

bitforms gallery

Zilvinas Kempinas, *Analog*
September 2–October 9, 2021

Gallery Hours: Tuesday–Saturday, 11 AM–6 PM

In his first solo exhibition with the gallery, Zilvinas Kempinas presents a suite of works that punctuate historic and newly debuted moments of his career. Kempinas' practice is motivated by curiosity and efficiency of means. He calls on readymade objects juxtaposed with invisible forces—air currents, magnetism, or gravity—to be his sculptural components. *Analog* engages these elements through a number of works that translate the artist's own inquiries into shared experiences.

A fan attached to a bicycle wheel spins lengthy strips of magnetic tape at the entrance of the gallery. Sounds of white noise fill the space as the tape, sourced from a VHS cassette, oscillates in a tangled, sparkling descent. The tape's primary function, to carry data, is usurped in favor of its ability to act as an artifact of universal communication. Kempinas repurposes this outdated industrial medium into a physical phenomenon with a visceral presence.

Panels, an installation across all walls of the gallery, also utilizes magnetic tape yet elicits a different response through its static, symmetrical placement. Part optical illusion, part mirror, the installation demonstrates the artist's mastery of quotidian items as sculptural entities. Evenly spaced vertical lines manipulate the gallery's architecture with reflective periphery, turning sight lines into expansive planes. This site-specific work is transformative, but once removed is merely a leftover of outdated technology. Kempinas revels in the transience of the magnetic tape, reinforcing it as an expendable readymade. At the rear of the gallery, *Flaming Tape* implements a similar arrangement with a performative difference—an industrial fan and select pieces of untethered tape. The fan's breeze guides the tape into captivating gestures reminiscent of smoke or flames until it powers off, leaving the untethered strands in a mesmerizing free fall.

Elements of surprise are nested within each of Kempinas' works, but unlike a magic trick, wonder still remains when the inner workings are revealed. *Bearings* is another example of Kempinas' ability to harness invisible forces. This kinetic sculpture hosts thousands of small ball bearings that sit half-submerged in mineral oil. Below the surface, magnets are positioned on a slowly rotating disc that inform sequences of abstract patterns. The piece performs new designs for an endless duration. *Nautilus*, a debut work within the exhibition, introduces a large round disk suspended horizontally from a single wire cable in the ceiling. Ball chains drip along its perimeter, cascading in different lengths while the sculpture slowly revolves. The rotation of this work—turning clockwise, slowing down to a stop, then reversing—creates overlapping optical scenes that continuously evolve into new shapes. *Nautilus* plays on the intersection of the ball chain with the vertical lines of *Panels* in the background, inciting the sensation of presence through vibration and movement. The sculpture is entirely transparent, shaped by gravity and toned by its own internal light.

Analog is the piece from which the exhibition gains its title. Minted with an NFT for this occasion, the video resembles a digital rendering of two rectangular shapes animated by chaotic motion. However, the only digital component of this work is the recording. *Analog* was produced by filming two pieces of paper attached to string that are enlivened by the breeze of a fan. It is a perfect encapsulation of Kempinas' use of simplicity to inspire illusion. *Analog* as a noun means to compare—as a technological term it defines the opposite of digital. This exhibition uses physical formats of technology to incite an emotional, subliminal connection with the viewer that reveals art's ability to act as a visual instrument.

Founded in 2001, bitforms gallery represents established, mid-career, and emerging artists critically engaged with new technologies. Spanning the rich history of media art through its current developments, the gallery's program offers an incisive perspective on the fields of digital, internet, time-based, and new media art forms. For press inquiries, please contact info@bitforms.art or call (212) 366-6939.

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b. 1969, Plunge, Lithuania
Lives and works in New York, NY

Zilvinas Kempinas graduated from the Vilnius Art Academy in 1993 and received his MFA from Hunter College, City University of New York in 2002. Kempinas has exhibited extensively internationally with solo shows at P.S.1 Contemporary Art Centre (New York), Palais de Tokyo (Paris), Contemporary Art Centre (Vilnius, Lithuania), Kunsthalle Wien (Vienna), Baltic Centre for Contemporary Art (Gateshead, UK), Garage Center for Contemporary Culture (Moscow), Museum Tinguely (Basel), Reykjavik Art Museum (Iceland), Laboratory K20 (Dusseldorf), Socrates Sculpture Park (New York), Kunsthalle Budapest (Hungary), Kunstraum Dornbirn (Austria), Liberté! Saison Culturelle 2019, Bordeaux (France), Spencer Brownstone Gallery (New York), Galeria Leme (São Paulo), Galerija Vartai (Vilnius), Yvon Lambert (Paris, New York).

Selected group exhibitions include Manifesta 7 (Bolzano, Italy), Nam June Paik Art Center (Yongin City, Korea), SFMOMA (San Francisco, USA), Lunds Konsthall (Lund, Sweden), MoMA (New York), Liverpool Biennial (UK), Yokohama Triennale (Japan), Nuit Blanche (Paris), Espaces Culturel Louis Vuitton (Paris), Museum of Contemporary Art, Avignon (France), Beaufort 04 (Belgium), Echigo-Tsumari Triennale (Niigata, Japan), Centre Pompidou (Paris), Toyota Municipal Museum of Art (Japan), Galeries Nationales du Grand Palais (Paris), Eli and Edythe Broad Art Museum (Michigan, USA), Queensland Art Gallery (Brisbane, Australia), Kunsthalle Osnabrück (Germany), Sculpture by the Sea (Aarhus, Denmark/Bondi, Cottesloe, Australia), Kunsthall Rotterdam (Netherlands), ZKM Center for Art and Media, (Karlsruhe, Germany), Brno House of Arts (Czech Republic).

Kempinas was the recipient of the biannual Calder Prize in 2007 and in 2008, lived for six months in Saché, France during his residency at Atelier Calder. He represented the Lithuanian Pavilion at the 53rd Venice Biennale in 2009, and was awarded the Lithuanian National Prize in 2012. He lives and works in New York.

bitforms gallery would like to thank the Lithuanian Culture Institute for their support of the exhibition.



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