

**Trevor Paglen: *From 'Apple' to 'Anomaly'*****(Pictures and Labels)****Selections from the ImageNet dataset for object recognition****The Curve, Barbican Centre****26 September 2019 – 16 February 2020****Media View: Wednesday 25 September 2019, 10am – 1pm****Free Admission****#TrevorPaglen***Supported by Cockayne Grants for the Arts, The London Community Foundation, and using public funding from Arts Council England.*

Barbican Art Gallery has commissioned the artist Trevor Paglen to create a new work for The Curve. Paglen's practice spans image-making, sculpture, investigative journalism, writing and engineering. Among his primary concerns are learning to see the historical moment we live in, exposing the invisible power structures that underpin the reality of our daily lives and developing the means to imagine alternative futures. The exhibition is part of the Barbican's 2019 season, **Life Rewired**, which explores what it means to be human when technology is changing everything.

For the exhibition, Paglen takes as his starting point the way in which Artificial Intelligence networks are taught how to 'see', 'hear' and 'perceive' the world by engineers who feed them vast training sets. Standard training sets consist of images, video and sound libraries that depict objects, faces, facial expressions, gestures, actions, speech commands, eye movements and more. Paglen highlights how the advent of autonomous computer vision and AI has developed alongside this new kind of media, not designed for humans, but for machines, which are rife with hidden politics, biases, stereotypes and epistemological assumptions.

**Trevor Paglen** said: *"Machine-seeing-for-machines is a ubiquitous phenomenon, encompassing everything from facial-recognition systems conducting automated biometric surveillance at airports to department stores intercepting customers' mobile phone pings to create intricate maps of movements through the aisles. But all this seeing, all of these images, are essentially invisible to human eyes. These images aren't meant for us; they're meant to do things in the world; human eyes aren't in the loop."*

For The Curve, Paglen has installed approximately 30,000 individually printed photographs pinned in a complex mosaic of images along the length of the curved wall. Taking as a starting point ImageNet: one of the most widely shared, publicly available collection of images, which is also used to train artificial intelligence networks, Paglen queries the content of images chosen for machine learning. ImageNet contains more than fourteen-million images organised into more than 21,000 categories or "classes". In most cases, the connotations of image categories and names are uncontroversial i.e. a "strawberry" or "orange". Others are classified under "debtors", "alcoholics" and "bad persons". These definitions, if used in AI, suggest a world in which machines will be able to elicit different forms of judgement against humankind.

**Jane Alison, Head of Visual Arts, Barbican**, said: *"Trevor Paglen continues to probe the underbelly of our digital world, illuminating the powerful and often hidden forces at play in shaping our understanding of the world. I am therefore delighted that we have been able to commission him to undertake our 32nd commission for The Curve as part of a year that explores our relationship with technology."*

In 2012 Paglen launched an artwork into distant orbit around Earth in collaboration with Creative Time and MIT, contributed research and cinematography to the Academy Award-winning film Citizenfour in 2014, and created a radioactive public sculpture for the exclusion zone in Fukushima, Japan in 2015. Last autumn, he launched a satellite into outer space with the Nevada Museum of Art.

Trevor Paglen's work has been exhibited at the Smithsonian American Art Museum, Washington D.C.; The Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York; Tate Modern, London; Walker Arts Center, Minneapolis; San Francisco Museum of Modern Art; Taipei Biennial 2008; and Istanbul Biennial 2009 as well as numerous other solo and group exhibitions. Paglen has been nominated for the Artes Mundi 8 Award (2018-19), is the recipient of the Nam June Paik Art Center Prize 2018, as of the MacArthur Fellowship (2017) and the Deutsche Börse Photography Foundation Prize (2016).

Trevor Paglen was born in 1974 in Camp Springs, Maryland, and currently lives and works in Berlin.

## **ENDS**

### **Notes to Editors**

#### **Press Information**

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#### **Press images available online from the Barbican Newsroom**

A link to the image sheets can be found in the 'Downloads' box on the top right-hand side of the page from: [www.barbican.org.uk/TrevorPaglenNews](http://www.barbican.org.uk/TrevorPaglenNews)

#### **Barbican Newsroom**

All Barbican Centre press releases, news announcements and the Communication team's contact details are listed on our website at [www.barbican.org.uk/news](http://www.barbican.org.uk/news)

#### **Public Information**

The Curve, Barbican, London

Public information: 0845 120 7550 / [www.barbican.org.uk/artgallery](http://www.barbican.org.uk/artgallery)

Free admission

For more information on Barbican membership please visit:

<https://www.barbican.org.uk/membership>

#### **The Curve opening times**

Saturday – Wednesday 11am–8pm

Thursday & Friday 11am–9pm

Bank Holidays 12pm–8pm

New Year's Day 11am–8pm

Closed 24, 25 and 26 December

Please note that the exhibition is closed from 6pm onwards on Friday 4<sup>th</sup> October for a private event. Last entry 5pm.

#### **Exhibition**

The exhibition has been commissioned by the Barbican, London and supported by Cockayne Grants for the Arts, The London Community Foundation, and using public funding from Arts Council England.

## Events

To find out more about specific events as they are confirmed, check the website for full listings: [www.barbican.org.uk/artgallery](http://www.barbican.org.uk/artgallery)

### **Trevor Paglen/ Kronos Quartet: *Sight Machine***

**11 Jul 2019, Barbican Hall**

Barbican presents the UK premiere of *Sight Machine*, a project between **Trevor Paglen** and San Francisco based string quartet **Kronos Quartet** that focuses attention on the growing ubiquity of artificial intelligence technology in our lives by analysing a shared human experience – a concert – with machine-vision systems in real time. The event is part of the Barbican's 2019 season, *Life Rewired*.

### **Trevor Paglen in Conversation with Anthony Downey**

**Thu 26 Sep 2019, 7pm, Frobisher Auditorium 1**

**Tickets £10**

Trevor Paglen discusses his practice and projects with writer and academic Anthony Downey, touching on themes of secrecy, surveillance and state.

### **Sarah Meyohas: Cloud of Petals**

**Fri 27 Sep 7pm, The Curve**

**Part of Emerge Festival**

As part of Emerge Festival, the Barbican will present a special viewing of Trevor Paglen: From 'Apple' to 'Anomaly', alongside a one-off screening of artist Sarah Meyohas' Cloud of Petals.

Acting as a counterpoint to Trevor Paglen's installation, Sarah Meyohas' 2017 film Cloud of Petals documents the creation of a dataset of 100,000 rose petals used to train an AI algorithm to generate an infinite series of new, unique petals. Drawing on ideas of post-human realities and the future of labour in the face of automation, this film traces how beauty and subjectivity can become embedded in AI systems.

*Emerge* is Culture24's new festival of night-time events, in museums, galleries, historic houses, visual arts venues and more across London. Over two nights in September, Emerge Festival will see a creative kaleidoscope of events take over 11 London Boroughs. With one ticket, you'll have access to all the night's venues and some of the best breakthrough artists in town. Their stage? 50 of the capital's iconic buildings, including the Barbican.

Tickets £15-25 available from [www.emergefestival.co.uk](http://www.emergefestival.co.uk)

### **Camouflage in the Digital Age: The Aesthetics of Disrupting Facial Recognition**

**Sat 30 Nov, 2-5pm, Fountain Room**

**Tickets £3**

Join Yoke Collective to explore the potential of fashion and camouflage in disrupting facial recognition software by altering your appearance using various materials. Ages 16-25.

### **Sonifying the Data-Set: Making Music using Computer Vision**

**Sat 25 Jan, 2-5pm, Fountain Room**

Join artist and PhD researcher Matthew Evans to learn how to build a programme that correlates sound with images, creating your own pieces based on the data-set images in the exhibition. Ages 16-25.

## Book

A fully illustrated catalogue to accompany the installation Trevor Paglen: From 'Apple' to 'Anomaly' will be available to purchase from 28 October. Featuring a commissioned text by Sarah Cook, and an interview with the artist by curator Alona Pardo, this title is the tenth in a publication series by Barbican Art Gallery that focuses on The Curve exhibition programme. Buy the catalogue in the Barbican Shop on Level G or online at [www.barbican.org.uk/shop](http://www.barbican.org.uk/shop) for £12.

## 2019 at the Barbican

*Life Rewired*

*Life Rewired* is the Barbican's year-long arts and learning season exploring what it means to be human when technology is changing everything. Running throughout 2019, the season investigates the impact of the pace and extent of technological change on our culture and society, looking at how we can grasp and respond to the seismic shifts these advances will bring about.

*Life Rewired* demonstrates how artists are finding imaginative ways to communicate the human impact of unprecedented technological shifts and scientific advances, as well as finding creative new uses for Artificial Intelligence, big data, algorithms and virtual reality.

## The Curve

The Curve is the Barbican's free exhibition space that wraps around the back of the Concert Hall. Launched in May 2006, Curve Art is a series of new commissions in which contemporary artists respond to the distinctive architecture of the space. Artists who have previously made new commissions for The Curve are Tomas Saraceno (Argentina); Richard Wilson (Britain); Jeppe Hein (Denmark); Marjetica Potrč (Slovenia); Shirana Shahbazi (Switzerland/Iran); Hans Schabus (Austria); Huang Yong Ping (France/China); Rafael Lozano-Hemmer (Canada/Mexico); Peter Coffin (USA); Clemens von Wedemeyer (Germany); Robert Kusmirowski (Poland); Céleste Boursier-Mougenot (France); John Bock (Germany); Damián Ortega (Mexico); Cory Arcangel (USA); Junya Ishigami (Japan); Song Dong (China); rAndom International (Britain); Geoffrey Farmer (Canada); Ayşe Erkmen (Germany/Turkey); United Visual Artists (Britain); Walead Beshty (USA/Britain); Roman Signer (Switzerland); Eddie Peake (Britain); Imran Qureshi (Pakistan); Bedwyr Williams (Wales); Richard Mosse (Ireland); John Akomfrah (Britain); Yto Barrada (Morocco), Francis Upritchard (New Zealand) and most recently Daria Martin (USA).

## Barbican Art Gallery and The Curve

Our visual arts programme embraces art, architecture, design, fashion, photography and film. Many of our exhibitions explore the interconnections between disciplines, periods and cultures, and aim to imagine the world in new ways. Designers, artists and architects are our collaborators in this process.

We invest in the artists of today and tomorrow; The Curve is one of the few galleries in London devoted to the commissioning of new work. Through our activities we aim to inspire more people to discover and love the arts. Entrance to The Curve is free. Through Young Barbican we offer £5 tickets to 14–25 year olds for our paid exhibitions, children under 14 attend for free.

Our exhibitions are complemented by comprehensively researched catalogues and a full range of public events. We develop engaging online content for audiences and offer special tours for schools. In partnership with renowned museums and art galleries, many of our exhibitions travel to reach both national and international audiences.

## About the Barbican

A world-class arts and learning organisation, the [Barbican](#) pushes the boundaries of all major art forms including dance, film, music, theatre and visual arts. Its creative learning programme further underpins everything it does. Over a million people attend events annually, hundreds of artists and performers are featured, and more than 300 [staff](#) work onsite. The architecturally renowned centre opened in 1982 and comprises the Barbican Hall, the Barbican Theatre, The Pit, Cinemas 1, 2 and 3, Barbican Art Gallery, a second gallery The Curve, public spaces, a library, the Lakeside Terrace, [a glasshouse conservatory](#), conference facilities and three restaurants. The City of London Corporation is the founder and principal funder of the Barbican Centre.

The Barbican is home to Resident Orchestra, [London Symphony Orchestra](#); Associate Orchestra, [BBC Symphony Orchestra](#); Associate Ensembles the [Academy of Ancient Music](#) and [Britten Sinfonia](#), Associate Producer [Serious](#), and Artistic Partner [Create](#). Our Artistic Associates include [Boy Blue](#), [Cheek by Jowl](#), Deborah Warner, [Drum Works](#) and [Michael Clark Company](#). The [Los Angeles Philharmonic](#) are the Barbican's International Orchestral Partner, the [Australian Chamber Orchestra](#) are International Associate Ensemble at Milton Court, and [Jazz at Lincoln Center Orchestra](#) are International Associate Ensemble.

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