



AUTOPOIESIS
METAHAVEN

Exhibition text
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Entropy Moves

We're only seconds away, time travel is possible.

Chaos Theory

He came to steal the future, his truth for all.

Information Skies

The same riddle that lies at the heart of modern physics echoes through the recent work of Metahaven: why does it seem that time moves only in one direction? Why are there records of the past but not of the future? Why is it that we can cause events to move 'forwards' but not 'backwards,' when, as one of the characters in *Chaos Theory* says, 'there is no now?'

Classical physics was timeless. It allowed us to make constant and reliable predictions, no matter if the events happened in the present, the past, or the future. Truth could be calculated inside an absolute, unchanging time. A pendulum swung, and it did not matter whether it went forwards or backwards: you could predict its movements all the same. After the industrial revolution, machines allowed us to study microscopic layers of temporality and scrambled causality once and for all. Certainty is no longer given. *Information Skies* and *Chaos Theory* peek into the uncertainty of our age without ever mentioning machines, only alluding to their logic: 'formerly known as dream, now we have a video.' In *Chaos Theory*, characters move around in circles or across the border of night and day, advised that 'there might be disinformation ahead,' and 'hidden layers' might be unearthed, where 'black swan' events abound. There is no now, neither is there truth, they tell us. They live in a digital world, captured as sensation and poetry, and through media both 'tactile' and 'virtual.' The science-fiction of digital culture is grasped as an everyday hazy reality, where time and truth are both out of joint.

Metahaven does not need to explicitly show us computers, quantum mechanics, simulations, and multiverses for us to understand that time and truth are unstable. They instead show how for human culture, which relies on the transmission of information, the passage of time is a beautiful and cruel hallucination. Information wants to carry a stable message but it must do so across time. This is no innocent crossing. In the expanse of time, each movement invites disintegration. Entropy moves through meaning, which does not survive unscathed. Language and matter are only the aftershocks of information carving itself into time, and time later dismembering it. *'You and I in a time machine,'* as *Chaos Theory* describes it, where no 'truth' can survive.

Chaos increases towards the so-called 'future.' Eventually, sense itself will not survive. Destruction–entropy–is the way in which we measure the motion of time. *Death is virtual reality, Information Skies* proclaims. Everything dies, makes less sense, stories unlink and certainty crumbles–this is how time moves forward through us.

The name we have for information that arrives too soon is technology. Technology wants you on its own time. It moves in a distributed manner, overlapping past and future, making everything true and false all at once: *'we orbit in groundless space'* (*Chaos Theory*), *'full circle, face the void'* (*Information Skies*). It is already here, a heavy machinery on our bodies, but the message is unclear. Its complexity needs to be weighted down by time, so that we may begin to piece it all together. We can only make sense of it by untangling ourselves from linear logic, by moving towards a chaos theory. The threads of cause and effect untangle. It becomes impossible to know if you are using the tools or if the tools are using you.

- Bogna Konior