MUTEK Forum Delves Deeper into Artificial Intelligence
From September 8 to 11, 2020, online and in Montréal
Passports presale is open until August 24

Friday, July 31, 2020 – After unveiling extended reality or XR, MUTEK Forum announces another focus of the Festival’s professional component: artificial intelligence (AI) technologies. This theme is not only a continuation of the 2019 Forum, which explored AI’s contributions to artistic creation, but also of the AI Art Lab—the first international multidisciplinary laboratory using artificial intelligence in the creation of audiovisual works, which was held in Montréal last March in partnership with Zú.

AI already has deep roots in cultural industries and is now an essential tool for a community of artists constantly on the lookout for ways to innovate and reinvent their creative processes. The increasingly intensive use of this technology raises a variety of ethical, political, and social concerns, calling into question the decision-making power afforded to these autonomous programs and their relationship with human beings. **MUTEK Forum examines a broad spectrum of AI-related artistic practices through a perspective that centers questions of racial justice, surveillance, and the inherent risks associated with the collection of personal data.** The Forum also features workshops where artists and creators of every level will be able to familiarize themselves with the plethora of AI-specific techniques used in electronic music and sound creation.

The issues raised by our future relationship with AI demand multifaceted professional, private, and social analysis, so we can better understand current trends and developments in the field. MUTEK Forum will begin on Tuesday, September 8, with a talk by African-American researcher **Ruha Benjamin** (Princeton University). In conversation with **Jason Lewis** (Initiative for Indigenous Futures, Montréal), she will identify and **dissect the history of racism and discrimination ingrained in advanced technologies such as AI**, which serve to reinforce a white supremacist society. From robotization to algorithm creation, Ruha Benjamin draws examples from her 2019 book, Race After Technology (Polity Books).

AI inspires strong feelings—fascination as much as fear—calling into question our role in the face of technology. As part of an event co-presented by Warsaw’s Adam Mickiewicz Institute and Digital Cultures Festival, **Aleksandra Przegalinska, Ph.D.,** a specialist in the philosophy of AI and author of Collaborative Society (The MIT Press), will discuss **challenges related to such human-machine collaborations.** The Forum will also examine the connection between **AI and the human voice**, through a panel that brings together Canadian artist **Erin Gee,** whose work on neural networks, choral composition, ASMR, virtual reality and robotics has been presented at the Toronto Biennial of Art and Ars Electronica; and German artist **Jovanka v. Wilsdorf,** who develops projects and musical works that include reproductions and imitations of the human voice. Their conversation will be moderated by Mexican scientist **Jose Sotelo,** who is the co-founder of Montréal start-up Lyrebird (Descript), a pioneer in voice cloning. Together, this trio will attempt to demystify the role artificial voices play.
Jovanka v. Wilsdorf is a consultant for Universal Music and an international speaker on creative writing and AI in music production, and is the creator of the DIANA prize, among other projects. She will lead a workshop covering some of today’s cutting-edge AI-based tools for musical composition and production. This activity will be grounded in the work of several artists who use AI as a muse or dialogue partner. Also, a workshop on Wekinator—open-source machine-learning software that allows input signals such as human gestures to be mapped to any process in real time—will provide further hands-on exploration aimed at individuals unfamiliar with coding. It will be hosted by Chilean-born Montréal producer and musician Gabriel Vigliensoni, whose work has focused on experimentation via new musical interfaces and is a founding member of post-punk band Lucybell.

Lastly, to help an increasingly eclectic community fulfill their ambitions, composer, musicologist and technologist Peter Kirn will provide an overview of newsletters, websites and other resources of potential interest to those seeking out greater knowledge of AI’s growing role within the creative industries. He is the author of independent daily magazine CDM, which explores technological developments in live music and visual arts, and has collaborated with ARTPHICAL, TED, the European Space Agency, Sónar+D, Gamma, and directs the MusicMakers Hacklab at CTM Berlin.

MUTEK Forum Passports – Presale
Three types of Passports are now on presale at a reduced price, until August 24. The Passport gives access to features through the Swapcard online platform and to the Forum content until September 20:

- Attend any conference or activity with the Discovery Passport,
- Spark new collaborations by taking part in networking activities, alongside our other events, with the Full Passport,
- Build your brand and highlight your team’s projects, products, and services: your company will be visible to all participants for the duration of the Forum with the Company Passport.

Discover all the benefits on our website [link], and starting at $25, be a part of MUTEK’s first ever hybrid edition.

MUTEK Forum Edition 6, from Tuesday, September 8 to Friday, September 11, 2020, online and in Montréal.

A list of confirmed experts is available below. You can discover their stories on a dedicated page via our new digital interface.

The Forum’s other topics and further details, as well as programming and tickets for the MUTEK Festival to be held in parallel until Sunday, September 13, 2020, will be unveiled in the coming weeks. In the meantime, you can reach us with any questions at info@mutek.org.

Confirmed speakers and moderators – IA and XR contents

Aleksandra Przegalinska PO – Kozmni University
Amaury La Burthe FR – Novelab
Antoine Cayrol FR – Atlas V
Arthur Yeung CA – Albedo Informatics
Charlène Bélanger CA/QC – Montreal Museum of Fine Arts
Cheryl Sim CA/QC – Phi Foundation for Contemporary Art
Chris Barr US – Knight Foundation
Christina Heller US – Metastage
Diego Galafassi BR/SE – Fasad Film
Diliana Alexander CA/US – FilmGate Miami
Émilie F. Grenier CA/QC – Thinkwell
Studio Montréal
Erin Gee CA/QC – Perte de Signal
Frances Adair Mckenzie CA/QC
Main partners of MUTEK Forum

All partners of MUTEK Forum – AI and XR contents
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