BEST OF THE FEST 2017
EUROPEAN MEDIA ARTS FESTIVAL

TUESDAY, NOVEMBER 28TH AT 6:30 PM
PF/PCA Melwood Screening Room

CONVERSATION WITH A CACTUS
RUBBER COATED STEEL
DAS GESTELL

This screening brings to Pittsburgh the best of the 2017 European Media Arts Festival (EMAF). The EMAF is one of the most influential forums of international Media Art. As a meeting point for artists, curators, distributors, galleries and an audience of experts the festival has a great impact on the topics and aesthetics of Media Art. Each year the festival offers its visitors a current overview of experimental films, installations, performances, digital formats and hybrid forms, ranging from personal and political subjects or formal experiments to provocative statements from the pulsating area of "Media Art – Society". The Festival sees itself as a place of experimentation and a laboratory where extraordinary works, experiments and ventures are created and presented.

CONVERSATION WITH A CACTUS

Elise Florenty & Marcel Türkowsky (French, German, Japanese co-production) 45 mins

A lyrical film, an essay about dreams, communication, media, it begins in Tokyo with Mei sending a message to her friend Toshi who lives in Hamburg. Mei’s oneric journey interweaves an animate collective surrounding with fragmented facts and rumours about the legendary Hashimoto Experiment from the 70s. A scientist and his wife, Mr. and Mrs. Hashimoto tried to teach the Japanese alphabet to a cactus plant. (As a former director of Fuji electronics, Mr. Hashimoto is known for being a precursor of numerous technologic inventions, like the Giant LED Screen and Neon Panel systems).

Elise Florenty & Marcel Türkowsky are a Franco- German artist/filmmaker duo working in moving image arts and installation. Combining fields of cinema, installation, publication and curation, they have been exploring the multiplicity of the self. Their reflections on the (post) human condition are undertaken in relation to transforming geopolitical landscapes; natural, built and virtual environments and their multiple inhabitants and hi/stories.
RUBBER COATED STEEL
Lawrence Abu Hamdan (Lebanese, German co-production) 22 mins

May 2014: CNN captured the shooting of two unarmed teenagers during protests outside of a prison on the occupied West Bank by an Israeli soldier, who claimed “only” to be using rubber bullets instead of live ammunition. To prove him wrong, the human rights organisation Defence for Children International contacted Forensic Architecture, an agency that undertakes advanced architectural and media research, which, in turn, worked with sound artist Lawrence Abu Hamdan to investigate the incident. His audio-ballistic analysis of the recorded gunshots provided pivotal evidence.

Lawrence Abu Hamdan: His projects have taken the form of audiovisual installations, performances, graphic works, photography, Islamic sermons, cassette tape compositions, potato chip packets, essays, and lectures. Abu Hamdan’s interest with sound and its intersection with politics originate from his background in DIY music. His works are part of collections at MoMA New York, Van Abbe Museum Eindhoven, Centre Pompidou Paris and the Arts Council, England.

DAS GESTELL
Philip Widmann (German) 30 mins

In “The Question Concerning Technology” Martin Heidegger reflected on das Gestell meaning the framework and the action of enframing in modernity. The film Das Gestell is an experimental essay based on the Japanese fascination with Heidegger and interpretations of his works on the relation between humans and technology. The film shows landscapes, spaces and situations that display the permeation of a region and a society by technology. Shot on Super 8, the film images evoke an incertitude as to which time they belong to. Their graininess points toward the past while some of them appear as if they were from a parallel future, one that did not originate in our current present.

Philip Widmann *1980 in West-Berlin, graduated in Cultural Anthropology from the University of Hamburg and in Visual Communications from the University of Fine Arts Hamburg. His works have been shown in art spaces and film festivals, such as the Wexner Center for the Arts, WRO Biennale Wroclaw, Berlin Film Festival, Rotterdam International Film Festival, New York Film Festival, Mostra São Paulo, FID Marseille, CPH:DOX und Visions du Réel.

Curated by Randall Halle, Director of the Film and Media Studies Program at the University of Pittsburgh