

#pieterjanginckels #nobull #ongoing #escaperoute  
#nobullartishokbiennale #mainsponsor #NBAdatacenter  
#tallinn2020 #visitestonia #masterclass #macatallinn  
#contemporaryart #studentsasperformers #T1mall #epicenter  
#headquarters #basecamp #messingaroundwithurbanlab  
#teslashowroom #speedtrip #flex #mask #markersoftoday #refined  
#democraticatmosphere #mineyourhopesandfears  
#duckfacedcaffinatedculture #instancesofenergy #innovation  
#globalculture #sustainability #getgoing #greendeal  
#globalworries #giveitbacktotheworld #coworkingspaces  
#thisisgreat #therewillbemiraclesifyoubelieve  
#therewillbeenergydrinksforeveryone #successwillfollow  
#endlessmerch #freelapsforfans #coolmerch #energyharvest  
#thefutureisalreadyhereitsnotjustevenlydistributed #yet  
#cashwithwings #copycat #batmanscene #surrendertothescene  
#oncetheroleplayisover #oncethepartyisover #copiesofcopies  
#designtillyoudie #messaround #aestheticsforeva #fanofaproblem  
#fanofasituation #invincible #localfun #solarsafari  
#lifewithoutobjections #surface #blogoshpere #endlessrender  
#retromanicdepression #normcorecapitalist #hardcorecapitalist  
#radicalsaturation #surroundertothesurface #ripoutthespine  
#surrendertothe collective #enterGodmode #suspensionofbelief  
#actorsinthesystem #beastieboys #pussyriot #davidbowie #prince  
#becomeyourfears #conceptsturnintoalibis #ideafixes  
#mirrortrends #capsulescapsule #identitypimp #identitybotox  
#acceleration #projectrealisation #blogoshpereharbours #sadcoppy  
#anticlimatictwin #fightfirewithfire #surfaceculture  
#surfingthesurface #deepprobe #speedtripper #propopro  
#architectureasperformance #pressureto perform #proveyourself  
#dothings #goplaces #passionto perform #1805characters  
#includinghashtags #becomethethingyoufearmost #followtheadvice  
#wheredowegofromhere #nobullshit #exhaustionandexuberance

Artist:

Text:

# Hanna Larva

The artistic method employed by Ginckels evokes that of a participant observer: a technique of insertion and immersion over an extended period of time, thus gaining an intimate familiarity with those studied. Swiftly, he slips between disguises: an artist, a researcher of neoliberal culture and a brand manager for an energy drink. Who or what is being observed?

“In the neoliberal city, our senses are constantly captured, used, attracted, wanted. We are to ‘experience’ culture and a certain lifestyle. Everyone ought to function like one’s own one person company, always appearing attractive, strong, healthy and sorted.”<sup>1</sup> An energy drink is the fuel of choice for a body pursuing, willingly or unwillingly, to keep up with the pace of this demand. “Attractive, strong, healthy and sorted” are not only characteristics of preferred individual skin, indeed they also capture the desired appearance of brands backing shiny sustainability goals in a world rapidly becoming undone.

The subject under observation is a late capitalist, caffeinated identity. Specifically, the process through which this identity perpetually recreates and recollects itself by using the means of visual-, verbal- and body language. Participatory observation unfolds as a total “surrender to the surface”. The artist and those with whom he collaborates dissolve themselves in a collective body and prefabricated value system, inhabiting and amplifying the very phenomena silently criticised.

Artist:

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<sup>1</sup> the nanopolitics group (2016), “Nanopolitics: Collectively Undoing Our Swallowed No’s” in “Slow Reader: A Resource for Design Thinking and Practice”, Ed. Ana Paula Pais, Carolyn F. Strauss. Amsterdam: Valiz. p183.

Text:

Kaljo

Victorian

Ginckels

# Marisa

“Why” has never been of much interest to me. It’s a totally different story with “how”. I am a total sucker for the superficial. For its enticing mirages. In the eyes of strangers, that makes me, at best, controversial or odd. Mainly just unlikeable. But actually, I am a little piece of themselves. A collection. A mirror. I am a collection of everyone and everything that surrounds me. Or rather, not of everything, but at least of whatever draws my attention. My walking gait, for example. I discovered it recently, one pre-dawn hour. A silhouette moving on the other side of the road caught my eye. A body with an impeccable posture, walking unerringly in one rhythm. Arms and legs with smooth, machine-like coordination. One step turned into another without any interruption or hesitation. Like a wheel rolling along the road. Slowly, an invisible force keeping the balance. I don’t remember the walker, I completely forgot to see who it was. And it doesn’t matter anyway – now I’m the one who is walking like that. I’ll walk like that for some time. Then I will find myself a new gait. I am in constant change, constantly reimagining and shaping myself. I got my current pensive appearance, the one that I’m still really infatuated by, from a woman in a café a few weeks ago. Her penetrating gaze was fixed into the distance, her face itself so calm, her chin delicately upturned, head slightly tilted to the right. I fell in love with that expression and took it for myself. Sometimes I also adopt something that leaves a grotesque or sinister impression. Above all, I am interested in noteworthiness. Not good or bad, or like/dislike. For example, my handwriting, which fell at my feet while I was browsing a book. A sheet of paper torn from a notebook, containing a shopping list. Written with extraordinarily dainty, sprawling rounded letters and yet in an astonishingly earnest and aesthetic manner. I was disgusted. An awe-inspiringly powerful force in something so commonplace. A valuable find, in my collection that is me.

Artist:

Text:

# Luiga

Victorian

Sinobols

# Bogie

**simulate** *vb* -lating, -lated **1** to pretend to feel or to perform (an emotion or action); imitate: *I tried to simulate anger* **2** to imitate the conditions of (a situation), as in carrying out an experiment: *we can then simulate global warming* **3** to have the appearance of: *the wood had been painted to simulate stone*

>**simulated** *adj* >**simulation** *n*

**simulate** *vb* **1** = pretend, act, feign, affect, put on, sham

**simulator** *n* **1** a device that simulates specific conditions for the purposes of research or training: *a flight simulator*

*\* Entries from the Collins English Dictionary and Thesaurus Essential Edition, Glasgow: Collins, 2020.*

Artist:

Text:

Dracastel

## THE SUM OF THINGS

Your Excellency, with respect.

Report on Subject AV82, 22 Oct. 2020.A.D, Reval.

In examining this subject in greater detail, we found the best way to approach her is to leave the impression of not approaching her, so that she would approach and make her decisions herself. In private conversations, the subject has described brands that she finds appealing with the words “honest”, “authentic” and “organic”. The latter also applies to any specific product group that happens to be currently in fashion. Thus, by utilizing this term, we can always make the subject like a product that she otherwise wouldn't take notice of.

As of now, the property/wardrobe of the subject include the following products: Eytys boots; Levi's jeans, 2 pairs, second-hand; MCM jeans, second-hand; H&M jeans, label removed, expressing the subject's actual scorn for this brand; Uniqlo U sweater (quantity 2); Uniqlo U T-shirt, (quantity: 3). Uniqlo U has a mildly magical dimension - the subject considers this important for her personal brand and tells to anyone who'll listen a related story in which a part is played by one Rick Owens, the products designed by whom are not owned by the subject due to their too-high price. Once the subject got a personal letter from Owens and was very disappointed that no products were included with the letter.

But I digress. Continuing the list: spring overcoat by Ivo Nikkolo, green, waterproof; spring overcoat by Ivo Nikkolo, glossy, dark blue, not waterproof. The glossy overcoat is more valuable in the eyes of the subject as it's associated with the film Matrix, which had a run in local cinemas. Both products are status purchases where the goal of the products was to show that the subject cares about the local design and clothing industry. Considering the state of the local fashion industry, the subject can wear these items with a bit of a martyr's air and lament the sad state of affairs to her companions, signalling that if the subject were offered a chance to single-handedly save the clothing industry, things might be better.

In addition to the Eytys boots, which cost the abovementioned subject dearly, the subject's shoe collection also includes other pairs of footwear that she wears regularly. When it comes to sports shoes, the subject prefers Nikes. Unlike H&M products, the subject doesn't conceal the brand name, but nor does she show too much love for this brand, as Nike's manufacturing techniques and ideology don't go very well with the subject's persona. Yet the subject considers it important that the Nike products that she owns be different from the ones worn by others, which considering the quantities of Nike products on the city's streets is not physically possible.

In regard to non-sports shoes, the subject is particularly pleased with boots by Wolverine, a small US company. These, the subject feels, are “timeless” products, plus the subject hasn't seen anyone else in her social circles wearing similar boots. The subject is worried about not finding boots like these again, so she has invested in restoring the product. It would be important to destroy the subject's relationship with said pair of boots as clearly the normal consuming cycle has been disrupted here and her behaviour is bordering on obsession. It can be presumed that the subject's development as a consumer is not going normally. Based on the above data and information previously gathered on AV82, I would recommend a moderate intervention.

*Text:*

*Wetrik*

*Artist:*

*Eytys boots*

*Victorian*

# How

I've tried to leave social media many times, but unsuccessfully, or it's more that the air has fizzled out of those attempts even before they started. It's a failing of my personality, I guess. But maybe precisely because of that lasting dysfunctional relationship, I've become more and more interested in situations where there's no escape.

Ginckels' job is to create a brand that acts as a sponsor of the Artishok Biennale. The desire of a sponsor - especially a powerful one that makes the rules - isn't limited to the dream of having a banner in the back corner of the parking lot, of course. A powerful sponsor wants to be on the front cover. What they really want is for the sponsoree to seem like part of its brand, not the other way around. The sponsoring brand wants to be like mist - diffuse and be everywhere. Become a platform that makes everything that is happening possible in the first place. Not that this should come as a surprise for anyone, but unicorns rule the world.

How do you get the better of them? Or do you have to be able to get the better of them, because the right question is how do you exist with a purpose in this age at all? How to be in an environment where market forces are all-powerful and criticism of them is at best hypocritical, because the criticizer comes from the same environment. This is what Ginckels' work deals with. Maybe a conceptual cheat is the only possibility?

Baudrillard wrote years ago that Disneyland is presented as imaginary to make us believe everything else is real, even though all of Los Angeles and surrounding America have long ceased to be real but rather exist in the domain of hyperreality and simulation. The situation has not become much more real in the years that have passed since then. Now we have before us an energy drink that was inspired by Red Bull and sponsors an art event. While Baudrillard lamented the lack of exits, today the only hope at all of reaching some original perception is to copy reality itself until it becomes a dystopia. In any case, a smirk isn't enough.

*Text:*

# Kaunissare

*Artist:*

# Ginckels

# Victorian

*Joanna*

In 2016, Eesti Ekspress came up with an ambiguous answers generator named after the current Prime Minister of Estonia, Jüri Ratas. The generator offers the user suitable, seemingly correct responses to whichever question, that essentially say absolutely nothing. Sometimes, when reading a contemporary art project's description or its wall text, I get a similar feeling - I must be dumb or they used a generator. The words are written on the wall, on paper or in PDF, I understand each of them, but it is impossible to understand the sentence. Mostly, I'm humble or self critical enough to believe that I am the problem. No matter that I've worked as a language and literature teacher. There simply aren't that many teachers here in Estonia.

A possible way to spend your time when confronted with such texts that seem to have been generated by a contemporary art text generator, is to drink shots. For instance, at one point, one could find the term 'juxtaposition' from the wall texts of almost all art galleries abroad - you see it, you down a shot. Seems like a good idea for some galleries' PR campaigns: field game, free alcohol + people actually read the texts and educate themselves. A win-win situation!

*Artist:*

*Text:*

*Hoffmann*

*Victorian*

*Ericks*

# Magdalena

The T1 mall, a nearly extinct capitalist dinosaur, a monument to Estonians' unbridled consumerism and the glory days of malls, which despite the lit-up Ferris wheel on the roof is slowly becoming devoid of tenants. It's funny yet sad to look at this failing giant and think that just recently there was a plan to build yet another behemoth mall in Lasnamäe district, which would have been the biggest yet in Estonia. The hoary old fact that Estonia has the most malls per capita doesn't seem to faze anyone. Perhaps this is how we compensate for our memories of empty shelves and long lines back in the day...

Absurd as it may seem, a Belgian artist's critique of consumerist culture and brand economy is what gets me to visit T1 for the first time in my life. T1 is of course an ideal location for the NO BULL data centre, which plays with the elements of performance art and a platform created for presenting the latest product. In this slightly quirky showroom, brands, data mining, energy efficiency, tech and social media all mingle. NO BULL Energy, the product being launched, isn't just an energy drink. It's a product as lifestyle, vibe, status - in a word, a ticket to the cool people's club. The boundaries between capitalism and art blur quite quickly. The physical nature of the product being advertised is not that important; it could be a new electric car, telephone or clothes collection. The main thing is the process of advertising and promoting and the techniques used for this.

Using as his tools the qualities the "snowflake" generation is often criticized for - superficiality, social media dependency, cult of technology and a two-faced attitude to environmental topics - Pieterjan calls on everyone to experience a tastefully designed energy drink release event that could appeal to both privileged trendsetters and the most left-leaning art students, without understanding who it is all actually meant for.

The artist himself has said that it is an art project disguised as a commercial or business venture... or vice versa (the product is real and also tastes appropriately disgusting) - it depends on what escape route he would need in a given situation. Waxing ironic about consumerist culture and pop activism, the young artist-athletes taking part in Pieterjan's workshop dive headlong into superficiality and in the course of that adventure, come up with a surprisingly non-superficial end result. Something very annoyingly capitalistic has been deconstructed, stereotypical behavioural patterns reassimilated and repurposed for the work. Being in this room, it does really feel like Tesla and Instagram have vomited here.

Artist:

Text:

# Maavik

# Pieterjan

# Workshops



# Vitamin

Lilian Hiob:

How can we criticise the event's main sponsor?

Siim Preiman:

Sponsors need to be thanked and not criticised.

LH:

Absolutely! I'm really excited about this project. I like that it takes place in a mall, in public space. Especially at T1, that weird place that no one really goes to. There have been previous attempts at bringing art there, but maybe Artishok will activate a new crowd.

SP:

I live next to T1 and I can tell you that there are always plenty of people in the supermarket. But yes, conceptually it is a great location, as that mall is a perfect example of the style I like to call 'fake premium'. Usually 'fake premium' means marble or precious wood imitation in laminate, or fake gold. T1 has an enormous atrium, restaurants overlooking Tallinn Old Town, a Ferris wheel... upon opening, the promise of this mall was huge, but it failed. The wonderful shopping paradise didn't materialise. I have a feeling that Pieterjan works with superficialness and I wonder whether it would have been better if his performance took place in a functioning mall, or maybe the figure is more precise now that it takes place in a mall that people just pass on their way to Ülemiste Centre.

LH:

I think the location works well. No Bull Energy Drink is probably also only a shell that contains the same old Red Bull energy drink or a cheaper equivalent. Fake promises, fake promises...

SP:

It is quite telling that Artishok's sponsor is an energy drink. I won't get tired of saying that it seems like a truly back-breaking festival to me - 10 days, 10 artists, 10 writers, 10 locations and then everyone goes huff-puff-puff on a marathon and the sponsor is an energy drink.

LH:

It's perfect!

SP:

I have to admit I don't quite understand whether he is critical... When I look at the material he's submitted, it all looks yummy. When I envisage a Tesla owner drinking Red Bull and taking selfies, then that looks yummy too.

LH:

Well, he did quote Batman in his presentation: "To conquer fear - you must become fear." To see through an ad, to overcome its influence, you must become it.

*Text:*

*Artist:*

Artishok

Pieterjan

# Naviten

Pieterjan Ginckels  
*No Bull Data Centre*

Please read this text carefully before you start your experience. If you have any questions or are not sure about anything, ask someone.

Keep this text in a safe place, you may want to read it again.

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What constitutes *No Bull Data Centre*?

No Bull Energy sponsorship brings you the best in every saturated sense. You will experience a manifestation of a previously initiated ongoing initiative, which is an art project disguised as a commercial project, or – depending on the conditional details – just the opposite. The present seems suspiciously bright and clear – sustainability, green energy, endless innovation and progress, global culture, mailable solar panels, shiny surfaces, distorted self-reflections – because the future has come for some time already. TL. NBA. NBE-AB 2020.

What is the recommended dose?

Consume quickly, fast. Too much is never enough, it might still be somewhat insufficient. Especially when it's especially speedy.

When should you be extra careful while experiencing *No Bull Data Centre*?

If you are a frequent consumer of energy drinks or other energy-providing substances. If shopping malls, showrooms and sales booths seem to be cosy environments to you. If telling the difference between the real and the fictive requires substantial effort from you. If you have a habit of getting stuck in roles; or vice versa.

What happens if I forget my dose?

If you forget to take your dose, then, as specialist Kiwa has noted, things will happen, light will shine, a lot of light, big lasers, big laser-beams, almost as if aliens were coming. Remind yourself as soon as you remember. Then go on as before. But a bit faster.

What are the possible side effects of *No Bull Data Centre*?

The values of object and units of time might change and start to oscillate. You might experience a sudden and irreversible loss of data. You might find yourself wondering what these postcards, camping mats and car parts are doing here. You might get worried, constantly worried.

Specialist Mark E. Smith has written: “*Cause I'm totally wired / I'm totally wired / (Totally wired) t-t-t-totally wired / (Can't you see?) totally wired / And I'm always worried / And I'm always worried / And I'm always worried / And I'm always worried.*”

If you are concerned about these or any other side effects, talk to someone.

Text:

Artist:

# Eske

Pieterjan

Ginckels