

For Immediate Release

## The Carl & Marilyn Thoma Foundation Acquires Face Filters by Huntrezz Janos – Paving the Way for Social Public Art

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*Clockwise: Huntrezz Janos with Eclipsatrix Exuvia (2021); Stills from AR Face Filters by Janos: Chromaviruz (2020); Hologram Mythography (2019); Images courtesy of TRANSFER and the artist.*

MIAMI, FL (August 22, 2023) – TRANSFER is pleased to announce the groundbreaking acquisition of Huntrezz Janos' *Chromaviruz* and *Hologram Mythography* face filters by the Carl & Marilyn Thoma Foundation. These filters, originally created on Meta's Spark AR platform, have been preventively re-built in open-source technology to preserve the longevity and accessibility of the works. While the Thoma Foundation owns the rights to display these filters in interactive public installations, the artworks are available for anyone to view online at any time, on the artist's Instagram account. Thus, the works are a form of public art that may be accessed in the public space of the web. This acquisition marks a transformative moment in the realm of social public art, spotlighting the Foundation's commitment to fostering openness and innovation.



Huntrezz Janos, born and based in Los Angeles, has earned recognition as a visionary artist renowned for her exploration of identity through simulation, augmentation, and worldbuilding. Janos is particularly celebrated for her 3D graphics, animation, and augmented and virtual realities. With a focus on identity, gender, community, and social structures, her digital works challenge conventional perspectives and forge new trajectories for artistic expression in the digital age.

Inspired by the rich history of masks as symbolic narrative devices, the augmented reality face filters introduce fantastical and impossible characters, each representing various real, imagined, and daydreamed scenarios from the artist's life. Viewers have the opportunity to try these masks on in digital space. "There are many spaces where I am not valued, or safe to be myself, a black trans woman. My new media work defies those attitudes, by utilizing innovation to share my intersectional perspective and let others share in my diverse forms." says Janos. She combines sharp renders with vibrant futuristic aesthetics to explore the fantasies of a Black, Non-Binary artist navigating the challenging realities of systemic violence and exclusion.

"*Chromaviruz (2020)* and *Hologram Mythography (2019)*, Huntrezz's first AR Face Filter artworks are freed from the Meta platform with this acquisition. In partnership with the Integrated Design and Media Researchers at NYU Tandon School of Engineering, TRANSFER has led an interventive conservation effort to rebuild the artworks on an open-source pipeline for web-based AR face filters, so the works are truly open and available to audiences," says Kelani Nichole, founder of TRANSFER.

The acquisition signals a shift in how we understand public art in the digital age. Janos' works, though originally created in Spark AR and trapped within the proprietary Meta ecosystem, have been preventatively conserved and converted into websites. This means that the works are available for anyone to access on the web without the need for a log-in or 3rd party data collection – opening up the possibilities of web-based augmented reality public art.

"The acquisition underscores an emerging institutional commitment to fostering dialogue about longevity and accessibility," says Nichole. "Huntrezz' experimental use of technology in the studio is helping us to broaden those conversations, and consider how open web-based initiatives can bolster those discussions around her work."

Huntrezz Janos' work can be accessed online at the artist's Instagram page. Additional filters available for acquisition from Janos' early face filter series will be on view as part of an interactive exhibition at PHOTOFAIRS New York from September 7 - 10, 2023 at the Javits Center. All ticketed guests are invited to an artist talk with Janos taking place at TRANSFER Booth #151 on Friday, September 8th at 3PM.

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**TRANSFER** is an experimental gallery that explores simulation and expanded practice. Founded by Kelani Nichole in 2013, TRANSFER's mission is to support artists examining the social, cultural and political implications of emerging technology in their work.