

PRESS RELEASE

HOW WE ACT TOGETHER – SCHIRN PRESENTS INTERACTIVE ONLINE PERFORMANCE

AT WWW.SCHIRN.DE/HWAT AND IN THE SCHIRN FOYER UNTIL JANUARY 22, 2017

For Schirn Kunsthalle Frankfurt, US American artists and programmers Lauren McCarthy and Kyle McDonald developed an interactive performance project entitled *How We Act Together* (2016) that can be accessed starting today, November 29, 2016, online at www.schirn.de/hwat. Individuals can participate via the website from their own PC with a webcam. In addition, visitors to the Schirn can join in the project via an installation in the foyer.

How We Act Together is a communal performance in the form of a video stream. The focus is on gestures as the most elementary forms of social interaction. Participants are asked to repeat one of four gestures – nodding, screaming, greeting or eye contacting – until exhausted in front of their webcam. As soon as an algorithm programmed by McCarthy and McDonald recognizes the gesture, a video recording begins. The performance aims to be a competition and endurance is rewarded. Indeed, if a user performs the respective gesture longer than the person with the greatest stamina before them, their recording is included in the video stream and becomes part of the accumulated performance. The result is a collective sequence of videos choreographed by software featuring identical gestures by different people. This creates an asynchronous interaction within a group divided both spatially and temporally.

The artists Lauren McCarthy and Kyle McDonald comment as follows: “With our project *How We Act Together*, which we conceived for the Schirn, we aim to show people how even the slightest gestures influence social interactions. The subject of interpersonal relationships has interested us both for a long time now – especially in the context of digital communication, which is often characterized by divided attention and the loss of real social connections. Drawing on the technological possibilities of facial recognition software, we visualize the discomfort that we sometimes encounter in social interactions in the wild.”

FACEBOOK LIVE WITH LAUREN MCCARTHY AND KYLE MCDONALD

On Thursday, December 1, 2016 at 7 p.m. (CET) the Schirn hosted a Facebook livestream with the two artists (www.facebook.com/schirn), who presented their project *How We Act Together* to the community.

Lauren McCarthy is an artist based in Los Angeles and Brooklyn, whose works explore current social and technological systems and structures for being a person and interacting with other people. McCarthy has participated in numerous international exhibitions and festivals, including Ars Electronica (Linz), Conflux Festival (New York), Japan Media Arts Festival (Tokyo), and created installations for the London Eye, the US Holocaust Memorial Museum (Washington, D.C.) and the Metropolitan Museum of Art (New York). As well as holding a Master’s in Fine Arts from the University of California (Los Angeles) and Bachelor’s degrees in Computer Science and Art and Design from Massachusetts Institute of Technology (Cambridge), she was previously a resident at STUDIO for Creative Inquiry at Carnegie Mellon University (Pittsburgh), Eyebeam (New York) and Ars Electronica / QUT TRANSMIT3. She is Assistant Professor of Design Media Arts at the University of California (Los Angeles). Her most recent projects include *Social Turkers* (<http://socialturkers.com/>, 2013) and *Follower* (<http://lauren-mccarthy.com/Follower>, 2016).

SCHIRN KUNSTHALLE FRANKFURT

Kyle McDonald is an artist who works with open program code. He is a contributor to arts-engineering toolkits for artists and designers such as openFrameworks and spends a lot of time building tools that allow artists to use algorithms in creative ways. His work is very process-oriented and he has taken to sharing his ideas and projects in public before they are completed. McDonald is a member of F.A.T. Lab, Community Manager for openFrameworks and Adjunct Professor at the ITP of New York University. McDonald was a resident at STUDIO for Creative Inquiry at Carnegie Mellon University (Pittsburgh) and Yamaguchi Center for Arts and Media (Yamaguchi City, Japan). His work is shown worldwide at exhibitions and festivals including Ars Electronica (Linz), Sonar/OFFF (Barcelona), Eyebeam (New York), Anyang Public Art Project (Anyang, Korea), Cinekid (Amsterdam) and NODE Festival (Frankfurt/Main). McDonald has already explored computer vision, facial recognition and social interaction in numerous workshops and projects such as *Sharing Faces* (<https://vimeo.com/96549043>, 2013/14) and *Exhausting A Crowd* (<http://www.exhaustingacrowd.com>, 2015).

VENUE www.schirn.de/hwat and in the Schirn foyer **DURATION** November 29, 2016 until January 22, 2017 **COORDINATION** Fabian Famulok **INFORMATION** www.schirn.de **EMAIL** welcome@schirn.de **PHONE** +49 69 29 98 82-0 **FAX** +49 69 29 98 82-240 **TECHNOLOGY PARTNER** for the interactive module in the Schirn foyer Samsung Electronics

SOCIAL MEDIA The Schirn communicates in the social channels with the **HASHTAGS** #hwat #Schirn **ONLINE MAGAZINE** www.schirn-mag.com **FACEBOOK** www.facebook.com/Schirn **TWITTER** www.twitter.com/Schirn **YOUTUBE** www.youtube.com/user/SCHIRNKUNSTHALLE **INSTAGRAM** @schirnkunsthalle **PINTEREST** www.pinterest.com/schirn **SNAPCHAT** schirnsnaps

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