



PIKSEL

festival for elektronisk kunst og fri teknologi

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PIKSEL19 - e/co,li:bre

The 17th annual Pikel Festival for Electronic Art and Free Technologies

21st - 23rd November 2019

Bergen (Norway)

Press note

Hossein Derakhshan

Post-news journalism: Art meets journalism

Why Europe should build its own social platform for news; if news is dying, who will safeguard democracy?; how did the news go 'fake'? When the media went social. These has been some of the articles that Hossein Derakhshan has been writing at The Guardian and other international media.

Hossein Derakhshan is an Iranian-Canadian writer, who has been defining, commissioned by the Council of Europe, on the theory and practice of what is known as 'fake news' together with Claire Wardle. In 2010, Iran's Mashregh News reported that the 'counterrevolutionary blogger' had been sentenced to more than 19 years in jail for "conspiring with hostile governments, spreading propaganda against the Islamic system, spreading propaganda in favor of counterrevolutionary groups, blasphemy, and creating and managing obscene websites."¹

After six years in prison he was pardoned by Iran's supreme leader, Ayatollah Ali Khamenei. No reason was given for the pardon.

As Wired magazine reported, Mr. Derakhshan "figured out a way to combine Unicode and Blogger.com's free tools to handle Persian characters." This technical advance, Wired said, meant that "suddenly, blogging in Persian was as simple as it is in English."

Considered a major influence in introducing the blogging concept to Iran, he was a research fellow at Harvard Kennedy School's Shorenstein Center and is currently a research associate at the MIT Media Lab. His current research is focused on the future of journalism and also on the theory and socio-political implications of digital and social media. His writings have appeared in The New York Times, The Guardian, MIT Technology Review, Wired, Libération, Die Zeit, and Corriere Della Sera.

In Bergen, under the Pikel19 festival program, he will be giving a lecture about how the challenge awaiting journalism in the years to come is to reinvent itself around something other than news, whilst resisting the seduction of propaganda and entertainment. He thinks that post-news journalism will revolve around drama. This means journalists should make various experiments inspired by older artistic forms such as literature, theatre, cinema, photography and even music and dance. Innovation in journalism should not only be about business models or technology, it should be also about radically new cultural forms and representation formats.

Hossein Derakhshan will be in Bergen invited by the Pikel Festival, giving a lecture on Friday 22nd of November at the Bergen Public Library. He will be available for interviews. Please contact Maite Cajaraville (maite@piksel.no) or Gisle Frøysland (gif@piksel.no). For mer informasjon: <http://19.piksel.no>

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1. (excerpts from The New York Times)