

HMKV  
Hardware MedienKunstVerein

# COMRADE SUN

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ENGLISH

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**‘[THE REVOLUTION] DID NOT JUST  
BRING DOWN INDIVIDUAL KINGS:  
IN PARIS, THE MONARCHY ITSELF, AND  
IN PORT-AU-PRINCE, THE COLONIAL  
REGIME AS SUCH WAS OVERTHROWN.’**

COMRADE SUN WAS FIRST SHOWN AT THE KUNSTHALLE WIEN AS PART OF THE VIENNA FESTIVAL | FREE REPUBLIC OF VIENNA 2024. IN 2025, THE HMKV HARTWARE MEDIENKUNSTVEREIN PRESENTS AN EXPANDED VERSION OF THE EXHIBITION ON LEVELS 3+6 OF THE DORTMUNDER U.

A PUBLICATION (DE/EN) WILL ACCOMPANY THE EXHIBITION.

CURATED BY INKE ARNS AND ANDREA POPELKA

# COMRADE SUN

Before the term ‘revolution’ was used in the 18th century – under the influence of the French Revolution – to describe a ‘violent overthrow of the existing political or social order’, it was used in astronomy to describe the rotation of celestial bodies.

The essayistic group exhibition *Comrade Sun* is dedicated to artistic works and theories that link the cosmos and in particular the sun, *the* energy supplier for life on Earth, with social and political movements. Against the background of the decen-tring of the human being as a historical subject, we ask to what extent not only the environment on Earth but also the cosmos plays a part in historical processes. Is there, as the Soviet cosmists (especially Alexander L. Chizhevsky in 1924) claimed, a connection between increased solar winds and terrestrial revolutions? And what speculative, pleasurable considerations can be found in contemporary art and poetry?

The works by international artists focus on the moving image – on cinema, film and video as media of light. But the works in other media also radiate hypnotic, feverish, glowing, threatening affects. Overall, the sun functions on the one hand as a source of life and energy for political struggles and on the other as a warning figure whose sheer mass and lifespan emphasise the brevity of human life on planet Earth. And also: What if it never sets or rises again and time becomes even more distorted than it already is?

The international group exhibition *Comrade Sun* presents almost 30 works by 18 artists on two floors of the Dortmunder U (Level 3+6).

# KOBBY ADI

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## DORTMUND LIGHT STUDY

HAND-BOUND LOG BOOK • 2025

*Dortmund Light Study* is a hand-bound log book in which members of the HMKV staff are asked to record the quality of the light on each day of the exhibition.

In this way, the agency to observe and note the sunlight is given to those who visit the work's exhibition space the most often and who, as they work, ensure the work's upkeep and reproduce it. The work is open to the many different ways they choose to interpret or engage with it; they are free to see it as a functional, poetic, or frustrating exercise.

The work speaks to the gap between the absolutely fleeting spatial and temporal coordinates of a single person recording the light at a particular moment and the much larger place that the record is said to represent – an entire city. The artist is planning a compendium of books for additional locations scattered all over the Earth, some as specific as a certain pavement or landscape. These books will carry an array of approaches from the notetakers who do the labour of hosting and looking after the work.

# KERSTIN BRÄTSCH

## PARA PSYCHIC

5 DRAWINGS

COLORED PENCIL, INK, OIL, LACQUER, CRAYON, GRAPHITE AND COLLAGE ON PAPER, OPTIUM ACRYLIC ARTIST'S FRAME • 2020–2021

## TEMPESTA SOLARE (SUNSHIELDS FOR IWAKI ODORİ) WITH TELESCOPE

BAKED ARTISTA GLASS, LUSTER PIGMENTS, POLISHED STEEL TELESCOPE • 2012

Known for her colourful, large-scale compositions, Kerstin Brätsch has developed a distinctive way of working, with which she continually expands the medium of painting. Besides regularly collaborating with other artists, Brätsch draws on traditional techniques – some of which have been largely forgotten – to reveal painting's more metaphysical qualities.

This is epitomised in her *PARA PSYCHIC* series, which the artist first created during the Covid-19 lockdown. Trapped in New York from January 2020 until March 2022, Brätsch created one hundred drawings while extensively researching and pursuing mysticism, tarot, and plant medicine. During this time, the artist deepened her exploration of painting in relation to the body, seeing her work as an extension of her own social, physical, and psychic well-being.

The artist specifically refers to her paintings as 'psycho-grams', warm and richly imaginative signs in which neither objects nor symbols are recognisable or seem to be represented: they are outbursts, violent discharges of energy that express sensations like hot or cold, light or shadow, love or hate, life or death.

As with other works in *Comrade Sun*, Brätsch decentralises the importance of human agency while, at the same time, laying her claim to it as the creator of her works. She can materialise her inner psyche – which in turn is influenced by external forces – but the effects of her works on visitors remain forever beyond her control; she can only mimic the mysticism that influences her practice as an artist.

1 Mattia Ruffolo, 'Kerstin Brätsch at Gió Marconi'  
*Art Viewer*, 30 July 2016. [artviewer.org/kerstin-bratsch-atgio-marconi](http://artviewer.org/kerstin-bratsch-atgio-marconi).

Courtesy the artist and Gió Marconi, Milan

# COLECTIVO LOS INGRÁVIDOS

## THE SUN QUARTET

PART 1: PIEDRA DEL SOL [SUNSTONE]  
VIDEO: 6:42 MIN • 2017

PART 2: SAN JUAN RIVER  
VIDEO: 12:50 MIN • 2018

PART 3: CONFLAGRATION  
VIDEO: 16:22 MIN • 2019

PART 4: NOVEMBER 2 / FAR FROM AYOTZINAPA  
VIDEO: 22:35 MIN • 2020

Colectivo Los Ingrávidos aim to create work that is both poetic and political through the medium of film. *The Sun Quartet* connects a contemporary traumatic event – the disappearance in 2014 of forty-three students from Ayotzinapa Rural Teachers' College in Iguala – to a historical moment that has been formative in shaping Mexican politics. The students were intercepted and kidnapped by local police while they were travelling to Mexico City to commemorate the Tlatelolco massacre, in which students protesting the 1968 Summer Olympics were slaughtered by the Mexican military.

Across its four parts, the film refrains from didacticism, instead combining elements of collage, superimposed cinematography, and poetic texts to highlight Mexico's national shame while speaking on the paradoxical nature of truth.

The video's first movement, *Piedra del Sol*, shares its name with an Aztec artifact believed to date to the fifteenth century, referencing the eternal circle of life mirrored by the rotations of Earth and stations of the cosmos and standing as a symbol of Indigenous endurance in the face of Spanish conquest.

*San Juan River* takes its title from the investigative finding that the remains of some of the Ayotzinapa students were dumped into the eponymous river. The accompanying soundtrack consists of a classroom roll call of the names of those who disappeared, hauntingly announcing the immense loss.

*Conflagration* draws on imagery of flames to symbolise the inexhaustible fire of revolutionary renewal. The film begins with a reading of *Ayotzinapa* in Chinese, a poem written on the Day of the Dead by David Huerta in 2014. A rallying cry that speaks to the trauma of disappearance, Ayotzinapa was translated into twenty different languages, emphasising an international movement of voices demanding government accountability that transcends borders.



In the concluding movement, *November 2nd / Far from Ayotzinapa*, *Colectivo Los Ingrávidos* refers to the date upon which a vigil was held for the missing students outside the White House in Washington, D.C., far from the scene of the crime.

# COLECTIVO LOS INGRÁVIDOS

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## DANZA SOLAR

VIDEO: 4:03 MIN • 2021

## RITUAL

VIDEO: 15:49 MIN • 2023

## TONALLI

VIDEO: 16:20 MIN • 2021

Formed in Tehuacán, Mexico, in 2012, Colectivo Los Ingrávidos arose as a resistance movement amid major protests against the Mexican government. Originally reporting on the political situation through an anonymous YouTube channel, the group later expanded their artistic practice on a basis of experimentation with documentary approaches. Poetically combining found footage with elements of the sublime, Colectivo Los Ingrávidos challenge the audio-visual language of conventional television and cinema production through their work, which – from their perspective – has long been appropriated by those in power to disseminate an ideology that enforces social and perceptive control over the population.

In *Tonalli*, *Ritual*, and *Danza Solar*, Colectivo Los Ingrávidos intertwine imagery of the sun from their shared ancient cultural heritage with a cacophony of sound and colour to cast a spell on the viewer. In Mesoamerican cultures, the sun was of utmost importance. The calendar, spiritualism, and rituals of the Aztec people were arranged around the sun's movement. The Aztec sun god Tonatiuh was represented as fierce and warlike – visual language the artists capitalize upon to evoke the urgency, immediacy, and energy of direct political action in their videos.

# DISNOVATION.ORG

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## EATING THE SUN

12 CUSTOM MADE ENGRAVED CERAMIC PLATES, ESSAY • 2024

This series of twelve engraved ceramic dinner plates is an essay on the political economy of strong sustainability with the Sun at its heart. It starts from the premise that the Earth's geological resources are finite and that mining and fossil fuel extraction are irreversible.

Through an economic lens, this series of illustrated ceramic plates explores how solar energy circulates through the biosphere as a primary life-supporting value. Photosynthetic organisms convert solar energy into organic matter, generating the carbon compounds that form the basis of life on Earth. Energy from the Sun is the basis of the entire food chain and fuels human activities, such as gathering, hunting, fishing, agriculture, cooking, heating, and building. This investigation examines the terrestrial metabolism of solar energy as a means to reconsider the concept of sustainability. This artwork explores how heterodox economic representations could inform governance to achieve lighter ecological footprints and sustainable human coexistence within ecosystems.

# DISNOVATION.ORG

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## THE SOLAR SHARE – AN EDIBLE SOLAR CURRENCY

VIDEO, INSTALLATION, AUTOMATED SPIRULINA CULTIVATION, LIVE  
STREAMING, COSTUM SOFTWARES • 2024

*The Solar Share* stages a form of planetary economics based on photosynthesis. Every day a microalgae culture converts sunlight into edible biomass. The yield of the 1 sqm bioreactor is a concrete means of measuring solar income – actual new energy entering the Earth's metabolism.

*The Solar Share* project challenges prevailing economic models with insights from sunlight-processing organisms, crucial to life's metabolism. Featuring a one-square-metre microalgae bioreactor, it highlights human dependence on photosynthesis and proposes phytobiomass (here as edible microalgae) as a new economic unit. This new unit 'a Solar Share' represents the average daily biomass yield on one square metre of the Earth's surface. This edible algae unit is a photosynthetic proof of work that can be consumed, exchanged, or stored as a currency.

# HO RUI AN

## SOLAR: A MELTDOWN

VIDEO: 59 MIN • DIGITAL PRINT, PUNKA (COLONIAL-ERA FAN),  
SOLAR-POWERED FIGURINE • 2014–2017

*Solar: A Meltdown* takes off from an image of a statue of the 19th-century Dutch anthropologist Charles Le Roux that Ho Rui An encountered in Amsterdam's Tropenmuseum. The wax figure of Le Roux has, as unlikely as it sounds, a sweaty back. It is from this image of 'colonial sweat' that Ho launches a series of investigations that attempt to get 'behind' of Empire and more crucially, the merciless sun behind it, beating down on the imperial back. The video shows the documentation of a performance lecture, a format Ho discovered throughout his studies of anthropology at Columbia University in New York.

The lecture speaks of 'Heliography', which literally means 'sun-writing'. This was the telegraphic practice adopted by military men and land surveyors between the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries that involved using a small mirror to reflect the rays of the sun. These flashes of sunlight communicated coded messages across large distances, thus enabling the colonial man to at once traverse and reinscribe a punishing terrain through which his body could never pass. By bringing the sun into his hand, the colonial man captured the land".<sup>2</sup>

In this work, Ho Rui An looks into what he calls the 'solar unconscious', underpinning the colonial project and its attempts at fending off the merciless tropical sun through the figures of the white lady in the tropics and the punkawallah (manual fan operator) who are tasked with constructing the protected sphere of the domestic within the colonies, which is then exported. According to the artist, a seminal figure of globalisation, the 'solar queen', the white colonial woman, would eventually extend her maternal force the world over, cradling her subjects within an expanded imperial domestic. Alongside the video, a digital print, a solar-powered figurine of the British Queen, and a punka, a colonial-era fan, are exhibited.

Spiralling out into the contemporary moment of terrestrial meltdown, the talk finally seeks to reclaim the affective capacities of sweat as a way of getting out of ourselves and in touch with the Solar.

2 Ho, Rui An; Gramlich, Noam: 'Solar: A Meltdown', In: *Zeitschrift für Medienwissenschaft*. Jg. 12, Heft 23 (2/2020), PP. 128–137.

# SONIA LEIMER

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## SPACE JUNK

5 SCULPTURES • STEEL, GALVANISED STEEL CABLE, STAINLESS STEEL  
2020–2024

The exploration of our living spaces is a recurring interest of Sonia Leimer, whose background in architecture has fostered a fascination with the social, personal, and cultural meanings of contrasting environments, as well as with the objects that inhabit these. Leimer would, for example, investigate the tiny dust particles settling on the roof of Vienna's natural history museum for a project, sorting earthly refuse from cosmic particles. With the works presented in *Comrade Sun*, the artist questions the ways in which even the vast expanse of outer space mirrors life on Earth and vice versa.

Leimer's series of *Space Junk* sculptures refer to waste that has come from disused satellites and spaceships. Ranging in size and shape, the objects embody a desire for technological and spatial advance while critically highlighting its potential unsustainability. On the one hand, they point to technical development; on the other, they suggest a confrontation the ecological problems that these invisibilised infrastructures carry with them. The debris is a reminder that digital space relies on the use of vast amounts of resources, be it rare earths and metals or the use of water to cool infrastructures. The production of waste is an integral part of the economy and what has been condemned to the sea or to an orbit can itself be re-marketed. Moreover, the work might inspire us to reflect on humanity's movement into space, which is currently dominated by nation states and techno-feudalistic billionaires dreaming of travelling and inhabiting space, while the Earth itself becomes increasingly devastated and a waste product.

# SONIA LEIMER

## LICHTGESCHWINDIGKEIT, SMILEY, 1845, SOLAR ORBITER

[SPEED OF LIGHT]

4 SILKSCREEN PRINTS ON MAGNET FOIL AND INSULATION FOIL DEVELOPED  
FOR SPACE FLIGHT (COPPER INSULATION FOIL / ALUMINIUM INSULATION  
FOIL / GOLDEN KAPTON) • 2024

In 2021, NASA's Parker Solar Probe became the first spacecraft to fly through the Sun's corona (its upper atmosphere) and to penetrate the deepest part of the corona on 24 December 2024. Never has a man-made object come this close to the sun. The images from this first mission are Leimer's subject matter, which she has printed on a special insulation foil made for satellites. One of them is displayed on the print: *Speed of Light*. Both the material of the print and NASA's probe are made to reflect extreme temperatures and radiation to regulate the extreme conditions in space. For Leimer, the work poetically evokes ideas of the extreme resilience of mankind against external pressures to achieve societal change – both in the past and inevitably in the future, as humanity is presented with new challenges to rise to.

The work *Solar Orbiter* also shows an image of our sun, printed on an insulation foil. The goal of exploring the sun more with the help of solar orbiters and other technologies is to understand and anticipate the unpredictable behaviour of the star on which our lives depend so strongly. However, the work *Smiley* shows the 'happy face crater' on the planet Mars. Its nickname is based on its appearance: the formations inside of the crater in combination with its walls resembles a smiley face. Similar to the other works, *Smiley* also alludes to the human attempt at reading space and finding meaning, patterns or even a smiley in it. The screen print *1845* on golden insulation foil shows the first photo that was ever made of the sun in 1845. The French physicists and self-taught scientists Hippolyte Fizeau and Léon Foucault used daguerreotype, which is the first type of photography. And even on this early image, sunspots are clearly visible. All four works were made of residual materials that were generated in the work process of the space agency NASA.

# MAHA MAAMOUN

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2026

VIDEO: 8:21 MIN • 2010

Through her practice in video and photography, Maha Maamoun reframes recognisable images found in mainstream culture so that viewers can revisit them in insightful ways. In the instance of *2026*, the artist draws from Chris Marker's science fiction film *La Jetée* (1962), in which survivors of a nuclear apocalypse send a prisoner on a journey through time to call those in the past and future for help in the present.

Maamoun restages a scene from *La Jetée* in which a man lying in a hammock wears an eye mask from which cables protrude and run down his body. Instead of hearing the original soundtrack from *La Jetée*, we hear a distant voice reading from a science fiction novel by Mahmoud Osman, *The Revolution of 2053: The Beginning* (2007). The novel describes a dystopian vision of Egypt in which a fictional revolution in 2053 has driven the country to social ruin.

With an eerie sense of foreboding, Maamoun created *2026* just one year before the actual Egyptian revolution of 2011, in which then-president Hosni Mubarak was overthrown. In her video, with its disorienting mix of references and nonlinear narrative, the artist confuses fact with fiction – a mimicry of how revolutionary change is both anticipated, experienced, and remembered.



# WOLFGANG MATTHEUER

## SUITE '89

JAHRHUNDERTSCHRITT [CENTENARY STEP] / KATASTROPHE [CATASTROPHE] /  
IKARUS ERHEBT SICH [ICARUS RISES] / GRÖSSE UND ELEND [GREATNESS AND  
MISERY] / AUSBRUCH [OUTBREAK] / SPIRALE [SPIRAL]  
6 LINOCUTS ON CARDBOARD • 1988/89

## SONNENSTRASSE III

[SUN STREET III]  
OIL ON HARDBOARD • 1990

## IM TEUFELSKREIS

[IN THE VICIOUS CIRCLE]  
WOODCUT • 1972

Painter, graphic artist, and sculptor Wolfgang Mattheuer (1927–2004) was among the most prominent figurative artists of the German Democratic Republic (GDR), a key member of the so-called Leipzig School along with Werner Tübke and Bernhard Heisig. Mattheuer came to be known for melancholy allegorical paintings incorporating a surreal element. His painted works repeatedly depicted his immediate surroundings (his Leipzig garden, for instance) or his birthplace in Reichenbach (Vogtland, at the juncture of Bavaria, Saxony, Thuringia, and former Bohemia). The mythological figure Icarus appears in a number of the artist's works. The title *Der Nachbar, der will fliegen* [The Neighbour Who Wants to Fly]\* (1984) leaves unstated where – or to whom – Icarus wants to fly and what lies across the horizon. The sun also plays an important role in Mattheuer's work: it is often depicted as a glistening white star that gives the impression of burning its way through the canvas from behind. Mattheuer's primary theme was engagement with reality in his own country and worldwide, always oscillating between hope and doubt, resistance and resignation.

In *Suite '89* a six-part series of linocuts, the role of the sun is central: it even appears to drive the tumultuous events that began in Germany in 1988–89. The spiral form (of revolution?) flings the figure around, while also throwing it forward into a new future. Another print shows the *Jahrhundertschritt*, the 'Step of the Century', a motif coined by Mattheuer that combines the Hitler salute and the clenched fist of the working class.

The woodcut *Im Teufelskreis* and the painting *Sonnenstraße III* complete the presentation by Wolfgang Mattheuer.

\* The painting was shown in 2024 in the exhibition *Comrade Sun* at Kunsthalle Wien and is depicted in the HMKV exhibition magazine.

*Suite '89* Courtesy Ludwig Forum für Internationale Kunst, Leihgabe Peter und Irene Ludwig Stiftung • *Sonnenstraße III* Courtesy Stiftung Kunstforum Berliner Volksbank • *Im Teufelskreis* Courtesy Galerie Schwind Leipzig

# OTTO PIENE

## DIE SONNE KOMMT NÄHER (THE PROLIFERATION OF THE SUN)

287 HAND-PAINTED GLASS SLIDES, 4 SLIDE PROJECTORS / DIGITISED SLIDES,  
4 DIGITAL VIDEOS • 1966/1967

*The Proliferation of the Sun* is a light performance – a kind of journey to the sun – that Otto Pione (1928–2014) staged and continually developed in numerous places.

Initially, he showed it with hand-painted slides, typically using five carousel projectors, and tape-recorded instructions telling the performers to raise the tempo of the sequence in stages to the maximum speed and then slow it down again. At the image-flooded climax, Pione could be heard mechanically repeating ‘the sun, the sun, the sun’ This climax and the conclusion were marked by a phase of ‘white out’ during which the projectors ran without slides. In later versions, the artist used projectors. Although this intermedia performance is now dated to 1966–67, in the announcement for the event at the Black Gate Theater in New York in 1967, Pione explicitly called it a ‘work in progress of multiple environmental projections’, which had already been shown in 1964 at the Institute of Contemporary Art in Philadelphia and the Howard Wise Gallery in New York, and in 1966 at the Stadtmuseum Bonn.

Source: Museum Tinguely: *Otto Pione. Wege zum Paradies. Paths to Paradise.*  
Basel 2014, P. 240.

Courtesy Museum für Gegenwartskunst, Siegen

# MARINA PINSKY

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JULY 15TH, 2015

UV CURED INKJET PRINT ON ALUMINUM, SILK RIBBON • 2015

Marina Pinsky examines the ways in which images can be read as material, spatial, and ideological models of the world. *July 15th, 2015* can be interpreted as an embodiment of time. Inspired by a newly invented watch mechanism, the round form comes from a silicone disc out of which tiny gears for watches are cut.

On the back of the work, the artist has printed a map of the internet with each continent's networks in different colours. Superimposed onto this image is a zodiac chart of the day the work was made, July 15th, 2015. As the internet is constantly changing at a ferocious speed, Pinsky acknowledges that charting it is an almost futile endeavour – her attempts quickly become outdated, even over the course of one day. This can remind us of Kobby Adi's work in the exhibition that shares similar concerns.

Radical change from one day to another was brought to the artist's mind again upon installing the work. Speaking to a colleague, Pinsky was reminded that 14th July is celebrated annually as the national day of France, otherwise known as Bastille Day, when insurgents stormed the Bastille, a fortress, political prison, and weapon arsenal, which was seen as a symbol of the monarchy at the time. During the French Revolution, Parisians famously smashed clocks, symbolically stopping time and putting an end to the old world order.

Pinsky's clock marks the anniversary of the following day, in which time continued on its course but with a new measurement of social order and progress in place. The work reflects the age old human endeavours to measure, record, and make sense of the passage of time, as well as the problem of writing history. It also alludes to the fact that political systems are often structured by particular conceptions of time and history and that changing a system may also require the abolition of the current understanding of time and its passing.

# MARINA PINSKY

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## FOUR COLOR THEOREM

7 UV CURED INKJET PRINTS ON ALUMINIUM • 2020

In *Four Color Theorem*, seven aluminium discs are suspended from the ceiling. One side, which faces inwards, shows the view from the sky to the ground: these are heptagonal photographs taken by Theodor Scheimpflug in the late 1890s. Scheimpflug had developed special airborne cameras for Luftbild [aerial image] cartography, an invention that was used after his death for military reconnaissance flights in World War I. He developed an important method for the translation of photography into maps.

On the other side of the discs, the gaze goes up- and outward from the Earth and into the sky; they display reproductions of various ancient celestial maps, such as the Nebra Sky Disc, which is estimated to be between 3700 and 4100 years old, or Korean astronomical charts from the Joseon Dynasty in the 18th century. Their aesthetics stands in stark contrast to the geographic and map-like black and white photography of Scheimpflug. Like *July 15, 2015*, this work shows the different ways of image-making with which cultures have tried to make sense of and map the earth and the sky, developing different cosmologies. These works seem to ask: What cosmologies are we currently living by? How do we understand our position within the cosmos now?

# AGNIESZKA POLSKA

## THE NEW SUN

VIDEO: 12:19 MIN • 2017

In Agnieszka Polska's animated video *The New Sun*, a sun character with childlike facial features hovers in front of us against a black background. Its huge eyes and mouth are set on an orange-like fireball that fills the whole screen. In moving direct address, the sun half-recites, half-sings different texts, shifting from one mood to another.

Artist Agnieszka Polska describes her works as 'visual poetry', constructed like poems, language and how it sounds matter deeply to them. This particular work has been inspired by the nineteenth-century Polish writer Maria Konopnicka's poem *Co słońko widziało* [What the Sun has Seen], which tells the story of rural life as seen from above by the sun. (A socialist poet, Konopnicka wrote about the exploitation, poverty, and hunger experienced by peasants, and the persecution of Jewish people in Tsarist Russia; she also advocated for children's rights.)

Polska was drawn to the figure of the witness – 'distant but diligent in its observations, a prisoner of the events unfolding before its eyes, unable to turn away or to take any action against the misery and suffering it is witnessing. I made it helpless, but not mute.' Other than Konopnicka's peaceful stage for everyday rhythms, Polska's sun comes upon a ruinous, post-apocalyptic landscape.

In a delirium, the witness's reactions shift between different emotional registers; at times joyous, at times agitated, she is always affected by what she sees. This sun is also always in love, the artist says. Polska wishes that the viewer to share in the kaleidoscopic states of *The New Sun's* protagonist. Polska stimulates these feelings in a refined way and they are the only thing that the artist considers 'real' about her highly synthetic work.

Since the video's creation in 2017, the hot, feverish sense of constant emergency has only intensified. How can we understand the relation between the sun's speech acts and songs to the earthly reality it watches? What do words do in the face of collapse? What does witnessing mean? And how can the different sentiments that accompany it be understood and classified, from cold indifference and distance to a heat that produces movement?

# KATHARINA SIEVERDING

## DIE SONNE UM MITTERNACHT SCHAUEN (RED), SDO/NASA

[WATCHING THE SUN AT MIDNIGHT (RED, SDO/NASA)]

VIDEO: 186 MIN (WITHOUT SOUND) • 2011-2014

200,000 satellite images show something usually invisible to the naked human eye: the surface of the sun. Katharina Sieverding used high-resolution 4K photographs from NASA to produce two video loops in luminous, glowing red and blue. The red version is projected onto the outer wall of the exhibition space in *Comrade Sun*, opening a breach in the diorama implied by the architecture of the exhibition.

Yet the NASA images do not provide a direct view of the centre of our solar system. They are themselves already highly artificial, calculated images. This paradox is reflected in the title of Sieverding's work: at most latitudes (except at the Earth's poles in winter or summer), the sun cannot be 'seen' at midnight. Its colours, its beautiful orange, salmon, or red, the drama of dusk or dawn are not its own, but effects of the atmosphere. The largest body in the solar system shuns representation. But of course it has accompanied humanity since time immemorial, and we find ourselves with a world abounding in depictions of the sun.

The artist has used the title *DIE SONNE UM MITTERNACHT SCHAUEN* repeatedly throughout a significant body of work since the 1960s, as for example in a paradigmatic self-portrait series of 1973 incorporating a golden face.

# THE ATLAS GROUP

## I ONLY WISH THAT I COULD WEEP

VIDEO: 7:12 MIN (WITHOUT SOUND) • 2002

*I only wish that I could weep* presents short videos of a beach promenade at sunset in fast forward.. At first capturing the hustle and bustle on the street, the camera then zooms in more and more on the sinking sun. This video work is part of the project The Atlas Group (1989–2004), an imaginary foundation created by artist Walid Raad. The speculative collective deals with the contemporary history of Lebanon, particularly the Lebanese Civil War of 1975 to 1990/1991. Shifting between fact and fiction, it explores memory, trauma, objectivity, authenticity, and authorship in the representation of history, as well as the presently challenging categories of ‘fact’ and ‘fantasy’. In the Atlas Group Archive, photographic, written, and audiovisual documents (both found and produced) of everyday life in Lebanon are preserved – including *I only wish that I could weep*. At the beginning of the video, we are told that the footage was made by a Lebanese Army intelligence officer, Operator #17, who was assigned to monitor the Corniche, a seaside boardwalk in Beirut. From 1997 on, the officer decided to videotape the sunset instead of his assigned target, which resulted in his dismissal. The sunset at sea in West Beirut, which Operator #17 wasn’t able to see as a citizen of East Beirut during the civil war, stands in stark contrast to the violence and horror of the conflict. Contrarily, it becomes a symbol of resistance, beauty, and hope, but also of loss and yearning.

Courtesy the artist and Sfeir-Semler Gallery Beirut, Hamburg

# THE OTOLITH GROUP

## IN THE YEAR OF THE QUIET SUN

VIDEO: 33 MIN • 2013

Named after the part of the inner ear that is responsible for the body's spatial orientation, The Otolith Group was founded in 2002 by Anjalika Sagar and Kodwo Eshun, artists whose work dissolves disciplinary boundaries between creation, criticism, and curation, using essayistic moving images to explore elements of science fiction, political philosophy, and the anti-colonial struggle.

*In the Year of the Quiet Sun* takes its name from an astronomical phenomenon that occurs every eleven years, whereby the surface of the sun cools enough to allow observatories to closely study solar activity. In 1964 and 1965, numerous countries – including many newly independent African states – celebrated this occurrence by issuing commemorative stamps. The artists see this as a period in which the astronomical calendar intersected with the political calendar of the Earth, representing a pivotal moment of both introspection and exploration.

In particular, the video explores the output of the Ghana Philatelic Agency, which was a New York-based company that designed Ghana's stamps from 1957 until 1966. The artists view the commemorative stamps made by the company in 1964 and 1965 as a materialisation of the utopian optimism of Pan-Africanism, a political ideal that gained traction throughout the 1950s and 1960s and promoted the common goals of unity amongst Africans and the elimination of colonialism from the continent. In travelling the world, the stamps were not only literal representations of an expansion of space exploration but also symbolically represented an expansion of the political consciousness around what Africans could do or who they could be.

Courtesy the artist and LUX, London



# SUZANNE TREISTER

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## ALCHEMY

THE SUN, 9TH FEBRUARY / THE SUN, 19TH APRIL / THE SUN, 27TH JUNE /  
THE SUN, 2ND JULY / THE SUN, 18TH JULY (5 OF A SERIES OF 82)  
ROTRING INK ON PAPER / 5 DIGITAL PRINTS (EXHIBITION COPIES)  
2007

The series of 82 works comprising *ALCHEMY* turn front pages of international daily newspapers (including *The New York Times*, *Le Figaro* and *The Guardian*) into alchemical drawings, reimagining the world as somewhere suffused with strange forces, powers, and belief systems. Suzanne Treister's drawings redirect the languages and the intent of alchemy: transmutation of materials and essences, revelatory comprehension of world as text; a realm of occult forces and gematric correspondences which, understood properly, enables humans to develop transformative powers. Gematria is the hermeneutic method whereby words are interpreted with reference to numbers. Letters are converted into corresponding numerical values by way of various 'keys', allowing meanings to be derived and relationships to be determined. In the works for the exhibition *Comrade Sun* front pages from the UK tabloid newspaper *The Sun* were used exclusively, adding emphasis to the question of solar influence on earthly events.

# SUZANNE TREISTER

## BLACK HOLE SPACETIME DIAGRAMS

WATERCOLOUR ON PAPER / 10 DIGITAL PRINTS (EXHIBITION COPIES) FROM  
THE SERIES THE ESCAPIST BHST (BLACK HOLE SPACETIME)  
(10 FROM A SERIES OF 33)  
2018–2019

## THE ESCAPIST COMIC STRIP

WATERCOLOUR ON PAPER / 52 DIGITAL PRINTS (EXHIBITION COPIES) FROM  
THE SERIES THE ESCAPIST BHST (BLACK HOLE SPACETIME)  
2018–2019

*The Escapist BHST (Black Hole Spacetime)* considers imaginary scenarios of technological and human evolution across wide stretches of cosmological time. These works, informed by recent research in artificial intelligence, cosmology, and theoretical physics, extend the viewers' horizon in a trajectory through the possibilities of inter-dimensional time travel, human consciousness, and singularity.

The project – presented here in the form of alchemical diagrams, a painting\*, and a full-colour comic – conjoins ecstatic mystical experience with the agnostic, iterative attributes of scientific work. The algorithm painted in oil\* appears to unlock secrets of interplanetary spacetime, while in the comic the viewer follows the 'Escapist' protagonist to black holes, event horizons, other dimensions, and multi-solar galaxies. The elaborate diagrams ultimately allude to the invisible connectedness of all things and the still unknown origin of the most powerful cosmic rays.

\* The painting *The Escapist BHST (Black Hole Spacetime)/Interplanetary Spacetime Algorithm* (2018-19) was exhibited at the Kunsthalle Wien in 2024.

Courtesy the artist, Annely Juda Fine Art, London and P.P.O-W Gallery, New York

# ANTON VIDOKLE

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## THE COMMUNIST REVOLUTION WAS CAUSED BY THE SUN

VIDEO: 33:36 MIN • 2015

The second part of Anton Vidokle's *Immortality for All* trilogy (2014–17) considers the poetic dimension of a solar cosmology, as envisaged by Soviet bio-physicist Alexander L. Chizhevsky. The film was shot in Kazakhstan, where Chizhevsky was interned in a labour camp. It presents his research on the effect of solar emissions on human social and economic life, psychology and politics via wars, revolutions, epidemics, and other catalytic events. Chizhevsky linked the 11-year solar cycle with the mass activity of people.

In the video, Vidokle collages scenes from rural life in Kazakhstan with abstracted views of the Earth from outer space, vignettes of human labour, and passages recalling scientific educational films. He also juxtaposes excerpts from Chizhevsky's writing with historical accounts, religious reflections, and poetic contemplation on the nature of life, death and the invisible energies that hold us in their sway. *The Communist Revolution was Caused by the Sun* states that 'a human is not only a terrestrial being, but a cosmic one' and if that is so, does the sun have an effect on human history?

# GWENOLA WAGON

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## CHRONIQUES DU SOLEIL NOIR

[CHRONICLES OF THE BLACK SUN]  
VIDEO: 17 MIN • 2023

Gwenola Wagon scours online sources for material to explore our fraught relationships with hyper-information and technology. Described as an ‘internet ragpicker’, the artist recycles found footage to construct surreal fables in the form of her performances, videos, and installations.

For *Chroniques du Soleil Noir*, Wagon and as Maha Maamoun does in her work in the exhibition, takes the structure of Chris Marker’s film *La Jetée* (1962) as a point of departure. The artists compose a science fiction narrative wherein an algorithm is used to reconstruct the past using an image from a protagonist’s childhood. Wagon’s video is set in a dystopian future where humans have had to block out the sun in order to survive on Earth. Escaping the disastrous environmental consequences of climate change, what remains of humankind spends their days in underground bunkers, living in perpetual darkness. To compensate for the sun they can no longer see, they instruct an artificial intelligence (AI) program to reconstruct its image from the memories of a young survivor.

In recycling photographs from personal albums, advertising images, and scientific snapshots – all of which are reproduced by an AI – the video examines our relationship to technology.

# ZHIYUAN YANG

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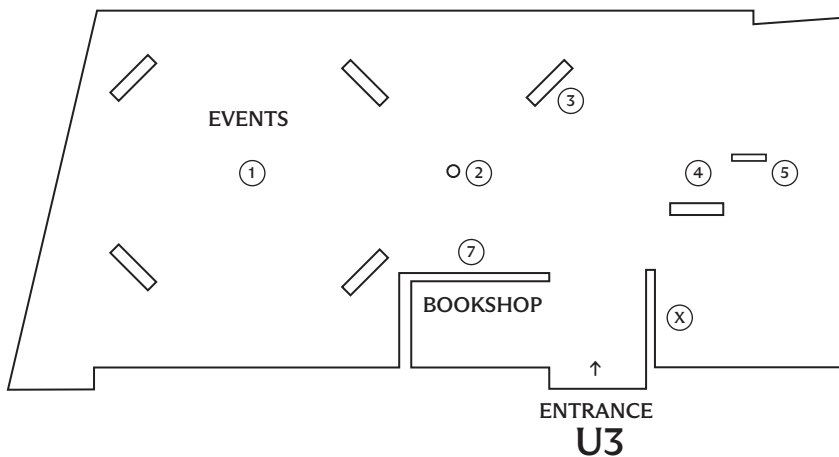
## MAKE A LITTLE SUN

VIDEO: 7:36 MIN • 2024

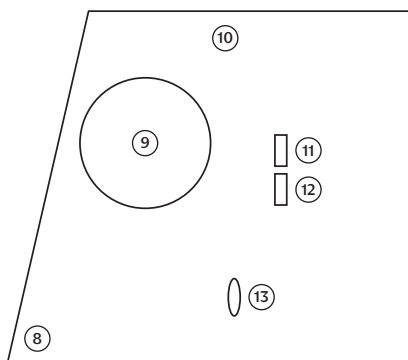
In *Make a Little Sun* (2024), Yang recreates a version of the first and only science-fiction film produced in China before the country's economic reform and opening-up. Intended as an educational film for children, *Little Sun* (1963) tells the utopian story of children as researchers who created an artificial second sun to increase food production in China.

However, the film was banned during the Cultural Revolution for nearly a decade. Today, *Little Sun* is often seen as an informal response to the Great Chinese Famine, which led to the deaths of 30 to 50 million people between 1959 and 1961.

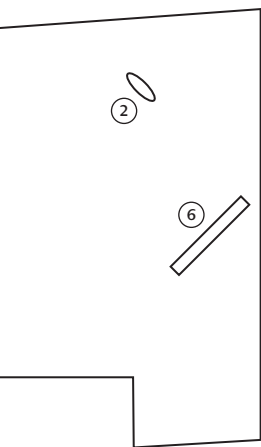
In Yang's re-edited version, the film is fragmented into short sections, split across three channels, and combined with new texts to construct a context that focuses on key global political issues since World War II. Interpreting the original film from different perspectives, the sun becomes a metaphor of desired power for critiquing the weaponisation of nuclear energy, the colonial dimensions of space exploration, and the polarisation of the world. *Make a Little Sun* also challenges the myth of technological progress, which often leads to destruction, failure, and crisis, and proposes a collective search for alternatives to capitalism.



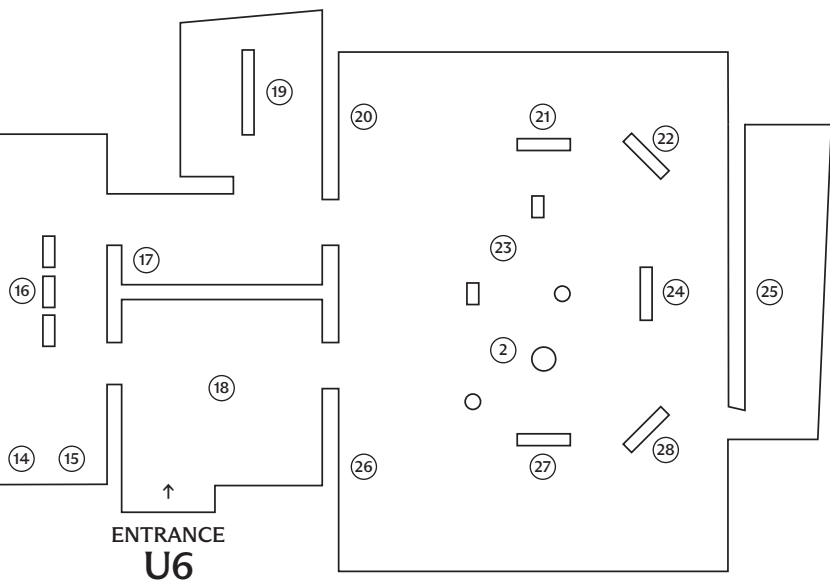
- ⑧ Otto Piene  
*Die Sonne kommt näher*  
(*The Proliferation of the Sun*)
- ⑨ Marina Pinsky  
*Four Color Theorem*
- ⑩ Suzanne Treister  
*The Escapist Comic Strip*
- ⑪ Colectivo Los Ingrávidos  
*Ritual*
- ⑫ Colectivo Los Ingrávidos  
*Danza Solar*
- ⑬ Marina Pinsky  
*July 15th, 2015*
- ⑭ Suzanne Treister  
*ALCHEMY*
- ⑮ Suzanne Treister  
*Black Hole Spacetime Diagrams*
- ⑯ Zhiyuan Yang  
*Make a Little Sun*



- ⑰ Wolfgang Mattheuer  
*Sonnenstraße III*
- ⑱ Kerstin Brätsch  
*PARA PSYCHIC*
- ⑲ Ho Rui An  
*Solar: A Meltdown*
- ⑳ Katharina Sieverding  
*DIE SONNE UM MITTERNACHT*  
*SCHAUEN (RED), SDO/NASA*
- ㉑ Gwenola Wagon  
*Chroniques du Soleil Noir*
- ㉒ Colectivo Los Ingrávidos  
*Tonalli*
- ㉓ Sonia Leimer  
*LICHTGESCHWINDIGKEIT,*  
*SMILEY, 1845, SOLAR ORBITER*
- ㉔ The Otolith Group  
*In the Year of the Quiet Sun*
- ㉕ DISNOVATION.ORG  
*Eating the sun + The Solar Share*
- ㉖ Wolfgang Mattheuer  
*Suite '89*
- ㉗ The Atlas Group  
*I only wish that I could weep*
- ㉘ Maha Maamoun  
*2026*



- ① Colectivo Los Ingrávidos  
*The Sun Quartet*
- ② Sonia Leimer  
*Space Junk*
- ③ Agnieszka Polska  
*The New Sun*
- ④ Kerstin Brätsch  
*Tempesta Solare (Sunshields for Iwaki Odori) with Telescope*
- ⑤ Wolfgang Mattheuer  
*Im Teufelskreis*
- ⑥ Anton Vidokle  
*The Communist Revolution was Caused by the Sun*
- ⑦ Alexander L. Chizhevsky  
*Fizičeskie Faktory Istoričeskogo Processa*
- ⓧ Kobby Adi, Dortmund Light Study, 2025  
\* takes place behind the scenes



COMRADE SUN WAS FIRST SHOWN AT THE KUNSTHALLE WIEN AS PART OF THE VIENNA FESTIVAL | FREE REPUBLIC OF VIENNA 2024. IN 2025, THE HMKV HARTWARE MEDIENKUNSTVEREIN PRESENTS AN EXPANDED VERSION OF THE EXHIBITION ON LEVELS 3+6 OF THE DORTMUNDER U.

A PUBLICATION (DE/EN) WILL ACCOMPANY THE EXHIBITION.

CURATED BY INKE ARNS AND ANDREA POPELKA



# COMRADE SUN

## PLAIN LANGUAGE

The Latin word 'revolutio' means 'to roll back, to turn around'. In astronomy, it referred to the revolutions of the planets and moons around each other and around the sun. However, it soon came to be used primarily to describe sudden political and social upheavals, such as the Haitian or French Revolutions.

The sun provides all the energy for life on Earth. Our existence as humans also depends entirely on the sun. But does the sun also influence our social and political activities?

The group exhibition *Comrade Sun* brings together artistic works and theories that connect the cosmos and the sun with social and political movements. Is it really only humans who shape their own history? Is the environment on the Earth the only thing that influences the way we act in society? Does the cosmos influence us too? The Soviet 'cosmists' (especially Alexander L. Chizhevsky in 1924) saw a connection between solar storms and political unrest and revolutions.

What speculations and imaginative reflections can be found on this subject in art and poetry?

Many works by international artists use cinema, film and video as media of light. But works in other media also possess a hypnotic, feverish, glowing or threatening aura. On the one hand, the sun appears as a source of life and energy for political struggles, and on the other hand as a warning figure. Its enormous mass and lifespan highlight the brevity of human life on Earth. And also: what if the sun never sets or rises again? What if time becomes even more distorted than it already is?

The international group exhibition *Comrade Sun* presents almost 30 works by 18 artists on two floors of the Dortmunder U (Level 3+6).

# KOBBY ADI

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## DORTMUND LIGHT STUDY

HAND-BOUND LOG BOOK • 2025

How good is sunlight in the German city of Dortmund?

The artwork is called *Dortmund Light Study*. It is a book. People who work in the museum write in the book. They write down how bright the sunlight was in the museum every day.

The people who work in the museum are in the room with the book the most. People that are not often in the museum cannot write well about the light. People who work in the museum can write best about the sunlight.

Many people can understand the artwork or do something with it. You can think it is useful or pretty or annoying. Everyone thinks something else. What you think is important.

The people in the museum write down how the sunlight looks like in only a short moment. The sunlight changes fast. It looks different when you stand somewhere else. People cannot write down everything. This is a contrast to the title of the artwork. The title says it is about the whole city called Dortmund. But the museum is only a very small part of the whole city. This means people cannot write down most of the light in the city.

The artist wants to make more books. The books will be in different places on Earth. Some of the books will also look at something small, for example a special pavement. Different people will write in these books. Every person writes in a different way. All the books will be very different.

# KERSTIN BRÄTSCH

## PARA PSYCHIC

5 PAINTINGS

COLORED PENCIL, INK, OIL, LACQUER, CRAYON, GRAPHITE AND COLLAGE  
ON PAPER, OPTIUM ACRYLIC ARTIST'S FRAME • 2020–2021

## TEMPESTA SOLARE (SUNSHIELDS FOR IWAKI ODORI) WITH TELESCOPE

BAKED ARTISTA GLASS, LUSTER PIGMENTS,  
POLISHED STEEL TELESCOPE • 2012

The name of the artist is Kerstin Brätsch. She makes big and colourful art. How she paints is very special. She works together with other artists. She uses old techniques. Many people have forgotten these old techniques. It makes the paintings look like they are out of this world.

Kerstin Brätsch has made a series of paintings. The series is called *PARA PSYCHIC*. She made the first of these paintings when she could not go outside when there was the Covid-19 virus. She was trapped in New York from January 2020 until March 2022. In this time, she made 100 drawings. She also looked at mystic things, tarot cards and plant medicine. She learned that her paintings connect to her body. Her paintings are important so that she feels well with her body and her mind.

Kerstin Brätsch calls her paintings 'psychograms'. This means they are a picture of her mind. You cannot see real things or symbols. The paintings show a lot of energy and feelings. Some show feelings like hot and cold or love and hate.

The paintings show that humans cannot control everything. This fits to the topic of the exhibition. The topic is that humans are not important for everything. She shows us her mind as a picture. Her mind is changed from the outside. She cannot control what you feel when you look at the painting. She tries to make it look mystic.

1 Mattia Ruffolo, 'Kerstin Brätsch at Gío Marconi'  
*Art Viewer*, 30 July 2016. [artviewer.org/kerstin-bratsch-atgio-marconi](http://artviewer.org/kerstin-bratsch-atgio-marconi).

Courtesy the artist and Gío Marconi, Milan

# COLECTIVO LOS INGRÁVIDOS

## THE SUN QUARTET

PART 1: PIEDRA DEL SOL [SUNSTONE]  
VIDEO: 6:42 MIN • 2017

PART 2: SAN JUAN RIVER  
VIDEO: 12:50 MIN • 2018

PART 3: CONFLAGRATION  
VIDEO: 16:22 MIN • 2019

PART 4: NOVEMBER 2 / FAR FROM AYOTZINAPA  
VIDEO: 22:35 MIN • 2020

The group of artists is called Colectivo Los Ingrávidos. This is Spanish and means the collective or the group of the 'weightless'. The group makes films. The films are about politics and poetry at the same time.

Four of the films together are called *The Sun Quartet*. They connect two events. The first event is that three students disappeared in Mexico in 2014. The second event is a change in Mexican politics. They are connected because the kidnapped students were on the way to remember the people that died in the Tlatelolco massacre. The Tlatelolco massacre was in 1968. The Mexican military killed many students. The students were protesting against the Olympic Games in Mexico.

The films do not sound like teaching. The films have many images next to each other and on top of each other. The films also have poetic text. The films tell us that the country Mexico feels ashamed. One topic in the films is also truth. No one can know what the real truth is.

The first part of the films is called *Piedra del Sol*. This means Sunstone. The name comes from an object from the Aztecs. The Aztecs lived in Mexico 600 years ago. The stone shows the circle of life, like how the Earth and stars move. It also stands for the strength of Indigenous people even when the Spanish came.

The second part is called *San Juan River*. The title is the name of a river in Mexico. People found some of the dead students in the San Juan River. In the video we hear the names of the disappeared students. The names sound like they are called in a classroom to see if they are there. It hurts that they are not there.

The third part is called *Conflagration*. This means a big fire. The big fire stands for revolution. In a revolution, everything old is gone – just like in a fire. The film starts with a poem. The poem is called *Ayotzinapa*. It was written by David Huerta in the year 2014. Ayotzinapa is the name of the city where the students were from. The poem is read in Chinese. The poem is about the pain when the students disappeared. The poem was translated into 20 languages. Many languages show that people in many countries care about the students and are angry at Mexican politics.

The last part is called *November 2nd / Far from Ayotzinapa*. On *November 2nd*, people remembered the missing students together in front of the White House. The White House is in the American city Washington D.C.. It is far away from the place where the students disappeared.

# COLECTIVO LOS INGRÁVIDOS

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## DANZA SOLAR

VIDEO: 4:03 MIN • 2021

## RITUAL

VIDEO: 15:49 MIN • 2023

## TONALLI

VIDEO: 16:20 MIN • 2021

Colectivo Los Ingrávidos is a group of artists. The group was formed in the Mexican city Tehuacán in 2012. It is a group that protests against the Mexican government. They started with making videos on the online platform YouTube. They talked about politics in Mexico in the videos. Later, they started to try out documentation. They combined other people's films with their own poetic ideas. Their films ask questions about television and cinema. People who make movies and TV have a lot of power. Movies and TV can change how people think. The group of artists think that the people who make movies and TV want to control what people think in a bad way.

The artists made three artworks. The artworks are called *Tonalli*, *Ritual*, and *Danza Solar*. The artworks have images of the sun and chaotic music and colours. The artists' forefathers come from the Aztecs. Now the artists use images from the Aztecs. The sun was very important for the Aztecs. The sun god of the Aztecs stood for strength and war. He was called Tonatiuh. The artworks are very direct and feel urgent. The artworks make people want to change something in politics urgently.

## EATING THE SUN

12 CUSTOM MADE ENGRAVED CERAMIC PLATES, ESSAY • 2024

The artwork is called *Eating the Sun*. The artwork consists of 12 dinner plates. The artists put pictures on it. The pictures are about sustainability. This means people should use the material that we have on Earth well and don't waste it. There will not be enough material forever and we cannot bring back the material that we already wasted.

Politics and economy can control a big part of how much is wasted. This is why the artwork looks at the economy. The artwork connects economy to the sun, because the sun is important for life on Earth. We get energy from the sun. We need this energy for making food, cooking, heating and building houses.

Many people have thought about how sustainability works. The artists think that these people did not think enough about the sun. The artists show economy together with the sun. This is unusual. They want to change the normal idea of sustainability. With this, they hope to change the minds of politicians, so we can all be more sustainable.

# DISNOVATION.ORG

## THE SOLAR SHARE – AN EDIBLE SOLAR CURRENCY

VIDEO, INSTALLATION, AUTOMATED SPIRULINA CULTIVATION,  
LIVE STREAMING, COSTUM SOFTWARES • 2024

The name of the artwork is *The Solar Share*. The sun is important for plants making sugar. This is called photosynthesis. The artwork uses photosynthesis to show a new kind of economy. Microalgae are small sea plants. They turn sunlight into food every day. How much food 1 square metre of microalgae makes shows how much food the sun gives us. It makes new energy.

The artwork shows how important photosynthesis is for humans. The artists want to use food microalgae make with the sun as money. One unit of this money is how much food one square metre of algae can make in one day. They call it one 'Solar Share'.

The artwork is just an example of the idea. It is just one of these square metres. You can eat it or trade it or use it like money.



# HO RUI AN

## SOLAR: A MELTDOWN

VIDEO: 59 MIN., DIGITAL PRINT, PUNKA (COLONIAL-ERA FAN),  
SOLAR-POWERED FIGURINE • 2014–2017

The artwork is called *Solar: A Meltdown*. The artist's name is Ho Rui An. The video begins with a statue. Ho Rui An found the statue in a museum in the Dutch city Amsterdam. The statue is a wax figure of Charles Le Roux. Charles Le Roux was in India when the Netherlands controlled a part of India. This means he is a colonist. There is sweat on the back of the statue. Ho Rui An calls it 'colonial sweat' because it is very hot in many colonies. The strong sun made the life of colonists difficult. The video is about the hot sun in colonies. The lecture is very interesting because it is a performance.

In the video, Ho Rui An talks about 'Heliography'. This means 'sun-writing'. It is the name for a special type of communication. People in the military and people who owned land in the colonies used it. A small mirror reflects the sunlight. This makes light flashes. The light flashes were a code for a message. The people could send a message when they are far away. This made it easy to control the land. It looked like they had the sun in their hand when they had the mirror in their hand. It looks like they control the sun.

The artwork is about people trying to live with too much sun. Not many people talk about how difficult heat is. Ho Rui An calls it the 'solar unconscious'. Two types of people are important for this. The first is the white lady in the heat. These white ladies were colonists in these hot countries. The second is the people who were waving the punka to make wind. They are called punkawallah. These two types of people make houses feel like a normal home in a hot colony. Colonists and the people that lived in the colonies before think that different things are normal. Colonists want to make their things normal for everyone. The white ladies are also called 'solar queens'. They want to make their idea of home normal for everyone. They do this like a mother.

There is not just the video. You can also see a print, a punka that can make wind and a figure of the British Queen. The queen moves because of sun energy. You can also call it a 'solar queen' like the white women in the colonies.

It feels like the Earth is melting. Melting and sweat make us feel something. The artist uses this feeling. Now we think about the sun more.

# SONIA LEIMER

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## SPACE JUNK

5 SCULPTURES • STEEL, GALVANISED STEEL CABLE, STAINLESS STEEL  
2020–2024

The name of the artist is Sonja Leimer. She is interested in places where people live. She has done architecture before. This means deciding how new houses look. She finds it very interesting when the places around people are different and don't fit together. She is interested how these places change people and culture. For example, the artist looks at dust on the roof of a museum. She wants to see which tiny parts of dust come from space and which tiny parts of dust come from the Earth.

She shows many works in this exhibition. The works are about how super big space is and if this has something to do with our life on Earth.

The first artwork is a series of sculptures. The series is called *Space Junk*. It is about the rubbish from satellites and space-ships that nobody uses anymore. They have different shapes and sizes. They show two things at once. The first thing is progress and how humans make better and better machines. The second thing is damage in nature and how bad more and more rubbish is. It also shows that the internet and other digital things waste important materials. Many parts of computers are made of rare kinds of metal. Big computers need water to cool the computer down. Using so much metal and water is bad for the Earth. Making rubbish is a big part of working companies. Many put their rubbish into the sea or into space. The artist wants that people look at that rubbish.

The artwork is also about going to space. At the moment, big countries and very rich people who like technology go into space. They dream of living in space. But we need to think about if it is good to go to space, because our Earth is getting worse and worse and full of rubbish.

# SONIA LEIMER

## LICHTGESCHWINDIGKEIT, SMILEY, 1845, SOLAR ORBITER

[SPEED OF LIGHT]

4 SILKSCREEN PRINTS ON MAGNET FOIL AND INSULATION FOIL DEVELOPED  
FOR SPACE FLIGHT (COPPER INSULATION FOIL / ALUMINIUM INSULATION  
FOIL / GOLDEN KAPTON) • 2024

NASA is a big space company. NASA made a spaceship called Parker Solar Probe. The spaceship flew to the sun in 2011. It was the first spaceship that went into the first layer around the sun. This layer is called the corona. The spaceship will also go deeper into the corona on 24.12.2024. The spaceship took pictures on the first trip to the sun. The artist printed these pictures on a foil. The foil is made for spaceships. One of the pictures printed on the foil is called *Speed of Light*. The foil is made for when it is very hot or dangerous in space. The artists says that this how strong humans are against heat or pressure to change something. It shows that we will always make progress, even when it is hard.

The second artwork is called *Solar Orbiter*. It is also picture of the sun printed on a foil for spaceships. 'Orbiter' means that it is a spaceship that goes around the sun. With technologies like this, humans want to understand the sun better. Understanding the sun is important, because we need the sun to live. And if we know how the sun changes, we will know what we have to change, so we can keep living here.

The third artwork is called *Smiley*. It shows a picture of a crater on the planet Mars. The crater is called 'happy face crater', because the rocks and mountains in it look like a smiley. The artwork shows how humans try to make sense of things in space and see meanings or smileys there.

The last artwork is called *1845*. It is a screen print. The first photo of the sun is printed on golden foil. Two people made this photo in the year 1845. They are from the country France and their names are Hippolyte Fizeau and Léon Foucault. They are physicists and used daguerreotype to take the photo. Daguerreotype is the oldest way to take a photo. You can already see sunspots on this old photo.

All four artworks are made from the rubbish of the space company NASA.

# MAHA MAAMOUN

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2026

VIDEO: 8:21 MIN • 2010

The artist's name is Maha Maamoun. She makes videos and photos. She uses popular images and makes people look at them in a new way.

The artwork is called 2026. The artwork was made in the year 2010, so it is about the future. The artist uses an old science-fiction film for the artwork. The film is called *La Jetée*. Chris Marker made the film in the year 1962. In the film, atom bombs have destroyed the world. Only a few people survive. They look into the past and the future to find help.

The artist uses a scene from the film. In the scene, a man lies in a hammock. He is wearing an eye mask with cables coming from it around his body. The artist did not use the music from the film. Instead, we can hear someone reading from a novel. The novel is called *The Revolution of 2053: The Beginning*. The novel was written by Mahmoud Osman in the year 2007. In the novel, there was a revolution in the African country Egypt in the year 2053. The revolution made life a lot worse for the people.

One year after Maha Maamoun made the artwork, there was a real revolution in Egypt. In the revolution, the people in Egypt overthrew the president Hosni Mubarak. It feels like the artist predicted the future with her artwork.

The video is messy, and the story is not straight-forward. The artist mixes up the made-up world and the real world. It is about how people look forward to change, how change feels and how people remember change.

# WOLFGANG MATTHEUER

## SUITE '89

JAHRHUNDERTSCHRITT [CENTENARY STEP] / KATASTROPHE [CATASTROPHE]  
/ IKARUS ERHEBT SICH [ICARUS RISES] / GRÖSSE UND ELEND [GREATNESS  
AND MISERY] / AUSBRUCH [OUTBREAK] / SPIRALE [SPIRAL]  
6 LINOCUTS ON CARDBOARD • 1988/89

## SONNENSTRASSE III

[SUN STREET III]  
OIL ON HARDBOARD • 1990

## IM TEUFELSKREIS

[IN THE VICIOUS CIRCLE]  
WOODCUT • 1972

The artist is called Wolfgang Mattheuer. He makes paintings, designs and sculptures. He lived from 1927 to 2004 in the eastern part of Germany. He was part of an art movement, which was called the Leipzig School. The artists Werner Tübke and Bernhard Heisig were also part of the Leipzig School. People knew Wolfgang Mattheuer for his sad paintings. The paintings showed symbols and hidden meanings. The paintings also had strange or dream-like parts. He painted the things and places around him. For example, he painted his garden in the East-German city Leipzig or he painted his birthplace in the South-German city of Reichenbach.

Icarus is a person from old Greek myths. Icarus is in many paintings by Wolfgang Mattheuer. Icarus is also in the artwork *Der Nachbar, der will fliegen*\* (This is German and means 'The Neighbour Who Wants to Fly'. It was made in the year 1984). In the artwork, we cannot see where Icarus is flying. The sun is also important in the artworks by Wolfgang Mattheuer. In the artworks the sun looks like a big white star. It looks like the sun is burning through the painting from the back. The topic of Wolfgang Mattheuer's works is reality in Germany and in the world. He talks about hope and doubt, about fighting and giving up.

The artwork *Suite '89* is made up of 6 linocuts (That is a special type of print). The sun is important in the artwork. It is about trouble in Germany in the years 1988 and 1989. On one of the prints there is a spiral. The spiral is throwing the person around and into the future. On a different print, there is a man that takes a big step. With one hand he does the Hitler salute. His other hand is in a fist. The fist stands for the working class. The artist calls the step from Nazi times to working class rights the *Step of the Century* (German: 'Jahrhundertschritt').

There are two other artworks here. The first one is called *Im Teufelskreis*. This means 'In the Vicious Circle'. The second one is called *Sonnenstraße III*.

\* The painting was shown in 2024 in the exhibition *Comrade Sun* at Kunsthalle Wien and is depicted in the HMKV exhibition magazine.

# OTTO PIENE

## DIE SONNE KOMMT NÄHER (THE PROLIFERATION OF THE SUN)

287 HAND-PAINTED GLASS SLIDES, 4 SLIDE PROJECTORS / DIGITISED SLIDES,  
4 DIGITAL VIDEOS • 1966/1967

The artwork is called *The Proliferation of the Sun*. It is a light performance. It feels like a journey to the sun. The artist is called Otto Piene. He lived in Germany from 1928 to 2014. He presented the artwork in many places. He made it better and better.

He painted the glass slides by hand. In the beginning, he used 5 carousel projectors. This means someone had to change the slide by hand. He recorded his telling these people when to change the slides first quicker and later slower. In the fastest part, his voice says 'the sun, the sun, the sun'. His voice sounds like a machine. At the end he says 'white out'. The projectors only show white then.

Later he used modern projectors. Because the artwork change so much, people cannot say when it was made. Many people now say it was made in 1966 to 1967. But in 1967, the artist still said it was a work in progress. In 1964 it was already at the Institute of Contemporary Art in the American city of Philadelphia and the Howard Wise Gallery in New York. It was also in the German city of Bonn in 1966.

Source: Museum Tinguely: *Otto Piene. Wege zum Paradies. Paths to Paradise.*  
Basel 2014, P. 240.

Courtesy Museum für Gegenwartskunst, Siegen

# MARINA PINSKY

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JULY 15TH, 2015

UV CURED INKJET PRINT ON ALUMINUM, SILK RIBBON • 2015

The artist is called Marina Pinsky. She thinks pictures can be a model of the world. A picture can show different aspects of the world, like space or thoughts. The first artwork is called *July 15th, 2015*. It is a model of time. It is made from a round disc made from silicon. Parts of watches are made from this material.

On the back of the work is a map of the internet. The network of each continent has a different colour. A chart with star signs is printed on top of the image. The chart is from the day the artwork was made. It was made on July 15th, 2015. This date is also the title of the artwork. The internet changes very fast. It can even change in one day. Because of this, it is almost impossible to put it on a map.

A colleague of the artist reminded her of how things can change in one day. The colleague told her that the July 14th is the national day of France. The day is also called Bastille Day. The Bastille was a castle in France before the French revolution. The Bastille was also a political prison. This means people who didn't like the rulers were also locked there. People thought it stood for monarchy. In the French Revolution, people attacked the Bastille. They were against monarchy. These people also smashed clocks. This meant they wanted to stop time and change the system.

The next day, time went on normally. But still, a lot was different. The system was changed. This next day was July 15th. This means the artwork is about the anniversary of the day after Bastille Day. This means the artwork is about how we write down and measure time. How we think about time is also important for our system. If we want change, we need to think differently about time.

# MARINA PINSKY

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## FOUR COLOR THEOREM

7 UV CURED INKJET PRINTS ON ALUMINIUM • 2020

The second artwork is called *Four Color Theorem*. Seven aluminium discs are hanging from the ceiling. They are hanging in a circle. On the inside, there are pictures of the Earth. Theodor Scheimpflug has taken these pictures. He took the pictures with flying cameras. The pictures are like looking down from the sky. Theodor Scheimpflug invented these cameras. They were used in the First World War to find enemies. They were also used for making maps.

On the outside, there are pictures of the sky on the discs. The pictures are old maps of the sky from different places. Some are around 4,000 years old. They look very different from the pictures of the Earth. The pictures of the sky are colourful like paintings. The photos of the Earth are black and white and look like maps.

The artwork has a similar topic to *July 15th, 2015*. It is about how people from different places have tried to understand the world. Some tried to make maps of the Earth and the sky for that. They invented stories of how the universe looks. The question is, which story we believe now? Where are we in the universe?



# AGNIESZKA POLSKA

## THE NEW SUN

12:19 MIN • 2017

The name of the artist is Agnieszka Polska. She made a video with animations. The video is called *The New Sun*. The background is black. In the middle there is a sun with the face of a child. It has big eyes and a big mouth. It looks like a fireball or an orange. It talks to you. It sometimes sings and sometimes reads out texts. The texts talk about very different feelings.

The artist calls the artwork ‘visual poetry’. That means poems that you can see. Language is very important for the artwork. Agnieszka Polska was inspired by a different poem. The poem is called ‘What the Sun has Seen’. It was written by Maria Konopnicka from Poland. The poem is about life in the countryside. The sun looks down on the countryside and says what it sees. Maria Konopnicka is a socialist poet. This means she writes about the unfair life of poor people and Jewish people. She also speaks out for the rights of children.

Agnieszka Polska liked the idea of a witness. The sun is watching from far away, but she can see a lot. She cannot look away or do anything about the bad things she sees. But she can talk. In the poem by Maria Konopnicka, there is peaceful everyday life. But in Agnieszka Polska’s artwork, the landscape is destroyed.

The sun cares about what she sees. Sometimes she is very sad. Sometimes she is very happy. The artist says that this sun is also always in love. Agnieszka Polska wants us to share the changing feelings of the sun. She says the artwork is very artificial, but the feelings are real.

The video is about the feeling that there is always an emergency in the future. The video was made in the year 2017. Since that year, this feeling has grown even stronger. The video makes us think about a few questions:

How is the connection between the sun’s songs and the real world on Earth? Can words help if the Earth is collapsing? What does ‘witnessing’ mean? What does it mean if a witness feels cold and distant? What does it mean if a witness feels connected and hot from strong feelings?

# KATHARINA SIEVERDING

## DIE SONNE UM MITTERNACHT SCHAUEN (RED), SDO/NASA

[WATCHING THE SUN AT MIDNIGHT (RED), SDO/NASA]  
VIDEO: 186 MIN • 2011-2014

The name of the artist is Katharina Sieverding. She uses 200,000 satellite images to show the surface of the sun. A human cannot see this with the naked eye. She made two video loops. This means a short video is repeated again and again. She used very detailed pictures from NASA (National Aeronautics and Space Administration) for that. There is a red video and a blue video. The red video is projected on the wall of the exhibition.

We still cannot see the sun directly. The images from NASA are created using maths. They are not real pictures, but they look like it. This is a paradox. The title of the work has the same paradox. One cannot watch the sun at midnight (only at the South Pole or North Pole). The red and orange colours are not the colour of the sun. The colours come from our atmosphere. The sun is the biggest part of our solar system, but we cannot really look at it. We still have a lot of different pictures and drawings of the sun, because we have always tried to draw it.

Many artworks by Katharina Sieverding have the same title: *WATCHING THE SUN AT MIDNIGHT*. She already used it in the 1960s and for self-portraits where she has a golden face.

# THE ATLAS GROUP

## I ONLY WISH THAT I COULD WEEP

VIDEO: 7:12 MIN • 2002

The artwork is called *I only wish that I could weep*. The artwork is made up of short videos. In the videos there is a beach at sunset. The videos get faster and faster. First one can see many people walking around. Then we get closer and closer to the sinking sun. The video is part of a project. The project is called The Atlas Group. It is a made-up foundation. The artist Walid Raad made it up. The Atlas Group is about the history of the West-Asian country Lebanon. There was a Civil War there from the year 1975 to 1991. It is about the memories and trauma in that war. It is also about what is true and what is not true. It is about how people write history.

The Atlas Group has an archive. In the archive there are documents, photos and videos from Lebanon. *I only wish that I could weep* is one of the videos. An officer in the army of Lebanon made the video. He had to watch a road in the city Beirut. But he made a video of the sunset instead. He had to leave the army because he did not do his job right. He lived in the east of the city. You can only see the sunset with the sea in the west. This is why he made a video of it. The pretty sunset is very different from the violence in the war. Because of that, the video stands for resistance and hope. But the video also stands for losing something.

Courtesy the artist and Sfeir-Semler Galerie Beirut, Hamburg

# THE OTOLITH GROUP

## IN THE YEAR OF THE QUIET SUN

VIDEO: 33 MIN • 2013

The group of artists is called The Otolith Group. Anjalika Sagar and Kodwo Eshun started the group in the year 2002. They make art, exhibitions and theories. They make videos about science fiction, politics and about making colonies free.

The artwork is called *In the Year of the Quiet Sun*. The name comes from a real event in the sky. The event happens every eleven years. The sun becomes a bit colder. This makes it easier to study the sun. One time it was in the years 1964 and 1965. In these years many countries made postal stamps about it. Many of the countries were in Africa. The countries became free a short time before the event. They had been colonies before.

The artists think there is a connection between the sun and politics. People could understand the sun better and the African countries could understand themselves better.

The video is about the stamps from one company. The company made stamps for the African country Ghana. They made special stamps about the year of the quiet sun. The artists think the stamps are about Pan-Africanism. Pan-Africanism is a political idea. It means that people in Africa work together more and that the countries are not colonies anymore. The idea was popular in the years 1950 to 1970. The stamps were sent all over the world. This means they spread the idea of learning about the sun everywhere. This also means they spread new ideas about Africa everywhere.

Courtesy the artist and LUX, London

# SUZANNE TREISTER

## ALCHEMY

ROTRING INK ON PAPER / 5 DIGITAL PRINTS (EXHIBITION COPIES)  
THE SUN, 9TH FEBRUARY / THE SUN, 19TH APRIL / THE SUN, 27TH JUNE / THE  
SUN, 2ND JULY / THE SUN, 18TH JULY (5 OF A SERIES OF 82)  
2007

The series of artworks is called *ALCHEMY*. Alchemy is an old science where people tried to turn one material into a different material. The series of works has 82 parts. Each part is the first page of a newspaper. The newspapers are from all over the world. The artist turned them into drawings about alchemy. The artist makes it look like the world is full of strange powers and ideas. The name of the artist is Suzanne Treister. She changes the idea of alchemy. Usually, alchemy is about materials. But she makes alchemy about language. She sees the world as a text. This means in the world there are strange forces, for example gematria. Gematria means connecting letters to numbers. This connects the world in new ways and makes it possible to change the world.

Only a few of the newspaper pages are in the exhibition. There are only pages from the British newspaper called *The Sun*. This shows how much the sun changes the world.

# SUZANNE TREISTER

## BLACK HOLE SPACETIME DIAGRAMS

WATERCOLOUR ON PAPER / 10 DIGITAL PRINTS (EXHIBITION COPIES) FROM  
THE SERIES THE ESCAPIST BHST (BLACK HOLE SPACETIME)  
(10 FROM A SERIES OF 33)  
2018-2019

## THE ESCAPIST COMIC STRIP

WATERCOLOUR ON PAPER / 52 DIGITAL PRINTS (EXHIBITION COPIES) FROM  
THE SERIES THE ESCAPIST BHST (BLACK HOLE SPACETIME)  
2018-2019

The series of artworks is called *The Escapist BHST (Black Hole Spacetime)*. The artworks are about how humans and technology change over time. They are about what the world looked like in different times in the past and what the world will look like in the future.

The artist learned a lot about new science and artificial intelligence (smart computers). With this knowledge, the artist could make the artworks. The artworks make you think about time travel and your own mind.

Two parts of the artwork are in the exhibition. One is a series of diagrams. The second one is a colourful comic. The artwork connects mystical and magical feelings with the plain science.

The main character of the comic is called 'Escapist'. He jumps through black holes, other dimensions and galaxies with two suns.

The diagrams show how everything is connected. They also show that we do not know where many strong powers in space come from.

\* The painting *The Escapist BHST (Black Hole Spacetime)/Interplanetary Spacetime Algorithm* (2018-19) was exhibited at the Kunsthalle Wien in 2024.

Courtesy the artist, Annelly Juda Fine Art, London and P.P.O.W Gallery, New York.

# ANTON VIDOKLE

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## THE COMMUNIST REVOLUTION WAS CAUSED BY THE SUN

VIDEO: 33:36 MIN • 2015

The name of the artist is Anton Vidokle. He made three videos. The video series is called *Immortality for all*. This means he wants to see everybody living forever. The second video is called *The Communist Revolution was Caused by the Sun*. The ideas about how the sun changes humans come from the scientist Alexander L. Chizhevsky. The video was made in the country Kazakhstan. Alexander L. Chizhevsky was forced to work in a labour camp in Kazakhstan. The video is about his work in science. He tried to find a connection between the strength of the sun and changes in human life, politics and human minds.

In the video, there are many different scenes put together. For example, scenes of life in the countryside, of hard work or of the earth when you look at it from space. Some scenes also look like a teaching film. The artist connects the science of Alexander L. Chizhevsky with history, religion and poetry about life and death. The video shows that humans not only live on Earth. Humans also live in the universe. Is this important for us? Does the sun change how we live and what we do?

# GWENOLA WAGON

## CHRONIQUES DU SOLEIL NOIR

[CHRONICLES OF THE BLACK SUN]  
VIDEO: 17 MIN • 2023

The name of the artist is Gwenola Wagon. She looks at how we live with too much information and technology. She takes videos from the internet and makes made-up stories out of them. She tells the stories with videos, performances and installations. Installations are usually big objects that the artist made. The objects usually stand in the room of a museum.

This artwork is called *Chroniques du Soleil Noir*. This is French and means 'The Story of the Black Sun'. Gwendola Wagon uses the same film as Maha Maamoun for her artwork. The artwork of Maha Maamoun is also in the exhibition. The film is called *La Jetée*. Chris Marker made it in the year 1962.

The artist made a video about a possible future. In this future, a computer can look into the past. For this, it only needs a picture of the childhood of the main character. In this future, humans have blocked the sun, because it was too dangerous. Because of climate change humans only live under the ground in the video. They miss the sun. Because of that, they ask a computer to make a picture of the sun.

She uses her own old pictures, ads and science pictures. The pictures are changed by artificial intelligence (smart computers). The video is about how we live with technology.



# ZHIYUAN YANG

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## MAKE A LITTLE SUN

VIDEO: 7:36 MIN • 2024

The artwork is called *Make a Little Sun*. The artist Zhiyuan Yang made it in the year 2024. It is a new version of an old film. The old film is called *Little Sun*. It was made in the year 1963 in the country China. That was before reforms were introduced in China. The film was the only science-fiction film before the opening-up of the country. The film was made to teach children. In the film, children are scientists. They make a little sun and put it in the sky. With one more sun, China can make more food.

The film was forbidden for ten years during the Cultural Revolution. Now, people think it is about the Great Chinese Famine. The Great Chinese Famine was when millions of people died because they did not have enough food.

Zhiyuan Yang used small pieces of the film and put it together differently. She always puts three of them next to each other. She also uses new texts about politics. It makes us understand the old film differently. The new film shows that the sun stands for being against atom bombs. It also stands for humans trying to make colonies out of space and how people disagree more and more. The new film also says that making better and better technology is difficult and dangerous. It also says that we should work on a new system of economy, where people are not always against each other to get money.

THE HMKV THANKS

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# HMKV

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