

# Institute of Contemporary Arts

PRESS RELEASE

Metahaven  
*VERSION HISTORY*

3 October 2018 – 6 January 2019  
Opening Tuesday 2 October, 6 – 8pm  
Press view Monday 1 October, 10am – 2pm



Metahaven, *Eurasia (Questions on Happiness)*, 2018, Still. Courtesy Metahaven

The Institute of Contemporary Arts is pleased to present *VERSION HISTORY*, an expansive exhibition of new and recent work by Metahaven.

Metahaven (Vinca Kruk and Daniel van der Velden) are Netherlands-based artists, filmmakers and designers. Since 2007, they have forged an experimental and speculative approach to design that encompasses visual identities, spatial installations, publications, textiles and music videos.

Using design as a form of investigation, Metahaven have addressed the inter-operations of information networks, platform infrastructure and political geographies. They have developed projects around digital and physical enclaves like the Principality of Sealand and WikiLeaks, and their speculative analyses have anticipated the conditions now labelled ‘post-truth’ and ‘fake news.’ Using a maximalist visual approach, Metahaven collapse the aesthetic and analytic, combining expressive graphic and textual layers with poetic and cinematic elements.

Since 2015, Metahaven have focused on moving-image work between the realms of film and digital media. Presented in exhibitions, online and at film festivals, their films use a mixture of live-action, animation and archival

footage, which generate a highly seductive, hybridised form between fiction and documentary.

*VERSION HISTORY* centres on a new and ambitious moving-image work titled *Eurasia (Questions on Happiness)* (2018), co-commissioned and produced by the ICA. Installed on a large-scale video wall, this work combines aspects of science fiction, essay, poem and folk tale. Shot in the Southeastern Urals and in Macedonia, *Eurasia* examines political and cultural narratives wherein belief and emotions hold sway over objective notions of reality. Creating a layered immersion within these conditions, this film explores neo-medieval interface politics, incompatible timescales and reversals of linear duration.

Accompanying *Eurasia* are key films made by Metahaven over the past two years such as *Information Skies* (2016) and *Hometown* (2018), which defy the simple diagnosis of contemporary conditions that the artists describe as ‘existence in the thick of physical and digital layers.’

Recent solo presentations by Metahaven include *Truth Futurism*, Futura, Prague (2017); *Information Skies*, Auto Italia, London (2016) and Mumbai Art Room, Bombay (2016); *The Sprawl*, YCBA, San Francisco (2015); *Black Transparency*, Future Gallery, Berlin (2014); and *Islands in the Cloud*, MoMA PS1, New York (2013). Recent group exhibitions include Sharjah Biennial 13, Sharjah (2017); *Fear and Love*, Design Museum, London (2016); *Dream Out Loud*, Stedelijk Museum Amsterdam (2016); *The Eighth Climate (What Does Art Do?)*, 11th Gwangju Biennale (2016); *All of This Belongs to You*, Victoria & Albert Museum, London (2015); *Private Settings: Art After the Internet*, Museum of Modern Art, Warsaw (2014); and *Frozen Lakes*, Artists Space, New York (2013). Recent publications include *Black Transparency* (2015), *Can Jokes Bring Down Governments?* (2013) and *Uncorporate Identity* (2010). Music videos by Metahaven include *Home* (2014) and *Interference* (2015), featuring musician, composer and artist Holly Herndon as part of an ongoing collaboration. Metahaven’s full-length documentary, *The Sprawl (Propaganda About Propaganda)* (2016) premiered at the International Film Festival Rotterdam in 2016. Its successor *Information Skies* (2016) was nominated for best European Short Film at the 30th European Film Awards in 2017, and their latest short film *Hometown* (2018) was shot in Beirut and Kyiv, and has been exhibited at IZOLYATSIA in Kyiv.

*VERSION HISTORY* is organised concurrently with Metahaven’s solo exhibition at Stedelijk Museum Amsterdam, opening Saturday 6 October 2018 and running through 24 February 2019.

*Eurasia (Questions on Happiness)* (2018) by Metahaven is produced by the Institute of Contemporary Arts, London, co-commissioned by the Stedelijk Museum Amsterdam and supported by the Museum of Modern Art in Warsaw and Creative Industries Fund NL. With thanks to Strelka Institute, Moscow, for their generous assistance.

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