

WHITNEY

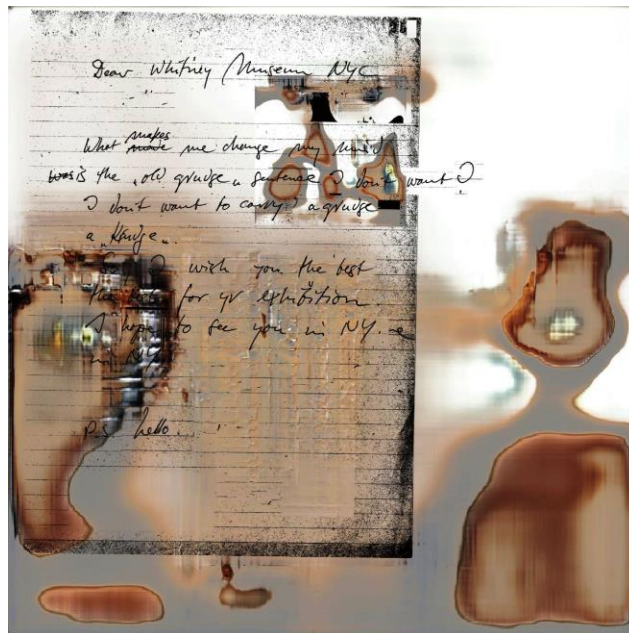
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PRESS RELEASE

A NEW COMMISSION BY DEVIN KENNY, *ONGOING, INDIVIDUAL ADAPTABILITY OR HOW TO QUIET QUIT*, LAUNCHES ON THE WHITNEY MUSEUM'S ARTPORT



Devin Kenny, a selection from *Ongoing, Individual Adaptability or How to Quiet Quit*, 2022

New York, July 25, 2022— Today, the Whitney Museum of American Art launched [Ongoing, Individual Adaptability or How to Quiet Quit](#), a new project by artist Devin Kenny on [whitney.org](#). Commissioned for artport, the Museum's portal dedicated to Internet art and an online gallery space for commissions of net art, this two-part work explores artificial intelligence (AI) in the context of art institutions, creativity, collaboration, and labor.

To create the work, a compilation of images and videos, Kenny used a Generative Adversarial Network (GAN), a form of machine learning in which algorithms trained on specific data sets continuously generate new images with the same characteristics as the originals. Kenny's data set to train the AI for this work comprises thousands of installation images documenting exhibitions at the Whitney Museum.

"Devin Kenny's project considers some of the most pressing issues surrounding creativity and collaboration in the use of AI for producing art," says Christiane Paul, Adjunct Curator of Digital

Art at the Whitney. “Kenny questions many of the common assumptions about machine learning and introduces a thought-provoking conceptual twist on the idea of artmaking by connecting machine learning to the ‘machine’ of an art museum.”

For the first part of the work, titled *Ongoing, Individual Adaptability*, the artist selected twelve images from the GAN’s output and collaged them with excerpts of original artist correspondences and ephemera from the Whitney Museum’s library. These collages are a “cooperation” between Kenny and the AI and hint at the parallels between processes in art institutions and AI software as they enable collaboration or exert authority and control. The title of this part of the work is a quote from Octavia Butler’s novel *The Parable of the Sower*, which addresses themes of growth and change in the effort to construct an ideal future.

The second part, *How to Quiet Quit*, consists of three videos showing the GAN in the process of producing images. Each video is accompanied by a soundtrack of excerpts from online TED talks by philosopher Nick Bostrom, computer scientist Kai-Fu Lee, and artificial intelligence researcher Janelle Shane, intercepted by the artist’s comments and questions. The GAN’s evolving visual abstractions exemplify or question Kenny and the speakers’ commentary on issues of intelligence, creativity, optics, and weirdness. The title *How to Quiet Quit* randomly appeared on the artist’s Instagram feed and resonated with him as a means for AI or a person to achieve autonomy. As a whole, *Ongoing, Individual Adaptability or How to Quiet Quit* establishes a framework for questioning AI as a tool for making the art of the future by “liberating” or replacing human creativity.

Ongoing, Individual Adaptability or How to Quiet Quit is commissioned by the Whitney and the project is overseen by Christiane Paul, Adjunct Curator of Digital Art.

More information on *Ongoing, Individual Adaptability or How to Quiet Quit* is available on whitney.org.

ABOUT THE ARTIST

Devin Kenny (b.1987, Chicago, IL; lives and works in New York, NY) is an interdisciplinary artist, writer, musician, and independent curator. Born in the South Side of Chicago, the artist relocated to New York City to pursue his undergraduate studies at The Cooper Union. He received his MFA from the New Genres department at the University of California Los Angeles in 2013 and is also an alum of the Whitney Independent Study Program and Bruce High Quality Foundation University. Kenny has held residencies at the Skowhegan School of Painting & Sculpture, SOMA Summer, and the Core Program at the Museum of Fine Arts, Houston. He has collaborated with DADDY, poool, Studio Workout, Temporary Agency, and exhibited and performed at venues across the U.S. and internationally, including Recess, MoMA PS1, Performance Space New York, The Kitchen, and Santos Party House, New York; REDCAT and Freak City, Los Angeles; and Theater de Roode Bioscoop, Amsterdam.

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 at whitney.org/artport.

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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.

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. COVID-19 vaccination and face coverings are not required but strongly recommended. We encourage all visitors to wear face coverings that cover the nose and mouth throughout their visit.

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