

# IDEAR KRAFT- WERK,

LETTER BY  
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CURATOR

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- NICCOLO PELLARIN
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  - LUCA SOUDANT
  - PEDRO MATIAS
  - ANTONIO LOPEZ  
ESPINOSA



Dear Kraftwerk,  
(Cc to all other signifiers of a paradigm shift),

First of all, I want to express my condolences on the recent loss of Florian Schneider – one of your founding members. All together you created a band that would change the understanding of tone, sound and music infinitely. You have started on the paved way of an *Autobahn* (1974), but your journey with an unknown destination led you off the beaten track, during which you explored, assessed and embraced the possibilities of a new mode of music creation through the sole use of electronic instruments. Not only the technique was new – your lyrical views were visionary of a world becoming ever more structured, defined and controlled by electronic devices. Considering your work as the prelude of an electronic turn, a plethora of other turns are taking shape at the moment, which we are only in the midst of grasping. An obvious turn emerging from the electronic sphere is the digital one, which, like a liquid entity, found its way to the deepest point possible, as the digital sphere has become one of the fundamentals of many societies across the world.

Naturally this phenomenon has been used as much as critiqued within the arts. For example, Nicolò Pellarin leaves behind a fictional landscape with non-alphabetic language in urban spaces, with which he unsettles everyday scenarios in real life to revert attention back from the digital sphere to the physical one. This might be a solution for the way we increasingly inhabit the world through our digital devices. Cóilín O'Connell contrastingly creates an abundant archive of digitized Neolithic stone monuments to scrutinise our methods of processing the past, present and imaging the future. How did you, dear Kraftwerk, continue to imagine the future while pandemics and disasters; fights for systematic changes and equality; economic and political crises; upheavals and wars were profoundly shifting the world around you throughout the years?

While Roman Tkachenko has been investigating the political implications of the design of public spaces in order to disclose its vulnerabilities and misuses,

the meaning of the term 'public' is shifting due to the COVID-19 pandemic. People across an entire globe have been confined to their private spaces, at least those who are privileged to stay at home and to have a home. The private sphere has never been so closely intertwined with the public one. Forced to meet with appropriate distance, over the phone or digitally, it has become clear that a sense of belonging among people is created not only within, but also beyond both these physical spaces. Communities have gathered through proxy moments of contact, considerably online.

Some might even say that our online identity has become more important than the offline parallel universe, like Joanne Vosloo is exploring by crafting digital images as well as through the writings of her alter ego Octo Jozer. In addition, Cindy Wegner is looking into which actions have been undertaken to connect people when togetherness was missing. Wegner in particular focuses on the reunification attempts and processes of the former East and West after the fall of the Berlin wall, which also raised questions on the sense of belonging.

Your electronic sound, dear Kraftwerk, actually travelled from West-Germany to the USA, where it laid the foundation for house music and influenced many musicians, as we among others can hear in *Aquabahn* (1994) by Detroit's Drexciya. Some of their new sounds, as well as from many others, created on the other side of the Atlantic then crossed the ocean. From the late 1990s, the Berlin record label Tresor started for example to release records by Drexciya. Such sounds have heavily influenced the capital's techno scene, which became world-renowned. So, my dear Kraftwerk, it is safe to say that we can feel connected through art regardless of its form, right? However, as Stephanie Schuitemaker is asking us, why do we resonate with art and why do some works resonate more than others?

Over time, another wave of changes rooted in the era you started has become more and more layered in order to represent the complexity of issues at stake. The relationship between body, sexuality, gender and identity has increasingly challenged dominant norms and

systems such as patriarchy and heterosexuality. This has led to more fluid ideas about this relationship, opening up space to let the actual mind and feelings reign, as in the work of Gabriella Goldsmith.

Gender performativity in sound and music has been scrutinised too. Luca Soudant investigates the tactility of sound and the way it can touch a body, both emotionally and physically. They explore how we can use that to our benefit in order to bend it in ways we prefer to think about the world, away from rigid and normative structures. As a matter of fact, following Pedro Matias' line of thinking, the future of the world is letting the body fully sink in softness, to eventually surrender into soft matter until we have no shape, with the purpose to accept and embrace liquidity, fluidity and continuous flux. Will an *Autobahn* or *Aquabahn* then still be needed to start journeys to the undiscovered? Can I invite you for a group discussion with these artists about such unknown futurities? Let me know, because I definitely want to embark on this adventure with these graduates, but before I do so, I will join Antonio López Espinosa in uttering a goodbye:

[...]

A sonic farewell,  
towards nowhere,  
but the map of the one who got  
lost,  
on purpose,  
for the one who needed to find,  
not to achieve,  
to find  
where there's nothing to be eaten,  
nothing, but the shadow,  
of the infinite blossoms,  
of the infinite sssuns,  
of the infinite moons.

[...]

Léon Kruijswijk

Graduates mentioned:

[sandberg.nl/graduation2020/draft/nicolo-pellarin](https://sandberg.nl/graduation2020/draft/nicolo-pellarin)

[sandberg.nl/graduation2020/draft/coilin-oconnell](https://sandberg.nl/graduation2020/draft/coilin-oconnell)

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[sandberg.nl/graduation2020/draft/luca-soudant](https://sandberg.nl/graduation2020/draft/luca-soudant)

[sandberg.nl/graduation2020/draft/pedro-matias](https://sandberg.nl/graduation2020/draft/pedro-matias)

[sandberg.nl/graduation2020/draft/antonio-lopez-espinoza](https://sandberg.nl/graduation2020/draft/antonio-lopez-espinoza)