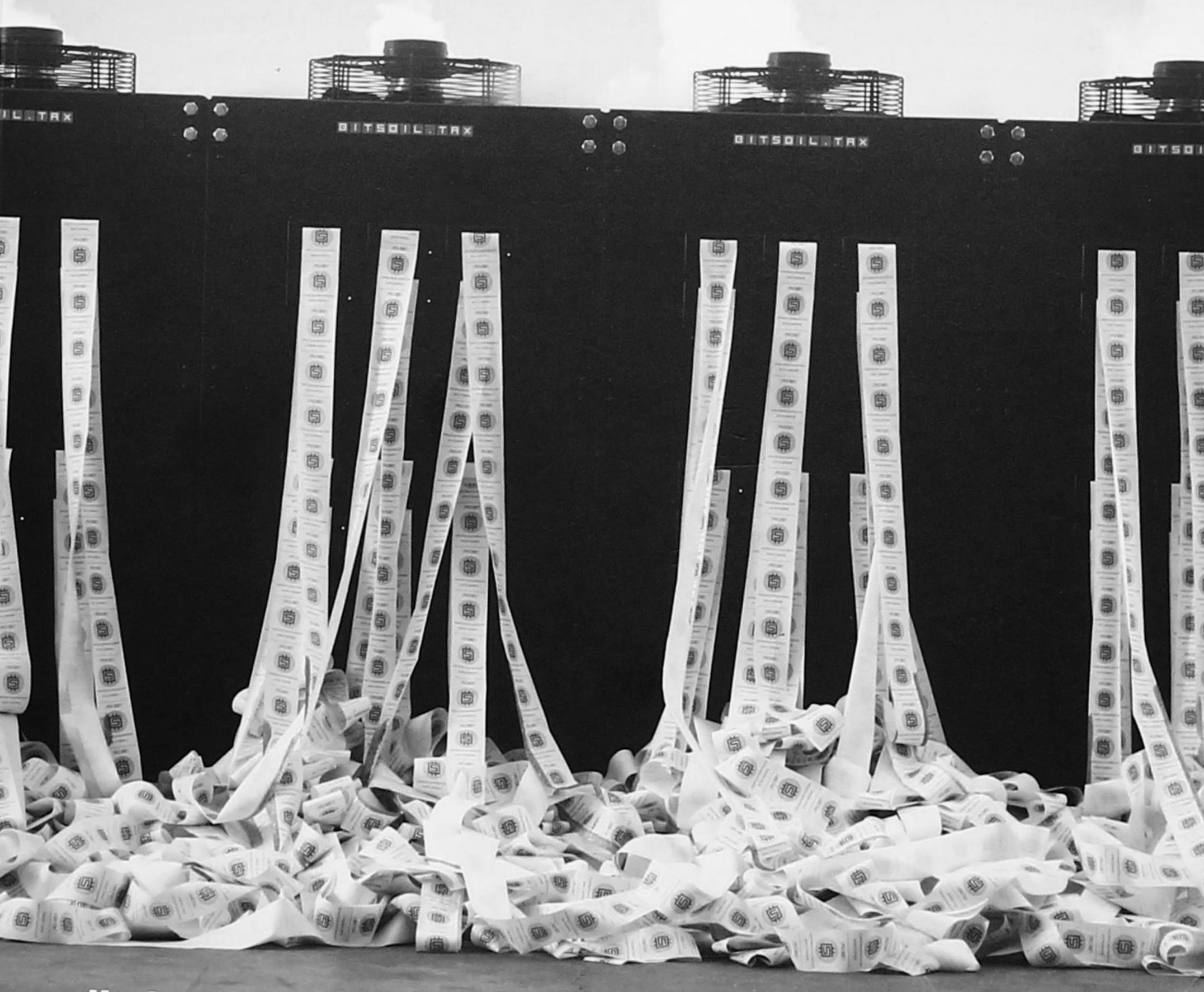
# CyberArts 2018

Prix Ars Electronica STARTS
PRIZE 18



빌로 ARS ELECTRONICA

HATJE

Hannes Leopoldseder · Christine Schöpf · Gerfried Stocker

## CyberArts 2018

International Compendium

#### Prix Ars Electronica

Computer Animation · Interactive Art + · Digital Communities Visionary Pioneers of Media Art · u19-CREATE YOUR WORLD

### STARTS Prize'18

Grand Prize of the European Commission honoring Innovation in Technology, Industry and Society stimulated by the Arts

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## Aboriginal Territories in Cyberspace (AbTeC)

http://abtec.org

Aboriginal Territories in Cyberspace (AbTeC) is an artist-led, Aboriginally determined research-creation network whose goal is to ensure Indigenous presence in the websites, video games, virtual environments, and social media platforms that make up cyberspace. Our community is composed of artists, activists, academics, technologists, youth, and elders from North America and Oceania.

AbTeC has multiple nodes and components: from AbTeC Island, our virtual headquarters in the massively shared online environment of Second Life, to our studio/lab at Concordia University in Montreal, to computer rooms across Turtle Island (North America), the community works on many projects. Our "Skins Workshops in Indigenous Storytelling and Digital Media" teach Indigenous youth how to make video games (in 200 hours) or machinima (in 30 hours), and have spawned offshoot workshops in programming, virtual world navigation, and character design. Their goal is to empower Indigenous youth to be producers-not just consumers-of digital media, building capacity in our community as we break down stereotypes. Artist residencies support the creation of new artworks, such as interactive virtual reality environments and machinima series. These works, the games, and more have been exhibited and screened internationally. AbTeC members also publish extensively, give interviews to both the press and student scholars, and lecture widely to inform Indigenous and non-Indigenous popular and academic audiences.

In 2014, AbTeC launched the "Initiative for Indigenous Futures (IIF)", reframing our activities to focus on the future of Indigenous communities. Can we use concrete dreaming about the future to help understand how to meet the challenges our communities face today? We've thus added to our activities an annual "Symposium on the Future Imaginary" among other new initiatives.

We also work towards influencing network culture and technology at large. That culture is heavily Euroand North America-centric, and the technology it has produced exhibits marked biases towards the many cultures that exist outside that context. As we work with Indigenous creators, AbTeC expects to see an Indigenous influence on the way cyberspace is conceptualized, designed and materialized.

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Aboriginal Territories in Cyberspace (AbTeC) began with a project called *CyberPowWow*, a hybrid website, chatspace, exhibition, library, and community event created by and for Indigenous artists. The project ran from 1997 to 2004. In 2005, Indigenous media artists Skawennati and Jason Edward Lewis launched AbTeC to encourage other Indigenous artists to use digital and networked media tools to create art and to populate cyberspace with Indigenous imagery, sounds and ideas. Urged by our elders to work with our youth, we established the "Skins Workshops" in 2008, which we have run in Kahnawake, Montreal, Toronto, Yellowknife, Regina, Vancouver, and Honolulu. We have won several Best New Media awards at the imagineNATIVE Film & Media Festival, as well as an Ashoka Changemakers award. In 2014, AbTeC founded the Initiative for Indigenous Futures (IIF) to develop the AbTeC community into a partnership with cultural organizations and educational institutions. abtec.org/iif