Owning the immaterial: art, technology and culture

Friday 30 May 2014
1.00 – 6.30pm
firstsite, Colchester

An afternoon symposium which brings together a group of international speakers to consider the subject of ownership in the internet age, taking the work of artists Aleksandra Domanovic and Simon Denny as a starting point for discussion.

Curators, artists, journalists and academics will address a wide range of issues including the tension between material and immaterial values; ownership, property and theft in the age of the internet; and the shift of power from the establishment to the individual through digital media.

The event is part of the public programme for firstsite's current exhibitions *Simon Denny: The Personal Effects of Kim Dotcom* and *Aleksandra Domanović* (22 March – 1 June 2014).

Schedule

1.00   Registration / view exhibition

2.00:   Welcome: Jes Fernie, Associate Curator, Public Programmes, firstsite

2.10:   Introduction by chair Matthew Fuller, Goldsmiths

2.20   Mark Fisher, writer, cultural theorist, Goldsmiths
Well known for his writing on capitalism, value systems and digital dreamtime, Fisher will present a broad, philosophical approach to the ways in which the internet age has forced us to consider the subject of ownership and the immaterial.

2.45   Questions / discussion

2.55   Charles Graeber, writer for the New York Times, Wired, The New Yorker.
New York based journalist Charles Graeber is one of the few journalists who has had on-going access to the controversial internet entrepreneur Kim Dotcom, the subject of Simon Denny's exhibition. Charles will discuss Kim Dotcom's dual identity as perceived saviour of on-line liberties and megalomaniacal gangsta clown.

3.20   Simon Denny, artist, in conversation with Charles Graeber
An introduction to Simon Denny's exhibition at firstsite *The Personal Effects of Kim Dotcom* and consideration of what it means to own or appropriate these items. What is their symbolic, material, exhibition and exchange value? What constitutes theft in the internet age?

3.40   **James Bridle**, writer, artist, publisher, technologist.
In 2011 James Bridle coined the term 'New Aesthetic' as an umbrella term for contemporary digital culture. He is interested in our post-privacy era, secret surveillance systems and the aesthetic produced by the merging of virtual and physical worlds. Today, he will address the question: how can we make the ubiquitous invisible network of technology visible?

4.05   Questions / discussion

4.20   Coffee break in MUSA café, firstsite

4.50   **Screening**: Excerpt of *From yu to me*, a film by Aleksandra Domanović which tells the story of the development by two academics of the .yu domain name, how it ceased to exist in 1992 with the break up of Yugoslavia and how it was subsequently acquired by The Museum of Yugoslav History in Belgrade.

5.00   **Aleksandra Domanović**, artist, in conversation with **Paul Pieroni**, Curator SPACE
Artist and curator will discuss Domanović' practice; how she has used idents, found footage from rave parties, archival photographs and interviews with academics and curators as a way to consider issues relating to digital conservation; ownership and copyright in a digital age and how new media can form a collective consciousness for a particular generation.

5.25   **Kieran Long**, senior curator of contemporary architecture, design & digital, V&A
Museum collections are largely made up of physical objects that visitors can touch or at least see. The increasing number of immaterial artefacts which tell important stories about a particular era or culture presents a major challenge to national museums. How can these artefacts be incorporated into collections and how can we ensure we have the technology to access them?

5.50   Panel discussion and questions (including **Michelle Cotton**, Senior Curator, firstsite)

6.30   End + drinks

Cost
£10, £8 concessions; £5 members, booking essential

Booking
http://tinyurl.com/q8k5naw
01206 577067

Transport
Trains leave London Liverpool Street regularly and take 50 – 60 mins to reach Colchester North Station. Please note that there is another train station in Colchester (Colchester Town Station) – it is nearer firstsite but trains are far less frequent.

firstsite is twenty minutes walk from Colchester North station.
Google map: http://tinyurl.com/oe4vq4l

Address
firstsite
Lewis Gardens, High Street
Colchester
Essex CO1 1JH

This event has been organised by **Jes Fernie**, Associate Curator, Public Programme, firstsite. Please contact jesf@firstsite.uk.net / @jesfernie with any queries.

Speakers

James Bridle is a writer, artist, publisher and technologist based in London. His work covers the intersection of literature, culture and the network. He has written for Wired, ICON, Domus, Cabinet and writes a column for the Observer newspaper on publishing and technology. His work, such as the *Iraq War Historiography, an encyclopedia of Wikipedia Changelogs*, has been exhibited at galleries in the Europe, North and South America, Asia and Australia. In 2012 he lectured as part of the 4 Thought series on BBC Radio 4, contributed to the Istanbul Design Biennial and Guimaraes 2012 European City of Culture, and was adjunct professor on the Interactive Telecommunications Programme at New York University.
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Simon Denny is a Berlin based artist interested in the structures and interfaces that influence the way we communicate. In recent projects he has explored the culture of internet-technology firms, corporate culture, obsolete analogue technology and public access to data. He plays with the conventions and perceived constraints of the gallery context using found objects, graphics, moving images and replicas. He has had solo exhibitions at MUMOK, Vienna; Kunstverein Munich; Aspen Art Museum, Colorado; Westfälischer Kunstverein, Münster; Neuer Aachener Kunstverein, Aachen; Contemporary Art Museum St.Louis, Missouri; Halle für Kunst, Lüneberg and Artspace, Sydney. He is representing New Zealand at the 56th Venice Biennale in 2015.
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Aleksandra Domanović is an artist from Slovenia now based in Berlin. Working primarily with video, digital media and sculpture, her work is a reflection on the way that images, information and music are circulated and received at particular political and cultural moments. Associative connections are made between copyright laws, web domains and techno music. She has held solo exhibitions at Kunsthalle Basel; SPACE, London; Künstlerhaus Bethanien, Berlin; Villa du Parc – Centre d'art contemporain, Annemasse; Galerija 001, Ljubljana and Western Front, Vancouver. Her work has featured in major survey exhibitions, including the 12th Biennale of Lyon; 7th Triennial of Contemporary Art in Slovenia, Ljubljana; ICP Triennial, New York; the 1st Kyiv Biennale and 4th Marrakech Biennale. She delivered a major new commission for Glasgow International at the Gallery of Modern Art in April this year and is represented by Tanya Leighton.
www.aleksandradomanovic.com

Mark Fisher has established a reputation as one of the most insightful and provocative cultural theorists in Britain. A co-founder of the Cybernetic Culture Research Unit (CCRU) at Warwick University he brings together psychoanalysis, political analysis and speculative fiction to create a body of rogue scholarship. Fisher is the author of 'Capitalist Realism', the editor of 'The Resistible Demise of Michael Jackson' (both Zer0, 2009), and writes for Sight and Sound, Film Quarterly, The Wire and Frieze. He teaches at the University of East London, Goldsmiths, University of London, and the City Literary Institute.
www.gold.ac.uk/visual-cultures/staff/fishermark/

Matthew Fuller is author of various books including 'Media Ecologies, materialist energies in art and technoculture' (MIT) and 'Behind the Blip, essays on the culture of software' and 'Elephant & Castle' (both Autonomedia). With Usman Haque, he is co-author of 'Urban Versioning System v1.0' (ALNY) and with Andrew Goffey, of 'Evil Media' (MIT). Editor of 'Software Studies, a lexicon', (MIT) and co-editor of the journal Computational Culture, he is involved in a number of projects in art, media and software. His project with YoHa "Endless War", a durational processing of the Wikileaks Afghan War Diaries is currently on show in various sites across Europe. Matthew Fuller is Professor of Cultural Studies at the Digital Culture Unit, Centre for Cultural Studies, Goldsmiths, University of London.
www.spc.org/fuller/

Charles Graeber is a New York Times bestselling author, an award winning journalist and contributor to numerous publications including Wired, GQ, The New York, New York Magazine. Awards include 2011 Overseas Press Club award for outstanding international journalism, a New York Press Club award and an American Poet's Prize. His writing has been included in numerous anthologies including The Best American Crime Writing, The Best American Science Writing Best American Magazine Writing Collection. In 2012 he spent two weeks living in Kim Dotcom's mansion in Auckland researching his extensive article for Wired magazine (http://tinyurl.com/9p3tyuk).
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Kieran Long is a writer, curator and broadcaster based in London. He is the Senior Curator of Contemporary Architecture, Design and Digital at the Victoria & Albert Museum and the architecture critic of the Evening Standard. He was the founding deputy editor of Icon magazine and became editor of the Architects' Journal in 2007 and later editor in chief of the Architectural Review. In 2012, was the assistant director at the Venice Architecture Biennale. He is also studying a PhD looking at the history and philosophy of context in London and writes for publications including Volume, Form, Icon and Abitare.
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Paul Pieroni is Curator at SPACE, London where he runs an experimental and acclaimed programme of exhibitions which has included the artists Marlie Mul, Jo Spence, HEX and many more. Prior to this he was director at SEVENTEEN, a London based commercial gallery representing artists including Uriel Orlow, Susan Collis and Oliver Laric.
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