

If AI Were Cephalopod

A multi-channel video installation by
Orphan Drift (Ranu Mukherjee and Maggie Roberts)

May 4th – June 8th, 2019

Opening Reception: Saturday, May 4th, 6 – 9pm

Closing Reception: Saturday, June 8th, 2 – 4pm



If AI were cephalopod it would have three hearts and see with its skin.

Telematic is pleased to present *If AI were Cephalopod*, a new multi-channel video installation by the collaborative artist Orphan Drift (Ranu Mukherjee and Maggie Roberts), which explores fictional relationships between human, animals and synthetic entities, in order to imagine possible future embodiments and forms of consciousness. Drawing upon Embodied Cognitive Science and Radical Anthropology, the artists ask what paradigm of “intelligence” we presuppose in the development of Artificial Intelligence, implicitly challenging commonplace assumptions about what it means to be human as distinct from other forms of life. Is it not perhaps better to imagine the intelligence of machines in light of, what we now recognize as, the remarkably sophisticated cognition of other creatures? What alternative forms of experience and perception are revealed in doing so? And if intelligence is so understood, is human cognition not perhaps already more of a distributed consciousness? In this work, Orphan drift poses an AI imagination coded by the somatic tendencies of the octopus.

Orphan Drift has explored the boundaries of machine and human vision, since its inception in London in 1994. The collective as avatar has taken diverse forms through the course of its career, changing personnel and artistic strategies in accordance with the changing exigencies of the time.

Recently their work has been included in the exhibitions *Still I Rise: Gender, Feminisms, Resistance* at Nottingham Contemporary and De La Warr Pavilion UK, *Matter Fictions* at the Berardo Museum Lisbon, *Speculative Frictions* at PDX Contemporary Portland Or, *Unruly City* at Dold Projects, Sankt Georgen Germany and *Eat Code and Die* at Lomex Gallery NY and in the book *Fictioning, The Myth-Functions of Contemporary Art and Philosophy*, by David Burrows and Simon O’Sullivan, Edinburgh University Press, 2019.

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Image credit: Orphan Drift, “If AI were Cephalopod,” 2019, video still