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IC-98
Moving Images and Other Projects
2016–2018

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TARU ELFVING

Introduction: All the Times in the World

Hours, years, aeons. Time speeds up until it begins to slow down and reaches a serene point of near stillness. Familiar signs and patterns of busyness have vanished and movements usually undetected by the human eye manifest themselves. An ancient tree appears to rub its branches together and carefully feel the atmosphere around itself. Its roots reach ever deeper towards the subterranean waters. Long durations pass within minutes, deep time transformations become visible, grounds and horizons tremble.

Yet when looking closely, the coordinates of this reading begin to falter. The logic of linear time no longer holds in the world of IC-98. Rather, complex differing temporalities emerge and merge here. Intense bursts of life – of moths and pollen alike, reminders of cyclical rebirth – flicker through the slow flow of time. Fish swim eternally in the hidden cavernous depths like in the origin myths. But it is not merely in the realm of myths and fables where time is many and more. Heterogeneity of time in the ecosystem challenges the productivist ethos of both the narratives of progress and the determinism of apocalypse. The belief in the linearity and unity of time is here unveiled as the most astounding fiction of all.

The works that have followed the installation of *Hours, Years, Aeons* by IC-98 at the Finnish Pavilion in the Venice Biennale 2015 have steadily continued to unravel what time in its complex potentiality may mean in the future present of ecological crisis. The works also persistently question, who is the witness to the events, and whose imaginaries are these, after all. Is there a last (hu)man standing, recalling the times gone and passing on legends around a campfire after the civilisations have collapsed? And who is there to listen? What if there is no last man, can the narrative be fathomed otherwise, in and through the times of multiple others? The gates may thus open to *Realms* radically different from that of “the forward-looking, sky-gazing Anthropos”.¹

The valley of the dead, the ultimate site and rite of passage, seems a fitting place where to end and to begin again. In *Nekropolis* one might see souls gathering for their last journey, but there are no golden rays of light to guide them, no weightless rise off the ground. The dichotomy of immanent and transcendent begins to sway. The invisible forces and elements of embodied existence gain material presence here. Souls

appear to be accompanied not only by their beloved companion species, the swallows, but also become gradually indistinguishable from swarms of insects or particles of some kind – be it dust, pollutants, pollen, spores. Meanwhile, all categorical divisions between natural and cultural blur in the thickening air and urge us to reckon with our always-already symbiotic existence. Where is there to transcend to within the warming atmosphere? Or, what kind of lines of flight may the ever-expanding cosmos encourage, what leaps of imagination and faith beyond geoengineering fantasies?

IC-98 continue to push the mirroring logic to its limits, where the dichotomies of the heavens and the earth – above and below, light and shadow – stammer and, eventually, crack. The hourglass in *Epokhe* tells this time, as time turns on itself. The evaporating gases, flows of water, boulders of rock, all gravitate towards and around the same vanishing point. The ultimate endpoint of the desired centred perspective, perhaps. It also suggests the collapse of the divide between life and non-life, foundational for Western modernity although increasingly challenged by its very own sciences. “The inert is the truth of life, not its horror.”²

Colours seep in, and the black and white worldview gently gains muted shades that undo the stark order of things. In line with the earlier IC-98 works, however, this world is not disorderly as much as unruly, pregnant with the heterogeneous multiplicity of temporalities, epistemologies, entanglements – the whole prism of wild divergence that may only become sensible when slowing down.³ Here the event, of extinction or rebirth alike, is not abrupt and spectacular. It is a manifold unfolding, never one nor the same. It is not something yet-to-come, but already here and around the corner, such as toxicity in the sacrifice zones of extractive late-capitalism.

A case in point is the *House of Khronos*, where time dwells but never lies still. In real time, in its numerous temporalities, there is nothing much to see. The work operates beyond representation, beyond capture. Or, perhaps more accurately put, human presence and perspective are here merely sediments in the narrative of other emergent and potential orders of things. The spectral image of our current civilisation may be deciphered in the future archives of bureaucratic documents, a source of old legends about anthropocentric beliefs in property.

There is thus no world without us. Instead, the co-dependent histories and futures hold both promises and responsibilities that cannot be met alone. These are inscribed in the annual circles of the birch tree if one knows how to read them. Meanwhile the young apple tree saplings tell the tales of renewal, cross-pollination and co-existence. *Family Trees* indeed, of kinships ceaselessly expanding their boundaries. Fences and walls are only momentary obstructions after all. Seeds for the future are intricately woven nature-cultures in all the vivid hues yet-unimaginable, as in *A World in Waiting*.

This calls for engagements and experiments within the polyphony of living languages one is always already embedded in, in every here and now, as the *Genius loci* makes sensible. Here not solely reading skills are required but novel practices of attention. The end of time may then be just the end of a particular, rather unkind, kind of time.

Notes

1. Donna J. Haraway. *Staying with the Trouble. Making Kin in the Chthulucene*. Duke University Press, Durham & London, 2016, 53.
2. Elizabeth A. Povinelli, *Geontologies. A Requiem to Late Liberalism*. Duke University Press, Durham & London, 2016, 45.
3. Isabelle Stengers, *Another Science is Possible. A Manifesto for Slow Silence*. Trans. Stephen Muecke. Polity, London 2018.

Hours, Years, Aeons

In a twilight world, a twisted ecosystem centred on an overgrown fruit tree undergoes parasitic and geological transformations as the hours, years and aeons pass.

The highly metaphorical narrative is set in a mythologized, distant future devoid of humans but slave to their far-reaching influence as a dominant species. The work reminds us of the long and sometimes circular passages of time, as it places the anthropocentric view of history into a new perspective. A poetic meditation on the Anthropocene, this is a work about the containment of ecological disasters in general, and nuclear waste repositories in particular, demonstrating the circulation of pollutants, the mutations they cause, and highlighting a certain cultural amnesia about the future: things may be buried and forgotten – but over time they will always resurface.

The animation *Abendland (Hours, Years, Aeons)* was first exhibited as a part of the site-specific installation *Hours, Years, Aeons* at the Alvar Aalto Pavilion of Finland at the Venice Biennale in 2015. In Venice, the installation highlighted the parallels between Finland's geometrically planted forests as the material precondition of the Northern welfare state and European gardens as symbols of power and man's mastery over nature.

installation, 2015

Hours, Years, Aeons

mixed media (animation *Abendland (Hours, Years, Aeons)*,
sound, tar, charcoal, jute)

curated by Taru Elfving

commissioned by Frame Visual Art Finland for the 56th
International Art Exhibition – la Biennale di Venezia, 2015

animation, 2015

Abendland (Hours, Years, Aeons)

HD

42'40", seamless loop

stereo sound

written, directed and drawn by IC-98

animated by Markus Lepistö, assisted by Leo Liesvirta

music by Max Savikangas

double bass by Juho Martikainen

contrabass clarinet by Marko Portin

recording by Pekka Mikael Laine (double bass),

Pentti Männikkö (contrabass clarinet)



< *Hours, Years, Aeons*, 2015

Finnish Pavilion, the 56th International Art Exhibition –
la Biennale di Venezia, 2015

> *Hours, Years, Aeons*, 2015

installation view, Finnish Pavilion, the 56th International
Art Exhibition – la Biennale di Venezia, 2015





Abendland (Hours, Years, Aeons), 2015, still images



Abendland (Hours, Years, Aeons), 2015, still images

Nekropolis

Nekropolis is loosely based on John Ruskin's lecture "The Storm-Cloud of the Nineteenth Century" (1884), in which he employs metaphors to describe the intensifying smog caused by the industrial revolution: "That harmony is now broken, and broken the world round: fragments, indeed, of what existed still exist, and hours of what is past still return; but month by month the darkness gains upon the day, and the ashes of the Antipodes glare through the night." *Nekropolis* updates this vision of a storm cloud "made of dead men's souls" for the 21st century.

In *Nekropolis*, the spirits of the departed ascend from their tombs only to form a fluctuating cloud, which first reigns over the valley of the dead, then darkens the whole earth as souls, gases and particles released from the ground are sucked up into the atmosphere. The souls are borne by flocks of cave-nesting swallows, who are not just mere carriers but the new inhabitants of a world without us. Even as it lies in ruins, human civilization remains a problem, the rotting biomass releasing methane as the Arctic ice and permafrost melt.

with Markus Lepistö, Juan Duarte Regino and Sink
2016

HD animation
32'00", seamless loop
stereo sound

written, drawn and produced by IC-98
directed by IC-98 and Markus Lepistö
animated by Markus Lepistö and Juan Duarte Regino
music by Sink
support: AVEK/Elena Näsänen

> *Nekropolis*, 2016
installation view, Röda Sten Konsthall, Gothenburg,
Sweden, 2016

» *Nekropolis*, 2016
installation view, Röda Sten Konsthall, Gothenburg,
Sweden, 2016

»» *Nekropolis*, 2016
still images







Epokhe

(The Last Sixth of the Final Hour)

A digital doomsday clockwork repeating the last ten minutes of our final hour, *Epokhe* presents us with a world where the trusted laws of nature have started to go askew. The scene is set by two mountains, the summits of which meet to create a giant hourglass shape. Melting ice from glaciers above rains down while the burning forests below send thick smoke up into the air. The cold rain, hot smoke, ice and stone meet in the centre to form an unstable orbit, which rotates around the calm locus of the surrounding chaos. The precarious balance is about to tip at any moment.

The microloops, the unrealistic yet life-like setting and the entirely computer generated ultra-high-definition landscape are not used to narrate a story but to present the viewer with a lengthened standstill moment, a timepiece arrested in an infinite loop.

2017
4K animation
10'00", seamless loop
stereo sound
written and directed by IC-98
animated by Markus Lepistö and Santeri Holm
3D modeling by Kari Kuusela, Markus Lepistö
and Santeri Holm
music by Marko Laine
support: Makasiini Contemporary

Epokhe, 2017
installation view, Logomo, Turku, Finland, 2017



Realms/Omnia mutantur

Omnia mutantur, an installation version of the short film *Realms*, is a voyage through time, evolution and the kingdoms of life towards the natural destruction wrought upon the planet by the human species.

As Ovid writes in *Metamorphoses*, everything changes but nothing perishes (*Omnia mutantur, nihil interit*). Things change shape, energy becomes matter and matter becomes energy. *Realms* is a film about this constant metamorphosis, a succession of states, epochs, species, kingdoms and realms, a journey through past and future strata, organic and inorganic phases and spheres of our planet.

The story unfolds on a remote fisherman's farm, where we begin our journey hundreds of millions of years ago in the depths of the primeval ocean. We reach the shore, make our way through to the farm-yard, through the house to the garden in the rear and onwards to the nearby forest, followed by a swidden, a rocky ridge and the sand dunes beyond. Finally, millions of years into the post-human future, we stand on the shore again, animate and inanimate nature levelled to black dust, gazing towards the stars of the Milky Way. And so the cycle begins again.

All that time, we have stayed within the perimeter of the farm and seen versions of how the same landscape has appeared at different times – how it was before humans and how it will look after we are long gone. Though our own era is just a blink in the eye of the long continuum of epochs, this blind moment with its reliance on energy provided by fossil fuels and the wholesale exploitation of nature threatens the future of the entire planet.

short film, 2018

Realms

4K DCP

19'38"

1:2,39

7.1 sound

installation, 2018

Omnia mutantur

4K

18'18", seamless loop

1:2,39

5.1 sound

written and directed by Patrik Söderlund
cinematography by Jussi Eerola
production design by Markku Pätilä
music by Max Savikangas
sound design by Olli Huhtanen/Finnvox Cinepost
edited by Mika Taanila and Jussi Eerola
visual effects by Jari Hakala/Post Work Productions
animations by Markus Lepistö
produced by Jussi Eerola

artistic advisor: Visa Suonpää
production: Elokuvayhtiö Testifilmi Oy
support: Finnish Film Foundation/Piia Nokelainen,
AVEK/Outi Rousu
in co-operation with: YLE/Sari Volanen

Realms/Omnia mutantur, 2018
installation view, Kunsthalle Helsinki, Finland, 2018





Realms/Omnia mutantur, 2018, still images



Realms/Omnia mutantur, 2018, still images

House of Khronos

House of Khronos is a long-duration project based on the disused Päivölä farm in Pöytyä, Finland. The property, consisting of 2,000 m² of land and five buildings and enclosed by a gateless fence, has been left to be claimed by nature. The project sets out to make visible the passage of time, seeks to offer protection to nature and culture as a mutually inclusive pair and investigates issues of ownership and environmental exploitation.

The property was bought in 2016, donated to the municipality of Pöytyä and thoroughly documented before being gated. Geological, archaeological, ornithological, vegetation, building and historic landscape surveys were carried out to collect material evidence to back the main argument of the project – that any given stretch of land has enough biodiversity and thus inherent value to be removed from excessive human use and ownership and to be returned to the planet itself.

After the material first phase, the second part of the project was commenced. The municipality of Pöytyä was now contractually bound by the terms set in the contract to both prohibit humans from accessing and interacting with the property and the processes taking place within it, and to seek further protections and safeguards under local and national legislation to fulfil this objective. The first step was to start a process to preserve the property under the Act on the Protection of Buildings, which involves working with a number of public authorities, including the Centre for Economic Development, Transport and the Environment and the Finnish Heritage Agency.

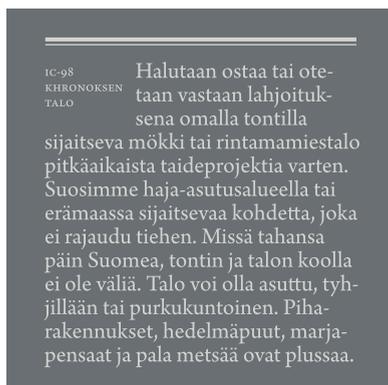
The purpose of the *House of Khronos* is to reposition the project, which initially began as an artistic endeavour, into the realm of bureaucracy and political decision-making. This would allow the questions posed through the project to be placed in the context of official applications, statements and licensing and permit processes. In the coming years, *House of Khronos* will have a life not only in Pöytyä but across myriad official documents.

A virtual reality environment – an experiential document, a pedagogical statement and a digital attraction – was created to support the objectives of the project.

project, 2016–
site-specific artwork (abandoned farm, fence, time, application and decision-making processes)
Pöytyä, Finland
commissioned by Lönnström Art Museum/
Lönnström Art Museum Contemporary Art Project #1

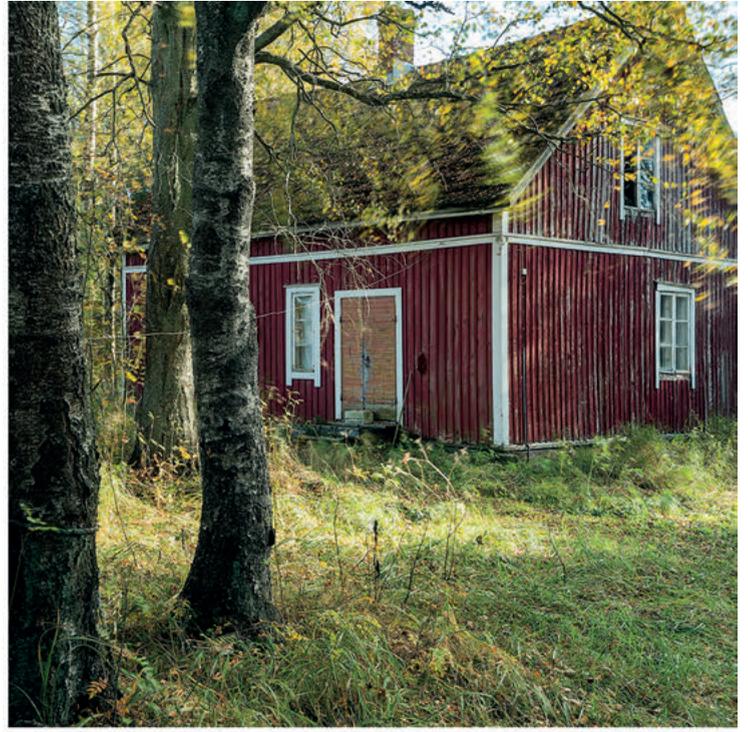
documentation, 2018
custom vitrines (official documents, maps, surveys, photos),
200 × 80 cm each
virtual reality (VR) environment

House of Khronos VR, 2018
concept, script, editorial oversight, direction: IC-98
coordination, script, editorial oversight: Asta Kihlman
geological and archaeological survey: Jussi Kinnunen
vegetation, building and historic landscape survey:
Jyrki Lehtinen
ornithological survey: Ilkka Kuvaja
VR and mobile app development: Morrow Games
sound design: Audire Sound
recorded bird songs: Ilkka Heiskanen (Birdlife Suomi ry),
Tero Linjama
producers: IC-98 & Lönnström Art Museum
support: Kone Foundation, Finnish Heritage Agency,
Business Finland, Municipality of Pöytyä



< *House of Khronos*, 2016–, a classified ad to buy a property, published across a number of print and digital channels: “Wanted: to purchase or as gift a freehold cottage or other small property for long-term art project [...]”

> *House of Khronos*, 2016–
Pöytyä, Finland, 2016





House of Khronos VR, 2018, still image



Family Trees

Family Trees is a public art commission for Maunula House in Helsinki, Finland. The community centre comprises a library, youth house and community college. The panoramic window of the library faces towards a public park, which is an outdoor extension of the building itself.

The work is made up of two parts: 1) Framed prints installed on the library wall; 2) A grove of multispecies apple trees planted in the park in front of the library windows.

The framed prints are made using material sourced from the birch trees that were felled on the site to make way for the new park. Woodchips were boiled up to generate pulp for the paper, ink was made from charcoal, picture frames were built using the heartwood and the printing plates were intersections cut from a trunk, revealing the annual rings of the tree in different phases of its growth.

Seen from within the library, the apple trees become a living, growing fresco you can walk into, updating the tradition of mural painting in public spaces. The multispecies family trees serve as a reminder of the many sources and origins of organisms, people and knowledge. Nothing is ever purely local, there's always a cross-pollination taking place both in nature, history and society.

The eight prints depicting the annual rings of the felled birch tree together with the eight new apple trees planted outside constitute a site-specific, material time diagram, which lends visibility and life to the temporal continuum of the place. The neighbourhood's cultural and natural history, stretching from the birth of the trees in 1948 until their death and the inception of the community centre in 2016, are visible in the annual rings. The future unfolds in step with the growth of the new, fruit-carrying saplings planted in 2017.



2016–
Maunula House, Helsinki, Finland
commissioned by City of Helsinki

1) installation, 2016

Betula pendula (1948–2016)

eight parts (prints, ink, paper and frames made from birch trees felled to make way for the Maunula House Park)

ink made and printed by Carl Osberg, Himmelblau

Printmaking Studio, Tampere, Finland

paper made by Laboratory of Paper Coating and Converting

Center of Functional Materials, Åbo Akademi, Turku, Finland

frames built by Kehysliike Malkki, Tampere, Finland

2) environmental artwork, 2017–

Malus domestica

eight multispecies apple trees, stones dug up during the construction of the Maunula House Park

park designed by Maisema-arkkitehtitoimisto Näkymä trees grafted and provided by Sundbergin taimisto, Lohja, Finland

< *Maunula House Park*, 2016, one of the original birch trees before felling

> *Family Trees: Malus domestica*, 2016– installation view, Maunula House Park, Helsinki, Finland, 2018







^ *Family Trees: Betula pendula (1948–2016)*, 2016
print

< *Family Trees: Betula pendula (1948–2016)*, 2016
installation view, library at Maunula House, Helsinki,
Finland, 2016

A World in Waiting

(78°14'08.4"N 15°29'28.7"E)

Twelve artists and artist groups were asked to imagine what Europe might look like 2,000 years from now. IC-98 invited Kustaa Saksi to collaborate on a contemporary *millefleurs* tapestry that would transport us into the future. The medium was chosen for its links to the Victoria and Albert Collections, especially the large-scale *Devonshire Hunting Tapestries*. The idea was to omit humans and to foreground nature, the “thousand flowers” traditionally seen as the backdrop to and object of human activity.

The tapestry imagines the site on the island of Spitsbergen in the middle of the Arctic Ocean, where the Svalbard Global Seed Vault once stood. In the scenario, the climate has warmed, sea levels have risen and human civilisation is long gone, though its impact – geographical, meteorological and biological – is everywhere to be seen. Here, stored seeds from all over the world have escaped and sprouted into lush meadows.

In preparation, Arctic climate scenarios and viable plant species were discussed with scientists from the Finnish Meteorological Institute, Natural Resources Institute Finland and Tromsø Arctic-Alpine Botanic Garden in Norway. The RCP 8.5 scenario, based on a global temperature rise of 4°C was selected as the basis of the forecast.

The tapestry was produced on the basis of this research and depicts a selection of the stored plants most likely to thrive on the site in 4017. The actual seeds of the plants were woven into the fabric of the tapestry. The work became a potentially self-fulfilling prophecy, waiting to rot and sprout. An image becoming reality. A world in waiting.

with Kustaa Saksi

2017

tapestry (jacquard weave, seeds)

553 × 302 cm

woven at TextielLab, Tilburg, The Netherlands
commissioned by Goethe-Institut and Victoria and Albert Museum, London, UK

scientific advisors: Merja Hartikainen, Kaija Hakala and Elina Kiviharju/Natural Resources Institute Finland; Kimmo Ruosteenoja/Finnish Meteorological Institute; Kristian Nyvoll/Tromsø Arctic-Alpine Botanic Garden

plants depicted on and encapsulated in the carpet:
Agrostis capillaris (Common bent)
Angelica archangelica (Garden angelica)
Brassica rapa ssp. campestris (Wild turnip)
Chamaenerion angustifolium (Rosebay willowherb)
Deschampsia flexuosa (Wavy hair-grass)
Elymus mutabilis (Wildrye)
Festuca rubra (Red fescue)
Hordeum jubatum (Foxtail barley)
Phleum alpinum (Alpine cat's-tail)
Poa pratensis (Common meadow-grass)
Polemonium boreale (Boreal Jacobs-ladder)
Rheum rhabarbarum (Rhubarb)
Rhodiola rosea (Rose root)
Ribes rubrum (Redcurrant)
Rubus chamaemorus (Cloudberry)
Solanum tuberosum (Potato)
Taraxacum officinale (Common dandelion)
Trifolium pratense ssp. pratense (Red clover)
Trifolium repens var. repens (White clover)
Vaccinium vitis-idaea (Lingonberry)
Vicia cracca (Tufted vetch)
Vicia sepium (Bush vetch)

> *A World in Waiting*, 2017
installation view, Victoria and Albert Museum,
London, UK, 2017

» *A World in Waiting*, 2017
installation view, Kunsthalle Helsinki,
Helsinki, Finland, 2018

»» *A World in Waiting*, 2017
detail







Genius loci

Genius loci is a real time generative poem commissioned for the Kaarina-talo library in the city of Kaarina. The title refers at once to the spirit said to protect the site and the mood that prevails within it. In our interpretation, the spirit is a manifestation of the oneness that joins together the property, the microclimate surrounding it, our terrestrial atmosphere and the cosmic, extra-terrestrial forces beyond.

The circular frame on the wall demarcates a field of dancing elementary particles to create the site where the mechanical, haiku-esque nature poem lives, engaged in a continual process of merging and parting. The poetry generator responsible for producing the text is connected to a weather station on the library roof and the poem responds in real time to changes to the wind, rain and temperature conditions outside. The words and lines change, shift and mingle as the text created by the generator manifests in a near endless number of permutations. Once a day, an algorithm based on the building's electric circuit design cuts off the nature poem. It is replaced with other poems, made up of words taken from classics of utopian and dystopian literature that create prophecies demanding constant interpretation.

The artwork's colour scheme is based on the Earth's transmission spectrum, visualised using the full gamut of visible light. Thus, the particle field alive within the circular artwork becomes a stylised portrait of the Earth and of the atmosphere responsible for maintaining life upon it.

The piece will also give expression to certain notable calendar dates, set to occur weekly, monthly, annually or less frequently within the next 100 years, whose rhythm is determined by the Earth's turning on its axis and the orbital patterns present in our solar system. During these moments, the text vanishes as the particle field replaces it with a series of non-linguistic compositions.

Genius loci is intended to form part of everyday life at the library. It will reveal itself in the course of multiple encounters under a variety of different weather conditions, across the seasons and over several years. Public art ought to always be a long-term proposition, an interface with life as lived, where art becomes an inextricable feature of both architecture and the everyday instead of being content to exist for ornamental purposes only.

with Mikael Brygger and Henriikka Tavi

2018

generative real time video installation

(weather station, computer, poetry generator, calendar, clock)

Ø 350 cm

Kaarina House, Kaarina, Finland

commissioned by City of Kaarina

concept, artistic direction and production: IC-98

poetry and poetry generator design:

Mikael Brygger and Henriikka Tavi

programming: OiOi Collective

typeface design: Niklas Ekholm

scientific advisor: Anu-Maija Sundström/Finnish

Meteorological Institute

Genius loci, 2018

installation view, Kaarina House, Kaarina, Finland, 2018

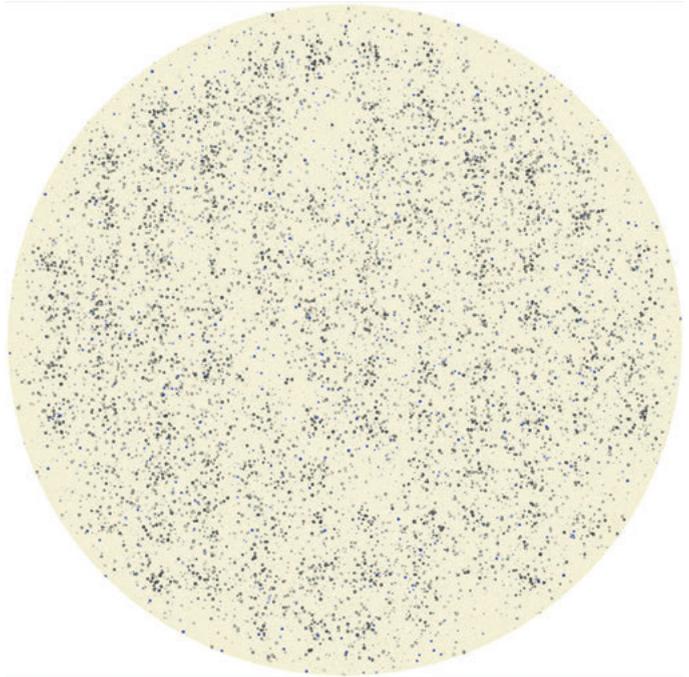
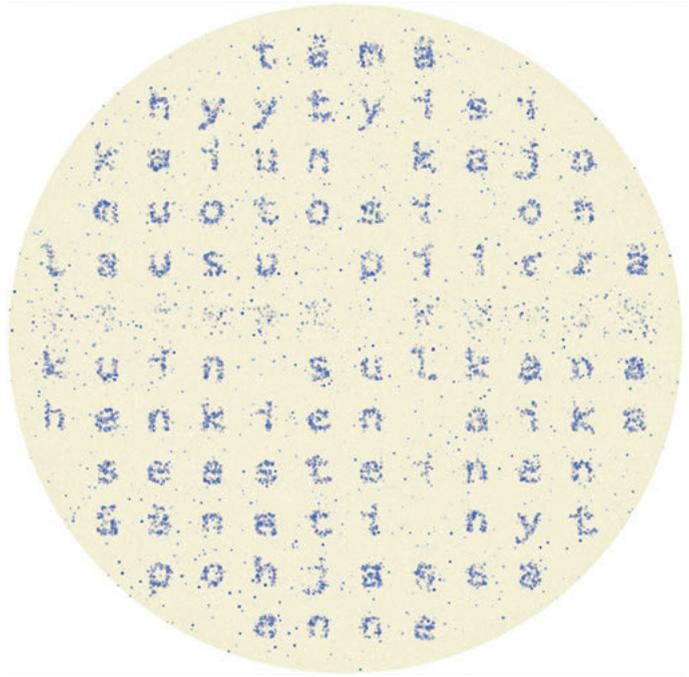


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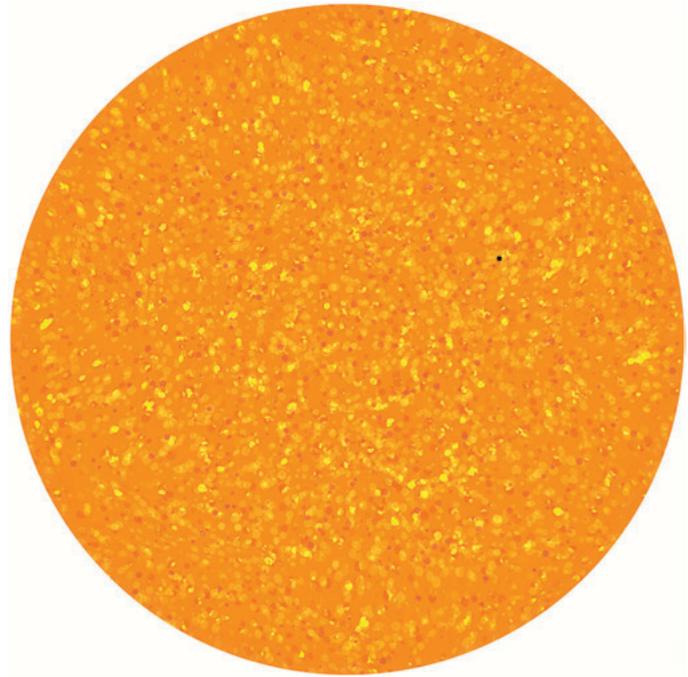
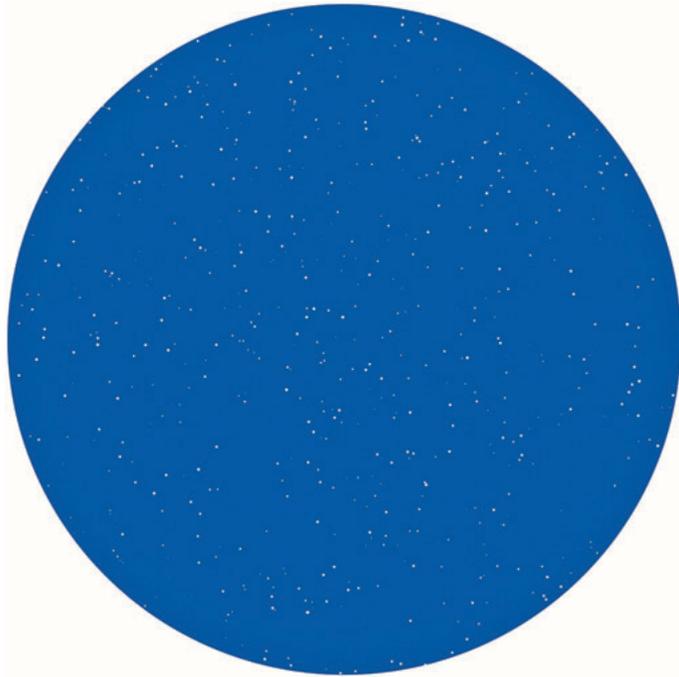
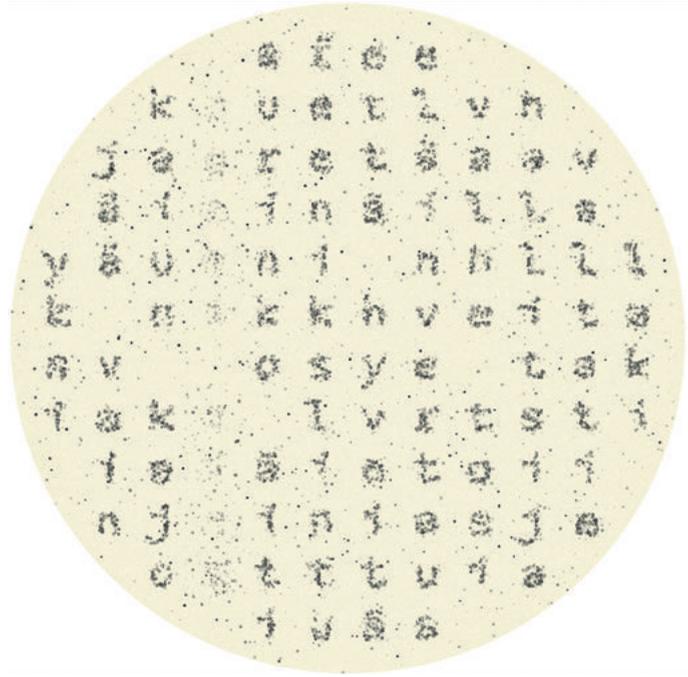
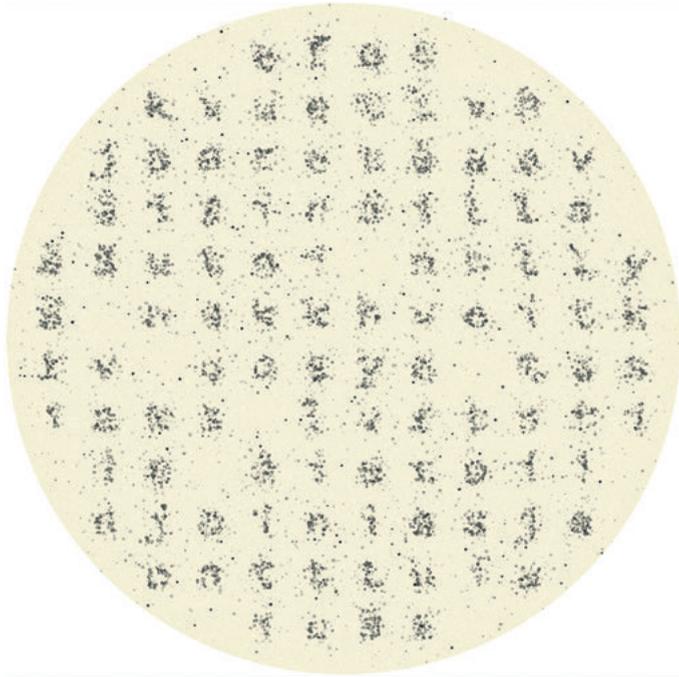
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kirjasto
GLOKKA



Genius loci, 2018, still images from poetry generator



Genius loci, 2018, still images from poetry generator

ANTTI SALMINEN

The Issue of Civilisation and the Church of Tomorrow

Observations on the Work of IC-98

Here, too, the gods dwell.
(Heraclitus of Ephesus)

“Property wanted, as a dwelling for Khronos, the god of time.” In conceptual terms, IC-98’s gesture appears modest. It is virtually invisible, in and of itself. Even by cautious estimate, there are currently thousands of properties of varying shapes and sizes here in the far north from bothies and neglected then abandoned wooden post-war family homes to inherited properties now bones of contention between quarrelling beneficiaries, whose dereliction or otherwise is of no consequence to anyone. But it is precisely the apparent minimalism of its denotation that lends such precision to the *House of Khronos* as an artistic act whilst simultaneously leaving it prismatically open to interpretation. This is an artwork that seeks to explore, simultaneously and equitably, the boundaries of the nonhuman, the conditions of possibility governing the existence of a civilisation such as ours and the meaning of postmodern theology.

House of Khronos forms part of a broader continuum of works by IC-98 exploring temporality and human civilisation, including *Arkhipelagos* (2013), *Abendland* (2013–2015) and *Nekropolis* (2016). These works establish a space where fateful ends and beginnings can meet, where the ends and beginnings can be distinguished, and where they can be rejoined. About to begin: an inevitable acceptance of the unknowability of the future of the human lot, and the seismic shift driven by the nonhuman, the temporal breadth and depth of which remains unknown – a future for which there is no previous example or precedent. About to end: the childish hubris underpinning our modern day civilisation and our ability to withstand the inevitable and unstoppable retaliation exercised upon us by the nonhuman. Also beginning-ending, ending-beginning: a treacherous crossing, western civilisation’s nocturnal sea voyage, which no one and no thing can survive without changing, from one to many and from many to one.

Ancient Greek is often credited with three words for describing time: *aeon* (αἰών; an era, time of the world), *kairos* (καιρός; the critical or opportune moment) and *khronos* (χρόνος; the linear passage of time). Each of these terms has its own personification in the form of a god or a god-like, sometimes daimonic, power. All three are also subject to their own Christian eschatological interpretations. In 2 Corinthians, *kairos* is beautifully employed to denote the possibility of ongoing, everyday messianism: “See, now is the acceptable time; see, now is the day of salvation!” (2. Corinthians 6:2). Ancient Greek powers of time also include other nonhuman figures such as the *Horae* (ῥα), often described as nymph-like goddesses of the seasons and of the hours of the day. Many of them feature in the Homeric hymns and in Hesiod’s *Theogony* (Θεογονία).

Finland's ancient religions and mythologies feature no god of time, and the closest equivalent Khronos has may be the figure of Perkele/Ukko, the god of sky and thunder or Ilmarinen, the immortal blacksmith and creator of the sky. In Finland, Khronos will be viewed as a tourist and a stranger, perhaps even an immigrant. No Nordic religions are known to worship him. It is unlikely sacrificial gifts will mount at his door here. But as we well know, gods know how to travel and can cover vast distances at immense speed so we shouldn't be overly worried about the geographical and temporal distances involved. Still, a god, removed from his usual dwelling place and separated from his followers must be a fundamentally unpredictable and thoroughly discontented (or antipathetic) character. That is why, in Khronos's house, as Hamlet has it, "[t]he time is out of joint". In a world where the future no longer has a future and the narrative of linear progress has no currency, this is as good a diagnosis as any.

How about this for a premise: all civilisations tend to perish. Right now, two distinct schools of thought, those of catastrophism and gradualism, are vying for the claim of having accurately called the waning of our present form of fossil capitalism. The proponents of catastrophism tend to focus on critical and perhaps initially invisible systemic shifts and tipping points, moments of strategically overwhelming and ruthlessly critical decline. The gradualists, by contrast, rely on the power of slow progressing resignation, an atrophying arc of spanning centuries, of the kind that saw off the Holy Roman Empire. These two doctrines are by no means mutually exclusive, and, it is reasonable to assume, one may in fact be as indispensable as the other if there is to be a farewell to the most destructive form of civilisation to date. Be that as it may, theoretically speaking, the point here is between two very different concepts of time. On the one hand, we have kairotic time, the dread and anticipation for the moments when you will experience what the Greek tragedies referred to as justice or retribution (Δίκη), meted out in the form of divine violence.

Then on the other hand we have the gradualist undoing, a slower and altogether more gentle process than kairotic ruin, where the impending fate is foreseen, chosen and accepted. A stepwise decline may be deathly dull and dreary, but it can also allow people the opportunity to face up to and practise the art of dying in the ancient Greek fashion. Khronos is a gradualist by temperament and it is not accidental that he tends to be depicted as a been-there-seen-that sort of an old man, while Kairos tends to be portrayed as a beautiful young man, standing on tiptoe, passionately holding forth on his pet topic of the day, full of boyish, Dionysian zeal.

Even back in ancient Greece, Khronos was often confused, whether accidentally or on purpose, with Cronus the Titan, son of Uranus and Gaia. The dual aspect of his persona, as the titan of titans, as an earlier and rather dodgier archetype of the Olympian gods who tended to be more anthropocentric, is due precisely because of this "error". Cronus ruled during the first aeon, the golden era. During that time, in common with many other cyclical and mythological theories of the world, there were no laws or external moralities. Under Cronus's faultless rule, all living things knew by instinct how to co-exist in harmony free from war and other calamities. The golden era bore little resemblance to democracy, however. In the Orphic rhapsodies, Cronus is portrayed as a sovereign, whose authority was unquestioned and who, like his father before him, eventually came to be overthrown. Following the end of a series of battles known as the Titanomachy (τιτανομαχία), Zeus, Cronus's unwanted son, decides that the best course of action is to defeat his father and bury him alive in Tartarus.

In his second guise, Khronos/Cronus appears as the deposed ruler of a paradise lost and one of the only fair and just ancient Greek leaders who wielded his power, though obtained through violent means, with fairness and justice unsullied by the whims and fancies typical of the other archetypal rulers that both precede and succeed him. In that sense, the *House of Khronos* points to the topos of reawakening and return, to rulers that have either abdicated

or been expelled from their thrones. This mytheme of the "buried king" is repeated the world over from King Arthur to Montezuma and from John the Evangelist to Väinämöinen. The figure is messianic by nature and always appears at a time of great need, usually having been called forth by some cairocally significant event. In this interpretation, IC-98's work becomes an architectural invocation, in which the promise of cairotic time ultimately becomes inextricable from the chronotic rhythm. These two systems of time intertwine, both in the figure of Khronos and in the house which is offered up as his dwelling place.

It is not unreasonable to assume that the first permanent man-made structure was a temple. When the site of the *House of Khronos* in Pöytyä, Finland still lay under an ice sheet, the megaliths at Göbekli Tepe in present day Anatolia had already been abandoned after 2,500 years in use (11,500–9,000 BCE). The complex is thought to have been a religious sanctuary, built by neolithic hunter-gatherers, possibly for the practice of animistic ancestor worship. If the hypothesis is accurate, it means that the transition towards domestication and the sort of agrarian practices which ultimately led to the development of sedentary human cultures did not start with the taming of wild animals or even the breeding of agricultural plant varieties. No, it was the gods that had to be tamed first.

This order of priorities, even if we are entertaining it purely for the purposes of a speculative thought experiment, suggests an experience-based approach that modern man, at the latest, felt able to dispense with. Given the technological and energy constraints of the time, megalith complexes of this kind were hardly built for a laugh. If, then, it was necessary for people to go to such extraordinary lengths to tame or at least appease the gods, the spirits of their ancestors or some other spiritual entities subject to a harder to pin down nomenclature, it is reasonable to think that for them the nonhuman did not (and for people in parts of the world still does not) consist of clearly defined sets of beings neatly sortable to distinct classes or categories or of animals, plants and minerals ideally suited to exploitation by humans, but of forces much more fundamental than this.

Perhaps amidst the merciless tumult of these forces, at the very source of energy and matter, humans, in the midst of transformation, engaged in an initial and temporary encounter with these beings, the beings later turning into subjects, the subjects into objects and so on. Perhaps the Neolithic ancestral worshippers really did choose to experience and make sense of the world in this way. But if we are to take seriously the challenge issued by Khronos and if we are to again consider time as a partner in the act of being, then the process of domestication into beings and their essence, and the modern preoccupation with the subject-object split will reveal itself as a prolonged metaphysical anxiety attack at best. There is not a single object or subject to be found in nature or time without violent reduction and abstraction.

Temple sites are never chosen at random. They all occupy a carefully chosen space, made visible by the temple itself. A temple domesticates the profane nonhuman while exposing it to the sacred nonhuman. In this sense, the temple intended for Khronos is an anti-cathedral of sorts. If our holy houses are typically built to last "for all eternity" in defiance of the sheer mundanity of time and to offer protection for our pact with eternity through the vastness of their bulk and their imperviousness to temporal considerations, the *House of Khronos* turns that promise on its head. The ancient power that has been invited to dwell within the house will destroy it as a physical structure and promptly set about building a new temple in its own image. Dereliction will ensure, the nonhuman will assert itself and, finally, a forest will emerge and prevail. In human terms, Khronos will be building a ruin, and from the ruin a ruin of the ruin – the process repeating itself fractally until only the site itself remains along with the possible archaeologies created by a holy entity that has completed the job he set out to do.

Let's say, in the spirit of a renegade durkheimian tradition, that every holy site conceals within it a secret and treasured decay. We don't need to imagine the soft-rot fungi, the

slowly mummifying remains of small mammals, the sedimentary layers slowly building up amidst all the dust and waste. If our esteemed guest does decide to take up the invitation and human beings continue to keep away, these creatures will almost certainly be joining him at the house. Moulds will run riot. An autumn storm will rage. Some water damage will positively enhance the place. A badger might discover find her way in. Bird skeletons will emerge from beneath the putrefying flesh. Finally, the corners will be piled high with humus and, in the end, all that remains of the human effort here is the evidence of its fundamental unsustainability. An altogether different party is about to kick off here: a celebration of decay.

The fate of a culture is always decided on the furthest verges of civilisation, in the hinterlands where the relative ratios of the nonhuman versus the human are negotiated. At the triumphant peak of our fully realised modern civilisation, you would be forgiven for thinking that our culture, in its present guise, has neither a future nor a border demarcating its outer perimeter or that the border, in terms of time and location, is now found in space, on a distant orbit that is a silent wasteland teeming with communications satellites and space litter. The edges of our civilisation, the exterior boundaries, are constructed and determined artificially, always through negotiation. In this definition, each scrap of plastic found within an ancient forest incorporates that forest into civilisation, in the same way every elk lost in a suburb forges a temporary link between a human community and nonhuman nature.

But it is only on a map, in the exercise of administrative abstraction, that a boundary can take the form of a straight line. We know from nature and from our own human experience that borderlands are an unknowable and uncharted wasteland, a lawless expanse when viewed from the vantage point of the two places it separates and unites. As a conceptual gesture and as a concession to the nonhuman, the *House of Khronos* will continue to grow increasingly dilapidated in that stretch of no man's land, defending it and serving as a crossing point for it. How safe such a crossing might be and whether you would be required to undergo some form of change while using it, we simply do not know. All we can do is wait patiently for, say, 300 years or so.

Apart from our tetchy relationship with time, another horror peculiar to the human race is that the boundaries of a civilisation slice right across the human and the private sphere, too, demarcating their confines along the way. The wild and untamed forest is present within us humans in a bodily sense, manifesting itself in the form of resident colonies of yeast, bacteria and other microorganisms and making its presence felt in those moments when the immune system turns against itself. Fossil capitalism finds its end in the stomach; lactic acid bacteria do not plough, harvest or gather stores for winter. And yet our inner forests are alive, extending across all the different strata of our experience, which are so free and so independent that the rational self, geared at all times towards self-preservation, has no option but to yield, to give way, if only momentarily, to eroticism, to violence, to intoxication and to sleep, as they make an appearance and begin to unpick the fairy tales civilisations tell themselves about their own resilience and longevity. This is why I believe Khronos will be joined at his house by three of the oldest figures in the ancient Greek universe: Eros, Eris and Chaos.

Through its very existence, the *House of Khronos* articulates problems we have no hope of solving. But with a bit of luck, we may hear them and, better yet, we may even survive them. And so be it: for when the anthropocentric world gives way, whether willingly or not, what will we be able to truly lay claim to except this intractable, unavoidable problem? On the other hand, where else could the fault lie except within ourselves? And furthermore: is it not the case that this problem is in fact embedded in our unwillingness and inability to admit to the primacy, precedence and supremacy of the nonhuman? If we are the source of the problem then our own existential nature can be found at the heart of its intractability.

And as that intractability is not voided upon death but is always passed on to and lingers with the next generation, it is the irreversible incompleteness, the boundaries and our terror at the face of the difficult to pin down question that define our understanding of the natural world. It is this same intractability that also defines the boundary of our civilisation that at once cuts through and constructs the human being. We will have to engage with it, consider it from both sides of the divide, if we are to save our civilisation in anything like its current guise.

Is it not the act of defending the unconditional nature of transience and the life that it sustains and destroys what we call upon Khronos to remind us of? Perhaps, or perhaps not: the gods rule absolute because no straightforward comparison can be drawn between the intentions of the nonhuman powers around us and our human wishes, desires and capacity for comprehension. To assume that there is a “benevolent” god would be to give into sentimentality. Fundamentally, this is, rightly, a matter entirely devoid of morality. It may well be that as Khronos settles into his new home in Pöytyä, he won’t like what he sees and will, for entirely logical reasons, lend his support to the brisk and violent undoing of the anthropocentric world.

It is likely that the oldest spiritual practices in ancient Greece were animistic and earth-centric. When the audacious new power players, Zeus and his brothers flanked by some younger gods entered into the battle of Titanomachy alongside Hesiod, it paved the way for the destruction of the animistic way of life. According to Hesiod’s testimony, the chaotic civil war lasted a decade. Following the Titans’ defeat, the victors that emerged were free to author the Hellenic history of ideas and erase the evidence of a culture that had venerated nature itself, only to replace it with a courtful of all too human archetypes that had no hesitation in revelling in both love and war.

It is precisely this victory that Nietzsche praises, describing how, following the defeat of Khronos, Zeus bedecks the winged oak “with a magnificent robe of honour into which with his own hands he embroiders lands, waters and rivers”. Nietzsche had it wrong of course. His jubilation was premature. The reason he got it so wrong is that Titanomachy forms part of a theological history of colonialism. It is the story of how an earth-centric and uncivilised religion came to be crushed, the narrative provided by the victor. The young gods replaced these elusive elemental forces with a brand new pantheon created in the human image thus casting in bronze for posterity the image of Greek gods as a band of iron fisted rulers intoxicated by rape and ritual sacrifice.

But gods tend to die only to live again and so it was with Khronos/Cronus. After an aeon, he was back again. The full cycle of that particular era stretches across the entire arc of our western civilisation, from its “Hellenic” inception to its end, to a moment where methodical Greek reason has reached its limit and where there is no option but to abandon its own hysterical metaphysical manifestations so as not to interfere with life’s patterns any longer and in order to become receptive to all that the nonhuman has in its gift and on which it is ultimately dependent. For this to happen, reason must engage in and leave itself open to a decisive renegotiation between the human and the nonhuman.

Is it reasonable to present a derelict old wooden house as a dwelling place for someone of Khronos’s stature? Is it likely the comforts of a squat would be to his liking? Heraclitus of Ephesus, a near contemporary of the Homeric hymns, would almost certainly have said yes. It is said the philosopher lived in a modest hut, a fact that never failed to astonish his students as they turned up to visit the cleverest man in the village, expecting to see something rather more des res. To the discombobulated philosophers-to-be anticipating a decidedly distinguished and carefully coiffed figure, scruffy Heraclitus is said to have retorted: “Here, too, the gods dwell”.

The above anecdote hints not only at the sites where the real power might reside, but also at the distinction between esoteric and exoteric knowledge. Firstly, power in its

concentrated form will always seek the proximity of intense energies and will always attempt to domesticate them within the confines of a prison, albeit it nice hygienic ones. This is the sleight of hand monotheistic states have performed throughout history to flex their muscle, employing grandiose architectural flourishes to bolster their claim to being the embodiment of the greatest spiritual and secular power. The *House of Khronos* serves as an effective critique of this theological position. Firstly, it serves as a reminder that holy sites and the higher powers they appoint are likely to be found where the ruling elites are not. Secondly, it points to how a divine being must withdraw, conceal, exclude and isolate itself in order for people to seek it and find it. A god that derives their power from their own image alone or rules from a pedestal is an idol at best. Beyond the reach of religious imagery, the true power always operates half, if not completely, hidden. The journey you must undertake to reach it is, if not physically impossible, then at least extremely arduous. To complete it, people must change, perhaps even transform, utterly.

Unlike the megaliths at Göbekli Tepe, it is not likely that the *House of Khronos* will survive many thousands of years. I suspect this might suit the god of time rather well. In terms of an act of worship, the practice of admitting and surrendering to our transience is something Khronos will surely approve of. Perhaps the most appropriate form of sacrifice you can perform at his altar is to learn to achieve a good death. But the logic of a credible sacrifice is by definition an intractable paradox: in order to curry favour with a pagan god, we must give up the very thing we do not possess. This demand, also alluded to by the *House of Khronos*, lays bare the issue of our own present day civilisation and its supposed longevity. If our current way of life, entirely dependent on the destructive consumption of nature itself, continues to be excluded from the negotiations we engage in, there will be no opportunity for us to learn how to give up our entrenched practices and proclivities and, post-humanly, we will be forced to surrender all that we possess to the nonhuman powers that surround us, time being one of them and by no means the most insignificant.

The question we must ask is, can the *House of Khronos* serve as the church of tomorrow? What if Khronos never turns up? Is it wise to rely on the ritual magic practised by IC-98, given the huge significance of what's at stake? Not to worry. It may well be that the kairotic, messianic, redemptive moments will never arrive and the slow slog of gradualism towards the fossil capitalist endgame will come to be seen as an obvious and natural direction of travel, embraced by the public and pointless to resist. Khronos himself, however, can always be relied upon: time is not a renewable resource as such but without it, renewal will not be possible. Khronos will come. Spring will be here.

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IC-98

founded in 1998, consists of
Patrik Söderlund (b. 1974)
Visa Suonpää (b. 1968)
They live and work in Turku, Finland

With backgrounds in visual arts and cultural studies, IC-98's 20-year collaboration has produced artist publications, site and context specific projects and interventions, animated film installations and various public commissions. IC-98 received the Finnish State Art Prize in 2009 and represented Finland at the Venice Biennale in 2015.

Though their practice is essentially post medium, IC-98 is best known for animations, which combine classical drawing and digital effects, depicting landscapes shaped by long time durations, natural and human histories and climate. Mythical, material, factual and fictional elements are weaved together into visual narratives, which – though deeply political and meticulously researched, scripted and executed – are presented as open-ended poetic reveries.

IC-98 is interested in the body politic, architectural space, the presence of history in everyday life and different ecologies. They often collaborate with other arts professionals.

Solo Exhibitions 2016–18

- 2018 Kunsthalle Helsinki, Finland
- 2017 Beaconsfield, London, UK
- 2017 Multimedia Art Museum, Moscow, Russia
- 2017 Yeltsin Center, Yekaterinburg, Russia
- 2016 City Center of Fine Art, Novosibirsk, Russia
- 2016 Krasnoyarsk Museum Center, Krasnoyarsk, Russia
- 2016 Arka Gallery of Contemporary Art, Vladivostok, Russia
- 2016 Röda Sten Konsthall, Gothenburg, Sweden

Group Exhibitions 2016–18

- 2018 *Riga International Biennial of Contemporary Art*, Riga, Latvia
- Northern Exposure*, Nordic Museum, Seattle, USA
- NoCo – Nordic Contemporary Art*, Hämeenlinna Art Museum, Hämeenlinna, Finland
- 2017 *Collecting Europe*, Victoria and Albert Museum, London, UK
- 2017 *If You Don't Like Art, Goodbye, Fuck Off, Go Home... Art from Nordic Contemporary Art Collection*, Vestfossen Kunstlaboratorium, Vestfossen, Norway
- 2017 *PyeongChang Biennale 2017*, Gangneung, Korea
- 2017 *Extension.FI*, Triumph Gallery, Moscow, Russia
- 2017 *Art Goes Logomo*, Turku, Finland
- 2016 *Fireflies in the Night Take Wing. Metamorphosis*, Stavros Niarchos Foundation Cultural Center, Athens, Greece
- 2016 *Land/Sky*, Leslie Tonkonow Artworks+Projects, New York, USA
- 2016 *No/Good Place*, Handwerker Gallery, Ithaca College, NY, USA
- 2016 *Painting of the Mind*, Mikkeli Art Museum, Mikkeli, Finland
- 2016 *Inaugural Exhibition*, Makasiini Contemporary, Turku, Finland

Public Works 2016–18

- 2018 *Genius loci*, Kaarina House, Kaarina, Finland
- 2016– *House of Khronos*, Lönnström Art Museum Contemporary Art Project #1, Pöytyä, Finland
- 2016– *Family Trees*, Maunula House, Helsinki, Finland

Festivals 2016–18

2016 Sundance Film Festival, Park City, USA

Filmography

- 2018 *Realms/Omnia mutantur*, 19'38" / 18'18", short / 1-channel video installation
2017 *Epokhe (The Last Sixth of the Final Hour)*, 10'00", 1-channel video installation
2016 *Nekropolis*, 32'00", 1-channel video installation
2015 *Abendland (Hours, Years, Aeons)*, 43'00", short / 1-channel video installation
2013–2014 *Abendland (I: The Place That Was Promised; III: The Edge That Was Set)*, 16'00",
2-channel video installation
2013 *Arkipelagos (Navigating the Tides of Time)*, 20'00", short / 3-channel video installation
2013 *Arkipelagos (Ebb)*, 10'00", 1-channel video installation
2011 *A View from the Other Side*, 70'00", short / 1-channel video installation
2010 *Theses on the Body Politic (Colony)*, 10'50", 1-channel video installation
2009 *Theses on the Body Politic (Riket)*, 14'00", site-specific 1-channel video installation
2008 *Theses on the Body Politic (Shadows)*, 45'00", short / 1-channel video installation
2008 *Theses on the Body Politic (The Descent)*, 6'11", 1-channel video installation
2007 *Theses on the Body Politic (Vicious Circles 1-3)*, 35'10", 3-channel video installation

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2015 IC-98: Hours Years, Aeons. Moving Images and Other Projects 1998–2015.
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Works in Collections

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Turku City Art Collection, Finland
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Heino Collection, Helsinki, Finland
Museum of Contemporary Art Kiasma, Helsinki, Finland
Matti Koivurinta Foundation, Turku, Finland
Turku Art Museum, Finland
Pori Art Museum, Finland
Pori Art Museum Deposit Collection (AJ), Pori, Finland
Rejmyre Folkets Hus, Sweden

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