

EDN Atelier: Breaking the Habits: Rebuilding Sustainability

Summary written by Carmen Amme

The EDN Atelier 'Breaking the Habits: Rebuilding Sustainability' was co-hosted by **Derida Dance Center** in Sofia, Bulgaria, and took place on May 10th and 11th 2022. During live and online panels, the international participants discussed how dance houses can be sustainable nowadays, and how certain technologies can support the transition of effectively going green. Guest speakers were **Manuela Sarkissyan**, Bulgarian puppeteer and performer, **Igor Crnković**, cinematographer and media producer, **Ivan Shopov**, Bulgarian composer and sound engineer, **Vladislav Iliev** and **Mihail Iliev** from [Studio Phormatik](#), and **Olof van Winden**, founder and director of [TodaysArt festival](#).

Manuela Sarkissyan proposed several ideas for the art industry to become more sustainable, which she also published in her guide 'Eco?Logic!' (available [online](#) in Bulgarian). With energy, transportation, garbage and material making up large parts in every production and institution, she proposes 4 R's to make them more sustainable: reduce, reuse, repurpose, and recycle. In 2021, she organised the 5-day workshop '[Art Lab for Clean Air](#)', where artists from different fields could explore and discuss the pressing environmental issues around the topic of air. The atelier showed that there are many different approaches to make the art and dance industry more sustainable.

Igor Crnković tries to move dance performances to the virtual space. In his project '[Springback Ringside](#)', he records different dance performances and presents them to the audience via 180° VR technology. By documenting existing productions and presenting them to a larger audience, Igor Crnković increases sustainability and reduces the carbon footprint that would be left if the whole team would travel to show the work. The fact that it's only him and a few technical devices that are needed to realize his projects also contributes positively to sustainability.

[Ivan Shopov](#) rebuilds sustainability through 'accident recycling'. He recycles by reusing sounds that are randomly created by a synthesizer and puzzling them together to a meaningful piece of music. Vladislav Iliev and Mihail Iliev from Studio Phormatik use novel forms of digital art, like real time rendering on stage, light design through projectors and AR techniques, to create intense and special experiences (<https://phormatik.com>). To increase sustainability, they create stage designs that don't need many tools to be implemented. Their dance performance [TELEPORT](#), developed in cooperation with Derida Dance Centre, is an example of how digital and live performance can be realized, thereby also including audiences from all over the world without having to travel.



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Olof van Winden dedicated his career to art, technology and music and founded the festival Today'sArt which centers around those three aspects. During his talk, Olof van Winden presented several ways in which technology can be fused with art: in his project '[Autonomous Trap 001](#)', James Bridle trapped autonomous vehicles into 'no entry' mode, thereby showing how easily technology can be manipulated. Another example on how technology and art can be merged is that of the Dutch artist and innovator Daan Roosegarde, who build '[smart highways](#)' that are outlined with glowing lines that charge during the

day and glow during the night to increase safety and enhance poetry, all in a sustainable way. Olof van Winden also presented the work of [Rhizomatiks Research](#), a Japanese art collective which is focusing on the exploration of artistic expression in the realms of technology. In their dance performance 'discrete figures', which makes use of artificial intelligence, a video projected avatar learns the movements from the dancer; at the end of the performance they are dancing in synchrony.

During this EDN atelier many of different options and possibilities to tackle environmental issues have been discussed and presented. Creative thinking is now needed to break our habits and rebuild sustainability in the field of art and performance.



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