

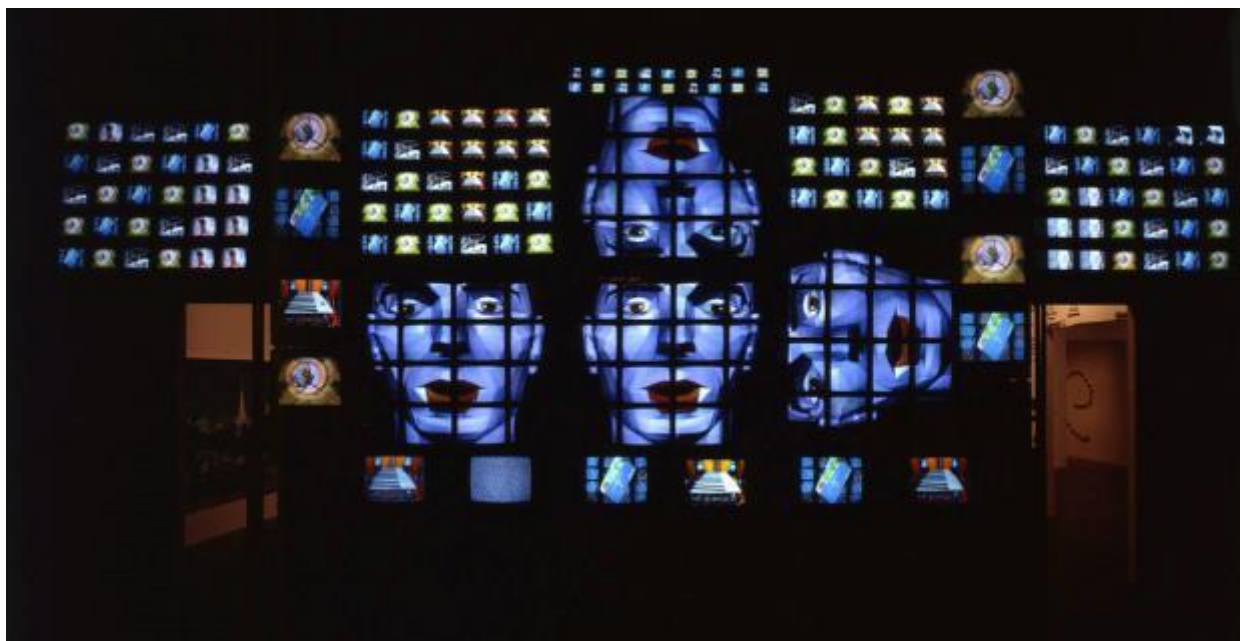
# WHITNEY

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# PRESS RELEASE



Nam June Paik (1932-2006), *Fin de Siècle II*, 1989

## **Programmed: Rules, Codes, and Choreographies in Art Opens at the Whitney September 28** **Recent acquisitions and rarely seen artworks to be on view**

**NEW YORK, August 15, 2018**– On September 28, the Whitney Museum will open *Programmed: Rules, Codes, and Choreographies in Art, 1965–2018*, an ambitious installation of more than fifty works by thirty-nine artists filling the Museum's sixth floor galleries. Drawn entirely from the Whitney's collection, the exhibition expands the genre of “programmed” art beyond the digital to encompass paintings, drawings, sculptures, videos, and large-scale installations that explore the artistic possibilities of rules, algorithms, and code.

*Programmed* illuminates how both analog and digital programs have informed the evolution of contemporary artistic practices from works such as Donald Judd's sculpture *Untitled* (1965) to Ian Cheng's *Baby feat. Ikaria* (2013). The exhibition, largely featuring living artists, includes important recent acquisitions and rarely seen works. A centerpiece of the exhibition will be the debut of the recently restored Nam June Paik masterpiece *Fin de Siècle II* (1989), a 17-by-41-foot floor-to-ceiling video sculpture comprising over 200 televisions, which has not been exhibited publicly since the year it was made.

“At a time when algorithms and automated systems increasingly define our experience of the world, *Programmed* looks back across half a century to consider how artists have used rules and instructions in the creation of their work. Sometimes these systems are seen as profoundly generative, while in other cases they are approached as strictures to be corrupted. Throughout the show, we experience how artists have responded to new technologies, realizing their often unforeseen potential to effect profound changes in our image culture,” said Scott Rothkopf, Deputy Director for Programs and Nancy and Steve Crown Family Chief Curator. The exhibition is divided into two sections, which link distinct themes of artistic exploration that are related in their implementation of instructions.

The first section of the exhibition, titled “Rule, Instruction, Algorithm,” examines the use of rules and algorithms to generate images and objects, focusing on conceptual art practices and their

emphasis on ideas as the subject of art. In *Homage to the Square* (1967) and *Variant* (1966), Joseph Albers famously used a symmetrical system to nest three or four colored squares and rectangles inside each other, creating variations of colors that continuously change each other in our perception. In *Programmed*, Albers's work is paired with *Color Panel v1.0* (1999) by the contemporary new media artist John F. Simon Jr. More than thirty years later, Simon used the same principles as Albers and the Bauhaus artists to create continuously evolving configurations in motion.

John F. Simon Jr. (b. 1963), *Color Panel v1.0*, 1999



Josef Albers (1888-1976), *White Line Square III*, 1966



“The histories of contemporary technological art forms are only now being written in a more comprehensive way” remarked Christiane Paul, the co-curator of *Programmed* and the Whitney’s adjunct curator of digital art. “*Programmed* strives to illustrate how art throughout the decades has been informed by technological and mathematical concepts and to provide insight into the increasingly coded structures of the contemporary landscape.”

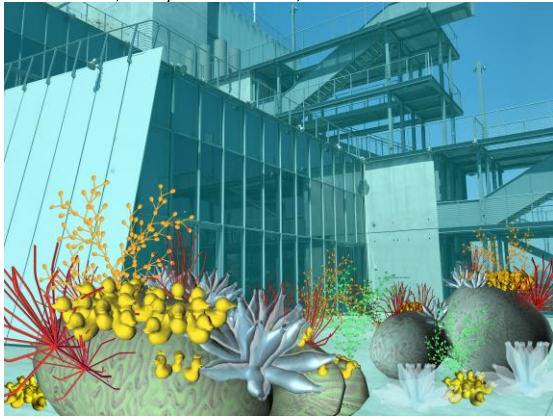
When moving from the first to the second section, visitors pass through Nam June Paik’s *Fin de Siècle II*, which originally appeared as a site-specific installation in *Image World: Art and Media Culture* at the Whitney in 1989. After 1989, the work was reconceived as a smaller piece for a private collector before entering the Whitney’s collection in 1993. Now it will be presented in *Programmed* in its original format following a thorough restoration. The conservation effort, ongoing for the past six years, exemplifies the fundamental questions of restoring new media art, as it required the use of original components, recently acquired vintage pieces, reproductions of discontinued parts, and the substitution of new parts only when original components were impossible to include.

*Fin de Siècle II* combines music videos with Hollywood classics and other pop culture iconography to reconfigure the television screens into dancing patterns of images. Paik’s multi-channel arrangement marks the beginning of a new era of image production, in which found videos act as source material to be remixed.

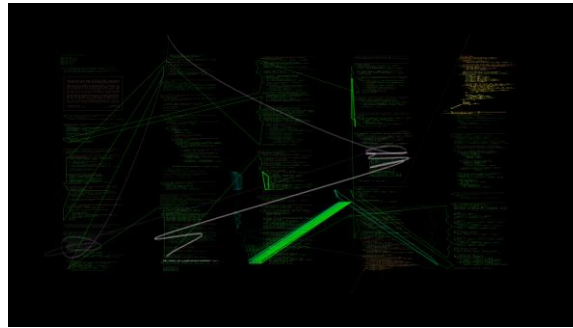
“The challenge of recapturing the original impact of over 200 televisions in a single work of art engendered both practical and theoretical considerations of Paik’s original artistic investment. Attention was paid not only to the practical melding of old and new apparatuses but also to the artist’s inventive engagement with media,” said Carol Mancusi-Ungaro, Melva Bucksbaum Associate Director for Conservation and Research and co-curator of *Programmed*.

The second section of the exhibition, “Signal, Sequence, Resolution,” highlights artists’ varied use of rules or code to engage with the television—its program, apparatus, and signal—as well as with image resolution and the manipulation of image sequences. Paik’s *Magnet TV* (1965) and early modifications of a monitor by Earl Reiback adapt the TV set’s signal, while Lynn Hershman Leeson’s landmark installation *Lorna* (1979–1984), the first interactive art videodisc, invites visitors to use a remote control to navigate the protagonist’s story unfolding on the screen. The installation itself mirrors the environment that Lorna, an agoraphobic fearful of leaving her tiny apartment, inhabits in the TV set, allowing viewers to assume the position of Lorna both in the gallery and on the screen as they participate in the piece.

Tamiko Thiel, *Unexpected Growth*, 2018



W. Bradford Paley, *Code Profiles*, September 2002



In addition to illustrating the aesthetic implications of rule-based processes, a number of artworks in *Programmed* demonstrate the social impact of rule-based communication systems. In one example, Keith and Mendi Obadike's *The Interaction of Coloreds* (2002) recreates the brown paper bag test to simulate racial classification and colorism in an online environment.

*Programmed* will also debut a new augmented reality artwork created specifically for the Whitney's sixth floor terrace, the Stefan Edlis and Gael Neeson Foundation Outdoor Gallery. Tamiko Thiel's *Unexpected Growth* (2018), viewable on smartphones or at viewing stations by the terrace windows, places coral-like formations that respond to the number of viewers experiencing the project in the outdoor gallery, opening a portal into a future when sea levels have dangerously risen.

*Programmed* will also include a number of works originally commissioned for artport, the Whitney's portal to Internet art and online gallery space for commissions of net art and new media art originally launched in 2001. This presentation will be the first time these works have been shown as large-scale installations and in dialogue with other work from the collection. Casey Reas's *{Software} Structures* (2004), an artport project inspired by Sol LeWitt's wall drawings and the legacy of conceptual art, will be shown alongside a LeWitt wall drawing.

*Programmed: Rules, Codes, and Choreographies in Art, 1965–2018* will be on view beginning September 28, 2018 in the Museum's sixth-floor Collection Galleries and Stefan Edlis and Gael Neeson Foundation Outdoor Gallery.

#### **Artists included in *Programmed: Rules, Codes, and Choreographies in Art, 1965 – 2018***

*Subject to change*

#### **Part I: Rule, Instruction, Algorithm**

##### **Grouping 1: Ideas as Form**

Josef Albers  
Tauba Auerbach  
Lucinda Childs  
Charles Csuri  
Agnes Denes  
Charles Gaines  
Philip Glass  
Frederick Hammersley  
Donald Judd  
Sol LeWitt  
Casey Reas  
Rafaël Rozendaal  
John F. Simon Jr.  
Mika Tajima  
Joan Truckenbrod

## **Grouping 2: Generative Measures**

Ian Cheng  
Alex Dodge  
Cheyney Thompson

## **Grouping 3: Collapsing Instruction and Form**

Joseph Kosuth  
William Bradford Paley  
Lawrence Weiner

## **Part II: Signal, Sequence, Resolution**

### **Grouping 1: Image Resequenced**

Barbara Lattanzi  
Lynn Hershman Leeson  
Nam June Paik  
Lillian Schwartz  
Steina  
Siebren Versteeg

### **Grouping 2: Liberating the Signal**

Cory Arcangel  
Jim Campbell  
Nam June Paik  
Earl Reiback  
James L. Seawright

### **Grouping 3: Realities Encoded**

Jonah Brucker-Cohen and Katherine Moriwaki  
Marc Lafia and Fang-Yu Lin  
Mendi and Keith Obadike  
Paul Pfeiffer

### **Grouping 4: Augmented Reality Commission for Terrace**

Tamiko Thiel

### **Curatorial Credit**

The exhibition is organized by Christiane Paul, Adjunct Curator of Digital Art, and Carol Mancusi-Ungaro, Melva Bucksbaum Associate Director for Conservation and Research, with Clémence White, curatorial assistant.

### **Exhibition Support**

*Programmed: Rules, Codes, and Choreographies in Art, 1965–2018* is sponsored by Audi



Major support is provided by the Alfred P. Sloan Foundation.

Significant support is provided by the Carl & Marilyn Thoma Art Foundation and the Korea Foundation.

Generous support is provided by the Jon and Mary Shirley Foundation.

Additional support is provided by Hearst.

In-kind support is provided by the Hakuta Family.



Alfred P. Sloan  
FOUNDATION

### 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.

### About Audi of America

"Progress through Technology" is our company ethos and is the core belief that drives the development of every Audi vehicle and service. It inspires the innovative solutions, revolutionary engineering, and progressive design that have become synonymous with the Audi brand. And it reminds us to challenge ourselves, rewrite the rules from time to time, and always fuel our pioneering spirit. Visit [www.audiusa.com](http://www.audiusa.com) or [www.media.audiusa.com](http://www.media.audiusa.com) for more information regarding Audi vehicles, initiatives, and business topics.

### About the Audi e-tron

The Audi e-tron—the first all-electric vehicle from the brand—is a five passenger SUV aimed at the heart of the premium market. With progressive design, advanced electric and digital technology, the driving dynamics and build quality that customers expect of a premium vehicle, the Audi e-tron lets consumers go electric without compromise. To learn more about the Audi e-tron and reserve your vehicle, visit: [www.audiusa.com/reserve](http://www.audiusa.com/reserve).

### Current and Upcoming Exhibitions at the Whitney Museum of American Art

Eckhaus Latta: Possessed	Until October 8, 2018
Pacha, Llaqta, Wasichay: Indigenous Space, Modern Architecture, New Art	Until September 30, 2018
David Wojnarowicz: History Keeps Me Awake at Night	Until September 30, 2018
Mary Corse: A Survey in Light	Until November 25, 2018
Programmed: Rules, Codes, and Choreographies in Art, 1965 – 2018	Opens September 28, 2018
Andy Warhol – From A to B and Back Again	November 12, 2018 – March 31, 2019
Kevin Beasley	Opens Fall 2018
An Incomplete History of Protest:	
Selections from the Whitney's Collection, 1940–2017	Until August 27, 2018
Christine Sun Kim: Too Much Future	Until September 24, 2018
Where We Are: Selections from the Whitney's Collection 1900–1960	Ongoing
The Face in the Moon: Drawings and Prints by Louise Nevelson	Ongoing

The Whitney Museum of American Art is located at 99 Gansevoort Street between Washington and West Streets, New York City. Museum hours are: Monday, Wednesday, Thursday, and Sunday from 10:30 am to 6 pm; Friday and Saturday from 10:30 am to 10 pm. Open Tuesdays in July and August. Adults: \$25. Full-time students, visitors with disabilities, and visitors 65 & over: \$18. Visitors 18 years & under, and Whitney members: FREE. Admission is pay-what-you-wish on Fridays, 7–10 pm. For general information, please call (212) 570-3600 or visit [whitney.org](http://whitney.org).

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### Captions

Nam June Paik (1932-2006), *Fin de Siecle II*, 1989. Video installation, 201 television sets with four laserdiscs, 168 x 480 x 60 in. (426.7 x 1219.2 x 152.4 cm). Whitney Museum of American Art, New York; gift of Laila and Thurston Twigg-Smith 93.139.  
© Nam June Paik Estate

John F. Simon Jr. (b. 1963), *Color Panel v1.0*, 1999. Software, altered Apple Macintosh Powerbook 280c, and acrylic (plastic), 13 1/2 x 10 1/2 x 3 in. (34.3 x 26.7 x 7.6 cm). Whitney Museum of American Art, New York; purchase with funds from the Painting and Sculpture Committee 99.88a-c. © 1999 John F. Simon Jr.



Josef Albers (1888-1976), *White Line Square III*, 1966, from the portfolio *White Line Squares (Series I)*. Lithographs: sheet, 20 11/16 x 20 11/16 in. (52.5 x 52.5 cm); image, 15 11/16 x 15 11/16 in. (39.9 x 39.9 cm). Whitney Museum of American Art, New York; gift of the artist 67.14.3. © 2018 The Josef and Anni Albers Foundation/Artists Rights Society (ARS), New York

W. Bradford Paley (b.1958), *Code Profiles*, September 2002. Java applet. Commissioned by the Whitney Museum of American Art for its *artport* website AP.2002.11

Tamiko Thiel (b. 1957) (with /p), *Unexpected Growth*, 2018. Augmented reality installation, healthy phase. Commissioned by the Whitney Museum of American Art