



ANDREAS LUTZ

I_AM

with critical text by **Philipp Bollmann**

Opening Saturday 8th April 2017, 7pm
April 11th - May 27th 2017



“I_AM / Interfered Accessed Memories” is the title that Andreas Lutz (1981, Freiburg) has given to his first solo exhibition at Galerie Mazzoli in Berlin.

Five works from the last three years are presented, all of which, in different ways, focus on the dysfunctional or undecipherable communication in the relationships between man-man, man-machine, and machine-machine. In particular, what Lutz examines in his work are the conditions, conflicts, and changes that develop for people in conjunction with the introduction of intelligent behavior and an assumed consciousness of machines.

The thematizing of this paradigm shift is especially clear in the work *Deformation* (2014). Speaking into a microphone, one’s own voice is not amplified as expected, but transformed into a binary code, which is then reproduced by a female robot voice. The original spoken voice is superimposed by the robot voice and no longer understandable. Only the binary combinations of 1

and 0, recited here in a monotone and based on Kafka's *Der Prozess* (1925) is what reaches the recipient. This language transformation illustrates the immediate possibility of a manipulation that extends to a potential total loss of information within an apparently autonomous system.

The installation *Daemon* (2016, together with Hansi Raber) can, in substance, be understood in direct relationship to *Deformation*. Three semi-transparent surfaces are positioned in the room and illuminated by projectors. When a visitor enters the darkened room, the system recognizes an intruder, which disturbs the predominating harmony of the rationally generated displays – synchronized processes within a perfect, autonomous system. The reactive audio-visual work is activated by the visitor upon entering the installation. The human silhouettes merge with the interferences created by the visitor and are absorbed by the three surfaces. With this work, Andreas Lutz manages to vividly allegorize the permanent vigilance of an artificial intelligence and, at the same time, pose the question as to whether people are even provided for in this process, i.e., if they can find their bearings here.

The work *Zwölftonform* (2015) offers a complementary approach to the consideration of how machines might deal with their autonomy in the future. Based on and inspired by the formalism of the twelve-tone row, Lutz plays here with the assumption that this abstract form of music, i.e., sound, can have a harmonic effect on technically created intelligences. Thus, the real issue is no longer that man makes music for people with help of machines, but that machines create an aesthetic for machines and the human being remains merely an external observer. On the basis of this work, one is inclined to pursue the question as to whether in the future, machines – just like people – will be receptive to music, and thus to culture.

Inspired by the theory of hermeneutics, *Hypergradient* (2016) analyzes the different possibilities of perceiving an abstract system of signs with respect to changing relationships. In two situations that the artist calls “statement” and “interpretation” the same sequence of different combinations of characters is transferred kinetically onto a flexible fabric. Analogous to the Latin alphabet, there are 26 different codes in a developed semiotic system, which combine in rhythmic succession into abstract sentences, but which elude human translation. Contrary to the condition of the “statement”, during the “interpretation”, with assistance from a changing lighting situation – despite unvarying characters – the perception of this sequence is influenced. The dramatic alternation from light and shadow illuminates and darkens different parts of the continuously transforming surface, whereby the appearance of the work for the viewer permanently changes. As in the work *Deformation*, *Hypergradient* also probes the possibilities of an unintentional alienation of meaning through the influence of technology.

The video installation *Wutbürger* (2014) can be understood as a diametrically opposed complement to the previously noted works. In collaboration with Christoph Grünberger, Andreas Lutz draws the portrait of an archetypal German who is seized by personal rage and knows how to find the reasons for his individual discontent in external circumstances. Powerlessness and an inability to change his own situation results in frustration. The five-hour performance from which the work is derived is based on the fictional treatment of the life of the protagonist and everyday man, Stefan W. In a specially constructed box, the “enraged citizen”, embodied by Andreas Genschmar, experiences different stations of his life. Whether a catharsis will set in remains open.

The acronym of the exhibition title, *Interfered Accessed Memories, I_AM*, can also be understood as an independent title and relates to the inherent context of the works, unequivocally referencing the humanist declaration “I am” (I think, therefore I am).

And thus the question is posed:

Who am I, really – in a time when the boundaries between man and machine are increasingly dissolving?

Philipp Bollmann

Andreas Lutz (1981 Freiburg, Germany). His work has been exhibited at the Center for Art and Media (ZKM) in Karlsruhe (Germany), the National Art Center Tokyo (Japan), the OpenArt Biennale in Örebro (Sweden) and won the Excellence Award at the 19th Japan Media and Arts Festival. In 2017 he has been invited to exhibit by the 57th Venice Biennale, Antarctic Pavillon (Venice, Italy), Berliner Festspiele (Berlin, Germany), ISEA2017 "Bio-creation and Peace" (Manizales, Colombia) and FILE Festival, SESI Gallery (São Paulo, Brazil).