HEK

Haus der Elektronischen Künste

Press Release

Swiss Media Art: Marc Lee, Chloé Delarue, Laurent Güdel – Pax Art Awards 2021

Exhibition: 12.02-24.04.2022
Press tour: 11.02.2022, 11am, Opening: 7pm

Marc Lee, Corona TV Bot, 2020 - ongoing, online project, screenshot

The exhibition *Swiss Media Art: Marc Lee, Chloé Delarue, Laurent Güdel – Pax Art Awards 2021* offers an array of works by the prizewinning artists in three parallel solo exhibitions. Marc Lee's current works revolve around themes of biology, the human body and our relationship with nature. Chloé Delarue stages novel works from her ongoing TAFAA cycle, with evocative installations that invite viewers to explore future scenarios between magic and dystopia. Sound is central to Laurent Güdel's practice, which draws particular attention to the contexts of presentation and dissemination accompanying sound productions. Thanks to the support of the Pax Art Awards, the artists have been able to produce new works that are on view here for the first time.

Marc Lee

The influence of information technologies on our understanding of the world, and how this constantly affects our social behaviour, is of particular interest to Marc Lee. His investigations follow the emergence of the World Wide Web through to the development of social networks. The artist's kaleidoscopic staging of videos from the Internet in immersive and interactive installations allows the flood of information of our time to become remarkably palpable. The exhibition presents a selection of his current works that primarily deal with biology and nature. His latest work *Ocean*, produced for this occasion, looks at how our oceans are polluted by industrial fishing and how fossil fuels cause their acidification. Lee employs so-called Generative Adversarial Networks (machine learning algorithms) to create fictional fish species that could survive in such a polluted environment. In doing so, he raises the question of whether technologies, such as artificial intelligence, might actually be helpful in preventing ecological disasters. *Time to Nist Time to Migrate* offers viewers an opportunity to immerse themselves in the inner workings of the human body, a world alive with fungi, parasites and bacteria. Here, it is not a matter of a strict scientific excursion. Instead, the viewer is invited to embark on a poetic and philosophical journey.

Among the numerous other interactive works on view, which explore our relationship with nature, are *Used to Be My Home Too* and *More and Less.* Both provide insight into the theme of species extinction, focusing on efforts people are making in order to catalogue as well as prevent this catastrophe. A new version of his ongoing *TV Bot* series puts the spotlight on how information about the Covid pandemic is dispersed in the public media stream.

Marc Lee (*1969) received the 2021 *Pax Art Awards* main prize of CHF 30,000. The artist lives and works in Zurich. His works have been exhibited internationally: HEK (Haus der Elektronischen Künste), Basel; C/0 Berlin; UNArt Center, Shanghai; Asia Culture Center (ACC); Roehrs & Bœtsch, Zürich; Annka Kultys Gallery, London; Synthesis Gallery, Berlin; MAK Wien; Zentrum für Kunst und Medien (ZKM), Karlsruhe; National Art Center, Tokyo; National Museum of Modern and Contemporary; Art (MMCA), Seoul; Seoul Museum of Art; Total Museum of Contemporary Art, Seoul; Ars Electronica Center, Linz; New Museum, New York.

Chloé Delarue

Most of Chloé Delarue's works form part of a large cycle of works entitled *TAFAA – Toward A Fully Automated Appearance*, inspired by an article by economist Fischer Black on the automation of the stock market from 1971. For the exhibition at HEK, Delarue coherently expands her *TAFAA* cycle with an especially produced new installation. Questions of technological progress and its effects – the automation of labour, cloning, artificial intelligence and how these processes may affect biological life – are central to the artist's work, which materialises in form of installations. Her heterogeneous assemblages of elements, ranging from recycled industrial materials, videos, neon tubes to latex prints, resemble dystopian environments familiar from science fiction films. The themes Delarue addresses are not conveyed in any narrative or didactical form (for example through videos or diagrams), but vibrate viscerally as all the elements of the installation come together. Sensory, almost synaesthetic associations are created in a kind of technological delirium. A fundamental aspect lies in how the installations' formal and physical character, created through the assembly of hybrid materials, forms a relationship with the surrounding exhibition space. The artist's universe, into which viewers are immersed, suggests a near future where, through the mingling of organic bodies and inorganic machinery, existing automated technologies have developed to a state of almost magmatic excess. In this sense, her work can be read as a representation of unbridled and accelerated post-industrial capitalism in which humans and information systems become one.

Chloé Delarue (*1986) received one of this year's *Pax Art Awards* for young emerging artists with the value of CHF 15,000. The artist lives and works in Geneva. Her exhibitions include: Binz39, Zurich; Instituto Svizzero, Rome; HEK (Haus der Elektronischen Künste), Basel; Post Territory Ujeongguk, Seoul; CAN Neuchâtel; Windhager von Kaenel Gallerie, Zürich; Villa du Parc – Centre d'art contemporain, Annemasse; Musée des beaux-arts de La Chaux-de-Fond; La Salle de bains, Lyon; Kunsthaus Langenthal; Urgent Paradise, Lausanne; Sonnenstube, Lugano; Parc Saint Léger - Hors les murs, Nevers; Palais de l'Athénée, Geneva.

Laurent Güdel

Sound is central to Laurent Güdel's work, which reaches beyond fascination with acoustics to look at the social, political and historical dimensions of sound. The artist and composer embarks on multidisciplinary and collaborative practices, while incorporating reclaimed and found material. In the exhibition at HEK, Güdel presents a series of recent works that form part of his *State Music* cycle. As the title suggests, the cycle explores how political interests, the evolution

of new technologies and development of experimental music are connected, specifically looking at how electronic music originated in the publicly funded studios of national radio stations. His most recent work, *Over the horizon*, created especially for the exhibition, is a sound composition based on an online archive of sound samples from radio waves and their graphic visualisation (sigidwiki.com). These very different sounds correspond for example with pulses from distant stars, civil or military flight signals, radar or satellite communication, songs from pirate radio stations and local radio network information broadcasts. His video work *Radio Belgrade* traces a part of the history of electronic music associated with national radio during the Cold War. *Unknown Artist* presents an audio file found coincidentally by the artist in a digital recorder purchased online. From the sounds, Güdel assumes that the device's record button was accidentally pressed by an employee at the shop where it was packed. Hence the recording serves as a perfect artefact for reflection on connections between the working environment, international distribution and trade in electronic devices.

Laurent Güdel (*1984) received one of this year's *Pax Art Awards* for young emerging artists with the value of CHF 15,000. The artist lives and works in Biel (CH). His exhibitions include: Swiss Art Awards 2021, Basel; Lausanne Underground Film & Music Festival (LUFF); Q-02, Brussels; Electronic Musik Studien (EMS), Stockholm; Radio Belgrade, Electronic Studio, Serbia; KSYME Contemporary Music Research Center, Athens; Espace eeeh!, Nyon; Lokal-int, Biel/Bienne; Krone Couronne, Biel/Bienne; Mayday Radio Marathon, Oscillation Festival, Brussels; Centre d'art Pasquart, La Cantonale, Biel/Bienne; Espace d'art contemporain [les helles), Porrentruy; Centre d'art contemporain (CAN), Neuchâtel; documenta14, Kassel; Kunsthaus Langenthal, La Cantonale.

The *Pax Art Awards* have been held annually since 2018. These ground-breaking prizes for digital art, awarded by the Art Foundation Pax in collaboration with HEK, honour and promote media-specific practices of Swiss artists whose works employ media technologies or reflect on their effects. Half of the prize money is allocated to purchase a work for the Art Foundation Pax collection, while the other half supports the artists in the development of a new work, which is presented in a joint exhibition in the spring of the following year. The Art Foundation Pax is an independent foundation for the promotion of digital and media-based art in Switzerland and is sponsored by Pax.

The exhibition is accompanied by an extensive on site and online educational programme. Guided tours are regularly held in German, English and French.

Curator: Boris Magrini

Hashtags:
#chloedelarue
@marcleeio
#laurentgüdel
@hek_basel

The exhibition was developed in collaboration with

Information:
HEK (House of Electronic Arts)
Freilager-Platz 9, 4142 Münchenstein/Basel

Exhibition duration: 12.02.-24.04.2022
Press tour: 11.02.2022, 11 am
Opening: 11.02.2022, 7 pm

Opening hours: Wed-Sun, 12am-18pm
Admission: 9 / 6 CHF (reduced price); Happy Hour (free admission): Wed-Fri 12–13am
Public guided tours: every Sunday at 15pm (German)
For more information visit: www.hek.ch

Presse contact:
Elena Kuznik
elena.kuznik@hek.ch
+41/(0)61 331 58 41

About the HEK (House of Electronic Arts)
HEK (House of Electronic Arts) in Basel is Switzerland's national competence center for all art forms that employ or reflect on new technologies and media. The HEK's interdisciplinary approach offers a broad public with insight into art production from various genres at the conjunction between art, media and technology. In a diverse program of exhibitions, smaller festival formats, performances and concerts, the HEK is dedicated to taking a closer look at current social issues and questions as well as technological and aesthetic developments. In addition to organizing exhibitions and events, the HEK is concerned with the methodology of collecting and the preservation of digital art.