

Querying the Digital:

Nans Bortuzzo. 5Ws, a new exhibition at Galerie de l'UQAM

Dates: March 8 – April 13, 2019

Opening: Thursday, March 7, 5:30 p.m.

Montréal, February 20, 2019 – Galerie de l'UQAM delves into the underpinnings of the digital in the exhibition *Nans Bortuzzo. 5Ws*, which explores personal data collection. The artist, a graduate completing his master's in visual and media arts at UQAM, deploys an installational experience that sets before us the most private inquiries of half a million Americans.

The exhibition

Our personal information today is disseminated through databases and in social networks. Our relationship with new technologies is eroding our private sphere. Yet the traces we leave on the Web offer direct access to our most intimate thoughts. *5Ws* strives to reveal these traces using a digital archive that contains the searches and navigation history of more than half a million Americans. These registers, built unbeknownst to users in 2006, were anonymized before being published for research purposes. The installation brings together a selection of these queries concerning personal realities. At once serious and light-hearted, they testify to social problems and reflect concerns that are still relevant in the United States.

The installation reveals the mechanisms of collecting and using personal data. Is it possible, from 20 million individual searches, to define a set of preoccupations that are characteristic of American society? To address the issue, Nans Bortuzzo organizes his investigation by using a method borrowed from journalism: the 5Ws, that is, the Who, What, Where, When, and Why. The method enables the disclosure of the information concealed in the archive. In a first work, all the queries are printed and exhibited on paper. The information, arranged by mathematical algorithms, is then organized visually as a semantic web on the wall. A selection of queries are projected and drift randomly, according to the recurring themes identified. In a context in which the media and information ecosystems are undergoing major changes, the questions that Nans Bortuzzo raises interface with our contemporary society and re-engage the digital archive as a present concern.

The artist

Nans Bortuzzo is completing his master's in visual and media arts at UQAM. His career intersects media arts, music, and scenography. He creates installations that deal with the power relationships established in the design and use of information technology. Recipient of the grant Mécènes investis pour les arts (2013), he has been artist-in-residence at the Cité internationale des arts, in Paris (2013). His work has been presented at VOX – Centre de l'image contemporaine (2018), Occurrence (2017), the Montréal Museum of Fine Arts (2015), and the Art Souterrain Festival (2018), among others. Since 2009, he has participated in the creation of shows disseminated internationally and he staged *Obsolescence programmée* at La Chapelle Scènes contemporaines, in Montréal (2014). In March 2019, the artist will participate in a week-long workshop at Centre Pompidou (Paris) with « Au-delà des images opératoires », a research-creation group from UQAM.

nansbortuzzo.com

Public activitiesArtist Talk: Nans Bortuzzo

Part of the *L'art observe* event series

Tuesday, April 2, 2019, 12:45 – 1:45 p.m.

Galerie de l'UQAM

In French

Free admission

Guided tours of the exhibition for groups

Available at all times, in French and English, free of charge.

Reservations required with

Philippe Dumaine

Cultural mediation manager

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Address and opening hours

Galerie de l'UQAM

Judith-Jasmin Pavilion, room J-R120

1400 Berri, corner of Sainte-Catherine East

Montréal

Berri-UQAM metro

Tuesday – Saturday, 12 – 6 p.m.

Free admission

Information

Phone: 514 987-6150

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Source

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