

Andrew Nunes, 'The Most Boring Tech Startup Ever, or the Perfect Performance?', *Creators Project*, October 2015

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The Most Boring Tech Startup Ever, or the Perfect Performance?

By Andrew Nunes — Oct 1 2015



Images courtesy the artist

To call [Constant Dullaart](#) a "troll" does not give the 36-year-old Berlin-based Dutch artist nearly enough credit. But Dullaart does employ a pervading sense of meddling humor throughout his works.

[High Retention, Slow Delivery](#) saw the artist buying 2.5 million Instagram followers to be distributed amongst 30 art-world figures and institutions for the sake of "equalizing their social capital." [His website](#) works are also thoroughly embedded with humor; [The Revolving Internet](#) rotates your web page indefinitely while Dusty Springfield sings "The Windmills of Your Mind" to you and [Google Terms of Service](#) emulates Google's home page but begins to loudly read the search engine's Terms of Service if you attempt to write something in the search bar.

But within these playful artworks, well-thought conceptual motivations are always present. In this respect,

work, Dullaart has founded [DullTech™](#), “the world’s first artist-led technology start-up firm.” Lying somewhere between a tech startup and an entrepreneurial art project, the artist has just successfully [crowdsourced \\$33,546 on Kickstarter](#) for the creation the company’s first product, a universal USB media player meant to facilitate common problems encountered by artists when installing video work for exhibitions.



It may seem that the only relationship to art that DullTech™ possesses is in its founder and intended consumer, but there are many layers that muddle the company’s superficial appearance as an ordinary tech startup. Talking to Dullaart, the artist emphasizes that the media player is “not only an awesomely simple, cheap and functional device, it actually has an artwork as a screensaver... so if you buy the player, you also buy an artwork, embedded in the device itself.” Effectively, the DullTech™ media player is always an artwork, either one of your choosing or Dullaart’s “performative video recorded in the former office of Friedrich Kittler.”

DullTech

The artist also affirms that, beyond the media player, the entirety of DullTech™ should be considered a form of performance art: “By commenting and showing the complete production process, the entire project

DullTech™ trademark application, to the Kickstarter, even if it fails, is performative.”



One aspect at the core of DullTech™ lies within the first half of its name. “Dull” functions as a double entendre of both the artist’s name and his philosophy regarding the technology his company will create: “In a time when more and more art is created to please the largest quantified mass of audience, it seems like we are flooded with populist non-critical corporate strategies contextualized as art... This is why I thought I should respond to this over excited consumer tech world that is embraced by the art world by just starting my own tech brand, a dull tech brand. DullTech™.” The company’s media player exemplifies this perfectly as a functional, if unstimulating by modern standards, piece of tech art.

With the successful Kickstarter, the company’s universal media player will be available to purchase within the next few months. DullTech™, however, is not merely a one-off artwork/startup hybrid; Dullaart boldly plans for the company to remain active as long as his studio practice continues. And so far this seems to be the truth; the artist already has a series of other DullTech™ products in the making, including “a machine that shuffles all the available loops from Garageband to keep you awake during overnight coding sessions or long distance driving”.



The official website of [DullTech™](#)'s “neoliberal hardware lulz” [can be found here](#), where the universal media player and other dull technology will be available to purchase in coming months. Constant Dullaart’s [incredibly unique artist website](#) is also definitely worth a visit.