

The Merging of Matter and Information

A short introduction by Katja Novitskova

The works by Anne de Vries offer access to our increasing entanglement with technology - its material and symbolic origins, our sense of the world as part of the universe and our expanding understanding of the laws of physics through different media. Where new technologies are influencing our perceptions of the world, with all its sociopolitical implications. From the mines, energy plants and factories, where the hardware basis of information technologies comes to being, to brand names, advertising images, product displays, personal use, and ultimately piles of toxic waste - commodities undergo a variety of state changes throughout complex ecological cycles.

Considering that what lies at the heart of every living being is genetic information, we are approaching an uncanny valley where life and technology coexist in a blurry commonality of their informational origin and material essence, each propagating an agenda of their own. Neolithic agricultural revolution for instance, can be seen not as an invention - a new human technology - but a state change, a result of coevolutionary development between humans and edible grasses. In this process of collaborative deforestation of land only some benefits were shared by humans. If we can look at the spread of Internet of Things as equivalent to the Neolithic agrarian revolution, then what is information technology's relationship with us as species? What does it take for a commodity to live, and what are the ecological principles of art?