

Flow: Central Asian video art programme

Week 5 : Environment, 15 - 18 January 2026

Screening List:

- *Transoxiana Dreams*, Almagul Menlibayeva, 2011, 23'20.
- *Following the shadow: route to the North*, Anvar Musrepov, 2020, 07'32.
- *Red Scene*, Dina Baitassova, 2025, 08'23.
- *Voice of the Glacier*, Yadykar Ibraimov, 2022, 63'25.
- *Song of Ömirkeldi Äbeuov* (Documentary film), Artcom Platform, 2023, 35'26.

Additional Information / Artists Notes

Almagul Menlibayeva (b. 1969, Almaty, Kazakhstan, lives and works in Germany and Kazakhstan)

Transoxiana Dreams, 2011.

“Transoxiana Dreams” is a little girl’s projection of the world living in the middle of the ecological disaster of the disappearing Aral Sea. She leads the audience through her Dreamtime beliefs to the post-Soviet hyperreality, in which her dad works as a fisherman in the new expanding Aralkum desert. Dad and other fishermen daily get used to the shrinking sea that has been called “one of the planet’s worst environmental disasters”. The region’s once-prosperous fishing industry has now become devastated, bringing unemployment and economic hardship to the locals.

We are caught in a girl’s posthuman world of hybrid reality inside her dream with the disturbing body experience of our possible futures of environmental social injustice. All-day and all-night, fishermen circle along the bottom of the dried Aral Sea. She pushes her father and his friends to enter the ghosts Ex-Soviet Union’s top-secret Aralsk-7 biological weapons research centre and test site in Vozrozhdeniye Island. The girl’s “Portal to Mystical Ecology” opposes the idea of human’s supremacy over nature, she seduces it on the trip with hybrid and chimeric bodies produced by the compost of human and nonhuman, the Greek mythical Centaur, the prototype of a nomad on a horse, with semi-humans, semi-animals all the futures remains of evolutionary possibilities. When the father and his friends overcome the temptations and dangers of illusions comparable to those from the Tibetan Book of the Dead, the Sea decides to come to the father and fishermen and pass on to the girl the message of the screaming fish. The Aral Sea appears to have a consciousness of an intelligent female.

Anvar Musrepov (b. 1994, Almaty, Kazakhstan)

Following the shadow: route to the North, 2020.

“Following the Shadow: Route to the North” is an essayistic journey to the world’s edge—a place with a fraught colonial past that still, quite literally, falls off the map. Blending found footage with digitally rendered images, Musrepov questions the Western hegemony embedded in digital mapping as we follow the protagonist’s shadow, making sense of place by wandering through it.

Dina Baitassova (b. Almaty, Kazakhstan)

Red Scene, 2025.

Once, I saw an image:
a Yemeni man in ceremonial dress, standing beneath a dragon’s blood tree older
than memory.

They say these trees were born from the flight of a blessed dragon,
its blood seeding the island.

On Socotra, there is a man who lives in a cave.
He knows the language of birds
and walks in quiet kinship with his goats.

One day, a bird appeared at the mouth of his shelter.
Her song was unlike any he had heard—
as if carried from another world.
They recognized one another,
as though love had already taken place before.

He offered her the depths of the sea.
She opened to him a hidden paradise.

Whale songs drifted through their dreams,
corals whispered in slow time,
ambergris burned with a sacred scent.

Held by a tender earth and its creatures,
they wandered between waking and sleep,
walking through warm waters at night,
the stars igniting beneath their steps.

Yadykar Ibraimov (b. Almaty, Kazakhstan. Uyghur artist)

Voice of the Glacier, 2022.

*cinematographer Kuanysh Kurmanbayev (@kazakhhead on instagram)
producer Mika Saruar (@mikasaruar on instagram)*

It is well known that glaciers are melting due to the climate crisis, but how exactly does this happen? Impressively photographed, harrowing eco-thriller about the melting Tuyuksu glacier in Kazakhstan - and the work of the scientists who document this process.

In a remote mountainous area at an altitude of 3400 meters in absolute isolation, two researchers are studying an ancient dying glacier.

Tuyuksu glacier is a central valley glacier in Kazakhstan, located on the northern slope of the Zailiyskiy Alatau ridge. From 1958 to the present day, Tuyuksu has lost about 57 million cubic meters of ice. The glacier is rapidly melting. Scientists believe that the glacier, which is of great importance for the whole of Central Asia, will cease to exist by 2050, and in this regard, an acute shortage of fresh water will begin in the region. And related to that an increase in social and economic tension in the region will follow.

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Song of Ömirkeldi Äbeuov, Documentary film, 2023.

This documentary marks the 75th anniversary of artist Ömirkeldi Äbeuov, who lives and works by the shores of Lake Balkhash. His wood carvings and weaving carry forward the ecological and cosmological wisdom of Kazakh nomadic traditions.

Filmed in close conversation with the lake's shifting landscapes, the film traces how Äbeuov's art and memory illuminate Kazakhstan's political, social, and cultural histories, while offering a vision of care rooted in ancestral knowledge and the fragile ecosystems of Balkhash.