

## Hi, TECH!

WILL CRUICKSHANK, MAURIZIO MOCHETTI, NAM JUNE PAIK, CORNELIA PARKER, GIANNI PIACENTINO,  
FRANCK SCURTI, ALAIN URRUTIA, PETER VOGEL, WOLF VOSTELL

Curated by Gianluca Ranzi

In this exhibition, the relationship between art and technology is analysed through a selection of works by contemporary artists, ranging from Fluxus and the Avant-garde artists of the 1970s to today's younger generations.

In a social and political landscape where technology increasingly reveals itself to be technocracy, artists react through their works with critical, ironic and sometimes sarcastic commentary. They challenge the myths of performance efficiency, the acceleration of time, and excessive productivity. As with the works in the exhibition, art produces a linguistic reality, a form of resistance of complexity against banality. It advocates for the utopia of time that endures against the consumption of the instantaneous.

**Wolf Vostell** (Leverkusen, 1932 - Berlin, 1998) and **Nam June Paik** (Seoul, 1932 - Miami, 2006) began developing their research in the early 1960s in the Fluxus group and the Happening, bearing direct witness to the dawn of the technological era and its effects on the mass media and subjugation of an increasingly anaesthetised public bent to the will of the market and opinion-makers. While Wolf Vostell counters all of this with his powerfully critical and demystifying line of thinking, revealing the relationship between the degenerate ties between the war industry, the market and the enslavement of consciences, Nam June Paik, on the other hand, reacts to the estrangement of contemporary man through the mirage of an unprecedented alliance between art and technology, between man and machine. He recovers the sense of a life no longer conditioned by technology but instead supported by it, also through irony, playfulness and irreverence.

In another formative and geographical sphere, and from the late 1960s onwards, there was the work of **Gianni Piacentino** (Coazze, 1945). By reshaping a new alphabet of technological neo-objectification, he transformed reality into imagination, thereby going from consumption to fantasy, from functionality to formal contamination, from practical utility to a hypothesis of beauty that is timeless and placeless. For **Maurizio Mochetti** (Rome, 1940), too, the work of art was the tangible result, albeit often dematerialised in laser light, of the principle whereby technology acts as an instrument for manifesting ideas, just as the project becomes an aerial projection of thought. In the wake of the

powerful socially critical work of some of these examples, the art of the French artist **Franck Scurti** (Lyon, 1965) has its place today. Starting with everyday objects with a strong socio-economic meaning, he takes them through a formal metamorphosis that reinterprets their codes and elements. The meaning that these operations produce in the observer is also found in the painting by **Alain Urrutia** (Bilbao, 1981), a marvellous hybrid of the mental and the visual, ranging over the world of images, their media consumption, the paradoxical rendering between the familiarity of reading and the otherness of the manifestation of the uncanny. The Polaroids by **Cornelia Parker** (Cheshire, 1956) in the exhibition are the result of both a lucid and hallucinatory eye that also recalls Munch's anguished solitude. These snapshots show the unease of everyday life in relation to violence, time and capturing it in the moment, ecology and human rights. The other British artist on exhibit, **Will Cruickshank** (London, 1974), from his particular angle, also ponders the relationship between time, technology and human intervention, creating bachelor machines, looms and tools that quote the world of industriousness, of labour and production. In reality and also through the intervention of chance and error, they recover a non-dehumanising practice where creativity and thought prevail. The manual nature of a creative process that cites technology but navigates its shallows using imagination is also characteristic of the works by German artist **Peter Vogel** (Freiburg im Breisgau 1937-2017), which play and tease with movement and sound, making the observer an active part of their playful and participatory process.

## Hard Facts

MAAB Gallery

via Nerino 3 – 20123 Milano

From May 30<sup>th</sup> to July 12<sup>th</sup> 2024

Open from Tuesday to Friday, 10.30 am – 6 pm

Opening: Thursday, May 30 | 6 pm – 8 pm

## Information

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