

PROJECT PROPOSAL:

Federation of Minor Practices

Curator: Martina Yordanova

Artists: Veneta Androva, Gery Georgieva, Maria Nalbantova, Rayna Teneva



Bird's eye view of the pavillion

The spatial configuration of the Bulgarian Pavilion, defined by its rectangular form and elongated proportions is conceived as a sequential spatial trajectory through which visitors move both physically and temporally. The architecture is not treated as a neutral container, but as an active agent in articulating the curatorial structure, which unfolds through a movement between the near past, a speculative present, and an open projection toward the future.

The pavilion is organised into a series of zones that are not rigidly separated but flow gradually into one another. In the initial section, the film works are situated as archival signals from the near past, surrounding the viewer and introducing a range of political, social, and ecological tensions. In the central zone, the space opens up and shifts into an interactive environment, where the present is experienced as a zone of suspension and experimentation. Here, the architecture supports the logic of the game through spatial concentration, gathering, and the possibility of collective participation. The final section of the pavilion does not offer closure or resolution in the sense of a completed narrative, but rather a gradual release and withdrawal. The space becomes less defined, allowing the experience to remain open and unresolved. In this way, the linear structure of the pavilion becomes a spatial embodiment of the curatorial concept itself: a passage through signals of the past, the activation of the present as a field of action, and the future left as a condition of possibility rather than a fixed image.



Portal

The final zone of the pavilion is conceived as a portal with a mirrored opening that functions simultaneously as an entrance and an exit, as a threshold between inside and outside, present and future. This zone does not impose a fixed direction of movement but allows for reversibility and hesitation. Visitors may enter the exhibition through the portal and move from the future toward the interactive environment and the video zone, or traverse the space in the opposite direction. In this way, movement does not follow a linear narrative but reflects a logic of repeated return, reordering, and rethinking.

The mirrored opening creates a moment of self recognition and temporary suspension. Instead of offering an image of the future, the visitor encounters their own reflection, situated within the context of what has just been experienced. The future is not presented as a vision or a scenario, but as an indeterminate space activated through bodily presence.

As visitors pass through the portal, a sound installation is triggered, composed of fragmented sentences, terms, and short formulations drawn from the vocabulary of the curatorial framework. These sonic elements function as a kind of exhibition glossary, in which key concepts, philosophical references, working notions, and shared inspirations from the collaborative process intertwine. The voices do not form a continuous narrative but appear and disappear, overlap and diverge, creating a sense of cognitive resonance.

The sound environment does not provide instructions or explanations, but opens a space for association and personal interpretation. It functions as an acoustic threshold that marks the transition between different experiential modes within the pavilion. In this sense, the portal does not conclude the exhibition but leaves it open, transforming the future into a condition of possibility rather than an endpoint.



Interactive environment

The central zone of the pavilion is conceived as an interactive environment in which the visitor shifts from the position of a viewer to that of an active participant. Here, the present is experienced as a field of action, choice, and collective thinking. At the core of this environment is a specially developed digital game, created in partnership with a professional digital laboratory, whose letter of support is included in the application. The game is conceptually and content wise based on the film works of the four artists and takes the form of a quiz journey. Participants are confronted with different social, political, and ethical positions extracted and transformed from images, situations, and narratives found in the films. The questions do not aim at correct answers but rather activate processes of recognition, positioning, and doubt. The game does not simulate reality but fragments it, translating complex social tensions into playable situations.

Examples of questions include scenarios in which participants are asked to recognise a point of view, make decisions under conditions of incomplete information, or position themselves within conflicts between care, control, collectivity, and individual choice. In this way, the game functions as a tool for temporarily inhabiting different social roles, without imposing a moral framework or a hierarchy of positions. Formally and conceptually, the game draws from the collaborative working process that underpins the project, metaphorically described as a cauldron, a shared container in which ideas, positions, and experiences are mixed, transformed, and continuously renegotiated. The interactive environment thus does not operate as an addition to the exhibition but as its extension into a different experiential mode.

Technologically, the environment is realised through Raspberry Pi mini computers connected to touch screen interfaces, enabling intuitive activation and navigation through the different stages of the game. In parallel, a mobile phone version of the game is developed and made accessible within the space, expanding the possibilities for participation and allowing for multiple modes of engagement. The game is the result of the joint work of the four artists and the curator and is conceived not only as a participatory tool but also as a method for researching and archiving public attitudes toward various social and political issues. The anonymously collected responses can function as a living archive, reflecting momentary states, hesitations, and collective sensibilities. The development of the game will be carried out in partnership with the digital laboratory within a maximum timeframe of one month. The process will be led by game designer Zlatka Uzunova, a long term lecturer in game design at New Bulgarian University and an established professional with extensive experience in developing interactive and educational game formats. This professional context ensures both the conceptual depth and the technical reliability of the implementation.



Video zone

The video zone is located at the beginning of the spatial trajectory and functions as a site of encounter with the near past, articulated through moving images and sound. The presented film works are by women artists whose long term practices consistently engage with political, social, and ecological questions that overlap with the curatorial framework of the project. Their selection is not illustrative but structural. Their works form an archive of positions, gestures, and critical approaches that establish the conceptual ground for the experience unfolding throughout the pavilion.

The films are positioned in a way that surrounds the viewer and creates a sense of immersion without imposing a single fixed point of view. The projection is realized through a high quality projector, carefully aligned with the architecture of the space so that the image remains clearly visible while not overpowering the bodily presence of the visitor. Sound is delivered through a sound system consisting of two speakers and a subwoofer, producing a dense yet controlled acoustic environment that remains contained within the video zone and does not interfere with the other areas of the exhibition.

The screening system is based on a Raspberry Pi mini computer, programmed with a dedicated playlist corresponding to the eight hour daily opening schedule of the pavilion. The total duration of the film works is approximately 120 minutes, with one film having a duration of 85 minutes. In order to ensure a relatively balanced screen presence for all participating artists, the projection timeline combines scheduled screenings of the longer film with continuous looping of the remaining three works. In this way, the video zone operates both as an archival structure and as a dynamic temporal field, where time is not linear but rhythmically organized.



Cross Section

The cross section of the Bulgarian Pavilion simultaneously visualizes the vertical organization of the spatial zones, the distribution of sound environments, and the integration of technological systems. It demonstrates how the architecture functions as a supporting structure not only for the exhibition elements but also for the entire technical infrastructure of the project.

All electrical, audio, and digital cabling within the pavilion is designed in response to the specific risks of the space, including the possibility of flooding. The cabling for projection equipment, sound installations, and the interactive environment is routed through overhead suspended systems and architectural elements above floor level. This approach minimizes the risk of direct contact with moisture and provides maximum protection for the technical infrastructure in the event of an incident. This solution enables a clear organization of the installation, easy access for maintenance and dismantling, and flexibility in adapting the exhibition to the spatial conditions. The technical logic follows a principle of unobtrusive presence, maintaining the visual clarity of the exhibition while ensuring the safety and durability of the implementation.