

## Statement of experience

“Do we need art in space?”

The idea which brought me to SESU 48 Lunar mission was thinking about term terraforming and its use when talking about planet Earth in relation to other astronomical bodies. There are numerous discussions about terraforming the Moon, Mars or some asteroid, but it seems that soon we will have to "terraform" the planet Earth as well.

In the past 10 years, space exploration and traveling have again become a big topic which initiated many discussions, from the desire to be multi-planet species to asteroid mining. There is a noticeable increase in activities related to space exploration, not only among states but also among private companies.

But what is the logic of the new space race? For whom will this "new world" on Earth or some other astronomical body be built and with what purpose?

My interest in “space exploration” began around 2019 when I stumbled upon a document about the establishment of the Centre for space and innovative technology in my hometown – Sisak, Croatia.

As part of the first reflections on the Centre, several performances were realized and documented in the forest - park near the former iron factory and oil refinery.

Thinking about the possibilities of where space exploration and exploitation of Earth and space can take us, I was given the opportunity to participate in a program called the Analog Astronaut Training as part of the ILEWG EuroMoonMars initiative.

Analogue training for astronauts, Lunar mission 48, SESU 48, under the slogan "Sustainable Earth, Sustainable Universe" was realized in Rzepiennik, in southern Poland in the period from August 5 to 11, 2022. Before coming to the habitat I saw this analogue training as a second part of a week-long performance, through the “blending” into the scientific crew, while observing and records daily events and experiments at the site. The training was indeed mentally and physically demanding, which included a simulation of work and life on the space station in conditions of reduced oxygen, no sunlight, limited resources (especially water), constant change of time zones, 16+ hours of continuous work, 24/7 supervision by the MCC, and machine like execution of tasks and orders.

But with each day, getting to know all crew members, learning from them and sharing the small space together I felt like the one with the crew, and our group's cause. I wanted to support them.

Within the training schedule, there was the possibility of introducing one's own experiment. The time period of that experiment varied depending on the occupation of the crew with tasks and daily unannounced emergency simulations. My experiment was daily physical and mental exercises of relaxation and letting go. I believe that such practice helped me better support my crew and in the "sustainable" use of my own energy during the mission. This could be seen as a performance within performance.

Through this practice, I wanted to display a different (subtle) way how we can prepare for a walk on the moon and space, a suggesting how to preserve one's own energy and prepare the body and mind for challenging situations.

After leaving the habitat in Rzepiennik, during a wonderful informal dinner, I was asked about my experience as an artist in space and among many one (more rhetorical) question was reflected to me. The question was "Do we need art in space?" Ever since (it's been around two weeks after the mission that I'm writing this), I been thinking about how to answer this question.

This one question could open a Pandora's Box about what is art and its purpose. Maybe we could formulate this question a bit differently, into "What can art bring (to space)?"

Here I could answer in a way that art could be a different way of seeing, thinking, and interpretation, offering varied experience for education, enjoyment, reflection, flexibility, balance, tangible and intangible heritage, knowledge and skill sharing, promoting inclusivity, diversity, and sustainability.

Further, we can see art as a mirror, reflecting back, but also binding people and places, generating social capital and strengthening a community's character.

Poetically speaking, we are not living in the first (and only) universe. There were/are other universes, now and in other eons, before and after ours.

Our Universe, totality of existing things combined into one, the whole world, cosmos, all things, all people, everybody, and the whole world is immeasurable and vast.

"Who am I? Who are we together?"

Earth is a planet in space: we are on it together.

Planet and world are two different things. World is, in our case, planet Earth as experienced. A world is different for different people, creatures, and things. It does not exist until it is experienced, conceived, and formalized as such. Planet, however, is what makes worlds possible.

To return to the body, to consciously sink into senses is coming back to Earth, embracing it - not as a matter, but as awareness that, in the end, fundamentally defies the boundaries of our condition and state.

Understood in this way, the Earth belongs to all its inhabitants, regardless of race, origin, ethnicity, religion or species. It reminds us how much everybody, human or otherwise, carries on itself and within itself, the essence of the universe.

*SESU 48 - Sustainable Earth, Sustainable Universe.*

*Home training on Earth will make us good guests in the Universe - Sustainable Earth, Sustainable Universe.*



2021. performance, Astronaut(s) without a spaceship, Sisak, Croatia

### Artist Statement

In approaching the artistic practice, I don't see the media as some fixed and insurmountable element. In the process of creation, I see the medium as fluid and changeable tool with which can different ideas and concepts be realized. Some ideas feel more comfortable as a short film, some as photographs, and some as an installation.

The whole process of artistic practice takes place in similar state (of mind) as in playing. The playing is a good method for going deeper into the practice. The playing as learning how something works, how it behaves, how it cooperates, sets and solves problems. The playing encourages us to experiment, to discover new alternative ways of perceiving. The playing opens up the space for unexpected moments.

During my practice as a visual artist, I acquire experience in this field of research by collaborating with scientists, curators, artists, and institution from a similar field of research. Topics that interest me are: archives and databases, memories, boundaries between realities, formulation of thought and identity.

The starting point can be collected objects, photographs, documents, pieces of data and information. Objects, documents, memories and story are put together in relation, giving them a voice, an alternative interpretation. In this process the substances are transformed, accepted, digested, corrected if necessary and brought to awareness.