

PRESS RELEASE

19.03 - 23.05.2015

RAFAEL LOZANO-HEMMER
POLYNOMIALS
24, RUE DU VIEUX-BILLARD

Born in 1967 in Mexico, Rafael Lozano-Hemmer received a B.Sc. in Physical Chemistry from Concordia University in Montréal, Canada. Fascinated by electronic arts, he develops his work around the concept of “relational architecture”, using technologies such as robotics and computerized surveillance. His approach aims to transform the dominant narratives of a specific building or urban setting by superimposing audiovisual elements to re-contextualize it. He transposes thus his desire to create social experiences in which performance and encounters converge thanks to new technologies.

In January 2015, the multidisciplinary artist invited every visitor to the Abu Dhabi’s Corniche to unite his/her heart rate in his last installation *Pulse Corniche*. In fact, the latter was an interactive canopy of powerful light beams projected into the sky by robotic searchlights whose brightness and orientation was controlled by the heart-rate of the visitors. The artist gathered thousands of people and illuminated the beach for 10 days for the opening of the Guggenheim Abu Dhabi.

Inspired by animatronics, mexican fantasmagory and carnival culture, *Lozano-Hemmer* describes his interactive “light and shadow” installations and his other large-scale interventions as “anti-monuments“. At a smaller scale, his installations and other digital prints explore the themes of perception, subterfuge and surveillance.

These themes are also examined in this exhibition. Firstly, **Nineteen Eighty-Four** is an interactive display that shows house address numbers from all over the world. In 1948, George Orwell predicted that 1984 would mark the end of private life. In 2014, the work contains numbers extracted from Google street view that have an immense variety of fonts colours and textures and can write over 22 billion different combinations of the number 1984. Typing any number onto an onboard animated keyboard starts a fast count-down or count-up until eventually the number 1984 is reached.

Make-Out, work composed of 2400 Internet videos shows thousands of couples looking at each other. As soon as someone stands in front of the display his or her silhouette is shown and all the couples within it begin to kiss. The massive array of make-out sessions continues for as long as someone is in front of the work... As he or she moves away all the kissing ends.

Blaise Pascal’s text “les Expériences Nouvelles touchant le Vide“published in 1647 appears gradually on **Airbone 5**. As soon as the captor detects the visitor, the letters stir and gather little by little until the screen displays the entire work. Then, the text disappears... and scrolls back again from the beginning.

Finally, the last two installations, **Method Random** and **Sphere Packing** are not interactive but also play with computerized data. In fact, the first is a series of chromogenic prints that have been

generated by computational methods that attempt to create randomness. Used for encryption and statistical sampling, Random number generators are algorithms which seek to create random series of numbers. While the sum of all colors picked by different RNG algorithms generates a random gray, patterns can be discerned when a massive number of pixels can be seen simultaneously. These prints spot the fundamental difficulty for computers to appear unpredictable.

Hanging from the ceiling, the second is a series of 5 3D-printed pieces designed to concentrate the entire musical production of five composers. Constituted of more than 1000 loud-speakers, their size is proportional to how prolific each composer was. As the visitor stands a couple meters away from a sphere he/she hears a quiet murmur of sounds, but as he/she approaches and puts his/her ear up close to individual speakers, he/she can hone in on specific compositions.

Rafael Lozano-Hemmer often says that he works with technology not because it is something new, but because it is inevitable in our globalized society. What is natural is to use, transform and question the technologies that make us, “us”.