

*Matthias* *Schäfer*  
*Pitscher*  
*Portfolio*

# Curriculum Vitae

Matthias /Pitscher/ Schäfer

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## exhibitions / performances

2021	<i>we are the human</i> WHA Galerie, Linz	2018	<i>Projected.Capital,</i> Roehrs & Boetsch, Zurich
2021	<i>doggg.art</i> Die Digitale, Düsseldorf	2018	<i>whosafraidofredyellowandblue.online</i> #nfc dab, Valencia
2021	<i>Social Media Meditation</i> Galerie Eigenheim, Berlin	2018	<i>Social Media Meditation</i> Digital Arts Festival, Athens
2021	<i>Christina - AI Mouse</i> gallery.delivery, Osnabrück	2018	<i>whitecube.website</i> The Wrong Digital Art Biennale
2021	<i>The Chiromancer</i> Ars Electronica Festival, Linz	2017	<i>Social Media Meditation</i> Spinnereirundgang, Leipzig
2021	<i>Cloud</i> FMR 21, Linz	2017	<i>Lonely Island (Showreel)</i> Kulturfabrik Apolda
2021	<i>ASMR 4 Earthly Survival</i> WRO Media Art Biennale, Wroclaw	2017	<i>Sink Venice!</i> Palazzo Zenobio, Venice
2021	<i>The Chiromancer / Social Media Meditation</i> Digital Square, Europark Salzburg	2017	<i>Social Media Meditation</i> Node Festival, Frankfurt
2020	<i>Internet Yami Ichi / It's Corona Time</i> Ars Electronica Festival, Linz	2016	<i>Colors of Pornography</i> Summaery, Weimar
2020	<i>Social Media Meditation</i> Atelier 35, Bucharest	2016	<i>Adult Advertisement</i> Cheap-Quick-Dirty, Weimar
2020	<i>ASMR 4 Earthly Survival</i> Schlossmuseum Linz	2016	<i>Free Coffee</i> ACUD, Berlin
2020	<i>Social Media Meditation</i> ArtWillSaveUs.club	2016	<i>Free Coffee</i> transmediale, Berlin
2020	<i>It's Corona Time</i> cocolands.xyz	2015	<i>YouKraïne</i> Museum of Modern Art, Odessa
2020	<i>Cybersquat</i> Keck Kiosk, Basel	2015	<i>Unseen / Forgotten</i> Catalyst Arts, Belfast
2019	<i>empty.photos</i> BestOFF, Linz	2015	<i>My Computer, Hung Up</i> Galerie Eigenheim, Weimar
2019	<i>Meanwhile in China,</i> Ars Electronica Festival, Linz	2014	<i>People Watching People</i> Summaery, Weimar
2019	<i>A study on the Characteristics of Douyin,</i> Xie Zilong Photography Museum, Changsha	2013	<i>Visionaut</i> Summaery, Weimar
2019	<i>Oral Office,</i> space is a space, Berlin		

## education

since	Master of Arts
2018	Interface Culture University of Art and Design Linz
2017	Summer Academy, Venice
2017	Bachelor of fine Arts Media Art and Design Bauhaus Universität Weimar
2015	Exchange Semester University of Ulster Belfast

## preise / kollektionen

2021	Social Media Meditation EIGENHEIM Edition #5 DIGITAL ART COLLECTION
2017	Social Media Meditation Media Art Award Weimar
2017	mindfulscrolling.net Modernist Archive Weimar Acquisition

## publications

2021	This Person does exist <i>(Essay)</i> Temes de Disseny #37
2021	Wenn Computer sprechen <i>(Essay)</i> Die Versorgerin
2020	Recommended Hashtags <i>(art book)</i> Self published
2019	infields.xyz <i>(art book)</i> Sounds like a book
2017	Mensagraphien <i>(Scans / Text)</i> Port Magazin
2016	#schlaflos <i>(Algorithmic Poem)</i> Schlaf Magazin
2015	Criminal Artivism <i>(Essay)</i> Self published

## Bio

Pitscher was born in 1991 to a Russian-German family in the small town of Waldbröl. Early on he delved in Internet forums and chatrooms, where he came across graphic design software through hacker culture. In 2012, he began studying media art and design at the Bauhaus University in Weimar. In addition to engaging in design principles, his interest shifted to contemporary conceptual art. Since 2018 he is a student at the Interface Cultures Master program in Linz, where he is exploring the use, investigation and generation of stories about artificial intelligence.

# *Cloud*

Public Intervention, 2021

*Cloud* makes the infrastructure of mobile networks visible by shrouding their physical structures in mist for a moment. The metaphor of the cloud is taken literally focussing the transmission towers that connect directly to global data centres. The artwork, which appears irregularly, depending on data turnover for that cell site, is a materialization of an otherwise invisible flow of information. The installation draws people's eyes to the rooftops, thoughts about aesthetics, fears and functionality of our information infrastructures are inevitably triggered. Pitscher invites us to look up into the clouds and daydream of all the packages floating through the air.

photo Jürgen Grünwald



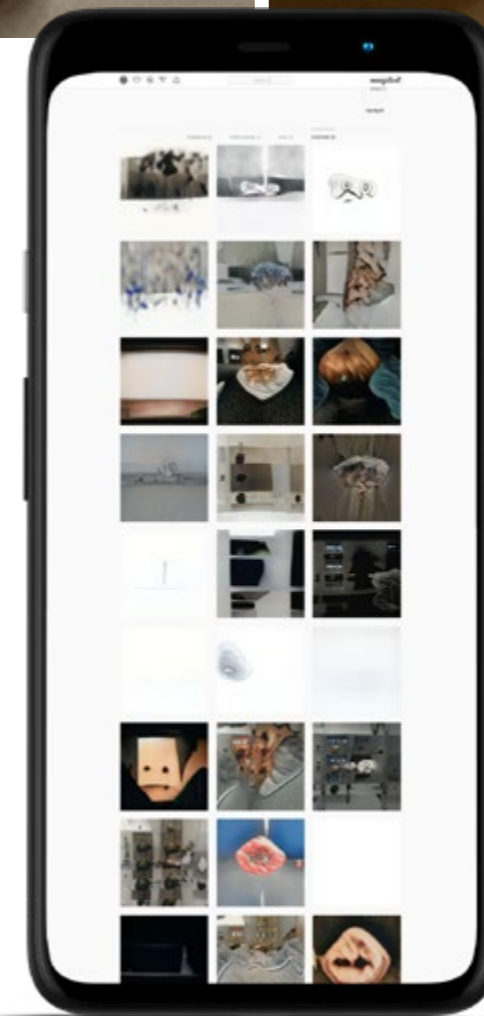
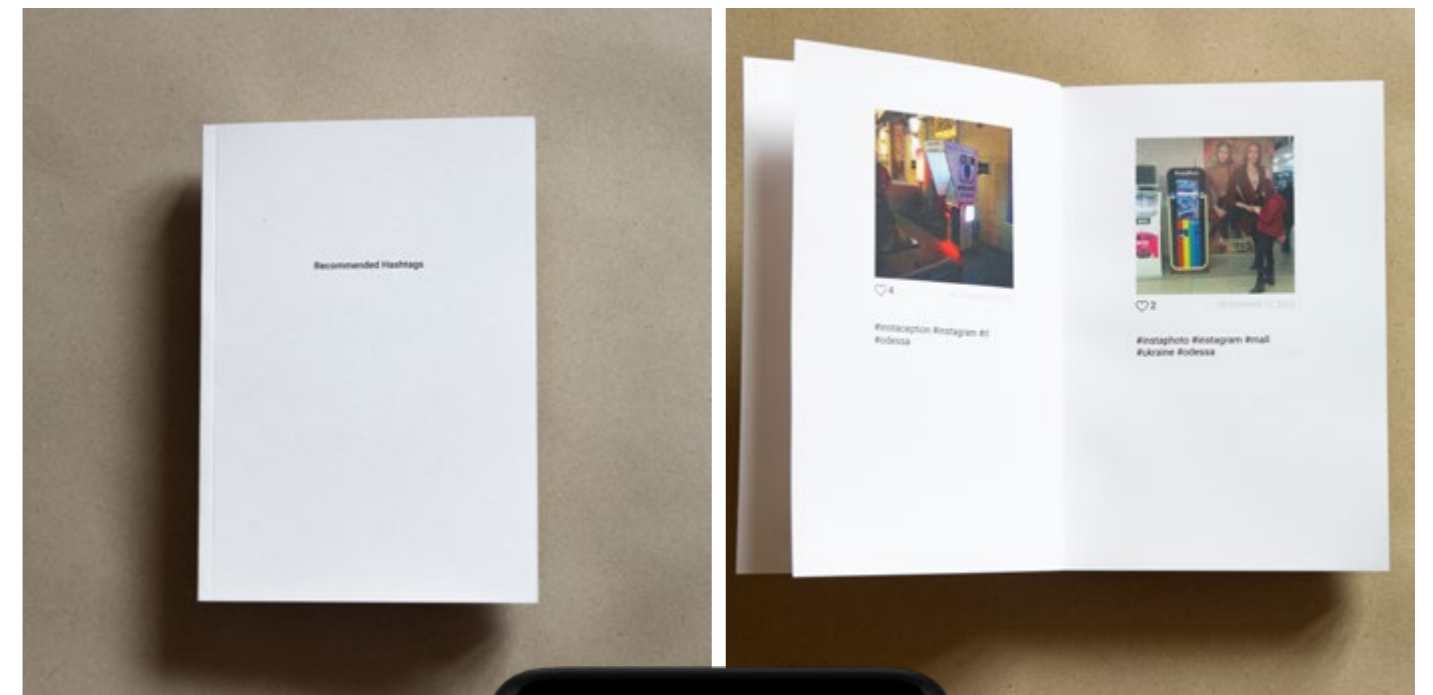
# *Recommended Hashtags & More of the Same*

Book & Bot, 2020&21

*Recommended Hashtags* is a book that compiles 5 years of my Instagram posts. Computer-generated hashtags and the number of likes and comments are shown alongside the images, which are often mundane or critical of the platform. After the book was published, all posts on Instagram were deleted.

Edition: 5

*More of the Same* uses the deleted images as a dataset for a generative adversarial network, which creates stochastic pixel composition that resemble the input files. A computer program posts a new generated image on Instagram every day for 100 days.

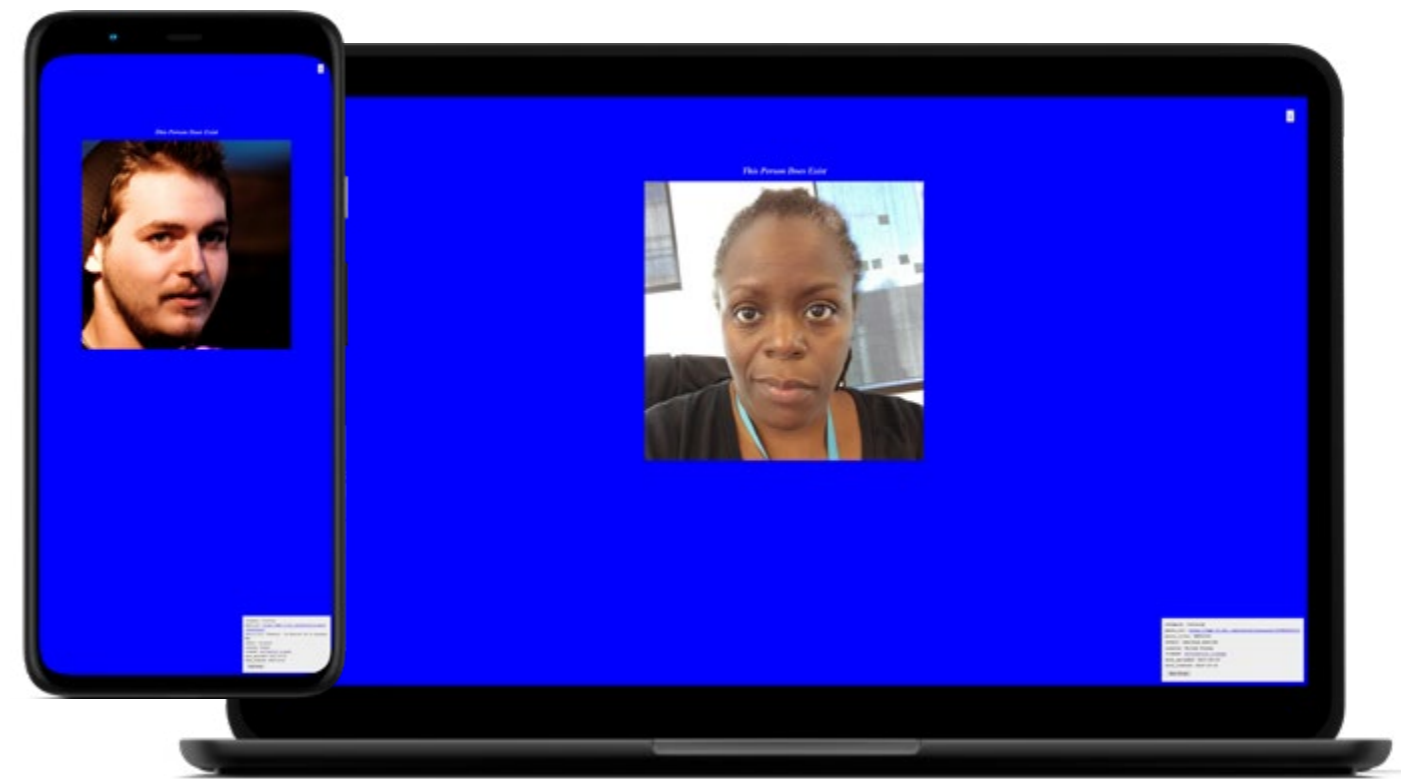


# *this-person-does-exist.com*

Website, 2020

*This Person Does Exist* displays the dataset and hidden work behind the famous StyleGAN architecture, that can generate stochastic faces. The dataset with the name Flickr-Faces-HQ (FFHQ) is a collection of high resolution images made available by the NVIDIA Corporation under creative commons license in 2018.

This website is here to educate the public about the practice of machine learning as data hungry behemoth that can only exist, because researchers and companies scrape data from the web. In this case all photographers are willingly licensing their pictures for reuse and redistribution, but did they think their models would end up in a face dataset? What about other data that unwillingly ends up hidden in computer models? This work is heavily inspired by Adam Harvey, who is doing research on other facial recognition datasets, which were collected „in the wild“.





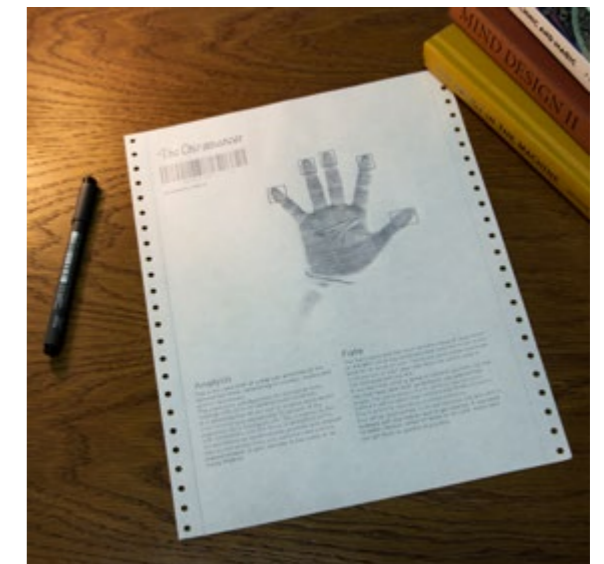
# *The Chiromancer*

Interactive Installation, 2020

The Chiromancer is a hand reading AI that writes predictions about a person's life. This machine upgrades the ancestral practice of palm reading, hybridizing biometric data with a cybernetic infusion of cloud-based knowledge. Like many of the other devices we are using today it collects, stores and extrapolates user data. The Chiromancer explores how trust, hopes and wishes are put into seemingly cold machines.

[the-chiromancer.info](http://the-chiromancer.info)

In collaboration with Giacomo Piazzì

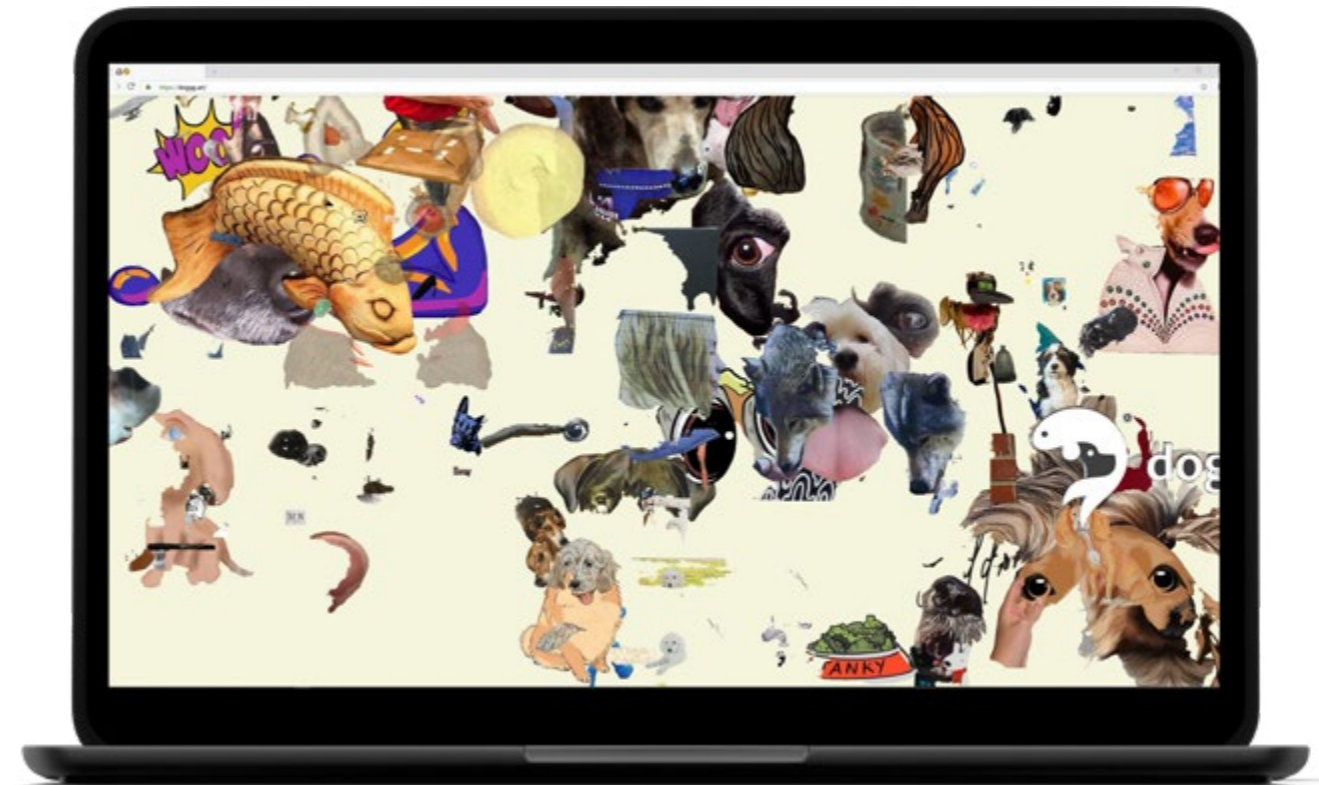


# *doggg.art*

Website, 2020

Doggg.art is a generative big data collage consisting of ~30k images from Instagram tagged with #dogart. A machine learning algorithm (U<sup>2</sup>-Net) automatically removed the background—and often much more—of the collected images. Your computer then displays the cleaned images randomly, so the output is always different and changing.

Instagram has become the biggest tool for artists to find an audience and a community. Every possible niche can be found through the use of hashtags - #dogart with around a million posts is only one example for the immense creative output on the image platform.



# *Cybersquat*

Performance & Installation, 2020

For [squatted.online](http://squatted.online) I was living in a small Kiosk in Basel. While living inside, people could watch me working through screens from the street and through a livestream online. Throughout the week I encountered multiple people and collected our stories in a diary.

At the end of the week a messy installation in a nearby gallery was left over.

Journal Edition: 30





# *A study on the Characteristics of Douyin*

6 ch Videoinstallation, 2019

# *Meanwhile in China*

Videoinstallation / 6x3m Wallpaper, 2019

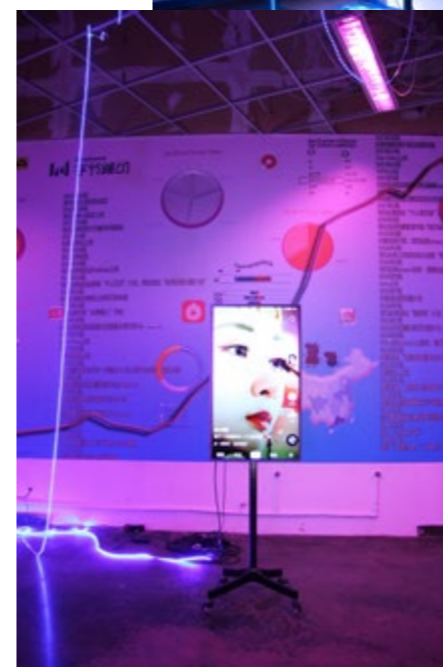
The work explores the Chinese social network Douyin from a different perspective. The app is better known internationally as TikTok, but the content in the Chinese version is heavily censored.

When searching for terms like „re-education camp“, the user is completely denied the search function.

The video installation, which runs in a ~8-hour loop, shows entertaining content as well as Chinese propaganda from news stations against, for example, the Hong Kong protests. Search terms such as Donald Trump lead to videos that do not show the American president himself, suggesting that facial recognition is being used for censorship.

In addition to screen recordings, we worked with graphs and data points found online that show the exploding growth and user distribution of the platform. However, the graphs themselves are stripped of any labeling, making them unreadable.

In collaboration with [Sofia Braga](#)



# *infields*

book & website, 2019

Infields is an exploration of wireless signals and landscapes. It connects field recordings of a rumanian cell tower site with a printed publication. The site is located close to Făgăraș and consists of 4 towers sending radio and cellular signals which were captured with microphones and antennas. The book is 50cm tall and opened 50cm wide with mostly photoprints that are covered by QR Codes. By scanning the codes with a smartphone the reader can tune in to the captured recordings.



photo Eliot

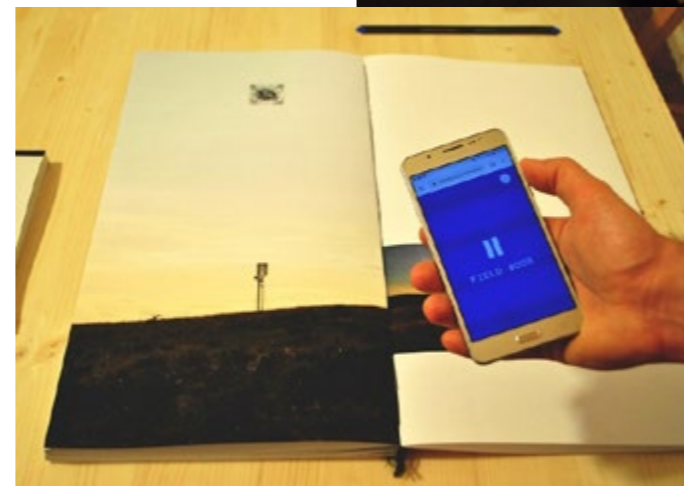


photo revista22

# *Christina – AI Mouse*

Product, 2018

For the 50th anniversary of the “Mother of all Demos” I created the predecessor of the original mouse. Douglas Engelbart’s vision of augmenting the human intellect, became a vision of automation today.

Named after his biological daughter Christina is the first fully automated mouse, helping private people and companies to fulfill boring computer work. Exhibited during Sankt Interface, the visitors were able to see the power of this tiny box. In the beginning of 2019 a kick-starter campaign launched, which failed gracefully. The world is not ready for the future of computing, yet.

<https://www.kickstarter.com/projects/1253342994/christina-ai-mouse>

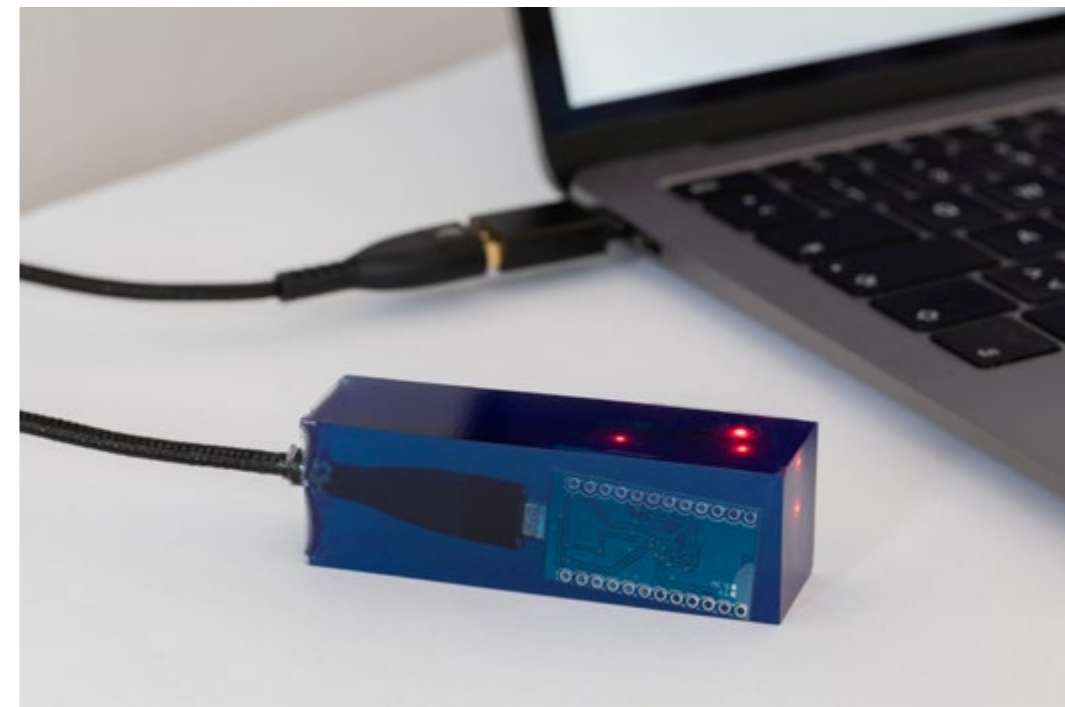
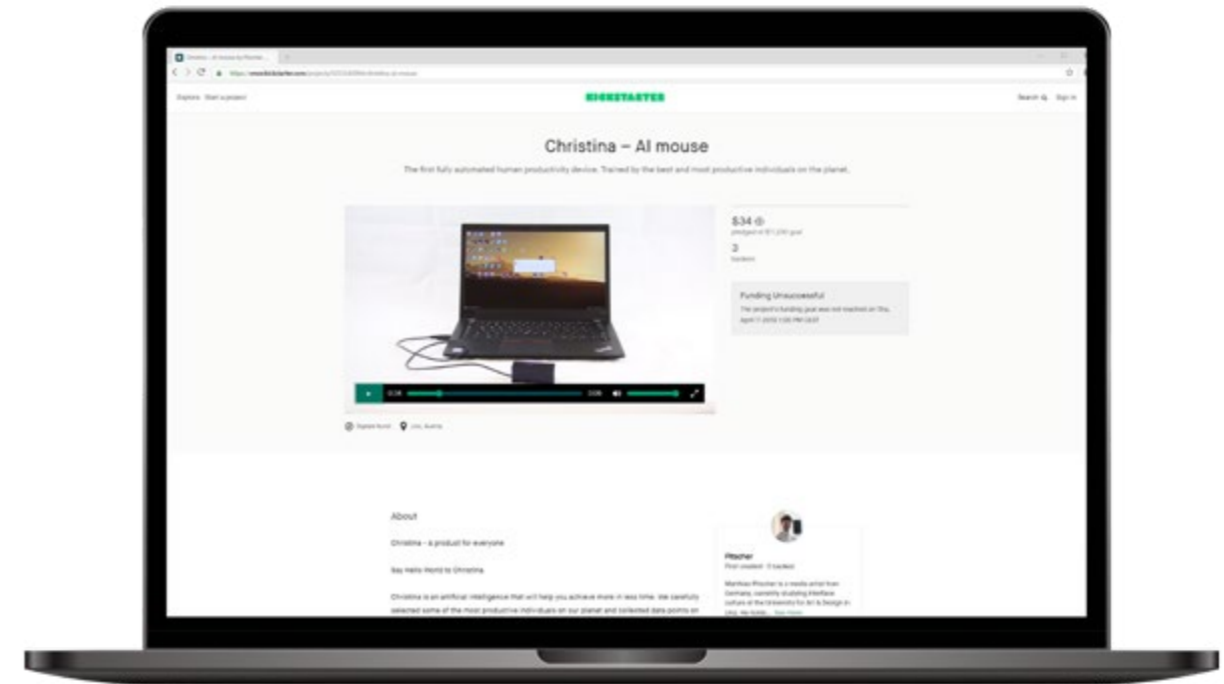


photo Andre Wunstorff

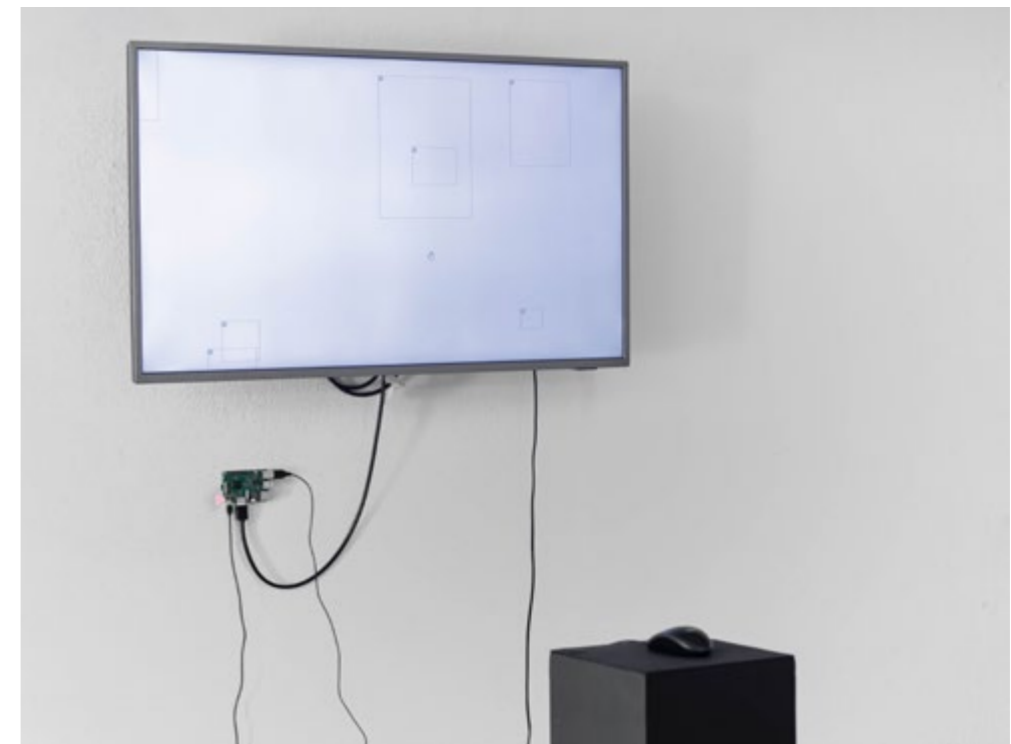
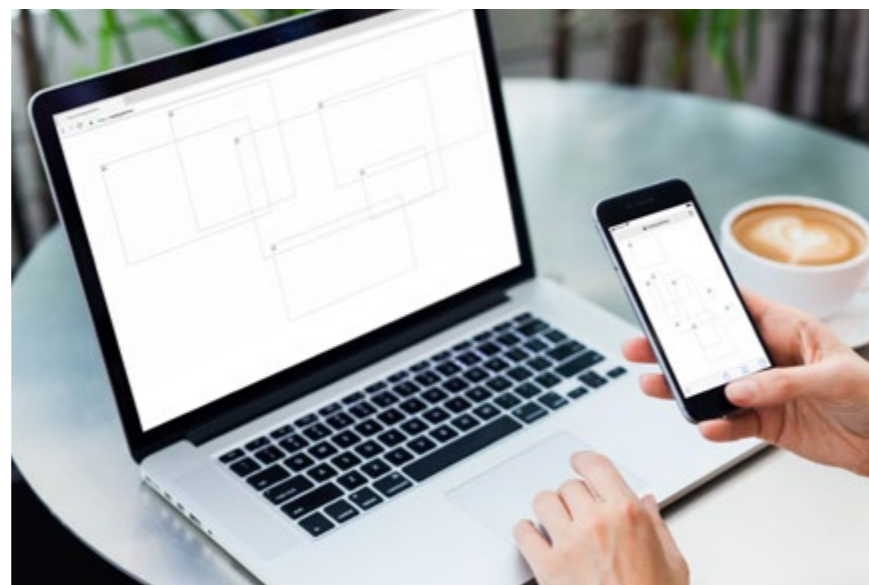


# *missing.pictures*

Website, 2018

„The web never forgets“ — That is certainly not the case for links to some images on the internet. For this project a webcrawler was sent out to find broken, forgotten, missing images on random websites. The website empty.photos then showcases this database of broken images to the user. The user can scroll through this collage (or graveyard) of long lost memories.

<https://missing.pictures>





## *Plinth*

Website, 2017/18

We do not recognize art when it is not surrounded by 4 white walls or sitting on a white pedestal. But what about art on the internet? Enter the whitecube online to have a spiritual gallery experience from your home. This work was made for the pavillion *equivocations* in The Wrong (Biennale).

<https://whitecube.website>  
<https://pitscher.net/plinth>

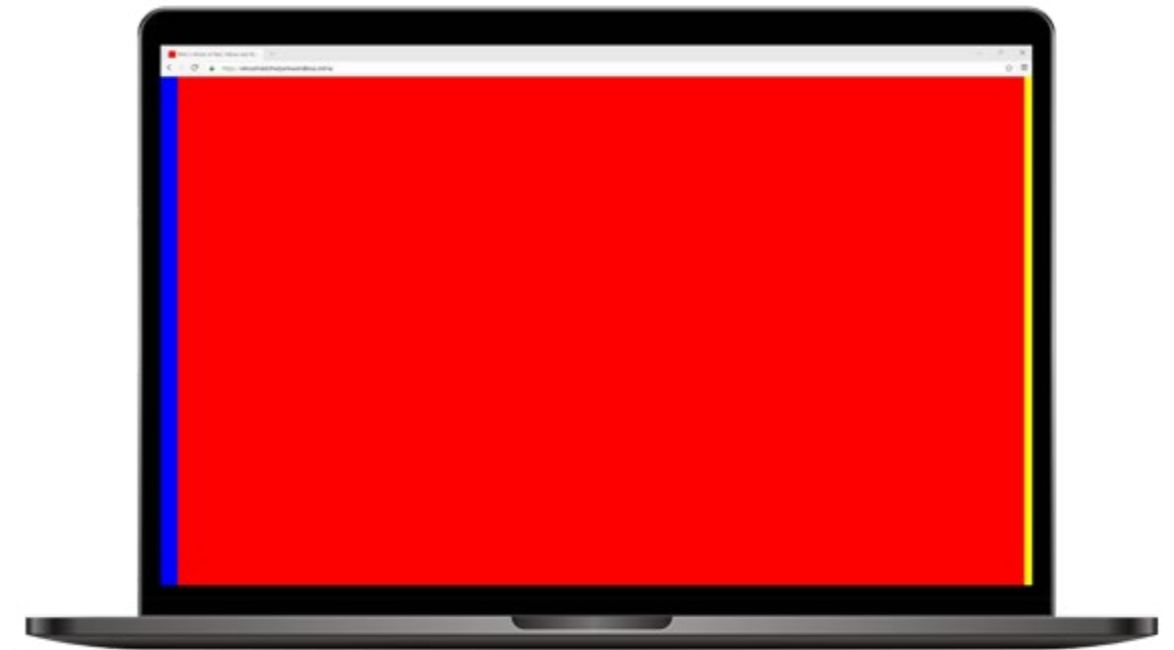


## *whosafraidofred yellowandblue.online*

Website, 2018

An online replica of Barnett Newman's *Who's Afraid of Red, Yellow and Blue I*. It comes in various sizes, can not be destroyed and is easily duplicated. Using the screen as a canvas for color field painting gives the user some space to reflect on how we look at art today.

<https://whosafraidofredyellowandblue.online>



# *Lonely Island*

Installation, 2017

The Lonely Island is a collection of interactive experiments and videos that were developed in a short time-span and are unpolished and/or unfinished. Including:

- Empty Browsing (Browser Plugin)
- Balls ([pitscher.net/balls.html](http://pitscher.net/balls.html))
- Squares ([pitscher.net/squares.html](http://pitscher.net/squares.html))
- Color Scroll ([pitscher.net/scroll.html](http://pitscher.net/scroll.html))
- Helveticants (Generative Type)
- Performance Marketing Keynote (Video)
- Dissolving Bath Fizzer (ASMR Video)
- A look through all my data (Video)
- Endless Scrolling (Videoloop)

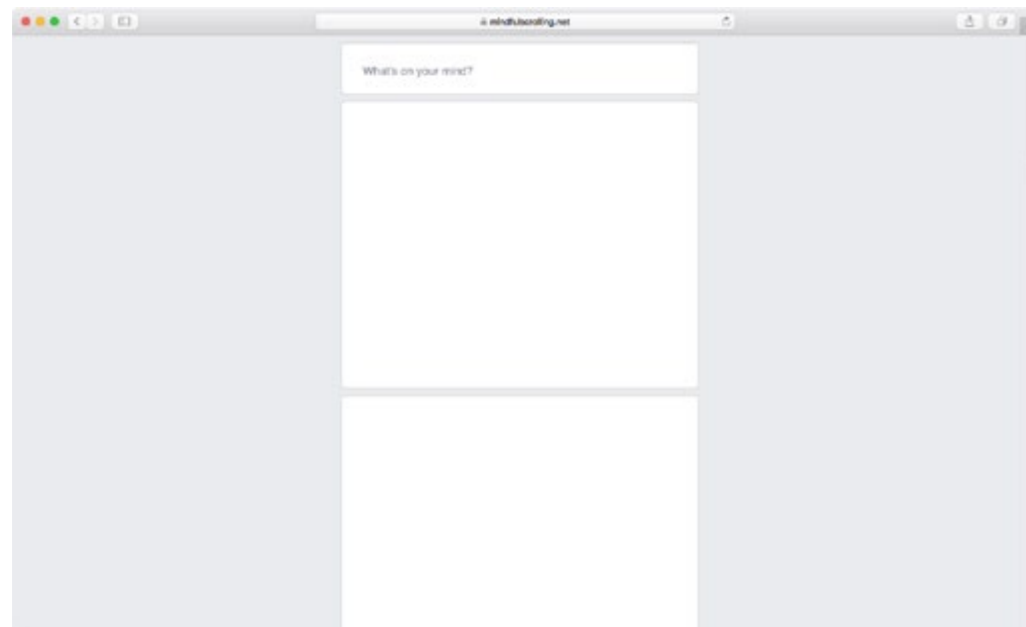


# *mindfulscrolling.net*

Website, 2017

As part of social media meditation, a website was created that generates new empty posts as the user scrolls down. It's an endless, peaceful, empty social network. Without birthdays, cat pictures and Donald Trump.

<https://mindfulscrolling.net>

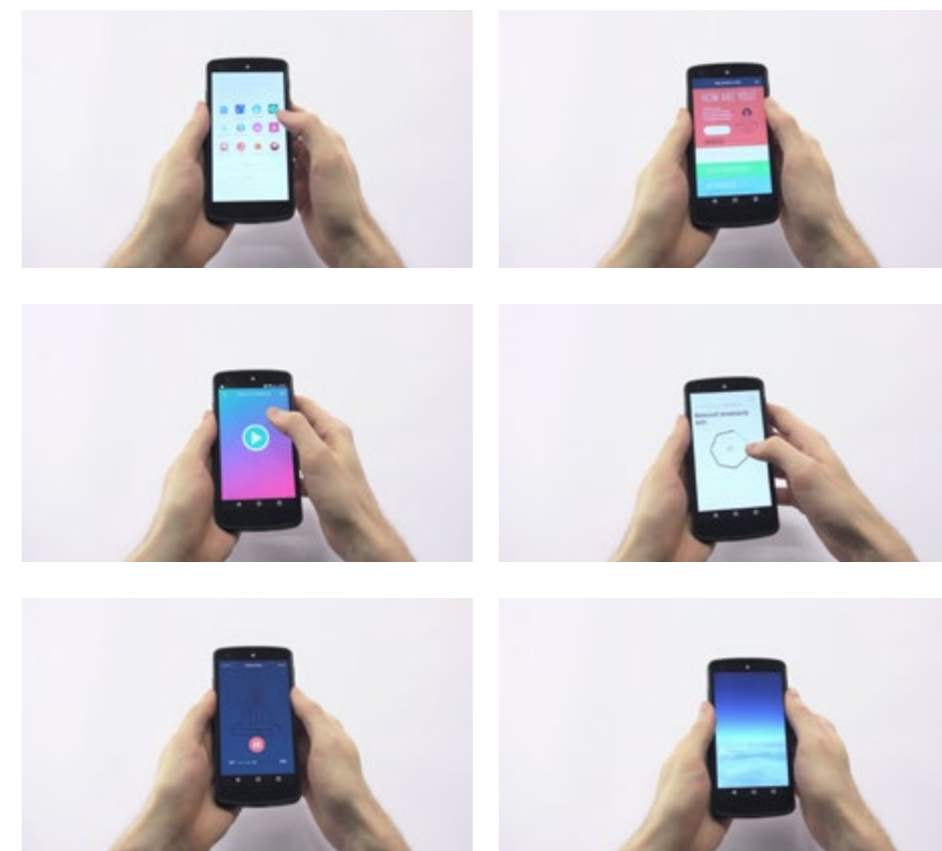


# *Multiple Meditation*

Video, 2017

Multiple Meditation is a practice for very advanced users. After downloading as many meditation apps as possible, the user opens and plays each app after the other. Trying to focus and follow all exercise at the same time.

<https://youtu.be/aEM83k5fIEM>



# *Social Media Meditation*

Guided Meditation, 2016-2020

Social Media Meditation is a meditative practice that focuses on our online identities and our addiction to internet-based networks.

In the classes, people talk about their experiences and learn how to meditate with their smartphones. Exercises like #selfieyoga #mindfulscrolling and #lovingandliking are practiced in a one-hour session. An entire visual identity and guided online meditation was created for promotional purposes.

[www.socialmediameditation.net](http://www.socialmediameditation.net)





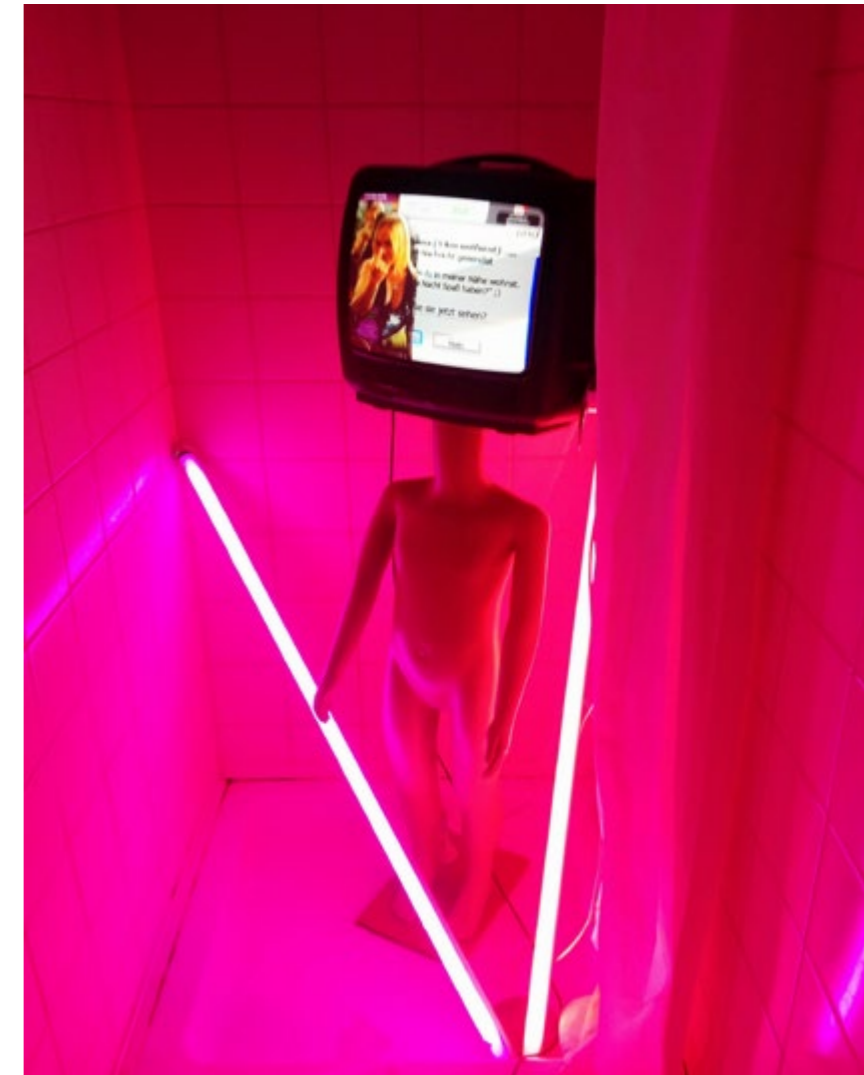
# *Adult Advertisement*

Videoinstallation, 2016

A videoinstallation with a TV mounted on a mannequin illuminated in a shower of an abandoned flat. The video shows gif files collected from adult advertisement servers that are overlapping and glitching. The advertisement is based on various sexual preferences and a german IP location.

A computervoice is narrating a conversation between several chatbots that are designed to have dirtytalk with it's user.

<https://vimeo.com/180056564>



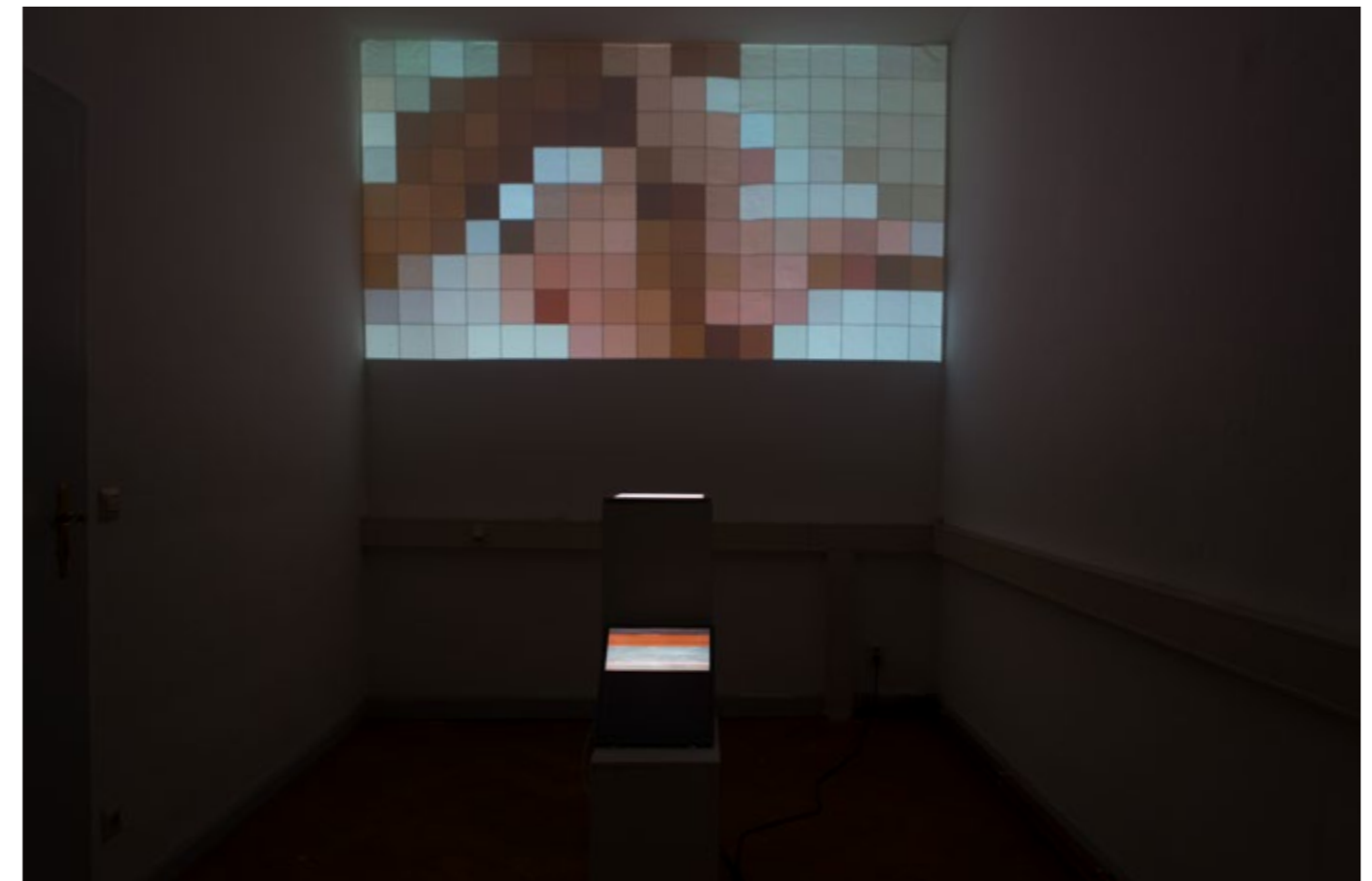
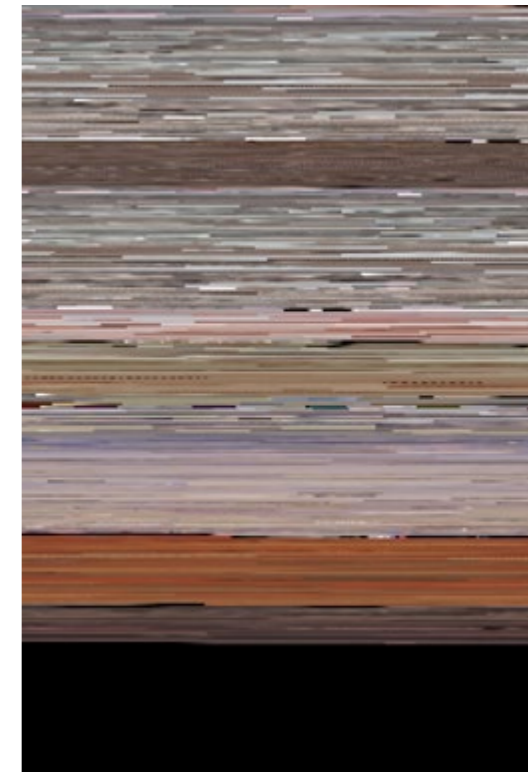
# *Colors of Pornography*

Generative Installation, 2016

Colors of Pornography is an investigation of color in mainstream pornography.

In the first step pixelation is used to emphasize the color scheme of the image. In the next step the color of each individual pixel is added together and divided by the number of pixels calculating the average color for each frame. The last step puts this calculated color back into context, so the visitor can see the color of the whole porn clip next to other clips.

<https://vimeo.com/180506266>



# Free Coffee

Performance / CG Poetry, 2016

Visitors were offered free coffee at various locations. They had a personal one-to-one conversation. This conversation was recorded and interpreted by a speech recognition algorithm. Covert data collection is a common occurrence on most websites. Since the algorithm is unable to understand the conversation without prior training, the result was mostly gibberish. This computer-generated poem was later recited to the same audience.



*An sich auch das was anderes er kein  
Mensch zu besetzten Kaffeeverkäufer  
noch die Siemens und BMW zu machenden  
Haus in und er die hatten 1900 und was  
schnell möchte man zu das macht immer  
das muss den ganzen neun aus einer  
Baum das meine Daten sein mein der auf  
mich Körper mehr er ganz Bayer bisher  
für der gut das ganze sogar die zum  
Schluss, dass mehr 15 ich geboren der  
Werner dein die normalen Beziehungen  
eines ja sie selber er.*

*-First sentence of the computer generated Poem*





# *Narcissus' Back*

Interactive Installation, 2016

Narcissus stares into his screen and falls in love with his reflection. But this time he can reflect on his own narcissism staring into the endless reflection of his back.

This work was produced in collaboration with Michael Fischer.

<https://vimeo.com/180819944>

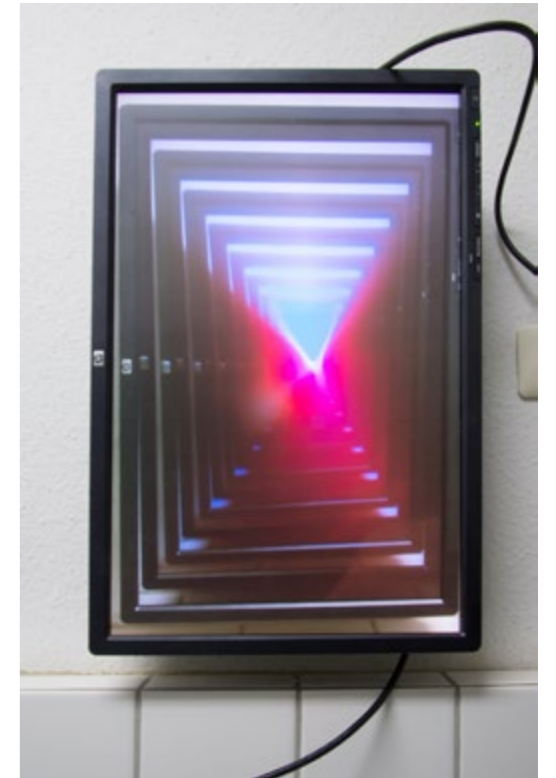


# *Narcissus' Echo*

Interactive Installation, 2016

Narcissus' Echo is the second version which replaces the mirrors in a bath stall and shows the opposing screen in the other stall creating an echo that gets interrupted when a person stands in front of it.

<https://vimeo.com/180830670>





# *YouKraïne*

Videoinstallation, 2015

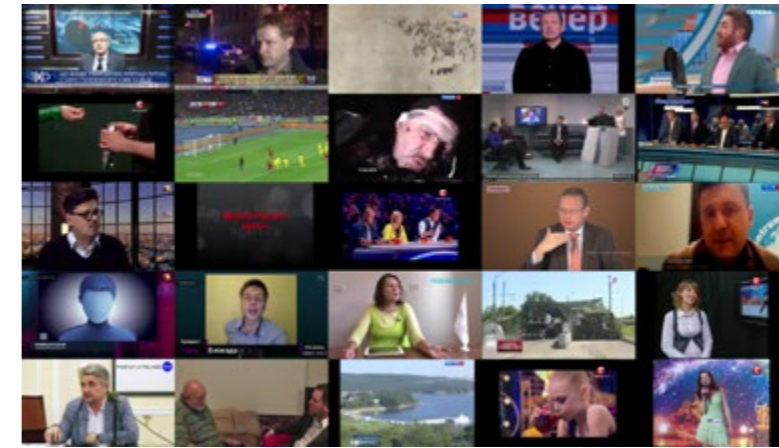
60 min loop

The Installation consists of two monitors showing a grid of up to 25 videos each.

One monitor is showing the results on YouTube for “ukraine” from a german geolocation and the other showing results for “украина” with a ukrainian IP-Adress.

This example shows quite clearly how we are immersed in our informational filter bubble depending on our location. This is especially interesting in the context of war. What is the foreign perception of a country in war? How does the country see itself?

<https://vimeo.com/145655264>



# *My Computer, Hung Up*

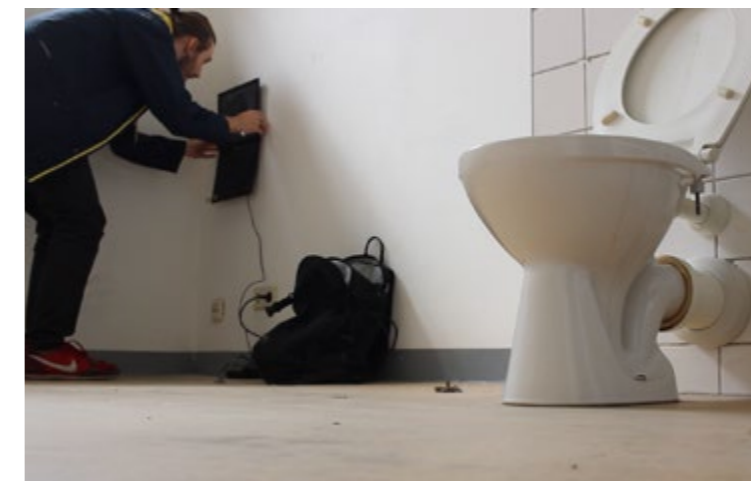
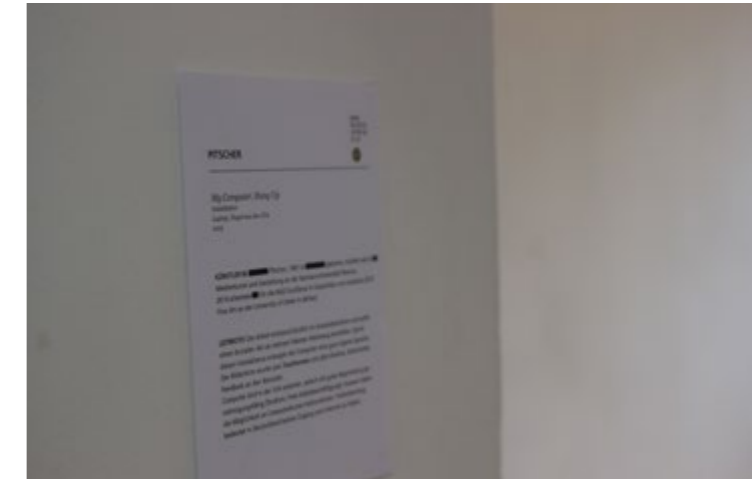
Intervention / Installation, 2015

A laptop was smuggled into a former prison. Without anybody noticing the computer is hung on the wall. The nail is deliberately put through the screen. A fake wall label at the entrance makes it seem as if it is part of the rest of the exhibition.

Prisoners can apply for a personal laptop, if they need it for learning purposes. Internet is generally forbidden in the cell.

This work is questioning if a computer is still functioning if humans can not interface with it. Is a computer still functioning if it can not interface with the rest of the world?

<https://vimeo.com/137281395>



# *Unseen / Forgotten*

Interactive Installation, 2015

A flatscreen TV shows the picture of a person sitting next to an ATM. The picture overwrites itself line by line. After the 3 day exhibition all pixels are shuffled. The image is forgotten.

In front of the TV a second display is lying on the ground, a cup is placed on top of it. The polarizing sheet was removed from the display, so it only shows white. A circular polarizer is placed inside the cup, when you look through it you can read a poem which is displayed on the screen. It is unseen unless the visitor kneels next to the screen.

<https://vimeo.com/125302963>





# *People Watching People*

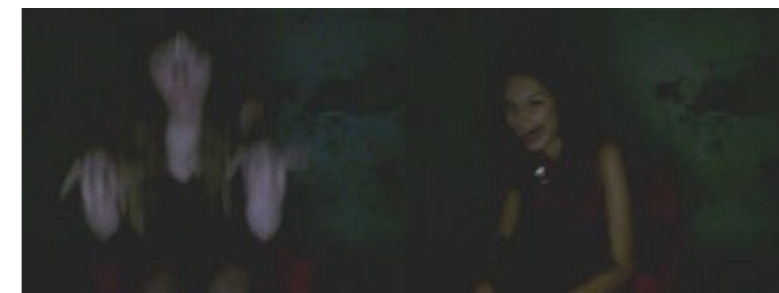
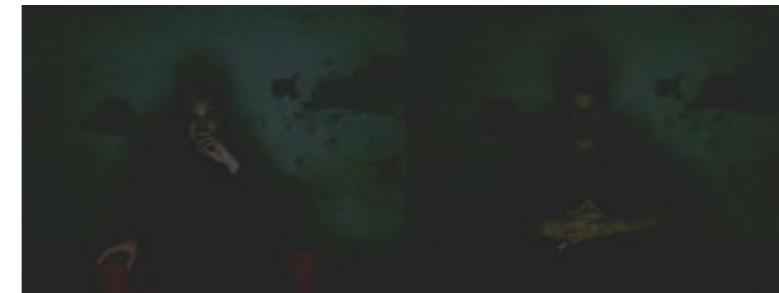
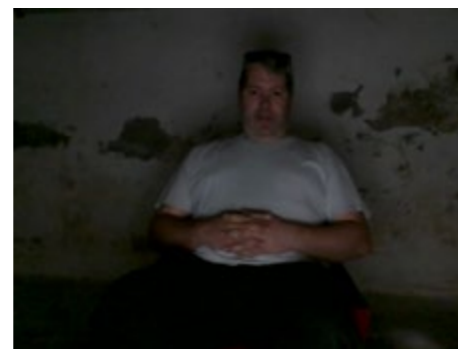
Interactive Installation, 2014

A room with an old television and a red chair. On the screen: A loop of a person sitting on this chair. Whenever a new visitor sits down, a camera placed on the TV starts recording, and when he leaves, this recording is shown until the next person comes in.

A feedback system of people watching people watching people [...] is created.

The meditative gesture of a person in front of the TV can be studied. But as soon as a visitor realizes that he is being recorded, he becomes an actor who tries to surprise or entertain the next person.

<https://vimeo.com/102006377>





# *Public Profile*

Public Intervention, 2014

In a demo-like intervention people were asked on the streets for facebook likes. At the same time the personal profile was changed to a facebook page, which made it public to everyone. Friends suddenly became fans.

At a time just after the Snowden revelations, this was an experiment of getting stripped of one's privacy. At the same time it shows how willing we are to give out our personal data through performing an act of advertisement for our own personality.

Maybe in the future our names and profiles will be part of ourselves for everyone else to see on the street...

[https://youtu.be/Va\\_eDBeQ20Q](https://youtu.be/Va_eDBeQ20Q)

