

You're being watched: WITNESS set to open at New Media Gallery

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Surface Tension, by Rafael Lozano-Hemmer, is part of the new WITNESS exhibition at New Media Gallery. Photograph By contributed

Everywhere you are watching – and being watched.

The next exhibition at New Media Gallery, WITNESS, explores life in a world of surveillance systems and vision technologies. It's set to open on Thursday, Sept. 8, with a reception from 7 to 9 p.m., and the exhibition runs Sept. 9 to Nov. 6.

"WITNESS explores the interplays between the perceiving machine, the world that is perceived by the machine and we who are both perceiving and perceived bodies," a press release explains. "The works question how surveillance systems and vision technologies have reconfigured notions of embodiment, public space and the technologies themselves."

The works in the show are varied.

Do robotic cats dream of electric fish?, a work by France Cadet of France, features a robotic cat watching Nemo the fish on a screen, in which the act of watching becomes a critique on the act of watching.

A truly magical moment, by Canadian Adam Basanta, has two iPhones facing each other on angled selfie sticks. When FaceTime connects them, the sculpture begins to spin while romantic music plays in the background, in a modern exploration of the classic "two lovers on the dance floor" movie moment.

Surface Tension, by Canadian artist Rafael Lozano-Hemmer, features a large eye that follows the visitor's every movement.

Bjorn Schulke of Germany offers up *Vision Machine #3*, described as "a cross between a nightmare visit to the dentist and the newest apple product."

The Agency at the End of Civilization, by U.K. artist Stanza, links real-time images from hundreds of CCTV cameras in the south of England, aligned to millions of car number plates from the U.K. car number plate recognition system, exploring what is described as "a paradoxical future-present where everything is watched in precise detail yet the truth is increasingly uncertain."

WITNESS is the New Media Gallery's ninth exhibition. To date, the gallery has presented more than 50 artists from around the world.

The New Media Gallery is at the Anvil Centre, 777 Columbia St. Call 604-875-1865 or see www.newmediagallery.ca (<http://www.newmediagallery.ca/>) for more information.