

# APALAZZOGALLERY

## Eva & Franco Mattes *508 Loop Detected*

11 February – 16 March 2024

**APALAZZOGALLERY** is delighted to present "**508 Loop Detected**" the debut solo exhibition of **Eva & Franco Mattes** at the gallery. After 15 years of exhibitions abroad, the pioneering duo of Net Art, also known as 0100101110101101.org, returns to Italy with their latest artistic production, including sculptures generated with artificial intelligence, a video installation, a kinetic sculpture, and a site-specific intervention on the facade.

In the early 1990s, Eva & Franco Mattes recognised the increasingly influential role the nascent Internet would play in shaping contemporary culture. They began devoting sleepless nights exclusively to exploring this new medium: its possibilities, pitfalls, and implications for content creation and dissemination, foreseeing the penetration of the Internet into every aspect of our lives.

This intangible network of digital images that constitutes our online existence is actually physically based on computer servers scattered worldwide, and this materialization of images and data lies at the core of Eva & Franco Mattes' new works.

The exhibition's title, "*508 Loop Detected*" is an ironic reference to an error code in website programming when the computer detects an infinite loop. The concept of the loop recurs in various ways in the exhibition, from the sculptures of *Personal Photographs*, which are actual infinite circuits, to *Roomba Cat* roaming the Hall, to the photographs in the *Up Next* video, demonstrating the impact the circulation of images can have on our lives.

In *Personal Photographs*, a loop of colored tubes houses a spool of Ethernet cable, where all the photos taken by the artists during a day circulate infinitely without being seen. Two microcomputers transfer the photographs back and forth, creating a sort of autonomous network. The digital photographs come from the Mattes' personal archive but remain invisible. Images without spectators, yet always present. Like most images today. Each work consists of a very limited number of pieces that, when combined, create infinite unique combinations of shapes and colors: a tribute to the circulation of data, communication, information transfer, and culture.

A series of unpublished circuits invade the main space of the gallery. On one side, four micro-circuits arranged like small-format portraits, on the other, three large multicolored and multilayered circuits imagined this time by AI - which has processed the photos from the Mattes' previous exhibitions, mixing them and imagining new sculptures. The Mattes reverse the creative process: first, they generate the images of finished works, and then they produce the "original" work.

These works bring to the forefront the debate on the relationship between AI and authorship. Instagram has transformed every artwork into an image, Twitter has turned every journalist into an influencer, and Spotify has turned every album into a database. The next step is to recognize what AI is doing: transforming all art and culture into training data. It is not something that

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happens after the object is produced; this dynamic is increasingly an integral part of the creative process itself.

**Roomba Cat** is a sculpture composed of a taxidermy cat sitting on a working robotic vacuum constantly moving throughout the gallery. The work is the sculptural version of a viral video found online. The animal-machine hybrid is a tragicomic representation of the interaction between natural and artificial, fitting into a long line of sculptures created by the artists intending to reflect on meme culture.

Inside the Golden Room, one encounters **Up Next**, a 19-minute slideshow telling the story of the controversial Iranian influencer Sahar Tabar through selfies and newspaper clips. Thanks to her makeup and editing with Photoshop, Sahar's photographs have turned her into an Instagram celebrity and, at the same time, a target of tabloid press, the algorithmic power of social media, and that of an oppressive and patriarchal state. Her personal story inadvertently touches on many themes that the Mattes have addressed in their work, such as visibility, circulation of images, amateur photography, meme culture, virality, misinformation, and manipulation. The video is projected on a TV placed on a floating labyrinthine floor where one can also sit. The modular surface evokes the constantly expanding infrastructures of data centers, in a further reflection between physical space and digital space.

The exhibition begins and ends with a site-specific intervention overflowing from the gallery facade, creating a strong visual contrast between the eighteenth-century architecture of the palace and this sulfur-yellow alien infrastructure that, emerging from the exhibition space, expands onto the balcony toward the street, circulating its files even outside. Just like the internet, the artwork crosses the invisible barrier separating the private space of the gallery and the public space of the square below.

**Eva & Franco Mattes** are a duo of Italian artists based in New York and Milan. Operating anonymously or under various pseudonyms - particularly 0100101110101101.org - they are central figures in Net Art and with classic works like Life Sharing (2000) have helped define the medium.

Through video, installations, and interventions on the internet, their work reflects and delves into our hyperconnected life condition, often exposing with dark humor its deepest ethical and political implications. Some of their most controversial works have also landed them in legal trouble, such as the famous lawsuit with Nike - which unexpectedly ended with the artists' victory - the invention of the renowned artist Darko Maver, or the spread of a computer virus at the Venice Biennale. Thanks to interventions like these, they have become cult figures, and their influence on younger generations of artists continues to grow.

Their works are held in the collections of SFMOMA, the Whitney Museum of American Art, Fotomuseum Winterthur, X Museum, and the Walker Art Center.

Their work has been featured in numerous international exhibitions, including: KW, Berlin (2024-21); Kunsthalle Mainz (2022); Sharjah Art Foundation (2020); SFMOMA (2019); Mori Art Museum (Tokyo, 2018); Museum of Contemporary Art (Chicago, 2018); Sydney Biennale (2016); Whitechapel Gallery (London, 2016); Sundance Film Festival (2012); MoMA PS1 (New York, 2009);

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Performa (New York, 2009-2007); National Art Museum of China (Beijing, 2008); The New Museum (New York, 2005) and Manifesta (Frankfurt, 2002). In 2001, they were among the youngest artists ever included in the Venice Biennale.

Their anthological exhibitions have been held at the Phi Foundation (Montreal, 2019); Fotomuseum Winterthur (Zurich, 2021); Kunstverein Wiesbaden (2021), and Frankfurter Kunstverein (2023). They have had solo exhibitions at Team Gallery (Los Angeles); Postmasters Gallery (New York); Carroll/Fletcher Gallery (London) and Essex Flowers (New York).

In 2023, they were finalists for the Italian Pavilion at the Venice Biennale.

They are part of the curatorial collective Don't Follow the Wind, which maintains an inaccessible exhibition in the Fukushima Exclusion Zone (2015-present).

Their website is [www.0100101110101101.org](http://www.0100101110101101.org)

**APALAZZOGALLERY** was founded in 2008 by Francesca Migliorati and Chiara Rusconi, as a commercial space for new encounters. Inspired by the unique architecture of the gallery, the prestigious Palazzo Cigola Fenaroli in Brescia, Italy, it aims to show contemporary art through a particular perspective, presenting curated solo and group exhibitions on a diversity of themes.

The commitment of the gallery is to develop a multidisciplinary and cross-generational programme. APALAZZOGALLERY organises exhibitions based on a particular theme or, alternatively, on the work of a single artist; and it supports international and Italian artists, both young and historical figures. Every project is built on a long and attentive dialogue between the gallery space and the artist; the result is often a show, in which the artworks engage the space in innovative ways, creating complex connections with the architecture of the palace. The gallery encourages and sustains this dialogue through artist residencies.

APALAZZOGALLERY promotes the work of the artists through Italian and international art fairs and curatorial projects.

Represented artists are Sonia Boyce OBE RA, Ann Iren Buan, Edson Chagas, Giorgio Ciam, Raül De Nieves, Nathalie Du Pasquier, Emkal Eyongakpa, the Estate of Larry Stanton, Paolo Gonzato, Ibrahim Mahama, Eva & Franco Mattes, Servane Mary, the Estate of Jonas Mekas, Lucia Pescador, Marta Pierobon, Nathalie Provosty, Alan Reid, Olympia Scarry, Augustas Serapinas, Alexandra Sukhareva, The Reader, Francesco Vezzoli and Luc Ming Yan.

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