

Workshop: Aesthetics of Information Ethics.
By Paolo Cirio, 2017.

The so-called information revolution brings us an increasing number of pressing ethical issues. Artists can be particularly sensitive to these issues and they are able to question ethics by proposing and challenging perceptions and scenarios beyond common understanding. This process can become part of the work of art through participants commenting and responding to the artist's propositions.

As an Internet artist and activist, Paolo Cirio has been working for over a decade with online privacy, fake news, piracy, algorithms, big data, leaks, and hacking. He explores boundaries and consequences of reconfiguring, exposing, and creating social relations within the risks of challenging institutions and making compromises for artistic and social agendas.

Paolo Cirio works on a reflection of the complexity of information ethics and how central it is today. He is interested in how aesthetics can navigate the uncertain and unjust social conditions produced by information systems. He examines liability of algorithms, responsibility in anonymous networks, exploitation of shared content and labor, censorship on social media, freedom of speech used to harass, public shaming to condemn, hacking to protest or leak, and micro-targeting for political campaigning. In order to inspire inquiry and policy making, the artist questions what can be justified and sacrificed to balance freedom, empathy, justice, and accountability.

Paolo Cirio's workshop presents a set of ethical questions concerning historical cases, hypothetical scenarios, and particular technological systems that affect personal and societal conditions. The artist will pose discussion topics which the students can debate, such as hypothetical information policies and the questionable ethics of artworks. These ethical questions will also be shown on the floor, the boards, and the screens in the space. In this immersive workshop, students will build paths in the space to navigate complex ethical issues and arguments. Students will also give feedback on shared documents, have discussions with people who have different opinions, and develop their projects during the workshop.

This project addresses specific highly problematic cases like the Facebook Files, Right To Be Forgotten, Wikileaks DNC leak, Predictive Policing, and Cambridge Analytica, and generally, emerging technologies such as Artificial Intelligence and Darknet. These issues urgently need democratic debate. The discussion can't be limited to technocrats, legislators, coders, and opaque internal policies of private entities. Art can play a role in this process of creating awareness and reflection on difficult ethical questions by making them relevant and engaging.

In the workshop Paolo Cirio will also discuss his ongoing campaign Right to Remove to bring a form of Right To Be Forgotten in United States. His proposal for this specific Internet policy is at the heart of the philosophical questions for balancing social accountability, freedom, empathy, access, and human rights on the Internet.

This workshop elicits and addresses participatory decision-making on ethical issues affecting the security, privacy, and dignity of everyone for a just and equal society. Nevertheless, discussing the aesthetics of information ethics will help artists and audiences assess contemporary works of art.

Some problematic issues that will be discussed during the workshop:

Search engines & social media moderation:

Hate Speech
Harassment
Trolling
Bullying
Blackmail
Stigmas

Social Profiling:

Social score & bias
Consumer profiling
Racial profiling
Sex offenders
Criminal records
Predictive Policing

Privacy and surveillance:

State and corporate surveillance
Cryptography for power structures
Cryptography for individuals
Public shaming

Security:

Hacking
Leaks
Theft

Piracy:

Copyright
Trademark
Royalties
Fair use
Education

Sharing Economy:

Labor rights
Private property

Media and politics:

Targeting Voters
Fake News

Algorithms:

Accountability of coders
Artificial Intelligence control

Blockchain, deepweb, and darknet:

Anonymity
Trust
Privacy
Fraud
Hate speech
Cruelty

Digital Currencies:

Transparency
Volatility
Access

Robotics:

Automated weapons
Automated Labor

Infrastructures:

Internet of things policy
Cloud servers
Decentralization
Ecological impact