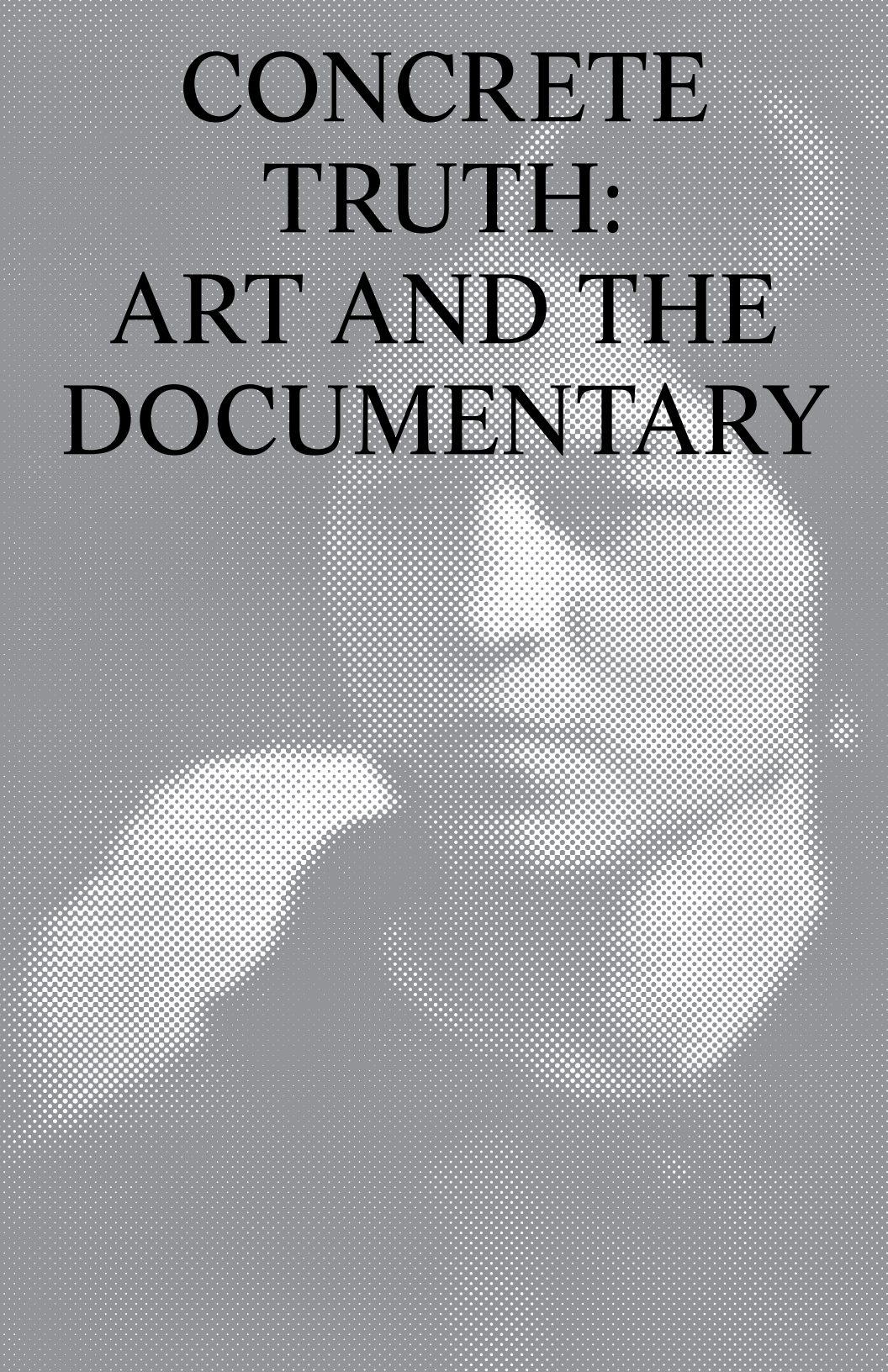
CONCRETE TRUTH: ART AND THE DOCUMENTARY



CONCRETE TRUTH: ART AND THE DOCUMENTARY
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Concrete Truth: Art and the Documentary, installation
at International Studio & Curatorial Program, 2017

Edgardo Aragón, *Mesoamerica. The Hurricane Effect*, 2015, high-definition video, color, sound and map; map: 51 × 59 in. video: 16 min. 20 sec. Courtesy the artist and Jeu de Paume, Paris

FOREWORD

Susan Hapgood, Executive Director

Concrete Truth: Art and the Documentary brings a timely selection of artworks by Edgardo Aragón, Eric Baudelaire, Paolo Cirio, Maryam Jafri, belit sağ, and Krista Belle Stewart, into public view at the International Studio & Curatorial Program in Brooklyn. Curated by Kari Conte, the works question and experiment with the ability of the lens to transmit factual information. They also explore how documents can so easily misrepresent and distort. The powers that come along with the frequent presumption of objective truth in documentation have attracted artists' interest for decades, but seem more topical in the climate of misinformation in which we find ourselves today.

ISCP organizes thematic exhibitions each year, tapping into areas of critical interest of the art of our time, and enabling the contextualization of residents' work within the broader field of practice. We are strongly supported in these endeavors by funding from a consortium of sources, to whom we are extremely grateful. For *Concrete Truth*, above all we express our thanks to the National Endowment for the Arts who funded Paolo Cirio's residency and the exhibition, the Greenwich Collection, Ltd.; New York City Council District 34; 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. I am indebted to our sponsors, our Board of Trustees and Director's Circle as well, for their ongoing support of ISCP.

I also wish to acknowledge the curatorial acumen of Kari Conte, and thank Siddhartha Mitter, Julia Powles, Tomáš Rafa and belit sağ, who gave their insights into documentary issues during the related public programming. Many thanks are also owed to Other Means for design of this catalog, Jesse McKee from 221A in Vancouver who supported a research trip for the curator, the installation team Wilson Duggan, Drew Lichtenstein, and Nelson Da Costa and program interns Anne-Kathrin Bossok and Alanoud Ahmed Al-Buainain, who all were integrally involved in bringing this project to fruition.

Edgardo Aragón, still of *Mesoamerica. The Hurricane Effect*, 2015, high-definition video, color, sound, 16 min. 20 sec. Courtesy the artist and Jeu de Paume, Paris

CONCRETE TRUTH: ART AND THE DOCUMENTARY

Kari Conte

During the last two decades, visual artists have revitalized documentary practices, facilitated by new digital technologies and modes of circulation. Documentary approaches help us bear witness to both individual and collective realities, often using found footage, biographical narratives, written documents, and historic reenactments. The artists in *Concrete Truth: Art and the Documentary* use documentary strategies to respond to contemporary times of crisis by interweaving research, archival practices, aesthetics, and ethics.

The exhibition focuses on recent lens-based works at the convergence of art and the documentary, that consider vital questions around fact and image-making. Photography and video are inextricable components of contemporary art's documentary turn. More than just an index of memory or a mnemonic device, photography and video produce archival records, supported by the camera as an archival tool. All of the works included in the exhibition are underpinned by their use of the archive.

Archives can be obscure or monumental, and provide material access to history and memory. They also enable our interpretation of the world and contain the potential to decode its meaning and future histories. The archive allows both new and revisionary histories to be written—Jacques Derrida suggested that more than the past, the archive is a sign of the future.[1] In modern times, the archive has appealed to artists as a source of fact, fiction, critique, deconstruction and reconstruction. For artists, unearthing the archive takes manifold incarnations —from dislodging timeworn drawers and boxes to navigating dematerialized digital systems, and fabricating fictions to insert into the gaping cavities in history. Michel Foucault outlined the importance of the archive this way: "It reveals the rules of a practice that enable statements both to survive and to undergo regular modification. It is the general system of the formation and transformation of statements."[2]

Several artists in the exhibition employ archival practices as a means to construct counter-narratives, in works that deal with a range of concerns including the histories of Indigenous peoples, the role of media in political conflict, internet ethics, the abuse of governmental power, and copyright issues. With work primarily produced during the past three years, these endeavors highlight the various ways artists represent political and social realities in an age of global disinformation. Reality is now transmitted as never before, with greater speed and

diversity of people participating in its production and dissemination. Given this transformation, can we still trust the documentary? Current times make it difficult to distinguish between fact and fiction, and with this in mind, access to the truth and reliable information is more urgent than ever before.

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In belit sağ's single-channel video *disruption (aksama)*, 2016, the amnesia of both public and personal memory is evoked by a bombardment of contentious and politicized media images from Turkey. This video shows the artist walking in the street ostensibly in Europe, accompanied by fragments of recent Turkish news reports as well as clips from several films. Ranging from a cake that resembles Vladimir Lenin, to Turkish president Recep Tayyip Erdoğan on a cellphone, to excerpts from the films *Time to Love* (1965) and *The Purple Rose of Cairo* (1985), all of the clips reflect on society's relationship to images. At first the scenes are only loosely connected, however, as the video unfolds they begin to communicate and respond to each other. The artist began this video during the July 15, 2016 coup d'état attempt in Turkey, when she watched the events occur online from outside the country. Numerous conflicting reports of who the coup d'état's leaders were emerged, and sağ became immersed in the media reports of the event as they happened. Strikingly, Erdoğan likened the coup to "a gift from God," leading to a power grab in the country, where he reasserted his control at the expense of democracy. sağ became disconnected from her immediate surroundings while watching news reports nonstop of the coup. Subsequently, *disruption (aksama)* responds to the bombardment of images we face daily, and how they interrupt the way we embody our own immediate reality. New technologies have enabled the rapid transmission of documents and images, often informing one's perception of the world more than lived experience.

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Mesoamerica. The Hurricane Effect (2015), is a critical cartography and video work by Edgardo Aragón that documents everyday conditions in

Cachimbo, Mexico, calling attention to its vulnerable infrastructure and to regional injustice and corruption. The town—located on the southern end of Oaxaca, near the border of Chiapas—should in principle benefit from nearby wind turbines constructed as part of the Mesoamerica Integration and Development Project, yet instead it relies on a precarious local solar-powered system donated by an Indian NGO. The electricity created in Cachimbo is always sent north to Oaxaca, transferred to foreign-owned companies. Each year, Cachimbo's infrastructure needs to be rebuilt as the area is prone to hurricanes, and the town's inability to access the power it generates further subjugates its citizens.

Aragón's work is comprised of a series of maps and a video that according to the artist, "form a timeline of Mesoamerica and the parties that are exerting an influence in the area. In the project there is a juxtaposition between the ancient Mesoamerican civilization and the contemporary US-initiated multi-billion-dollar development project that operates under the same name and also loosely covers the same territory." Taking as a starting point a map from 1857 that strangely includes territory of Mexico as part of the United States, the artist traces the influence of foreign powers and local corruption over its lands and seas. A single map from the series is displayed at ISCP. On this map, Aragón drew a Quetzalcoatl, a pre-Hispanic deity that looks like a feathered serpent, a pig to represent narcotics as well as Mexico's colonizer Spain, and other mythical life forms to stand-in for political parties with their economic interests, foreign companies and drug cartels that devastate the region.

The 16-minute video shows a man on a car journey beginning in Oaxaca and traveling through endless fields with wind turbines to Cachimbo. Here, Aragón films the symbolic act of the man bringing a battery to Cachimbo and crossing deprived territories—in order to rightfully bring electricity back to a place that should be permitted to keep what it produces. Towards the end of the video, an orally transmitted Zapotec legend written down by Mexican writer Andrés Henestrosa is recounted. Telling the story of nature fighting with man, it attests to the perseverance of the Zapotec people, who overcame catastrophic weather to rebuild their lands, akin to the current struggles in Cachimbo and the wider area.

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In *Also Known as Jihadi* (2017), a feature-length and research-based film, Eric Baudelaire traces the journey of a young French man—

Krista Belle Stewart, video still of *Seraphine, Seraphine* (left channel only), 2015, digital video and sound, 38 min. 57 sec. Courtesy of the artist

Krista Belle Stewart, video still of *Seraphine, Seraphine*, 2015, digital video and sound, 38 min. 57 sec. Courtesy of the artist

Abdel Aziz—from the public housing where he grew up in the Parisian suburbs, to Syria, where he joins the Al-Nusra Front, a precursor of ISIS. Using the Japanese cinematic approach *fûkeiron* (landscape theory) in which landscape is read in terms of prevailing political structures, the viewer never sees the protagonist. Instead, shots of locations that he travelled to establish the narrative, including Spain where he was arrested, his grandmother's home in Algeria, the prison where he is currently incarcerated and the Syrian border in Turkey. In between scenes of these charged locations are legal documents from Aziz's 2015 trial including police and judicial documents, that disclose his prosecution for allegedly joining Daesh (ISIS). *Also Known as Jihadi* questions how Aziz's social and political realities—and particularly his immediate environment in a segregated community shaped his path to radicalism, and how the media depicts terrorists. At the same time, Baudelaire wanted to make a film that "affirms the position of trying (not) to understand."

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Krista Belle Stewart's two-channel installation titled *Seraphine, Seraphine* (2015) rethinks past and present found footage of Seraphine Stewart, the artist's mother. The left channel was produced by the National Film Board of Canada in 1967 and is a grainy black and white documentary of the artist's mother at the beginning of her career as British Columbia's first Aboriginal public health nurse. It shows her going about her everyday life—travelling to school, working with patients, socializing and moving throughout the city. Excerpts from this coming-of-age story are seen alongside Seraphine Stewart's recent testimony of the trauma she endured in an Indian Residential School, shot in 2013 by Canada's Truth and Reconciliation Commission. Residential schools existed in Canada for 150 years and were attended by 30% of Indigenous children; they essentially functioned as a tool of assimilation by the state and church. Overcrowded, underfunded and poorly run, these schools removed children from their families, and obstructed the generational transference of Indigenous languages and cultures.

Stewart was placed in a Residential School in 1949, when she was just eight years old. She travelled miles from her home to a truck that took her and other children including her brother to the school. Eventually, she was separated from her brother at the school as it was

divided into a girls' and boys' section. Stewart recalls her early days there in a heartfelt and painful testimony in her daughter's work.

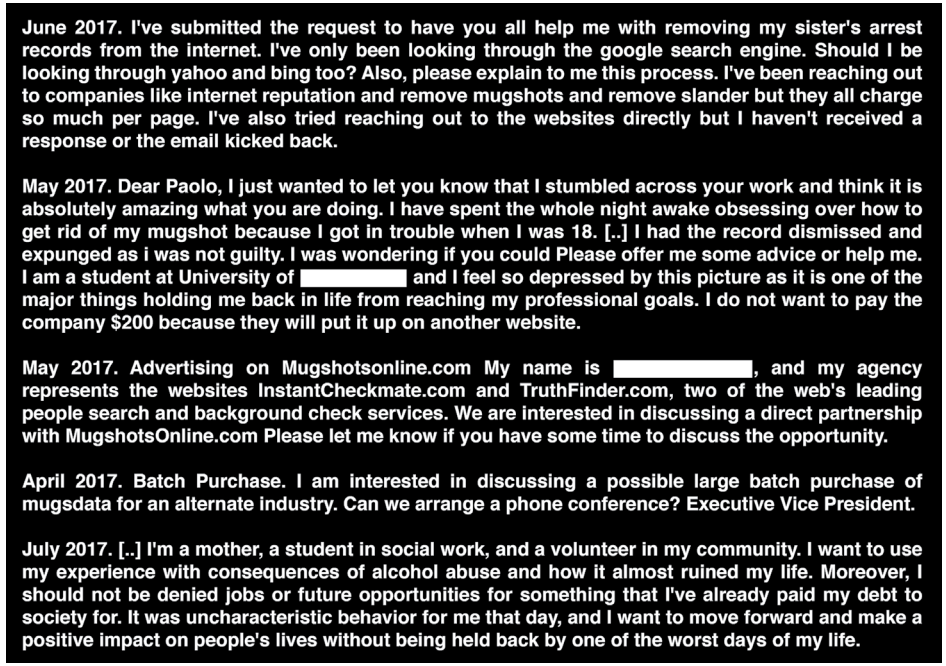
> I remember my mom had bought me this beautiful green dress, a satin green dress, emerald green and white...I was so excited to have these beautiful clothes. We got down there and we saw this truck, we said where are we going to ride, and they flapped down the big gate, and they were putting us in a cattle truck. We looked, and there were no chairs, but there were benches. There were benches in the back of this truck, so we all had to scoot over and we all as little kids were stuck together on the benches... I think a lot of us started to cry... So that's how we traveled in this cattle truck on this dusty old road. When we got there, I remember we got off and we looked at our clothes. They weren't pretty anymore. They were just covered in dust. But that didn't matter anymore, because they lined us up and told us to take off our clothes... And they stuffed all our brand-new clothes in a suitcase, and we never saw those clothes until Christmas. And then, when we took it out for Christmas, they said you're going home for Christmas, and we looked at our clothes, and we couldn't even fit in them anymore. I remember that really, really vividly... and the rest had just become routine after. It's just like you went to church, you got up real early every day, and you prayed to god they said, we didn't know who god was, and we prayed to god. I said god must be a really mean person to get little children up like us all filing into church, two by two every day... and then when we ate, we never ate much too. It was very sparse food. We were hungry, always hungry, we never have enough.

Placing these two disparate accounts of Seraphine Stewart's life side-by-side questions the reliability of the depiction of reality. Both accounts of Stewart's life—the one told by the National Film Board of Canada and the one told by Stewart herself 46 years later—demonstrate that all documentation is subjective. The artist's intervention into the archive doesn't aim to revise her mother's history, but instead questions the reading and ordering of archival knowledge.

The archive represents power—historically, those in power have constructed the archive and its control has been utilized as a way to maintain power and sovereignty. However, in the digital age, the building and dissemination of archives has begun to be democratized. Maryam Jafri's long-term research project titled *Versus Series* (2012–2015) demonstrates this sea change. Prior to conceiving the work, for another project she had undertaken research in the archives of the Ghana Ministry of Information. While later browsing the website of stock photo agency Getty Images, she noticed that photographs of Ghana's 1957 independence ceremony from Britain which she had seen in the national archives—the first instance of liberation of sub-Saharan Africa from Western rule—were also copyrighted by Getty, and in a sense, digitally "colonized." As Jafri dug further, she noticed extensive inconsistencies between the government and Getty captions of the photographs, and visual manipulations of the images. In the resulting work, she placed both photographs next to each other to highlight their disparities, with the corresponding captions also displayed. The captions point to the way that information is selected and reassembled by institutional powers to convey new meanings that often provide merely partial truths.

> The left image is from the Ghana Ministry of Information, the right from Getty Images. The Ministry identifies their image as G/1180/1, Getty identifies theirs as 50405305. The caption accompanying the Getty image states Duchess of Kent (L) dancing with Ghana Prime Minister Kwame Nkrumah (C) at the Ghana independence ceremonies. A special note accompanying the Getty image states: No resale application use without the prior permission of Time, Inc. Contact your local office to see if we can clear this image for you. The back of photo G/1180/1 bears a purple stamp stating Copyright Photographic Services, Ministry of Information, PO Box 745, Accra. All rights reserved. The Ghana Ministry of Information charges $4 per photograph for reproduction and licensing. Licensee must credit the Ministry.

Jafri eventually expanded her research to the public archives of other countries and stock agencies, and noticed surprisingly similar patterns of corporate copyrighting of national heritage. In the exhibition, a fragment of the overall project is presented through sixteen photographs and seven text panels and included the pairings *Getty vs. Ghana, Corbis vs. Mozambique, Kenya vs. Corbis*, and *Getty vs. MRAC vs. DR Congo*. Each photograph she found in a national archive of the first



Paolo Cirio, detail of *Obscurity*, 2016, inkjet print.
Courtesy of the artist and NOME Gallery

independence days of a Sub-Saharan African nation is displayed next to its manipulated copy from Getty's or Corbis's collections. With this apparent contrast, Jafri opens a space to consider the function of photography in decolonization, the lacunae of the archive, and the politics of copyright and digitization.

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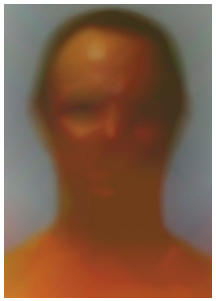


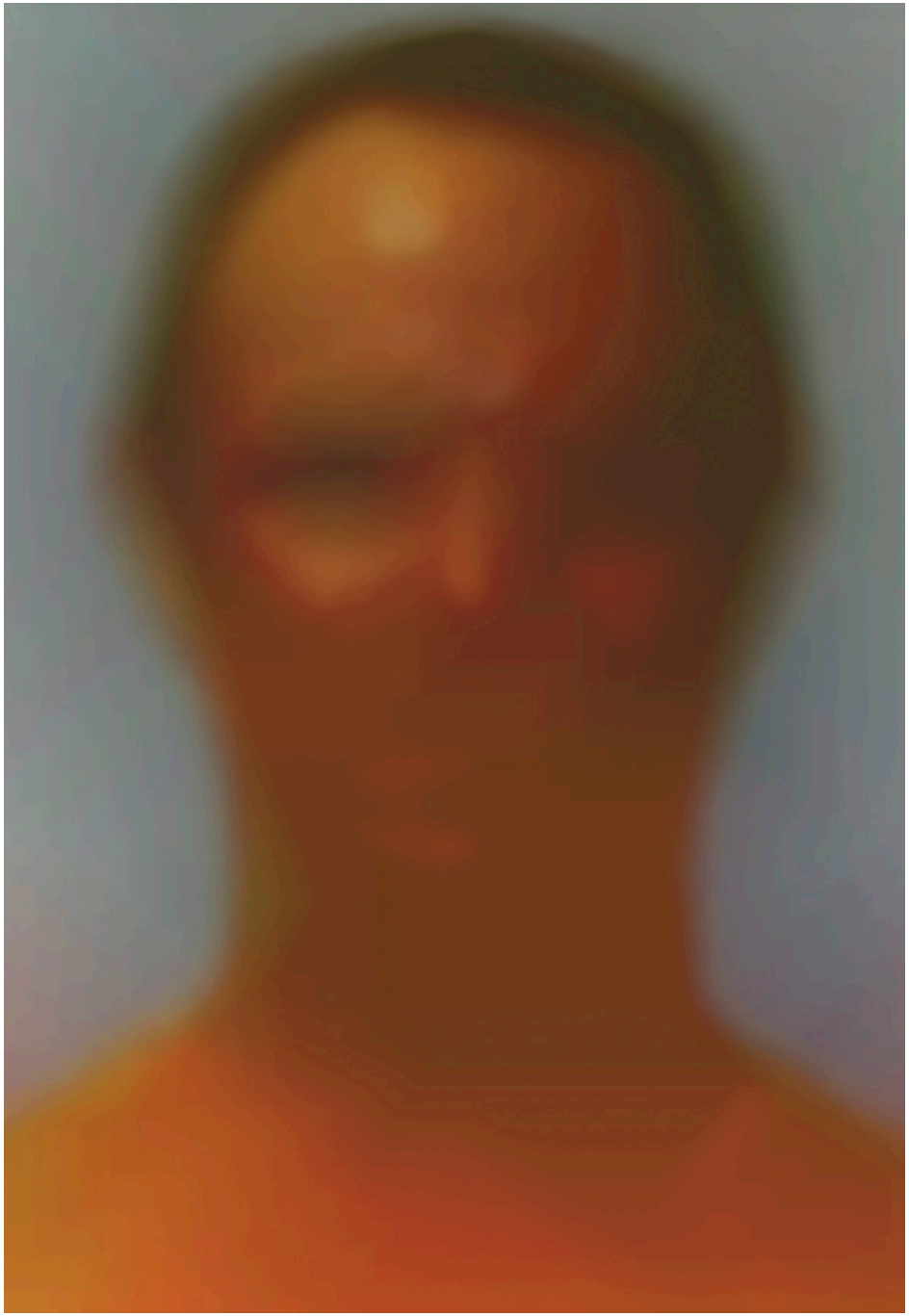
In the multifaceted work *Obscurity* (2016), Paolo Cirio examines information ethics by obfuscating mugshots and criminal records. Over the past 20 years, more than 50 million criminal mugshots of individuals arrested in the United States have been made public and exposed on internet search engines such as Google, and then used for extortion and harassment, even if the charges were dropped. To address this issue, the artist replicated six mugshot websites, blurred all the images on them to hinder facial recognition, and rearranged the names of those arrested to hide their identities. The algorithm coded by the artist used to scramble the names and images kept accurate data of ages, ethnicities, locations, and criminal charges to hold law enforcement accountable for mass incarceration. Responses from people whose reputations have been affected by having their criminal records online are also included in the work, pointing to the industry of mugshot extortion, in which websites charge people to have their mugshots removed and reputations restored.

Cirio received legal threats from some of the websites he appropriated the mugshots from, including a cease and desist letter to the artist's website, *Mug-Shots.us*, which incorporates the images and data that are used in this work. The artist has also designed the internet privacy policy, *Right2Remove.us*, a socially-engaged project that questions the "Right to Be Forgotten" law being proposed in the United States, and campaigns for the right to remove personal data from online search engines. Through this performative hack, Cirio interrogates the ethics of information sharing and the deep fault lines in the United States' industrial prison complex of mass incarceration.

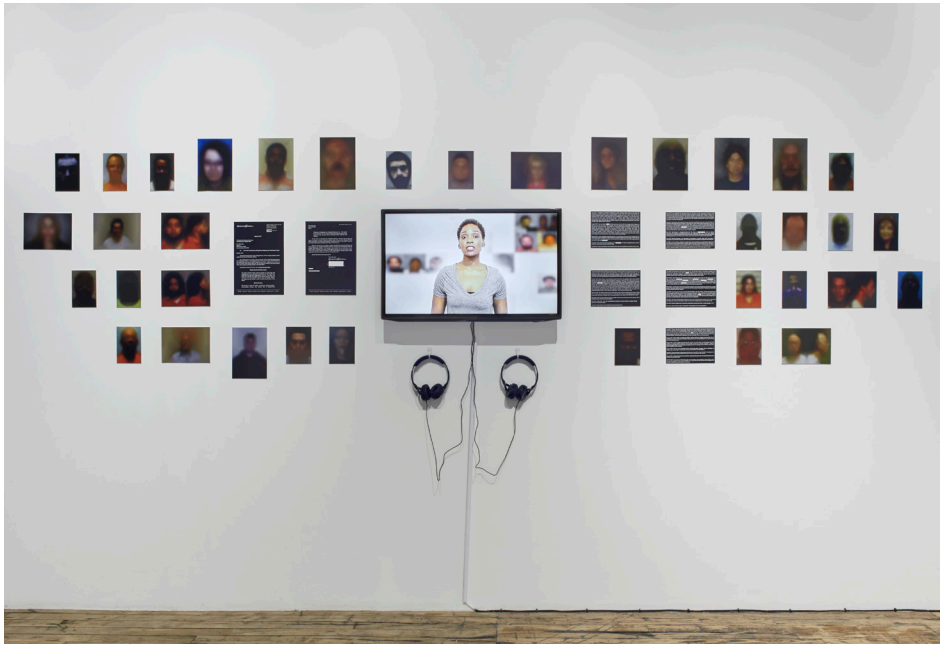
Rather than relying on traditional documentary methodologies, which aimed for the objective veracity, the works in the exhibition question documentary forms in an age of post-truth. The artists insert their own subjectivities, and sometimes their own lived experience, determined to remain truthful to reality. The production of knowledge to counter journalistic or historical gaps, with the aim of toppling corrupted power structures, is likely the most pressing ambition today for art and non-art alike.

1 Jacques Derrida. 2006. *Archive fever: a Freudian impression*. Chicago and London: University of Chicago Press

2 Michel Foucault, Alan Sheridan (translator). 1972. *The archaeology of knowledge.* New York: Pantheon Books, p. 130



Paolo Cirio, detail of *Obscurity*, 2016, inkjet print.
Courtesy of the artist and NOME Gallery



Paolo Cirio, *Obscurity*, 2016, inkjet prints
and video, 36 × 144 in. Courtesy of the artist
and NOME Gallery

ETHICS, DOCUMENTARY, AND THE INTERNET: PAOLO CIRIO IN CONVERSATION WITH JULIA POWLES

On December 12, 2017, Paolo Cirio and Julia Powles spoke at ISCP about ethics, documentary, and the internet as well as Cirio's work *Obscurity* (2016) included in *Concrete Truth: Art and the Documentary*. *Obscurity* obfuscates over fifteen million internet mugshots and criminal records in connection with the "Right to Be Forgotten" law that is being proposed in the United States.

Cirio and Powles discussed how free speech can be reconciled with the right to a dignified image of vulnerable individuals, both on the internet and in the field of art, as well as Facebook algorithms, the ethics of representation, privacy and the distribution of information.

JP I love this project. I think Paolo's work highlights a particularly severe case of the challenge we have with the "perpetual present" of the internet—where information, no matter what point in time it was placed online, retains a currency to anyone who types the right search terms. Meanwhile, we continue to live our lives and to move on. This creates a challenging balance between our central communal need to remember and build on what has happened, along with our very personal need to be able to live our lives and develop, and so on. In this context, the online mugshot websites example is particularly controversial. I feel like it would only happen in the United States, frankly. First, that you would have this information going online at all, and then that you would have these companies who are running businesses operating on, and exercising extortion on, people's most vulnerable selves.

For many of the people in these databases, we are only talking about small offenses or situations where people might not have been actually charged or incarcerated. There are also, of course, some cases where we do want information to be present. Lots of countries have laws around sex offenders lists, for example, and the importance of maintaining them.

The "right to be forgotten" became controversial mainly because it was a poke at the power of Google. There was a big case that happened in 2014, and it concentrated a lot of attention on the power of Google over our representation online and our inability to do anything about it. What you really want is some nuance around how we allow information to sediment over time. So we have the rehabilitation of offenders' rights, for example. If you served a criminal term, after a certain amount of

time that doesn't continue to attach to you forever, and that should be the case online as well as offline.

PC To address the ethics of representation over the internet, in art, and in journalism, it may be useful to consider both a Balthus painting titled *Thérèse Dreaming* (1938) that is in the collection of the Metropolitan Museum of Art and a 1972 photojournalistic image of the Vietnam War. This photograph primarily shows Kim Phuc, a nine-year-old Vietnamese girl, running away from a napalm attack with other children, after she ripped off her burning clothes as she was fleeing. The Balthus painting depicts a twelve-year-old girl with her skirt falling to the sides and underwear visible; it was removed from the museum due to an online petition. The image of Vietnam was censored from Facebook because of their moderators and algorithms. We all understand the difference, right? Through the algorithm of Facebook, the image is of young kids, who have facial expressions of horror. And one is naked. What is actually different for the algorithm? This demonstrates how artificial intelligence won't ever be able to make such judgments. An algorithm, or someone at Google or Facebook decides what should be removed, or not... and with very little cultural background and understanding of the particular social and historical relevance for every image. Therefore, they likely see no difference between these two images.

You may be familiar with the image of the Vietnamese children who are terrified and running away. It generated a lot of reaction against the war. It was actually very important to have this picture published. But this case of its censorship on Facebook, it tells a lot about other kinds of issues that are already in place regarding the circulation of sensitive information on the internet. If we really look at the ethical and general conventions in journalism, we see that professional journalists have to follow guidelines. That's why journalists don't usually publish bloody pictures, or photographs of minors, but they do expose some cruel pictures. But why instead doesn't Google, Facebook, Twitter, and so on have the same kind of guidelines for the internet? What are the legal definitions that determine how publishers and platforms are defined? As far as I know, Google does define itself as a publisher. In this regard, they think no entities can tell them what to do. If they were defined as publishers, they would have to follow ethical guidelines.

JP That republished Vietnam photograph was this extraordinary moment and wake-up call. It was published, censored, and blocked as an image on Facebook after having been published in a Dutch newspaper. The editor-in-chief of that newspaper wrote to Mark Zuckerberg, as this

sort of "censoring chief" of the planet, asking how a historic photo of consequence could have been classed under an algorithm seeking nudity and underage bodies as something that had to be flagged for attention. This started this whole conversation about platforms and how they are regulated (if they are regulated). It led to a whole bunch of things subsequently, including some exposure of Facebook's internal guidelines on dealing with certain kinds of content, and then this very murky business of content moderation which involves hundreds of thousands of people around the planet who have to sit there every day looking at pretty nasty images and sort them.

There's this kind of blur between the particular aesthetics that produce this very physical reaction and help to move something forward, like that Vietnam photo, and I think some of the photos that came out of Syria. It's an art to identify when the right moment is to publish. You may have very ethical news organizations that have many meetings of people who are debating this, and then another publication hits 'publish' and then they all just do that anyway. Someone has taken on the responsibility to be the first. But platforms operate very differently. They are largely outside the zone of any kind of traditionally democratic oversight or professional codes of ethics. That's partly because Facebook is very eager not to classify itself as 'editor,' even though what it's doing functionally is editing.

It's fascinating, the connections between some of those conversations that are happening in the arts and also on censorship. There's the whole world of debate around attribution and these controversial cases. You get this weird moment whereas platforms push further their vision of certainty and truth, there is a reluctance from traditional organizations to kind of fix that. They want to be more like, "oh we've contributed to the conversation about representation, or about attribution, and so on," without anyone wanting to be really bold there. Over the last two years, there has been more editorial oversight of professional cartoonists than ever before and, at the same time, we have less professional cartoonists than ever before. I can't understand how we've got that caution when we probably need more freedom and resilience. We need to say "here's the code that we as a professional entity subscribe to." Transparency would be an effective move in the face of platforms that have really buried their processes, and which have pretty arbitrary, non-human, non-necessarily-ethical processes.

PC Probably it's also because we have definitions of these things and fields that do not fit squarely into today's reality. Before, a painting

remained primarily inside the museum, only visitors saw it, but now you have Facebook. Anyone can see it at anytime, and judge it. They may not like it for moral reasons, ethical reasons, or just because of conservative mindsets. That's something relevant to platforms and publishers, the actual difference today in mass media is that the ultimate editor is Facebook or Google. They don't make content but they filter and edit everything out there. What is Facebook? We should think about it as the most powerful media today. It is not only a social media app, it's actually more powerful than television and the New York Times in terms of its editorial control over what we see and know. But because we still define things as we did pre-internet, we have yet to recalibrate our outlook on media. And it's also about art institutions today, who have a similar responsibility because the audience trusts curators to deal with the mediation of difficult questions about representation. But definitions have something to do with divergences in language and culture. For instance, I have found in my research key differences between the use of the words ethics and morals, in Southern Europe and South America we see morals as imposed by the church and institutions, something that needs to be challenged and questioned. However, Americans usually speak about morals as something that indicates a higher social principle. Then they try to follow on the notion of ethics. For me personally, I understand both definitions as fluid, they are not fixed, and rather evolve as modern terms. In terms of cultural understanding, there's also a huge difference between Germans and Americans when it comes to privacy. What is your experience in terms of cultural background and language?

JP In the face of new technologies, we have this bizarre unwillingness to challenge them. We don't know how they're going to go and there's always the chance that this path, maybe it will be amazing for the future. So instead of speaking about regulating anything, we talk about making sure we deal with it all ethically. This is just like kicking the ball way down the field, and not having to deal with it, which actually happened recently in New York City. There is this law that was proposed to make sure that any time the city uses an algorithm or automated system to decide how to allocate services to us or policing, that it should make what it's doing transparent to the public, and that was all debated under the label of ethics. The ethical move was sort of, "oh, we need to think about this more," whereas a regulated move would be, "oh, you shouldn't be able to do anything unless you show what you're going to do first, and show that it won't have any ethical issues, that it's not going to be

Eric Baudelaire, video still of *Also Known as Jihadi*, 2017, high-definition video, color, sound, 99 minutes. Courtesy of the artist, LUX, London and Poulet-Malassis Films, Paris

Eric Baudelaire, video still of *Also Known as Jihadi*, 2017, high-definition video, color, sound, 99 minutes. Courtesy of the artist, LUX, London and Poulet-Malassis Films, Paris

biased against a huge proportion of the population, that it won't shaft a ton of people and we can fight back."

There is a rich discipline around ethics, which provides very structured ways of thinking about problems, social values, and norms. It's very richly contextual and thinks about particular communities. This is very interesting. There is a lot around the imperialist claims, the Western claims of ethical values, and thinking about even which particular problem to think about. To me as someone working outside the art world, one of the areas where I see this is an issue is in community engagement in art. How much do artists really engage the communities they are working with? So you can have very raw pieces that move people which are driven by, and informed by, those *themselves* who have particular issues and grievances. This, to me, moves the ethical conversation to where it should be instead of instrumentalizing people. Are you engaging with those you make art about as communities in their own right?

PC How can you judge someone online if you don't know the social context? This has to do with empathy on the internet, or if we can have reconciliation on the internet. This makes me think of the very recent moment of #metoo. The public shaming of course is very effective, important, and useful but it also creates polarization among people, with the internet becoming weaponized in social relations.

JP I feel that the false promise of the digital is to offer us *certainty* and *efficiency*, where there really isn't any! It does this by making more rapid, and more comprehensive-seeming results. When you search someone you are going to go on a first date with, you know how much that ruins the experience of getting to know someone. If you look at your own digital footprint, you realize it's a very poor rendering of yourself. Yet I think that we are being sold this [efficiency and certainty promise] constantly, and it is the same with many personalized systems that have been developed, and the promise of AI [artificial intelligence] and so on. Are we able to slice through life with certain information? I think, really, part of the effort to restore a degree of humanity to digital representation is really just to have the functionality of 'search' be just that. So 'search' should be an indication—after which you have the space for discovery, which learns from memory, and that allows us to think of privacy as much as the way we modulate how we share. We share to gain intimacy with relationships, to build a community, and we give back to the individuals whom we are operating with.

To those who really worry about what would happen to society if we remove mugshot websites, I think in fact we would get to a position

when you don't prejudge, and you have ways of acquiring knowledge and fitting it into a context that is a key thing that the digital doesn't do. My positive aspect of where we are going is I think that we will look back to the early twenty-first century as a really crude understanding of the digital. That we had the flat world of screens where we made spectacular amounts of information public, where we were completely transparent citizens to governments and corporations. I feel like the opportunity is in engaging more with the hearts and minds between the polarities as we shift, as technologies shift, from screens to being embedded in physical life and social realms. Whereas we may not think too much of the dodgy data brokers that scrape your internet history, partly because they don't actually affect how we navigate through the world in quite the same way that if I know that every object in this room is collecting information effecting where we might go next. I think the move to the physical produces a much more visceral response. I think people don't just take it in quite the same way—I think we have a real physical bias. If you meet someone and then subsequently find out more things about them and you have a really good impression about them, it would be difficult to move that, but the other way around it really happens. If you prejudged, you may not give them the time of day. I hope that we have some more opportunities in the shift from screens for these challenges and debates. As these systems are being gradually embedded into our physical lives, it's really crucial to get a bit of a restoration of our ordinary due process. I mean, there is real exceptionalism about digital technology and in harnessing most of what we have developed socially, legally, and politically in terms of bringing to account these systems.

belit sağ, *disruption (aksama)*, 2016, single channel video looped, 4 min. 59 sec. Courtesy of the artist

Maryam Jafri, detail of *Getty vs. Musée Royale D'Afrique Centrale vs. DR Congo*, 2012, two black and white photographs and one framed text panel, 14 9/16 × 11 1/16 in. each photograph. Courtesy of the artist

Maryam Jafri, *Versus Series (Getty vs. Ghana, Corbis vs. Mozambique, Getty vs. Kenya vs. Corbis, Getty vs. Musée Royale D'Afrique Centrale vs. DR Congo)*, 2012, 14 black and white, two color photographs and seven framed text panels. Courtesy of the artist

Edgardo Aragón (born 1985, Oaxaca, Mexico) currently lives and works between Oaxaca and Mexico City. His work centers on aspects of everyday reality in Mexico. He has had solo exhibitions at Museo de Arte Contemporáneo de Oaxaca, Mexico; Jeu de Paume, Paris; CAPC musée d'art contemporain de Bordeaux; Museo Universitario de Arte Contemporáneo, Mexico City; and MoMA PS1, New York.

Eric Baudelaire (born 1973, Salt Lake City, Utah) is an artist and filmmaker living and working in Paris. Baudelaire has had solo shows at Witte de With Center for Contemporary Art, Rotterdam; Ludwig Forum, Aachen; the Fridericianum, Kassel; the Bergen Kunsthall; Beirut Art Center; and the Hammer Museum, Los Angeles. He is the recipient of the Sharjah Biennial 12 Prize, 2015; the SeMA-HANA Award, Mediacity in Seoul, 2014; and the Special Jury Prize at DocLisboa Festival, Portugal (2012, 2014).

Paolo Cirio (born 1979, Turin, Italy) engages with legal, economic, and semiotic systems of the information society. His works investigate social fields impacted by the internet, such as privacy, copyright, democracy, and finance. He has exhibited work at C / O, Berlin; MIT Museum, Cambridge; and V&A Museum, London, among others. Cirio was awarded the Golden Nica in Interactive Art by Ars Electronica in 2014 and was an Eyebeam Fellow in 2012.

Maryam Jafri (born 1972, Pakistan) lives and works in New York and Copenhagen. Recent solo exhibitions include Kunsthalle Basel; Betonsalon, Paris; Gasworks, London; and Bielefelder Kunstverein, Germany. Biennials include Bienal de São Paulo, Venice Biennale, Manifesta 9, Shanghai Biennale, and Taipei Biennial.

Krista Belle Stewart (born Canada) is a member of the Upper Nicola Band of the Okanagan Nation, living and working in Vancouver. Her work engages the complexities of archival material. Stewart had a solo exhibition at the Contemporary Art Gallery, Vancouver; and has participated in group exhibitions at Artspeak, Vancouver; and Esker Foundation, Calgary.

belit sağ (born Nazilli, Turkey) is a videomaker based in Amsterdam. Overarching themes in sağ's work are the violence of images and images of violence. Her background is rooted in alternative video-activist and artist groups in Ankara and Istanbul. sağ's work has been exhibited internationally including at EYE Film Institute and the International Film Festival Rotterdam, both in The Netherlands; Salt and DEPO, both in Istanbul; and DMZ International Documentary Film Festival, Paju, South Korea.

Dr. Julia Powles is a research fellow at New York University School of Law and Cornell Tech, where she works on the law and politics of technology. Prior to coming to New York, Powles was a post-doctoral fellow in law and computer science at the University of Cambridge, a policy fellow and contributing editor at The Guardian newspaper, and speechwriter for the Director General of the World Intellectual Property Organization. She has worked as a lawyer, scientific researcher, and clerked in the Federal Court of Australia and Commonwealth Administrative Appeal Tribunal, working on technology, intellectual property, and national security cases.

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