



Mouseboard, 2017.

Louis Frehring is interested in both the insides of machines and the ways in which they interact with their users. He uses plastic forms that shift the gaze and question what is taken for granted. For an artist dealing with the Internet, Louis Frehring makes very moderate use of digital technologies: his works are rather sculptural and he pays attention to the level of technological quality he proposes for each object, concentrating on the precise contributions of each material.

Excerpt of Lucas Morin's text at the end of this portfolio.

# CV

## Exhibitions

2023 | Symbioses: group show, Théâtre de la Ville, Paris (France).  
2023 | Jouer le réel: duo show with Delphine Bertrand, B612, Rennes (France).  
2022 | EXH-KIB: group show, Piksel Festival XX, KiB, Bergen (Norway).  
2022 | Peinture Fleuve: group show, 40 Etienne Dolet, Rennes (France).  
2022 | Voilà l'été: group show, le quartier général, Quimper (France).  
2022 | Debug: group show, Art Meets Radical Openness, STWST, Linz (Austria).  
2021 | Club Avant-Gardes : duo show with Leah Geay, Maison de la Fontaine, Brest (France).  
2020 | D1G1TAL S3CR3TS : group show, Die Digitale festival, Weltkunstzimmer, Düsseldorf (Germany).  
2020 | Digital Wild : group show, Meta.morf Biennale, Trondheim Kunstmuseum - Gråmølna, Trondheim (Norway).  
2019 | Nuit noire : group show, galerie Kashagan, Lyon (France).  
2019 | Off-grid : group show, Compiler, London (UK).  
2019 | mulhouse 019 : Biennale, Parcexpo, Mulhouse (France).  
2019 | Getaway is Halfway : group show, The White House Studio Project, Toronto (Ontario).  
2019 | <http://www> : a birthday celebration: group show, Carnation contemporary, Portland (Oregon).  
2018 | Projected.Capital : group show, Roehrs & Boetsch, Zurich (Switzerland).  
2018 | FOMO : group show, Palais Bondy, Lyon (France).  
2018 | Digital Landscapes : solo show, Maxxx Project space, Sierre (Switzerland).  
2018 | SHRED D'ART : group show, Schau Fenster, Berlin (Germany).  
2018 | Net Art For Storage : group exhibition part of The Wrong - New Digital Art Biennale, Net Art For Storage Pavilion (World Wide Web).  
2017 | Starring, une exposition pilote : group show, 69 rue Navarin, Brest (France).  
2017 | Félicitations : group show, Maison de la fontaine and EESAB, Brest (France).  
2017 | Start-up : group show, Les abords, Brest (France).  
2017 | Fraction : group show, Hôtel Pasteur, Rennes (France).  
2017 | WHAT IF : group show on networks and Internet at EESAB, Brest (France).  
2016 | FFIAC : group show, EESAB's gallery, Brest (France).

2016 | Foundering to me is sweet : group show, EESAB's gallery, Brest (France).

2013 | Plus jamais seul : group show, galerie Standards, Rennes (France).

## Performances

2023 | Poetry reading at Permanence poétique, L'orée 85, Strasbourg (France).  
2022 | Navigating transitory urban airspace: radio performance with Caroline Claus, Radio Panik, Brussels (Belgium)  
2022 | The Manifesto for Rebugging: Performance, Art Meets Radical Openness festival, dH5, Linz (Austria).  
2019 | Trattoria 42 : culinary and video performance with Leah Geay, The White House Studio Project, Toronto (Ontario).  
2017 | Hardwork : Performance, Unité 9, Clermont-Ferrand (France).  
2017 | We Might See : group installation in Emmanuelle Lainé's exhibition: Incremental Self, Bétonsalon, Paris (France).  
2014 | Extreme Territories : group Performance with Joe Walker and Maxime Kerneis, centre d'art Passerelle, Brest (France).

## Residencies

2023 | Useful Fictions #3, Summer school of École Polytechnique and ENSAD, Saclay (France).  
2023 | Residency organized by Medienfriche, Boden & Bsclabs (Austria).  
2023 | Histoires et Mythologies de l'informatique: Residency organized by 40mcube, Rennes (France).  
2022 | WHAT: Residency and workshop organized by l'Estran, Guidel (France).  
2020 | Residency organised by the city of Brest, in collaboration with Leah Geay, Local de la pointe, Brest (France).  
2018 | Residency organised by Fondation Château Mercier, Villa Ruffieux, Sierre (Switzerland).  
2017 | ÇA ROOLE ! : residency organised by 35h, Unité 9, Clermont-Ferrand (France).

## Public collections

Collection of the Château Mercier, Sierre, (Switzerland).  
Fonds départemental d'Ille-et-Vilaine, Rennes (France).  
Collection of the Art Library of the City of Brest, Brest (France).

## Aids & prizes

2022 | Mobility grant, Institut Français de Norvège. (Norway).  
2022 | Aid from the city of Rennes, Rennes. (France).  
2022 | Aid from the French Ministry of culture, DRAC Bretagne, Rennes. (France).  
2021 | Traversées : financial aid, CIPAC, Paris. (France).  
2019 | Public aid from the French Ministry of culture, DRAC Bretagne, Rennes. (France).

## Publications & writings

Ongoing | Online publication of poetry (French).  
[www.louisfrehring.fr/ecrits/poesies/](http://www.louisfrehring.fr/ecrits/poesies/)

2022 | GENERATOR : Group retrospective book, 40mcube & Les Presses du réel, Rennes (France).  
2021 | X-plore : publications and co-direction, Brest (France).  
2020 | Reading review, Critique d'art. (France).  
2017 > 2018 | Art critics for the website Le Poullailler, Brest. (France).  
2015 > 2017 | M.S.T.: fanzine (publications and co-direction), Brest (France).  
2014 > 2015 | Liesse Magazine: publications, Lorient (France).

## Curating

2021 > 2023 | R.U.R. : direction and curating, Brest (France).  
2016 | FFIAC : co-curating with Sarah Penanhoat, Brest (France).

## Teaching and talks

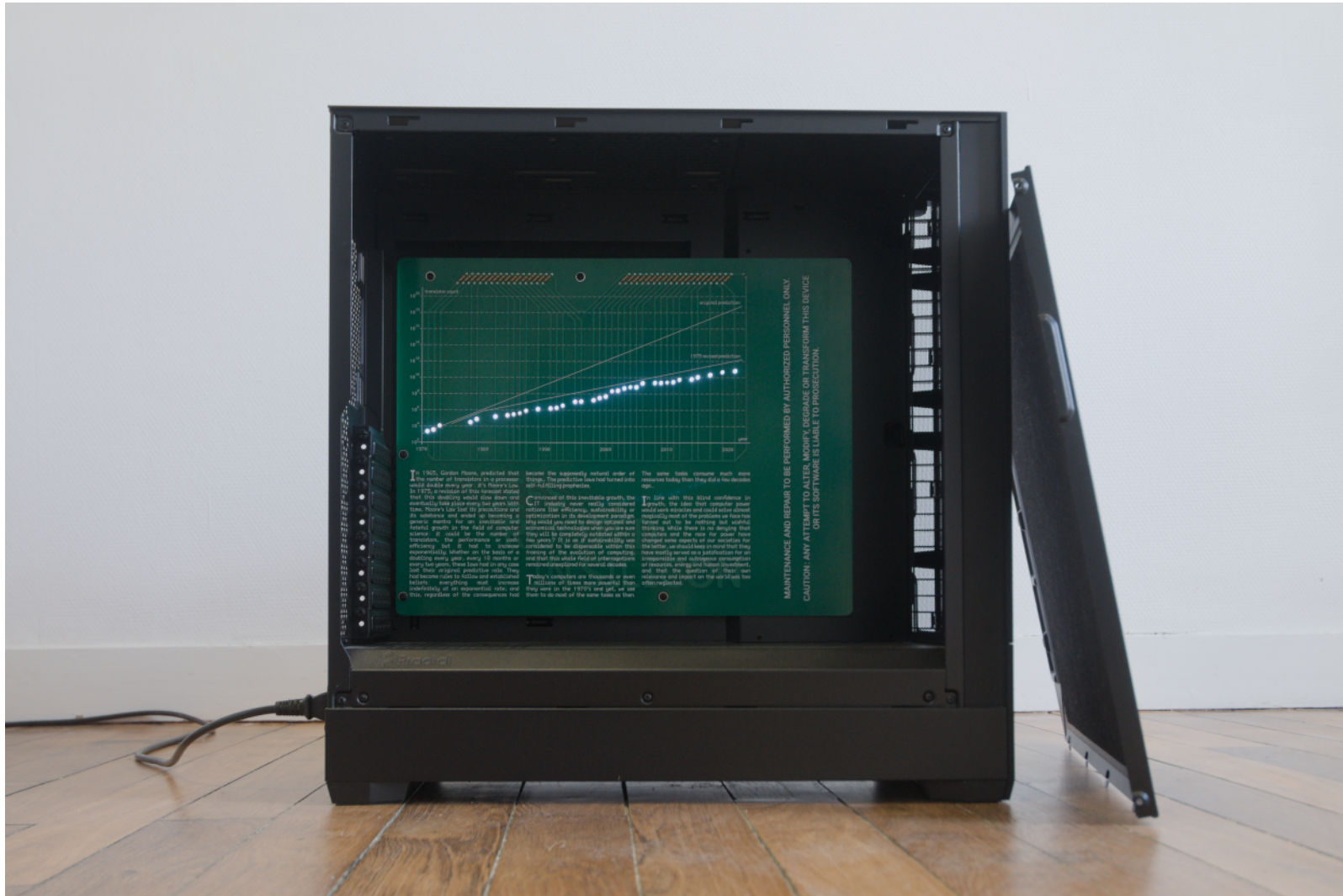
2023 | Artistic practice workshops, FRAC Bretagne & Centre départemental d'action sociale, Monfort sur Meu (France).  
2022 | Contemporary drawing workshop, Musée des Beau-Arts, Brest (France).  
2019 | La pratique artistique : une forme critique du web, apprenez à en tirer parti: conference about artistic practice and web, Paris Web, Sup'Internet, Paris (France).  
2019 | WWW4A: workshop about web-based artistic practices, EESAB, Brest (France).  
2017 | Hack it !: transdisciplinary workshop on Art and Hacking, EESAB, Brest (France).  
2014 > 2017 | After-school activities contemporary practices, City of Brest (France).

## Formation

2019 | Vocational training GENERATOR, 40mcube, Rennes (France).  
2017 | DNSEP (MA) in Fine Arts, École Européenne Supérieure d'Art de Bretagne, Brest (France).  
2015 | Erasmus+, University of Central Lancashire, Preston (UK).  
2015 | DNAP (BA) in Fine Arts, École Européenne Supérieure d'Art de Bretagne, Brest (France).

# UNLIMITED

*One day we will have to face the facts: unlimited growth is impossible in the long term.*



*A completely black PC case bearing the inscription "UNLIMITED" is opened up, revealing the innards of this black box that tell the story of Moore's Law on a printed circuit board.*

Paint on computer case and printed circuit board. 550 x 600 x 260 mm. (2023) production 40mcube.

# Cloud computing

*The cloud, a marketing promise that we are all too often not told what it is, is in fact something quite simple: a (large) pile of computers running all day long to serve us, the physicality of which is concealed behind the vaporous promise of the cloud. So that's what Cloud Computing is: a bunch of running computers draped in a blanket with aerial camouflage patterns.*



Modified computers and woven blanket. Variable dimensions. (2023)  
production 40mcube.

# Constant renewal

*Keep it new, all the time! New telephone, new colours! And yet nothing seems to change: the same shapes, the same mechanisms at work, the same marketing speeches and their obvious lies.*



*Constant Renewal takes its cue from a showroom display on which phones are displayed with cheesy slogans reminiscent of GAFAM. But it's all fake: the phones are sculptures and the slogans are blatant lies. .*

Painted wood, plexiglass, laser prints on tracing paper, electronic device and ink on sticky notes. 1150 x 1000 x 250 mm. (2023)  
production 40mcube.

# Privacy is intimacy

*The perfect jewel to share sweet words safe from prying eyes.*



*A pair of engraved silver necklaces on each of which, that are several metres long, are engraved the public and private keys of two pairs of PGP keys. Thus, Privacy is intimacy is the ideal piece of jewellery for the most reckless lovers, it allows two people who would wear these necklaces to always have on them the possibility to create their intimacy. This work symbolizes the possibility of intimacy through privacy and inscribes it in a form of preciousness by being a jewel..*

Silver, CNC engraving. two necklaces of 3600 x 6 mm. (2020)  
production 40mcube / Self Signal.



# Internet ?

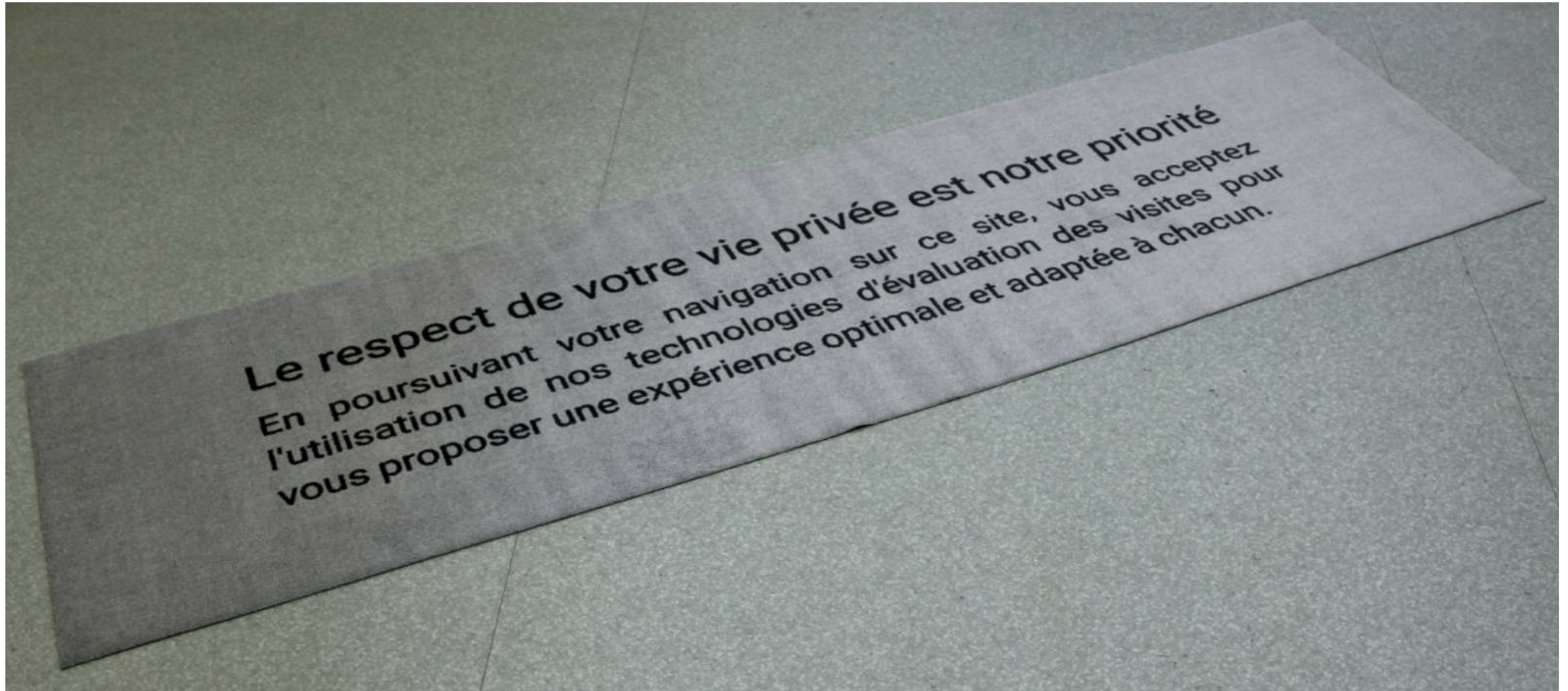
*Will you log in ?*



Bronze, electronic device, software. 17 x 20 x 10 cm. (2020)  
production 40mcube / Self Signal

Le respect de votre vie privée est notre priorité *(your privacy is our priority)*

*Really ?*



Carpet. 300 x 85 cm (2020)  
production 40mcube / Self Signal

# STRANGEST VIDEO EVER !!!! 🤩 🤔 🤪 WATCH TILL THE END !!

*The best things are the most awaited.*



*By materialising an unbearable situation, that of the load interrupting, if only for a moment, the flow of the stream, STRANGESTVIDEOEVER!!!! 🤩 🤔 🤪 WATCH TILL THE END !!! suggests that the promise made by its very title will never be kept and invites the spectator to be satisfied with the almost hypnotic wait for the infinite loading. But anyway, don't they say that everything comes to those who wait ?*

Inkjet photo print, electronic device, power supply, computer program. (2019)



## Angoisse (*anguish*)

*The information exists, you know it, but you'll never be able to get it..*

Painted stand, mirror, tablet computer, earbuds, video. 115 x 20 x 11 cm. (2019)

# Intimacy of the screen

*Who, better than your screen, can witness the most intimate ?*

*The LED, which indicates that the screen is working, has replaced its backlight. It is no longer as talkative as usual but if we approach it, it will surely give us some fragments of intimacy.*



Modified computer screen, computer, photographs. 45 x 42 x 20 cm. (2019).

# Up-to-date Icon

*Worships have changed, look for the new trend!*



*Updating itself automatically, the machine and computer program paints us a new icon every time the most followed person on Instagram posts a new photo. The ultimate cult object, Up-to-date Icon reflects both our modern cults and our faith in technology.*

Painted frame, LCD display, computer, computer program. 17 x 12 cm. (2019)

# Impressions

*Hashtag after hashtag a new picture was born. Synthesis of all the pixels seen, it is a global view on the landscape but, is it the final and transcendental picture of it ?*



Digital images and smartphones, 12 x 40 cm. (2018)

*Each image that Impressions displays is the result of a social network's global conception of a term: an average image of those associated with it on the network. These computer-hallucinated landscapes testify of the existence of a mass imagery hidden deep in the databases.*

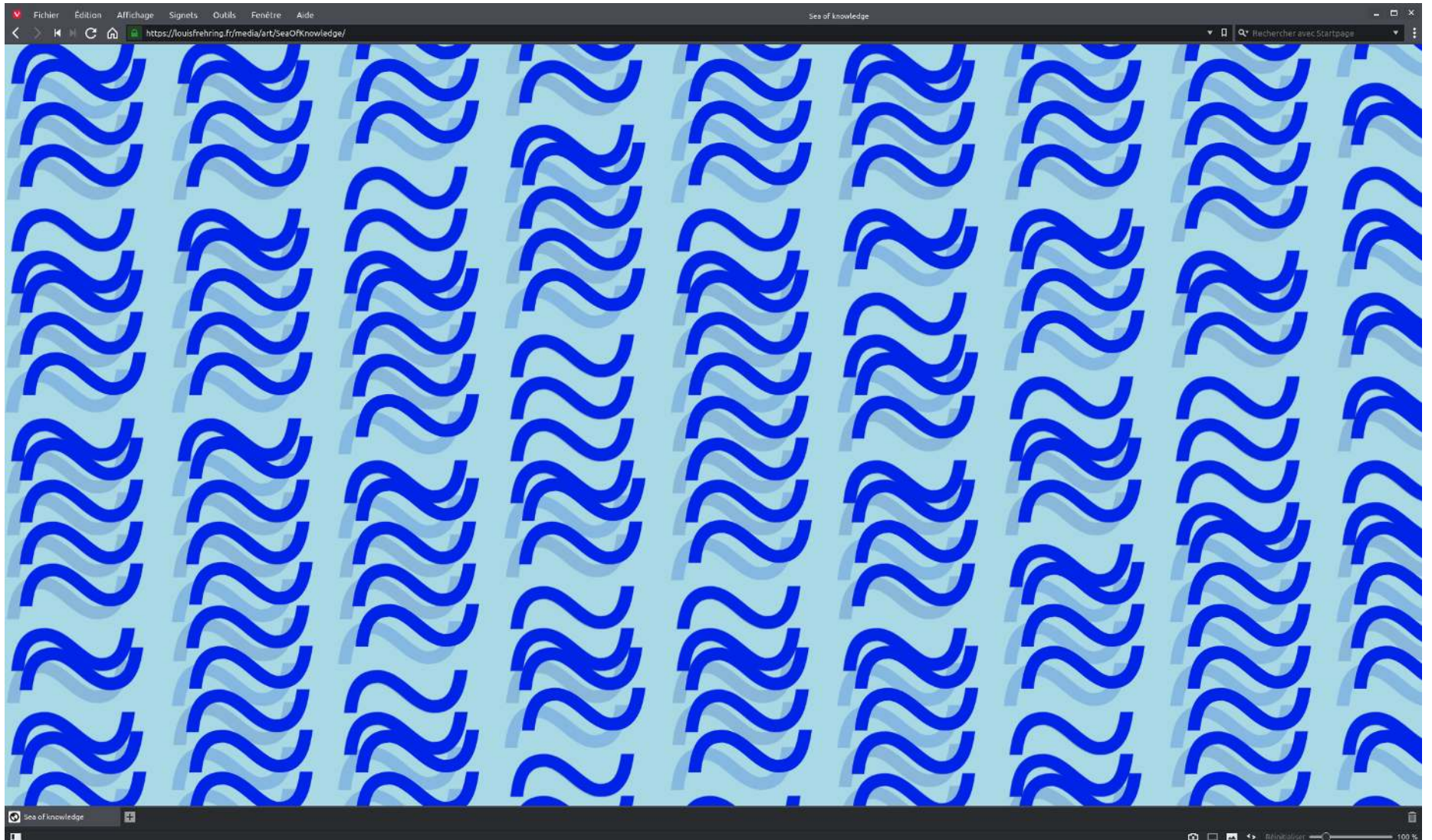


Details of Impressions (#sunset).

# Sea of knowledge

[www.louisfrehring.fr/media/art/SeaOfKnowledge/](http://www.louisfrehring.fr/media/art/SeaOfKnowledge/)

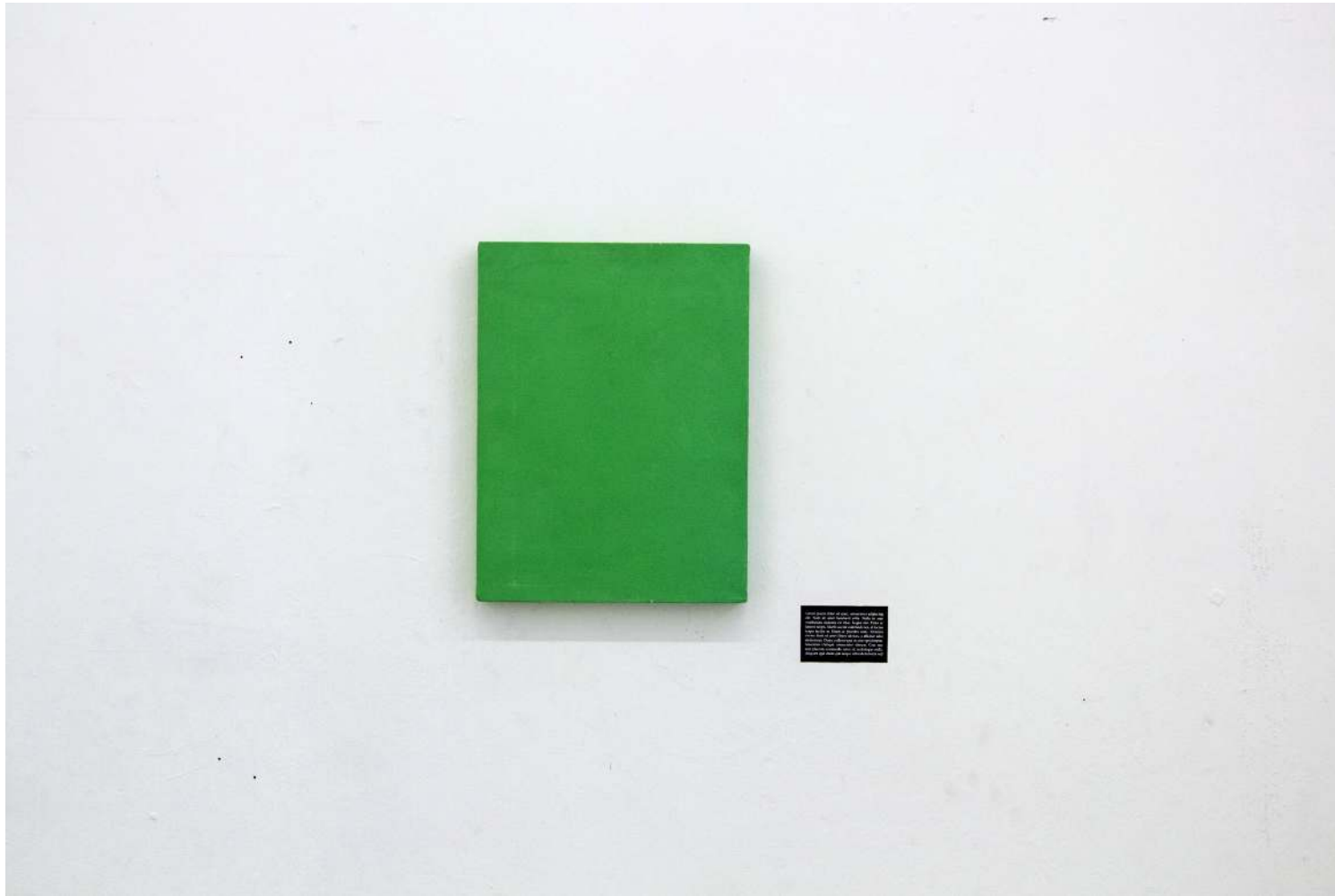
*If you were not able to travel to the sea this summer, you still can go to the sea of knowledge.*





# Privacy

*Through networks your image is conveyed, is duplicated, disappears and reappears elsewhere. But where ?*

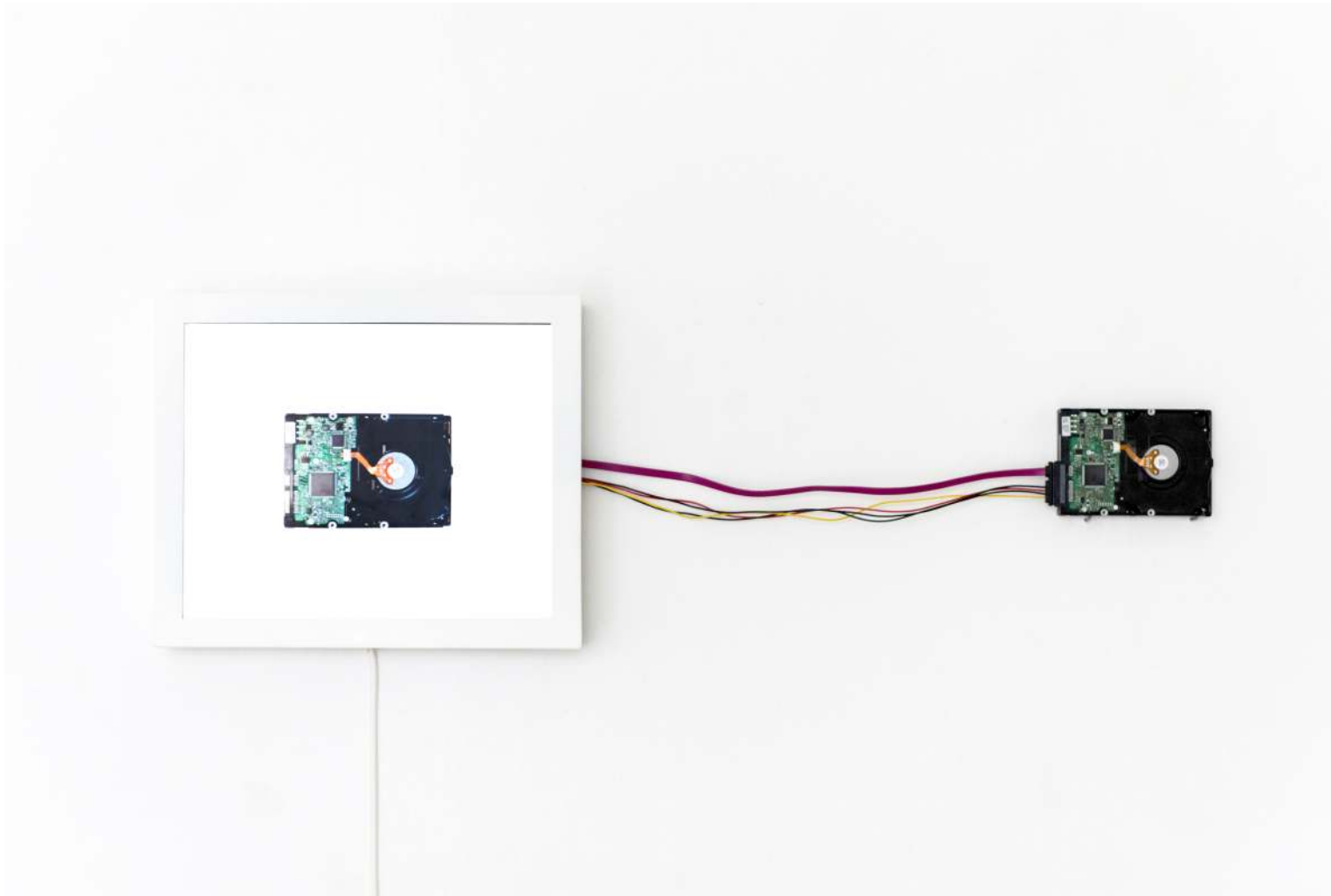


*Successively, the spectator passes in front of a green canvas and then in front of a computer device that captures his own image and renders it to him in place of the green canvas. Privacy then questions the viewer about the circulation of personal images in public spaces and the loss of control over them.*

Installation: acrylic on canvas, plexiglass, webcams, computer, display. Variable dimensions. (2017)

# Image disque

*What realities do we experience daily in digital spaces ? What is a bit, in terms of physicality ? Not that much, right ? And a megabyte ? A gigabyte ?*



*Image Disque is an installation consisting of a hard drive containing its own photograph, a photograph that takes all the space on this disk and that is continuously read in by a computer displaying it. We are thus confronted with the reality of the hard drive and of its 'virtual' image which differs from what one could expect. Will bugs and unexpected behavior from the machines are going to change our understanding of what a digital file is?*

3,5" hard drive, computer, USB/SATA device, LCD display. 40 x 120 x 15 cm. (2017)

# We might see

*Machines can see but they can also hallucinate.*

*Facing a bay window, the spectator is confronted with the vision that an artificial intelligence has of the scene unfolding before his eyes. Sometimes this artificial intelligence is mistaken about what it can observe and introduces an uncomfortable gap between what the viewer sees and what the machine describes.*



Installation: artificial intelligence, displays. Variable dimensions. Co-creation with Laura Gaulard, Anne-Claire Nain, Mehdi Benjelloun and Hubert Mardi. (2017).

# Lucas Morin's text on Louis Frehring's artistic practice.

I am writing this text in the spring of 2020 in the context of a very particular residency. For reasons that everyone knows, travel and contact have suddenly become impossible. I met Louis Frehring through online video exchanges, which after all is not so bad for discovering the work of an artist who is interested in so-called technological objects, their uses, their implications, and even their thoughts. The health crisis has brought to the forefront notions of data processing, anonymity, traceability and digital isolation that were previously the preserve of specialists or enthusiasts. While a large part of Louis Frehring's work consists of translating these issues, the world seems to have decided to make them crucial for each and every one of us. For my part, I took part in the exercise of visiting digital workshops which, after all, allowed us to tell other stories.

Louis Frehring is making this shift in perception with one of his projects developed during GENERATOR, soberly entitled *Internet ?* (2020). He created a bronze Internet router with a precious appearance, designed to contrast with the pseudo-futuristic banality of this device that adorns my living room and no doubt yours. The artist seeks to play with the confusion between device (the box), technology (Internet) and network (Wi-Fi). This work echoes a previous project, which was solely online. *Sea of Knowledge* (2018) created a dreamlike maritime interface for random navigation on an ocean-Wikipedia. Louis Frehring highlights the paradoxical hypercentralisation of this network, while most of us use, by force of habit and capitalist predation, only a tiny fraction of its possibilities. The visible and invisible facets of this work allow several levels of reading by drawing attention on the one hand to the sculptural aspect and on the other hand to the very precise technical aspect.

Fascinated by these machines, Louis Frehring wishes to develop a psychoanalysis of technical objects. With *Image disque* (2017) the artist exhibited a computer that read its own image in an endless loop. The object, reduced by the artist to uselessness while using all its technological capacities, was brought to speak of itself, first by representing itself but above all by expressing itself. It had no access to speech, but its operating process and the physical reality of the calculation were made sensitive by the heating of its mechanism and the noise of its fan. During GENERATOR, Louis Frehring took this logic a step further by designing *AI Monologue* (2020). He once again uses an object that has become commonplace, this time a smart home speaker - I'll say it right away, I don't have one, but maybe you do - to which he has given a new envelope but above all a new function. The speaker has been trained to express its own emotional life and its feelings about its existence, via a long

monologue. The artist forces the robot to speak - this time literally - in the first person. Fortunately it's not me he's asking to monologue to, I would have replied "LOL" and we would have moved on quickly. But this chatty foray into the psyche also demonstrates the limits of this speech. Conditioned by the thousands of sources that are not, or not yet, written by robots, it reminds us that the relationship to technology is above all a social fact.

The installation *Le respect de votre vie privée* (2020), is an absorbent black and grey carpet, the kind you find in anonymous lobbies with names like CIG OPRENSIA ASSETS or BEST ELEGANCE HOTELS. Instead of the expected logo, Frehring reproduces messages asking for the user's consent to the use of their personal data, such as: "Your privacy is our priority. By continuing to browse this site, you agree to the use of our visitor evaluation technologies to provide you with an optimal experience tailored to each individual." With this shift from virtual space to concrete objects, the artist invites a change in the regime of attention. Would visitors make the same decisions outside the virtual space ?

Finally, Louis Frehring moves into more personal territory where interest in technology meets intimacy. In an as yet untitled work, he creates two pieces of jewellery, a pair of silver chains, which together form cryptographic keys using PGP (Pretty Good Privacy) technology. This ultra-secure process is best known for being prized by whistleblowers, such as Wikileaks ones, hackers and drug dealers. From an obscure term reserved for insiders in the dark corners of the Internet, PGP has become a commonplace to the point of entering pop culture through the front door with Booba's eponymous track in 2019. With his jewellery, Frehring wants to allow two lovers who exchange them to communicate in complete confidentiality and to use PGP to reactivate the coded languages long used by epistolary lovers. The artist takes up the public and private symbolism of jewellery, an object that is ostensibly displayed but whose details conceal many secrets, much to the delight of romance writers.

With this intrusion into sentimentality, Louis Frehring wishes to contribute to a restorative gesture, a gesture that would make it possible to protect lost intimacy with means similar to those that destroyed it. By reducing cryptography to a physical object, however, Louis Frehring pushes this logic to the absurd. The PGP cryptography he uses requires hundreds of characters, and by associating each of them with a pendant link, he creates an inordinate chain several metres long, far too cumbersome to wear. Although the object is functional, retrieving the characters one by one would be so tedious that communication between the lovers would be impossible. Once again, the artist strips technical objects of their primary utility in order to better comment on their construction and social function.

Louis Frehring is interested in both the insides of machines and the ways in which they interact with their users. He uses plastic forms that shift the gaze and question what is taken for granted. For an artist dealing with the

Internet, Louis Frehring makes very moderate use of digital technologies: his works are rather sculptural and he pays attention to the level of technological quality he proposes for each object, concentrating on the precise contributions of each material. Frehring does not propose a technological arte povera, however: acquiring and using a screen or a phone is much cheaper and quicker than making a carpet or working on a metal sculpture - which should question the labour relations that determine them, just saying. It is a choice of discourse, in the sense that the artist wants to talk about technology by making it understandable. The artist is interested in information and its dissemination above all through its containers: the networks, the objects through which information transits, the technologies that make it accessible and those that protect it. He insists on the systemic, on what conditions the possibility of existence of these contents. However, he starts from these packages to offer precise and rich accounts, to reveal stories that tell the intimate experience of this very particular relationship.

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[www.louisfrehring.com](http://www.louisfrehring.com)

[base.ddab.org/louis-frehring](http://base.ddab.org/louis-frehring)

[www.instagram.com/louis.frehring](https://www.instagram.com/louis.frehring)

Club Avant-Gardes (French only) :

[base.ddab.org/club-avant-gardes](http://base.ddab.org/club-avant-gardes)

[www.instagram.com/clubavantgardes](https://www.instagram.com/clubavantgardes)

Association R.U.R. (French only) :

[www.rur-association.fr](http://www.rur-association.fr)

[https://www.instagram.com/r.u.r\\_association/](https://www.instagram.com/r.u.r_association/)