Screenshot of *The Next Biennial Should Be Curated by a Machine*, launched March 2021.

ARTIST-MADE AI PROGRAM, *THE NEXT BIENNIAL SHOULD BE CURATED BY A MACHINE,* LAUNCHES ON THE WHITNEY'S ARTPORT

NEW YORK, MARCH 24, 2021—The Whitney Museum today announced the launch of *The Next Biennial Should Be Curated by a Machine*, an artificial intelligence project commissioned for artport, the Whitney's portal to Internet art and online gallery space for commissions of net art. Developed as a collaboration between artists UBERMORGEN, digital humanist Leonardo Impett, and curator Joasia Krysa, the project reimagines the future of curating in the light of artificial intelligence as a self-learning human-machine system.

The Next Biennial Should Be Curated by a Machine uses a group of machine learning processes to "curate" a series of imagined, constantly evolving biennial universes. Collectively named B3(NSCAM), the featured software takes data sets from the Liverpool and Whitney biennials—as well as various other sources, including *Rolling Stone* magazine —and processes them to calculate a future probability for words to appear, generating endless combinations of possible biennials in flux. These imagined occurrences, or biennial universes, manifest as texts—seemingly conventional artist biographies, curatorial statements, press releases, and art magazine reviews—which engage in a continuous process of rewriting themselves. Ever fluid and ungraspable, the texts are presented in browser windows that appear on top of a variety of animated visual backgrounds, alluding to the sixty-four parallel universes of possible biennials constructed by the AI.

 "The alternate, parallel universes constructed by the AI reflect the curatorial and institutional desires embedded in the data on which the software has been trained," said Christiane Paul, adjunct curator of

digital art at the Whitney Museum. "The AI engages in a kind of cultural apophenia, the tendency to see meaningful connections between seemingly unrelated things, and reveals hidden patterns."

Audiences enter the project through an interface that depicts a twisting black and white vortex overlaid with sixty-four spinning wheels. Clicking on an individual wheel launches a new biennial universe on an animated background constructed from a range of sources, from NASA and sci-fi imagery to pop culture. Each universe is accompanied by the soundtrack of a TikTok playlist, referencing the mix of creative expression and preconfigured elements in digital tools. The respective universes are created by subtle changes in the software's parameters, for example, giving more weight to one data set over another or simply generating variations of biographies for artists with the same first or last name. Together these textual and graphic universes of biennials narrate and visualize the impossible, absurd endeavor of an AI to curate on the basis of what it has learned from sources compiled by people and human understandings of art.

The Next Biennial Should Be Curated by a Machine is commissioned by Liverpool Biennial and the Whitney Museum of American Art, with support from Liverpool John Moores University, Pro Helvetia, Federal Chancellery of Austria, and the City of Vienna. At the Whitney, the project is overseen by Christiane Paul, adjunct curator of digital art. The project is accessible anytime through the Liverpool Biennial's website and the Whitney's artport: https://whitney.org/exhibitions/the-next-biennial.

About the creators
UBERMORGEN is an artist duo founded in 1995. Autistic actionist lizvlx and pragmatic visionary Hans Bernhard are net.art pioneers and media hackers widely recognized for their high-risk research into data and matter, haute couture websites, and polarizing social experiments. CNN called them "Maverick Austrian Business People" during their Vote-Auction online project. They reached a global audience of 500 million while challenging the FBI, CIA, and NSA during the U.S. presidential election. In 2005, they launched their acclaimed EKMRZ Trilogy, a series of conceptual hacks: Google Will Eat Itself, Amazon Noir, and The Sound of eBay. UBERMORGEN occupies 175 domains. Their exhibition history includes the New Museum, New York; Somerset House, London; Haifa Museum of Art, Israel/Palestine (2019); Wei-Ling Contemporary, Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia; HKW, Berlin; ZKM, Karlsruhe, Germany; National Art Gallery, Bulgaria (2017); ICA Miami, USA; Mahatma Gandhi Institute, Mauritius (2015); Serpentine Galleries, London (2014); Kunsthal Aarhus, Denmark; Ars Electronica, Austria; MoMA Ljubljana, Slovenia; ArtScience Museum, Singapore (2013); 3331 Arts Chiyoda, Japan (2012); Centre Pompidou, Paris; Gwangju Design Biennale, Korea; WRO Media Art Biennale, Wrocław, Poland (2011); Prague Biennale, Czech Republic (2009); Biennale of Sydney, Australia (2008); MOCA Taipei (2007); The Premises, Johannesburg, South Africa; ICC Tokyo, Japan (2005); SFMOMA, USA (2001).
The Whitney last worked with UBERMORGEN in 2010, when the Museum commissioned the artist duo to create *CLICKSITAN*, a work of computer game art designed to encourage support of the Whitney's Annual Fund—and by extension, art in an increasingly global community.

Leonardo Impett is a digital humanist working at the intersection of computer vision and art history. In trying to bring "distant reading" to visual studies, his current research focuses on unveiling the implicit image-theories of computer vision and constructing new computer vision systems based on early modern philosophies of vision. He is assistant professor of computer science at Durham University, and was previously a digital humanities scientist at the Max Planck Institute for Art History, Rome; a digital humanities fellow at the Harvard University Center for Italian Renaissance Studies; a member of the Image and Visual Representation Laboratory at EPFL; a visiting fellow at Cambridge University Digital Humanities; and an associate researcher at the Orpheus Institute for Artistic Research in Music, Ghent.

Joasia Krysa is a curator, professor of exhibition research, and head of art and design at Liverpool John Moores University, in partnership with Liverpool Biennial. Her first curatorial software experiment was launched at Tate Modern in 2005 and published in *Curating Immateriality* (2006). She has curated at the intersection of art and technology, among others, as part of the curatorial team of Documenta 13, co-

curator of Liverpool Biennial 2016; and artistic director of Kunsthal Aarhus, Denmark. She currently serves as a curatorial advisor for Sapporo International Art Triennale SIAF 2020 in Japan and Helsinki Biennale 2021.

About artport
Artport is the Whitney Museum's portal to Internet art and an online gallery space for commissions of net art and new media art. Originally launched in 2001, artport provides access to original artworks commissioned specifically for artport by the Whitney; documentation of net art and new media art exhibitions at the Whitney; and new media art in the Museum's collection. Recent commissions include *New York Apartment* (2020) by Sam Lavigne and Tega Brain, Michael Mandiberg's *Live Study* (2019), and Jennifer and Kevin McCoy's *Public Key / Private Key* (2019). Audiences can access these projects and more on the portal by visiting https://whitney.org/artport.

About the Whitney
The Whitney Museum of American Art, founded in 1930 by the artist and philanthropist Gertrude Vanderbilt Whitney (1875–1942), houses the foremost collection of American art from the twentieth and twenty-first centuries. Mrs. Whitney, an early and ardent supporter of modern American art, nurtured groundbreaking artists at a time when audiences were still largely preoccupied with the Old Masters. From her vision arose the Whitney Museum of American Art, which has been championing the most innovative art of the United States for more than eighty years. The core of the Whitney's mission is to collect, preserve, interpret, and exhibit American art of our time and serve a wide variety of audiences in celebration of the complexity and diversity of art and culture in the United States. Through this mission and a steadfast commitment to artists themselves, the Whitney has long been a powerful force in support of modern and contemporary art and continues to help define what is innovative and influential in American art today.

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