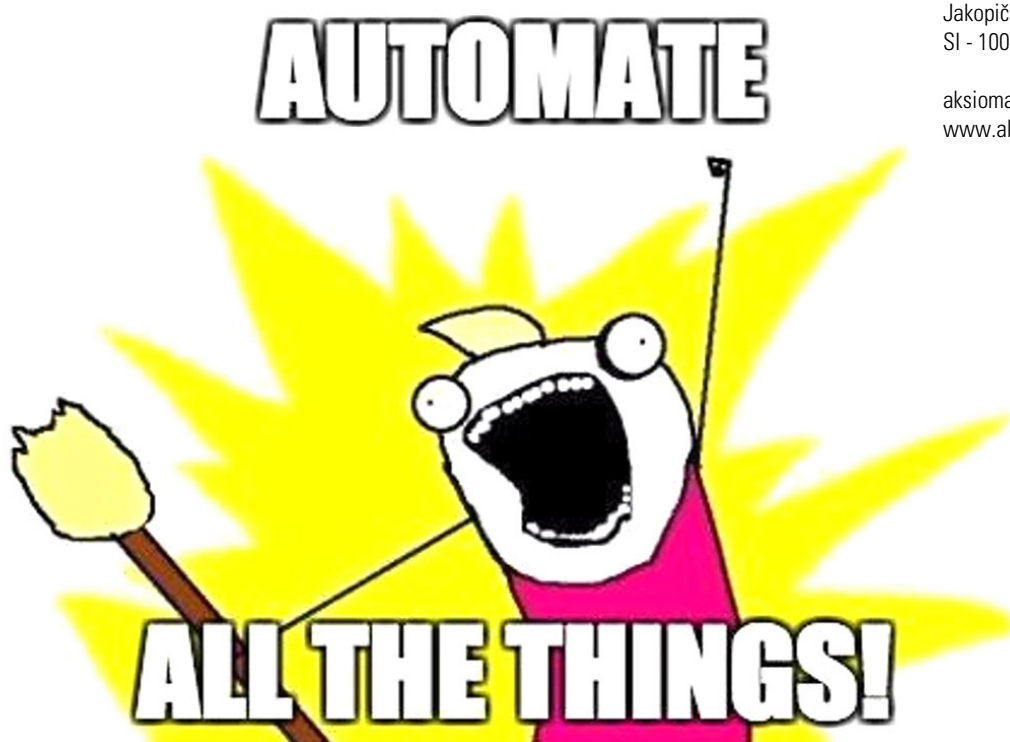


AKSIOMA

Institute for Contemporary Art
Ljubljana

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Ljubljana, 22 November 2019

PRESS RELEASE

Aksioma – Institute for Contemporary Art, Ljubljana, presents the 8th edition of conference series [Tactics & Practice](#):

AUTOMATE ALL THE THINGS!

SYMPOSIUM and ACCOMPANYING PROGRAMME

Speakers: Elisa Giardina Papa, Sanela Jahić, Silvio Lorusso, Michael Mandiberg, Domenico Quaranta, Sašo Sedlaček, Sebastian Schmieg

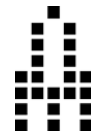
January 14, 2020 at 11 AM

The Academy of Fine Arts and Design of the University of Ljubljana

January 15, 2020 at 5 PM

Moderna galerija

aksioma.org/automate.all.the.things



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Michael Mandiberg

Postmodern Times

SOLO EXHIBITION / SCREENING

7-10 January 2020

aksioma.org/postmodern.times

Opening screening (86 min): TUE, 7 January 2020 at 7 pm

Aksioma | Project Space

Komenskega 18, Ljubljana

Elisa Giardina Papa

Post-Work? I'll Learn to See Myself Exactly as You Want Me To

SOLO EXHIBITION

15 January-14 February 2020

Exhibition opening: WED, 15 January 2020 at 8 pm

Aksioma | Project Space

Komenskega 18, Ljubljana

Hyperemployment

GROUP EXHIBITION

Curator: Domenico Quaranta

Artists: Danilo Correale, Elisa Giardina Papa, Sanela Jahić, Silvio Lorusso, Jonas Lund, Michael Mandiberg, Sebastian Schmieg, Guido Segni

7 November 2019-19 January 2020

aksioma.org/hyperemployment

MGLC – International Centre of Graphic Arts

Grad Tivoli, Pod Turnom 3, Ljubljana



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Institute for Contemporary Art
Ljubljana

AUTOMATE ALL THE THINGS!

In the framework of *Hyperemployment*, the symposium *AUTOMATE ALL THE THINGS!* wants to explore a contradiction implicit in the increasing automation of work: is this process, which should apparently open up a new age of free time, no labour and universal basic income, instead turning humans into software agents, invisible slaves of the machines? Welcomed as a curse by the Luddites at the very beginning of the industrial age, throughout the 20th century, automation did not destroy human labour, but profoundly changed its organisation on a global scale. In the late-20th century, technological innovations brought automation to a brand new level, accelerating the shift toward a post-industrial economic model. Today, with many jobs previously run by humans becoming fully automated, the dream – or nightmare – of a post-work society seems closer than ever; and yet, at a closer look, automation in its current form isn't destroying human labour. Rather, it is making it invisible.



Part of *Hyperemployment - Post-work, Online Labour and Automation*. A year-long programme co-curated by Domenico Quaranta & Janez Janša. Dates and additional information regarding each event of the *Hyperemployment* programme can be found at aksioma.org/hyperemployment

SYMPOSIUM PROGRAMME

DAY 1

January 14, 2020 at 11 AM

The Academy of Fine Arts and Design of the University of Ljubljana

Erjavčeva cesta 23, Ljubljana, classroom 7, first floor

Domenico Quaranta

Portraying the Invisible Crowd

TALK

Throughout history, portraying workers has often been a step into recognising their existence, allowing them the dignity to be considered as a subject, as well as the representatives of a “class”. Digging into the research for the show, *Hyperemployment*'s curator Domenico Quaranta will offer a tour through various artistic efforts to portray online workers, from Chinese Gold Farmers to scan-ops, from gig workers to online content moderators.



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DAY 2

January 15, 2020 at 5 PM

Moderna galerija Auditorium

Cankarjeva cesta 15, Ljubljana

Elisa Giardina Papa

Notes on Post-Work: Free Time and the Human Infrastructures that Sustain Automation and Artificial Intelligence

KEYNOTE

Most of the academic and political discourse on post-work has focused on the relationship between automation and free time. That is, it has posited that automation has the emancipatory potential to free us all from work: to reduce necessary working hours or at least to devote ourselves to more intellectually rewarding jobs (immaterial labour). What is not fully convincing about this approach is that it is grounded in a hierarchical separation between machines and humans. What is missing is the acknowledgment of the human infrastructure that sustains automation and artificial intelligence. The invisible, precarious, alienated, low-paid and offshored workforce that automation requires in order to function properly. These workers and their tasks are the focus of this talk.

Sebastian Schmieg

I Will Say Whatever You Want In Front Of A Pizza

LECTURE PERFORMANCE

I Will Say Whatever You Want In Front Of A Pizza is a speculative Prezi (a presentation software) that explores digital labour, the amalgamation of humans and software, and the possibility of interventions inside algorithmic systems. Narrated from the perspective of a cloud worker, the Prezi video presents digital workers as software extensions.

The ubiquitous network and the computerisation of everything have not only blurred the lines between bots and people – supposedly autonomous programs are sometimes people who have to act as if they were software; this development has also made it very easy for everyone to hire, programme and retire humans as part of any workflow: bodies and minds that can be plugged in, rewired and discarded as one sees fit.





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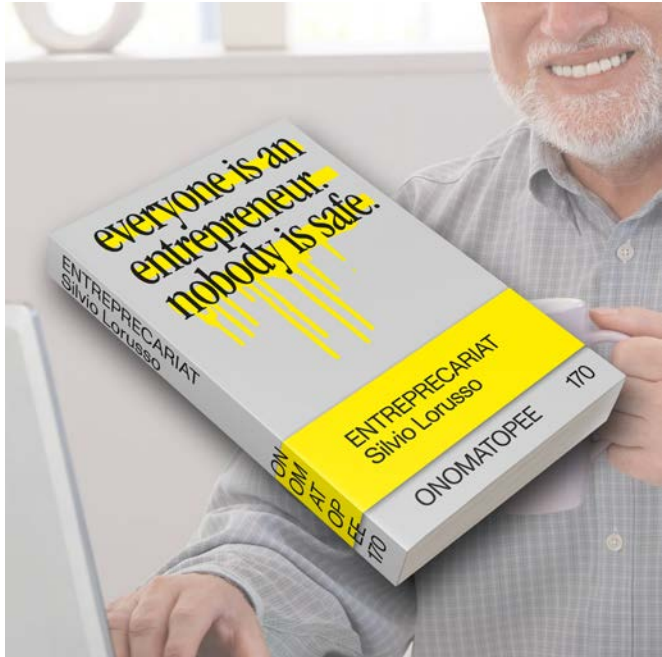
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Silvio Lorusso

Entreprecariat

BOOK PRESENTATION

Entreprecariat (Krisis Publishing, 2018; Onomatopee, 2019) explores and maps out the current entrepreneurial ideology from a precarious perspective. The *Entreprecariat* indicates a reality where change is natural and healthy, whatever it may bring. A reality populated by motivational posters, productivity tools, mobile offices and self-help techniques. A reality in which a mix of entrepreneurial ideology and widespread precarity is what regulates professional social media, online marketplaces for self-employment and crowdfunding platforms for personal needs. The result? A life in permanent beta, with sometimes tragic implications.



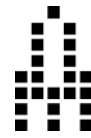
Sanela Jahić, Michael Mandiberg, Sašo Sedlaček

Art Making in the Age of Automation

ROUND TABLE

Moderator: Domenico Quaranta

How does the increasing automation of labour affect artistic practice, on all the levels of content, process and form? How is it affecting the present society and our vision of the future? What can art do to deal with the increasing fragmentation of human labour and its disappearance from visibility, and give it back its presence and dignity? Taking off from their own work and from the statements of other participants in the symposium, the artists involved in the round table will attempt to offer an answer to these and other questions.



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ACCOMPANYING PROGRAMME

Michael Mandiberg

Postmodern Times

SOLO EXHIBITION / SCREENING

7-10 January 2020

aksioma.org/postmodern.times

Opening screening (86 min): TUE, 7 January 2020 at 7 pm

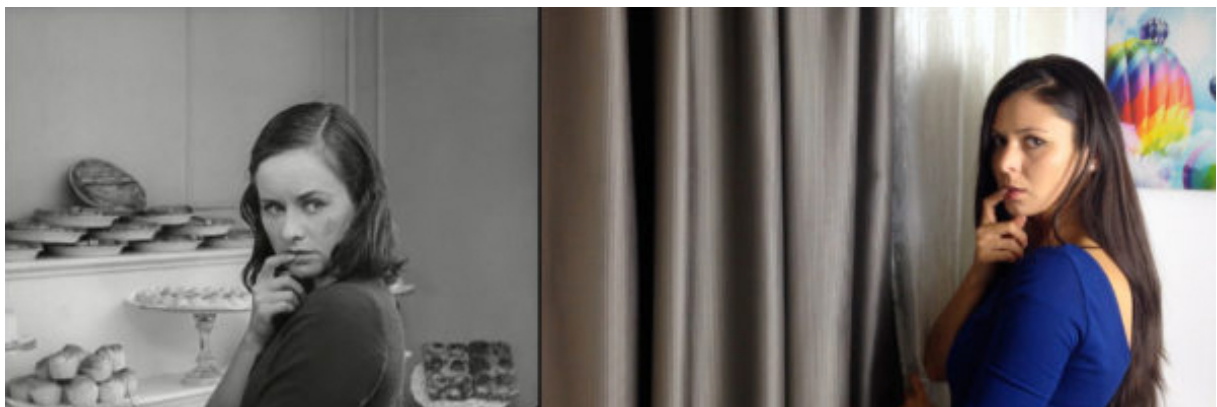
NOTE: The number of seats for the premiere screening is limited! Free tickets can be picked up at 6:45 PM on 7 January.

From 8 to 10 January, the screenings will run on demand during gallery hours from 12 PM to 6 PM.

Aksioma | Project Space

Komenskega 18, Ljubljana

A modernist masterpiece and an iconic portrait of the Great Depression and of industrialisation, Charlie Chaplin's *Modern Times* (1936) has been outrun, along the last three decades, by the new organisation of labour introduced by late capitalism and post-Fordism, to the point that it's hard for younger generations to empathise with the Little Tramp. By asking gig workers to re-enact scenes from the movie, American artist Michael Mandiberg not only updated it for the 21st century, but also triggered a distributed theatre of the (post-Fordist) oppressed, which is now documented in this remake entitled *Postmodern Times*. The movie will be presented as an event with screenings, continuing Aksioma's effort to support the film screening as a theatrical, performative form.





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Elisa Giardina Papa

Post-Work? I'll Learn to See Myself Exactly as You Want Me To

SOLO EXHIBITION

15 January-14 February 2020

Exhibition opening: WED, 15 January 2020 at 8 pm

Aksioma | Project Space

Komenskega 18, Ljubljana

Post-work can be understood as the sum of labour practices that have emerged in the context of post-Fordist capitalism. Most of the discourse about post-work has focused on the relationship between automation and free time, and is grounded in a separation between automation and labour and, thus, between machines and humans. What seems to be missing here is an acknowledgment of the human infrastructure that sustains automation – that is, the invisible, precarious, alienating, low-skilled, and low-paid labour that automation requires of humans in order to function properly. The third piece in a trilogy of works focusing on labour, automation, and digital economies, Elisa Giardina Papa's installation *Post-Work? I'll Learn to See Myself Exactly as You Want Me To* draws upon the personal experience of the artist as a micro-task worker for machine vision tech companies. Mixing storytelling and aestheticisation, the work will be premiered at Aksioma Project Space.



Hyperemployment

GROUP EXHIBITION

Curator: Domenico Quaranta

Artists: Danilo Correale, Elisa Giardina Papa, Sanela Jahić, Silvio Lorusso, Jonas Lund, Michael Mandiberg, Sebastian Schmieg, Guido Segni

7 November 2019-19 January 2020

aksioma.org/hyperemployment

MGLC – International Centre of Graphic Arts

Grad Tivoli, Pod Turnom 3, Ljubljana

Although increasing automation has actually caused many forms of human labour to disappear, it has not – as many thinkers have predicted – brought an end to labour. Instead, it has led to – together with other innovations, such as the rise of device culture and social networks – its fragmentation into plenty of micro labours and its infiltration into every moment of life. In other words, today, no matter if we are unemployed, self-employed or working at a regular full-time job, as “technology users” we are always working.

Hyperemployment – a word borrowed from media theorist Ian Bogost, describing “the Exhausting Work of the Technology User” – is a group show curated by Domenico Quaranta opening at MGLC Ljubljana meant to explore these and other dimensions of what labour has become through the works of eight international artists who have focused their research on the topics such as automation and gig economy, the end of free time and the rise of social media fatigue and self-improvement apps, among others.

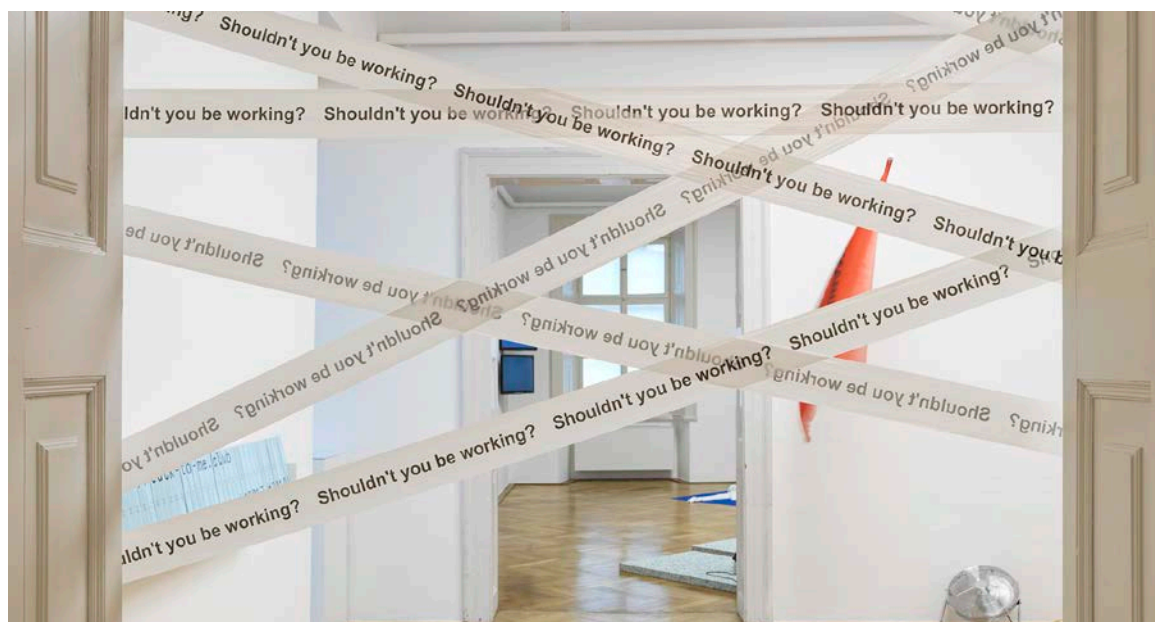


Photo: Jaka Babnik. Archive: MGLC, Aksioma

BIOGRAPHIES

Elisa Giardina Papa is an Italian artist whose work investigates gender, sexuality and labour in relation to neoliberal capitalism and the Global South. Her work has been exhibited and screened at MoMA, New York City, Whitney Museum [Sunrise/Sunset Commission], Seoul Mediacity Biennale 2018, Unofficial Internet Pavilion of the 54th Venice Biennale, XVI Quadriennale di Roma, rhizome.org [Download Commission], The Flaherty NYC, among others. Giardina Papa received an MFA from RISD, and a BA from Politecnico of Milan, and she is currently pursuing a PhD in media and gender studies at the University of California Berkeley. She lives and works in New York and Sant'Ignazio (Sicily).

Sanela Jahić graduated in painting from the Academy of Fine Arts and Design, University of Ljubljana in 2008, and received her master's degree in 2010 in public art and new artistic strategies from the Bauhaus University in Weimar. Jahić is an intermedia artist who constructs visual and technologically supported kinetic objects and installations. Her artistic practice often involves collaboration with specialists for mechanical engineering, automation, software and electronics. She lives and works in Škofja Loka. Jahić has exhibited her work in numerous shows in Slovenia and abroad.

Silvio Lorusso's work focuses on the cultures and rhetorical regimes embedded in technosocial systems. He deals with the narratives and counternarratives that define platforms, devices and interfaces. By doing so, he engages with the tensions surrounding notions of labour, productivity, autonomy, self-design, entrepreneurialism, precarity and failure. Lorusso's practice combines various media such as video, websites, artist's books, installations, lectures. An affiliated researcher at the Institute of Network Cultures in Amsterdam, a tutor at the Royal Academy of Art, The Hague, and a researcher at Willem De Kooning Academy, his work has been presented internationally, in venues including Re:Publica, Berlin; MAXXI, Rome; Transmediale, Berlin; Drugo more, Rijeka; Kunsthalle Wien; MoneyLab, Amsterdam; IMPAKT, Utrecht; Sight & Sound, Montreal; Adhocracy, Athens. His work has been featured in, among others, *the Guardian*, *Financial Times* and *Wired*. He lives in Rotterdam and lectures internationally. His book *Entreprenariat* was published in Italian by Krisis (Brescia, 2018) and in English by Onomatopée (Eindhoven, 2019).

Michael Mandiberg is an interdisciplinary artist whose work crosses multiple forms and disciplines in order to trace the lines of political and symbolic power as it takes shape online. Mandiberg received an MFA from California Institute of the Arts and a BA from Brown University. Mandiberg's projects have been presented at the Museum of Modern Art (MoMA), New York City; Los Angeles County Museum of Art (LACMA); the New

Museum, New York City; Musée d'Art Moderne de la Ville de Paris; Denny Dimin Gallery, Art-in-Buildings Financial District Project Space, New York City; Arizona State University Museum & Library, Tempe; and Transmediale, Berlin, amongst others. Mandiberg's work has been written about widely, including in *Artforum*, *Art in America*, *ARTnews*, *the New York Times*, *the New Yorker*, and *the Wall Street Journal*.

Domenico Quaranta is a contemporary art critic and curator. His work focuses on the impact of the current means of production and dissemination of the arts, and on the way they respond – syntactically and semantically – to the technological shift. The author of *In My Computer* (2011), *Beyond New Media Art* (2013) and *AFK. Texts on Artists 2011–2016* (2016), he has contributed to, edited or co-edited a number of books and catalogues including *GameScenes. Art in the Age of Videogames* (2006) and *THE F.A.T. MANUAL* (2013). Since 2005, he has curated and co-curated many exhibitions, including: *Holy Fire. Art of the Digital Age* (2008); *RE:akt!* (2009–10); *Playlist* (2009–10); *Collect the WWWorld* (2011–12); *Unoriginal Genius* (2014); *Cyphoria* (2016), *Janez Janša®* (2017–18) and *Escaping the Digital Unease* (2017–18). He lectures internationally and is a faculty member at the Accademia di Belle Arti di Carrara. He is a co-founder of the Link Art Center, Brescia (2011–19).

Sebastian Schmieg is an artist living and working in Berlin. His work engages with the algorithmic circulation of images, texts and bodies within contexts that blur the boundaries between human and software, individual and crowd, or labour and leisure. At the centre of his practice are playful interventions into found systems that explore hidden – and often absurd – aspects behind the glossy interfaces of our networked society. Schmieg works in a wide range of media such as video, website, installation, artist book, custom software and lecture performance. Schmieg's works have been shown at, among others, The Photographers' Gallery, London; Rhizome, New York; Transmediale, Berlin; NRW-Forum, Düsseldorf; Panke Gallery, Berlin. He lives and works in Berlin and Dresden.

Sašo Sedlaček holds a BA in sculpture and video from the Academy of Fine Arts of the University of Ljubljana (UL ALUO). Since 2015, he works as an associate professor in UL ALUO's Video and New Media programme. His work has been awarded various grants, including the Trend Award for exceptional achievements in visual culture (Ljubljana 2012) and the VIDA 11 (Fundación Telefónica, Madrid, 2008), and is featured in various private and public collections, including the Museum & Galleries of Ljubljana (MGML). Since 2001, his work has been exhibited nationally and internationally at various venues, most recently: City Art Gallery of Ljubljana (2019), Espace Apollonia in Strasbourg (2018), Contemporary Art Palazzo Torriani, Gradisca d'Isonzo (2018), Autostrada Biennale Prizren (2017), Handel Street Projects, London (2017); UGM, Maribor (2017); +MSUM, Ljubljana (2016); AND

Festival, Grizedale Forest (2015); Wro Art Center, Wrocław (2015); Ars Electronica, Linz (2014); Transmediale, Berlin (2014).

Credits

Production:

Aksioma – Institute for Contemporary Art, Ljubljana, 2019

Part of the conference series [*Tactics & Practice*](#).



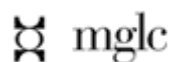
Coproduction of the symposium:

Museum of Modern Art Ljubljana and the Academy of Fine Arts and Design of the University of Ljubljana



Co-production of the *Hyperemployment* exhibition:

MGLC – International Centre of Graphic Arts



Partner:

the Italian Cultural Institute, Ljubljana



The events are part of the programme *Hyperemployment*, a year-long series of events focused on post-work, online labour, AI and automation, co-curated by Domenico Quaranta and Janez Janša.



Supported by:

The Ministry of Culture of the Republic of Slovenia and the Municipality of Ljubljana.



REPUBLIKA SLOVENIJA
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Mestna občina
Ljubljana

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REPUBLIC OF SLOVENIA
MINISTRY OF PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION

Aksioma is:

Janez Janša / Artistic Director

Marcela Okretič / Producer

Sonja Grdina / Executive Producer

Valter Udovičić / Technician

Notes to the Editor

Photos available for free download: <http://www.aksioma.org/press/automate.all.the.things.zip>

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Aksioma – Institute for Contemporary Art, Ljubljana (2002), is a non-profit cultural organisation with the status of “public interest in the field of culture”. With the regular support of local public and private funding, it produces, presents and disseminates projects in the fields of new media and visual and performing arts. Aksioma explores social, political, ethical, and aesthetic concerns, critically discussing and investigating the structures of modern society in the Web 2.0 age.

From 2014 to 2016, it was the project leader for the 24-month project [*Masters&Servers - Networked Cultures In The Post-Digital Age*](#), and from May 2017 to April 2019, it led the project [*State Machines - Art, Work, and Identity in an Age of Planetary-Scale Computation*](#).



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Institute for Contemporary Art
Ljubljana

Both international cooperation projects were co-funded by the Creative Europe Programme of the European Union.

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