

# Press Release Berlin, 16 August 2022

## Rachel Rossin *THE MAW OF*

KW Institute for Contemporary Art presents the project **Rachel Rossin *THE MAW OF***, which will be on view during Berlin Art Week 2022 in the exhibition **KW on location: Rachel Rossin *THE MAW OF*** and be launched in an online commission, as part of KW's digital program. This web component is co-commissioned by KW and the Whitney Museum of American Art, New York.

### **KW on location: Rachel Rossin *THE MAW OF***

Exhibition	15–18 September 22
Opening	14 September 22, 7–10 pm
Opening hours	Daily 12–7 pm
Admission	Free admission
Venue	Tieranatomisches Theater, Campus Nord, Haus 3 Philippstraße 13, 10115 Berlin, Germany
Curator	Nadim Samman, KW Institute for Contemporary Art
Curatorial assistant	Linda Franken, KW Institute for Contemporary Art
Artist Talk	17 September 22 at 3 pm With Rachel Rossin, artist and Nadim Samman, curator In English
Daily introductions	Registration via <a href="mailto:reservation@kw-berlin.de">reservation@kw-berlin.de</a> Each 4:30 pm In German and English Registration via <a href="mailto:mediation@kw-berlin.de">mediation@kw-berlin.de</a>

### **KW Institute for Contemporary Art, online commission**

14 September – 21 October 22  
[www.kw-berlin.de/en/rachel-rossin-the-maw-of/](http://www.kw-berlin.de/en/rachel-rossin-the-maw-of/)

### **Whitney Museum of American Art, online commission**

14 September 22 – ongoing  
[artport.whitney.org](http://artport.whitney.org)



Rachel Rossin, *THE MAW OF* (2022) © the artist

*THE MAW OF* by Rachel Rossin (\*1987, US) explores the coming together of flesh, machine, cognition, and code provoked by current research into brain-computer interfaces. An artist and programmer whose multi-disciplinary practice has established her as a pioneer in the field of virtual reality, Rossin's work blends painting, sculpture, new media and more to create digital landscapes, which she uses to address aspects of entropy, embodiment, the ubiquity of technology, and its effect on human psychology.

Spanning installation, sculpture, augmented reality, virtual reality, and net art, *THE MAW OF* features a site-specific installation at Tieranatomisches Theater (TA T), Berlin, as part of the digital program of KW Institute for Contemporary Art. Conceived as mixed-reality theatre, Rossin's project stages a new conceptual and visual vocabulary, addressing the expanded limits of the human body and mind today.

Imagining the corporeal as a component within a larger technical assemblage, the work draws from the historic development of body peripherals and outsourced sensing. Marshalling visual tropes from gaming, mobile apps, manga, and documentary video, Rachel Rossin's work is a guided trip through the outer reaches of fantasy made real. Various icons are conjured along the way, like figures in a dream, that serve as symbols for prostheses used to augment our bodily existence. There are 'sentinel species' such as canaries, used to detect air toxicity in coal mines, or seeing-eye dogs, but also artificial devices such as smartphones and keyboards. Moving into the present, wearable exoskeletons represent an instance where hardware and wetware (flesh) increasingly meet. Many such technologies are currently being tested on animals before being implanted into the human brain—further intensifying the reality of cognitive peripherals.

The online artwork—co-commissioned by KW Institute for Contemporary Art and the Whitney Museum of American Art, New York, and accessible on the websites of both KW (14 September – 21 October 22) and the Whitney Museum of American Art (14 September 22 – ongoing)—is an interactive feedback loop between the visitors' screens and their mobile phone displays. Offline, at Tieranatomisches Theater, Rossin's virtual reality environment morphs 3D scans of the theatre with the lobby of Whitney Museum and terrain features appropriated from a video game. Inside this environment, visitors chase an avatar, as a 'ghost in a machine', while it searches a network of tributaries representing their nervous systems.

The choice of location is not accidental. Rossin not only uses Tieranatomisches Theater as a venue but incorporates it into her work as a place where, as part of Humboldt-Universität zu Berlin, the systematic study of animal biology was initiated, leading to the scientific inquiry enabling us to intervene in animal and human anatomies. While the TA T now serves as a site of curatorial research and aesthetic practice, neuroscientists in the immediate vicinity are actively researching brain-computer interfaces based on animal studies, gaming, and other practices pursuing brain-machine interfaces.

*THE MAW OF* dramatizes relations between the inside and the outside as well as between humans, animals, and machines. It is a work about the theatre of embodied subjectivity in the technocene. It also performs the exhibition as an expanded body—blurring the line between the physical and the digital realm. The exhibition space is mapped through the creation of a world whose virtual reality may be accessed through various portals. These portals are entry points to digital spaces of contemplation and poetic representation authored by Rachel Rossin.

## Biography

Rachel Rossin (\*1987, US) is an artist and programmer whose multi-disciplinary practice has established her as a pioneer in the field of virtual reality. Her work blends painting, sculpture, new media, gaming, and video to create digital landscapes, addressing entropy, embodiment as well as the ubiquity of technology and its effect on human psychology. Rossin received a Fellowship in *Virtual Reality Research and Development*, from New Museum's NEW INC in 2015. Her work was shown in solo exhibitions in venues such as Zabłudowicz Collection, London; 14a, Hamburg; The Journal Gallery and Signal Gallery, New York City; Contemporary Art Centre, Riga and Zieher Smith & Horton, New York City. She has also been part of group exhibitions at the Frist Center for the Visual Arts, Nashville, US; K11 Art Museum, Shanghai; Kiasma Museum, Helsinki; The New Museum, New York City.

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**BERLIN**  
ART 14—18 SEP 2022  
WEEK

In cooperation with TA T Raum für forschende Ausstellungspraxis and gamelab.berlin (Humboldt-Universität zu Berlin).



The web component of *THE MAW OF* is co-commissioned by KW Institute for Contemporary Art and the Whitney Museum of American Art.

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