

'Black Swan DAO', 2021 - Ongoing

WHAT

Launched with a Working Group in January 2021, [Black Swan DAO](#) is a digital initiative which channels resources from established institutions to cultural practitioners via a membership programme. The project enables practitioners to collectively manage resources, responding to the increasing precarisation of cultural labour. *Black Swan DAO* was developed at [Trust](#) as a collective project with a shared space in Berlin and an online community of multidisciplinary practitioners.

WHO

Project co-founders:

Penny Rafferty is a writer and visual theorist based in Berlin. Her theoretical essays and creative texts have been commissioned for *Cura*, *Kaleidoscope Magazine*, *Keen on*, *Taz.de NRW Dusseldorf*, *Flash Art* and *Elephant Magazine* amongst others. She was the in-house critic at *STATISTA*, Berlin 2020 and is one of the co-founders of both *Ishtar Gate* and *Black Swan DAO*. She co-developed the think tank series *Artworld DAOs* with Ruth Catlow in coordination with *Serpentine Gallery*, *Furtherfield Gallery* and *Goethe Institute* 2019/2020 and continues to work as both a writer, auditor and researcher at the intersection of art, culture and technology.

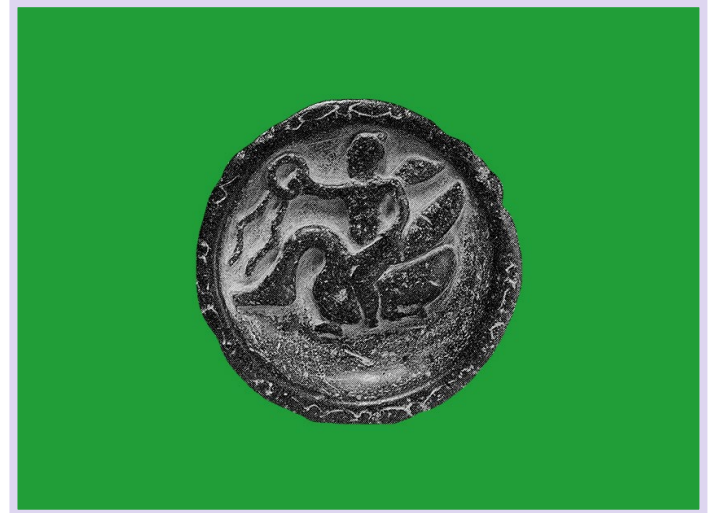


Image courtesy Black Swan DAO, 2021

Calum Bowden creates stories, worlds, and platforms that reimagine relations between organisms and algorithms, humans and nonhumans, the Earth and the cosmos. He co-founded *Trust* and *Black Swan DAO*. Calum took part in the post-graduate program at the *Strelka Institute*, Moscow. He has an MA in *Design Interactions* from the *Royal College of Art* and a BSc in *Anthropology* from *University College London*.

Laura Lotti is a researcher investigating the relations between technological, economic and cultural systems. She is a research partner at Other Internet, where she collaboratively explores headless dynamics in networked cultures. She co-founded *Black Swan DAO*.

Black Swan DAO's Working Group comprises of 'silent stakeholders' and an online community of members:

The online community of at least 300 members includes artists, designers, technologists and ecologists working with advanced technologies and experimental theories.

The silent stakeholders are institutions that provide resources for the members to use for free.

WHERE

Black Swan DAO is an online, digital platform, operating from Berlin.

WHY

- *Black Swan DAO* responds to the need to propose and establish collaborative institutional practices to support emerging artists.
- Currently, artists compete for increasingly limited resources. This digital initiative enables artists to make collective use of existing institutional assets, such as equipment, expertise and guidance, funding, space, audiences and publicity.

- The project aims to provide art institutions with a more effective use of resources to share technologies and platforms.

HOW

Black Swan DAO's Working Group comprises of 'silent stakeholders' and an online community of members. The Working Group's activities are coordinated through a voting system, whereby only the members decide which projects receive resources.

IMPACT

Thus far, the project has completed its Working Group stage in which it has identified successful voting methods in order to move forward with the development of a voting app for artistic communities called 'Cygnet'.

"Cultivating a stronger emerging art scene is in everyone's favour. The Swan DAO doesn't abolish capitalism, nor the bulk production of art, but it provides adequate incentives to work as a professional community."

- PENNY RAFFERTY,
*A Speculative White Paper on the
Aesthetics of a Black Swan World*