

Press Release: Carefully curated is the prefabricated stream of media content by which we are constantly surrounded. The hierarchical processes of selection by and through which information is mediated and orchestrated as knowledge—a power at once real and simulacral—are determined by a complex system of strategic and political interests that shape public opinion. The exhibition Stage of Maneuvers focuses on the ways in which these processes influence and control individuals' thoughts and behaviors, and consequentially their conceptions of identity. Works in the exhibition also critically reflect on social profiling—the collection of personal data in order to create individual customizable information package profiles—as a powerful political instrument for control. Stage of Maneuvers presents extant and newly commissioned film and performative installations by four international artists. Alia Farids Theatre of Operations (or The Gulf War seen from Puerto Rico) (2017) presents a compilation of found TV footage recorded in the U.S. territory of Puerto Rico that documents the 1990-1991 Iraqi invasion of Kuwait—the first televised war and one which marked a paradigm shift in terms of how war was waged. News footage is interwoven with TV reality show material about three families that, one of them the artist's, escaped the war to live in Puerto Rico. Bringing together “personal” and official narratives, Farid exposes some of the underlying political mechanisms at play in the Gulf War and media's power to manipulate public opinion. Claire Fontaine's News Floor (2019) occupies the entire floor of the exhibition space, taking on the role of both the stage and the backdrop for the other works in the exhibition. Reflecting on the dematerialization and dislocation of information, this work alters visitors' experiences and receptions of the show and of the other pieces on exhibition. Gabriella Torres-Ferrer addresses decentralized and unregulated ecologies of value creation that track and commodify personal data. The data that is collected represents a powerful instrument that supplies individualized information packages in the form of, for instance, advertisements. Torres-Ferrer has developed a new interactive installation that responds to and is triggered by the presence and activity of exhibition visitors and the (changing) conditions of the exhibition space over time. Georgia Sagri presents a series of objects that are installed throughout the exhibition. Like spatial notations, they physically guide viewers through the space, suggesting a variety of scores that encourage them to overcome habitualized patterns of exhibition-viewing behavior. This collection of modules rejects the hierarchy between objects and spatial determination, taking the form of outdoor signs that aim to shift the norm from reading as knowledge acquisition to declaration, movement, and contemplation.

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