

International New York Times

Website gives stage to new-media artists

LONDON

Buyers can download video, sound and digital works on Daata Editions

BY GINANNE BROWNELL MITIC

This is what a hit looks like in the age of digital art.

A web video piece called "she's so talented," by the Canadian born, New York-based artist Chloe Wise, sold three copies within a day of being posted in May on Daata Editions, a digital art marketplace.

The video, 1 minute 3 seconds and set in Boca Raton, Fla., features a gender-bending character in a variety of poses: drinking Red Bull in a pink velour zip-up

jacket on the beach, sitting on a sofa in a high-rise condo, doing dance moves while dressed in a floral midriff top. The soundtrack includes conversational snippets overheard by the artist at last year's Art Basel in Miami Beach, including "She's so talented, she's a real artist," and "Listen, if you are on the wait list, that means you are in the liminal zone between being no one and actually being someone."

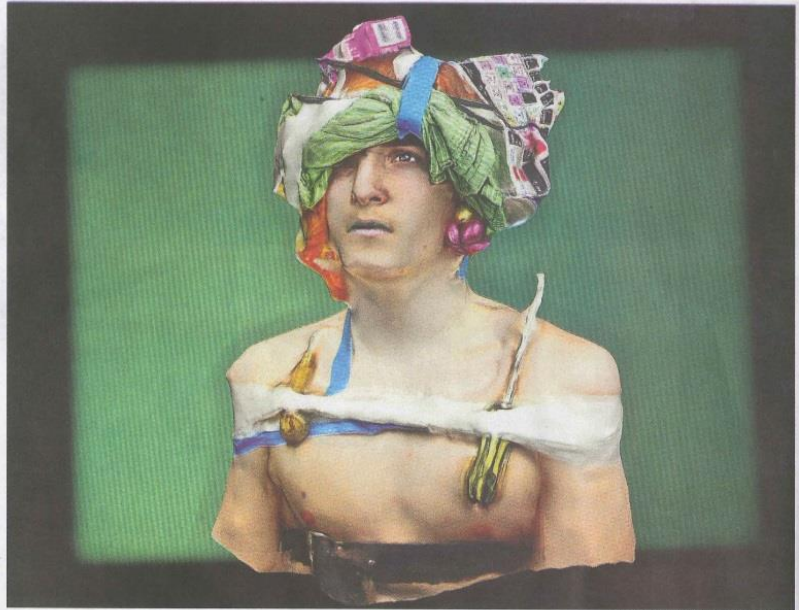
"Miami is a place of excess, of vacation and gluttony, but also the art market, with lots of consumerism going on," said Ms. Wise, who graduated from art school in Montreal in 2013. "It is a really interesting place to overhear things."

And, apparently, to get on board with a new way to sell art. Miami is also where Ms. Wise first met David Gryn, a London-based curator who, along with the British collector and philanthropist



COURTESY CHLOE WISE AND DAATA EDITIONS

"What we are is a commissioning platform that works with artists who work in those mediums and who promote their art form."



COURTESY CHARLES RICHARDSON AND DAATA EDITIONS

Anita Zabudowicz, co-created Daata Editions. The website, which debuted during this year's Frieze Art Fair in New York, combines the growing online art sales scene with the mushrooming market value of new media art.

Ms. Wise was one of 18 new-media artists invited to be part of the inaugural group to show on the website. The group includes Jon Rafman, Takeshi Murata, Hannah Perry, Ilt Azoulay and Stephen Vitiello.

"I have learned to say no to a lot in the art world, as you sense 'I do not trust this person,'" said Mr. Vitiello, a Virginia-based sound and visual artist who created sound works for Daata with names like "Stars in My Pocket Like Grains of Sand."

"But you try and say yes to those that instinctively feel interesting, and I thought, 'Why not give this a shot?'"

The idea behind Daata is simple. Once a year, 18 video, sound and digital artists will be commissioned to do six pieces of three minutes or less, 15 editions of each piece. The works are available to be purchased and downloaded from the site.

Daata has a sliding price scale. Sound, web and digital works start at \$100 and increase by edition to a top price of \$2,800; for video, the starting price is \$200, increasing by increments to a top price of \$5,600. The price difference, Mr. Gryn said, is linked to the perceived higher market value of video. Daata keeps the revenue and pays each artist a 15 percent royalty on each sale.

The website got an institutional boost in mid-October with the announcement that two museums had become benefactors. The Julia Stoschek Collection in Düsseldorf, Germany, has purchased the full set of new works, and the Hammer Museum in Los Angeles has accepted a full edition as a gift. The Hammer's chief curator, Connie Butler, said in a statement that the pieces would "extend the museum's history of collecting and displaying new media work."

Seed funding for the site came from Ms. Zabudowicz, who remains an adviser. The site is staffed by Mr. Gryn and a producer. Their intention is to break even by 2017.

The first release took place during the

mediums are not very different. There are natural similarities in these immaterial art forms. We are making it very simple to show and collect the works that have been commissioned."

The British artist Hannah Perry, who was one of the inaugural 18, acknowledged that the concept of collecting video art was difficult for some people to get their heads around.

"Once you buy something, how do you display it or how do you share it?" she said. "I had a collector say to me once, 'Do I put a monitor on the wall during a dinner party? Do I keep the sound down? How do I put the sound in?'"

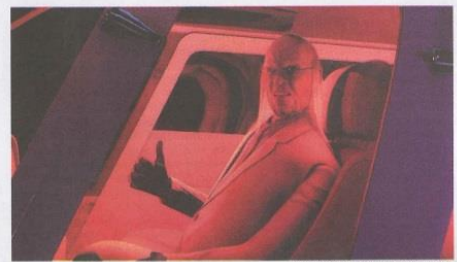
When Ms. Perry sells a video work, she includes in the box not only with the certificate of authenticity but also a small silkscreen print related to the piece that the owner can display.

The perception that video or sound art is difficult to grasp is something that Mr. Gryn hopes will change with Daata.

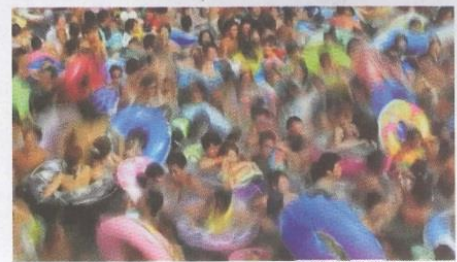
"We are not a gallery — we are not art advisers," he said. "What we are is a commissioning platform that works with artists who work in those mediums and who promote their art form and nurture awareness. My idea is that you make a self-sustaining business that commissions the next round of artists' works."

By the beginning of September, all the inaugural artists had sold several editions of their works, and there were over 500 downloads of a free Jon Rafman video. By Mr. Gryn's standards, "that is

New way to sell
Images from videos available from Daata Editions. The works are priced initially from \$100 to \$5,600. Clockwise from above: Charles Richardson's "Carramesh" (2015), Takeshi Murata's "OM Passenger" (2015), Jon Rafman's "Oh the humanity" (2015), and Chloe Wise's "The hotel gave us wine" (2015).



COURTESY TAKESHI MURATA AND DAATA EDITIONS



COURTESY JON RAFMAN AND DAATA EDITIONS

Frieze Art Fair in New York, followed in June by a release during LOOP in Barcelona, Spain. After Frieze London, there will be three more releases during Season One, which will extend into early 2016.

Mr. Gryn, who curates the outdoor film screenings at ART Basel in Miami Beach, said the idea for Daata grew out of his and Ms. Zabudowicz's observations that collectors were hesitating to buy new media art and gallerists were struggling with how to show it. That, in turn, led to gallerists' hesitating to bring new media works to art fairs because they tended not to sell well during such high-stakes, high-profile events.

"We are all so very used to buying music and film online without having to own physical items we have purchased," Ms. Zabudowicz wrote in an email. "The art

fantastic," he wrote in an email, because it means the work is being seen and bought.

Jessica Witkin, the director of the New York gallery Salon 94, which specializes in new media, drew a parallel with how collectors eventually warmed to photographic art, accepting the idea that more than one edition could be available.

"I think it is really important what they are doing, supporting artists from the inside," she said.

Ms. Wise agreed, saying that if Daata had not commissioned her Florida videos for the platform, they would not have been made.

"Basically," she said, "they are pushing the cycle further and allowing digital to really be appreciated and have acceptability, viewership and be funded."