Artist Interviews

# Pinar Yoldas

*1. What does the idea of a non-human world mean to you? Do you see it as an inspiring artistic proposition or as a real possibility for the near future?*

I do not get a kick out of the possibility of a non-human world. Since humans emerged as a species who dominated the planet, a world without humans would mean that our models for civilization failed us. I do not find inspiration in the mass failure of human cultures, to live harmoniously with other organisms inhabiting Earth. My inspiration comes from the intrinsic and undeniable beauty of the natural world in its all complexity to the point that we understand it with our science or by other means we have been endowed with. Yet it is very humbling to accept that human beings may or may not be around let's say in the next 500 years. It is the same kind of humbling thought that one could get when one understands their own death.

*2. The exhibition is based on a narrative that defines a specific context for the artists and visitors as well as for the additional education program. What implications do you think could come up by exhibiting your work in this setting? Do you think it could generate new readings of your work?*

Of course, each person has their own unique way of reading the work. This is what Umberto Eco talks about in the Open Work. His views have been a beacon for my artistic practice therefore I always work for layered pieces that can find alternate readings. The goal of Ecosystem of Excess is to illustrate an ocean in which plastic eating organisms flourished. An ocean that is alien in a way. An ocean as the fusion of nature and culture. An ocean full of plastics brimming with plastisphere life.

*3. What role does social, ecological and economical sustainability play in your artistic practice?*

My entire practice orbits around ecological justice. I have to say that after I departed from architecture and computer science I had a period of confusion where I did not know how to merge my aesthetic tendencies with my ideological self. I felt very strongly about the failure of consumerism yet the media arts scene I was engaged in seemed very apolitical. It was as if raising questions around what we now call the anthropocene did not matter that much. As if projects around how we failed at planetary health was more like a choice of taste. An Ecosystem of Excess which you are exhibiting is one of the first works I found funding support for that was at its core very activist (thanks to the vision of Kristoffer Gansing and Heike Mertens and HKW.)
So yes I believe in the urgency of the matter. I do not believe that we have the luxury of making art that does not touch upon social, ecological and economical justice.

*4. On which level do you think could art contribute to social and ecological changes?*

More than one could imagine.

*5. During the last decade the liaison between art and science has been a topic frequently discussed. In this context art was often considered to be a successful tool for the production of alternative forms of knowledge. How do you evaluate this idea?*

Are you asking me to make a comparison? Or to explain art in regards to science? There are a myriad ways art and science happens. I like to think that both good art and good science stem from a specific kind of curiosity about the world inside and outside. Art devises tools for manipulating thought via playing with emotion. Art creates sensations (Deleuze&Guattari.) But does not stop there. Science devises tools to manipulate the world. Science creates facts. The two is not that separate after all, but art is closer to our biology and science can transcend that.

*6. What is one of your favourite youtube videos that deals with a certain aspect of the exhibition (e.g. the non-human scenario, environmental factors or sustainability)?*

I chose videos in a gradient of violence towards non-human world

*CHINA FUR TRADE EXPOSED IN 60 SECONDS*

When the fur is finally peeled off over the animals' heads, their naked, bloody bodies are thrown onto a pile of those who have gone before them. Some are still alive, breathing in ragged gasps and blinking slowly. Some of the animals' hearts are still beating five to 10 minutes after they are skinned. One investigator recorded a skinned raccoon dog on the heap of carcasses who had *enough strength to lift his bloodied head and stare into the camera.*

*https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=oxVwsA2MLWA*

*From 30 seconds on very graphic.*

Blackfish, documentary on killer whales in captivity. Story of Tilikum who died in captivity at the age of 36 last year (almost my age). The part where a mother killer whale is screaming his calf’s name, after they have been separated by the SeaWorld people. The calf is transported to a new facility.

Watch MIDWAY on plastics in the ocean : https://vimeo.com/25563376

Watch Carl Safina talk about animals, sentience, emotions : https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=y9KeyKVuLHU

List goes on ….