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NEW MUSEUM TO PRESENT A NEW COMMISSION BY
ED ATKINS PRODUCED IN ASSOCIATION
WITH NOKIA BELL LABS



[UPDATE, 4/15/2020: While the Museum remains closed due to concerns around the spread of COVID-19, this exhibition is postponed until further notice.]

New York, NY...The New Museum is proud to present “*Ed Atkins: Get Life/Love’s Work*,” a new commission by British artist Ed Atkins (b. 1982, Oxford, UK), on view from June 25 to September 27, 2020. “*Get Life/Love’s Work*” will be the inaugural exhibition in a partnership between the New Museum and Nokia Bell Labs to develop an annual residency and commission aimed at fostering meaningful exchange between the fields of art and technology.

Over the past decade, Atkins has created a complex body of work that considers the relationship between the corporeal and the digital, the ordinary and the uncanny, through high-definition computer-generated (CG) animations, theatrical environments, elliptical writings, and syncopated sound montages. With these filmic and text-based artworks, Atkins tracks forms of feeling, living, and communicating hidden behind or curtailed by technological representation, which unspool into sensitive and often somber narratives.

At the New Museum, Atkins will present a new project that focuses on the ways bodies and technology are intertwined in everyday life and in the research fields of artificial intelligence, machine learning, and avatar development. As always in Atkins’s work, technology will be analyzed as a theoretical and even

allegorical interrogation of itself, rather than in any literal terms.

Filling the Museum's Fourth Floor gallery, the exhibition will premiere a new body of work made with technologies that profess to "capture" life, including a series of computer-generated animations recorded using motion- and facial-capture technologies that document interviews with a range of people who live in social isolation. With these CG renderings, Atkins tests the borders of digital communication and representation, looking to the ways technologies both mediate intimacy and control human relationships. The videos will be presented within a sculptural installation made from a scientifically engineered type of bread that lasts indefinitely. Inscribed with drawings, writings, and appropriated graffiti, this eternal foodstuff preserves transmissions of communication by more physical means. The video and the sculptural components each attempt to simulate life, either by means of digital reproduction or by initiating a controlled process of preservation and decay. By reimagining technology simultaneously as an existential threat and a form of sustenance, "Get Life/Love's Work" will interrogate the limits and definitions of what constitutes communication and empathy today.

Atkins's presentation will be the first in a series of exhibitions produced in collaboration with scientists, engineers, and researchers from the Experiments in Art and Technology (E.A.T.) program at Nokia Bell Labs to open up new possibilities in human communications. Inspired by the pioneering legacy of E.A.T., the series aims to channel the interdisciplinary spirit initiated in the 1960s by Bell Labs engineers in collaboration with artists such as John Cage, Lucinda Childs, Marta Minujín, Robert Rauschenberg, and Stan VanDerBeek.

This project also builds upon Nokia Bell Labs' support of the E.A.T. track at NEW INC, the New Museum's cultural incubator, which provides artists, technologists, and others with the tools to make and research born-digital art, through mentorship from staff at Nokia Bell Labs and Rhizome, the New Museum affiliate that champions born-digital art and culture. Through its relationship with the New Museum, Nokia Bell Labs provides artists with access to cutting-edge motion-capture and communication technologies, with the support of experts in the field; participating artists in turn inform new research paths for that technology resulting from interdisciplinary collaboration and intellectual exchange.

The exhibition continues Atkins's sustained relationship with the New Museum, where he has presented the ghostly computer-generated animation *Happy Birthday!!* (2014), a grayscale rendering of a man who repeatedly disintegrates and rematerializes, in the 2015 Triennial, "Surround Audience," and the rhapsodic video *The Trick Brain* (2013), a tribute to André Breton, composed of footage of the Surrealist writer's apartment, in the 2016 group exhibition "The Keeper." Atkins has been lauded internationally for his profound use of the digital to engage with philosophical questions; recently, he was a standout of the 2019 Venice Biennale, where he displayed the video installation *Old Food* (2019).

"Get Life/Love's Work" is curated by Massimiliano Gioni, Edlis Neeson Artistic Director, and is accompanied by a fully illustrated catalogue published by the New Museum. The catalogue includes an interview with the artist, conducted by Gioni, a conversation between Julie Martin and Madeline Weisburg, and newly commissioned texts by Erika Balsom, Mark Leckey, and Vivian Rycroft.

ABOUT ED ATKINS

Ed Atkins (b. 1982, Oxford, UK) lives and works in Copenhagen. Recent solo exhibitions include Kunsthaus Bregenz and K21 Düsseldorf (both 2019); Martin-Gropius-Bau, Berlin (2017); MMK Frankfurt (2017); DHC/ART, Montréal (2017); Castello di Rivoli and Fondazione Sandretto Re Rebaudengo, Turin (2016); The Kitchen, New York (2016); Stedelijk Museum, Amsterdam (2015); Serpentine Galleries, London (2014); and MoMA PS1, New York (2012). Atkins was included in the 56th and 58th Venice Biennales, the 13th Lyon Biennale, and Performa 13 and 19. An anthology of his texts, *A Primer for Cadavers*, was published by Fitzcarraldo in 2016, and Skira released an extensive artist's monograph in 2017; an epic soliloquy, *Old Food*, was published by Fitzcarraldo in 2019. Atkins is currently working on his first feature film.

ABOUT NEW MUSEUM

The New Museum is the only museum in New York City exclusively devoted to contemporary art. Founded in 1977, the New Museum is a center for exhibitions, information, and documentation about living artists from around the world. From its beginnings as a one-room office on Hudson Street to the inauguration of its first freestanding building on the Bowery designed by SANAA in 2007, the New Museum continues to be a place of experimentation and a hub of new art and new ideas.

ABOUT NOKIA BELL LABS

Nokia Bell Labs is the world-renowned industrial research arm of Nokia. Over its more than 90-year history, Bell Labs has invented many of the foundational technologies that underpin information and communications networks and all digital devices and systems. This research has resulted in 9 Nobel Prizes, three Turing Awards, three Japan Prizes, a plethora of National Medals of Science and Engineering, as well as three Emmys, two Grammys, and an Oscar for technical innovations. For more information, visit www.bell-labs.com.

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