

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

What Do Ohio Voters Really Think?



Roopa Vasudevan: #Bellwether
Artist In Residence: May 19 – July 29
Exhibition: May 20 – July 29, 2016
Opening Reception:
Friday, May 20, 6:00 – 9:00 PM
Public Presentation:
Thursday, June 9, 6:30-8:30 PM

Cleveland, OH (April 20, 2016) — #Bellwether is a data collection project designed to dig deeper into the true political desires of the voting population of Ohio, a state that is regarded as vital to the endgame of both parties,

but whose citizens are often treated as faceless, nameless votes.

Roopa Vasudevan (Shanghai, China & Brooklyn, NY) is collecting social media data related to 2016 US presidential candidates, from the first debates through the nomination conventions. The data consists of public Twitter postings, geo-located to Ohio or at least mentioning Ohio in some way. The artist will perform language processing to extract sentiment or desires from the postings. Outcomes will manifest as physical artifacts that coopt the design language of the presidential campaigns, but instead of reflecting the candidates curated messages, the artifacts will represent how Ohio residents perceive them.

Additionally, Vasudevan plans to lay the findings and current polls side by side. Is there a trend to what the population actually wants? Do these trends match up with the widely accepted polls? And if not, is it time to investigate a new system of vote forecasting that better utilizes the data trails we are already habitually leaving behind us?

ARTIST BIO

Roopa Vasudevan is an artist, creative coder, and researcher. She is interested in utilizing technology to explore and expose patterns in our behavior, and to examine how computers and algorithms can help us better understand interpersonal relationships. Her work has been exhibited at venues around the United States, and has been featured by Reuters, Slate, the Huffington Post, the New Yorker blog, Jezebel, GOOD Lifestyle, Complex, PSFK, and The FADER, as well as on American, French and German television.

Roopa holds a BA in Film Studies from Columbia University, and an MPS from NYU's Interactive Telecommunications Program (ITP), where she also served as a post-graduate research fellow during 2013-2014. She is a member of the Flux Factory artist collective, based in Queens, NY, and an Assistant Arts Professor of Interactive Media Arts at NYU Shanghai.

SWAP

Since 2002, the SPACES World Artist Program (SWAP) has hosted residencies in Cleveland for international, national and local artists that support the creation, presentation and discussion of new artwork, while facilitating new connections between Cleveland communities and artists from around the world. Roopa Vasudevan is SWAP's 55th artist-in-residence.

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SPACES is located at 2220 Superior Viaduct, in Cleveland, OH. Gallery hours are Tuesday - Sunday: 12 – 5 p.m., and the gallery is open until 8 p.m. on Thursdays. Admission (and parking) during regular gallery hours is free and open to the public. For more information, visit www.SPACESgallery.org, call 216.621.2314 or email contact@SPACESgallery.org.

Style Notes: “SPACES” (all capital letters) is the legal name of the organization, and should be used in all instances without any additional words when referencing the organization.