

June 21, 2021

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North Norwegian Art Center



[1] Daniel Slåttnes, *Plant Cyborgs* 2015–2021, *P. obtusifolia* (baby rubberplant), robotic prothesis, software that interprets the biosignals of the plant. Courtesy of the artist. Photo: Meta.Morf Biennale for art and technology, Gråmalna, Trondheim Art Museum. [2] Eva Bakkeslett, *Mekkeverk*, 2017. Video and sound installation with compost worms *Eisenia fetida*. Courtesy of the artist. [3] Jana Winderen, hydrophone recording 15 meter under the sea ice by the North Pole in 2015. Courtesy of the artist. Photo: MAMONT foundation. [4] Mercedes Mühleisen, *The Pond's Crust*, 2019. Video installation. Photo: Christian Øen. [5] Service dogs at the Karelian front. Courtesy of the Murmansk Regional Museum of Local Lore. Photo: J. I. Kozminskij. [6] Viktor Pedersen, *Jeg er Mangfoldig* (I am Multitudes) (still), 2020. Courtesy of the artist.

I am a Multitude

June 19–July 25, 2021

Galleri Nord-Norge

Normannsgate 1
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I AM A MULTITUDE

But who are you?

For a while, I am the cabbage. Then I am the door handle of the public toilet. I am the immune system. I am the bar of chocolate. I am the gut. I am the handrail and the stop button on the bus. I am the keyboard of your computer. I am the air. I am a kiss. (1)

What do you mean? That you can be anything? From the mineral kingdom, the plant kingdom, or the animal kingdom?

We have to be brave and erase the line between dead and living matter. (2)

Yes, and some might even take it so far as to claim that everything is just one big organism. Interwoven, mutually dependent. Maybe, when it comes right down to it, created from the same substance; whether that should turn out to be magma, bacteria, or something else entirely.

But! If all things are made out of the same,

and share that inner roaring flame,

why cannot I dissolve myself

and out of this pond, become something else?

What can I do to be like you?

What hole do I need to fall into? (3)

As part of this year's Arctic Arts Festival in Harstad, Northern Norway, the festival exhibition *I am a Multitude* presents different ways of being in the world, and the complex symbiotic relationship between all of us. From the microscopic, which can make quite a surprising difference, to the macroscopic that supposedly makes a bigger impact, we wish for the exhibition to, in an imaginative way, open up for the exploration of various types of existences and sensualities. In a time when the distant has slipped even further away, and the near has crept even nearer, we aim to build bridges and to inspire the exploration of less obvious connections.

Participating artists: **Allora & Calzadilla**, **Annika Eriksson**, **Antti Tenetz**, **Atelier Éditions**, **Camilla Renate Nicolaisen**, **Daniel Slåttnes**, **Eva Bakkeslett**, **Egill Sæbjørnsson**, **Gerd Aurell**, **Inghild Karlsen**, **Iselin Linstad Hauge**, **Jean Painlevé**, **Jana Winderen**, **Jenna Sutela**, **John Cage with Lois Long & Alexander H. Smith**, **Matti Aikio**, **Mercedes Mühleisen**, **Michelle-Marie Letelier**, **Outi Pieski**, **Simon Daniel Tegnander Wenzel**, **Yngvild Færøy** og **Søssa Jørgensen**, **Viktor Pedersen**, **Åsa Sonjasdotter**.

Curated by Karolin Tampere and Torill Østby Haaland from the North Norwegian Art Centre.

Public programme, June 19–26: The program includes presentations in the gallery by curators and artists, an interactive VR experience by **Michelle-Marie Letelier**, a performance-lecture by **Simon Daniel Tegnander Wenzel**, live radio by **Søssa Jørgensen** and **Yngvild Færøy**, a public discussion about co-existence with seagulls by **Geir Tore Holm** and **Søssa Jørgensen**, a live concert with clarinetist **Håvard Lund** and compost worms from **Eva Bakkeslett**'s installation and an evening in the gallery for youth to be in conversation with the artists.

Festspillene i Nord-Norge (Arctic Arts Festival) was founded in Harstad in 1965. Taking place during the summer solstice in June each year, it is a weeklong international arts festival dedicated to music, theatre, dance and performance. With its home base at 68° latitude, the festival is in and about the north, where fostering and honouring creative processes, contemplative exchanges and a communal spirit is in focus.

The North Norwegian Art Centre (NNKS), located in Svolvær, Lofoten, is a regional centre for contemporary art, encompassing the entire region of Northern Norway. It carries out an extensive range of activities, curating exhibitions, regularly commissioning works and projects by artists at other locations in the whole region. NNKS also owns and organises the internationally established art biennial Lofoten International Art Festival (LIAF).

- (1) Bacteria and fungus from Viktor Pedersen's body in his video *Jeg er mangfoldig* (*I am a Multitude*), 2020.
- (2) Egill Sæbjørnsson in the video and performance-lecture *From Magma to Mankind*, 2020.
- (3) The creature in Mercedes Mühleisen's video installation *The Pond's Crust*, 2019.

