

ART from ESLEWHERE: Mexico City
The MOMENTUM Collection at LAGOS

AES+F



***Inverso Mundus* (2015), 4K Video with sound, 38'**

Comingling art historical traditions of allegory with digital animation, video and photography, *Inverso Mundus* shows us a world turned upside down. Seen in this exhibition - at a time when war once more rages in Europe, when the world is still recovering from the human and economic devastations of the pandemic, when environmental crisis looms ever closer, when politics is ever more a regressive game of fools - *Inverso Mundus* is a scathing critique of our times. It is a reflection on a world unmaking itself, relentlessly turning backwards to a Dark Ages of warfare and plague.



ARTIST STATEMENT:

The title of this video, *Inverso Mundus*, means the world upside down. Engravings in the genre of “World Upside Down”, known since the 16th century, depict such scenes as a pig gutting the butcher, a child punishing his teacher, a man carrying a donkey on his back, man and woman exchanging roles and dress, and a beggar in rags magnanimously bestowing alms on a rich man. These engravings contain demons, chimeras, fish flying through the sky and death itself, variously with a scythe or in the mask of a plague doctor. The title of the work, *Inverso* – both in Italian “reverse, the opposite” and the Old Italian “poetry”, and *Mundus* the – Latin “world”, hint at a reinterpretation of reality, a poetic vision. In our interpretation, the absurdist scenes from the medieval carnival appear as episodes of contemporary life in a multichannel video installation. Characters act out scenes of absurd social utopias and exchange masks, morphing from beggars to rich men, from policemen to thieves. Metrosexual street-cleaners are showering the city with refuse. Female inquisitors torture men on IKEA-style structures. Children and seniors are fighting in a kickboxing match. *Inverso Mundus* is a world where chimeras are pets and the Apocalypse is entertainment.

- AES+F

AES+F (Artist Group founded in Moscow in 1987. Live and work in Berlin, Germany and New York, USA.)

www.aesf.art

First formed in Moscow as AES Group in 1987 by Tatiana Arzamasova, Lev Evzovich, and Evgeny Svyatsky, the collective became AES+F when Vladimir Fridkes joined in 1995. AES+F work at the intersection of traditional media, photography, video and digital technologies. They define their practice as a kind of “social psychoanalysis” through which they reveal and explore the values, vices and conflicts of contemporary global culture. In 2015, AES+F premiered *Inverso Mundus* at the 56th Biennale di Venezia, and later showed it at the Kochi-Muziris Biennial and a number of other museums and festivals around the world.



AES+F achieved worldwide acclaim in the Russian Pavilion at the 52nd Biennale di Venezia in 2007, and since then have participated in many signature biennials around the world, including: Adelaide, Gwangju, Havana, Helsinki, Istanbul, Kiev, Kochi-Muziris, Lille, Lyon, Melbourne, Moscow, St. Moritz, Sydney, Taipei, Vancouver, and others. Festivals devoted to new media include: ARS Electronica (Linz), Mediacity Seoul and Video Zone (Tel Aviv).

AES+F have had over 100 solo exhibitions at museums and galleries worldwide, including: ZKM (Karlsruhe), HAM (Helsinki), Moderna Museet (Stockholm), Tate Britain (London), MAXXI and MACRO Future (Rome), Centre Pompidou (Paris), Museo Thyssen-Bornemisza (Madrid), Today Art Museum (Beijing), Mori Art Museum (Tokyo), Leeum Samsung Museum of Art (Seoul), State Russian Museum (St. Petersburg), Garage Museum of Contemporary Art (Moscow), National Gallery of Australia (Canberra), Faena Art Center (Buenos Aires), and many others.

Their works appear in some of the world's principal collections of contemporary art, such as: Moderna Museet (Stockholm), MOCAM (Kraków), Sammlung Goetz (Munich), ZKM (Karlsruhe), Art Gallery of South Australia (Adelaide), and the Museum of Old and New Art (Tasmania), Centre de Arte dos de Mayo (Madrid), Centre Pompidou (Paris), and the Louis Vuitton Foundation (Paris), the Vanhaerents Art Collection (Brussels), Taguchi Art Collection (Tokyo), and many others. Their work is also well represented in some of Russia's principal national museums, such as: The State Tretyakov Gallery (Moscow), The State Russian Museum (St. Petersburg), the National Center for Contemporary Art, and the Multimedia Art Museum (Moscow).

AES+F received many significant awards, including: the Sergey Kuryokhin Award 2011, the main award of the Kandinsky Prize 2012, the main award of the NordArt Festival 2014, and Pino Pascali Prize 2015 (18th Edition) for the project Allegoria Sacra. AES+F were also awarded a Bronze Medal (2005) and a Gold Medal (2013) by the Russian National Academy of Fine Arts.