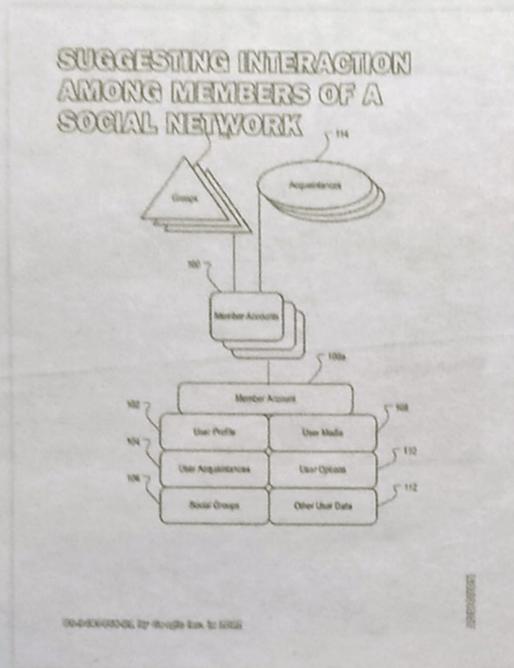


# ART, Hacktivism AND THE Unknown Rules OF THE Digital SPACE INTERVIEW WITH Paolo CIRIO



Still from *SOCIALITY, the Coloring Book of Technology for Social Manipulation* (2018) by Paolo Cirio

**In your artistic work, you often reference law and often refer to various patents on the Internet. Can you tell us more about how you work with the information in your art?**

PAOLO CIRIO – I make political art concerning the Internet. My artworks are often interventions and documentations of specific issues concerning privacy, democracy, economics, and intellectual property. Internet is a technology that disrupted many of the obsolete legal structures. Corporations and authorities took advantage of such legal disruptions to abuse their power. With my work, I look at those legal disruptions, often problematising them with further provocations, but ultimately I'm interested in strengthening the law for the Internet age, to make it fair, quick, efficient, and as democratic as it should be with the Internet.

**Tell me about the work that you will exhibit at GIBCA.**

PC – In order to inform on devices that enable discrimination, polarization, addiction, deception, and surveillance, I documented over twenty-thousand patents of Internet technology of the last past twenty years. I then invited participants to share, flag, and ban these technologies designed to monitor and manipulate social behaviours. I obtained patent images and data through hacking the Google Patents search engine. Then I rated the patents and created thousands of compositions with images of flowcharts and titles of inventions, which were published on the site *Sociality.today*. The concept of turning patents into vehicles for regulations aims to exploit intellectual property law as a tool for oversight. This work integrates both the dystopia surrounding technology and the utopia of democratic oversight with flowcharts of patents, taking the form of documentary and protest art.

**How did your great interest for the Internet evolve?**

PC – My background is from hacker cultures; I had believed and advocated for absolute freedom of the Internet. However, I have also always been interested in discussing the power of the media, and that is why I've invested my life in this field. Today, I can't stand politicians, but also hackers or Internet activists who don't see the need and potential of fair rules that can govern the Internet. I think that absolute Internet freedom was the reason why the Internet became such machine for controlling and manipulating people in the hands of a very few. It's an unacceptable undemocratic situation and more people need to take responsibility for it, instead of just creating new technology. Removing human values—such as ethics, politics, and equality—is the most shameful mistake technologists are doing today.

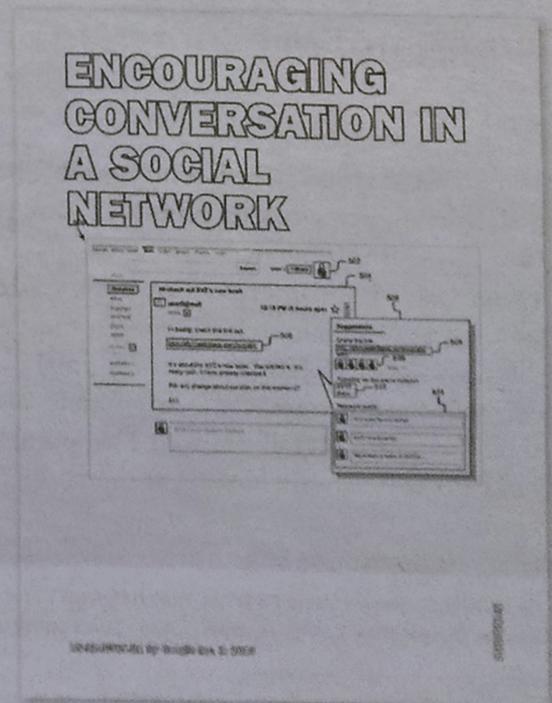
**What are the greatest challenges to humankind in a digital age?**

PC – Creating a global governing agency for information technology policies.

**Your work will be exhibited at Gothenburg Museum of Natural History, perhaps an unusual place for Contemporary Art. What do you think about that?**

PC – I always like to expand the venues of presentations and my audience. I rarely make works for only the art world. My work is meant to inform and inspire change, therefore I'm always happy to show in unusual venues with unexpected audience.

Paolo Cirio (b.1979) is based in New York. Cirio received his education in Drama, Art and Music Studies at the University of Turin. His works have been presented at major art institutions, including Gwangju Biennale (2018), Strasbourg Biennale (2018), MIT Museum, Boston, Tate Modern, London, and more.



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10<sup>TH</sup> EDITION OF GÖTEBORG INTERNATIONAL BIENNIAL FOR CONTEMPORARY ART

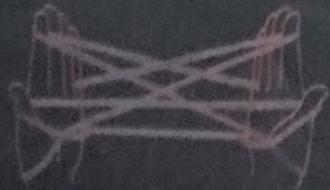
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THEREFORE I AM A PART  
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## PRACTICAL INFORMATION

### The GIBCA App

For its anniversary edition the biennial gets an app, free to download in the Appstore. Search for GIBCA!

Two of the artworks are only presented in the app. Be their first visitor! The app helps you find your way around the exhibition venues, read more about participating artists, listen to interviews and get updates with the programme.

### Accessibility

The entrances and toilets of Röda Sten Konsthall, Göteborgs Konsthall and The Gothenburg Museum of Natural History are accessible to wheelchairs. The entrance of Göteborg Konsthall is located on the left-hand side of Göteborgs Konstmuseum from where the venue can be accessed by lift.

### Social Media

Updates and further information about the biennial can be found on Facebook (facebook.com/GIBCA) and Instagram (goteborg\_biennial). Feel free to use our hashtags #gibca2019 and #partofthelabyrinth and let us know what you think of the biennial.

### Guide to Göteborgs International Biennial for Contemporary Art – Part of the Labyrinth

If you want to know more about the biennial after your visit, search for the biennial guide. It costs 20 kr and is available at Röda Sten Konsthall, Göteborgs Konsthall and the Gothenburg Museum of Natural History.

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