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Abstract.

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Un-earthing Bodies in Cinema.

The curators of the 14th Shanghai Biennale, 2023: 'Cosmos Cinema' at Power Station of Art, Shanghai, propose that 'film is a cosmic phenomenon, and that cinema is well placed as a medium to change our understanding of the universe and our place within it'¹. In the exhibition catalogue proposals by German philosopher Alexander Kluge present the cosmos as a form of cinema, the index of all events which are recorded by the light traces, they leave behind and the connection is made with the early twentieth century Russian movement 'cosmism', a precursor of transhumanism, which proposed a move to regulate the forces of nature². This paper embraces the Cosmos Cinema exhibition format of montage to focus on the recombination of elements to produce new meanings exploring different ways in which humanity interacts with and understands the context of the universe by delving into experiments for space settlements and how these unsettle our understanding of life and living on our planet. How does the legacy of 'space settlements' in film manifest current issues of ecological, socio-political and economic crisis scenarios? *Urth* by Ben Rivers (2016) and *Extra-Terrestrial Ecologies* by Ralo Mayer (2018) are experimental films which both include footage from inside Biosphere 2, the space settlement prototype, in Arizona. River's protagonist is the last woman on Earth, a logbook accounts her struggles with sustaining her world and Mayer speculates that the 'ninth biospherian' is a ghost. Both films are a cinematic exploration of past and future space which examine transformations of humans and human cultures via what River suggests are 'temporary autonomous zones' or which Mayer labels 'un-earthing'. Here the audience experience amazement at phenomena characterized by the fact that they become apparent only in the experience of a postapocalyptic time - a little part of the universe finally reaches your body. What would an endeavor such as Biosphere 2 mean today in terms of relationships with the body and the natural? From a historical-philosophical perspective and to follow Benjamin and Agamben, what remains in a time that has already begun to end or how does 'cosmic wonder' overcome conflicting and overlapping ideologies on earth that really map its territory?

¹ Vidokle. A, Introduction to 14th Shanghai Biennale: Cosmos Cinema. Accessed 5 April 2024. <https://www.powerstationofart.com/whats-on/programs/shanghai-biennale/home>

² Young. G, *The Russian Cosmists: The Esoteric Futurism of Nikolai Fedorov and His Followers*, Oxford University Press, 2012, p280.