

CUKRARNA

PRESS

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Marko Batista: *At the Edge of Reason*

Curated by Alenka Trebušak

11. 9.—2. 11. 2025

On Thursday, 11 September 2025, at 7 PM, Cukrarna Gallery will host the opening of *At the Edge of Reason*, an exhibition by artist Marko Batista.

Marko Batista moves across the fields of sound, image, and technology, creating innovative performances, sound installations or objects. In Cukrarna Gallery he is premiering an immersive environment consisting of electronic components, sound-emitting bodies and both obsolete and still functioning technical devices. In the exhibition *At the Edge of Reason*, he constructs a futuristic dystopian landscape that prompts the viewer to reflect on contemporary society's relationship with technology and the consequences of its advancement.



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ABOUT THE ARTIST

Marko BATISTA is a Ljubljana-based intermedia artist, audiovisual experimenter, and multidisciplinary performer. He graduated in painting from the Academy of Fine Arts and Design in Ljubljana and later completed a master's degree at Central Saint Martins in London. His practice lies at the intersection of technology, DIY art, and research processes, and he collaborates with a range of major cultural venues. By curatorial invitation, he has presented work at the 15th Istanbul Biennial, Ars Electronica in Linz, the Transmediale festival in Berlin, and NET. Audio in London. His works have been shown at the Museum of Contemporary Art Metelkova (MSUM) in Ljubljana, the Carinthian Gallery of Fine Arts, Dvorana Jedinstvo in Zagreb, Vžigalica Gallery, Kapelica Gallery, and more. Curator Boris Groys featured his work in the U3 edition at the Museum of Modern Art in Ljubljana. He has

also been included in all survey exhibitions of Slovenian contemporary art organized by MSUM+, which in 2024 acquired his work *Glass Sky* for its collection. In addition, he has participated in exhibitions such as Wonderlab (Novi Sad), Lumina (Portugal), Art Stays (Ptuj), Svetlobna gverila (Ljubljana), and Sajam3N (Croatia).

ACCOMPANYING TEXT FOR THE EXHIBITION

The exhibition *At the Edge of Reason* is a visual and acoustic representation of a futuristic dystopian landscape, which the artist Marko Batista uses to encourage the viewer to reflect on the relationship with technology in today's society.

Intermedia artist Marko Batista has been developing his work at the intersection of image and sound for thirty years. Characterised by its active use of technology, his artistic practice is experimental in nature, the result of scientific processes, particularly in the fields of electronics and acoustics. In the spirit of DIY culture, his works oppose the determinism of systems and aim to construct dynamic interfaces and hardware that allow for greater flexibility in the way they work. Using this method, Batista creates his own tools for producing what he calls micro-robotic machines: the responsive systems he uses to explore the phenomenology of sound and the perception of it.

Sound is therefore invariably present in Batista's work. It is a medium that he constantly transforms, reshaping it to different configurations and contexts, whether in performances, installations or objects. His installation for Cukrarna is a diverse, immersive environment consisting of electronic components, sound-emitting bodies and both obsolete and still functioning technical devices, which are combined with nearly forty electric motors and connected to form a functioning whole. *At the Edge of Reason* is a visual and acoustic representation of a futuristic dystopian landscape, which the artist uses to encourage the viewer to reflect on the relationship with technology in today's society. Its dynamics are a metaphor for the unstable nature of this relationship, which is in a constant state of negotiation and redefinition and goes hand in hand with technological progress. In this sound sculpture, Batista highlights one of the key aspects of artificial intelligence: its ability to predict the future based on the past. This kind of logic leads to a form of determinism, a fundamental contraction of possibilities, as the future becomes a project based on pattern recognition rather than a space for freedom, chance, potential or disruption.

Just as technology itself involves both active and passive processes, Batista's installation, too, is defined by the relationship between static and dynamic structures: on the one hand, there are elements from the early 2000s, and on the other, electronic devices that are still in use today. By connecting and mechanically animating both the static and the dynamic, the abovementioned motors trigger an overabundance of processes and can be read as a reference to modern technology, which controls a multitude of processes and is no longer just a tool for task automation but also an apparatus that increasingly influences the ways in which we perceive, act and subjectivise. Importantly, Batista designs some of his systems primarily for performances in which he triggers their sonic qualities at intervals, dramaturgically interweaving and directing them. However, since technology is becoming

increasingly self-controlling and self-sustaining, the sound installation system also works without the artist being present.

Batista is a sound architect who designs the listening point in relation to the position of the loudspeaker – or rather, the listening points, since he creates his soundscape using differently oriented sound sources that encourage the viewer to move, circulate and listen within the spatial layout of his installation. He breaks the sound down further into different levels and layers, ranging from pre-recorded material to the vibration frequencies and resonances that are triggered when the surfaces and materials are activated. In this way, *At the Edge of Reason* embodies the elusive mutability of the relationship between technology, production and society, and encourages reflection on this time of transition to a new era that is being ushered in by artificial intelligence.

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