

25th IAA SYMPOSIUM ON SPACE ACTIVITY AND SOCIETY (E5)  
Contemporary Arts Practice and Outer Space: A Multi-Disciplinary Approach (4)

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WYSINATI PROJECT: SOCIAL ART USING SPACE-BASED X-BAND SYNTHETIC APERTURE  
RADAR AND VERY HIGH RESOLUTION OPTICAL SATELLITES

**Abstract**

We present a project that includes two innovations: the development of a new form of social artistic expression and a new application of space technology to contemporary art practice.

We propose a social artistic intervention performed synchronously within a global project. This project will involve actions produced on the ground, in different countries, implemented by different teams, all of them involved in the WYSINATI Project (WYSINATI: What You See Is Not All There Is).

Nobel Prize winner Daniel Kahneman introduced the concept What You See Is All There Is (WYSIATI). His theory states that when the mind makes decisions, it deals primarily with Known Knowns, phenomena it has already observed. It rarely considers Known Unknowns, phenomena that it knows to be relevant but about which it has no information.

Playing with appearances has been indeed a distinctive resource of contemporary art. Often the non-speech makes implicit precisely what is not said. But not remaining explicit the message can be misunderstood. We intend to work with two explicit meanings imagewise, one clearly exposed and visible, the other hidden, only detectable by radar.

Space technology allows us to work on two simultaneous levels of artistic expression. In the first level, on the ground, we can perceive an orthodox image, a geoglyph made with ecofriendly materials, carrying a non-aggressive, politically correct and non-controversial meaning. The picture of this geoglyph will be taken by an optical satellite. But in a second level, beneath that first geoglyph, lies hidden another image, a geoglyphs steganography, imbued with a controversial meaning. This geoglyph remain invisible to any satellite or aerial image in the visible range, and can only be revealed by a radar satellite.

We plan to use the following space assets: 1. Constellation of SAR satellites: TerraSAR-X, TanDEM-X and PAZ 2. Constellation of VHR Optical Satellites: Pleiades 1A and Pleiades 1B

The images taken by the satellites will be processed after being downloaded and will be exhibited as large printouts or video projections.

The main goal of the WYSINATI project is to exhibit the optical image and the radar one side by side. Doing so we will face two readings, what is shown versus what is hidden, what is seen versus what underlies beneath, the censored versus the freely expressed. In summary What You See Is Not All There Is.