



Werner Remm, 02/17/21

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Polar bears have to cry



No, nothing is as clear as in the lyrics to the song "Eisbär" by the Swiss band Grauzone from 1980. Even then there were worried voices who warned of a global rise in temperature and the associated problems. Now, 40 years later, the effects of unbridled capitalism are felt around the world. Capricious weather such as the recent onset of winter in northern Germany and ever new temperature records have finally sparked a social discussion about necessary countermeasures, in which art is also playing an increasingly important role.



artmagazine author Raimar Stange already curated the exhibition "2050 Nature Morte - Art on Climate Change" in Berlin in 2020. Now, together with the artist Andreas Templin, for *Goodbye, World* he has sought a more radical and final exhibition situation than the usual white cubes. In the icy expanse of the Gulf of Bothnia in northern Sweden, the two staged a final exhibition to say goodbye to the world as we know it. Loosely distributed on the ice surface, the works of 10 artists pay one last tribute to the earth before the climate collapse.



With an offering of bread and wine, Nika Fontaine releases nature into a new, undiscovered future that may be free from the greed of human civilization. Olaf Nicolai invites you to one last opulent picnic on the ice before the rising temperatures let everything sink into the sea.



With the advancing climate crisis, technocratic fantasies of omnipotence are being reduced to absurdity. Not the expansion of technology, but the return to long-established practices of careful handling of nature can at best save us from feeling the full force of the changes. Julia Strauss reminds us of this with an "Hymn to Apollo" and Martha Rosler, who also immediately exposes the military complex to ridicule: The photo of ex-Vice President Mike Pence when the new US Space Force was announced, printed on edible paper, serves at best as a Bird or fish food before it finally dissolves in the sea water after the ice melts.



All works of art brought out on the ice surface are, the curators assure, of course biodegradable, including the felt suit that Peter Niemann lets flutter on a tripod in the north wind. However, it is not an original by Joseph Beuys, the co-founder of the German Greens, because the neoliberal capital clearly left the distinctive red and white logo of a cigarette brand on the breast pocket. Beuys, who ran for the European Parliament and the German Bundestag, is definitely worth rediscovering as a political-artistic activist on his hundredth birthday.



In the course of the warming, all works are left to the natural cycle, eaten by fish, decomposed by microbes and withdrawn from the usual recycling mechanisms to which art is also subject. What remains is a memory of lost terrain and an idea of how art could at least partially recapture it.



The *Goodbye, World* exhibition is expected to be on the ice until March; It was made possible by an open call from the non-profit art organization apexart in New York.

Further information and dates of online discussion groups at -> apexart.org

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