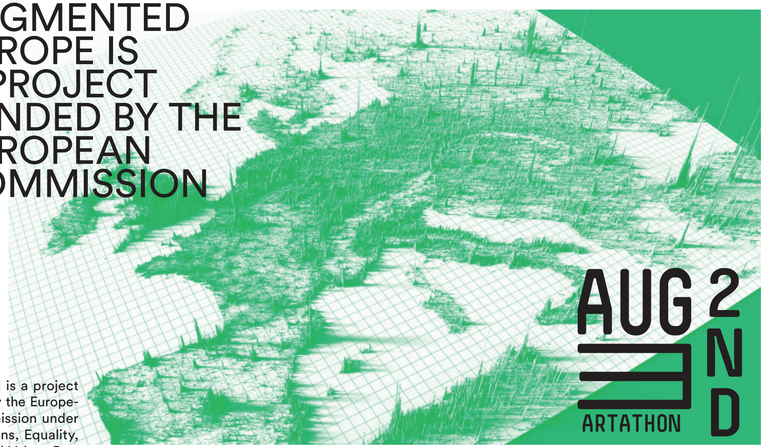
THE GOAL OF THE PROJECT

AUGMENTED EUROPE. OUR FUTURE IS CONNECTED. DIGITAL AWARENESS AS AN OPPORTUNITY FOR INCLUSION AND SOCIAL JUSTICE, FOR A BETTER EUROPE.

MILAN
BERLIN
RIGA
GDANSK
BARCELONA

FROM MILAN PASSING THROUGH BARCELONA, BERLIN, GDANSK AND RIGA MORE THAN 130 YOUNG PEOPLE MET DURING THE TRANSNATIONAL ARTATHON, WHERE THEY CONFRONTED EACH OTHER AND DEVELOPED INNOVATIVE INITIATIVES AND PROPOSALS TO MAKE THEIR AND OUR TOMORROW BRIGHTER.

AUGE AUGMENTED EUROPE IS A PROJECT FUNDED BY THE EUROPEAN COMMISSION



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ARTATHON RIGA

KEYNOTE SPEAKERS

ELEONORA BRIZI

Eleonora BRIZI (IT). Curating Digital & Crypto Art

Eleonora Brizi is a digital and crypto art curator previously based in New York, Rome and Beijing, now indefinitely living in the Metaverse. In 2018, she studied blockchain technology and its application to art in New York. Here, following her art curator career in China, she became very active in the flourishing crypto-creative community, curating, promoting, and participating in many Crypto Art pioneer projects. Also in 2018, she founded Breezy Art, a WEB3 art curation habitat, a laboratory for creative experimentation with Art and Technology. It champions Digital/Crypto/NFT Art, Creative Coding, and the Metaverse, exploring the exciting possibilities brought to the world by Blockchain technology.
In her talk Eleonora Brizi talked about her experience with curating digital and crypto art, delving into blockchain technologies in the context of art and how they deal with such topics as green and climate. She highlighted how the intersection of blockchain, digital, and crypto art shapes our perspectives, emphasizing the role of artistic innovations in driving these transformative changes.

BLOCKCHAIN, ART AND CLIMATE: CHALLENGES FOR GREEN & DIGITAL FUTURE

ERIC NOWAK & JANE TINGLEY

Eric NOWAK (CH). Tokenizing Nature: Can Carbon Markets Really Impact Climate and Biodiversity?

Eric Nowak is Professor of Finance and Head of the Institute of Finance at the Università della Svizzera italiana. He is also Director of the recently launched Center for Climate Finance and Sustainability at the University and a VCS Advisory Group Member at VERRA.
Full Professor of Financial Management and Accounting at USI since 2003, Eric Nowak studied at the Universities of St Gallen and Bocconi in Milan and completed his PhD at the University of St Gallen in 1997. In Eric Nowak's presentation, he delved into the realm of cryptocurrencies and the innovative approach of tokenizing nature. He discussed the potential for collaborative endeavors between artists and scientists, examining the conceivable impact on the environment and nature. One avenue explored was the tokenization of artworks, presenting it as a viable possibility in this context.

Jane TINGLEY (CA). Foresta-Inclusive: Investigating the more-than-human

Jane Tingley is an artist, curator and Assistant Professor at York University. Her studio work combines traditional studio practice with new media tools – and spans responsive/interactive installation, performative robotics, and telematically connected distributed sculpture. Her current artistic trajectory is interdisciplinary in nature and spans the intersection of art, science and technology. Her talk unpacked and explored the ideas behind the exhibition
more-than-human and the related research project Foresta-Inclusive, which focuses on understanding and visualizing the hidden vitality of trees and the ecology of the forest. Together the artworks in more-than-human and research project Foresta-Inclusive aim to challenge the mental habit of assuming that humans are superior to everything else on the planet.

RIXC

The Riga Artathon organized by the RIXC Center for New Media Culture took place as part of the Auge2nd project as well as the RIXC Art Science Festival 2023: Crypto, Art and Climate in Riga, Latvia on September 21, 2023. How does crypto art relate to climate change? Can artificial intelligence offer solutions to environmental problems that human intelligence has so far failed to do? Furthermore, will the persistent ignorance of our natural environment ultimately compel us to transition to a metaverse – a virtual world providing an idealized digital simulation of our real world?

WHAT DOES CRYPTO ART HAVE TO DO WITH CLIMATE CHANGE?

Today, not only the RIXC Artathon, but society as a whole is focusing on a range of new technologies – blockchain networks, Web 3.0 and NFT, artificial intelligence and machine learning, virtual and augmented reality and the vision of the metaverse – that are changing the landscape of art and culture, and raising new environmental issues.

What does crypto art have to do with climate change? At first glance, it seems impossible to connect it to environmental issues, as crypto-art uses blockchain technologies that consume large amounts of resources. However, blockchains also have the potential to address environmental issues due to their transparency and decentralized network technology.

RIXC RIGA

Blockchain, Art and Climate: Challenges for Green & Digital Future

AI AND BLOCKCHAIN: TRANSFORMING POTENTIAL IN ARTS + DIGITAL FUTURE CHALLENGES: BLOCKCHAIN, ART AND ECONOMY

Showcase by Jurgis Peters

Challenge1+4

WHAT ARE THE BIGGEST CHALLENGES FOR A GREEN & DIGITAL FUTURE? HOW YOU WOULD SOLVE IT USING **AI** AND **BLOCKCHAIN** AND BLOCKCHAIN TECHNOLOGIES? WHAT ARE THE IDEAS FOR PROJECT/S?

What are the broader applications of AI-driven creativity? What is its transformative potential within the contemporary art landscape? What is NFT and what are the possibilities offered by blockchain technology?

The workshop featured a showcase by the Latvian artist Jurģis Peters who introduced the intricate fusion of art and technology, highlighting his personal artistic journey and the use of generative AI in his artwork. Attendees were introduced to the broader applications of AI-driven creativity and its transformative potential within the contemporary art landscape. Additionally, the showcase tried to explain and demystify blockchain technologies and highlight interesting use cases. The topic of Non-Fungible Tokens (NFTs) – a technology based on the blockchain – was also explored, emphasizing their growing prominence and the possibilities offered by the technology.

Based on the showcase the participants online explored two perspectives – AI and Blockchain: Transforming Potential in Arts (Challenge 1), as well as Digital Future Challenges: Blockchain, Art and Economy (Challenge 4). The workshop participants divided in different discussion groups and based on the three central workshop questions explored how AI, blockchain and blockchain technologies could be used to contribute in solving the challenges of a green and digital future. The youths identified such future challenges as the waste of energy and physical bi-products due to increasing reliance on technology. They explored possibilities offered by AI and blockchain in contributing to future challenges and proposed a step-by-step plan: 1) Define the problem to solve with AI; 2) Collect and preprocess data for AI development; 3) Choose the right tools and platforms for AI development, such as programming languages and frameworks; 4) Develop AI models using machine learning or deep learning algorithms. One of the proposed projects was to develop an AI agent that will result in an AI-generated image using SDXL 1.0 model the prompt of a diagram of an AI agent assisting reduction of energy and chemical bi-product waste.

Another discussion group of youths also reflected on the ideas shown in the showcase from the perspective of Blockchain, Art and Economy. They brainstormed on safe ways of making transactions using blockchain and one of the challenges of a green and digital future – ecology – and how to contribute to it by using blockchain technologies to track illegal activities and deforestation. They came up with an idea to create digital artwork, using AI and blockchain which would give an opportunity for art on relevant environmental and societal issues to reach wider audiences. The youths explored new, ecologically friendly ways of expression using blockchain. While conventional art may require the usage of a lot of resources and can be limited in audience reach, digital and blockchain artwork could be more accessible and resource-effective.

ART, AI AND THE METAVERSE: REALITY SHIFT

Showcase by Ieva Viksne and Liga Velina

Challenge 2

WHAT ARE THE BIGGEST CHALLENGES FOR A GREEN & DIGITAL FUTURE? HOW YOU WOULD SOLVE IT USING **VR** TOOLS? WHAT ARE THE IDEAS FOR PROJECT/S?

How can people interact with technologies in balance with nature? What are the current possibilities and future predictions for such immersive technology as virtual reality? Considering ethical and legal implications connected to these technologies - how do we feel about them?

The workshop was led by two Latvian Virtual Reality (VR) artists, Ieva Vǧksne un Lǧga Vǧlīǧa who introduced their VR artworks on view at the RIXC Festival 2023 Exhibition: Crypto, Art and Climate Exhibition in Rīga, Latvia. Currently, we are experiencing a new paradigm shift, where artificial intelligence has entered everyday life even more than ever. There have been discussions among the researchers and creative communities questioning what this means for artists and humans in general? Does it threaten the artists, replacing them in creative disciplines – or the opposite – it gives them tools and possibilities to create new experiences with new means of artistic expression and interactions with artificial intelligence systems? What are the current possibilities and future predictions for such immersive technology as virtual reality combined with AI tools? Considering ethical and legal implications connected to these technologies – how do we feel about them?

Based on the showcase the youths explored the three central questions of the discussion. The brainstorming session by participants was quite productive in identifying a variety of the possible challenges of the green and digital future. Youths thought of such challenges as mass surveillance, the issues with data protection, high energy consumption and rising carbon emissions, as well as mass surveillance and the lack of awareness of what information and data is provided to the big companies by an average consumer. The last two challenges identified in the discussion were overpopulation, worsening environmental problems and the issues with people's balanced co-existence with technologies and nature. The participants narrowed down on various strategies that could be implemented while using VR tools: to make a VR simulation of the right choices that humanity could make for a better future, implement positive values in VR games for children, simultaneously keeping in mind to be mindful to not make a utopia but instead create a realistic vision of the future. Finally, the youths discussed and finalized possible project ideas, namely, to try to make an educational program that would include the usage of new media and VR art, as well as to make a simulation of deforestation from the perspective of a tree.

GREEN DIGITAL UTOPIA AND AUGMENTED NATURE-CULTURES

Showcase by Isabella Münnich, Anna Manankina, Jung Eun Lee

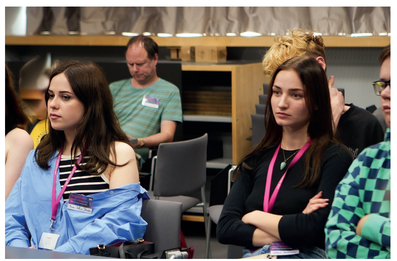
Challenge 3

WHAT ARE THE BIGGEST CHALLENGES FOR A GREEN & DIGITAL FUTURE? HOW YOU WOULD SOLVE IT USING **AR** TOOLS? WHAT ARE THE IDEAS FOR PROJECT/S?

What is the green digital utopia and how can we use augmented reality (AR) art to make visible the invisible processes in urban nature? What are the connections between the biological being and social existence of both the non-human and human?

How can augmented reality (AR) make visible the invisible processes in urban nature, explore the symbiotic relationship between social and ecological systems, and trace the historical and contemporary trajectories of nature-culture sites in the city? The workshop featured showcases of AR artworks by three Karlsruhe-based artists and introduction to an AR art. The German artist Isabella Münnich, in her mush/room: growing together artwork performs a digital study of 'interactional landscapes, capturing transformations of natural objects using digital scanning techniques (photogrammetry), creating digital sculptures that the visitor can experience by approaching them, walking around them, or even going inside to see in detail the striking structures of digitally transformed mushrooms. The speculative Vegetable kingdom, vegetable anarchy artwork by Ukrainian artist Anna Manankina is an AI-generated species of plants, created using images from the Museum of Natural History, which are in a continuous mutation, evolving to a stage after which humans aren't needed anymore as any plant can take the shape of a human... South Korean artist Jung Eun Lee in her artwork Pond Creatures: Becoming One, Being Plural draws associative parallels between the biological being and social existence of both – non-human (pond creatures) and human (observer); the artwork is based on the artist's observations of "pond creatures" living in the artist's own built aquariums (of the glass jars) and their unique way of symbiotic living...

The workshop participants had an opportunity to view the AR artworks in the urban environment using an AR app. The participants inspired by the artworks and the showcase reflected on the three key questions during the discussion. The youths explored the possible green and digital future challenges such as the criminalization of climate activists, value establishment, as well as education. They also identified the key strategies that could use augmented reality in order to tackle these challenges, for example, changing people's perception and using art as a tool to inform people, focusing more attention on relevant issues via AR art, and establishing emotional connection and using AR art for education to perceive and see the societal issues more clearly. Finally, the participants narrowed down to an idea of an artistic project using augmented reality art. The participants proposed an AR art project that would show the world from the perspective of a small creature, showing how to become an "ant or a bee" which would help via art to think more about small things and sustainability, as well as how to use using resources reasonably from the point of view of a small non-human being.



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