

bitforms gallery

Rafael Lozano-Hemmer

Confirmation Bias

September 5 – October 21, 2018

Opening reception: Wednesday September 5, 6 – 8 PM

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

bitforms gallery is pleased to announce *Confirmation Bias*, Rafael Lozano-Hemmer's sixth solo exhibition with the gallery. Featuring an immersive light installation, a 3D printed aluminum sculpture and three data-driven screen-based works, the exhibition highlights the artist's ongoing engagement with diverse forms of digital media.

Confirmation bias is the tendency to search for, interpret, favor, and recall information in a way that confirms one's preexisting beliefs or hypotheses. In a scientific context, confirmation bias proposes human perception as a negative effect that causes misinterpretation of data. Lozano-Hemmer reinterprets this term to emphasize the role of human perception in the creation and understanding of art, which speaks to the artist's larger practice of depending on the active role of the visitor.

The exhibition opens with *Saturation Sampler* (2017), a flat-screen triptych that uses AI computer vision to track onlookers and extract the most saturated color palettes from their bodies and clothes. Colors are analyzed and classified in real time, creating a gridded composition from the footage, where viewers catch glimpses of their reflections in the pixelated field.

The following room features *Recurrent Sanches* (2018), a screen-based artwork composed of writings by the sixteenth-century skeptical philosopher Francisco Sanches. Most notable among these is his treatise *Quod nihil scitur* (*That Nothing Is Known*) in which he proposes that ultimate knowledge through scientific inquiry cannot be attained because the search for causes, and their causes, quickly descends into an infinite regress. The idea of infinite recursion is echoed in the work as the movement of Sanches' words is controlled by a fluid dynamic algorithm, producing an endless flow of letters that form each sentence the philosopher wrote.

As visitors walk around the main gallery, *Vanishing Points* (2018) tracks their position and the orientation of their heads. A grid generator software deforms graphics in real time to create vanishing points that look coherent from each visitor's perspective; from all other angles they appear skewed. As two participants approach, their respective grids converge. A set of a dozen additional vanishing points are shown to describe previous viewpoints.

Also on view is *Volute 1, Au clair de la lune* (2016), a wall-mounted aluminum sculpture that is the world's first 3D-printed speech bubble. In 1860 Édouard-Léon Scott de Martinville used the phonograph to record himself singing the popular folk song "Au clair de la lune," which is the oldest known recording of intelligible human speech. Lozano-Hemmer materializes the iconic phrase with techniques developed in collaboration with fluid dynamic scientists from New York University, Georgia Tech and Auburn University. The novel approach involves using laser tomography to scan the shape of the breath exhaled by a participant as he or she speaks. Then, the scan is rendered in 3D using photogrammetry and printed in a polymer. Finally, it is cast into aluminum, creating a unique form akin to a turbulent cloud containing layers of complex folds and vortices. This process captures a particular moment of speech; the same words spoken by the same person would result in a vastly different shape each time.

Confirmation Bias concludes with a special exhibition installation of *Semioptics for Spinoza* (2012) in which the movements of a plano-convex lens suspended from a thread are determined by a small motor and the surrounding air flow. The piece is titled after the philosopher Baruch Spinoza, who made a living as a lens maker. Spinoza was involved in important optical investigations of the seventeenth century through his correspondence with the Huygens brothers, who were key figures in the development of the aerial telescope. *Semioptics for Spinoza* generates a set of artificial lens flares based on equations that consider the orientation of the lens in relation to the viewing public. These artificial lens flares are projected on the wall behind the lens and travel through it, creating optical aberrations.

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b. 1967, Mexico City

Lives and works in Montréal

Rafael Lozano-Hemmer is known for creating large-scale interactive installations in public spaces throughout Europe, Asia and America. Using a variety of audio-visual technologies, his “Antimonuments” challenge traditional notions of site-specificity, —instead focusing on the idea of creating relationship-specific work through connective interfaces. His smaller-scale “Subsculptures” and his work in photography, video and installation explore critical themes of surveillance, perception and deception. Since his emergence in the 1990s, Lozano-Hemmer has mixed disparate fields of scientific and artistic research from robotics to biometrics, from linguistics to performance art.

This year Lozano-Hemmer was featured in solo exhibitions at the Musée d'art contemporain de Montreal and at the new AmorePacific Museum of Art in Seoul. Lozano-Hemmer was the first artist to officially represent Mexico at the 52nd Biennale di Venezia. Collections holding his work include the Museum of Modern Art, New York; Tate Modern, London; Cisneros Fontanals Art Foundation, Miami; Colección Jumex, Mexico City; Museo Universitario de Arte Contemporáneo, Mexico City; DAROS Latinamerica Collection, Zurich; Borusan Contemporary, Istanbul; 21st C Museum of Art, Kanazawa; Manchester Art Gallery, UK; MUSAC, Leon; MONA, Hobart; ZKM, Karlsruhe; the Musée d'art contemporain de Montréal and Singapore Art Museum, among others.

Past exhibitions of his work have also included The Barbican Centre, London; The Museum of Art, Hong Kong; and La Gaîté Lyrique, Paris; Kulczyk Foundation, Poznan; Art Basel Unlimited; and art biennials in Cuenca, Havana, Istanbul, Kochi, Liverpool, Melbourne NGV, Moscow, New Orleans, New York ICP, Seoul, Seville, Shanghai, Singapore and Sydney. A recipient of the International Bauhaus Award in Dessau, his honors also include the Golden Nica from Ars Electronica, a Rockefeller Fellowship, two British Academy of Film and Television Arts awards in Interactive Art, a Governor General award in Canada and the Trophée des Lumières in Lyon.

Lozano-Hemmer has forthcoming solo exhibitions at the Hirshhorn Museum and Sculpture Garden in Washington, D.C., the MARCO Museum in Monterrey and the San Francisco Museum of Modern Art. He was recently named as a Bloomberg Public Art Challenge finalist for his project Border Tuner to connect the cities of El Paso, Texas and Ciudad Juárez, Chihuahua. In 2018 the feature documentary “Megalodemocrat: the public art of Rafael Lozano-Hemmer” will premiere, shot by Benjamin Duffield over 10 years in 17 countries.

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.art.

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