



Children of Prometheus

Furtherfield Gallery, Finsbury Park, London

1 July - 20 August 2017

Sat-Sun, 11am - 5pm or by appointment

Private View: Friday 30 June 2017, 6 - 8pm

Featuring Anna Dumitriu (in collaboration with Melissa Grant and Rachel Sammons), Carla Gannis, AOS (Art is Open Source), Simon McLennan, and Alan Sondheim.

Humans have always exploited the raw materials this planet has to offer - with the power to change the nature of things, whether physical or virtual. With constant re-edits and enhancements we transform everything we touch as part of our evolutionary mutation. In Greek mythology Prometheus was a demigod and a Titan worshipped by craftsmen. Greek Titans were ultimately honoured as the ancestors of humans, who in turn were attributed with "the invention of the arts and magic" (Graves 1964). The artists featured in *Children of Prometheus* at Furtherfield Gallery explore the possible consequences of our scientific

and technological imaginings for us as individuals, our society and the world at large.

In this exhibition, visitors can encounter Anna Dumitriu's *Microbe Mouth*, a necklace of unique teeth grown from bacteria. *Microbe Mouth* is a collaboration with scientists Melissa Grant and Rachel Sammons from the University of Birmingham's School of Dentistry. Carla Gannis updates Hieronymus Bosch's famous triptych in her *Garden of Emoji Delights* replacing medieval religious symbolism with an emotion-inspired iconography of the 21st century. Alan Sondheim's *Avataurror* are 3D printed avatars representing distorted, wounded, problematic bodies and their relationship to states of violence and genocide, where cracks and wounds are eternally everywhere and nowhere. Simon McLennan's *Drawings* reflect intimate contradictions in our dysfunctional society showing us daily mutations. When the artist and open-source engineer Salvatore Iaconesi, one of the artist duo AOS (Art is Open Source), was diagnosed with cancer he launched a participatory open source initiative to find a cure. The resulting global art performance *La Cura* explores the

complexity of being human and seeks to find ways to reclaim our bodies in collaboration with others.

Children of Prometheus considers the roles of our arts and science traditions, and how they are played out while examining governance, posthumanism, biohacking, and biopolitics.

This exhibition is produced in partnership with LABoral, in Gijón as an extension of the *Monsters of the Machine* exhibition 18 Nov 2016 - 21 May 2017. Based on Mary Shelley's classic novel *Frankenstein* written 200 years ago which continues to offer a lens through which to examine current practices in arts and technology and how they shape society today.



Drawings by Simon McLennan

ABOUT THE ARTISTS

Anna Dumitriu is a British artist whose work fuses craft, sculpture and bioscience to explore our relationship to the microbial world, technology and biomedicine. She has an international exhibition profile, having exhibited at venues including The Picasso Museum in Barcelona, The Science Gallery in Dublin, The Museum of Contemporary Art (MOCA) Taipei, and The V&A Museum in London. She is artist in residence on the Modernising Medical Microbiology Project at the University of Oxford, a visiting research fellow: artist in residence in the Department of Computer Science at The University of Hertfordshire, and an honorary research fellow of the Wellcome Trust Brighton and Sussex Centre for Global Health at Brighton and Sussex Medical School.

Carla Gannis is an artist who lives and works in Brooklyn, New York. She received a BFA in painting from The University of North Carolina at Greensboro and an MFA in painting from Boston University. In the late 1990s she began incorporating net and digital technologies into her work. Gannis is the recipient of several awards, including a 2005 New York Foundation for the Arts (NYFA) Grant in Computer Arts, an Emerge 7 Fellowship from the Aljira Art Center, and a Chashama AREA Visual Arts Studio Award in New York, NY. She has exhibited in solo and group exhibitions both nationally and internationally. She is currently Assistant Chair of Digital Arts at Pratt Institute in Brooklyn.

Simon McLennan has produced his ephemeral street art/interventions, starting out in Bristol, then London, and now Brighton, using chalk and pasting on billboards. He has played in various alternative post rock groups through the years, currently fronting art rock group Solid Birds Flying in Brighton. He is also a filmmaker, bringing together film and music.

AOS (Art is Open Source) was born in Italy, in 2004, as an interdisciplinary research laboratory focused on merging artistic and scientific practices to gain better understandings about the mutation of human beings and their societies with the advent of ubiquitous technologies. **AOS** was created by **Salvatore Iaconesi** (engineer, hacker, artist, designer, TED Fellow, Eisenhower Fellow, Yale World Fellow, Prof. in Interaction Design at ISIA Design University in Florence), joined by **Oriana Persico** (social scientist, artist) and now includes more than 200 artists and researchers from across the world.



La Cura and [AOS] Art is Open Source

Alan Sondheim was born in Wilkes-Barre, Pennsylvania; he lives with his partner, Azure Carter in Brooklyn NY. A cross-disciplinary artist, writer, and theorist, he has exhibited, performed and lectured widely. Recently, Sondheim had a successful residency at Eyebeam Art + Technology Center in New York; while there he worked with a number of collaborators on performances and sound pieces dealing with pain and annihilation. He also created a series of texts and 3D printing models of 'dead or wounded avatars.' His ideas explore death, sex, space, time, terror and how these effect our psyche and the body.



Avataurror, 3D printed avatars by Alan Sondheim

EVENTS, ACTIVITIES, AND PRESENTATIONS

Alan Sondheim - Performance/Presentation

Wednesday 5 July 2017, 6.30 – 8.30pm

Furtherfield Commons, Finsbury Park

Artist Talks: Carla Gannis and Alan Sondheim

Monday 10 July 2017, 6:30 – 8.30pm

CAS, Davidson House, 5 Southampton Street, London WC2E 7HA

BOOKING ESSENTIAL. Visit the website for details:
<http://www.furtherfield.org/>

NOTES

[1] Robert Graves. *Larousse Encyclopedia of Mythology*. Paul Hamlyn, London. 5th Edition, 1964. P.92.

[2] *Body Drift: Butler, Hayles, Haraway (Posthumanities)*. Author Arthur Kroker. University of Minnesota Press (22 Oct. 2012).

[3] *Body Drift: Butler, Hayles and Haraway*. Review by Marc Garrett 15/08/2015. <http://www.furtherfield.org/features/reviews/body-drift-butler-hayles-and-haraway>

The exhibition draws upon ideas originally written in an essay *Prometheus 2.0: Frankenstein Conquers the World!* by Marc Garrett. <http://www.furtherfield.org/features/prometheus-20-and-our-god-complex>



FURTHERFIELD GALLERY

Furtherfield Gallery is located in the middle of Finsbury Park attracting large numbers of diverse visitors reflecting the Gallery's unusual location. Jenny Judova of *Fad* magazine picked Furtherfield Gallery as one of the top five galleries in London that show new media art and *ArtSlant* featured Furtherfield Gallery in 'The Best Non-Profit Art Spaces in London'.

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ABOUT FURTHERFIELD

Furtherfield provides diverse access points for the creation, authoring and appreciation of art forms that arise from networked and digital culture. Through exhibitions, labs and debates around today's important questions, people explore the expressive and democratic potential of our artistic and technological cultures – locally, nationally & internationally.

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