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Biography

Matthew Keff is an artist based in New York creating graphics, interactives and installations. Thinking over digital life and feelings, these works squish together the sugary aesthetics found in video game and internet culture. Through interactive web and app-based works as well as animations, Keff looks to reveal the more awkward nature of contemporary digital visual culture and considers the role emotions play there. This sweet-as-candy imagery is informed by attention economy mechanisms used in digital marketing, where emotional engagement is a highly valued commodity. Keff received a BFA from the School of Visual Arts and has since been commissioned by major film and music events as well as participating in exhibitions internationally including the Supernova Digital Animation Festival, Denver, US, Magdalen Art Space, Oxford, UK, CCAM Yale University, New Haven, US, Somerset House, London, UK, 4Culture, Seattle, US, Chromatic Festival, Montréal, CA, Abrons Arts Center, Manhattan, US, HereART, Manhattan, US, Tokyo Game Show, Tokyo, JP, and A Maze Festival, Berlin, DE.

Statement

My work thinks over digital life and feelings using the sugary aesthetics found in internet and video game culture. I'm interested in the psychological mechanisms behind human-to-digital interactions and how emotions are communicated and felt there. Lately, many of my projects have surrounded thoughts on gamified design and how they are used to study or steer behavior. My background working as a creative in the commercial art industry informs the techniques I use to make graphics, interactives, and installations.

I make video games intended to be continual works in progress, unfinished or otherwise broken pieces of software. Playing with these simulations creates awkward audiovisual scenarios and riff off emoticons and collectible rewards, digital candy. These software-based projects are a starting point for digital or physical installations. My installations seek to create pseudo subcultural paraphernalia by taking inspiration from mobile devices and electronics storefronts or video game convention displays. Video, vinyl stickers, 3D fabrication, ready-made mobile devices, interactive apps, and advertising signage techniques are some of the materials I turn to in this exploration.

I am influenced by the history of video art, video game art, and expanded internet art landscapes and reference the design and iconography found in current digital pop culture including video gaming and social media. The visual culture cultivated by attention economy mechanisms and used in digital marketing is intriguing. I'm curious about how emotions operate in this context and use these projects as a place to try out different kinds of audiovisual experiments.

Matthew Keff Brooklyn, USA

Education

School of Visual Arts, BFA., Film/Video, 2007

Selected Group Exhibition

- 2021 CMC Playground, Site Gallery, Sheffield, UK
Artpoint x VeePee, VeePee Headquarters, Paris, FR
Denver Theatre District, Denver Pavilions Mall, Denver, US
Roppongi Art Night, Roppongi, Tokyo, JP
Art Homepage Fair, Arebyte AOS, Online
- 2020 Creative Code Festival, Lightbox NYC, New York, US
Supernova Digital Animation Festival, Denver Digerati, Denver, US
.Art x Ars Electronica Online Exhibition, Online
Wretched of the Screen, DAR x The Wrong Biennale, Online
The Wrong Epicenter, Center Del Carme, Valencia ES
Wretched of the Screen, Magdalen Art Space, Oxford, UK
Framed x Lalaport, Lalaport, Yokohama, JP
- 2019 Our Beautiful Planet, Abrons Arts Center, Manhattan, US
Dizzy Spell: Purposely Frivolous, Buntport Theater, Denver, US
Framed x Whitestone Gallery, Dong Gallery, Taipei, TW
Games for Windows, Current Scene, Rochester, US
Heyday, CCAM Yale University, New Haven, US
IEEE GEM, Yale University, Stamford, US
Creative Tech Week, Radiance VR x NYIT, New York, US
Now Play This, Somerset House, London, UK
Gilded Dimension, SoHigh Gallery, Melbourne, AU
- 2018 MediaLab, Cinekid, Westergasfabriek, NL
Arcade Different Games Conference, Worcester Polytechnic Institute, Worcester, US
Tokyo Games Show: Indie Games Area, Makuhari Messe, Chiba, JP
Storefront Media Gallery, 4Culture, Seattle, US
Patch Gif Party, Teer Art, AVA Center, Tehran, IR
Pop of Color, HereART, New York, US
Bed Art School, Galerie Galerie, Montréal, CA
Mood Machine, Standard Vision, Los Angeles, US
A Maze./Berlin, Urban Spree, Berlin, DE
ALTCade 3 RE:SOUND, Open Signal, Portland, US
- 2017 Homeostasis Lab, The Wrong Biennale, Online
Creative Collection, Zium Museum, Online
A Maze./Johannesburg, Tshimology Precinct, Johannesburg, ZA
Arcadia, West Ward Works, Dundee, SCT
Virtual Firecracker, Bogart House, Brooklyn, US
IRL, Museum of Human Achievement, Austin, US
A Maze./Berlin, Urban Spree, Berlin, DE
BYOB, R/SF Projects, San Francisco, US
UMW Media Wall January, Fredericksburg, US
- 2016 Basement Sale, Chinatown Soup, New York, US
Samples Transvideo: Borderless Image, Diorama, Mexico City, MX
Felt Zine, Matchbox Gallery, Houston, US

Residency

- 2020 Lot Residency, Silicon Valet, Online
- 2019 Digital Artist Residency, Online
Artistres_, Bubbles, Online
Is this It?, Heyday, Online
- 2018 Ace Hotel x Giphy AIR, Ace Hotel, New York, US
- 2017 WelcomeToMyHomepage.net, Online

Event Commission

- 2016 Keroxen 16, Canary Islands, ES
Elements Festival, Brooklyn, US
SOS Festival 4.8, Murcia, ES
- 2014 ChemCreative, Brooklyn, US
Galapagos Art Space, Brooklyn, US
Tribeca Grand Hotel, New York, US
- 2013 Downtown Standard Hotel, Los Angeles, US
- 2012 The Old Truman Brewery, London, UK
918 Bathurst, Toronto, CA

Online Publication

- 2019 Jyni Ong, "Matthew Keff digitally riffs off the design tropes of social media and advertising", It's Nice That, itsnicethat.com
- 2017 Bruno Dias, "'The Zium Museum' is an Art Gallery You Can Download",
Waypoint, waypoint.vice.com
Matt Cox, "Tour a virtual gallery in The Zium Museum", Rock Paper Shotgun
rockpapershotgun.com
Philippa Warr, "Smile While: a joyful free colour extravaganza", Rock Paper Shotgun,
rockpapershotgun.com
Ethan Gach, "A Game Jam About Watermelons All Started Because of a Joke", Kotaku,
kotaku.com
Matteo Bittani, "Game Art: Matthew Keff's Game Engine Experiments", Game Scenes,
gamescenes.org
- 2015 Noisey Staff, "Premiere: Toma un Empalagoso Viaje Cosmico con Tama de Ocellot",
Noisey, noisey.com
Marcos Hassan, "Meet Barcelonas Ocellot, Electronic Psych Pop Exploding in
Technicolor Tama", Remezcla, Remezcla.com