipzig. In 2015 Zielony represented Germany at the Venice Biennale with his work *The Citizen* in cooperation with refugee activists in Germany and African media. In 2021 he had a survey exhibition at Museum Folkwang in Essen titled *The Fall*. In 2023 his monograph *Wolfen* was published by Spector Books, Leipzig. Since 2022 Zielony has been Professor of Photography at the HFBK University of Fine Arts Hamburg.

Images of War: Technological Violence, Aesthetics & Archive

With Maithu Bui, Anna Engelhardt (online), Ali Akbar Mehta

Moderation: Clara Herrmann, Head of JUNGE AKADEMIE

Made up of artists who engage with war, violence and military apparatuses in different ways, the panel will explore the entanglement of war and art, media and the battlefield. AI, cyber warfare, satellite surveillance and bots have transformed the image of war in media and art. At the same time, virtual worlds like 3D terrain simulations and synthetic training environments have become integral to military strategies. The push for automation accelerates the dehumanisation of combatants, erasing the line between simulation and reality, as seen with drone warfare. Current war zones are becoming laboratories for the development of AI (Hito Steyerl). Hybrid warfare includes the calculated use of disinformation and propaganda to polarise societies and ultimately influence elections. Meanwhile, social media increasingly hosts unfiltered violence in endless “war feeds”, even as activists turn to crowdsourcing and digital archives to expose war crimes and counter propaganda. What new strategies are being developed by artists who immerse themselves in digital image regimes, opaque information systems and simulations to counter the worlds of war and its representation? How can artistic visual practices, archives, research, and speculation be used to reveal the hidden logics of hybrid wars and convey untold stories?

Maithu Bui (b. 1991 in Plauen) explores networks of human intervention and their entanglements with life forms at the intersection of collective history, science and technology. They studied philosophy of language and logic at LMU Munich and fine arts at UdK Berlin. Their work has been presented at the 12th Berlin Biennale, Bundeskunsthalle Bonn and Kunsthalle Bratislava. Bui co-founded the research collective Curating through Conflict with Care (CCC) and the working group art+computation at the Gesellschaft für Informatik. They are a 2024 Human Machine Fellow at the Akademie der Künste and a 2025 recipient of the Stiftung Kunstfond stipend.

Anna Engelhardt is an alias used by the video artist and writer. Her investigative practice follows the traces of material violence, focusing on what could be seen as the “ghost” of information. The toxic information environments she deals with stem from structures of extraction, occupation and dispossession. Her work has been shown at transmediale, Berlin; the ICA, London; Ars Electronica, Linz; the TEA Contemporary Biennial, Tenerife; the National Gallery of Art, Lithuania; B3 Biennial of the Moving Image, Frankfurt; the Henie Onstad Triennial for Photography and New Media, Oslo; the Kyiv Biennial.

Ali Akbar Mehta is a transmedia artist, curator, researcher and writer. His practice investigates narratives from conflict zones and power structures, offering countermeasures to everyday experiences of violence, conflict and trauma. His work, in the form of performances, installations, talks and curatorial interventions, has been recognised by, among others, Tate Britain, the Delfina Foundation, transmediale 2025, silent green, the Helsinki Biennial 2023, documenta fifteen, Tampere Art Museum, Taide Museo ARTSI, Gallen-Kallela Museum, Ainola Museum, Visavuori Museum, Kiasma Contemporary Art Museum, the Venice Biennale Research Pavilion, the Mänttä Art Festival, ONOMA (Fiskars), Myymälä2, Third Space, TAO Art Gallery.

Militarisation and Its Impact on Societies

With Felix Ackermann, Teresa Koloma Beck,
Deimantas Narkevičius, Natascha Sadr Haghighian
Moderation: Eglė Elena Murauskaitė

Militarisation increasingly shapes political discourses and societal and cultural structures. Bringing together perspectives from sociologist Teresa Koloma Beck, artists Deimantas Narkevičius and Natascha Sadr Haghighian, and historian Felix Ackermann, the panel discussion, moderated by Eglė Elena Murauskaitė, will open up the cultural and societal implications of militarisation in the context of European history and global entanglements. The panel will also examine the role of art in making visible the complex interrelations between military structures, social dynamics and individual experiences, reflecting on how these connections shape our understanding of contemporary realities.

Felix Ackermann, Professor of Public History at the FernUniversität in Hagen, received his doctorate in 2008 with a thesis on the history of the Belarusian city of Hrodna. 2001 to 2011, he established the Institute for Applied History in Frankfurt (Oder), from 2011 to 2016, Visiting Associate Professor for Applied Humanities at the European Humanities University in Vilnius. 2016–2022 Research Fellow at the German Historical Institute in Warsaw, habilitation with a study on prisons in Lithuania, Belarus, Ukraine and Poland in the long 19th century, since 2022 development of a public history chair with a focus on the aftermath of violence in Germany and Eastern Europe.

Teresa Koloma Beck is a sociologist whose research focuses on everyday life and globalisation in contexts of war and crisis. She is particularly interested in the significance of colonial and imperial history in contemporary societies. She is a professor of sociology at the Helmut Schmidt University in Hamburg and has conducted ethnographic research in Angola, Mozambique, Afghanistan and Germany.

Deimantas Narkevičius (b. 1964 in Utena, Lithuania; lives and works in Vilnius) started using film during the early nineties. His work makes use of the intricate practice of memory and portrays a contemporary society confronted with the painful process of history. The central characters in Narkevičius's narratives are often absent from the screen, replaced by objects, drawings and other surrogates. In 2023 Narkevičius completed his first full-length feature film *Twittering Soul*. He has recently had a solo show at Maureen Paley, London (2024), and participated in the 17th Lyon Biennale (2024), the 14th Shanghai Art Biennale "Cosmos Cinema", the Power Station of Art, Shanghai (2023) and the International Rotterdam Film Festival (2024). In 2008 he was awarded the Vincent Van Gogh European Artist and Lithuanian National Culture and Art Prize.

Natascha Sadr Haghighian (b. Budapest, 1987 or Sachsenheim, 1968 or 1976 or Australia, 1979 or Munich, 1979 or Tehran, 1967 or Iran, 1966 or 1953) is an artist who lives and works in Berlin, Germany or Kassel, Germany or Gütersloh, Germany or Santa Monica, California, USA or the Cotswolds, Great Britain. Sadr Haghighian develops installations, video and audio works, as well as performative interventions to evoke and resound diasporic infrastructures and conditions of collectivity. Her practice is deeply invested in collaboration, sensual play and listening as modes of unraveling liberal individuality and the sociogenic accords of cognition. Recently, she has been interested in epistemic disobedience as a mode of unlearning coloniality. She co-founded various collectives and coalitions, among them the *institute for incongruous translation* together with Ashkan Sepahvand, and *kaf* together with Shahab Fotouhi and Tirdad Zolghadr. She was part of the Society of Friends of Halit and the Tribunal “Unraveling the NSU Complex”.

Eglė Elena Murauskaitė is a Lithuanian art writer, poet and translator. She is the 2025 STAGES playwright resident at the National Drama Theatre and also runs the monthly culture column “Kraštinė” at NARA. Her own works, and many of the translated pieces, explore the themes of (queer) body, conflict, inhabiting the self and de-othering. Prior to going into writing full-time, she gained an MA in international relations from Sciences Po Paris and spent fourteen years in the field of international security (co-authoring four edited volumes and 25 research articles).

8:30 pm Live musical performance

Instructions for the Woodcutters, and Other Songs

Lina Lapelytė

This performance brings together excerpts of Lapelytė's works in the form of songs from over ten years of work. Combining sound, voice and movement, it explores themes Lapelytė has often centred her practice on such as labour, memory, silenced voices, rituals, and resistance. The central piece, *Instructions for the Woodcutters* (a part of the installation "Currents" originally commissioned and shown at the 2020 Riga Biennial), is both a story and a musical score. Inspired by the imagined labour of 35 woodcutters, it uses rhythm as a metaphor for breakdown – of gender roles, unity and industrial power. With humour, repetition and subtle clashes in sound, Lapelytė's songs offer gentle prompts for connection. Each piece responds to the setting of the performance, encouraging the audience to listen and reflect.

Lina Lapelytė (Vilnius, Lithuania / London, UK) is an artist whose performance-based practice is grounded in musical composition and sound, critically engaging with themes of pop culture, gender norms and collective memory. Her works, including *Ladies*, *Hunky Bluff*, *Candy Shop* and *Pirouette*, have been presented at various venues, among them the Serpentine Pavilion, Queen Elizabeth Hall (London), the Venice Architecture Biennale, and MACBA (Barcelona). Together with Rugilė Barzdžiukaitė and Vaiva Grainytė, she created the award-winning opera *Have a Good Day!* and the Golden Lion-winning *Sun and Sea (Marina)* for the 2019 Venice Biennale. Recent projects, such as *Currents/Instructions for the Woodcutters* (2020), reflect her growing focus on large-scale, site-specific installations. Lapelytė's works have been shown at venues like Festival d'Automne / Bourse de Commerce, Paris (2024); Public Art Munich (2024); Wiener Festwochen (2023); FRAC, Nantes (2022); Lafayette Anticipations, Paris (2022); and the Venice Biennale (2016 & 2019).

Film programme (ongoing)

daily from 11 am

An Orange from Jaffa

Mohammed Almughanni

France / Poland / Palestine, 2024, 27 min

Mohammed, a young Palestinian, embarks on a tense journey to cross an Israeli checkpoint with a temporary Polish residence card. After being turned down by other drivers, Farouk, a well-meaning taxi driver, offers him a ride. However, they soon encounter severe trouble when Israeli soldiers discover Mohammed's previous failed attempt to cross. The film powerfully captures the oppressive reality of life under occupation and the personal costs involved.

Mohammed Almughanni (b. 1994 in Gaza) is a film director and screenwriter. He earned his bachelor's and master's degrees in directing from Łódź Film School in Poland. Focusing on racial justice and socio-political life amid armed conflicts, his films have won awards at festivals including Clermont-Ferrand, Ji.hlava (2020), and IDFA (2023), and have been shortlisted for the César and Oscar® awards. Almughanni raises awareness about collateral issues faced by innocent civilians in war, including national identity and unregistered children. He was a fellow of the Film and Media Section at the Akademie der Künste in 2021–22.

Onset

Anna Engelhardt & Mark Cinkevich

UK / Poland, 2023, 25 min

A demon roams through an ominous synthetic environment, reconstructed from satellite images of Russian air bases in Syria, Belarus and Ukraine. In *Onset*, Engelhardt and Cinkevich craft an unholy alliance of medieval demonology, investigative research and CGI animation to uncover the hidden life of these military outposts. The true horror of Russia's wars coalesces into a parasitic monster possessing sovereign states to destroy them from within.

Mark Cinkevich is a Belarusian artist and researcher. His work explores how infrastructures and visual technologies organise power, with a focus on surveillance, logistics and extractive operations. He examines how these systems shape perception, produce uncertainty and structure environments of control. His work has been presented at transmediale in Berlin, steirischer herbst in Graz, the BFI London Film Festival, the National Gallery of Art in Vilnius, Ars Electronica in Linz, the Aksioma Institute for Contemporary Art in Ljubljana, the Henie Onstad Triennial for Photography and New Media in Oslo, and TEA Contemporary Biennial in Tenerife.

I'm Not the Enemy

Bjørn Melhus

Germany, 2011, 25 min

Home is a place of comfort, of security and peace. Delve into the world of a veteran suffering from Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder, however, and such notions drastically become perverted and uneasy. The home becomes alien, and family members come to encapsulate the demons against whom the veteran has to fight. Appropriating dialogues from Hollywood movies that deal with the legacy of the Vietnam War and firmly implanting them in quiet German suburbs, *I'm Not the Enemy* cuts open the ways in which a society engaged in war deals with the guilt of problematic returns. In a society that has such little interest in the faraway Afghan war that is fought in its name, how is the war veteran ever to find any degree of acceptance?

Bjørn Melhus (b. 1966) is a German Norwegian media artist and a member of the Akademie der Künste. In his work he has developed a singular position, expanding the possibilities for a critical reception of cinema and television. His practice, which involves the fragmentation, destruction and reconstitution of well-known figures, topics and strategies of the mass media, not only opens up a network of new interpretations and critical commentaries but also redefines the relationship between mass media and the viewer. Originally rooted in an experimental film context, Melhus's work has been shown and won awards at numerous international film festivals. He has held screenings at a variety of venues, including Tate Modern and LUX in London, the Museum of Modern Art (MediaScope) in New York, and Centre Pompidou in Paris. His work has been exhibited at the Whitney Museum, New York, the 8th International Istanbul Biennial, at FACT Liverpool, the Serpentine Gallery London, Sprengel Museum, Hanover, Museum Ludwig, Cologne, ZKM Karlsruhe, Denver Art Museum et al.

The Dud Effect

Deimantas Narkevičius

Lithuania, 2008, 15 min

Abandoned Soviet nuclear rocket launch bases form the subject of *The Dud Effect*. A base like this existed in Lithuania and was closed down back in 1977, but the underground catacomb structure is still impressive in scale and scope. Narkevičius found a few people who served there and who provided him with all the technical details and specific information on the way it used to be run. Narkevičius' basic idea was to stage a rocket launch from the site featuring the exact protocol of commands used. Fortunately, such a thing never happened during the Cold War, but in light of recent political conflicts between the West and the East (including Russia), the horror of a possible nuclear weapon confrontation – which we thought was gone – is rising from the past.

This booklet has been published
for the project

Aspects of Presence.

Art in Times of Militarisation

“Aspects of Presence” is a project by
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and the Akademie der Künste.

5–6 June 2025

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