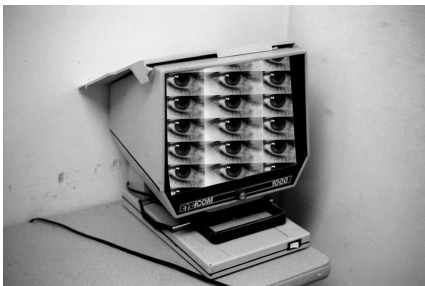


ART

In Maria Antelman's Work, Technology Is More Than Just a Tool

One of the most evincing themes in *Mechanisms of Affection* is how easy it is for computers, digital spaces, and technology writ large to be anthropomorphized.

Lydia Pyne November 13, 2019



Maria Antelman, "Eyecom" (2017), inkjet print on luster paper. 16.6 x 25 inches
(all images courtesy of the artist)

Humankind has made, used, and curated technology for hundreds of thousands of years. In *Mechanisms of Affection*, New York-based artist Maria Antelman explores how technologies are more than just tools – they're material objects that reflect human nature back to their human creators.

For the past decade, Antelman's art has centered around computer technology and its subversion of traditional subject-object relationships. The computer is a machine, Antelman contends, that measures the human body and arbitrates human experiences. From satellites to eye exams, from microfilm to IBM mainframes, machines chronicle human experiences, and, at least nominally, tells us something about ourselves. Machines are mediators.



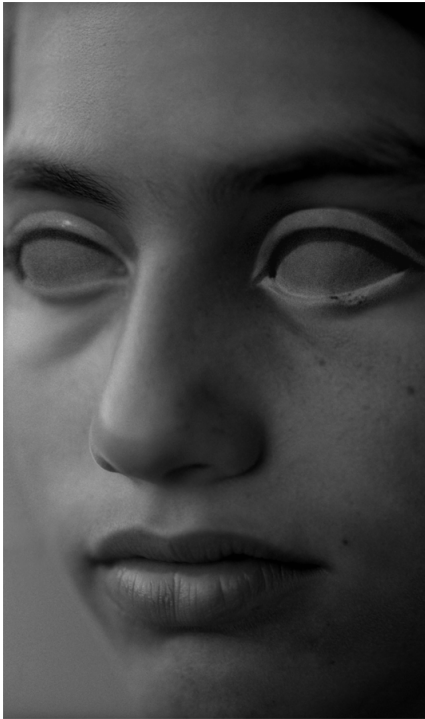
Maria Antelman, Spacesaver III, 2016.
Inkjet print on Phototex paper. 68 x 40
in.

Antelman's current exhibition brings together 15 different works that include photomontages, sound installations, sculptures, and animations. Some, like "Spacesaver Series" invoke early computer advertising that marketed both machines and women as objects of desire. The sound installation "For Your Eyes Only" features different female voice actors reading the programming code for Satellite ISSE-3/ICE aloud.

Other works, like "Stone's Instinct," "Seer (Deep)," and "Echo Code," are particularly evocative in their animation of humanity's most enduring technological medium – stone. Each of these installations includes a set of rocks as a stabilizing base. In "reading" the technology from bottom to top – much like one would interpret a stratigraphic profile from an archaeological site – we come to appreciate stone as a necessary base for all future technological development. It's a technological media that can be reimagined and remade in every episode of human history.

One of the most evincing themes that runs through *Mechanisms of Affection* is how easy it is for computers, digital spaces, and technology writ large to be anthropomorphized. Ultimately, Antelman's work explores what it means for sensations to be automated, connections simulated, and for perspective to be, literally, facilitated through a manufactured, non-human lens.

Maria Antelman: Mechanisms of Affection continues at the Visual Arts Center at The University of Texas at Austin through December 6, 2019. The exhibition was curated by Taylor Bradley.



Maria Antelman, "Seer (Deep)" (2019),
HD Video loop, monitor, media player,
Ilano boulders

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