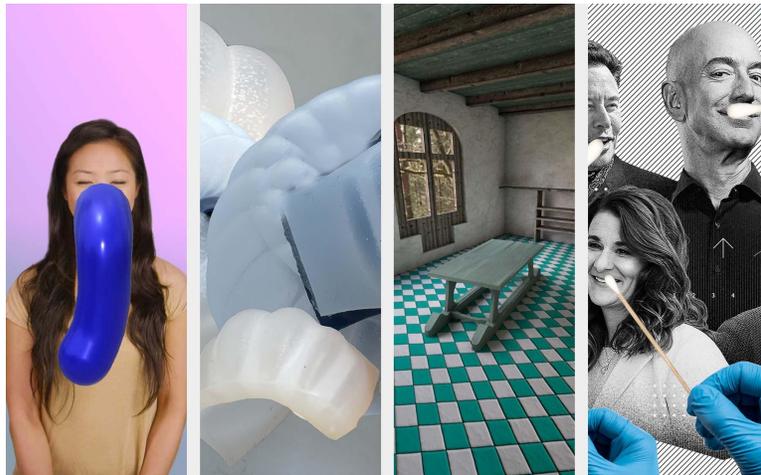![Goethe Institut logo]

ROSY DX

PRESS INFORMATION

Berlin, 31.01.2022

Jemand Society - A group of contemporary artists explore speculative futures inspired by trailblazer author Bertha von Suttner

From left to right, details of works by Jemand Society artists: Jeremy Bailey, "PAC" (2022); Janne Kummer, "XOwB" (2022); Lucie Freynhagen, "Wunderkammer of Passing Futures" (2021), and Sam Lavigne, "Capitalist Gene" (2022)

On 4th February 2022, the *Jemand Society* will launch with an online event by self proclaimed Famous New Media Artist Jeremy Bailey. The launch will be followed by a different artistic intervention every Friday in the month of February (4th, 11th, 18th, 25th). Bailey, alongside Lucie Freynhagen, Sam Lavigne and Janne Kummer (Aka.Alaska) form the core of the *Jemand Society*, an artistic circle exploring the topics of utopias and dystopias through virtual interventions that aim to engage audiences in imagining, speculating and, possibly, taking action towards possible desirable futures.

Created by the Goethe-Institut USA and Canada in collaboration with Rosy DX, the *Jemand Society* draws its name from one of Bertha von Suttner's pseudonyms *Jemand* (from German, meaning "someone") under which she published her book *Das Maschinenalter* (1889). In the novel, she approaches the present while looking from a fictitious future. Like von Suttner, the members of the *Jemand Society* give us a glimpse into the present through the lenses of a possible future by questioning the status-quo.

Bailey's project PAC - a nod to the makeup brand M.A.C. - inquires about the possibility of destabilizing gender norms and beauty standards through technology. He takes the phenomenon of filter dysmorphia - feeling shame after using Augmented Reality (AR) filters - as a starting point to use the same technology as a tool to empower and enhance contra-normative confidence.

Jemand Society - A project by Goethe-Institut and Rosy DX

Janne Kummer continues the programme with *XOwB* on 11th February, where she speculates on future artifacts that might enable humans to unfold as new sensory beings and to break free from rigid normative rules and expectations put on them through a patriarchal system. Kummer will present an interactive virtual performance where the audience can "touch" the artists through a wearable soft robot by triggering it via an online multiplayer platform.

On 18th February Sam Lavigne will challenge contemporary narratives of economics with the launch of *The Capitalist Gene*. Lavigne questions whether capitalism is written in our DNA based on the often unspoken assumption that our current political, cultural and economic realities are fundamentally unalterable because they are products of "human nature" itself. *The Capitalist Gene* is an attempt to tackle this assumption, by collecting genetic samples from noted capitalists and capitalistic ambients, in an unprecedented effort to isolate capitalism on a genetic level. The launch will instruct audiences on how to support the artist on his endeavor.

Closing the programme, on 25th February Lucie Freynhagen will open her *Wunderkammer of Passing Futures* to the public. The project is a crowd-sourced digital cabinet of curiosities of the present that breaks the power dynamics of curation by letting everyone become an author of our present, past and future. The artist collected objects through an open call and will present them in the opening at the virtual wunderkammer.

Programme
4th February: 'PAC' Online Launch & Workshop by Jeremy Bailey
11th February: 'XOwB' Interactive Virtual Performance by Janne Kummer
18th February: 'Capitalist Gene' Online Launch by Sam Lavigne
25th February: 'Wunderkammer of Passing Futures' Virtual Tour by Lucie Freynhagen

The following artists are collaborators in the *Jemand Society* projects:
Cibelle Cavali Bastos
Heran Genene
Olga Hohmann
Anton Krause
Shawné Michaelaine Holloway
Alla Popp
Clemens Reinecke

For more information go to https://jemandsociety.com/.

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ARTIST BIOS

Jeremy Bailey is a self proclaimed Famous New Media Artist living and working in Toronto. He received his MA in Fine Arts from Syracuse University. Jeremy's work explores custom software in a performative context and offers hilarious parodies of new media vocabularies. Jeremy Bailey speaks to his audience as layers of augmented reality animate around him. He addresses body objectification online by wearing the Internet, employing online advertising strategies to reclaim public space. He plays, dances and paints with technology in various ways.

Janne Kummer, Aka.Alaska (She/They), works at the intersection of performing arts and digital media. She teaches and researches the effects of digitalization on the perception and representation of bodies. Her research areas include techno and cyberfeminism, new materialism, other-than-human-agency and the Anthropocene discourse. In her artistic practice, she is currently developing interactive multimedia installations that serve as interfaces between analog and digital experiential spaces and organic and inorganic lifeworlds. In addition, she works on a contemporary artistic practice to utilise the subversive and creative potential of new technologies. Her focus lies on the development of alternative, queerfeminist narratives and narrative formats that address the complexity of a technological, digitalised and globalised world and that operate beyond the structures of established power mechanisms. She is a fellow of the interdisciplinary collaborative project *DiGiTaL - Arts and Science* and an alumna of the *Studienstiftung des deutschen Volkes*.

Sam Lavigne is an artist and educator based in New York whose work deals with data, surveillance, cops, natural language processing, and automation. Sam studied Comparative Literature at the University of Chicago and has a Master in Professional Studies at Interactive Telecommunications Program at New York University. He describes his work as "online interventions that surface the frequently opaque political and economic conditions that shape computational technologies". Sam Lavigne is the co-founder of the 'Stupid Shit No One Needs' and 'Terrible Ideas Hackathon' as well as the founding editor of 'Useless Press'. His most recent projects 'Zoom Escaper' and 'Zoom Deleter' are especially topical in the times of the pandemic.

Lucie Freynhagen studied Experimental Painting at the Dresden University of Fine Arts, and today works on artistic, conceptual and curatorial projects. She curates exhibitions for the art space "C. Rockefeller Center for the contemporary Arts", conceives performative fashion shows with "International Topsellers", brings art to public billboards with "Dresden Public Art View" and stages post-internet operas. Lucie Freynhagen aims to dismantle the language of the art market by questioning the way of how and where art is exhibited and distributed. Her work is all about conceived experiences, situations and the transformation of fantasy into the real possibility.