

GES-2

Similarity Index

On 25 April, the international *Similarity Index* project will open at GES-2 House of Culture, inviting us to contemplate small things in a planetary context

Planet and soil, territory and habitat, reservoir of memory and wellspring of resources, recipient of labour, care, and protection, fragile organism and insurmountable force—the authors of this exhibition excavate, describe, and analyse the historical layers of our planet, the personal and collective histories of loss of its inhabitants, and rapacious efforts to acquire ever larger areas of earth (and Earth).

Artem Timonov, curator:

“Attempts to form a holistic concept of our planet have always been mired in contradictions. Is it an immense world, or a mere speck in the Universe? The most powerful of the elements or a fragile organism? An object of religious veneration or raw material for exploitation? The earth has always eluded a single definition. The Similarity Index exhibition gives us the chance to look at our home through a kaleidoscope of diverse approaches, to marvel, be horrified, or fall into a contemplative trance before it.”

The Earth Similarity Index is a scale reflecting the physical resemblance of other planets to our own, allowing us to form an approximate idea of whether a given planet might be suitable for human beings and other living creatures. The index is calculated according to a complex formula devised by an international group of biologists, chemists, astronomers, and planetary scientists. This scientific view of the earth as a holistic organism on a planetary scale serves as a point of departure for *Similarity Index*: the artworks exhibited as part of the project pair scientific approaches with the subjective perspectives of individuals or of communities—theories and facts are combined with poetic, symbolic, intuitive, political, or speculative material.

The project brings together artists from Russia, Brazil, Chile, China, Greece, Portugal, Thailand, and the United Kingdom; participants include Lucas Bambozzi, Li Binyuan, Filipa César, Zhenya Chaika and Zhenya Gavrilov, Haris Epaminonda, the Gentle Women Group (Alexandra Artamonova and Evgenia Lapteva), Olga Grotova, Laboratory of Geocultural Research, Deborah Stratman, and Ana Vaz. *Similarity Index* mainly features videos, films, and installations; every visitor is given headphones at the entrance, and then left to contemplate the works in solitude. To watch them through, one either needs to spend many hours at the exhibition or to visit it several times.

The architecture of the exhibition space is ruled by the principle of upcycling, or secondary usage. The basis of several structures in *Similarity Index* are materials from previous GES-2 projects. In this way, the House of Culture is taking its first steps towards a more environmental approach to exhibition design.

The Similarity Index project is an international continuation of the exploration of personal memory as an element of global processes begun by the exhibition *The Sunset Fired a Hundred Suns* in Autumn of 2023, and develops an important theme for GES-2: “The Earth: Personal vs. Planetary.”

Similarity Index
25 Apr–22 Sep

Curators:
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Anna Ilchenko
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[Press kit](#)

GES-2 House of Culture is a cultural institution and urban space, the main platform of V–A–C Foundation in Russia.

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