

# Let's Play event

## Sanatorium Anthropocene Retreat

The COVID-19 pandemic impacted the theme of the Venice Biennale. The Barthesian problem, *How will we live together?* -- an issue of interspecies communication -- turned into a matter of life and death for all humanity.

The *Sanatorium Anthropocene Retreat* game examines the development of anti-anthropocentric philosophical concepts from the perspective of the classical 'vergilian' road movie. The key utopian concepts of antihumanism, posthumanism, transhumanism, and technological singularity as well as the doctrines of Haraway, Latour, and Land are introduced in a magical fantasy performance where the protagonist undergoes a sequence of transformations resulting from his interactions with the other main characters.

The gameplay is based on the fluid identity of the protagonist. His settings are not defined and are subject to change in function of the interactions with non-player characters.

Incidentally, the game through speed of the storyline determines the answer to the vital question of the last decade, namely the exact date of the beginning of Anthropocene, that is, the epoch of significant human impact on Earth.

*Does the non-human agent come from Lemuria? Is it a cross between a Hyperborean and an Atlantean, according to Madame Blavatsky?*

*How are the players supposed to deal with necro coin mining when they transform into COVID-19, a creature of the fresh and heavy summer soil?*

*Is it true that the desire to register its own existence is the hallmark of humanity?*

*What are the names behind the characters representing post-,*

*trans-, and antihumanist approach?*

*Is there a limit to entropy?*

*Are the cute Boston Dynamics Spot robot dogs our helpers or smart new recruits of the killer robot forces joined not only by the living?*

*What is behind the alarming future? The crater of the Great Old Ones, an ominous void, readjustment of senses in favour of today's stars, electronic extensions of human functions or the good old ancient Logos, no less terrible for that? █*

*And, last but not least, when did Anthropocene actually begin?*

*Sanatorium Anthropocene Retreat tackles all of these questions, and Nikolay Smirnov, curator and geographer, is going to offer his take on the answers during the public Let's Play event.*

Nikolay Smirnov works as an artist, a geographer, a curator and a researcher regarding spatial practices and representations of space and place in art, science, museum practices and everyday life. His practice is aimed at analysis and implementation of complex narratives in form of text, exhibition dispositive and film. He recently developed the concept of speculative geography as a tool for local studies.