



THIS PAGE: Installation views of Hayden Fowler's *Together Again*, Garage Museum of Contemporary Art, Moscow, 2019.

COURTESY: THE ARTIST, GARAGE MUSEUM OF CONTEMPORARY ART, MOSCOW AND ARTEREAL GALLERY, SYDNEY.

NEXT PAGE: Installation view of Hayden Fowler's *Broken Romance*, Kunstlerhaus Bethanien, Berlin, 2019. PHOTO: VINNIE LIAZZA. COURTESY: THE ARTIST AND ARTEREAL GALLERY, SYDNEY.

HAYDEN FOWLER

The Coming World: Ecology as the New Politics 2030–2100 is a major exhibition at Moscow's Garage Museum of Contemporary Art on show until December 2019. Featuring work by 50 international artists, the exhibition explores the vexed relationship between ecology and politics while looking into "the speculative future, [highlighting] the uncertainty of our knowledge about the events to come".

Hayden Fowler is just one of two Australian artists included (the other is Patricia Piccinini). It's a natural fit for Fowler who, since his earliest exhibitions some 20 years ago, has investigated these ideas across a variety of media including video, photography, performance and installation. More recent works have explored the possibilities of virtual reality (VR).

Following on from his year-long residency at the Kunstlerhaus Bethanien in Berlin, where he exhibited new work, Fowler's contribution for *The Coming World* is an update of *Together Again* (2017). First staged as part of Sydney Contemporary, the piece involved Fowler co-habiting a cage with a dingo. The artist explored a VR world that approximated a so-called Australian natural environment, an experience relayed to the audience via video screens, while the dingo ate, slept or was cradled by the artist.

"The project has developed out of my ongoing concern with the accelerating process of extinction, and the relationship between environmental loss and the depletion of human culture and qualitative experience," the artist says. "The project explores

desires for reunion with nature in the face of the looming impossibilities of this in a near-future world."

For Moscow, Fowler has restaged the work. But the VR component now approximates Russia, while a European wolf has replaced the dingo.

The message, however, stays vital: "Currently the world is facing a looming death of the ancient in both human culture and our environment, where the delayed effects of modernity and acceleration of technological industrialisation are playing out," says Fowler. "We are at a critical tipping point in extinction and the loss of our ancient relationships and physical experience of nature, and particularly the wild."

Andrew Frost