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79 Essex Street
New York, NY 10002
icp.org

The International Center of Photography Opens New Home with Inaugural Exhibition *James Coupe: Warriors*

On View

January 25–
May 18, 2020

Media Preview

Thurs., January 23
11 AM–1 PM

RSVP

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Location

79 Essex Street
New York, NY 10002

NEW YORK, NY (JANUARY 13, 2020) — The International Center of Photography (ICP) will open its new integrated center at Essex Crossing on Manhattan's Lower East Side with *James Coupe: Warriors*, one of four inaugural exhibitions. It will be on view at ICP at 79 Essex Street at from January 25 to May 18, 2020.

James Coupe's three new moving image works algorithmically categorize museum visitors and, using imaging and classification technologies such as deepfakes, Face++, and ImageNet, inserts them into specific scenes from Walter Hill's 1979 cult classic film *The Warriors*.

Hill's film is set "sometime in the future" in a New York beset with white supremacist and xenophobic hatred, police brutality, and massive economic inequality. Coupe populates key scenes from the film with visitors' faces, inserted into gangs using data-driven analysis of their demographic, economic, and occupational markers.

At three stations across the lobby and gallery space, visitors will be able to opt-in to this unique experience. Cameras will record their faces and then run a series of demographic, personality, and other classification analyses on their images. This catalogue of faces will then be swapped with members of the "gangs" from original footage in *The Warriors*. Visitors will find themselves algorithmically segregated, an experience that is participatory yet not democratic, since it forecloses any sense of control over how one's image is used.

"Coupe's work shows how technology can be used to create content with unintended and often problematic consequences. The collision of past and present highlights the social tensions portrayed on screen and their contemporary relevance," said Erin Barnett, ICP's director of exhibitions and collections.

Warriors sheds light on how these mechanisms of power and control operate in public and private space, on city streets and online, typically relying on tacit consent. It reflects on how personal data—including images—is continually mined, manipulated, and (mis)categorized, and on the resulting widespread distrust in mainstream media, evidence, and facts.

Unlike the data that is collected by corporations and municipalities about us every day, the data in this exhibition will be briefly projected in the gallery space and stored for the duration of the exhibition before being deleted.

During the run of the exhibition, ICP will host public programs and other events for students, museumgoers,

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ICP members, and the general public which explore technology's influence on visual culture. More information will be available in the coming weeks.

About James Coupe

James Coupe is a Seattle-based artist who works with a broad range of media, including real-time public surveillance systems, live social media content, and most recently, Amazon's Mechanical Turk, a global workforce of micro-laborers. Reflecting on the impact of Big Data, immaterial labor, and AI, Coupe's works explore the aesthetic value of searches and queries, automation, the use of algorithmic narratives, surplus information, and human affect. He has been exhibited at venues including ZKM, FACT, the Prix Ars Electronica, and the Toronto International Film Festival/Museum of Contemporary Canadian Art.

About ICP

The International Center of Photography is the world's leading institution dedicated to photography and visual culture. Cornell Capa founded ICP in 1974 to champion "concerned photography"—socially and politically minded images that can educate and change the world. Through our exhibitions, education programs, community outreach, and public programs, ICP offers an open forum for dialogue about the power of the image. Visit icp.org to learn more.

Special Thanks

James Coupe would like to recognize support from the Center for Digital Arts and Experimental Media (DXARTS) at the University of Washington, and Jacob Fennell, Forrest Fabian Jesse, and Yuying Hung for their work on the project.

James Coupe: Warriors is supported, in part, by public funds from the New York City Department of Cultural Affairs in partnership with the City Council and the New York State Council on the Arts with the support of Governor Andrew M. Cuomo and the New York State Legislature.

Additional exhibition support is provided by the Joseph and Joan Cullman Foundation for the Arts, Inc.



Council on
the Arts

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