

# Analogue Practices in Digital Landscapes

**Işıl Karataş**

*Department of European Ethnology, University of Vienna*

DOI: [https://doi.org/10.51002/trajectoria\\_023\\_02](https://doi.org/10.51002/trajectoria_023_02)

(Published March 31, 2023)

## **Abstract**

In this film, I experiment with ethnographic research methods and modes of representation to depict analogue film communities, filmmaking practices in Berlin and Vienna, and the mechanical repair and photography milieus in Istanbul. For the past two years, I have conducted an empirical study of analogue film materiality and the maintenance of older media infrastructures. I address the obsolescence of media technologies in the digital age, in which the newest technologies are rapidly becoming obsolete. On the one hand, through a focus on the technical survival of film, practices in the artist-run film laboratories of filmkoop Vienna and LaborBerlin form an essential part of this film. On the other hand, Istanbul's artistic historicity and its particular geopolitical and economic conditions give an intercultural context to these analogue practices that flourish in Europe.

This documentary employs audio-visual cultural research methods to represent analogue practices in the digital age from an actor-centered perspective<sup>1)</sup>. Participant observations accompanied by a camera and sound recording devices constitute the primary visual and diegetic layers. On the aural level, I re-enact anonymously recorded ethnographic conversations and interview excerpts as voice-overs. Soundscapes of analogue devices, electricity, and water recorded during the field research accompany the film like a soundtrack. To experiment with alternative forms of (non-)representation, I perform excerpts from my field diary, accompanied by self-produced music that forms the prologue and epilogue of the film.

In an age marked by digital technologies, this film chronicles the everyday lives of artists working with obsolete or abandoned technologies, and the mechanics and retailers who keep them alive. From the practitioners' point of view, the fragmented chapters describe the relationships between humans and their tools, which rely on senses, emotions, and know-how in aesthetic productions based on image technologies.

**Key Words:** audio-visual culture, experimental ethnography, media obsolescence, photochemical film, sensory aesthetics



**Film 1** *Analogue Practices in Digital Landscapes* (Karataş 2023)

## **Note**

- 1) Elsewhere, I explore the sounds of technology used in filmmaking beyond an anthropocentric perspective. In the article “Sonorous Materiality of Analogue Film” (Karataş 2022), accompanied by sound works, I relate the sensory aesthetics of media materiality to its ecological dimensions through an acousmatic observation.

## **Reference**

Karataş, I.

2022 Sonorous Materiality of Analogue Film. *NECSUS* Autumn 2022.

<https://necsus-ejms.org/sonorous-materiality-of-analogue-film/> (accessed January 4, 2023)

## **Film**

Karataş, I.

2023 *Analogue Practices in Digital Landscapes*. Studio audio-visual research, Department of European Ethnology, University of Vienna, 38:57.

<https://vimeo.com/774900272> (Retrieved March 31, 2023)