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REAL FEELINGS

Emotion and Technology – An international Group Show

House of Electronic Arts Basel (HeK) | Freilager-Platz 9 | 4142 Münchenstein/Basel

May 28 – August 16, 2020

Press Tour | Wednesday May 27, 2020 11am

Artist Talk and Opening | Wednesday May 27, 2020, from 6pm



Stine Deja und Marie Munk, *Synthetic Seduction*, 2018

Emotions could be described as the core of human experience. The international group exhibition *REAL FEELINGS* explores the rapidly changing relationship between technology and emotions. Works by 20 artists are presented in the show, ranging from interactive installations to artificial intelligence, animations, video installations and photography. They explore how technology today represents, manipulates and changes our emotions. Several works will be newly produced in the context of the exhibition.

In the 21st century, emotions have increasingly come into focus – how they can be manipulated and controlled by technology, because they influence our society and our lives. Today, major companies try to manipulate the way we behave by triggering our emotions everyday through smart phones, laptops and personal devices. Researchers at the MIT

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media lab have developed a machine learning system that 'reads' facial expressions to determine human emotions. At the same time, young children are being trained to recognise emotions in other human beings – because their ability to do so is failing in the digital age. The barriers between human and machine, emotion and technology seem to be breaking down. Our heartbeat, perspiration, speech, or body language are checked by smart watches or fitness trackers, web-cams and facial and body recognition systems. In the 21st century we are seeing the rise of investigations into emotional technology (or ET), which stands for measuring biometric data in order to detect and respond to our emotions which is then used as data input for various digital applications. Advances in machine learning have enabled emotion recognition with AI. Our world is flooded with digital technology and these devices have literally become extensions of ourselves: humanlike robots are used in healthcare, sex robots are compensating the shortcomings of human relationships, smart devices are listening to our conversations and are taking care of our needs – we are communicating more with technology than with other humans.

As the emotional intelligence gap between of humans and machines grows narrower – do we actually know how we really feel? Who is in control of our emotions now? Is technology beginning to influence how we feel? Could technological advances lead to the emergence of new emotions that were not only previously unquantified, unnamed, and unidentified, but also un-felt? And what exactly are real feelings in today's highly technological world? These difficult questions and more are raised in the course of the exhibition as visitors encounter diverse works which challenge, provoke, and explore how technology is representing, influencing and changing our emotions.

A comprehensive catalogue will be published to accompany the exhibition, documenting the works in the exhibition and featuring current scientific and artistic contributions. An extensive programme of events and educational activities is also planned, including a colloquium in collaboration with TA SWISS, the Foundation for Technology Assessment, on the subject of "Social Robots" on June 4, 2020. This event is being held in the context of a current study by TA-SWISS that deals with the opportunities and risks of social robots that simulate empathy and generate emotion. It focuses on the new challenges of the relationship between man and machine. The results of the study will be available in early 2021.

Artists: Antoine Catala (FR), Stine Deja & Marie Munk (DK), Heather Dewey-Hagborg (US), Justine Emard (FR), Cécile B. Evans (UK), Ed Fornieles (UK), Maria Guta & Adrian Ganea (CH/RO), Esther Hunziker (CH), Seokyung Kim (KR), Clément Lambelet (CH), Lorem (IT), Kyle McDonald & Lauren McCarthy (US), Simone C. Niquille (CH), Dani Ploeger (NL), Lucy McRae (AU), Shinseungback Kimyonghun (KR), Maija Tammi (FI), Troika (UK), Coralie Vogelaar (NL), Liam Young (AU)

Curators: Sabine Himmelsbach, Ariane Koek und Angelique Spaninks



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The exhibition is created in partnership with



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Information:

Opening hours: Wed-Sun, 12:00-18:00

Special opening hours during Art Basel: Mon-Sun, 10:00-20:00

For more information: www.hek.ch

The House of Electronic Arts Basel (HeK) is Switzerland's national competence centre, that deals with contemporary art exploring and configuring new technologies and media and reflects on them. With its interdisciplinary alignment HeK allows insights into the art production of different genres in the examination of art, media and technology for a broad audience. In a varied programme of exhibitions, smaller and larger events, festival formats, performances and concerts, HeK dedicates itself to current social topics and questions as well as technological-aesthetic developments. In addition to the event and exhibition activities, HeK is engaged with the collection methodology and the preservation of digital art.

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