

bitforms gallery

R. Luke DuBois

The Choice Is Yours

October 26 – December 23, 2016

Opening reception: Wednesday, October 26, 6 – 8 PM

Gallery hours: Wednesday – Saturday, 11 AM – 6 PM & Sunday, 12 – 6 PM

bitforms gallery continues its fifteen-year anniversary season with *The Choice Is Yours*, a new body of work by R. Luke DuBois. For his fourth solo show at the gallery, DuBois questions individual agency, from the choices we make in our daily lives to those that constitute the “world’s greatest democracy.” Repurposing and building upon mid-twentieth century voting machines, DuBois pairs typically innocuous words as oppositional choices, a gesture underscoring the lack of choice we feel when presented with reductive binaries.

The Choice Is Yours consists of a series of mechanical voting machines from the forties, fifties, and sixties, manufactured by the Automatic Voting Machine (AVM) Corporation in Jamestown, New York. In the exhibition, these machines are transformed into *Learning Machines*, a play on the concept of machine learning and artificial intelligence (AI), the premise of which is that computers—given the correct parameters and data—can simulate human behavior and decision-making. The Dartmouth Summer Research Project on Artificial Intelligence, convened in the summer of 1956 and considered by many to be one of the most historically significant events in AI, dates to the same time period as the voting machines in the exhibition.

The *Learning Machines* themselves are interactive sculptures; participants use them to vote on a series of choices, posed as dichotomies that range from the poignant to the absurd. Upon voting, the participant receives a unique video response. These brief, user-specific audiovisuals draw on datasets of media developed for and employed in machine learning research. Real-time results from voting will be displayed in the gallery.

Historical ephemera from voting machines are presented alongside the artworks in the exhibition. Materials include voting machine manuals, spare mechanisms, and the infamous Votomatic-style voting machine that produced “hanging chads” in Florida during the 2000 presidential election. A text by historian Jonathan Soffer details the history of ballot voting and the evolution of voting machines in the United States.

R. Luke DuBois (b. 1975, New Jersey) is a multidisciplinary artist, whose practice spans visual art, computer programming, musical composition and performance, and record producing. Throughout, he explores the temporal, verbal, and visual structures of cultural ephemera. Recently the subject of the solo exhibition *Now*, DuBois's work has been exhibited at Bowdoin College Museum of Art, Brunswick, ME; the Orange County Museum of Art, Newport Beach, CA; John and Mable Ringling Museum of Art, Sarasota, FL; National Portrait Gallery, Washington, D.C.; Smithsonian American Art Museum, Washington, D.C.; Cleveland Museum of Contemporary Art, Cleveland, OH; Haus der elektronischen Künste (HeK), Basel, Switzerland; The Lowry, Manchester, England; The Whitworth Art Gallery, Manchester, England, among other venues. His series *Hindsight is Always 20/20* was featured at the 2008 Democratic National Convention in Denver, CO. In February 2016, he participated in TED, presenting a talk on his “Insightful human portraits made from data.” He holds a Doctorate in Music Composition from Columbia University and was a member of the musical performance group the Freight Elevator Quartet (FEQ).

Founded in 2001, bitforms gallery represents established, mid-career, and emerging artists critically engaged with new technologies. Spanning the rich history of media art through its current developments, the gallery’s program offers an incisive perspective on the fields of digital, internet, time-based, and new media art forms.

For images and more information on the exhibit, please visit www.bitforms.com and lucedubois.com.

For publicity requests, please contact info@bitforms.com or call (212) 366-6939.