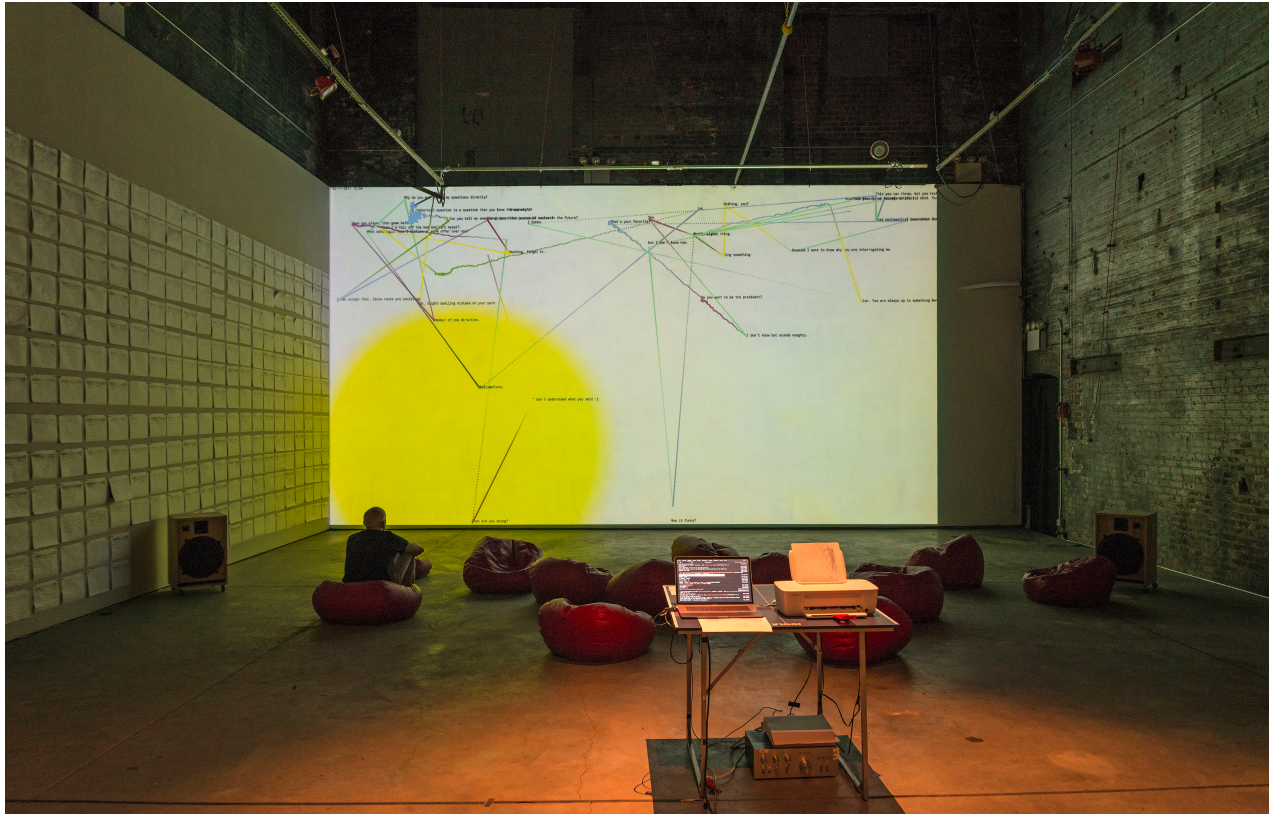


## Galleries



When the artist John O'Connor first tried to communicate with Cleverbot, an artificial-intelligence program that the British computer scientist Rollo Carpenter created in the 1990s, it told Mr. O'Connor that it would like to punch him in the throat. Their relationship has improved over the years.

Now a collective called NonCoreProjector, which includes Mr. O'Connor, Mr. Carpenter, Jack Colton and Elias Jarzombek, has created "verbolect" at the Boiler, based on Cleverbot. To experience the work, you can sit on a beanbag chair and listen to Cleverbot talk to itself, asking questions and providing answers derived from a stored memory of past conversations. Projected on the wall are moving lines whose colors indicate the emotional potency of the spoken words. Additional images, music and sounds have been loaded into the projected computer presentation, including photographs of faces from Paul Ekman's studies of human emotion.

The projections resemble some of Mr. O'Connor's earlier drawings and paintings, as well as concrete poetry and the "conspiracy" drawings of Mark Lombardi, with their networks of lines. Splitting the difference between art and science, the exhibition is fundamentally conceptual and philosophical, making you question the nature of intelligence and emotion, as well as the boundary between A.I. and humans.

Cleverbot often sounds comically delusional or defensive: "Are you a robot?" it asks itself. "No, I'm a human." But sometimes Cleverbot seems full of infinite possibilities and bravado. "What are you having for lunch?" it asked itself while I was there. "Everything."

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