

Touch – Feel – Experience – Consider

On being exposed to crisis through performative and interactive practices in contemporary printmaking and graphic arts

INTRODUCTION

The last two decades have brought a visible and perceptible change in artistic printmaking practices. Besides traditional forms of presentation, i.e., framed or unframed print on paper or any other surface, we may observe new ways of interacting with viewers, who become more and more involved in transforming themselves into active participants or even co-producers of the artistic project. This paper focuses on such artistic proposals, and if more classical artworks are mentioned, the reason is their non-traditional aspects like provocative visual play with viewers' perceptions.

Those formal aspects of analysed artistic examples are linked to the ideas expressed by the artists in question, which revolve around different crises and catastrophes that humanity is facing today. The leitmotiv of the general approach represented by Sean Caulfield, Karol Pomykała or Angela Snieder is related to the postulate posed by Jean-Luc Nancy (2015, p. 8), that

We are being exposed to a catastrophe of meaning. Let's not hurry to hide this exposure under pink, blue, red, or black silks. Let us remain exposed, and let us think about what is happening [ce qui nous arrive] to us: Let us think that it is we who are arriving, or who are leaving.

Nancy wrote this reflection after an ecological tragedy in Fukushima in 2011, but his words should be perceived as related to all crises that happen in the contemporary world. The French philosopher also warned against falling into one of two extremes: mourning or fascination. The first is loudly hearable in different publications that try to picture the actual state of our planet, while the latter can be traced back to the 18th century, when volcanic eruptions, horrifying floods and great fires became a spectacular topic for painters like Guardi, Hackert and Wright of Derby, bringing to life the first stage of the so-called "culture of a spectacle".

I recall these examples from the past because the 18th century was also the moment when the first reflection related to destructive human influence on nature appeared. As Crutzen (2002, p. 23) put it,

Mankind's growing influence on the environment was recognized as long ago as 1873, when the Italian geologist Antonio Stoppani spoke about a "new tellu-ric force which in power and universality may be compared to the greater forc-es of earth."

Generally speaking, we may divide the issues raised by the artists in question into two groups: those related to the aforementioned ecological catastrophe, which we nowadays refer to as the sixth extinction (Caulfield, Snieder), and those related to the negative and difficult-to-control influence of culture generated by digital media, especially various types of digital social networks, in the daily existence of individuals, their psychological well-being, and the mechanisms controlling the behaviour of different social groups or entire nations (Pomykała). Their concerns are strong evidence of so-called global reflection on the contemporary state of humanity.



Figure 1

Figure 1. Reproduction No. 1. Sean Caulfield, Installation view of *The Flood*, carved wood relief, approximately 20 x 30ft, Art Gallery of Alberta, Canada, 2016 (Photo Credit: Blaine Campbell / Courtesy of the Artist)

FEEL IT – PLAYING WITH GEOLOGICAL HUMAN AGENCY

And God said: who shut up the sea with doors, when it brake forth, as if it had issued out of the womb? Who hath divided a watercourse for the overflowing of waters, or a way for the lightning of thunder; To cause it to rain on the earth, where no man is; on the wilderness, wherein there is no man?

And Man said: I did, actually

(Davies, 2016, p. 40).



Figure 2

Canadian graphic artist Sean Caulfield (2020) writes about his work as follows: ‘my work focuses on the idea that crisis and change – whether it be environmental, political, or personal – can be a significant and positive catalyst for rebirth, growth and courage’. Among the projects created in the last decade, the subject of this analysis will be a series of large-format woodcut matrices entitled *The Flood*¹, presented in a way that transforms the gallery space into a graphic mural, and an interactive graphic installation entitled *Deadweight*².

In the first case, we are dealing with a reworking of how the artists portrayed the Anthropocene and the reasons they dealt with the theme of natural disasters. To this end, Caulfield uses, for example, prints by Albrecht Dürer. In the second project, the artist is primarily interested in making the viewer aware of what the “geological trace” is, which is permanently inscribed in the stratigraphy of the planet, and in confronting it with the sense of threat and uncertainty accompanying the danger of an ecological catastrophe. In both cases, the biblical Flood is the narrative point of reference.

The Flood myth is one of the most enduring and widely distributed cultural narratives³. However, none of its versions can measure up to the biblical one in terms of global recognition. As Dundes (1988, p. 3) rightly pointed out, ‘the adventure of Noah and the Ark is known throughout the Judeo-Christian world and beyond through to the ceaseless efforts of missionaries’. Analysing two examples of the biblical Flood narrative, the one from the Yahwist tradition and the one from the priestly tradition, which have been combined into one, Habel (1988, pp. 13-28) notes the differences regarding the causes, the course and the end of this gigantic God-sent catastrophe. Recapitulating Habel’s analysis in the context of Caulfield’s project, attention should be paid to the duality of the message flowing from the verses closing the story of Noah. The Yahwist tradition emphasises that God has promised never to destroy the Earth again while leaving open the question of another attempt to remove man from its surface. We can call this covenant a “forgiving promise”, but it does not guarantee the salvation of man, whose destruction may occur, even if not by God’s will, because of his inherent “evil heart”⁴. The priestly tradition emphasises God’s repetition of the human right to “subdue the earth”⁵, but in a much more elaborate version than the original one⁶. The priestly tradition was much more widespread in European culture,

Figure 2, Reproduction No. 3. Sean Caulfield, Installation view of *Deadweight*, ink, plywood, found tree branches, central and wall panels approximately 10ft x 22ft, Esplanade Art Centre, 2018 (Photo Credit: Yuri Akuney / Courtesy of the Artist)

which allowed the Flood myth to be seen primarily as (Leeming, 2005, p. 138): ‘the given culture’s «dream» of rebirth, re-creation, and renewal from the chaotic maternal waters’. Such a denotation was heard, for example, in the works of artists active at the turn of the 18th and 19th centuries, such as Joseph Mallord William Turner, which was pointed out, among others, by Poprzęcka (2009, p. 177), who emphasised that: ‘the full subtitle of the painting *Light and Color (Goethe’s theory) is Morning after the Deluge – Moses Writing the Book of Genesis*. The destruction brought on by the waves of the Flood is thus inseparable from the idea of cleansing and regenerating the vision, thanks to the fully revealed faculties of vision, directed towards «a new heaven and a new earth»’.



Figure 3

In the woodcut mural *The Flood*, Caulfield abandons both the narrative of “human domination”, replacing it with the depiction of the effects of the “evil heart” of mankind and the aesthetics of “spectacular show”, into which natural disasters and climate anomalies were transformed by artists of the industrial revolution⁷. To break with the Enlightenment tradition and illustrate both the effects of human activities and their causes, Caulfield uses simple diagrams, similar to graphs found in scientific articles. Here we are faced with an uncomplicated rebus kept in comic-book aesthetics: from the house set on stilts puffs of smoke rise, emitting carbon dioxide into the atmosphere, the concentration of which significantly exceeds all acceptable standards. The effect of the excessive concentration of this gas is climate change, pictured by cascades of heavy rain, slowly flooding the house from which the dangerous smoke was rising.

The presentation of rain was taken from a graphic by Albrecht Dürer, belonging to *The Apocalypse* series and showing the opening of the fifth and sixth seals. The raw form emphasises the geological agency of man. On the other hand, the monumental dimensions of the wooden matrices make it impossible to ignore this message. It strikes the viewer with the force of its obviousness and directness, making it impossible to ignore the catastrophic image, whose comic-book form only seemingly soothes the severity of the message. There is no place for voyeuristic pleasure derived from watching a picturesque catastrophe. The mechanism, according to which ‘every natural phenomenon, even a cataclysm, is a creative work’ (Pieńkos, 2000, p. 93), does not work. It is the abandonment of the concept of “domesticated catastrophe.” According to Pieńkos (2000, p. 93), geognosis ‘is a creationist concept, built in parallel to the artist’s genius theory’ that is disappearing. Thus, there is a break with the aesthetics that Mirzoeff ascribed to imperialist mechanisms and the Enlightenment tradition. Man is not the master of the world, admiring the catastrophic effects of his actions like a thrill-inducing excitement, but a harmless spectacle, a factor that leads to his annihilation. Even more inevitable is the confrontation proposed in the installation *Deadweight*.

Caulfield offers the viewer a step into the space where a small boat, floating on waves cut in the wood, tries to move away from the

fire ruining the landscape. There is a slight glimmer of hope in this installation, which, however, can only be fully realised if the viewer's situation is properly recognised, because when moving around the installation, each one leaves a trace in the form of scratches on soft wood, which, over time, will lead to the destruction of the contours of the waves on which the boat floats. It is therefore crucial to realise the importance of your actions to prevent their further devastating effects. The purpose of self-reflective representation as the basis of the dialectical depiction of the Anthropocene is not, to paraphrase Koutsourakis (2017, p. 300), a worn-out reminder to the public that what one is looking at is art, but to propose a 'mode of representation that considers – both in terms of form and content – the causes behind the effects'.



Figure 4

Both of Caulfield's proposals answer the question asked by Bailey (2018, p. 10) of how within the framework of 'contemporary art-making practices committed to ecological issues [...] might artists create stories that [...] rouse public sentiment without propping up false hope or instilling paralyzing despair?' This question is also posed by Davis and Turpin (2015, p. 6). In the case of Caulfield's answer, it is worth emphasising both the skilful inversion of the "vector of the spectacle" and the fact that his works refer to simple diagrams the natural history museums and textbooks are filled with, but the Canadian artist gives them a more vivid and viewer-engaging character. As Caulfield (2020) himself points out, 'these installations follow my ongoing exploration into the impact of technological advancements on our environment and our bodies and call into question our own role in shaping a future narrative for our ecosystem.'

The geological agency of man in the context of the Anthropocene received a broad and multi-level discussion when the article by the Dutch Nobel laureate Paul J. Crutzen was published in *Nature* in 2002. It summarised the theses presented earlier in a joint text by Crutzen and Stoermer published in an issue of the *Global Change Newsletter*. It was there (Crutzen, Stoermer, 2000, p. 18) that the statement that 'mankind will remain a major geological force for many millennia, maybe millions of years, to come' appeared for the first time, and that 'during the Holocene mankind's activities gradually grew into a significant geological, morphological force' (Crutzen, Stoermer, 2000, p. 17). An article by Crutzen and colleagues (Steffen, Crutzen and McNeill, 2007, p. 614) that appeared in *Ambio* in 2007, clarified this idea with a statement describing human activities as 'so pervasive and profound that they rival the great forces of nature and are pushing the Earth into planetary terra incognita'. Describing the impact of mankind on the natural environment, Crutzen emphasised the transition from the local and regional scale that this impact had achieved in earlier eras to the global scale that it had acquired over the past two hundred years, with particular emphasis on the period following the end of World War II. Canadian graphic artist Angela Snieder has been creating an extraordinary visual universe of this human geological agency for several years.

Figure 4. Reproduction No. 4 Sean Caulfield, Installation view of Deadweight, ink, plywood, found tree branches, central and wall panels approximately 10ft x 22ft, Esplanade Art Centre, 2018 (Photo Credit: Yuri Akuney / Courtesy of the Artist)

The artistic project entitled Diorama⁸ is, as the artist herself declares:

a play with trickery and illusion, pointing to the photograph's capacity for deception, and analogously, to the changeability of perception. Atmospheric effects and textures of natural materials generate a sense of familiarity, while Incongruities in scale and subject matter allude to elements of artifice. What happens in the shifting moment when the eye catches on to the trick; and how does the knowledge of this conspiracy alter the experience of the image and the illusion? This fluctuation invites heightened attention and opportunities for curiosity and surprise, prompting a reflection on our relationship with physical environments (Snieder, 2020).



Figure 5

The images that appear to the viewer resemble the interiors of abandoned old hard coal mines, virgin waterfalls, barren snow wastes, mountain and sea landscapes, and other spaces of unclear nature.

There is something disturbing about them, and this effect is enhanced by the enlargement of the compositions⁹, originally developed in small diorama boxes. This 'aesthetic duplicity', as Harvey notes (Harvey, 2019), being a kind of 'cultural artifact' of the times when man was recognised as the dominant geological force, only seemingly resembles the naively romantic image of the 'wild landscape' untouched by human hands. The fact that the mine ruins seem at first glance to be unusual cave formations and the impression of the virginity of the mighty landscape belong to the same subversive play that the artist declares in her statement. She is leading a conscious crusade against anaesthetics, which became the main feature of perception in the Anthropocene. As Mirzoeff put it brilliantly (Mirzoeff, 2014, p. 220), 'the aesthetics of the Anthropocene emerged as an unintended supplement to imperial aesthetics – it comes to seem natural, right, then beautiful – and thereby anesthetized the perception of modern industrial pollution'. Mirzoeff makes it clear that the Anthropocene transformed our perceptions so that we were indifferent to its visual symptoms. The paradox here is that this anaesthesia is a derivative of the high aestheticization revealed in hyperaesthetic sunsets, which places beyond our awareness the fact that they were caused by a chemical intervention in the stratosphere¹⁰. What may initially offend because of the aforementioned naïveté and would perhaps be met with a loud protest by Donna Haraway due to insufficient commitment or not too directly explicated critical vector, at closer inspection seems, in the words of Pieńkos, to be "the culture of a spectacle", not only the one applied to the audience by 18th- and 19th-century painters and various types of jugglers touring Europe and North America with their "phantasmagoria", but primarily the one formed through the hyperaesthetics of the Anthropocene era. Davis and Turpin (2015, p. 11) rightly point out that 'there is no shock that could be greater than that of realizing the scope and scale of the human transformation of the world.' Snieder convinces the viewers not through the image itself, which is initially charming and seductive, but through that eeriness born of a sense of alienation and weirdness suddenly falling upon them at the moment when they discover disturbances in an ideal vision.

Figure 5. Reproduction No. 5. Angela Snieder, Diorama 1, photopolymer gravure, chine-collé 2016 (Courtesy of the Artist)

What initially appeared to be a window on closer inspection turns out to be a hole cut in the cardboard wall of a diorama box.

Recognised as monumental and at the same time disturbed by time, the vaults of mine galleries suddenly reveal that they are “only” cardboard flaps of the same box. A picture that seemed perfect reveals cracks, inconsistencies, and delaminates. Its tempting beauty disappears, and the viewer’s enlightenment passes, replaced by the feeling that something magical has been lost before their eyes; some beauty that was within reach suddenly dissolved into the fog.

In this way, Snieder warns the viewer against succumbing to the temptation of easy delight, which obscures us with the actual conditions that produce certain effects. At the same time, by constructing her landscapes on a microscale and then transforming them into macroscale prints, she tries to draw the viewer’s attention to the fact that even what is small can change into its opposite. The author’s tactic aims to make viewers constantly vigilant, to re-sensitise them to reality and to discover cracks and tears, for which the human geological agency is largely responsible. As Harvey (2019) notes, Snieder’s works in their ‘deception and [...] toying with the categories of nature and culture, of semblance and reality, [their invite] us to consider the ways those categories overlap, posing productive questions about how we understand their interrelations, and our own experience of them.’

That is how Snieder in her way seems to fulfil Davis and Turpin’s postulate (Davis and Turpin, 2015, pp. 12-13) that ‘developing techniques to begin to think through the limits of our temporal frameworks, and then thinking beyond them – these are crucial practices; in fact, they are a matter of survival’.

At the same time, Snieder’s works are the artist’s response to Koutsourakis’ postulate (2017, p. 302), according to which ‘the question of historically formed labour processes and the ways they transform humans’ relation to nature is an important element in getting to think about climate change and the eco-crisis’. Mines are one of the symbols of industrialisation and the capitalist economy. The damage that the exploitation of hard coal has caused to the environment has transformed thousands of hectares of landscape, and the topic of declining fossil fuels is one of the dominant themes in the ecological debate today.

FROM ENTHUSIASM AND FAITH IN THE PROSUMER TO A CRITICAL REFLECTION ON THE NETWORK SOCIETY

In 1984, during one of the most iconic annual sports events in the United States, the Super Bowl final, a double premiere took place¹¹. On 22 January, during the intermission of the third quarter of the finals taking place at Tampa Stadium, a Mackintosh personal computer ad directed by Ridley Scott was broadcast, ending with a slogan: On January 24th, Apple Computer will introduce Macintosh. And you’ll see



Figure 6



Figure 7

Figure 6. Reproduction No. 6. Angela Snieder, Diorama 2, photopolymer gravure, chine-collé 2016 (Courtesy of the Artist)
 Figure 7. Reproduction No. 7. Angela Snieder, Diorama 3, photopolymer gravure, chine-collé 2016 (Courtesy of the Artist)

why 1984 won't be like '1984'. The cult production of the director, who only two years earlier¹² had introduced to the cinemas a work based on the novel by Philip K. Dick showing the effects of the deep revolution that the new digital media were to bring, lasted a bit over a minute, but it announced a change in the cultural paradigm that occurred over the next 40 years. The essence of the message was the announcement of the birth of a new model of the cultural participant, the prosumer.

The very concept of prosumer functioned in the field of reflection on cultural changes caused by the emergence of digital media before they even became popular and widely available. The recognition of this new way of participation in the broadly understood sphere of production and the new model of culture emerging because of these changes appeared at the beginning of the 1970s. In the book, significantly titled *Take Today. The Executive as Dropout* McLuhan and Nevitt (1973, cited in Lambert, 2014, p. 135) describe a new, upcoming reality as an era in which there will be a 'changeover, from matching to making, from acquisition to involvement'. This thesis was confirmed and significantly expanded conceptually by Alvin Toffler in the book *Third Wave*, which appeared in 1980. While creating the prosumer definition, Toffler combined several previously essentially separate functions. In the first place, it was a fusion of a producer and a consumer, next to which appeared a professional with significant knowledge in a given field and a proactive person, and therefore one who, instead of responding to the offer created by others, seeks to create and control reality. The current order, based on a clear division between meaning providers and its consumers, was negated, and Steve Jobs and his team equipped new consumers with the basic tools for establishing a new paradigm. At the end of the 20th century, with the advent of the World Wide Web, it seemed that the dreams of Steve Jobs and the creators of the Mackintosh Classic had come true. The viewer had evolved into a prosumer who not only possessed easy-to-use tools for producing messages of a diverse nature (subsequent generations of personal computers) but also a widely available, cheap content distribution tool (the internet). One can say, from the time perspective, that there was only an expectation of the phenomenon of Mark Zuckerberg, who launched the social networking site Facebook on 4 February 2004 in his Harvard University dorm, and for the work of three former PayPal employees, Chad Hurley, Steve Chen and Jawed Karim, who exactly a year later created the YouTube platform for sharing all kinds of audiovisual content. Prosumer has ceased to be a theoretical concept; it has become "each of us", as the American weekly *Time* summed up when announcing *Time Person of the Year 2006* to be "You", understood as a representative of 'individual content creators on the World Wide Web'¹³. Thirteen years later, the optimism of that time seemed to have faded. Belief in collective intelligence, which Henry Jenkins (2006, p. 259) enthusiastically defined as an 'alternative source of media power', paled in the face of the changes that have occurred in the last decade, both in terms of the content of messages distributed on the web and in how the culture produced by the network society functions. Anno Domini 2019, the terms most



Figure 8

Figure 8. Reproduction No. 8, Karol Pomykała, Installation view of *One Direction*, linocut, 50 sculptures raisin cast, VR environment designed in cooperation with programmer Paweł Laciuk 2019 (Photo Credit: Stan Barański / Courtesy of the International Print Triennial Society)

often repeated in discussions about network society are 'hate', 'fake news' and 'shitstorm'. In these circumstances, Karol Pomykała enters the arena with his proposal to analyse the current state of reality in his project entitled Immersion. The conclusions he draws undermine the enthusiasm present in the theoretical works cited above and the narrative of the ad broadcasted in 1984.

Looking at unified silhouettes deprived not only of individual features, but even stripped of any features (no eyes or mouths), it is impossible to avoid associating them with the rows of uniforms that appeared on the screen in a movie by Fritz Lang and depict employees of the Moloch factory who are no longer human beings but only cogs in a large production machine. This uniformity also makes them similar to the characters from Scott's advertisement. In turn, how the silhouettes are composed in space, placed in equal rows, which form compact rectangles, almost immediately puts before the eyes the stills from Triumph of the Will, a movie by Leni Riefenstahl, and thus the precise choreography and stage design developed by Albert Speer under the slogan of the Light Cathedral prepared for the well-known Party Congress in Nuremberg in 1934. So, the artist uses extremely strong visual codes that we identify almost intuitively. This anonymous, unified crowd raises anxiety in us, prompting us to ask a question about the purpose Pomykała would like to achieve. Why does he, who was brought up in a world of free communication, equipped with tools designed, in accordance with Scott's commercial, to set humanity free from the shackles of media dictators, present us with a world that seemed irretrievably erased from reality? According to a personal declaration (Pomykała, 2019), he does so to draw the viewer's attention to the fact that:

Manipulating of information and transforming the truth used for our own purposes is a weapon that threatens us all. Unfortunately, we are often unable to distinguish truth from fiction. That is why we become an easy target for a variety of manipulators. Sharing fake (intentionally false) news with the public may cause discrimination against specific groups or individuals by transforming them into typical scapegoats.

Shadows lie on an ordered crowd of anonymous human figures depicted in a huge linocut. They are an additional factor that raises the viewer's anxiety. Who are they? What is their role? Part of the explanation is revealed by the animation made using virtual reality technology, which not only broadens the field of perception by inviting the viewer to enter the space of two-dimensional original print but also brings to light the potential identity of those hidden behind the shadows.

Big, black figures, importantly, just as anonymous and generalised as a crowd of orderly figures, stroll between the rows of tiny figures and from time to time move them according to a pattern known only to themselves. One way to interpret these giants is to understand them as visual signs of media manipulators, i.e., all sorts of trendsetters, network celebrities, and social engineers employed by large media concerns whose primary task is to control the moods of the digital



Figure 9

community. They are those who, with the skill of circus jugglers, capture ideas born in network communities and transform them into tools for creating collective phantasms, mood control instruments and political manipulation strategies supporting specific power centres and instruments of consumerism pressure. The viewer, immersed in the world that is on the one hand extremely attractive, thanks to the impact of virtual immersion, which so easily deceives even the most rational and hard-grounding minds, and on the other, terrified by the message it carries, is put before a metaphorical and at the same time a literal analysis of an important aspect of digital culture almost half a century after its symbolic birth. In this context, an important complement to the reflection proposed by the artist is the “army of resin sculptures” made of figures cast together with their shadows and arranged in equal rows.

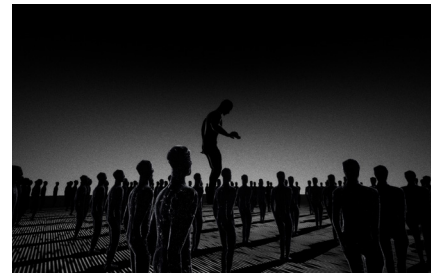


Figure 10

On the one hand, this is another attempt to draw attention to the troublesome issue of distinguishing truth from false, or better, fact from fiction, because the shadows are somehow double: those that were cast are mixed with those created naturally by the precise lighting of the entire composition. On the other hand, it is a metaphorical representation of the potential role of the viewers, who become, thanks to this simple operation initiated by the artist, transformed into characters similar to the giants presented in the animation. Now the viewers cast shadows on the army of passive figures and potentially can change their location. In this way, the artist emphasises a fact, a characteristic of digital culture, according to which each of us, by assumption, can become a creator of messages. The form this content will take and how it will affect others depend only on our intentions. This attitude reveals something crucial: the enormity of the responsibility that has been placed in the hands of every user connected to the World Wide Web and equipped with the younger siblings of the Mackintosh Classic.

Now it is worth returning to the linocut that was the starting point for the concept of artistic environment arranged by Pomykała.

Next to the dense human mass, it has another protagonist. This is the figure that stands out from the equal rows, that stands half-freely and gives the impression of leaving a unified crowd. This is a great question mark that the artist puts before us. Is this lonely figure a picture of one who migrates between the different tribes of the network society, who liberates himself only for a moment, to be absorbed again by another faction? Or is it maybe a symbol of waking consciousness, which, once restored to favour, will not allow us to join the next wave of hate so uncritically, or support the spread of fake news? Maybe it is the late grandson of one of the heroes of Scott's commercial, once again freed from his shackles, freed from the hypnotic force of Big Brother's influence, a “dis-zombied” viewer who decided to become a prosumer again, this time liberated from the appropriating forces building media reality? Awakened thanks to the critical potential, which, as the artist seems to believe, has never finally died in the human mind, perhaps it today becomes the last resort protecting against falling into a stream of the digital septic tank on one hand and drowning in a virtual illusion on

the other.

Pomykała does not provide ready answers, but by arranging an immersive and visually attractive space, he asks the viewer questions that, in the face of the continuously growing mediation of the experience, seem not only relevant but simply fundamental. He does so not by renouncing the possibilities offered by digital culture, but by using the tools it offers in a spirit of critical reflection, which was supposed to be its constitutive feature.

CONCLUSIONS

To sum up, even though not all the artists in question refer to an ecological catastrophe, Nancy's words remain valid also when artistic activities concern other types of crises appearing in the contemporary world. Equally important, this 'exposure to a catastrophe', understood as an active perception without turning the head off, may be considered an important reason the discussed artists use new forms of communicating with the audience. As Heather Davies and Etienne Turpin brilliantly put it (2015, p. 5), this 'exposure' means:

to endure our encounter with catastrophic loss by allowing ourselves to sense it. If we move too quickly, even catastrophes, like everything else under capitalism, become little more than general equivalents of exchange.

On the one hand, this paper is a review of topics taken up by different artists who strive to make the audience aware of the various threats currently affecting the lives of individuals and entire societies; on the other hand, it aims to indicate these new ways of communicating that enable our 'exposure' to crises and catastrophes and impact the shape of what we can broadly define as a graphic medium.

FOOTNOTES

¹ The series consists of woodcut matrices 600 x 900 cm each. Year of production: 2016.

² The installation consists of paint-covered wooden cut panels, a wooden sculpture in the form of a boat, found branch-es, and a large-format woodcut matrix. Year of production: 2018.

³ An exception is Africa, because it is hard to find this type of narration among its tribes, cf. A. Dundes, Introduction [in:] *The Flood Myth*, ed. A. Dundes, University of California Press, Berkeley 1988, p. 2.

⁴ Cf. Genesis 8:21.

⁵ Cf. Genesis 1:28.

⁶ Cf. Genesis 9:1-3.

⁷ Cf. A. Pieńkoś, *Okropności sztuki. Nowoczesne obrazy rzeczy ostatecznych*, *Słowo/Obraz Terytoria*, Gdańsk 2000. Especially chapter entitled *Kultura spektaklu. Malarstwo katastrof wulkanicznych w oświeceniu*, pp. 77-94

⁸ Prints made with the use of polymer photogravure and chine-collè. Year of production: 2016.



Figure 11

⁹ The dimensions of most of the prints from the series are 120 x 270 cm.

¹⁰ Cf. H. Davis, E. Turpin, *Art & Death...*, op. cit., p. 11.

¹¹ In fact, Mackintosh's ad debuted on TV screens on 31 December 1983, when it was presented at ten local cable stations in the last ad block broadcasted before midnight. The reason for the premature premiere was its creators' desire to compete for the Clio award in the forthcoming year. However, on 22 January 1984, its pan-American premiere took place in the only emission of this advertisement on a national scale.

¹² *Blade Runner* had its official premiere on 25 January 1982. The film is based on the novel by Philip K. Dick first published in 1968, known under two titles: *Do Androids Dream of Electric Sheep?* and *Blade Runner: Do Androids Dream of Electric Sheep?* Scott's movie moved the viewers (as the book moved the readers) to the San Francisco of 2021.

¹³ A cover of *Time*, on which, at the announcement the Person of the Year, a photo of the chosen personality appears, this time presented an image of a computer, whose screen was covered with a foil that served as a mirror to a potential buyer and on which a single word "YOU" was printed. Below it the editors put the following sentence: Yes, you. You control the Information Age. Welcome to your world.

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Marta Anna Raczek-Karcz (PhD) – born in 1979; graduated from Art History and Media & Culture Studies, both at the Jagiellonian University. At present is PhD in Humanities (Discipline: Arts). She is art critic and theoretician, as well as free-lance curator. She is an Assistant Professor at the faculty of Graphic Arts of the Academy of Fine Arts in Krakow.

Since 2007 she was the Vice-President of the Board and since 2013 she is the President of the Board of the International Print Triennial Society in Krakow. She gives lectures on contemporary printmaking and graphic design, culture anthropology, film history, history and theory of art and media studies. As a curator she organised more than 20 exhibitions in National Museum in Krakow, Litografiska Museum in Tidaholm, BWA Municipal Gallery in Katowice, Upper Silesian Culture Centre in Katowice, Kloster Bentlage in Rheine, Gallery Container in Rome, Anaid Art Gallery in Bucharest, and MODEM Museum in Debrecen. She is a member of the International Association of Art Critics AICA. She writes texts to catalogues of different exhibitions, as well as articles related to contemporary art, film and new media.

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IMAGE GALLERY



Figure 1. Reproduction No. 1
[Sean Caulfield, Installation view of The Flood, carved wood relief, approximately 20 x 30ft, Art Gallery of Alberta, Canada, 2016 (Photo Credit: Blaine Campbell / Courtesy of the Artist)].



Figure 2. Reproduction No. 3
[Sean Caulfield, Installation view of Deadweight, ink, plywood, found tree branches, central and wall panels approximately 10ft x 22ft, Esplanade Art Centre, 2018 (Photo Credit: Yuri Akuney / Courtesy of the Artist)]



Figure 3. Reproduction No. 2
[Sean Caulfield, Detail from *The Flood*, carved wood relief, Art Gallery of Alberta, Canada, 2016 (Photo Credit: Blaine Campbell / Courtesy of the Artist)]



Figure 4. Reproduction No. 4
[Sean Caulfield, Installation view of Deadweight, ink, plywood, found tree branches, central and wall panels approximately 10ft x 22ft, Esplanade Art Centre, 2018 (Photo Credit: Yuri Akuney / Courtesy of the Artist)]



Figure 5. Reproduction No. 5
[Angela Snieder, Diorama 1, photopolymer gravure, chine-collé 2016 (Courtesy of the Artist)]



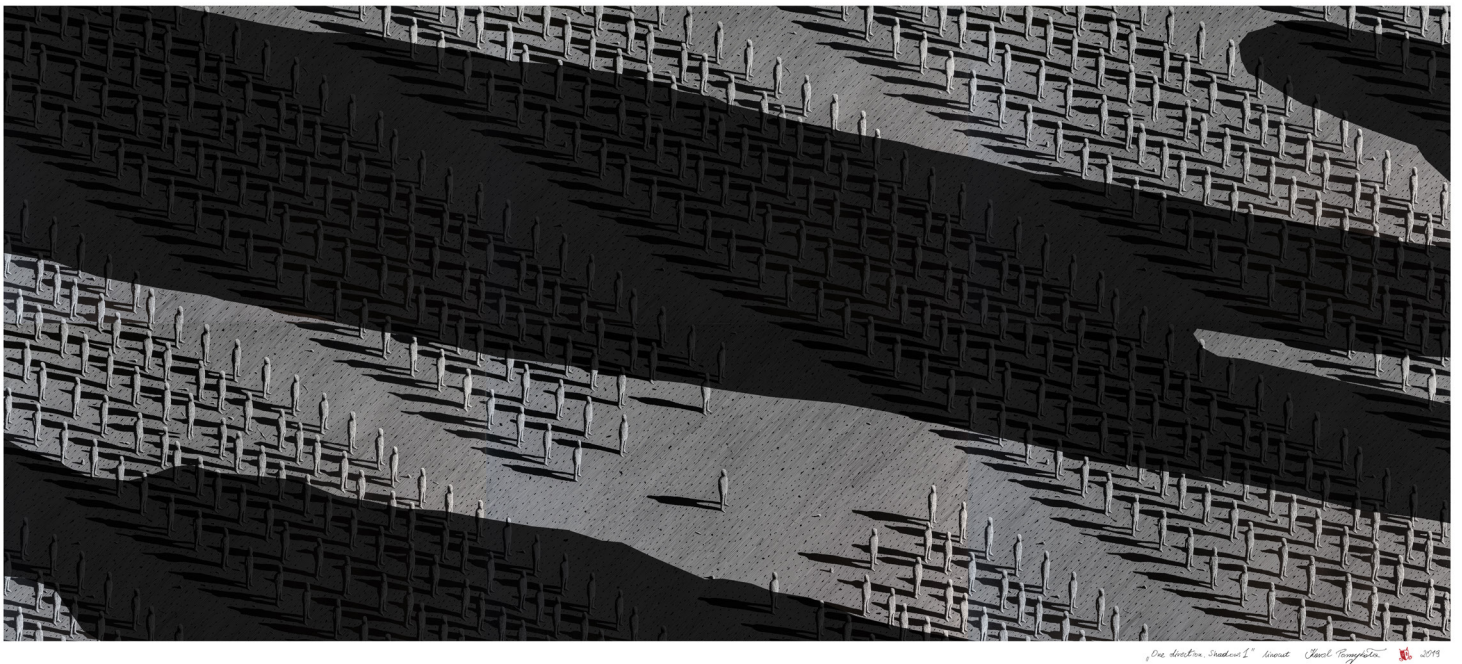
Figure 6. Reproduction No. 6
[Angela Snieder, Diorama 2, photopolymer gravure, chine-collé 2016 (Courtesy of the Artist)]



Figure 7. Reproduction No. 7
[Angela Snieder, Diorama 3, photopolymer gravure, chine-collé 2016 (Courtesy of the Artist)]



Figure 8. Reproduction No. 8
[Karol Pomykała, Installation view of One Direction, linocut, 50 sculptures raisin cast, VR environment designed in cooperation with programmer Paweł Laciuk 2019 (Photo Credit: Stan Barański / Courtesy of the International Print Triennial Society)]



„One Direction: Shadows 1” Karol Pomykała 2019

Figure 9. Reproduction No. 11
[Karol Pomykała, One Direction: Shadows 1, linocut, 2019 (Photo Credit: Stan Barański / Courtesy of the International Print Triennial Society)]



Figure 10. Reproduction No. 9
[Karol Pomykała, One Direction: Shadows VR, VR environment designed in cooperation with programmer Paweł Laciuk 2019 (Photo Credit: Stan Barański / Courtesy of the International Print Triennial Society)]



Figure 11. Reproduction No. 10
[Karol Pomykała, One Direction (detail), 50 sculptures raisin cast 2019 (Photo Credit: Stan Barański / Courtesy of the International Print Triennial Society)]