

SCANDALS AND ABSTRACTIONS

Martin Rován, 2026

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»The glow of the screens. I love the screens.
The glow of cyber-capital. So radiant and
seductive. I understand none of it.«

Don DeLillo, *Cosmopolis*

Global financial capital structures the everyday lives of billions of people while operating largely invisibly. The establishment of complex financial instruments, the automation of trading through high-frequency systems, and the ongoing deregulation of global financial markets have transformed financial processes, increasingly detaching them from materiality, spatiality, corporeality, and temporality. Trading operations today take place virtually, inside machines, on levels of abstraction beyond human perception.

The abstract nature of financial capital does not, however, mean that its effects are immaterial—on the contrary: material consequences are an integral component of the system. These manifest in acute crises, geopolitical tensions, and the everyday realities of local communities. The power exerted by financial capital does not operate physically in the sense of military or police force, but indirectly and structurally as »abstract violence«, thereby eluding political accountability and material responsibility.

The installation »Scandals and Abstractions« engages with those aesthetic traces that remain between the operational invisibility of the financial system and its material effects: the specific arrangement of generic computer screens, the spatial characteristics of boardrooms, the cryptic names of financial infrastructure companies, as well as the metaphors of financial jargon—from »dark pools« through »deep time« to »black swan events«.

I. DeLillo, Don. *Cosmopolis*. Picador, 2004.

II. LiPuma, Edward, und Benjamin Lee. *Financial derivatives and the globalization of risk*. Public planet books. Duke University Press, 2004.

III. La Berge, Leigh Claire. *Scandals and Abstraction: Financial Fiction of the Long 1980s*. Oxford University Press, 2015.

Aluminium frames, black plexiglass, Alu-Dibond prints, water bottles, drinking glasses, screen mounts