

TO CITE A BODY

12th January – 2nd February 2019 | Private View: 11th January 2019, 6 – 9pm

Bob Bicknell-Knight | Yoshi Kametani | Keiken | Mark Aerial Waller | Vivien Zhang

Curated by Jack Smurthwaite

To cite a body is a group exhibition about materialising the digital: moulding and authoring data to grant it some form of 'materiality'. It is a distinctly modern expression, which is in part linked to the existential crisis of (personal) data becoming valuable. This data has currency and exists as an entity outside of the confines of the human body making it simultaneously personal and alien; it represents the subject but is apparently divorced from the agency of that same subject.

The networked structure of the exhibition reflects our complex personal and social relationships to the digital and non-physical material. Each artist, in their own way, comments and reflects on large societal questions, yet when they are viewed in relation to each other, they arguably show a fuller and richer depiction of our current situation.

Bicknell-Knight's carelessly unattended bag makes an explicit comment on the very public Cambridge Analytica scandal and Facebook's questionable response to it. Having such a visible and recognisable advertising campaign and public figure ('The Zuck') in the gallery brings to mind a recent and powerful example of how our data can be handled, manipulated, utilised and fed back to us. When viewed opposite Mark Aerial Waller's *Sons of Temperance*, there is a realisation that anything, consciously or not, can be approached as data if it is collated, investigated and measured. The fictional ability to extract the voices of potters from the objects they made that Waller's film depicts is wholly believable. These two works dialogically illustrate that the public outrage we felt in the fallout of the CA scandal wasn't one of offence or shock but the sound of a bubble of wilful ignorance bursting. We know we produce masses of data; will also know we don't fully question its value, power, or the shifting relativity of its authorship.

Keiken's collective practice emphasises the braided strands of pop culture, politics, scientific investigation and prompts us to consider the future of data and its effects on us. The result of collaborations between artists, film makers, activists and biometrics experts, Keiken's universe forces a viewpoint of futurity onto the contemporary debates that thrive around us. Empathy is often brought to question in conversations around technology but what is the fate of any 'human' emotion when it is repressed and shielded behind an increasingly acute understanding of hard, personal data.

Yoshi Kametani's beautifully glitchy *945°C* series not only shows just how easily data can be interfered with but also how easy it is for this process to descend into an entropic free fall. Like the charred sculptures that his series started with, the abstraction of the 'pure' data, once meddled with, is irretrievable. Despite looking wholly digital, human fingerprints are stickily all over the perfect gloss of the photographic prints, just as the brushstrokes of Zhang's canvases seamlessly meld the human and artificial. Zhang's work presents an endless rhythmic and algorithmic landscape that is universally relatable yet culturally bound. Idiosyncratic gestures and personal memories appear in the aesthetic of the apparently borderless digital world but are framed within the long history of Zhang's chosen medium and the underlying socio-political structures that invisibly govern the generation of such content.

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Biographies

Bob Bicknell-Knight is a London-based artist and curator working in installation, sculpture, video and digital media. Bicknell-Knight's work explores the divergent methods by which consumer capitalist culture permeates both online and offline society.

Bicknell-Knight is also the founder and director of *isthisit?*, a platform for contemporary art, exhibiting over 800 artists since its creation in May 2016. Online, it operates as a gallery producing monthly exhibitions showcasing emerging to mid-career artists, hosting a roster of guest curators experimenting with the medium of the internet to interrogate a variety of concepts. Offline, it has held exhibitions nationally and internationally and is the publisher of *isthisit?*, a book series released on a triannual basis.

Selected solo exhibitions include CACOTOPIA 02 at Annka Kultys Gallery, London (2018), Sunrise Prelude at Dollspace, London (2017) and Are we there yet? at Chelsea College of Art, London (2017). Selected group exhibitions include Inside Intel at Goldsmiths, University of London, London (2018), Total Power Exchange at Galerie Manque, New York (2018), Terms and Conditions May Apply at Annka Kultys Gallery, London (2018), The Museum Has Abandoned Us at State of the Art, Berlin (2017), The Choice of a New Generation at The Muse Gallery, London (2017), I miss you, Blockbuster... at A217 Gallery, London (2017) and MozEx at Mozilla Festival, Ravensbourne, London (2016)

Yoshi Kametani was born in New York City and is currently based in London. Working across multiple disciplines including photography, installation, and moving image, Kametani's practice is characteristic of a non-hierarchical approach to materials. Parallel to his individual practice, Kametani also collaborates with other artists and collectives, challenging the notion of authorship. His work has been published in numerous monographs and he has exhibited internationally.

Keiken are artists, art directors and musicians working collaboratively in a networked practice that merges multiple voices and mediums with collective critical thinking to create immersive experiences. Working with interactive contemporary art and the latest technologies, they apply world-building techniques to imagine networked, layered futures in order to test-drive implications. Most recently, Keiken presented their performative lecture "Honey, I'm Data!" at IMPAKT Festival (Utrecht) developed from previous iterations at LUX Moving Image and Space Art + Technology (London). They have also exhibited and curated at MIRA Festival (Barcelona), CTM and Transmediale's Vorspiel festival (Berlin), and U Studio at Tate St Ives. They were the first artists to have their virtual reality film projected 22,000 light years into space by Jon Pettigrew for Planet3artnews.

Mark Aerial Waller's work is concerned with the transmission and interpretation of culture across time. His fine art practice explores relationships between cinema, sculpture and live performance, where the spectator, art object and its relative position in space and time become an interdisciplinary medium. He has exhibited extensively, with recent screenings and commissions at Tate, Hayward Gallery, BFI Southbank and Channel 4.

In 2000 he founded an experimental research platform, The Wayward Canon, is a site for radical exploration of cinematic practices. Events include portmanteau film with disco transition *Simon and*

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the Radioactive Flesh (with Giles Round) (2007), *Horror Yoga* (2014) Tate Britain and *40 Days at the Rhumba* (2018) Kunsthall Oslo.

He has published articles and essays on cinema and art in Artforum and Frieze magazine and is currently associate lecturer in Fine Art at Central St Martins and Lecturer in Moving Image at University of Brighton. He is represented by Rodeo and his video work is distributed through LUX.

Vivien Zhang is a London-based artist and grew up in China, Kenya and Thailand. Zhang is named on the 2017 Forbes 30 Under 30 Asia list, and is the recipient of the Abbey Award 2016–17 at the British School at Rome and the Chadwell Award 2014–15. She received her MA in Painting from the Royal College of Art (London).

Vivien Zhang's work reflects disjunctions one experiences as a third-culture citizen and also as a digital native. Zhang's paintings present a cultural and geographical fluidity that interrogates the palimpsest nature of contemporary culture, the casual appropriation of visual tropes, and the role of post-production in making works of art today. Zhang collates motifs and manifest them in various combinations in her paintings. Examples include "manicules" found in early European manuscripts, Baroque fragments from Roman churches, and the mathematical shape gömböc.

Selected solo and duo exhibitions include Codescape, Long March Space (Beijing); Uzumaki, House of Egorn (Berlin); Digital Natives: Vivien Zhang and Thomas van Linge, The RYDER (London); Cavity Drift: Vivien Zhang, Galerie Huit (Hong Kong). Selected group exhibitions include BE:YO:ND, Plus-One Gallery (Antwerp); All As Long Distance Neighbours, SOYUZ (Pescara); Beyond Borders, Blain|Southern (London); and Saatchi New Sensations 2014, Victoria House (London).

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For all press inquiries – including image requests – please contact **Jack Smurthwaite** on:

jacksmurthwaite@hotmail.com or +44 7450272798

Opening times: Fri – Sun, 12-5PM, or by appointment

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