



**KUNSTMUSEUM
WOLFSBURG**

Ryōji Ikeda. data-verse

December 7, 2019—March 29, 2020

Opening: Friday, December 6, 2019, 7 p.m.

Ryōji Ikeda (*1966 in Gifu, Japan, lives and works in Paris, France and Kyoto, Japan) is one of the most important sound and media artists in the world. His often large-format light and sound installations have caused many international sensations (e.g. 2018 Centre Pompidou, Paris; 2018 Eye Filmmuseum, NL; 2015 ZKM Karlsruhe; 2014/15 Minsheng Art Museum, Shanghai; 2014 Musée d'Art contemporain de Montréal). In 2019, Taipei Fine Arts Museum, TW, will present a solo exhibition on Ryōji Ikeda. With his immersive media art he makes digital universes visually and acoustically experienceable and provides fascinating artistic levels of reflection for the progressive digitalization of our society. With the exhibition in the completely darkened central exhibition hall, the Kunstmuseum Wolfsburg is showing two new large-format installations: *data-verse 1* (currently being shown at the 2019 Vencie Biennale) and *data-verse 2*, together for the first time, which will be set up especially for the museum.

Ryōji Ikeda does not work with the traditional materials of the visual arts - oil paint, canvas, wood, bronze, marble, etc. - but with media and data. For him, digital data for "capturing the world down to the smallest detail" (R. I. 2008), and visualizing it with elaborate and technically perfect projections. His light and sound installations have their origins less in artistic than in (natural) scientific sources, such as mathematics, physics, biology, musicology and philosophy. The generated sounds also feed themselves mainly from digital sources. Ikeda succeeds in transforming the unimaginable amounts of data and computing power that most people have to deal with on a daily basis, consciously or unconsciously, into dimensions that are incomprehensible but nevertheless imaginable, and in immersing viewers in digital universes. This immersive quality of his expansive installations, which always oscillates the viewer between the impression of facing the smallest measurable units or being on cosmic journeys with and on data streams, is certainly one of the outstanding strengths of Ikeda's work, which also reveals the absolutely global approach of his understanding of art.

In Ikeda's installations, on the one hand, the surrounding architecture plays a decisive role, the specifics of which are taken into account when the installations are set up. On the other hand, visitors* to the exhibition are invited to move around in space in order to examine their own perception and become aware of their own position. Both the limits of individual perception and the relationship between space and time will be explored. The pulsating sounds underlying the installations range in their spectrum from barely audible sine tones to dull, almost physically perceptible sounds, adding an additional level that irritates perception. The visualizations deliberately play with completely contrary dimensions, which on the one hand make one think of bites and bytes, i.e. of the smallest units of digital data flows, and on the other stage almost universe-like dimensions. The latest 4K projection technology also contributes to turning the exhibition into a fascinating synaesthetic overall experience.

Data-verse 1 and *data-verse 2* are commissioned by Audemars Piguet.

Curator: Andreas Beitin