



Paolo Cirio, still from *Criminal Data*, 2022. Web project: whitney.org/artport. Courtesy the artist.

CRIMINAL DATA, A NEW COMMISSION BY PAOLO CIRIO, LAUNCHES ON THE WHITNEY'S ARTPORT

New York, February 24, 2022— Today, the Whitney Museum of American Art launched *Criminal Data*, a new project by artist Paolo Cirio, on whitney.org. Commissioned for artport, the Museum's portal to Internet art and online gallery space for net art, *Criminal Data* employs video and text to probe the process and impact of the online dissemination of mugshots and digital criminal records.

Informed by years of research, advocacy, and intervention, *Criminal Data* consists of a roughly two-minute video essay and accompanying statement by the artist. The video takes viewers on a fly-through of symmetrical grids constructed from thousands of blurred mugshots. Aggregated over three years (2016–19), the images are part of a data set of ten million photos Cirio originally gathered for his project *Obscurity* (2016) by scraping images from six mugshot websites and shuffling their related booking data. Throughout the video, the mugshots are interspersed with text segments that assert statistics related to the publication of these images and pose questions about the effects of the public distribution and commercialization of criminal records that have become standard practice.

“With its grids of thousands of mugshots neatly locked into image ‘cells,’ the *Criminal Data* video essay gives striking visual form to practices that diminish humans to data points and profitable

image assets,” said Christiane Paul, the Whitney’s Adjunct Curator of Digital Art. “The protection of personal information has become one of the most contested territories in our online lives, and Paolo Cirio’s work has consistently drawn attention to the ethical and legal issues surrounding the use of this information in commercial frameworks.”

Accompanying the video is a statement by the artist that situates *Criminal Data* within the context of Cirio’s research-driven practice and social engagement. The project is the culmination of his previous and ongoing works *Obscurity* (2016) and *Right to Remove*, which advocate for the legal right to remove personal information from search engines both through digital intervention and collaboration with lawyers, academics, and legislators to promote privacy policy. Together, the video and text probe ideas of judgment, access, freedom, and responsibility while examining the material repercussions from disseminating criminal records and mugshots on the internet.

Criminal Data is commissioned by the Whitney and the project is overseen by Christiane Paul, Adjunct Curator of Digital Art.

More information on *Criminal Data* is available on whitney.org.

About the artist

Paolo Cirio (b. 1979, Piedmont, Italy) lives and works in New York City. He received a Bachelor of Arts in Drama, Art, and Music Studies from the University of Turin, Italy. He has received numerous awards and grants, among them a Golden Nica first prize at Ars Electronica, Linz, in 2014; a Transmediale second prize in Berlin in 2006; an Eyebeam Fellowship in 2012; and a National Endowment for the Arts grant at the International Studio & Curatorial Program in New York City in 2017. Cirio has had solo exhibitions at the Fondazione Modena Arti Visive in Italy; Saint James’ Charterhouse in Capri; the Palazzo delle Arti di Napoli; Giorgio Persano Gallery in Turin; Fondazione Sandretto Re Rebaudengo in Turin; International Kunstverein Luxembourg; NOME Gallery in Berlin; Bellegard Centre Culturel in Toulouse; Kasa Gallery in Istanbul; and Aksioma Institute for Contemporary Art in Ljubljana.

About artport

artport is the Whitney Museum’s portal to Internet art and an online gallery space for net art and new media art commissions. Launched in 2001, artport provides access to original commissioned artworks, documentation of net art and new media art exhibitions at the Whitney, and new media art in the Museum’s collection. Recent commissions include *The Next Biennial Should Be Curated by a Machine* (2021), a collaboration between artists UBERMORGAN, digital humanist Leonarda Impett, and curator Joasia Krysa; Sam Levine and Tega Brain’s *New York Apartment* (2020); Michael Mandiberg’s *Live Study* (2019); and Jennifer and Kevin McCoy’s *Public Key / Private Key* (2019). Audiences can access these and more projects on the portal by visiting 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 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 ninety 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, 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.

Current and Upcoming Exhibitions at the Whitney Museum of American Art

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| Public Art Project: David Hammons: Day's End | On permanent view |
| My Barbarian | Through February 27, 2022 |
| Labyrinth of Forms: Women and Abstraction, 1930–1950 | Through March 13, 2022 |
| Jennifer Packer: The Eye Is Not Satisfied With Seeing | Through April 17, 2022 |
| Whitney Biennial 2022: Quiet as It's Kept | April 6–September 5, 2022 |
| At the Dawn of a New Age: Early Twentieth-Century American Modernism | May 7, 2022–January 2023 |
| Martine Gutierrez: Supremacy | September 2022–March 2023 |
| Edward Hopper's New York | October 19, 2022–March 5, 2023 |
| no existe un mundo poshuracán: Puerto Rican Art in the Wake of Hurricane Maria | November 23, 2022–April 23, 2023 |
| The Whitney's Collection: Selections From 1900 to 1965 | Ongoing |

Visitor Information

The Whitney Museum of American Art is located at 99 Gansevoort Street between Washington and West Streets, New York City. Public hours are: Monday, Wednesday, and Thursday, 10:30 am–6 pm; Friday, 10:30 am–10 pm; and Saturday and Sunday, 11 am–6 pm. Closed Tuesday. Member-only hours are: Saturday and Sunday, 10:30–11 am. Visitors eighteen years and under and Whitney members: FREE. Admission is pay-what-you-wish on Fridays, 7–10 pm.

Effective January 29, 2022, all visitors aged 5 and older must show proof of two vaccine doses or a single Johnson & Johnson dose for admission to the Whitney, in accordance with New York City requirements. Visitors over 18 will also be asked to show photo identification. Face coverings are required for all visitors, and timed tickets must be booked in advance. For complete visitor guidelines, visit [whitney.org](https://www.whitney.org).