Daniel Canogar
A Look Back: A Survey of Previous Works

bitforms gallery
March – April 2020

Daniel Canogar, *A Look Back*

In light of the closure of the gallery in response to COVID-19, the opening of Daniel Canogar's exhibition, *Billow*, has been postponed. We want to take this opportunity to share previous works by the artist that have made a meaningful contribution to the landscape of new media art. Throughout his oeuvre, Canogar has sourced a wide variety of materials ranging from VHS tape, discarded cell phones, and flexible LED tiles to immaterial resources such as telephone signals, art history, and trending Google searches. The artist's practice is intrinsically linked to the world of data, and how this invisible force negotiates its relationship with the physical world. Within these selected works, Canogar seeks to materialize the world of data and its implications through consumer electronics, public intervention, digital sculpture, and generative video. As a precursor to his upcoming show at the gallery please join us in revisiting a group of earlier works by Daniel Canogar.

b. 1964 Madrid, Spain
Lives and works in Madrid and Los Angeles

Born in Madrid to a Spanish father and an American mother, Daniel Canogar´s life and career have bridged between Spain and the U.S. Photography was his earliest medium of choice, receiving an M.A. from NYU at the International Center of /photography in 1990, but he soon became interested in the possibilities of the projected image and installation art.

He has created permanent public art installations with LED screens, including *Aqueous* at The Sobrato Organization (Mountain View, CA, 2019); *Pulse*, at Zachry Engineering Education Complex in Texas A&M University (College Station, TX, 2018); *Tendril* for Tampa International Airport (Tampa, FL, 2017) and *Cannula*, *Xylem* and *Gust II* at BBVA Bank Headquarters (Madrid, 2018). He has also created public monumental artworks in different mediums such as Amalgama El Prado, a generative video-projection projected on the Museo Nacional del Prado façade and created with the Museum's painting collection (Madrid, 2019.

His solo shows include "Liquid Memories" at sala Kubo-Kutxa (San Sebastian, 2019); "Surge" a temporary installation for the Grand Lobby Wall at Moss Arts Center, Virginia Tech (Blacksburg, VA, 2019); "Echo" at Paul and Lulu Hilliard University Art Museum (Lafayette, LA, 2019); "Melting the Solids" at Wilde Gallery (Geneva, 2018); "Fluctuations" at Sala Alcalá 31 (Madrid, 2017); "Echo" at bitforms gallery (New York, NY, 2017) and Max Estrella Gallery (Madrid, 2017); "Sikka Ingentium" at Museum Universidad de Navarra (Pamplona, Spain, 2017); "Quadratura" at Espacio Fundación Telefónica (Lima, 2014); "Vórtices" at the Fundación Canal Isabel II (Madrid, 2011); Synaptic Passage, an installation commissioned for the exhibition "Brain: The Inside Story" at the American Museum of Natural History (New York, NY, 2010) and two installations at the Sundance Film Festival (Park City, UT, 2011).

He has exhibited in Reina Sofia Contemporary Art Museum, Madrid; Wexner Center for the Arts, Ohio; Offenes Kulturhaus Center for Contemporary Art, Linz; Kunstsammlung Nordrhein Westfallen, Düsseldorf; Hamburger Bahnhof Museum, Berlin; Borusan Contemporary Museum, Istanbul; American Museum of Natural History, New York; Andy Warhol Museum, Pittsburgh; Mattress Factory Museum, Pittsburgh; Palacio Velázquez, Madrid; Max Estrella Gallery, Madrid; bitforms gallery, New York; Art Bärtschi & Cie Gallery, Geneva; Eduardo Secci Contemporary, Florence; the Alejandro Otero Museum, Caracas and the Santa Mónica Art Center, Barcelona.

Daniel Canogar
Other Geologies 8, 2005-2007
Kodak Endura photo mounted on aluminum
59 x 89 in / 150 x 225 cm
Edition of 3, 2 AP

Discarded objects (toys, computers, videos tapes, mattresses) found in garbage dumps have been photographed in order to create large photographic murals. Naked bodies are trapped within the garbage. *Other Geologies* is a meditation on mass consumption and visual excess. Other issues, such as the electronic baroque and the erasure of memory are also explored.
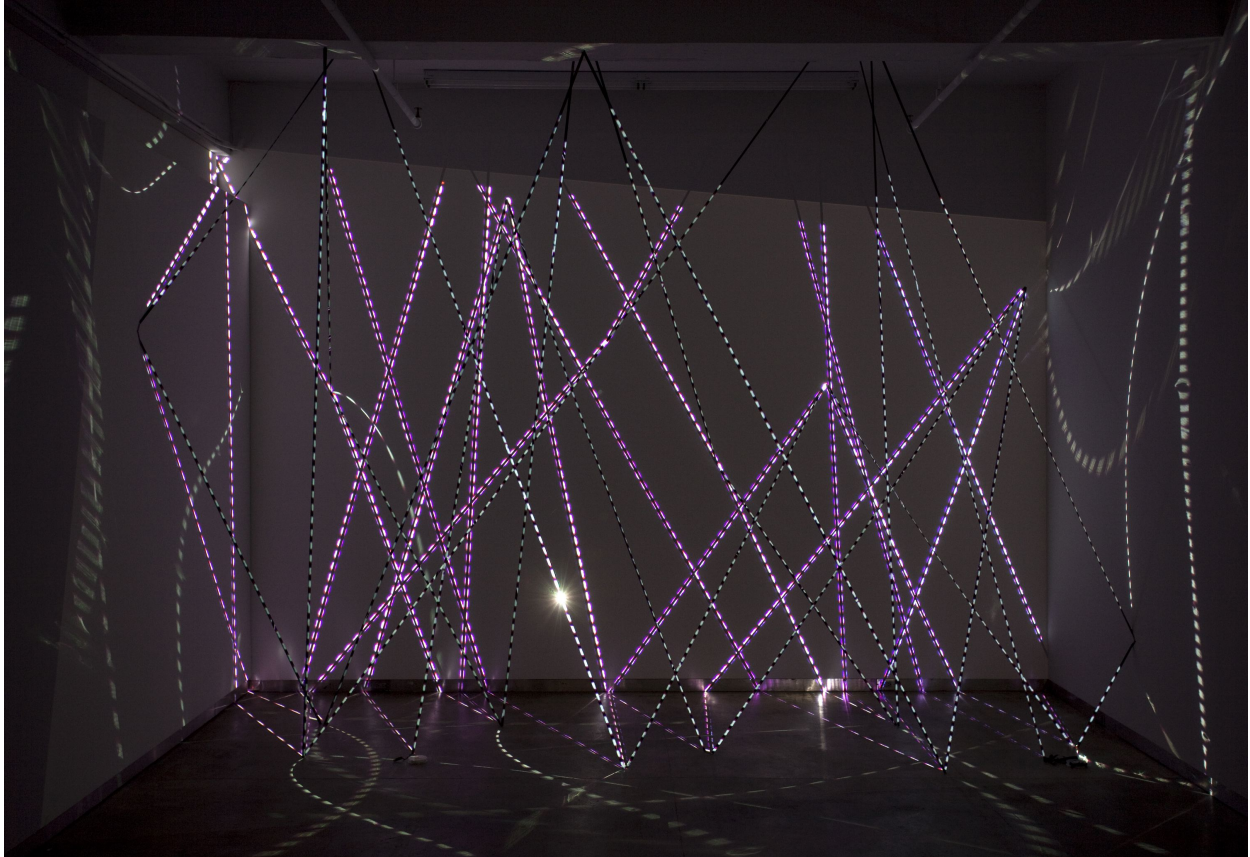
Daniel Canogar
Pneuma 1, 2009
Discarded telephone cables, wood, projector, disk, fans
22 x 29 x 16 in / 56 x 74 x 40 cm
Edition of 7, 1 AP

Video documentation: https://vimeo.com/26379520

Daniel Canogar uses art installation as a vehicle to reanimates the lifeless, reviving a collective portrait of secrets contained in discarded electronic materials. In the *Pneuma* series, the ephemeral lifeblood of a telephone signal serves as a metaphor for technological mortality. A relic in the age of information, the wires in this work were found in a dumpster near the artist's home. Flickering with light, the illuminated color cabling in this sculpture evokes both the stage and crackling communications, reminding us of our own fragile bodies and natural information exchanges. Defined as "breath" by the ancient Greeks, *pneuma* is a vehicle of *logos*, which structures the continuum of matter.

Daniel Canogar
Tracks, 2009
VHS magnetic tape, video (color, silent), projector, media player
Dimensions variable
3 min 30 sec, loop
Edition of 3, 1 AP

Video documentation: https://vimeo.com/401375198

Tracks is an elaborate network of tape ripped from a VHS copy of Alfred Hitchcock's film *Dial M for Murder*. Forming a latticework of crisscrossed lines spreading across the gallery, a video animation is precisely aimed at these radiating geometries and appears to constantly move along the tape, much as the head in the VCR would have done. A living system becomes apparent, as the animation spirits a narrative forward, evoking a pumping heart, veins and arteries. Reviving this celluloid artifact to dramatic effect, the animation was inspired by Saul Bass' credits for Hitchcock's films, as well as the filmmaker's sawtoothed suspense plots.

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Daniel Canogar
Vortex, 2011
Pigment print on archival paper
59 x 107 in / 150 x 272 cm
Edition of 3, 1 AP

Video documentation: https://vimeo.com/30242091

Vortex presents a group of human figures floating in water amid a profusion of plastic detritus. The complexity of detail in the image emerges in the individualized expressions of the figures who appear to be overwhelmed by the accumulation of garbage and waste that surrounds them. Each individual, unaided by the rest, seems to be struggling for survival.
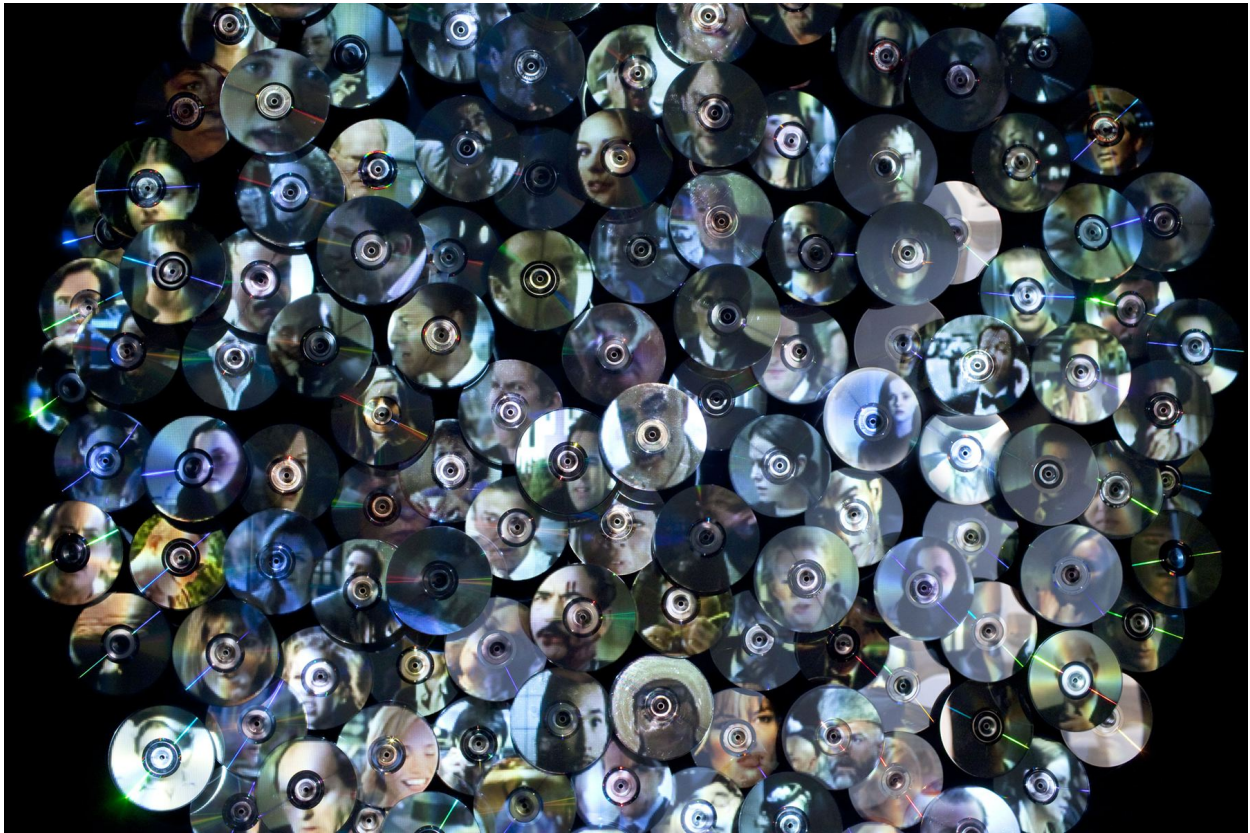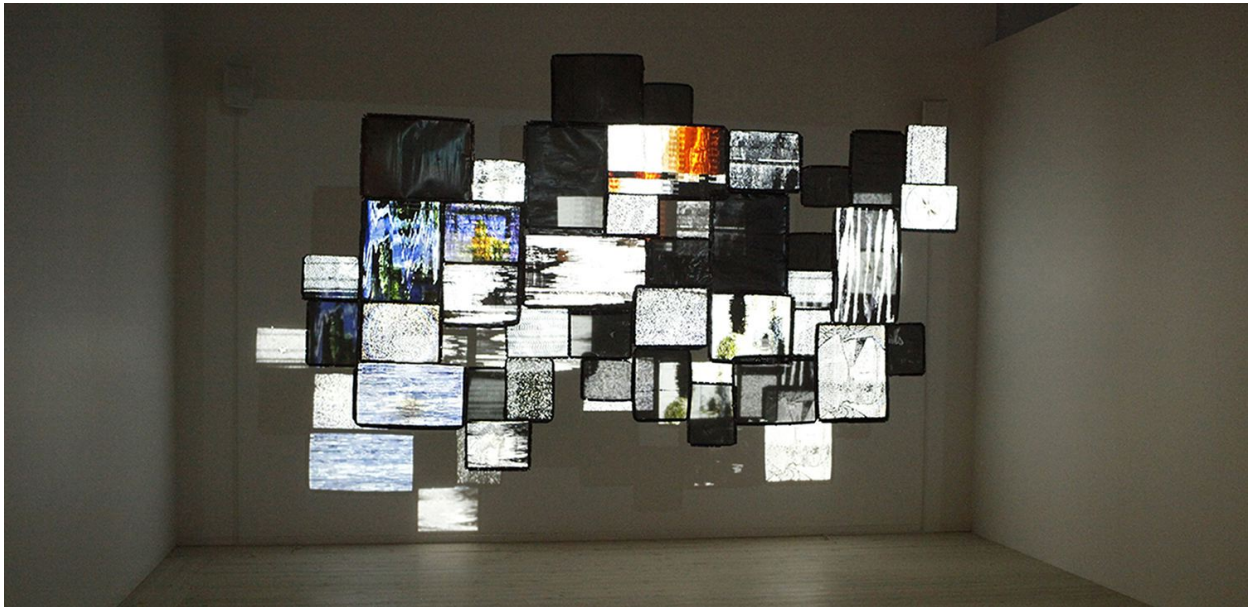
Daniel Canogar
Sikka, 2012
140 DVDs, video (color, sound, projector, speakers
57 x 57 x 6 in / 145 x 145 x 15 cm
7 min 50 sec, loop
Edition of 3, 1 AP

Video documentation: https://vimeo.com/58729437

Taking its name from the word that describes Babylonian-era gold coins sewn to clothing, *Sikka* is a video installation constructed from 140 discarded DVDs. This decorative tradition also references the shiny plastic objects that we know today as sequins. Historically, sikka were worn to remind onlookers of the wealth and power of those wearing them, while also evoking the light of the divine.

In this installation, the surfaces of the DVDs flash images back at us that are born from the glamorous world of Hollywood, where image is converted to a kind of currency. An audio-visual mosaic that explores the phantasmagorical properties of cinema, Sikka projects the contents from each DVD back on to its physical surface. It's film segments were selected from each DVD, primarily for color, shape and movement values, forming a digital palette from which the projected loops were constructed. The 140 layers of audio in these segments form the installation's "found" soundtrack.

Daniel Canogar
Frequency, 2012
33 analog television screens, projector, video (color, sound) media player, speakers
118 x 79 in / 300 x 200 cm
4 min 30 sec, loop
Edition of 3, 1 AP

Video documentation: https://vimeo.com/39782585

The installation *Frequency* is a patchwork of 33 screens recovered from analog television sets. With the advent of digital television, these TV sets with cathode-ray tubes have been rendered obsolete and today pile up in junkyards and electronic recycling centers, where Canogar obtained them. He recovered the metal meshes within the old sets, and maps video to these objects, projecting precise images of white noise and test charts. The screens seem to have lost their ability to tune into their signal, unable to decipher an alien code whose meaning is perhaps forever lost.

The collage created by the screens reverts to hand-made textile techniques, a quilt-like assemblage created from discarded pieces. The installation crafts a visual analogy between traditional weaving techniques, and the line-by-line interlacing of the electronic image, both fundamental image-creating technologies that have shaped our vision of the world.

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Daniel Canogar
Storming Times Square, 2014
Green-screen public-participation performance captured on video (color, silent), output to Times Square
LED billboards

Video documentation: https://vimeo.com/107335730

Using methods of public intervention and video installation, *Storming Times Square* was born from a desire to have viewers project themselves, literally and metaphorically, onto their immediate environments. From July 24-27, 2014, participants were invited to crawl over a green-screen surface while being captured by an overhead video camera in Times Square. The culmination of this video shoot is a multichannel animation featuring participants climbing up the LED billboards in Times Square.

Storming Times Square was part of the "Midnight Moment" program, the largest coordinated effort in Times Square to display synchronized, cutting-edge creative content on electronic billboards throughout Times Square.

Daniel Canogar
Tendril, 2017
Flexible LED screens, computer controlled system, video (color, silent), metal structure
35 x 41 x 12 ft / 11 x 12.5 x 3.5 m

Video documentation: https://vimeo.com/268053139

Tendril is a permanent installation created for Tampa International Airport which emerges from the artist's fascination with representations of ruins that depict nature reabsorbing what was built by humans. The artwork is composed of ribbon-shaped LED screens that coil around architectural trusses. *Tendril* evokes the coiling shapes of vines curling around a trellis. The videos screened on the artwork depict a rich variety of native South Florida vines. *Tendril*'s video animations suggest vigorous reclamation of territory, shifting from fast invasive gestures to tranquil sequences of species settling into their new home.

Daniel Canogar
Game Over II, 2020
Discarded Game Boy parts, wood, projector, micro SD memory card
53 x 26 x 15 in / 135 x 60 x 38 cm
Edition of 3, 1 AP

Video documentation: https://vimeo.com/115921123

Game Over is part of the *Small Data* series. *Small Data i*s composed of a series of salvaged electronic devices (old cell phones, broken computer screens and printers, cracked hard discs, etc.), onto which an overhead projection is cast. The projections, precisely aimed at the devices, animate and seemingly give new life to the abandoned technologies. The artist works like an archeologist, pulling out the found items from piles of discarded materials in junkyards and recycling centers (veritable cemeteries for consumer electronics) and organizes them on shelves as if they were fragile remnants of a bygone era.

The animations attempt to capture our complex and sometimes ambivalent relationship with consumer electronics. Buying the latest gadget makes us feel like sophisticated citizens of the digital age. Yet these technologies break down or are rendered obsolete at a fast pace. Propped on shelves, the decaying technologies of Small Data present themselves as contemporary still lives, insidious reminders of our own aging process and inevitable expiration date.