

BEYOND BINARY

Non-Dual Perspectives
on Art and Technology

23 & 24 October 2025

MEDAA

European House of Authors
Koninklijke Prinsstraat 85-87
1050 Brussels

Participation is free, but registration
is required. Register [here](#).

image: Quantum Drawings – Images based on data from quantum computers. 2021 – present, David Young, detail

BEYOND BINARY

The seminar Beyond Binary brings together artists, thinkers, and researchers to reflect on how emerging technologies challenge binary paradigms – digital/analogue, material/immaterial, real/virtual – and how such opposites may instead be seen as deeply intertwined.

Non-dual perspectives offer ways of understanding technology and reality that move beyond binary thinking. The Buddhist concept of non-duality, for instance, suggests that distinctions like self/other or subject/object are ultimately illusory, pointing instead to an interconnected reality.

Register [here!](#)

PROGRAM 23 OCTOBER

PANEL 1

9h30: introduction Kristof Timmerman
9h45-10h25: Prof Koenraad Jonckheere
10h25-11h05: Martina Menegon

11h05-11h20: coffee break

11h20-12h00: Marcel Van Brakel
12h00-12h45: panel discussion

12h45-13h45: lunch break

PANEL 2

13h45-14h25: Steven Humblet
14h25-15h05: David Young

15h05-15h20: coffee break

15h20-16h00: Victorine Van Alphen
16h00-16h45: panel discussion

17h00: End of day 1

Non-Dual Perspectives on Art and Technology

This resonates with quantum mechanics, where entanglement reveals interdependence that undermines the notion of separate entities.

Non-duality encourages us to look past fixed states, embracing paradox, ambiguity, and the “both-and” nature of reality. This aligns with the probabilistic logic of quantum mechanics, where outcomes are expressed as probabilities rather than certainties.

Adopting such views allows us to expand both philosophically and ethically in our engagement with technology, providing a vital framework for reimagining the boundaries of art, technology, and thought.

PROGRAM 24 OCTOBER

WORKSHOP

9h30 - 12h30:
Workshop *The Blind*
by Kristof Timmerman

PANEL 3

13h45-14h25: Ilona Puskás
(New European Bauhaus)
14h25-15h05: Vanessa Hannessschläger
(Ars Electronica)

15h05-15h20: coffee break

15h20-16h00: CREW

16h00-16h45: debate on the arts &
technology eco-system

17h00: Network reception

PANEL 1

23 October / 9:30 - 12:45

Koenraad Jonckheere

When One and three chairs become One and more chairs. A note on materiality and immateriality in art

Consider Joseph Kosuth's *One and Three Chairs* (1965), currently on display at the Metropolitan Museum of Art. It echoes a framework dating back fifteen centuries. This seminal work of conceptual art gives visual form to ideas already articulated in medieval thought and deeply embedded in the Christian understanding of images since late antiquity. But what precisely does it reveal and what can it tell us about today's (art)world?

Martina Menegon

Becoming Chimeric. Glitching Toward Radical Hybrid Identities and Unruly Collective Becoming

Martina Menegon (University of Applied Arts, Vienna) presents her current PhD research and workshop practice *Becoming Chimeric*. Rooted in cyber-queer-glitch-feminist perspectives, the practice explores hybrid selfhoods and glitched transformations through digital self-portraiture, myth-making, and algorithmic processes. It conjures unstable, chimeric avatars that unsettle normative ideas of identity and embodiment. As both artistic practice and research methodology, *Becoming Chimeric* opens collective spaces for experimenting with hybrid bodies, more-than-human kinships, and unruly futures of becoming.



me, myself and (a)I. 2025, Martina Menegon

Marcel Van Brakel (Polymorf)

The Body as Medium: Multisensory Futures in Art and Technology

In his lecture, Marcel van Brakel (Polymorf) will discuss the collective's pioneering work at the intersection of art, design, and technology. Polymorf creates multisensory and performative experiences that combine VR, AR, AI and immersive storytelling, often engaging not just vision but also touch, smell and taste. Their projects challenge conventional notions of immersion and embodiment, positioning the body itself as both medium and site of exploration. In doing so, Polymorf reimagines how technology can shape new forms of perception, intimacy, and connection with our environment and each other.

Future Botanica. 2025, Polymorf and Studio Biarritz



PANEL 2

23 October / 13:45 - 16:45

Steven Humblet

The Original Copy

In his book 'Beyond Digital', the architectural historian Mario Carpo briefly refers to the age-old distinction between original and copy, claiming that in today's AI driven culture the distinction is losing its relevance. More precisely, he continues, we are again entering an age where 'the copy' is leading. At the same time, however, it seems we're lacking the necessary vocabulary to understand this cultural shift. In my talk I would like to 'return' to two specific moments in art history where processes of automatisisation (or copying) were met with a similar kind of resistance.

David Young

The Illusion of Control

Our digital era promised us control—over processes, outcomes, and understanding itself—but as we transition toward machine learning's organic neural networks and quantum computing's simultaneous states, are we losing that control—or was it always an illusion? While we think we can control AI systems, what if their logic fundamentally differs from our own? Quantum computing pushes even further beyond binary thinking, embracing simultaneity in ways that suggest radically different futures. Through examining these transitions, I'll show how I navigate technological uncertainty and why non-technical voices—including artists—are essential for shaping more diverse technological futures.

Quantum Drawings – Images based on data from quantum computers. 2021 – present, David Young

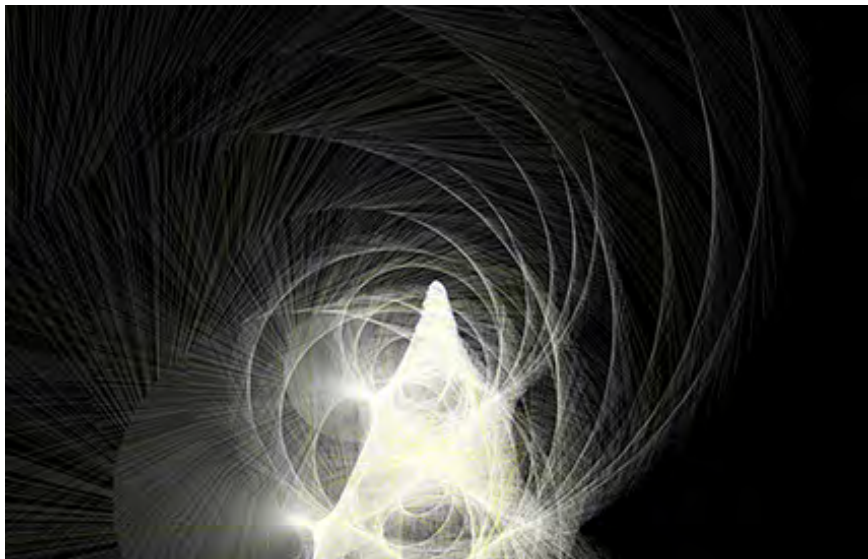


Image from The Oracle: Ritual for the Future. 2025, Victorine Van Alphen

Victorine Van Alphen

The Oracle and Other Posthuman Stories

In her lecture, Victorine van Alphen explores the tension between our sensual and rational modes of existence in a technologized society. Known for works such as *IVF-X: Posthuman Parenting in Hybrid Reality* and *The Oracle: Ritual for the Future*, she creates futuristic microsocieties and performances that question binaries such as natural/artificial, material/immaterial and male/female. Blending philosophy, media art, and ritual, her practice evokes intimate, often unsettling encounters that invite reflection on how technology reshapes bodies, identities and relationships.

WORKSHOP

24 October
9:30 - 12:30

The Blind – Immersion, Disorientation and Digital Disappearance

This workshop takes *The Blind* (1890) by Maurice Maeterlinck as a point of departure to explore the aesthetic, philosophical, and political dimensions of immersion in the digital age. In Maeterlinck's play, twelve blind characters are stranded in a forest, abandoned by their guide who has died. Their condition of waiting—uncertain, disoriented, without direction—serves as a metaphor for our contemporary experience of technological overwhelm and collective paralysis.

Over the course of three hours, participants are invited into a series of reading sessions, exercises and reflections that move between performance, theory, and digital experiment. This workshop begins with a lecture-performance inspired by *The Blind*, introducing themes of waiting, disorientation, and the collapse of orientation as metaphors for our contemporary condition in a digital age where the real and the virtual overlap. From there, the workshop introduces the concept of the portal as an artistic and philosophical threshold between realities: a fragile moment of transition where the real and the virtual overlap. Participants experiment with these portals—physical, performative, or digital—before collectively enacting states of waiting and suspension reminiscent of *The Blind*.

The notion of liminal blindness—seeing too much without orientation—becomes a lens to reflect on broader questions of technology, ecology, and politics. How do we act when knowledge is abundant but direction unstable? How can collective movement emerge out of uncertainty?

Rather than offering solutions, the workshop cultivates a shared space of exploration and reflection. By oscillating between experience and analysis, presence and absence, reality and simulation, participants are encouraged to reimagine blindness not as a lack, but as a condition for new forms of attention, solidarity and action.

Kristof Timmerman

Kristof Timmerman is an artist-researcher whose work explores the intersections of performance, technology, and hybrid environments. With his collective studio.POC, he creates performances and installations that place the relationship between body and technology at the centre, often using virtual reality, motion capture, sensors, and projection mapping, anchored by tangible installations that function as portals into the digital.

Alongside his artistic career, Timmerman plays a leading role in artistic research and education. He is chair of the Research Council of the Royal Conservatoire and the Royal Academy of Fine Arts Antwerp, chair of Maxlab (a research group on digital arts), and co-initiator of the Immersive Lab at AP University College. He lectures in Immersive Storytelling and is frequently invited as a guest lecturer, coach, and jury member.

His doctoral research, *Sense of Wonder: Artistic Portals between the Real and the Virtual*, investigates how transitions between physical and virtual spaces can intensify immersion and transform subjectivity. Through his dual role as artist and researcher, he aims to advance the integration of digital technology in performance and installation art.



The Blind. 2025, Kristof Timmerman

PANEL 3

24 October / 13:45 - 16:45

Ilona Puskás

Ilona Puskás represents the New European Bauhaus, a creative and interdisciplinary initiative of the European Commission that connects the European Green Deal to our daily lives through art, design, sustainability, and innovation. With a background in fostering collaboration between cultural institutions, researchers, and policy-makers, she brings insights into how transdisciplinary partnerships can shape the future of art, technology, and society. At Beyond Binary, Puskás will highlight how NEB stimulates new ecosystems and collaborative consortia, inspiring ways for artists and institutions to rethink their role within Europe's technological and ecological transition.

Vanessa Hannessschläger

Vanessa Hannessschläger is head of European Collaboration at Ars Electronica, steering the company's engagement in numerous pan-European partnerships with well over 100 partner institutions in the context of Ars Electronica Platform Europe. She holds a PhD in literature from the University of Vienna, and teaches courses on digital humanities, research policy frameworks, and digital legal literacy at universities across Europe. At Beyond Binary, Hannessschläger will share insights into how Ars Electronica builds networks and consortia across Europe, offering inspiration for institutions seeking to strengthen the tech/science/art ecosystem and foster sustainable partnerships.

CREW

CREW is a Brussels-based collective led by Eric Joris and Isjtär Vandebroek that has pioneered immersive performance and research at the crossroads of art, science and technology. Collaborating with scientists, engineers and academic partners, CREW explores how technological innovation reshapes perception, embodiment and storytelling. Their groundbreaking projects—often combining VR, AR, motion capture, and live performance—have positioned them internationally as key players in the art-science field. At Beyond Binary, CREW will share their long-standing experience with interdisciplinary and European collaborations, offering insights into how artists and researchers can build sustainable partnerships.

Image from Soulhacker. 2022, CREW



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The seminar Beyond Binary is organized by two research groups of the Royal Academy of Fine Arts Antwerp, Maxlab and Thinking Tools, in collaboration with ARIA (Antwerp Research Institute for the Arts).

Maxlab

The research group Maxlab investigates how digital technologies shape human perception, behavior, and agency. While designed to feel seamless and intuitive, these systems conceal complex structures of power and automation. Our work exposes the illusions of neutrality and machine autonomy, revealing how design choices encode assumptions about authorship, attention, and control. Through artistic research, critical theory, speculative design, and performance, we create experimental worlds that serve as spaces for reflection and resistance. These worlds are not escapist, but invitations to reconsider our relationship with technology, and to imagine more thoughtful and embodied forms of interaction.

Chair: Kristof Timmerman

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Thinking Tools

The Thinking Tools research group investigates the role of the technological apparatus in art, from photography to contemporary hybrid practices. Following Vilém Flusser, we see the apparatus not as a neutral tool but as an autonomous partner that decisively shapes artistic production. Our focus lies on the friction between control and surrender, analogue and digital, human and non-human actors. Through symposia, publications, residencies, and artistic research, we explore how these tensions generate hybrid works and open new poetic relationships to the world.

Chair: Dr. Steven Humblet

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Antwerp Research Institute for the Arts (ARIA)

The Antwerp Research Institute for the Arts (ARIA) brings together the Antwerp Schools of Arts and the University of Antwerp to support research and PhDs in, with, and for the arts. ARIA safeguards the unique character of artistic research while fostering dialogue with other disciplines. Its projects span critical and socially engaged practices, practice-based reflection, and explorations of cultural heritage. Rooted in artistic practice and connected to the professional arts field, ARIA promotes interdisciplinary exchange, contributes to education, and strengthens the role of the arts in society.

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