Press Release: School of Art VASLS Speaker Claudia Hart presents *Memory Theaters*

Feb 29th

*Memory Theater Performance I*: 9am – 10am TEMPE Stauffer B125
*Memory Theater Performance II*: 2:30pm – 3:45pm MIX Small Screening Theater (First Floor)

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**The Memory Theaters of Claudia Hart**

**BIOGRAPHY**

Claudia Hart emerged as part of a generation of 90s intermedia artists examining issues of identity and representation. Since the late 90s when she began working with 3D animation, Hart embraced these same concepts, but now focusing on the impact of computing and simulation technologies. Hart was an early adopter of virtual imaging, using 3D animation to make media installations and projections, and later as they were invented, other forms of VR,
AR and also creating objects produced by computer-driven production machines. At the School of the Art Institute of Chicago, where she is Professor Emeritus, she developed a pedagogic program based on her practice - Experimental 3D - the first dedicated solely to teaching simulations technologies in an art-school context.

Hart’s works are widely exhibited and collected by galleries and museums including the collections of the Whitney Museum of American Art, the Museum of Modern Art, the National Gallery, Hamburger Bahnhof, Berlin, and the Albertina Museum, Vienna, The Museum of Contemporary Art San Diego, The Vera List Center Collection, The Borusan Contemporary Collection, The Carl & Marilynn Thoma Foundation Collection, the Anne and Michael Spalter Digital Art Collection, The Goetz Collection, The New York Public Library, the Addison Gallery of American Arts, Andover, MA, Richard and Ellen Sandor Family Collection, and many other private collections. Her work has been exhibited at the New Museum, produced at the Eyebeam Center for Art + Technology, where she was an honorary fellow in 2013-14, and at the Center for New Music and Audio Technology, UC California, Berkeley where she is currently a fellow. She lives in NY, works with bitforms gallery, NY, and Expanded.art, Berlin and is married to the Austrian media artist Kurt Hentschlager.

Project Description
Since the late 1980s, Claudia Hart, an artist and Professor Emeritus at the School of the Art Institute of Chicago, has used 3D simulations technology to produce subversive works on identity and experience that cross the virtual and physical worlds. Hart thinks of herself as a mixed reality artist, and her art takes shape through tangible installations and sculptures, projection-mapped performances, and what she calls “Digital Combines”— hybrid works that combine NFT encrypted contracts and tangible paintings. These projects explore the poetic threshold between the concrete and abstract. Her new live performance, entitled MEMORY THEATER (2023) embodies this as a half hour theatrical monologue combined with animations consisting of experimental avatar dance, video, and earlier works culled from her personal archive spanning 35 years of continuous media-art practice. In it, she recites fable-like anecdotes that hybrid Grimm’s fairy tales with art history and personal memoir, bringing together her past, present, and imagined selves.

Created in 2023, Hart uses materials culled from 5 of her 40-year media archive (2013-2018), focusing on works from The Alice series, Hart’s collaboration with the composer Edmund Campion. The Memory Theater of Claudia Hart is 30 minutes in length. Four different animations are projected one after the next in a single reel, with Hart telling stories timed to her projections. The Memory Theater is direct and simple, requiring only a single large screen for projection, a head-set microphone and a sound system with a mixing board. Hart listens to a click-track of each narrative on AirPods as she speaks it live against a recorded sound collage featuring samples from Campion’s compositions that he produced and recorded for their collaborative performances. The piece does not require precise digital-sync.