Symposium: Gemeinschaft, Körper, Begegnung in digitaler Kunst (Moovy Festival)

Saturday & Sunday 17 & 18 October 2026 | 10 am–4 pm | Tanzfaktur, Cologne |
in German, except where highlighted

	Saturday, 17 October 2026		Sunday, 18 October 2026
10.00h	Welcome, Introduction (Ágota Harmati, Klaas Werner)	10.00h	Welcome, What happened so far (Ágota Harmati, Klaas Werner)
10.20h	**Francis Wagner:** Queer(ing) VR?	10.10h	**Jens Fehrenbacher:** Default bodies. Körpernormierung in der 3D-Entwicklung und künstlerische Gegenstrategien
10.40h	**Patrick Blümel:** Hypercreatures - Entangling art, space and audiences	10.30h	**Manischa Partowi:** Nebeneinander, Füreinander, Miteinander? Choreografien von Kunstrezeption mit XR
11.00h	Open discussion session	11.00h	Break
11.45h	Break	11.10h	Open discussion session
12.15h	Open discussion session	12.00h	Break
12.30h	**Chris Geiger:** Dancing with Dragons - How to successfully bring art, technology, science and business together in new media art and mixed reality projects	12.30h	Open discussion session
12.50h	**Lex Rütten & Jana Kerima Stolzer:** Micro Encounters right beneath our feet	12.50h	**Amit Palgi:** Ticklish Pixels - How digital can be somatic? (in English)
13.10h	Break	13.10h	**Sam Hopkins:** Offline Together: Bazes, Networks and Collective Media (in English)
13.30h	Open discussion session	13.30h	**Keez Duyves:** Immersive collaborations with a pinch of AI. *(in English)*
14.30h	**Charlotte Triebus** on WE, BRUTE FORCE	14.00h	Break
14.45h	**Alisa Berger** on RAPTURE II - PORTAL	14.15h	Open discussion session

Saturday

Francis Wagner (Media Studies Scholar, Wien)

Queer(ing) VR?

This presentation explores the queer potential of VR through strategies of discomfort. Rather than purportedly fostering empathy by adopting marginalised perspectives, selected VR works turn the gaze on its head: the often white, cis-hetero-normative question 'How does it feel to be…?' can be reframed as 'How does it feel to be a problem?'. This demonstrates how moments of disruption, unease and disorientation function as queer interventions in virtual space.

Francis Wagner *is a media studies scholar and works as a postdoctoral researcher at the Institute for Theatre, Film and Media Studies at the University of Vienna. His research and teaching focus on VR, tracking technologies, queer studies, trans studies and theories of affect. He is a member of the steering committee of the Gender/Queer Studies and Media Studies Working Group of the Society for Media Studies and has recently published the book "Virtual Reality and the Question of Empathy: Queer Perspectives in Film and Media Studies" with transcript.*

///

Patrick Blümel (Media Art Curator, Köln/Dortmund)

Hypercreatures - Entangling art, space and audiences

Patrick Blümel operates at the intersection of society, science, technology and culture. He regards media art as a symptom of our times. It not only addresses current issues – it operates within the media structures that shape our digitally defined reality.

Patrick Blümel *was most recently Head Curator of Contemporary Art at the LVR's Max Ernst Museum in Brühl. In exhibitions such as *Surreal Futures* (2023/24) and *Hypercreatures – Mythologies of the Future* (2025), he consistently placed media art within broader art-historical and social contexts, viewing it as a potential continuation of surrealist ways of thinking – as an artistic response to social upheavals, technological revolutions and profound transformations of our reality.*

///

Chris Geiger (Professor for Mixed Reality, Düsseldorf)

In his talk, Chris discusses the work carried out at the MIREVI Lab as part of its long-standing collaboration with artists and venues, and how mixed reality, AI and human-technology interaction can be successfully integrated into innovative projects in the performing and visual arts.

Prof. Dr Christian Geiger *heads the MIREVI team (Mixed Reality and Visualisation, www.mirevi.de) at Düsseldorf University of Applied Sciences and has been active in the fields of mixed reality, digital media and immersive human-technology interaction for more than 25 years. He has initiated and led numerous research and development projects at national and international level. His interests lie in the design and*

implementation of new, useful and sustainable XR experiences. For many years, the MIREVI team has been collaborating with international artists and venues, combining new media art, dance and theatre with mixed reality.

///

Jana Kerima Stolzer & Lex Rütten (Artistduo, Dortmund)

Micro Encounters right beneath our feet: how multisensory enhancements help us forge new connections

Technology is becoming increasingly accessible and allows us to perceive the environment in a new and more intense way. Rather than imitating an environment in the virtual world and creating an artificial space, technology can also serve to enhance the senses. It is therefore not just a question of how we interact with one another as human beings, but of how technology enables communication between earthly entities. If the vitality of the non-human world can only be conveyed through anthropomorphisation, must we continually recognise ourselves in the other?

*Interactions and feedback systems between living beings and their environment form the starting point for the multimedia installations by **Jana Kerima Stolzer** and **Lex Rütten**. The protagonists are usually those entities that have no voice in reality: hybrid beings combining organism and technology, flora, fauna and inanimate matter, which convey their perspective on the world in musical-style settings. Drawing on their research, the duo develop narratives based on scientific research and science fiction that sketch out what is (im)possible.*

///

Charlotte Triebus (Artist, Cologne)

***Charlotte Triebus** works as a performance artist and multidisciplinary artistic director. Her work centres on exploring the potential of the intersections between art, dance and technology. Her works and performances have been shown in numerous national and international exhibitions. In 2018, she founded the New Human Body Society. Charlotte co-heads the Department of Artistic Research at the Mirevi Lab (Düsseldorf University of Applied Sciences/Düsseldorf Innovation Hub) and is an associate member of several international research teams exploring the intersections of contemporary dance and technology.*

///

Alisa Berger (Artist, Cologne)

***Alisa Berger** studied at KHM Cologne and Le Fresnoy. She was nominated for the Max Ophüls Prize and the FIRST STEPS Award and received the Studio Collector Prize of Isabelle & Jean-Conrad Lemaître at Jeu de Paume in 2023. Her works have been shown at Eye Filmmuseum, Jeu de Paume, Tokyo Metropolitan Art Museum, CWB Paris, Kunstpalast Düsseldorf, Smithsonian's National Museum of Asian Art, and Kindl Berlin, as well as at Berlinale, IDFA, CPH:DOX, Hot Docs, among others.*

/// ///

Sunday

Manischa Partowi (art historian, Ruhr University Bochum)

Side by side, for one another, with one another? Choreographies of art reception with XR

Manischa Partowi's contribution addresses the question of how the integration of artistic works into the exhibition space can evoke different modes of reception with XR. Drawing on specific examples of artworks, she suggests that combined forms of 'side by side' and 'for one another' can already be created through spatial installation decisions. But what is required for 'with one another' – for a shift from observation to participation?

Manischa Partowi *is an art historian whose research explores affective strategies and hybrid spectatorship at the intersection of installation, performance and digital media. She is currently completing her PhD on the topic 'Intimacy and Violence: On the Aesthetics of Virtual Reality Art' at Ruhr University Bochum, where she most recently worked as a research assistant. As a curatorial assistant at the Museum Folkwang, as head of art education at Urbane Künste Ruhr and with her pop-feminist collective FAM_, Manischa has also worked on various formats of art reception.*

///

Jens Fehrenbacher (media and cultural studies scholar, Cologne University of Applied Sciences)

Default bodies. Body standardisation in 3D development and artistic counter-strategies

How do 3D development tools shape the standardisation of physicality? Online body libraries, automated animation tools, cross-platform body templates and generative AI often shape body ideals and standards in subtle ways. Through versatile presets and time-saving features, the digital arts are also affected by this logic of standardisation. At the same time, counter-strategies are emerging in this field that aesthetically expose these narrow conceptions of the body.

Jens Fehrenbacher *is a postdoctoral researcher in digital memory culture as part of the DFG research initiative 'Memory Culture in Crisis' at Cologne University of Applied Sciences. As a media and cultural studies scholar, he conducts research into digital memory culture, extended reality and media art. Alongside this, he works as a media artist on app projects, performances and installations.*

///

Amit Palgi (Artist, Amsterdam)

Ticklish Pixels - How digital can be somatic? *(Input in English)*

Our life takes place nowadays between at least two channels. I am here, physically, reading these words, but there is another version of me online (maybe in instagram?

or linkedin?) that represent me as well. Many times the digital self of us makes us detouch from our physical selves, but can we use the digital to connect ourselves to our own body?
In my talk I will try to give examples from my exploration of using digital mediums in a somatic way, and question what elements from our humanity we wish technology will mirror.

Amit Palgi *is a dance artist who works with digital culture based in Amsterdam. He studied dance; therefore, the departure point of his art is the body; The potential for intimacy and vulnerability of our human bodies and mind. As an artist Amit is interested in interdisciplinary work, extending ideas regarding what dance is and how we share it. Creations of Amit presented on stages and galleries across the world including Korzo, Theater aan de Rijn, Kikker theater, and film festivals over the world such as SXSW, IFFR, Cinedans among others.*

///

Sam Hopkins (Artist, Academy of Media Arts Cologne)

Offline Together: Bazes, Networks and Collective Media *(Input in English)*

In Nairobi, bazes are informal social spaces where people gather to hang out, and watch, swap and discuss digital content on their phones. Drawing on ethnographic research into these spaces and the recent art project Baze (2026), part of Manifesta+ in Dortmund, this talk asks how technologies designed for individualised use can be repurposed through collective practice to create shared, social and embodied forms of experience.

Sam Hopkins *is an artist and researcher whose work explores networks, infrastructures and forms of collective life. He is interested in how people practice their realities, use technologies, and negotiate everyday relationships. His work moves between artistic research, collaborative projects and situated interventions, with a long-standing engagement with Nairobi, offline digital cultures and the social practices of media exchange. He teaches at the Academy of Media Arts Cologne (KHM), where he is Assistant Professor for Networks.*

///

Keez Duyves (Mediaartist, Amsterdam)

Immersive collaborations with a pinch of AI *(Input in English)*

Keez Duyves is an inventor and a pioneer in the performing with digital technology. Which makes him a performer too. Keez tells about his current research in bridging different disciples with the use of one's body, immersion for example in XR and a multidimensional use of AI.

Keez Duyves *is an artist/ with an enormous track record of unpatented inventions in the field of technological performances. He contributed or pioneered some now common concepts, like 'the swipe', 360° on the web, realtime light and 3D-painting, and digital afterlife. Keez likes to invent media which allow other artists to create. Keez*

is the founder of PIPS:lab, and made several performances which reflect our techno-social society.
Currently, Keez is focusing on research and development at the intersection of performance and AR/VR with PIPS:lab. Keez is a teacher at HKU (interactive performance design and the XR minor) and is Artist in Residence at AHK Amsterdam, in which he researches a immersive collaboration environment based on his 'Conceptual Calculator'