

CYFEST 17 Natura Naturans: Human Beings, Nature, Landscape

Video Program

Reimagine the Landscape / Data Traces / Land of Memories

Curated by Victoria Ilyushkina

3 program screenings with 26 works

Program 1 “Reimagine the Landscape”

31 October 2026, 19:00 — Special Events Auditorium, Cafesjian Center for the Arts, Yerevan

Reimagine the Landscape approaches landscape not as a fixed backdrop, but as an active and constantly changing field shaped by natural processes, human memory, and computational systems. Geological time, digital technologies, personal experience, and artificial perception intersect across the works in the program. Here, the digital is neither separate from nature nor simply a tool for representing it. It becomes another way of sensing, recording, and transforming the environment — revealing its fragility, preserving traces of what is disappearing, and proposing new ways of understanding our place within it.

Grigor Khachatryan’s video diary “City TV series” (“Sayat Nova”, “Beatlemania”), produced at AR TV from 1996 to 2000, managed to grasp the everyday life of the city and survives precisely because it captured fleeting, imperfect moments of 1990s Yerevan that are now gone: buildings that have already vanished, clothing that has changed, movements and gestures we will see no more. Here the digital footage becomes “conceptual poetry” recalling a lost Yerevan, and the glitches and distortions of the medium become part of the surface of that landscape. The work by Studio Above&Below “Critical Landscapes – Series One” explores the dynamic relationship between human technological systems and the living processes of the Earth, explicitly treats “code, data, and material as co-creative agents,” reimagining the landscape as an “interconnected, evolving system” shaped by both geological forces and computational intervention (using the DeepMind GNoME model). Anabela Costa “Wind” translates the physical sensation of wind into a “poetic spatial image” embedded within an abstract three-dimensional digital landscape, where sound intensifies human sensory memory, highlighting the friction or harmony between biological and systemic perception. Sayler / Morris “The Amazon is Elsewhere” reflects on the Amazon as both a real place and a symbol shaped by outside ideas. Inspired by a crumbling university building in the Ecuadorian jungle, the work explores what happens when modern dreams fade and nature reclaims space. The Landscape as an Ephemeral Archive in the collaborative work “Twin of Earth” by Sid landovka & Leslie Thornton explores affinities between the two idiosyncratic artistic archives — calling out to each other across intervening decades and mediums. Garush Melkonyan “Ubi sunt” depicts a purely organic landscape that requires human gestures and proto-language to restore harmony. Within this context, it serves as a vital counterpoint — representing the natural world that exists outside digital intervention, yet is acutely threatened and desperately needing preservation.

Program 2 “Data Traces”

21 November 2026, 19:00 — Special Events Auditorium, Cafesjian Center for the Arts, Yerevan

Data Traces brings together works in which information drawn from bodies, ecosystems, weather, and technological environments becomes part of the artistic process itself. Data is not treated as a neutral description of reality, but as an active material capable of reshaping how landscapes, bodies, and systems are perceived. Across the program, distinctions between the organic and the computational, physical places and digital representations, natural evolution and technological intervention become increasingly unstable. Landscape emerges as a living document: continuously recorded, processed, and rewritten.

Arnaud Laffond / “Breathing” — inspired by the universal act of breathing, the work transforms “meteorological and environmental data” into evolving light and visual landscapes, projected onto architectural or sculptural forms, making invisible processes visible and questioning how data “reshapes our perception of climate change.”

Guli Silberstein / “MATERIALIVE” creates an audio-visual documentary of the hyperreal and living form, born from the history of dreams, actively “moshes” body, pixels, nature, and neural networks, made by a unique combination of generative AI and algorithmic datamoshing.

Liudmila Belova / “Diary of Observations” (video: Iurii Tolstoguzov, sound: Kristina Petukhina) explicitly frames this as an encounter between “the organic natural environment and the logic of technological systems,” tactile explorations of nature by AI Blob tracking software, synchronizing AI tracking with the artist’s real-time hand movements to imagine how a machine perceives living nature, visualizing tactile explorations. Soundscape syncs with artist painting.

Jean-Michel Rolland / “Affordance” depicts a physical, reversible interaction with nature — a man resting in a tree — and, through the figurative transformation of a digital image, shows the impact of time, which leaves no trace in the real landscape.

Hong Chen / “The Command of Origin” uses “heart-rate data” translated into parameters to modulate a particle universe, revealing a reciprocal relationship where “individuals and systems continuously produce, regulate, and transform one another.”

Citron | Lunardi / “Kingdom Plantae” imagines a post-human future where nature re-emerges in hybrid forms: ecosystems reconstructed through data and pixels, created via human-AI collaboration, luminescent plants reduced to simulacra and sustained by generators on natural/artificial platforms, forming a continuous cycle of mutation and regeneration.

Anton Khlabov / “Distortion of Signal” (sound: Giuseppe Di Bisceglie) turns to the urban landscape, where distorted advertisements become “ephemeral light scattered across the imperfect surfaces of the city” — an echo of the same fragility.

Mark Cypher / “Dis_place” is a net-artwork that deforms landscapes through geographic, personal and economic data, arguing that neither place nor data has fixed meaning, but both “emerge through networks of relationships.”

Sami Keskikallio / “Bordering”. Some phenomena of nature seen through an artificial divide. Filmed in the northern cities of Haparanda (Sweden) and Tornio (Finland), which share a border and, more or less, a culture.

Tonoptik / “Latent Space” is an AI-driven audiovisual work that transforms Bangkok’s electrical wires into digital landscapes where human-made networks “begin to resemble organic forms,” deliberately “blurring boundaries between nature and technology, landscape and data.” (Based on a corpus of photographs, the imagery is processed through machine learning and temporal interpolation, generating fluid, unstable visual layers accompanied by sound derived from electrical signals.)

Jaanika Peerna / “All That Is Kelp Melts Into Ice” (camera and sound: David Rothenberg, editing: Harriet Lengel Enright) is a performance film in which the cinematic gaze itself becomes a transformative agent collapsing temporal and ecological scales into a single, haunting encounter. Jaanika Peerna brings her signature ‘last piece of ice on Earth’ into a forest of kelp in the extreme tides of the Bay of Fundy on Grand Manan Island, where sea and sand confront the richness of the plant world with the lingering presence of dwindling glaciers on our hearts and minds.

Program 3 “Land of Memories”

19 December 2026, 19:00 — Special Events Auditorium, Cafesjian Center for the Arts, Yerevan

Land of Memories turns from external landscapes toward inner and imagined ones. Animation becomes a way of mapping memory, psychological transition, altered states of perception, and possible futures. Across the program, fixed realities dissolve: documentary experience meets speculation, human perception encounters non-human perspectives, and personal memory becomes inseparable from constructed and imagined worlds.

Together, the works suggest that in a world shaped by ecological crisis and an overwhelming circulation of information, reality can no longer be understood as stable or singular. Organic life, physical environments, memory, and computational systems remain in constant transformation.

Marc Lee’s “Hi, AI agents! Create new chimeras based on scientific publications such as genetics and robotics” uses AI and the mobile app “Speculative Evolution” to generate entirely new lifeforms — chimeras that combine traits from animals, plants, fungi and robots, drawing on 3D printing, CRISPR and genetic engineering, to predict how they could balance our ecosystem and improve biodiversity, sustainability, health and resilience.

Lin Yen-Ju’s “0” explores space as a perceptual interface that destabilizes reality, foregrounds the tension between corporeality and abstraction, using dreamlike animation to construct a “liminal field” where the self dissolves into spatial illusion, treating reality itself as a constructed, animated projection of cognition.

In the video poem “Swarm,” Edward Kulemin translates swarm intelligence (a definition from biology and bionics) into moving ideographic and asemic texts and a soundtrack. The animation here simulates the distributed, decentralized consciousness of a hive, reducing the human perspective to a collective, insect-like visual language

Sid landovka's "(e)scape goat" lets the work take place on its own terms, unsteady and strange, untethered to familiar, predictable, habitual orders of media perception or consumption. The lightest touch, almost leaving the image alone, introduces unexpected pluralities, sensory and evidentiary traces, potentialities, displacing rather than grounding the image, bringing about new forms of visualization, new possible worlds.

Ellen Pearlman's "Brenda" integrated into algorithmic representations of human memory. Artistic representations of individualized memories use processes paralleling recent research in neurophysiological models of spatial and cognitive memory mapping, indicating an emerging synthesis and co-opting of human memory using "biomimetic" algorithmic modeling. The video Brenda shows mimicked algorithmic interpretations of seminal individualized human memories coupled with linguistic fragments as a soundtrack.

Ani Chopuryan's "The Weight of Becoming" creates animated collage (fragments of bodies, landscapes, paintings) to visualize the "fragile space" between past and future selves. The landscape is not a forest or a city; it is the terrain of psychological transition.

Yanina Chernykh's "The Nivkhs" physically attaches a camera to a dog, using the animal's movement to generate the cinematic image. The "animation" of the frame, its rhythm and motion, is determined by a non-human actor, blurring documentation and mythology through a distinctly embodied, four-legged perspective.

Diana Kapizova's "There, over the rainbow..." animates the pink skies and rivers of her industrial hometown, blending childhood memories of The Wizard of Oz with ecological reality. Animation allows the physical landscape of Pervouralsk to become a magical, melancholic, and deeply personal narrative space, rather than an objective data-point.

Arman Ayvazyan's "Dragonfly" creates deep visual poetry and unique editing to trace the ripples of an unnoticed sacrifice through time and cosmos, treating animation as a philosophical inquiry into causality and light, far removed from data-driven documentation.