



Eduardo Kac, *Inner Telescope* in the International Space Station cupola (2017)

# ***Poetry for Animals, Machines and Aliens: The Art of Eduardo Kac***

Furtherfield Gallery, Finsbury Park, London

Saturday 7 April - Monday 28 May 2018

April: Sat - Sun, 11:00 - 17:00

May: 7 days a week, 11:00 - 17:00

Private View: Friday 6 April, 18:00 - 20:00

The work of the Chicago-based artist Eduardo Kac (b. 1962) challenges us to rethink the way we view words, language and technology. Kac uses technologies ranging from digital videos and holograms to DNA manipulation and space flight to liberate poetry from the printed page, sending poetry into the outside world and even into space.

In this Furtherfield exhibition you can see - inside and outside the Gallery - works from different stages of Kac's career. This is Kac's first solo exhibition in the United Kingdom.

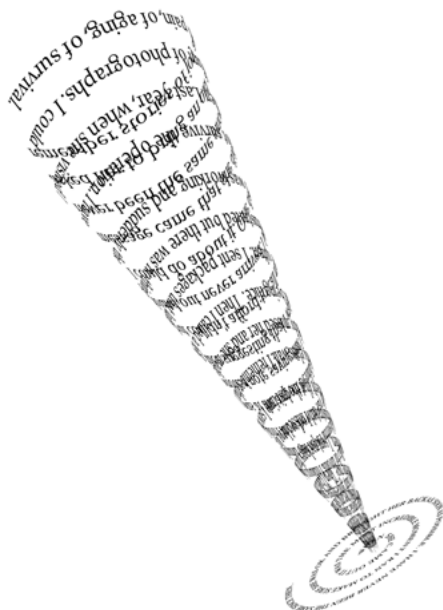
Like such twentieth-century pioneers as Guillaume Apollinaire, e.e. cummings and Dom Sylvester Houédard, Eduardo Kac is fascinated by the way typography and technology can transform the appearance of texts and give it new layers of meaning. Since the early 1980s, he has realised his intense, poetic vision in highly inventive ways, including performative and multimedia strategies.

In 1983, Kac first used holograms to seek to liberate poetic language from the constrictions of the printed page and also made poems using Minitel, the French videotext network. His experiments with typewriter poetry unfolded into his first digital poem, *Não (No!)*, in 1982.

Since that time, Kac has enthusiastically explored a succession of technologies to create new poetic visions: photocopiers, fax, LED screens, robots, digital and network technologies, and aromapoetry using specially

made scents. Kac's use of satellite imagery and Google Earth can be seen in his *Lagoogleglyph* series, which is shown on a screen as you enter Furtherfield Gallery.

Kac was a pioneer of media poetry: the first room of the Furtherfield exhibition contains two groundbreaking digital poems, *Accident* (1994) and *Letter* (1996). In *Accident*, the digital device of an infinite loop creates hesitations and uncertainties in the words, just as when two new lovers nervously meet.



Eduardo Kac, *Letter* (1996)

*Letter* uses virtual reality markup language to create a three-dimensional spiral of text that you can explore from different angles, reflecting the multi-perspectival content of the work. Initially it appears to be fragments of letters written to a single person; then it unfolds to reveal it consists of poetic text in the form of correspondence between a grandmother, mother and daughter.



Eduardo Kac, *Adhuc* (1991)

In the second room of the gallery is *Adhuc*, a rarely-seen holopoem from 1991. As with all of Kac's holopoetry, you have to move around to find the different perspectives that constitute the work. This interactive process transforms the nature of reading and you experience the effect described by poet Loss Pequeño Glazier: 'letters and words seem to drift into the distance, superimposed on each other, eerily suspended in a spherical mist, or atmosphere, the color of which varies.'

In the last room in the Gallery, Kac's *Inner Telescope* (2017), performed by the French astronaut Thomas Pesquet in the International Space Station, is poetry for zero gravity. The form has neither top nor bottom, front nor back, left nor right. Sometimes it looks like the French word MOI (me). At other times, it looks like a human figure with the umbilical cord cut. It is the first poem to be made in outer space.



Eduardo Kac, *Inner Telescope* in the International Space Station cupola (2017)

Just as digital and holographic technologies create new imaginative experiences, so emerging biotechnologies suggest fresh poetic perspectives. In Kac's most famous work, *GFP Bunny* (2000), an albino rabbit called Alba was bred in a laboratory with a gene causing the rabbit to glow fluorescent green under a blue light. Alba was meant to live with Kac's family, but the laboratory which bred Alba refused to release her.

At the entrance to Furtherfield Gallery you can see *The Alba Flag* (2001) which Kac hung outside his home as a memento of Alba's absence. Kac's experience with Alba prompted him to create a wordless language incorporating rabbit imagery which he called lagoglyphs (from the ancient Greek words 'lagos' for hare and 'glyphe' for carving).

The rabbit leads us to the fields of Finsbury Park where

Kac has installed a *Lagoogleglyph*, a lagoglyph scaled to the resolution of the satellites providing images for Google Earth. You are invited to go and walk round this installation, which conjures up the memory of a rabbit both in place and space. You can see how the installation appears in space by finding this location in Google Earth on your phone or computer.

The Finsbury Park *Lagoogleglyph* is the third and largest in a series of artworks designed to be viewed in Google Earth. *Lagoogleglyph I* (2009) was installed at Oi Futuro, Rio de Janeiro, Brazil and *Lagoogleglyph II* (2015) at Es Baluard Museum of Modern and Contemporary Art, Palma de Mallorca, Spain. You can see the two *Lagoogleglyphs* as they appear in Google Earth in the first room of the Furtherfield exhibition.



*Lagoogleglyph I* (2009) Google Earth work composed of *Lagolyph* installed on the roof of Oi Futuro Rio de Janeiro, Brazil

Eduardo Kac's visionary experiments urge us to look at technology creatively and not to be passive techno-consumers. Words in his works are mobile and shifting. The boundary between the poet as creator and the audience as viewer is also in constant flux. In his bio art and space poetry, Kac breaks down the barriers between humans, animals and technology, making us appreciate how poems are remade each time we look at them. You can find out more about his work at: [www.ekac.org](http://www.ekac.org).

Kac's work raises many important questions about the nature of materiality and the place of poetry in the context of changing technology. This exhibition forms part of research undertaken by the Digital Transformations strategic theme of the Arts and Humanities Research Council. It has been curated by Professor Andrew Prescott of the University of Glasgow with assistance from Furtherfield and Bronac Ferran, with advice and support from the artist. The organisers

are grateful to the Google Cultural Institute and the Jonathan Ross Hologram Collection for their support and assistance.

#### ABOUT THE ARTIST

**Eduardo Kac** is internationally recognised for his telepresence and bio art. Kac's distinctive body of work has been featured in exhibitions in New York, Paris, Rio de Janeiro, Madrid, Shanghai, Tokyo and many other venues. His work is part of the permanent collection of the Victoria & Albert Museum, London, the Museum of Modern Art in New York, the Museum of Modern Art of Valencia, Spain, the ZKM Museum of Contemporary Art, Karlsruhe, Germany, Art Center Nabi, Seoul, and the Museum of Modern Art in Rio de Janeiro, among others. He has received the Golden Nica Award, the most prestigious award in the field of media arts and the highest prize awarded by Ars Electronica. This is his first solo exhibition in the United Kingdom. His work is documented at [ekac.org](http://ekac.org).

#### EVENTS AND DISCUSSIONS

##### Let's Fill this Park with Rabbits!

Free family workshops

Sat 7 April, Sun 22 April & Mon 7 May, 11am - 4.30pm  
*Furtherfield Gallery*

Families and groups of all ages are invited to join artist Michael Szpakowski to design their own giant rabbits and draw them on Finsbury Park by walking your own rabbit route using GPS software. Just turn up on the day to book a place for your group - workshop places will be offered on a first-come first-served basis on each day. Groups and families can also just turn up on each day to join in with the fun and walk some bunny routes in the park.

FREE

##### Arts and Humanities Research Council Digital Transformations Workshops

Inspired by and building on the Kac exhibition, these four workshops will draw together themes and issues which have emerged from the AHRC thematic research programmes including Translating Cultures, Science in Culture, Care for the Future and Connected Communities. The four workshops are:



**Digital Transformations and Community Engagement**

18 April 2018, 10.30am – 4pm

*Furtherfield Commons*

How can we promote collaboration between communities and academic researchers? Do digital methods help create community engagement?

FREE | booking essential

**Reconnecting Artistic Practice and Humanities Research**

25 April 2018, 10.30am – 4pm

*Furtherfield Commons*

Can a renewed dialogue between humanities scholars and artistic practice provide innovative perspectives to confront current social and cultural challenges?

FREE | booking essential

**Language and Diversity**

8 May 2018, 10.30am – 4pm

*Furtherfield Commons*

Exploring the role of language and translation in promoting understanding and communication within, between and across diverse cultures.

FREE | booking essential

**Science in Culture**

23 May 2018, 10.30am – 4pm

*Furtherfield Commons*

How can art engage with science and technology? And how can art explore the role of science in culture?

FREE | booking essential

Further Eduardo Kac exhibitions are being held in London during 2018 as part of the AHRC Digital Transformations theme. During June, The Horse Hospital, Colonnade, Bloomsbury, London WC1N 1JD, will host an exhibition called *...and the Bunny Goes Pop!*

This project is realised in collaboration with the Digital Transformations strategic theme of the Arts and Humanities Research Council, the UK's largest funder of advanced arts and humanities research.

**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'.

McKenzie Pavilion, Finsbury Park  
London N4 2NQ

T: +44 (0) 7737 002879

E: [info@furtherfield.org](mailto:info@furtherfield.org)W: [www.furtherfield.org](http://www.furtherfield.org)**ABOUT FURTHERFIELD**

Furtherfield is an internationally-renowned arts organisation specialising in labs, exhibitions and debate for increased, diverse participation with emerging technologies. At Furtherfield Gallery and Furtherfield Commons in London's Finsbury Park, we engage more people with digital creativity, reaching across barriers through unique collaborations with international networks of artists, researchers and partners. Through art, Furtherfield seeks new imaginative responses as digital culture changes the world and the way we live.

[www.furtherfield.org](http://www.furtherfield.org)**SUPPORTED BY**

Arts & Humanities  
Research Council



Supported using public funding by  
**ARTS COUNCIL  
ENGLAND**



Google Arts & Culture