INFORMATION

Kunsthalle Basel
25.6.— 10.10.21

today

Lawrence Abu Hamdan
*1985 in Amman, JO
Lives and works in Beirut, LB

American Artist
*1989 in Los Angeles, US
They live and work in New York, US

Alejandro Cesarco
*1975 in Montevideo, UY
Lives and works in New York, US

Simon Denny
*1982 in Auckland, NZ
Lives and works in Berlin, DE

Marguerite Humeau
*1986 in Cholet, FR
Lives and works in London, GB

Zhana Ivanova
*1977 in Russe, BG
Lives and works in Amsterdam, NL

Tobias Kaspar
*1984 in Basel, CH
Lives and works in Zurich, CH

Gabriel Kuri
*1970 in Mexico City, MX
Lives and works in Brussels, BE

Liu Chuang
*1978 in Hubei, CN
Lives and works in Shanghai, CN

Ima-Abasi Okon
*1981 in London, GB
Lives and works in Amsterdam, NL, and London, GB

Laura Owens
*1970 in Euclid, US
Lives and works in Los Angeles, US

Trevor Paglen
*1974 in Camp Springs, US
Lives and works in Berlin, DE

Sondra Perry
*1986 in Perth Amboy, US
Lives and works in Newark, US

Cameron Rowland
*1988 in Philadelphia, US
They live and work in New York, US

Sung Tieu
*1987 in Hải Dương, VN
Lives and works in Berlin, DE, and London, GB

Nora Turato
*1991 in Zagreb, HR
Lives and works in Amsterdam, NL

Like it or not, we are surrounded. There is no escape from the incessant flow of information that drives this twenty-first-century, data-based capitalism. Encrypted networks, digital currencies, artificial intelligence, data harvesting, algorithmic biases, sentient machines: these are just some of its effects. The proliferation of information, and data's nebulous modes of circulating now fundamentally shape our existence.

INFORMATION (Today) is a group exhibition conceived as a loose response to the iconic INFORMATION show at New York's Museum of Modern Art (MoMA), curated by Kynaston L. McShine in 1970. MoMA's exhibition emerged out of the context of dramatic advancements in communication technologies at the end of the 1960s—a period already then being heralded as the Information Age. Fifty years on, INFORMATION (Today) features new and recent work by sixteen artists from around the globe, all born since the tumultuous information explosion that prompted the works in the 1970 MoMA show. The artists in this current exhibition work in a variety of media and represent a wide range of artistic positions, and whether they explore communication technologies, surveillance, data systems, or financial speculation, information arguably condenses to become the quasi-medium of their work.

Yet INFORMATION (Today) also deliberately refuses to fit the image one might most immediately conjure of a show addressing this topic—either a dry and objective, fact-based assembly of black and white documents or buzzing with high tech computer-controlled gadgets or featuring what has been called Post-Internet Art. Playful, colorful, materially complex, research-laden, speculative, immersive: INFORMATION (Today) lays out an apparently contradictory array of material and immaterial artworks that wrestle with our fundamental reliance on information in vastly different ways.

To enter the exhibition is to be confronted by hardened chrome barriers that stand in visitors' paths as they make their way into the space. Riddles (Jaws) (2017–2021), by Marguerite Humeau, originates in the artist's research into the mythological guardian figure of the Sphinx, which the artist recasts here as a central barricade leading an army of like others. Formally, Humeau's sculptural installation resembles the aggressive metal security obstacles of modern-day airports, meant to block or guide, regulate and control. Equipped with glass "eyes" that glow (look closely and find their "irises" display the loading icon commonly

appearing on computer screens) and intermittently issuing sounds, these technological objects are strangely alive. They are networked and "communicate" with each other without letting on what prompts their occasional, fever-pitched clicking and hammering.

While Humeau's sculptural elements speak to each other, Laura Owens's newly made painting is speaking directly to *you*. "T'as une question ?" (Do you have a question?) the yellow sticky note painted as trompe l'oeil onto the canvas asks, the inquiring phrase followed by a Swiss telephone number. Go ahead, send a question via text message! Like the frustrating experience of speaking to "smart" devices and robo-call systems, Owens's paintings, with their embedded telephone devices, sometimes deliver straight answers and at other times respond completely off topic, with Wikipedia-style information on the city of Basel's history or a description of another artwork in the exhibition. In the age of Siri and Alexa, a real-time communicative feedback loop with an inanimate entity such as this should hardly surprise. Still, what if you don't ask Owens's painting anything at all, but study its explicit marriage of the analogue and the digital? Thick impastos seem to say, "Look at me! I am painted!", while picturing a matrix of distributed dots, recalling digital pixels and layered with the characteristic drop shadow of computer design programs. These works by Owens, showcased in the first and final room of the exhibition, all bearing phone numbers, enact a type of painting that is not afraid to simultaneously elevate and excoriate the conventions of the medium.

Tobias Kaspar's two canvases near the entrance, along with others dispersed throughout the exhibition, take a different, playful tack in addressing the tradition of painting. Their subject is the logomania of branding and here, the "brand name" is the artist's name, Tobias Kaspar, printed over and over across stretched canvases (or, in another example, the recognizable *Swoosh* of the sports giant Nike is superimposed on a traditional pictorial subject). At a moment when brand logos have become synonymous with an aesthetics of consensus in the service of corporate profit and mass consumption, Kaspar's treatment of his own name as a brand (and, in a two-part painting on display in the last room of the exhibition, his immortalization of a popular online shopping site) offers a commentary on the art-world's relationship to commodification and the demand for artists to become producers of easily identifiable "signature" goods.

But what is in a name? Use a search engine of your choice, enter "American Artist" and see what comes up. The list will surely be long, but your true target might be hard to find. Because American Artist is perhaps best known for having legally changed their name so any search for their moniker frustratingly conflates an anonymous descriptor with their embodiment of an artist *from* and *of* a place. Their new work made for the exhibition, *Veillance Caliper (Annotated)* (2021) is a large-scale sculpture that combines an interior recalling a precision measurement device and an exterior roughly constructed of wood. The latter has been scrawled upon and spray-painted with notes inspired by the writings of Simone Browne on different types of surveillance and resistance to it, as well as their impact on Black lives. The result is an irrational tool for measuring the unmeasurable: how regimes of surveillance are used against Black subjects along with the ways in which *sous-veillance*, or veillance from below, might provide a kind of counter through the watching of the powerful few above by the powerless many below.

Systems of information and knowledge have been an ongoing concern of Alejandro Cesarco. With his contribution to the show, he uses dead-pan photographs of open library binders to expose some of the classification principles of one of the largest public libraries in the world. While the subject headings enable the navigation and use of the picture collection of the New York Public Library, they simultaneously signal what is included and excluded from it. They are thus, according to the artist, "the precursor to Google Image's algorithm," but they also reveal, like all organizational systems—whether old-school printed and bound or high tech and computational—that they are invariably a reflection of the humans that determine the criteria and categories that underpin them.

Lawrence Abu Hamdan's *For the Otherwise Unaccounted* (2020) is based on forensic analysis, biological data, historiography, and scientific hypotheses collected by Dr. Ian Stevenson. His research on reincarnation suggests that a birthmark is a sign of violence that had been perpetrated upon an individual whose death found no recourse, justice, or retribution and thus manifested itself as such a body marking in a person's later incarnation. Imagining the body as a carrier of trauma across generations, like a hard drive that stores information for later retrieval, Hamdan's text pages and prints, glistening with irregularly shaped forms, document individuals, their mode of death, and the birthmarks that appeared on the
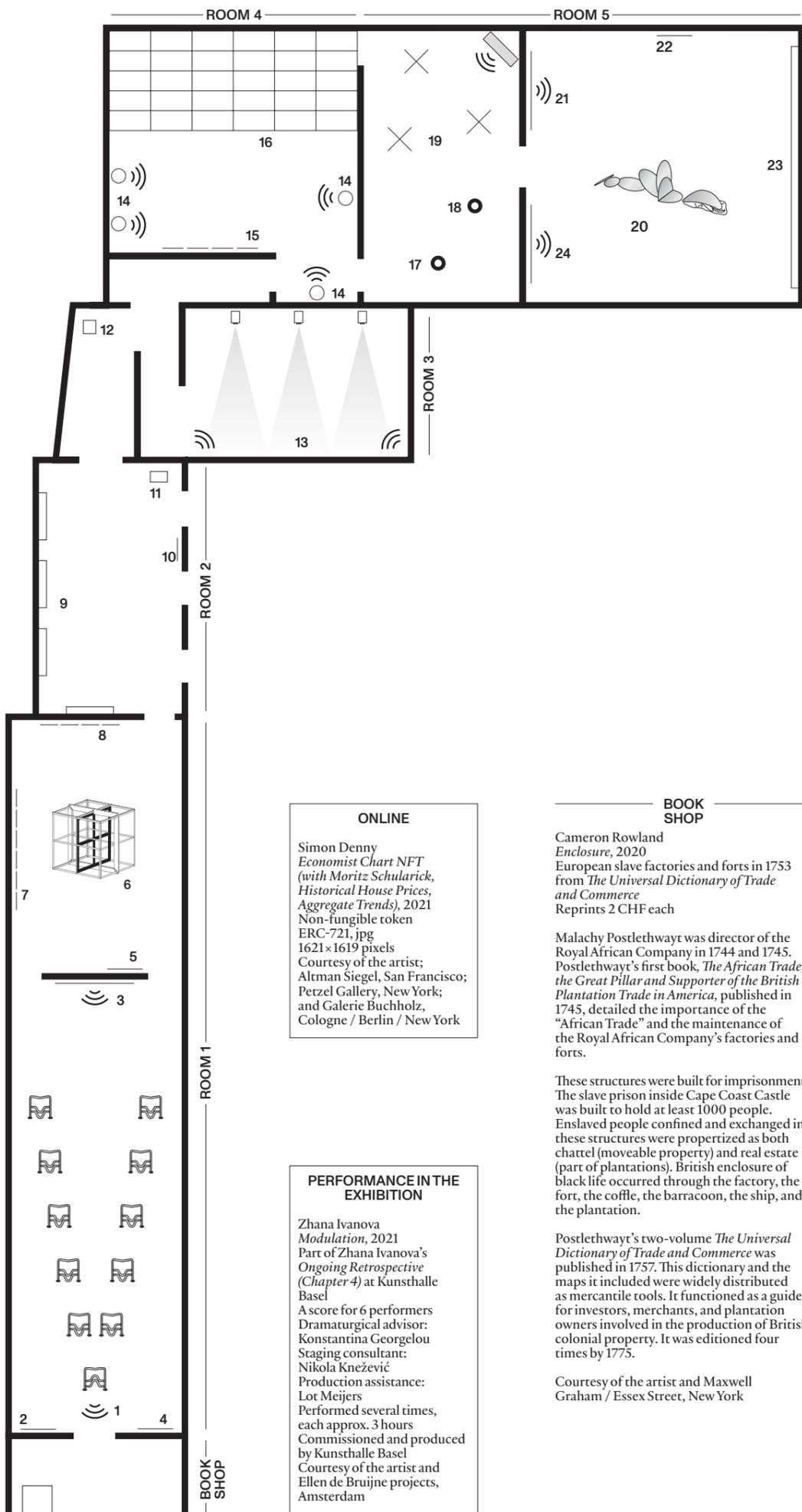
bodies they inhabited in their subsequent lives. For Hamdam, whose art often focuses on bearing witness to injustices that have otherwise escaped historical record, the documentation highlights the ways in which testimony might, in fact, manifest across time and space and on the living body.

Cameron Rowland's *Monthly Supervision Report* (2020) is a standard form for monitoring and billing individuals in the US criminal justice system, who are obligated to pay for their own supervision. In exhibiting this administrative document, the artist articulates one of the modes this expanded system of incarceration uses to generate income from those held captive within it. The work's caption reveals that in "2017, 45% of people admitted to state prisons were incarcerated for violating their probation or parole." On the floor nearby sits Rowland's *0D20612* (2014), which consists of a LoJack device powered by a car battery. LoJack devices are installed in vehicles and transmit a signal, which if registered can be located by law enforcement when identified as missing. This LoJack is operational but not registered. The pieces resonate with another of Rowland's artworks in the exhibition, this one located in the bookshop: *Enclosure* (2020), a reproduction of a map from 1753, depicting the Western coast of Africa. It locates the various "forts" and "factories" built by European slave traders, which functioned to imprison the enslaved before they were shipped to European colonies. Widely distributed as a mercantile tool, the map functioned as a guide for those involved in the trade of the enslaved, goods produced by the enslaved, and the underlying system of colonial finance. This artwork is available to anyone and can be purchased for 2 CHF.

Taking the form of a transparent minimalist sculpture filled with visible circuit boards, a maze of wiring, and electronics, Trevor Paglen's *Autonomy Cube* (2015) is both an object to be seen and tool to be used. Select the Wi-Fi network called "autonomy cube" to access an atypical Wi-Fi hotspot—free of tracking, surveillance, or censorship. To offer such a data-environment, the sculpture routes all of its internet traffic using Tor, a global network of thousands of volunteer-run servers, relays, and services designed to help anonymize data (which could serve to offer cover for, say, oppressed and persecuted journalists, but potentially also to criminals). Furthermore, for the duration of the exhibition, the *Autonomy Cube* itself acts as a Tor relay, helping others around the world to stay untraceable at a time when online data tracking and surveillance have become pervasive.

Liu Chuang's ambitious, three-channel video installation weaves disparate research findings into an epic thesis on political and socio-technical systems throughout history. His is a dizzying voyage whose core unspools a seemingly unrelated relationship between crypto currency mining (which takes up about 70% of the world's computing power) and field recordings of ethnic Zomia minorities, who have historically maintained antagonistic relationships with the ruling governments in their regions. Combining breathtaking drone imagery with footage taken from the social media accounts of power-line repairmen and underscored by voiceover narration in Muya, a language related to Tibetan, the video flits wildly between topics, from the introduction of telegraphs in China during the late Qing Dynasty to sci-fi human-alien communication. Improbable but enlightening connections between energy and information and between technology and identity come alive in the video thanks to Liu's synthesis of hard-nosed research and a visually striking speculative poetics.

Sung Tieu's two contributions to the exhibition are connected to her ongoing investigation into the psychological dimension of warfare and its relationship to Cold War ideologies. Her spare installation, *In Cold Print* (2020), combines stainless steel seats and military clothing and bags—constructed by the artist from fabrics that evoke the minimal lines and patterns of Sol Lewitt drawings—with a muffled, drone sound referencing the so-called "Havana Syndrome." First reported in 2016 by US embassy staff posted in Cuba, it manifested as inexplicable disorders and brain injuries resembling concussions and was believed to have been caused by a sound weapon. In an effort to demonstrate the mere possibility of such a weapon's existence, US intelligence authorities recorded a reconstruction based on testimony. The artist listened to this reconstruction, recorded her cerebral activity and in turn translated it into acoustic signals. The resulting sound piece shares the room with *Loyalty Questionnaire* (2021), which similarly hints at a new reading of conceptual and minimal art in relation to US Imperialism. The latter consists of a form that the US government administered in 1943 to US citizens of Japanese ancestry, and on which the artist drew delicate renderings of the border walls between Mexico and the US (which were actually built from recycled elements taken from World War II era internment camps in the US as well as helicopter landing mats produced during the war in Vietnam).

Room labels in floor plan: ROOM 4, ROOM 5, ROOM 3, ROOM 2, ROOM 1, BOOK SHOP

17
Simon Denny
Remainder 1, 2019
Margret Thatcher scarves, Patagonia 850
Down Sleeping Bag 30 F/-1 C-R parts,
Ripstop Nylon, down sourced from second
hand garments in San Francisco, carbon
fiber, glass fiber, wood
210 × 55 × 40 cm
Collection of Kevin Morris, California, US

18
Simon Denny
Remainder 2, 2019
Margret Thatcher scarves, Patagonia 850
Down Sleeping Bag 30 F/-1 C-R parts,
Ripstop Nylon, down sourced from second
hand garments in San Francisco, carbon
fiber, glass fiber, wood
210 × 55 × 40 cm
Courtesy of the artist and Altman Siegel,
San Francisco

19
Sondra Perry
*IT'S IN THE GAME '18 or Mirror Gag for
Projection and Three Universal Shot Trainers
with Nasal Cavity, Pelvis, and Orbit, 2018*
Digital video, Rosco Chroma Key Blue paint,
3 Spalding Universal Shot Trainers, 3 digital
videos, 3 Acer 17" monitors, 3 privacy
screens
Dimension variable
Video, color, sound, 16 min 20 sec, in loop
3 videos, each color, sound, 2 min, in loop
3 training aids, 176.53 × 111.76 × 92.25 cm,
217.17 × 88.90 × 101.60 cm,
195.58 × 111.76 × 88.90 cm
Courtesy of the artist and Bridget Donahue,
New York

20
Gabriel Kuri
*Balance of the Invisible and the Foreseeable,
2014*
Powder-coated metal, sleeping bags
123 × 576 × 124 cm
Courtesy of the artist and Sadie Coles HQ,
London

21
Laura Owens
Untitled [SMS +41 79 807 86 29], 2021
Oil, Flashe, screen printing inks, charcoal,
and sand on wallpaper mounted to
aluminum, walnut frame, with sound
275.9 × 214.9 × 6.3 cm
Courtesy of the artist

22
Tobias Kaspar
*Moda Operandi, Proenza Schouler, Ribbed
Knit Gathered Midi Dress, 2021*
Acrylic paint, inkjet and silkscreen print on
cotton
2 parts, 178 × 140 cm, 163 × 140 cm
Courtesy of the artist; Galerie Peter
Kilchmann, Zurich; Galerie Lars Friedrich,
Berlin; Urs Meile, Beijing; and VI, VII, Oslo

23
Nora Turato
*your bed is a magical place where you
remember all the things you forgot during the
day / your vanity is powerful enough to defeat
anything, 2021*
Emulsion paint on wall
Dimension variable; as installed 6 × 10.85 m
Courtesy of the artist; Galerie Gregor Staiger,
Zurich; and LambdaLambdaLambda,
Prishtina

24
Laura Owens
Untitled [SMS +41 79 807 86 92], 2021
Oil, Flashe, screen printing inks, charcoal,
and sand on wallpaper mounted to
aluminum, walnut frame, with sound
275.9 × 214.9 × 6.3 cm
Courtesy of the artist

14
Sung Tieu
In Cold Print, 2020
5-channel sound installation in garments,
5 portable speakers, 2 subwoofers,
5 MP3-Players, sea sack, pilot overall, shirt,
carry bag, backpack, wall mounted stainless
steel swivel stools, stainless steel hooks
31 min 24 sec
Dimension variable
Courtesy of the artist; Emalin, London;
and Sfeir-Semler, Beirut / Hamburg

15
Sung Tieu
Loyalty Questionnaire, 2021
Pencil on printed paper
4 parts, each 21 × 29.7 cm;
framed, each 32.1 × 23.4 cm
Courtesy of the artist; Emalin, London;
and Sfeir-Semler, Beirut / Hamburg

16
Ima-Abasi Okon
$M — C — M'$ (1 with Peace, 2 without Peace, 3 with Peace, 4 without Peace, 5 with Peace, 6 without Peace, 7 with Peace, 8 without Peace, 9 with Peace, 10 without Peace, 11 with Peace, 12 without Peace, 13 with Peace, 14 without Peace, 15 with Peace, 16 without Peace, 17 with Peace, 18 without Peace, 19 with Peace, 20 without Peace, 21 with Peace, 22 without Peace, 23 with Peace, 24 without Peace, 25 with Peace, 26 without Peace, 27 with Peace, 28 without Peace, 29 without Peace, 30 without Peace, 31 with Peace, 32 without Peace, 33 with Peace, 34 without Peace, 35 with Peace, 36 without Peace, 37 with Peace, 38 without Peace, 39 with Peace, 40 without Peace, 41 with Peace, 42 without Peace, 43 with Peace, 44 without Peace, 45 with Peace, 46 without Peace, 47 with Peace, 48 without Peace, 49 with Peace, 50 without Peace, 51 with Peace, 52 without Peace, 53 with Peace, 54 without Peace, 55 with Peace, 56 without Peace, 57 with Peace, 58 without Peace, 59 with Peace, 60 without Peace, 61 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Peace, 455 without Peace, 456 without Peace, 457 without Peace, 458 without Peace, 459 without Peace, 460 without Peace, 461 without Peace, 462 without Peace, 463 without Peace, 464 without Peace, 465 without Peace, 466 without Peace, 467 without Peace), 2019–2021
Metal grid, (104 of) 467 white fissured
ceiling tiles, wire, (without) morphine,
(without) insulin, (without) ultrasound gel
and (without) gold
4 × 923 × 355 cm
Courtesy of the artist and Galerie Neu,
Berlin

ONLINE
Simon Denny
*Economist Chart NFT
(with Moritz Schularick,
Historical House Prices,
Aggregate Trends), 2021*
Non-fungible token
ERC-721, jpg
1621×1619 pixels
Courtesy of the artist;
Altman Siegel, San Francisco;
Petzel Gallery, New York;
and Galerie Buchholz,
Cologne / Berlin / New York

BOOK SHOP
Cameron Rowland
Enclosure, 2020
European slave factories and forts in 1753
from *The Universal Dictionary of Trade
and Commerce*
Reprints 2 CHF each

Malachy Postlethwayt was director of the
Royal African Company in 1744 and 1745.
Postlethwayt's first book, *The African Trade,
the Great Pillar and Supporter of the British
Plantation Trade in America*, published in
1745, detailed the importance of the
"African Trade" and the maintenance of the
Royal African Company's factories and
forts.

These structures were built for imprisonment.
The slave prison inside Cape Coast Castle
was built to hold at least 1000 people.
Enslaved people confined and exchanged in
these structures were propertized as both
chattel (moveable property) and real estate
(part of plantations). British enclosure of
black life occurred through the factory, the
fort, the coffle, the barracoon, the ship, and
the plantation.

Postlethwayt's two-volume *The Universal
Dictionary of Trade and Commerce* was
published in 1757. This dictionary and the
maps it included were widely distributed
as mercantile tools. It functioned as a guide
for investors, merchants, and plantation
owners involved in the production of British
colonial property. It was editioned four
times by 1775.

Courtesy of the artist and Maxwell
Graham / Essex Street, New York

PERFORMANCE IN THE EXHIBITION
Zhana Ivanova
Modulation, 2021
Part of Zhana Ivanova's
*Ongoing Retrospective
(Chapter 4)* at Kunsthalle
Basel
A score for 6 performers
Dramaturgical advisor:
Konstantina Georgelou
Staging consultant:
Nikola Knežević
Production assistance:
Lot Meijers
Performed several times,
each approx. 3 hours
Commissioned and produced
by Kunsthalle Basel
Courtesy of the artist and
Ellen de Bruijne projects,
Amsterdam

1
Marguerite Humeau
Riddles (Jaws), 2017–2021
One mirrored finish stainless steel
"Mother Sphinx" and 10 mirrored finish
stainless steel "Vertebra," equipped with
an internal radio communication system,
LED lights, hand-blown glass eyes, clicking
metallic jaws, electronic systems
11 parts, each 101 × 105 × 70 cm
Courtesy the artist and CLEARING,
New York / Brussels

2
Tobias Kaspar
Logotype (red rose), 2020
Acrylic paint and inkjet print on cotton
180 × 140 cm
Courtesy of the artist; Galerie Peter
Kilchmann, Zurich; Galerie Lars Friedrich,
Berlin; Urs Meile, Beijing; and VI, VII, Oslo

3
Laura Owens
Untitled [SMS +41 79 807 86 34], 2021
Oil, Flashe, screen printing inks, charcoal,
and sand on wallpaper mounted to
aluminum, walnut frame, with sound
275.9 × 214.9 × 6.3 cm
Courtesy of the artist

4
Tobias Kaspar
All-over logo (black), 2020
Acrylic paint and inkjet print on cotton
180 × 140 cm
Courtesy of the artist; Galerie Peter
Kilchmann, Zurich; Galerie Lars Friedrich,
Berlin; Urs Meile, Beijing; and VI, VII, Oslo

5
Tobias Kaspar
No Logo (Nike, Sunset), 2020
Acrylic paint and inkjet print on cotton
175 × 135 cm
Courtesy of the artist; Galerie Peter
Kilchmann, Zurich; Galerie Lars Friedrich,
Berlin; Urs Meile, Beijing; and VI, VII, Oslo

6
American Artist
Veillance Caliper (Annotated), 2021
Wood, metal, acrylic, paint
243.84 × 243.84 × 243.84 cm
Courtesy of the artist

7
Alejandro Cesarco
*New York Public Library Picture Collection
(Subject Headings), 2018*
Archival ink-jet prints
6 prints, each 86 × 58 cm;
framed, each 88 × 60 cm
Courtesy of the artist and Tanya Leighton,
Berlin

8
Alejandro Cesarco
*New York Public Library Picture Collection
(Subject Headings – Cross References), 2018*
Archival ink-jet prints
4 prints, each 76 × 55 cm;
framed, each 77.5 × 56 cm
Courtesy of the artist and Tanya Leighton,
Berlin

9
Lawrence Abu Hamdan
For the Otherwise Unaccounted, 2020
Thermographic prints and text panels on
shelves
17 prints, each 42 × 29.7 cm
4 text panels, each 42 × 24 cm
Courtesy of the artist and Maureen Paley,
London

10
Cameron Rowland
Monthly Supervision Report, 2020
Form PROB 8

In 2016, there were 3,789,800 people on
probation in the United States. The U.S.
federal government and 41 states charge
people on probation flat or monthly
monitoring fees and fines to pay for their
own supervision. Federal supervision fines
are imposed as a "criminal monetary
penalty" in addition to restitution, assess-
ments, interest, bail bond forfeitures,
and court costs, to be paid as a condition of
probation.

In 2017, 45% of people admitted to state
prisons were incarcerated for violating their
probation or parole.

Courtesy of the artist and Maxwell
Graham / Essex Street, New York

11
Cameron Rowland
0D20612, 2014
LoJack transmitter, car battery
29.85 × 32.39 × 16.51 cm
Rental

LoJack is only available aftermarket. When
installed, the transmitter serial number
and the VIN are registered in a database at
the National Crime Information Center,
directly linked to enforcement. LoJack
receivers in police cars search the serial
number of the transmitter based on the VIN
of the missing vehicle. This is an unused,
unregistered transmitter, powered, which
operates for 200 milliseconds every 10
seconds at 173.075 MHz. The frequency
173.075 MHz is available for stolen vehicle
recovery systems on a shared basis with the
Federal Government.

Courtesy of the artist and Maxwell
Graham / Essex Street, New York

12
Trevor Paglen
Autonomy Cube, 2015
Plexiglas cube, computer components
40.01 × 40.01 × 40.01 cm
Courtesy of the artist and Altman Siegel,
San Francisco

13
Liu Chuang
*Bitcoin Mining and Field Recordings
of Ethnic Minorities, 2018*
3-channel video, color, sound
40 min 5 sec
Courtesy of the artist and Antenna Space,
Shanghai

Ima-Abasi Okon takes literally the "aesthetics of administration" that was attributed to 1960s and 70s conceptual art, with its predilection for index cards, statistical charts, and filing systems. Her readymade modular frame and ceiling tile installation reveals the architecture of such administration, isolating the emblematic characteristics of places where documents are stamped and filed, where bureaucracy is celebrated and perpetuated. Her installation, with its title's unrelenting circumlocution, hovers as an oppressive structure, held in place via a complex and rational display of wires and hooks. If we have long thought that power is administered through intangible networks of surveillance and restraint, Okon suggests instead that it is seated in the tangible bureaucratic structures where information is processed and circulated, and she shows a side of these architectures that are normally invisible: a view from above.

Simon Denny's two sculptures, *Remainder 1* and *Remainder 2* (2020), stand like Egyptian sarcophagi, if such things were covered in a cache of Margaret Thatcher's scarves purchased at auction, and crossed with the forms of Patagonia sleeping bags (the brand of choice for the tech bro) while also being stuffed with down from secondhand clothing found around Silicon Valley. In so doing, Denny connects the former U.K. Prime Minister's neoliberal policies with the gaping divide between the privileged and those who lack such position in life. As the artist sees it, Thatcher's financial and social policies form the foundation of the global dot-com businesses that make up Silicon Valley's power. While the sculptures are an unabashedly material manifestation of Denny's ongoing concern with finance, power, technology, and those that orchestrate them, the works also relate to his immaterial contribution to the exhibition, *Economist Chart NFT (with Moritz Schularick, Historical House Prices, Aggregate Trends)* (2021). For this work, Denny collaborated with an economist to select and reproduce an iconic graph that charts rising housing prices, rendering it as a digital "meme"certified by way of a Non-Fungible Token (NFT). Denny's new piece, conceived for the show, will be auctioned during the last weeks of the exhibition on www.opensea.io, a marketplace for NFTs, with proceeds shared fifty-fifty between Kunsthalle Basel and Canton Basel-Stadt, thus supporting both a bricks-and-mortar institution as well as the state, with its taxes and regulations, that crypto-proponents often attempt to circumvent. Provocatively responding to the tenets of the crypto community, Denny proposes his NFT as a medium through which a conceptual artwork attains an inherently critical

structural mechanism; he thus differentiates it from what NFTs have been made out to be by the media: explosively expensive and artistically questionable JPEGs.

Sondra Perry sets her video installation against a backdrop of Chroma Key Blue. The deeply saturated color is used in the production of special effects for movies or videogames, because it contrasts so markedly with most human skin tones. Between these walls, she scatters training aids for basketball players meant to help them to adopt a better shooting posture and that here are attached to flatscreen monitors showing views of the rendered fleshy insides of an avatar. The fulcrum of the installation is a video that follows a peculiar story: the likeness and vital statistics of Sandy, the artist's twin brother and a basketball player, were stolen to create a videogame avatar for which neither he nor the other athletes featured in the game were consulted or paid. Perry records Sandy navigating the game's interface, as he finds his friends and roommates amongst its anonymous, selectable characters and describes the young men behind those avatars. This real-life story is paired with imagery of African artifacts held in "universal" institutions like the Metropolitan Museum of Art in New York and the British Museum in London, each of which decontextualizes Black life without consent or appropriate remuneration. Perry's unraveling of a long history of objectification draws a parallel between the Black bodies whose likenesses are stolen, respectively in the realms of the digital and the material.

Consumption and waste on the one hand and contingency and probability on the other—all central to late capitalism's functioning—are the very stuff of so much of Gabriel Kuri's work. In *Balance of the Invisible and the Foreseeable* (2014), bright, multicolored, circular disks make up a sprawling sculpture whose forms and colors evoke the logos of credit cards such as Mastercard, Maestro, or Cirrus. The elements lie and lean precariously, with sleeping bags wedged between and underneath them. One of the central questions of sculpture—how to maintain structural balance—here formally and figuratively connects the overleveraged credit of the housing boom with the homeless crisis that ensued.

Much of Nora Turato's paintings and spoken word performances are composed of phrases appropriated from the fragmented language of SMS messages or snippets of text gleaned on the internet. For her newly commissioned wall mural, which extends across the entire back wall of the exhibition,

she juxtaposes the handwritten—a means of communication at risk of fading away as digital correspondence becomes ever more ubiquitous—with an updated version of Helvetica, the celebrated "neutral" typeface of Switzerland that was licensed to Adobe, Apple, and Xerox, and became one of the core fonts of digital printing. Turato, is often said, channels the textual hysteria emitted by our smartphones and speaks to an age in which language is disconnected from its informative function. Combining elliptical textual statements with bold graphic lines abstracted from Sankey diagrams (flowcharts that depict transfers of energy, materials, or power), *your bed is a magical place where you remember all the things you forgot during the day /your vanity is powerful enough to defeat anything* (2021) epitomizes this strategy.

In Zhana Ivanova's new piece, *Modulation* (2021), performed several times during the exhibition, six large, imposing men linger in a room. They enact minute but precise gestures in relation to a set of numerals marking the floor and walls and according to signals received via the earpiece that each wear. None of the ordinary actions they perform under covert direction is particularly menacing. Yet the cumulative effect is vaguely threatening. This is a performance that doesn't announce itself as such, doesn't ask for you to take part, and doesn't stop if no one is watching. But to encounter it is to realize that the inscrutable fear you might feel when surrounded by a group, acting without you knowing who or what gives them their orders or what information determines their acts might, quite simply, be an allegory of contemporary life.

INFORMATION (Today) brings together artworks that construct a picture of our time, while also pointing both to the past and its future, raising questions about how the frictionless circulation of information that is so triumphantly celebrated today actually makes and unmakes who we are. Understanding how this process operates matters because, like it or not, we are not only surrounded by, we *are* information.

GUIDED TOURS THROUGH THE EXHIBITION

Every Sunday at 3 pm guided tour, in German
(Except on Sundays when the curator guides through the exhibition in English)

Curator's tours with Elena Filipovic, in English
27.6.2021, Sunday, 3 pm
19.9.2021, Sunday, 3 pm
26.9.2021, Sunday, 3 pm

Guided tour, in English
28.8.2021, Saturday, 3 pm

Guided tour, in German
2.9.2021, Thursday, 6:30 pm

Tandem guided tour, in German
30.9.2021, Thursday, 6 pm
Kunsthalle Basel and S AM Swiss Architecture Museum offer a joint tour of their current exhibitions, highlighting the intersections between architecture and art.

MEDIATION AND PUBLIC PROGRAM

Kunsthalle ohne Schwellen, in German
9.8.–14.8.2021, workshops for people with disabilities
In the half-day workshop, participants explore the current exhibition and try out different forms of artistic expression. Registration at: kunstvermittlung@kunsthallebasel.ch

Screen printing workshop, at Kunsthalle Basel workshop, Klostergasse 5, in the framework of the Theaterplatzfest
11.9.2021, Saturday, 11 am–6 pm
A group of young participants engage with the exhibition and create designs that visitors, in turn, can have silkscreened on fabric. Please bring cloth bags, T-shirts, or pillows to print on.

Performance, *Modulation* by Zhana Ivanova
19.9.2021, Sunday, 2–5 pm
20.9.2021, Monday, 10 am–1 pm
21.9.2021, Tuesday, 10 am–1 pm
22.9.2021, Wednesday, 7–10 pm
25.9.2021, Saturday, 5–8 pm
26.9.2021, Sunday, 5–8 pm

Kunsthalle Basel Night, free entry
22.9.2021, Wednesday, 7–10 pm
On this evening, Zhana Ivanova's performance *Modulation* will take place.

Accompanying the exhibition, the *INFORMATION (Today) Reader* assembles various texts and text fragments selected by the exhibition's participating artists. It gives access to their research and thinking and is available for free in the bookshop and on Kunsthalle Basel's website.

In the Kunsthalle Basel library you will find a selection of publications related to *INFORMATION (Today)*.

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More information at kunsthallebasel.ch