

# Patent Filed on Democracy Ahead of 2024 Election as Defense Against Future Political Shenanigans

*Innovations Include Legislative Automation and Nonhuman Voting. Prototypes Developed at San José State University to be Exhibited in San Francisco on October 30*

SAN FRANCISCO, CA, UNITED STATES, October 23, 2024 /EINPresswire.com/ --

Confronting simultaneous crises in American democracy and global ecology, a pioneering laboratory at San José State University has invented technologies to fundamentally alter elections and governance. Under the direction of experimental philosopher and artist Jonathon Keats, working in

collaboration with SJSU faculty and students, the Future Democracies Laboratory has developed protocols for including all living beings in politics in order to better represent the interests of the whole planet. The lab has also prototyped breakthrough technologies to make laws reflecting the

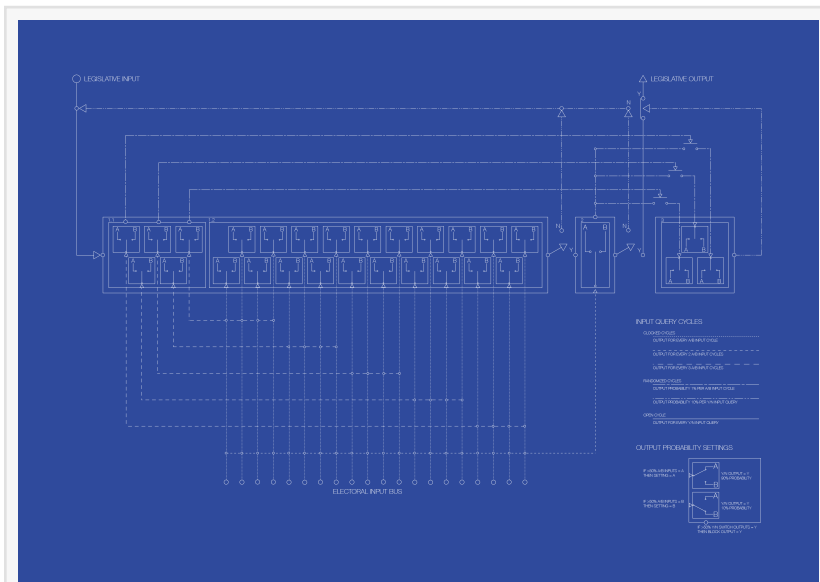
will of a taxonomically diverse electorate without the problematic interventions of human politicians. A newly-formed patent commons will ensure that these innovations are available to everyone.

“

Humans are oblivious to most of what happens on our planet. To ignore the perspectives of other species is reckless and also deeply unfair. Environmental justice depends on more holistic governance.”

*Jonathon Keats*

“People constantly gripe about the partisanship and corruption of elected officials, and the inadequacy of their policies.” says Mr. Keats. “It’s hard to disagree, given the degree of discontentment with the world in which we live. Our lab is dedicated to exploring root causes of dysfunction and investigating alternatives by fearlessly asking 'what if?’”

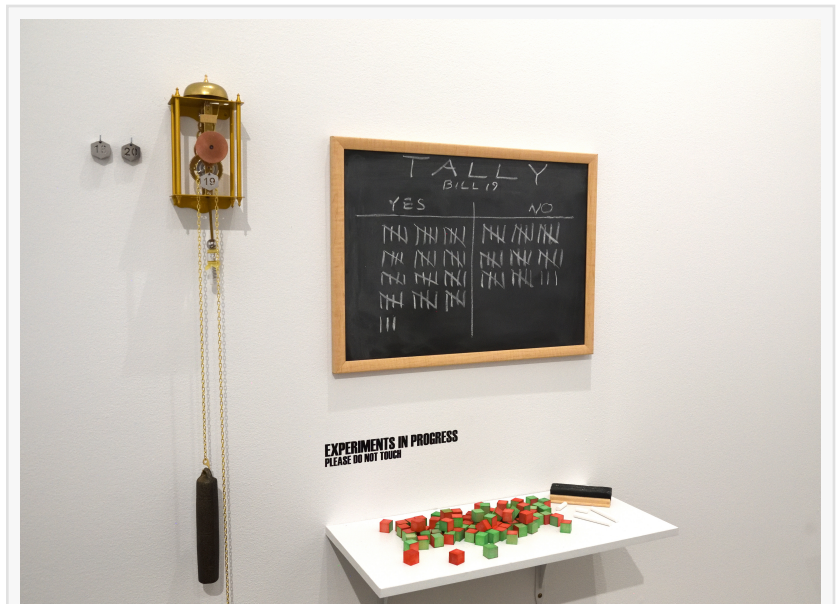


Courtesy of Jonathon Keats & Modernism Inc.

On the eve of the 2024 election, as discontentment verges on revolution, the laboratory will open a showroom in San Francisco's [Modernism Gallery](#), unveiling technologies that radically rethink centuries of political dogma. "Our work originated more than a decade ago with a simple thought experiment," Mr. Keats explains. "What if we re-engineered our political system to operate without people at the helm?" The lab replaced politicians with random number generators weighted to represent the will of the majority with high frequency but without perfect fidelity, providing a crucial check on the tyranny of the masses. These random number generators, one for each member of Congress, were configured to emulate the legislative process, with new laws generated by random mutation of legal code from the past.

Mr. Keats quickly recognized that the thresholds of random number generators could be adjusted continuously, reflecting realtime changes in political sentiment, but he also realized that people wouldn't want to spend their whole lives inside a voting booth. "Instead of requiring citizens to register their preferences by punching holes in cardboard, I reasoned that we could simply monitor changes in their stress level," explains Mr. Keats. "We can measure physiological changes such as heart rate, increasing the probability that random number generators will vote for change as stress increases. For even greater accuracy, biomedical devices have the potential to measure changes to the stress hormone cortisol from one moment to the next."

Humans are not the only animals to use cortisol as a stress hormone. Based on this fact, the voting system has been conceived to include input from mammals ranging from orangutans to chipmunks, as well as birds and bees. Other species manifest stress with other hormones that are no less measurable. For instance, stressed plants emit a volatile called ethylene. The Future Democracies Laboratory is collaborating with organizations including the [Institute of](#)



Courtesy of Jonathon Keats & Modernism Inc.



Courtesy of Jonathon Keats & Modernism Inc.

[Contemporary Art San José](#), the [University of South Australia](#), and Earth Law Center to integrate all of these inputs into democratic decision-making and to inspire human voters to reconnect with the rest of nature.

“In terms of biomass, our species constitutes less than one percent of life on Earth,” says Mr. Keats, who also serves as Earth Law Center’s principal philosopher. “Humans are oblivious to most of what happens on our planet, and our human neurobiology limits our thinking. To ignore the perspectives of other species is reckless and also deeply unfair to them. Environmental justice depends on more holistic governance.”

Keats emphasizes that the lab’s stress-based voting protocol and automated congressional platform are still largely untested in the wild and may not achieve their desired goals. “They could turn out to be catastrophic,” Mr. Keats admits. “As a research laboratory, we’re investigating possible futures to assess how they might impact society before they’re enacted. We’ve preemptively filed for patent protection – and secured a provisional patent – in order to prevent corporate and political opportunists from profiteering.

“Equally important, by presenting our speculative technologies to the public and allowing people to interact with them in our San Francisco showroom, we’re engaging the community in the process of deciding collectively what’s in our best interest: democratizing how we conceptualize democracy.”

On October 30th, from 6:00 to 8:00 PM, a selection of technologies will be on view in the Future Democracies Laboratory’s San Francisco showroom at Modernism Gallery, where they’ll be shared with the public and made available for licensing by companies seeking innovation in corporate governance. Apparatus on view will include a legislative mutation board and an experimental voting system for houseplants.

Concurrently, the Institute of Contemporary Art San José will showcase a range of Future Democracies Laboratory prototypes including an interactive electronic apparatus for reconfiguring government developed at SJSU’s CADRE Laboratory for New Media in collaboration with Professor Steve Durie. The apparatus will be installed at the ICA until February. Collected data will inform future R&D.

#### About Jonathon Keats

Acclaimed as a “poet of ideas” by *The New Yorker* and a “multimedia philosopher-prophet” by *The Atlantic*, Jonathon Keats is an artist, writer and experimental philosopher whose conceptually-driven transdisciplinary projects explore all aspects of society, adapting methods from the sciences and the humanities. Keats is currently a fellow at the Berggruen Institute, a research associate at the University of Arizona, a research fellow at the Highland Institute and the Long Now Foundation, principal philosopher at Earth Law Center, an advisor in metadisciplinary studies at the University of Zürich, and an artist-in-residence at the SETI

Institute and Flux Projects. A monograph about his work, Thought Experiments, was recently published by Hirmer Verlag.

MODERNISM INC.

info@modernisminc.com

Jonathon Keats

Visit us on social media:

[Facebook](#)

[Instagram](#)

[Other](#)

---

This press release can be viewed online at: <https://www.einpresswire.com/article/754010822>

EIN Presswire's priority is source transparency. We do not allow opaque clients, and our editors try to be careful about weeding out false and misleading content. As a user, if you see something we have missed, please do bring it to our attention. Your help is welcome. EIN Presswire, Everyone's Internet News Presswire™, tries to define some of the boundaries that are reasonable in today's world. Please see our Editorial Guidelines for more information.

© 1995-2024 Newsmatics Inc. All Right Reserved.