FALLING FROM THE SHOULDERS OF GIANTS:

INVISIBLE SYSTEMS – VISIBLE ERRORS

Thursday, 3 December 2026 | 14:00–21:00 (BER Time)
Digitalvilla at Hedy-Lamarr-Platz, Karl-Marx-Str. 67, 14482 Potsdam

Visibility, memory and reality under algorithmic control and the artistic interventions that challenge it

In Potsdam — Laila Shereen Sakr (USA) & Michael Betancourt (USA)
Joining via Zoom — Domenico Barra (IT/MT) & Ian Keaveny aka crash stop (IRE)
Curatorial direction — Verena Voigt M.A., GFZK e.V.
Register by 2 December at kontakt(at)verena-voigt-pr.de

PROGRAMME

14:00 — FALLING FROM THE SHOULDERS OF GIANTS

A curator-led tour through the three levels of the Digitalvilla, ending at the InTraLab.

Featuring glitch artefacts by Laila Shereen Sakr (USA), Michael Betancourt (USA), Domenico Barra (IT/MT), Ian Keaveny aka crash stop (IRE), Niklas Washausen (DE), Thomas Scheffer (DE), Rosa Menkman (NL), marie molins (FR), Peter Seligman aka trash panda (USA), Xavier Dallet aka somethingstar (FR), Laura Ranglack (DE), Nadja Verena Marcin (DE/NYC) and Katrin Leitner (DE).

Opening of the installation GLITCH ART IN THE AGE OF PERFECT CENSORSHIP on Level 2
Curated by Verena Voigt M.A. and Ian Keaveny aka crash stop (IRE).

14:45 — Artist Talk at the InTraLab with Video Call

Q&A moderated by Verena Voigt, GFZK e.V.

16:00–16:45 — Domenico Barra (IT/MT)

WHITE PAGE GALLERY/s

Relaunch of Domenico Barra’s WHITE PAGE GALLERY/s platform, with a focus on collaborative infrastructures and decentralised communication.

Q&A moderated by Verena Voigt, GFZK e.V.

17:15–18:30 — Michael Betancourt (USA)

What Is a Glitch and Why Is It Art?

On glitches, art, machines and human agency.

Q&A moderated by Verena Voigt, GFZK e.V.

19:00 — Laila Shereen Sakr (USA)

REALITY AI – FROM THE CYBORG'S DESK — Video installation at the InTraLab

Laila Shereen Sakr is developing a utopian science fiction narrative at the intersection of film, interactive video games and critical media art. It explores questions of power, memory, algorithmic control and resistance.

Q&A moderated by Verena Voigt, GFZK e.V.

The programme ends at around 21:00.

FALLING FROM THE SHOULDERS OF GIANTS: COLD FEET – LONG ARMS

The project brings together artistic and theoretical research into censorship, algorithmic control and the social and political conditions that shape cultural visibility. It asks how digital technologies shape our perception of reality, our participation in society and our access to historical memory, and how we can retain control over our own data.

Censorship and self-censorship are closely intertwined. Censorship intervenes in public communication through bans, exclusions and regulations. Self-censorship often begins earlier, when artists anticipate possible sanctions and adapt their forms of expression accordingly. The criteria governing digital visibility are often opaque, their application inconsistent and their consequences hard to predict. Artists may adapt their practice to what they believe the platform rules to be well before they face exclusion. The possibility of censorship itself becomes a condition of artistic production. The artist collective GIANT GLITCHES develops collective strategies that provoke algorithmic systems, making their rules visible and challenging them.

Who decides which images remain visible, which voices are heard and which experiences disappear from digital public spaces? How do artificial intelligence and machine learning reshape the relationship between human agency and

technological control? And how can we create alternative spaces for action beyond the logic of commercial platforms?

FROM CRITIQUE TO COLLABORATIVE PRACTICE

The projects connect different forms of artistic research across past, present and future. PERFECT CENSORSHIP documents algorithmic censorship and artists' experiences of exclusion. WHITE PAGE GALLERY/s tests alternative infrastructures for cultural exchange in the public sphere. Michael Betancourt examines the historical relationship between art, machines and human agency. Laila Shereen Sakr imagines a future in which Glitch Art opens up new ways to explore suppressed memories, identity and possibilities for resistance.

The new installation GLITCH ART IN THE AGE OF PERFECT CENSORSHIP on Level 2 of the Digitalvilla brings critical digitality together with experimental research. As both an aesthetic practice and an epistemic method, Glitch Art offers ways to investigate, disrupt and transform technological systems that typically operate out of sight.

The projects share a question. Who controls the systems through which we perceive reality, remember history and make art publicly accessible?

They also ask how external controls shape our perceptions and artistic practice, and how we can recognise and overcome the limits we have internalised. Glitch Art takes disruptions as starting points for new knowledge, collective agency and collaborative counter-infrastructures.

The events on 3 December present an interim account of our long-term artistic and curatorial research and open up possibilities for the international collaborations planned for the project's second year.

WHITE PAGE GALLERY/s — DOMENICO BARRA (IT/MT)

With White Page Gallery/s (WPG/s), Domenico Barra is developing a network of independent websites where artists, curators and cultural workers offer one another digital exhibition spaces. The project explores collaboration, visibility and curatorial practice outside commercial social media platforms, creating an unusual model for a decentralised counterpublic.

Within GLITCH ART IN THE AGE OF PERFECT CENSORSHIP, the model addresses a pressing question. What viable alternatives can we build when algorithmic classification and moderation largely determine cultural visibility? The project

develops a collaborative counter-infrastructure in which digital practices of care and sharing guide the curatorial work.

Hospitality, accessibility, solidarity, participation and mutual responsibility take precedence over maximising individual reach. The focus shifts from the individual artwork to collective practice and from individual visibility to shared infrastructure. Through its online exhibitions, WPG/s tests the social and technical conditions that allow people to organise a cultural public sphere collectively and independently.

LAILA SHEREEN SAKR (USA)

In her film project REALITY AI – FROM THE CYBORG'S DESK, Laila Shereen Sakr develops a science fiction narrative at the intersection of film, interactive video games and critical digitality. Drawing on the spirit of the civic and political movements of 2011, the project explores power, memory, algorithmic control, resistance and utopia.

In a technologically advanced future society under authoritarian rule, the historian Sherene Al-Masry encounters mysterious digital glitches that reveal fragments of a past systematically erased from collective memory. Her search for historical truth brings her into conflict with those in power. She loses her privileges and eventually has to part with her digital double, Qareen, an artificial assistant who embodies the authority of the system Sherene has internalised.

Together with the robot BU6A, Sherene discovers R-Shief, an intelligent archive that preserves the suppressed history of her society. Her search transforms her loyalty to its institutions into a form of knowledge that enables resistance and political action.

The glitch becomes an epistemic method. It breaks through a controlled reality and opens up access to suppressed accounts of history. As the archive opens up, it becomes a political actor, while artificial intelligence and digital doubles expose the troubling entanglement of identity, dependency and domination.

How can resistance be kept alive when power structures shape the very way we perceive political realities?

MICHAEL BETANCOURT (USA)

What Is a Glitch and Why Is It Art? What is a glitch? Why do glitches matter? What role does glitching play in art?

Michael Betancourt takes up these questions and situates Glitch Art within broader cultural debates about machines and their use in art. He considers glitching part of a historical debate about human agency that began with industrialisation and photography in the nineteenth century and continues today with machine learning and artificial intelligence. He asks how machines change the conditions under which artists work and what role disruptions, errors and unforeseen processes can play.

For COLD FEET – LONG ARMS, this historical perspective places present-day conflicts over algorithmic control, AI and cultural visibility within a longer history of the relationship between humans, machines and artistic agency.

17 NOVEMBER 2026 | 16:00–20:00 | DIGITALVILLA

LYRIK-PFLEGE: THE REVERSE SIDE OF MEMORY
Jutta Petzold — From the Injured Surface to the Textile Archive
An embroidery workshop with Marie Kublik and Frida Teller.
Register at kontakt@verena-voigt-pr.de.
LYRIK-PFLEGE: DIE RÜCKSEITE DER ERINNERUNG — Workshop information

Dictatorship inscribes itself on bodies and biographies. Its traces resist a straightforward reading. Ian Keaveny's digital portrait of Jutta Petzold reveals the fragility of historical reconstruction. Through their LYRIK-PFLEGE project, Marie Kublik and Frida Teller transfer selected lines by Petzold onto historic fabrics.

The needle pierces the fabric and leaves a lasting trace, making embroidery an ambivalent practice poised between injury and care. Legible writing emerges on the front, while the paths of the threads, knots and securing stitches form a second order on the reverse. Here the practice resonates with Glitch Art by making the usually hidden conditions of production visible.

The reverse side records the way we approach Petzold's work today. Preservation here means acknowledging what resists full reconstruction and remains difficult to read.

26 OCTOBER 2026

NEW ANCESTORS
The Potsdam Poet Jutta Petzold
"Die Mauern sie können nicht tauschen" ("The walls, they cannot be exchanged")
Ines Geipel in conversation with Verena Voigt M.A., GFZK e.V.

Jutta Petzold (1933–2020) was one of the long-overlooked voices of a culture of resistance outside the East German literary canon. Following a failed attempt to flee East Germany in 1961, she became associated with what is known as the Third Literature, whose writers worked outside the official literary sphere. Their work was made accessible and recognised only much later. The writer and literary scholar Ines Geipel is preserving and making Petzold's literary estate accessible. At the Digitalvilla, Geipel introduces a poet whose work speaks to the conditions of writing under political pressure, the experience of exclusion and the struggle to find a language of one's own.

PNN — "Words with Explosive Force: What Role Did Potsdam Play for the Poet Jutta Petzold?"
In this article from 24 October 2026, Tabea Hamperl explores the long-overlooked East German poet's ties to Potsdam ahead of Ines Geipel's presentation at the Digitalvilla on 26 October. Read the article in German

OV [Operativer Vorgang]

GIANT GLITCHES, 2026
I have been taken out of context. Again.

An artistic exploration of surveillance, classification and Operational Psychology.

The international artist collective GIANT GLITCHES first presented the video work OV [Operativer Vorgang] in 2025 at Spazju Kreattiv in Valletta, Malta. Reworked as an installation, it invites a fresh reading in light of two key procedures used by East Germany's Ministry for State Security (MfS). These were the surveillance check on an individual (Operative Personenkontrolle, OPK) and the subsequent escalation to an operational case (Operativer Vorgang, OV). The artists show their faces. GLITCH: ONTOLOGICAL EXHAUSTIONS & SYSTEM FAILURES

25 SEPTEMBER 2026

THOMAS SCHEFFER
THE VISIBLE IS NOT THE POSSIBLE
Generative Images, Perception and the Question of the Glitch
Thomas Scheffer in conversation with Verena Voigt M.A., curator, GFZK e.V.

What do we see when we look at a digital image? A state produced by technology, a process, or an image that emerges through the interplay of display, eye, body, brain, memory and expectation?

The Gesellschaft für zeitgenössische Konzepte e.V. presents recent works by Thomas Scheffer that explore this seemingly simple question from different angles.

The artist talk is accompanied by artefacts from several bodies of work, including HOPE UNTOLD, SILENCE, STORIES OF YOUR MIND, QUALIA, THE BLIND SPOT and PORTAL DELUXE.

23 JULY 2026

NIKLAS WASHAUSEN
RE:DEFINE PRESSURE

18 JUNE 2026

IAN KEAVENY aka crash stop
GLITCH ART IN THE AGE OF PERFECT CENSORSHIP

FALLING FROM THE SHOULDERS OF GIANTS: COLD FEET - LONG ARMS (2026/2027)

Building on the FALLING FROM THE SHOULDERS OF GIANTS concept (2026–2027), we explore connections between art, the body, AI and the cosmos in relation to East and West German identity, state security and surveillance, and the ways regimes of violence inscribe themselves in language and on bodies. The research centres on the *Dictionary of State Security* and on artistic mappings of the *Juristische Hochschule* at the Golm campus (1951–1990), with a particular focus on Operational Psychology. COLD FEET - LONG ARMS is a two-year programme of exhibitions and events.

The programme develops and examines contemporary artistic responses to artificial intelligence, representations of the body, control and memory, against the backdrop of Brandenburg's history as a place where power was exercised and knowledge produced. In 2026, the focus is on the *Juristische Hochschule Potsdam* (1951–1990), the main training institution of East Germany's State Security service, and on the methods of Operational Psychology developed there to discipline, control and destabilise individuals.

Through digital and non-digital artistic processes, the programme sets these historical techniques of power alongside the ways AI asserts authority today and the narratives of control that accompany it.

The Body as an Artificial Construct — Historical and Digital Paradigms

How do ideological systems use technology to construct the body? The exhibition brings contemporary artistic critiques of AI into conversation with the East German State Security service's conception of the body. Through Operational Psychology, the service sought to destabilise individuals through surveillance, isolation, disorientation and self-doubt. Alongside today's beauty ideals, digital optimisation and psychological profiling, these practices show how the "optimised" person remains a projection of political ideals.

Control Through Language — The Dictionary of State Security as an Instrument

The *Dictionary of State Security* reveals how language was used to obscure and legitimise repressive measures. Through artistic reconstruction, recoding and defamiliarisation, the exhibition brings the dictionary into contact with today's AI-generated language and its normative, decontextualised outputs. The dictionary serves as a source of text, an aesthetic object, a space for critical artistic inquiry and a basis for recitations and interventions in public space.

The Human Mind Under Extreme Conditions — Operational Psychology and AI

How do the East German State Security service's methods of control compare with the largely invisible ways today's algorithms steer behaviour? Artists reconstruct, disrupt or "glitch" processes that rely on behavioural prediction, psychological influence or gamification, past and present.

The publications of East German writer Ines Geipel are also central to this phase of the project. Together with Geipel, we will explore the work of the long-overlooked writer Jutta Petzold.

Lost Bodies, Lost Control — Techniques of Zersetzung and Ghosting

Artists explore how the body is deconstructed. In East Germany between 1951 and 1990, the body was an object of surveillance and a cultural construct shaped at the intersections of sports, aerospace and military medicine. Through artistic means, the programme examines parallels between the Stasi's tactics of psychological destabilisation, known as *Zersetzung*, and the ways digital systems make people or content disappear today, including shadow banning, deplatforming and deepfakes.

Glitch Art as Artistic Resistance — Countering Control Through Disruption

Disruption becomes a strategy. The East German state used it as a tool of repression. In the digital present, it can serve as a creative means of resistance.

Glitch Art subverts data flows, questions the dominance of AI and creates alternative readings through fragmentation, layering and shifts in context.

FALLING FROM THE SHOULDERS OF GIANTS: COLD FEET - LONG ARMS. A project within the framework of “Von hier aus Zukunft – Kulturland Brandenburg 2026/2027”. Kulturland Brandenburg 2026/2027 is funded by the State of Brandenburg, with the kind support of Brandenburg’s savings banks.

Von hier aus Zukunft
Kulturland Brandenburg 2026/2027

LAND BRANDENBURG

für Brandenburg

We thank our academic partner, the Digitalvilla at Hedy-Lamarr-Platz in Potsdam, Institute of Information Systems, Processes and Systems at the University of Potsdam, 14482 Potsdam. We are especially grateful for its technical, logistical and organisational support and for making the WI-Braukeller and InTraLab available.

The exhibition can be visited by arrangement at kontakt(at)verena-voigt-pr.de.