

# CULTURED

## Code Call

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March 2016



Portrait by Matt Grubb

"I am interested in how we are evolving as a consequence of technological developments," says New York-based Hayal Pozanti, the latest artist tapped to create the Cultured Commission. "By making these objects that preserve fleeting bits of data in physical reality, I aim to create points of recognition and memory for the future." For her series, Pozanti calls on her invented lexicon of 31 shapes to create a new work entitled *81 (Percentage of CEOs with high intuition scores who doubled their business in five years.)* Here, the artist talks about data manipulation, creating shapes and her work at The Kitchen's group show, "From Minimalism to Algorithm."

**You've invented an alphabet of 31 shapes that you paint over and over again and use as a tool to interpret and image sets of data. Where did these shapes come from?**

I like to think of it as creating new shapes through combinations of the original set of 31 rather than painting over and over again. As for where they came from, I came up with this lexicon in a very roundabout way. I was initially interested in generating interruptions within online visual flows and therefore wanted to create images that did not resemble or refer to anything within the feed. In other words, to explore the possibility of creating something completely from scratch. To better understand how one could invent shapes I began to study such varied examples as cuneiform, runes, kilim patterns, military insignia, corporate logos, occult symbols and ancient drawings from around the globe. Through this research I came up with a personal shape making system based on placing a circle within a square. From that point on I just started making hundreds of shapes freely. After using these sketches as a basis for my paintings for a few years I began to notice repetitions. That is when I decided to identify which ones I was repeating, hence the 31 shapes.



81 (Percentage of CEOs with high intuition scores who doubled their business in five years.)  
Courtesy of the artist and Jessica Silverman Gallery.

**The statistics and data sets you depict have to do specifically with, in your words, “the impact of technological advancements on humans.” What types of statistics are you seeking out specifically? How do you choose what you use?**

I am interested in how we are evolving as a consequence of technological developments. The speed at which our external world shifts makes it extremely difficult for us to objectively analyze and think through the consequences of our inventions. By making these objects that preserve fleeting bits of data in physical reality, I aim to create points of recognition and memory for the future. You can think of it as a subjective timeline based on curated data. I am usually working towards an exhibition that addresses particular issues, so I will start reading and researching about that topic which in turn naturally leads to me to data sets and numbers related to it. I then pick out the bits of information which feel most relevant. These don't necessarily have to be statistics although in most case they tend to be.



Install image of the artist's show "Deep Learning" at the Aldrich Museum in CT. On view until April 3, 2016.

**Why translate these stats into abstract forms? What function does that serve for you or for the viewer? In a way, does making it abstract, make it even less accessible?**

I translate them into abstract forms in order to create encrypted physical vessels of information. My aim in doing this is to address issues of data manipulation, validity of online information, censorship, surveillance, personal information rights and privacy. So, yes, they do become less accessible, that is, until you have the key. Visually though, I don't think that abstraction makes them less accessible. They are in dialogue with a rich history of shape-making systems that were used for communication, spiritual guidance and confidentiality.



*Percentage of total impact of a message that is nonverbal, 2016.*  
Image courtesy of the artist and Jessica Silverman Gallery

**You are currently in a group show at the Kitchen that deals with the history of Minimalism and how it connects to younger artists dealing with technology and seriality in their work. Do you identify with a legacy of minimalism or does some different vein of abstraction feel more apt? Do you identify with the label Neo-Geo?**

I think that formally my work is definitely in conversation with minimalism in terms of how it pares down compositions into geometric shapes. It does however incorporate elements of embellishment and references to writing that would go against the grain of the core principles of the movement. As for Neo-Geo, my work could be seen to share an aspect of the rejection of non-objective abstraction but at the same time it does not use elements of figurative subject material that actually exists in the world. It's an invented system of self-referral, which in a way prevents it from being understood under a clear cut collective umbrella of movements.

**What will you show at your upcoming exhibition at Levy.Delval in Brussels?**

I am working on two different sets of prints. One will be in the form of large banners printed on fabric and the other on metallic dibond. I'm still in process so can't give anymore details unfortunately.

81 (Percent of CEOs with high intuition scores doubled their business in five years.) is an edition of 5 unique prints available exclusively on [Artsy.net/culturedmagazine](https://www.artsy.net/culturedmagazine).