

REVERSE

BEAUTIFUL INTERFACES: THE PRIVACY PARADOX 4/14—5/14

BEAUTIFUL INTERFACES: THE PRIVACY PARADOX is a group show curated by Helena Acosta & Miyö Van Stenis featuring work by Jennifer Lyn Morone, Heather Dewey Hagborg, LaTurbo Avedon, Annie Rose Malamet and Carla Gannis. The exhibited work will live on a wireless network accessible through five routers at the gallery space. The routers have been hacked and are not actually connected to the Internet. Each router has a private network, which visitors must login to through their own devices – cell phones or iPads – to view the artwork. BEAUTIFUL INTERFACES: THE PRIVACY PARADOX explores the dichotomy between the private and the public, creating a platform for distribution of data on an independent and anonymous network.

In the era of algorithm prediction all our online actions have a digital trace, which are used by companies and governments to predict our behaviors. The Internet's purpose is to collect and quantify each action – becoming a medium for surveillance.

Everyday online social practices could look like harmless actions through a naive eye, but they contain the potential for unexpected consequences when they are traced and connected to algorithmic surveillance systems. In less than five years facial recognition algorithms will be ubiquitous. For example, Facebook has recently added facial recognition technology to their platform, becoming more deeply integrated into our smartphones. These new applications will facilitate easy reconstruction of any random encounter we have on the street that has been captured by a camera.

And even though our increased communication practices on the Social Web result in an increase of personal information online, the 'Privacy Paradox'* suggests that despite Internet users' apprehension about privacy, their behaviors do not reflect those concerns. Although we keep insisting on how much we care about our data, the statement 'privacy is important!' has become a void belief in our contemporary society.

*In a study into the matter of The Privacy Paradox, researchers created two fictitious online shops. One of the shops demanded less personal data from their customers, but the DVDs on sale cost one euro more than in the second shop, which wanted to know a lot more about its customers. Almost all users picked the cheaper store. Even when the prices were the same in both shops, only half of the subjects chose the privacy-friendly variety. Apparently, we are not willing to pay a price for privacy. The costs of privacy are virtually zero.

Monika Taddicken, Institute of Journalism and Communication Research (Hamburg, Germany: University of Hamburg).

A router is a networking device that forwards data packets between computer networks. Routers

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reinforcing this idea of the privacy paradox, erasing the router's predetermined function and transforming it into a device that offers a private experience. The hacking process of this exhibition is powered by Occupy.here an open source project developed by Dan Phiffer in 2011.

Annie Rose Malamet's 'Hooker Meditation Exercise' is a video art piece that examines anonymity, fear, and visibility in relation to sex work. Malamet uses her own advertisements, client voicemails, and original footage to create a narrative about the anxiety of being discovered and to reflect on her own identity.

In 'Electronic Graveyard No.2' Carla Gannis explores the collision of traditional self portraiture in fine art and social media's selfie culture. Gannis creates a dystopic futuristic Graveyard where digital identity and daily online practices live forever on the collective memory of the social web; where even after we are dead, our privacy can still be exposed.

Heather Dewey Hagborg works at the intersection of art and science, placing an emphasis on conceptions of the natural and the artificial. 'Stranger Visions' is a series of portrait sculptures created from genetic material collected in public places by the artist. Working with the traces strangers unwittingly leave behind, Dewey Hagborg calls attention to the developing technology of forensic DNA phenotyping and the potential for a culture of biological surveillance.

Jennifer Lyn Morone affirms "I am a data slave and so are you." Morone uses ethics and economic reasoning to create a business model, where she is the corporation that owns her own data. Jennifer Lyn Morone™ Inc is a hyper capitalistic model, where Morone over exposes her data in order to protect and capitalize it. For the exhibition, the curators have selected to show Jennifer's data from their first contact with her up until the moment of the exhibition.

In 'ID,' LaTurbo Avedon visualizes the attributes that she has acquired in virtual space. Using data like facial detection markers and her lifted fingerprints, she reveals the process of creating personal metadata for the identification of a digital self.

ABOUT THE ARTISTS

Annie Rose Malamet is a visual artist, writer and poet. Her work addresses the relation between female net art production and visual vulnerability, exploring the woman's body to navigate conversations about visibility. Her interactive website, ANNYFANNY.info, invites visitors to click through various photos and videos, journeying through a mediated, yet labyrinthine narrative. The site includes new, original footage as well as images from an extensive archive documenting Annie's experiences from the age of 15 and on. Other significant artistic projects include a solo performance in 2014 at Vector Gallery. Her current artistic interests include individual isolation and the Internet, digital trauma, anonymity and sex work.

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Carla Gannis' work explores the concepts of nature and the politics of identity, drawing from art history, technology, theory, cinema, video games and speculative fiction. Identifying as a visual storyteller, Carla uses 21st Century representational technologies to narrate through a "digital looking glass", reflecting on power, sexuality, marginalization and agency. She is fascinated by contemporary modes of digital communication, the power (and sometimes the perversity) of popular iconography and the situation of identity in the blurring contexts of technological virtuality and biological reality. Since 2003 Carla's work has appeared in 20 solo exhibitions and numerous group shows both nationally and internationally.

Heather Dewey Hagborg works at the intersection of art and science, placing an emphasis on conceptions of the natural and the artificial. Drawing from diverse fields including biology, computation, sculpture and critical design, Heather engages in art as practice based research; a means of exploration to probe the deep and often hidden structures of media, technology and science that dominate the contemporary moment and frame our cultural imagination. She has long been fascinated by language and speech, learning and knowledge representation, algorithmic models and metaphors, biological and ecological systems and the cultural organization of data as information. Heather's work has been exhibited internationally at numerous events and venues and has been widely discussed in the media.

Jennifer Lyn Morone is an artist, designer and experimenter whose work playfully challenges human-designed systems that undermine the individual. Her work can be described as thought experiments put to practice in long-term, subversive and collaborative life-works. Jennifer's focus is on economics and her methodology involves reappropriating structures (i.e. political and business systems), deconstructing them and redesigning them, taking into account concerns and realities of today and especially those anticipated in the future. By pushing her designs to the extreme, she aims to expose how, inherently, the exploitation of economically driven decisions and agendas impacts the fabric of modern human existence. Jennifer's work has been shown internationally at numerous events and venues.

LaTurbo Avedon is an artist and resident of the Internet. Without a real world referent, LaTurbo is a digital manifestation of a person that has never existed outside of a computer. Avedon's digital sculptures and environments disregard the lack of physicality and instead emphasize the practice of virtual authorship. Her works are regularly distributed online and have been exhibited internationally at Transmediale (Berlin), NRW Forum (Düsseldorf), Museum Angewandte Kunst (Frankfurt), CICA Museum (Gimpo), Newman Festival (Druskininkai), NRW Forum (Düsseldorf), Transfer Gallery (New York City), Jean Albano Gallery (Chicago) and Galeries Lafayette (Paris), among others.