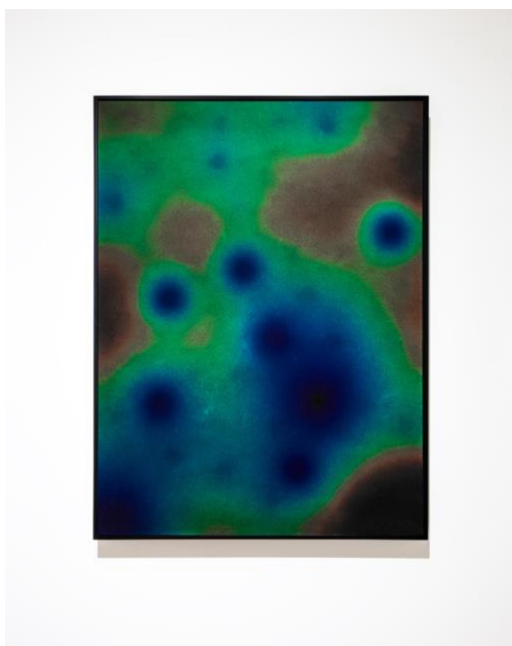


## PRESS RELEASE



**Agnieszka Kurant**, *Conversions #2*, 2020  
Engineering: Nick Wallace, Programming: Agnes Cameron  
Courtesy the artist and Tanya Bonakdar Gallery, New York / Los Angeles  
photo Randy Dodson

***Agnieszka Kurant. Crowd Crystal***  
**Drafted by Carolyn Christov-Bakargiev and Marcella Beccaria**  
**First Floor, Galleries 8 - 9**  
**November 4, 2021 - February 27, 2022**

Within the overall Museum program *Espressioni* taking place in 2021-2022, Castello di Rivoli presents *Crowd Crystal*, a solo exhibition of the conceptual and interdisciplinary artist **Agnieszka Kurant** (Łódź, Poland, 1978).

The exhibition *Crowd Crystal* investigates the crowds as assets of late capitalism, in which the entire society became a factory of data mining. The title is inspired by the concept of “crowd crystals” introduced by the writer Elias Canetti in his book *Crowds and Power* (1960).

In her work Agnieszka Kurant analyzes the transformations of the human and the future of labor and creativity. The artist questions the concept of individual authorship and reflects on the notion of the footprint that everyone leaves in the digital world, as well as carbon footprints, as actualizations of prehistoric imprints left by our ancestors. She reflects on the potential we all carry within ourselves to influence social change and mutations of matter.

*Crowd Crystal* consists of evolving installations, paintings and sculptures resulting from the collective agency of thousands or millions of people, molecules or microorganisms. The artworks investigate the impact of collective intelligence phenomena in nature and culture and non-human intelligences - from bacteria and other single-celled organisms to artificial intelligence. The works in *Crowd Crystal* physically react to changes in society. The liquid crystal paintings *Conversions* (2019-2021), employ “data mining” to harvest the dynamics of emotions of protesters around the world expressed in their social media feeds, which causes constant changes of the appearance of the artworks, displaying the effects of collective intelligence in contemporary algorithmic and technological society. In *Chemical Garden* (2021) the artist investigates the relationship between the digital, biological and mineral. The work consists of complex crystalline structures resembling plants, created through a mix of inorganic chemicals: salts of metals – copper, cobalt, manganese, chromium, iron - which are ingredients in modern computers, the industrial extraction of which leads to the devastation of entire ecosystems. Paradoxically, the chemical gardens in hydrothermal vents on the sea floor are a plausible origin of life on earth.

*Crowd Crystal* will also present two sculptures from the *Post-Fordite* (2019-2020) series, made of pieces of material known as “Fordite” or “Detroit agate”; a hybrid, quasi-geological formation, created through the accumulation and fossilization of automotive paint on production lines at now-defunct car factories around the globe.

Finally, Castello di Rivoli presents *Adjacent Possible* (2021), a series of works on Luserna stone, investigating alternative directions in which human culture could have evolved or is presently evolving. In the development of this project, the artist collaborated with the computational social scientists LeRon Shults and Justin Lane to apply an artificial intelligence algorithm – machine learning - to an archive of thousands of various iterations of 32 graphic signs signs – the earliest known forms of symbolic communication, dating 40,000 BC to 14,000 BC - documented in the Paleolithic caves in Europe by the paleoanthropologist Genevieve von Petzinger. The algorithm generated other potentials signs and forms of expression that could have emerged as products of collective subjectivity. Over the centuries some of the cave paintings have been colonized by bacteria and fungi, replacing the original pigments. Through collaboration with synthetic biologists, the artist creates new paintings using vividly colored pigments containing mutated pigment-producing bacteria with genes from corals and jellyfish, as well as fungi and lichens as “living pigments”.

On the occasion of the opening of the exhibition *Agnieszka Kurant. Crowd Crystal* installed in the Museum and the launch of ‘Flash Art International’ 336 Fall 2021, **Wednesday November 3 at 7 pm** in the Castello di Rivoli **Theater** will be held *Ultra Bodies Ultra Species* in presence of the artist **Agnieszka Kurant**, of the Publisher and Director of ‘Flash Art’ **Gea Politi**, the Curator of the Castello di Rivoli **Marianna Vecellio** and the Curator **Noam Segal**.

**The exhibition is made possible thanks to the contribution of Fondazione per l’Arte Moderna e Contemporanea CRT**



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Partner



## Biography



Agnieszka Kurant, foto Carolyn Christov-Bakargiev

**Agnieszka Kurant** (Łódź, Poland, 1978) is a conceptual artist whose work investigates collective intelligence, non-human intelligences and the exploitations of social capital under surveillance capitalism. She often collaborates with scientists and scholars from various fields. Her research is in dialogue with multiple authors including the writings on plasticity and automatism by Catherine Malabou and Franco Bifo Berardi, the work of David Graeber, Manuel DeLanda and the writings of the neuroscientist Antonio Damasio. Kurant is the recipient of the 2020 LACMA A+T Award, the 2019 Frontier Art Prize, the 2018 Pollock-Krasner Award and the 2021 Google Artists + Machine Intelligence Grant. She is currently an Artist Fellow at the Berggruen Institute Transformations of the Human program and was an artist in residence at MIT CAST in 2017 - 2019. Her work was recently exhibited at the Museum of Modern Art in New York, the Istanbul Biennial, Kunsthalle Wien, Salzburg Kunstverein, Hamburger Kunstverein, the De Young Museum in San Francisco, MOCA Toronto, Jameel Arts Center in Dubai and the Milano Triennale. Her solo exhibitions include *Errorism*, Museum Sztuki, Łódź (2021); *The End of Signature*, commissioned by the MIT List Visual Arts Center at Kendall Square, Cambridge, MA (2021); *The End of Signature*, Guggenheim Museum, New York (2015); *Exformation*, Sculpture Center, New York (2013) and *Stroom den Haag* (2014). In 2010 Kurant co-represented Poland at the 12th Venice Biennale International Architecture Exhibition (in collaboration with the architect Aleksandra Wasilkowska) presenting the project *Emergency Exit* at the Polish Pavilion. Her work was also exhibited at Palais de Tokyo, Paris; Guggenheim Bilbao, Witte de With, Rotterdam; Moderna Museet, Stockholm; Whitechapel Art Gallery, London, Cleveland Biennial; The Kitchen, New York; Bonner Kunstverein; Grazer Kunstverein, Kunsthalle Mainz; Museum of Modern Art, Warsaw; MOCA, Detroit; CAC, Cincinnati; Mamco, Geneva; Frieze Projects, London, MUMOK, Vienna; Performa Biennial and Momentum Biennial. Kurant's monograph book *Collective Intelligence*, will be published by Sternberg Press / MIT Press in the spring of 2022.

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Partner

