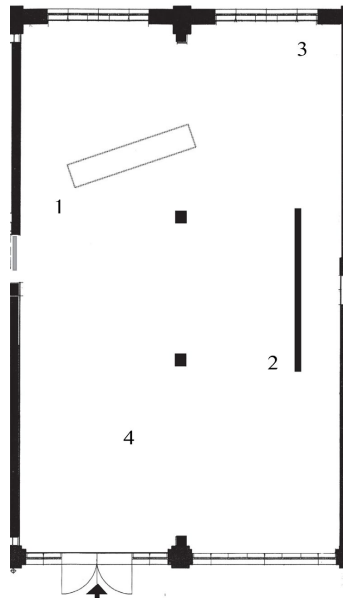


Emilija Škarnulytė



1. No Place Rising
2015, HD video, 9 min.
Director: Emilija Škarnulytė
Underwater camera: Vasco Pinhol
Drone: Jokūbas Čižikas
Underwater material was shot in Olavsvern -
25,000m² decommissioned NATO submarine base

2. Twin ØSO
2015, HD videofilmas, 10 min., Dolby Surround
audio
Camera: Emilija Škarnulytė and NASA footage
Sound composition: Jokūbas Čižikas
Audio material source: Personal recordings of
Emilija Škarnulytė. Sounds from cosmos: NASA,
Field recordings and VLBI algorithmic binary
files from quasars' signals: Emilija Škarnulytė in
collaboration with Norwegian Mapping Authority
Geodetic Observatory (VLBI) station based in Ny-
Ålesund, Svalbard

3. Chronoplasm
2015, HD video, 3 min.
Viscous, crystalline substance made from frozen
time
Footage courtesy of ESA (European Space Agency)

4. Future Fossils
2015, 16mm film, 5min.
Edited educational found footage from 1974, Kiev

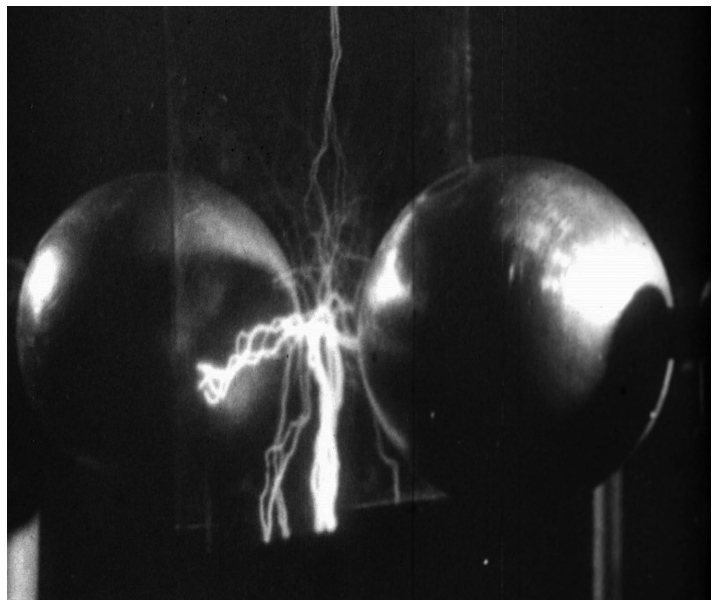
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YOU ARE INSIDE A WORMHOLE: PORTRAITS FROM WITHIN A CONVEX MIRROR

Timothy Morton

LUCA is the Last Universal Common Ancestor. LUCA was a single celled organism. LUCA's cell walls were very porous. LUCA fed on protons. Then the cells evolved to have firmer walls. Some of them excreted oxygen. The first massive environmental catastrophe was called oxygen. It was fatal to the single-celled organisms. The single-celled organisms, the cyanobacteria, evolved to hide in oxygen-breathing organisms, and the first plants evolved. Plants are green because of chloroplasts, which are evolved cyanobacteria hiding out. The green of our world is a signal of a gigantic cataclysm, the creation of one of the first hyperobjects, an entity massively distributed in space and time, so big that we humans only see part of it at a time: or in this case, one breath at a time. We inhabit a catastrophe. You are listening to this rather than writhing on the floor, suffocating, because we are still inside this gigantic event. It is happening now, the thing that happened to cyanobacteria 3.7 billion years ago—their tragedy.

And inside this tragedy, another tragedy. Humans started to excrete huge amounts of carbon dioxide around 1800, carbon dioxide which ironically is exactly what cyanobacteria like to breathe. The steam engine was invented. Powered by coal, the steam engine powered drills that enabled the extraction of greater amounts of coal: the first obvious fossil-fuel feedback loop. Coal is fossilized plants. Other forms of fossilized plants are called oil. Burning fossil fuels has resulted in the human catastrophe, otherwise known as the Anthropocene, a gigantic hyperobject, we live inside it, it distorts out world in almost every sense imaginable. A catastrophe inside a catastrophe, like a sphere inside a sphere. An explosion inside an explosion. And inside this tragedy, another tragedy. Humans started to excrete huge amounts of carbon dioxide around 1800, carbon dioxide which ironically is exactly what cyanobacteria like to breathe. The steam engine was invented. Powered by coal, the steam engine powered drills that enabled the extraction of greater amounts of coal: the first obvious fossil-fuel feedback loop. Coal is fossilized plants. Other forms of fossilized plants are called oil. Burning fossil fuels has resulted in the human catastrophe, otherwise known as the Anthropocene, a gigantic hyperobject, we live inside it, it distorts out world in almost every sense imaginable. A catastrophe inside a catastrophe, like a sphere inside a sphere. An explosion inside an explosion.

Inside the explosion called Anthropocene, humans figured out how to make plastic out of fossilized plants. Plastic out of those single-celled beings, but now they are so strong, so smooth, so...shiny. LUCA got harder and now it's much much harder. Cellophane is hard to rip. But Mylar is even harder to rip. Mylar is a wall of death that protects the soft tissues inside it, just like cells have a boundary that protects against the environment. But the cell wall is porous. Mylar doesn't breathe. You have to have a little bit of death to protect you from too much life, too much stimulation. Latex is comforting and protective and erotic because it protects and holds tight the soft quivering tissue inside it. In a way, Mylar is a perfect symbol of the Anthropocene, a death culture brought about by the relentless desire to survive, to protect life no matter what. There is pleasure in it: lovely, smooth, soothing, shiny death, a perfectly reflective surface, repealing all those harmful rays, allowing a runner to warm up after a race.

Something is distorting our world. Mountains pour out of an invisible slit, in a weirdly perfect mathematical symmetry. Antennae implode into the slit, as if their three-dimensional physical structure were being sucked into a lower dimension. Something is pulling and pushing space and time. But we can't see it. We can't point to it. It's like being in an ocean. Everywhere we see ripples and distortions because of the water. But because the water is all around, we don't quite see it. A disturbing, creepy feeling: something gigantic is distorting space itself. Making us see differently. Pulling and pushing objects, gigantic objects: a radio telescope, a mountain range. A hyperobject: something so large, so distributed across space-time, that we can't point to it. Something that

transcends our sense of dimension and world, and our categories such as "object" and "subject." We sense it anamorphically: as a distortion of everything else. As a lens. But not a small contact lens or lenses in a pair of binoculars. This is not an anthropomorphically scaled lens. This is a terrifyingly, wonderfully gigantic, nonhuman lens. Not a lens through which you can see things "over there," nice and safe and "objective" and distant. Not a human-scale lens with which you can manipulate these objectified objects by bringing them into greater focus. A magnified object like this isn't close at all: it's safe, distant. I'm here and it is there. But...what if...the lens itself were an entity? An entity so large that we were utterly dwarfed by it? An entity that we might even be inside of? What if the lens were a lensing? What if an intrinsic part of the lens were time itself? What if, in a way, the lens itself was time? Things distort and shift, collapse and expand, and we give the name time to how this happens. You can't see the lens because the lens is time: the lens lenses. It never just sits there, waiting to lens: lensing isn't what a lens does. Lensing is what it is. Just like a mat is "matting," the lens is lensing. A gigantic invisible ripple passing through our world.

