

apexart

2013-14 Unsolicited Program Proposal by
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Scientific research aspires to systematically build and organize knowledge, to explain and understand the universe. The role of art in scientific research was once very clear. Andreas Vesalius' detailed anatomical diagrams, for example, were produced by commissioned artists. The artists' presence at the dissections, help Vesalius to produce the first accurate set of diagrams. It was not only of much better quality than those produced previously but was also considered an instant classic.

The relations between art and science are not so clear anymore, and yet many artists use the language, tools and methods of scientific research. The exhibition argues that by adopting scientific practices and tools, art does not ask to understand the world, or merely observe outside of it, but rather to participate in the world.

Pierre Huyghe's *A Journey That Wasn't* (2005) merges two events: an Antarctic expedition in search of an albino creature rumoured to exist on an uncharted island exposed by receding ice, and a re-enactment of that voyage as an elaborate concert and lightshow in Central Park. Thus he navigates between fact and fiction, proposing that reality is so unbelievable that "to tell it the right way, you must tell it as a fiction."

Tomer Sapir investigates cryptids, animals for which there is no scientific proof and which are not identified in the official zoological index. His ongoing project "Research for the Full Crypto-Taxidermical Index" is a coming into being lexicon of objects, mutations suspended between the organic and the artificial, the seductive and the threatening. The world introduced by Sapir is underlain by a duality between the use or imitation of nature (the findings of a researcher, gathered leftovers or findings, traces of what once was) and what is quintessentially man-made (sculptural works, use of synthetic materials). It is precisely this dichotomy, however, which makes for a space and time where Sapir's sculptures/creatures may exist, a gray area which sustains a tension between history, mythology, and fiction.

Guido van der Werve is immersed in his works in a sublime landscape, trying to find his place in the universe. In the work *Nummer acht: Everything is going to be alright* (2007) we see him walking in front of an enormous icebreaker in the dramatic landscape of the Finnish Gulf of Bothnia. Van der Werve continues forward while the icebreaker keeps pace, breathing down his neck. Walking on imperturbably is his only chance, and as long as he keeps up his pace, everything is going to be alright. In the work *Nummer negen: The day I didn't turn with the world*, the artist traveled to the geographic North Pole and stood on the exact axis of the world for 24 hours, turning clockwise while the earth under him turned anti-clockwise. Due to this counter-movement, he and the world were desynchronized for one day.

The exhibition will feature the work of eight artists - Pierre Huyghe, Guido van der Werve, Tomer Sapir, Thomas Feurstein, Jenny Michel, Michael Hoepfel, Roxy Paine and Mark Dion.