

Piet Zwart Institute
Media Design and Communication Master Course

Graduation Thesis

Practice based report on the development of
Dániel Szöllősi's graduation project

by Dániel Szöllősi, 2013
student number: 0852821

writing support: Steve Rushton
second reader: Simon Pummel

tutorial support: David Haines, Aymeric Mansoux,
Michael Murtaugh, Barend Onneweer

Thesis submitted as writing component to the Master Media
Design & Communication Programme, Piet Zwart Institute,
Willem de Kooning Academy, 2013
Course Director: Simon Pummell

Index

Abstract

My thesis is a written report on the development of my graduation project and the evolvement of my of my artistic praxis by describing and analyzing the final-, and previous, contextually related projects of mine and other artist. The aim was to gain a deeper and conscious knowledge about my present and previous practise by comparing and juxtaposing the works with not just each other but also with works by other artists.

The core of this paper consists of the description of my project Leisure Factory, One night in Paris, Their Mona, Empty Spots and the final project.

What is the conclusion in one line?

The introduction presents a report and gives a summarized insight of the journey, the story I have gone through preparing my graduation project.

Introduction

1. *'Ideas do not necessarily proceed in logical order. They may set one off in unexpected directions, but an idea must necessarily be completed in the mind before the next one is formed.'*
– Sol Lewitt
(*'Sentences on Conceptual Art'*, 1969
Osborne, 2002, p.222)

Throughout the year my praxis was in continuous change and development. My praxis has two components: one is the practise based work resulting in art projects and pieces and the second is the written component, the thesis. They are inseparable from each other: if one went shifted the other followed.

During the third trimester I was trying to push further my previous project, Leisure Factory. Since that project was exploring an enormous field that I was fascinated by and I had the intuition it worth to address another project on this basis. I started researching this infinite, vast and broad field: Exploiting aspects of (Online/Digital) Global Capitalism. I was hoping to find another 'handle bar' I can grab like I used Mechanical Turk as motor. This research taught me a broad overall, valuable knowledge about the society I live in – but have not manifested in an art piece. The field I was researching was too broad and theoretical – something visual to grasp was missing. I had some sparkles and ad hoc concepts. Previously the descriptions of these concepts constituted part of my thesis. *'...The idea itself, even if not made visual, is as much a work of art as any finished product. All intervening steps – scribbles, sketches, drawings, failed works, models, studies, thoughts, conversations – are of interest. Those that show the thought process of the artist are sometimes more interesting than the final product.'* – Sol Lewitt (1967, Alberro-Stimson, p.14.: *Paragraphs on conceptual art*). Even though these projects remained to be unrealized I analysed thorough their method: even if the subject of these concepts were diverse and may vary, I have discovered: methodically they were consistent. I had a yet unconscious fascination to use 'twist', 'paradox', 'reversed logic', create 'loophole' and subtraction – a similar toolset that the founders of conceptual art were employing.

The discovery was a shift in understanding from content to method. Insisting to this method allowed me to deal with a diverse range of topics – which was liberating. This was a major and beneficial discovery for myself.

A period followed when I allowed myself experiment: I realized several minor projects with a conscious approach taking into consideration what I have discovered about my method.

'When I began to re-think my ideas of art, I had to re-think that thinking process, and it begins with the making process...' "Art as idea" was obvious; ideas or concepts as the work itself. ...' – Joseph Kosuth (1991, quoted in Osborne, p.117)

Eventually by the second half of the year when the outline of my graduation project took shape another discovery were made: looking at my projects from another angle they not only show consistency in method but also in content.

The content that could be titled 'The camera as the agent for performance'.

This paper describes the projects one by one and reveals the conceptual consistency.

Projects

Leisure Factory, 2012

'You deserve a minute off'

was the title of the simple task I offered on Amazon's 'Mechanical Turk' platform.

Mechanical Turk is an online marketplace for work. Any US resident can commission a small task for a small fee to digital workers from all around the world. A task can be digitalization, transcribing visual or audio data, translating, writing reviews or comments or solving 'captchas'. My job offer was as follows:

'Stand up. Do 1 minute of exercise. Make a snapshot of yourself using your webcam. Upload the image to any image sharing service. Paste the URL of your uploaded image below and get paid 0.50\$'

The visual result of Leisure Factory project is a series of webcam portraits taken by Amazon's Mechanical Turk workers of themselves in their own working environment. The current series consists almost a hundred photos.

Leisure Factory hacked / reversed a truly exploiting system: instead of exploiting further, the project liberated the workers on tiny but in the same time enormous scale. The project paid workers to take a break instead of asking them to work.

The project turns an inhuman system upside-down and squeezes something human out of it. For me the human aspect was a fortunate result of the project but the core goal was the act of 'hacking-reversing' the system's nature.

The main motivation and inspiration for this project was the platform itself: the Mechanical Turk. After got to know about the platform I signed up as worker myself. I experienced the true exploitation and the boring, almost robotic, monotone tasks. And I made almost no money at all: an amount that is definitely not enough to live nor to survive in Western-Europe – not surprisingly since this is the idea behind the platform: outsource labour to developing countries where the wages are low and the labour is cheap. I could not almost believe that there are hundreds of thousands of people working using this platform.

Who are the workers? Who are these people who bare the monotony of the thousands of surreally inhuman tasks? What circumstances leave them no other choice rather than voluntarily work on this platform?

I was initially interested and curious to find out who are they, to see these people. The platform general policies provide them anonymity – but it was possible to ask them to make and send me their self-made portraits. One of the few requirements became: the worker's face has to appear on the photo. The body of the offer was pure but specific and easy to understand and: use your webcam. This way I could achieve a secondary content: their 'working' environment appears behind them which in the case of these workers is their own homes occasionally their own bedroom.

One Night in Paris'

One Night in Paris pretends to be an amateur photo series taken on a one night long journey in Paris – but an unfortunate setting of the flash ruins all the pictures: everything in the background fades to black leaving only the smiling main character in the foreground exposed.

The spectator visually confronts a series of photos with one man appearing every photo seemingly as a tourist. He wears a fluffy, traditionally Russian 'usanka' hat and a winter coat with a scarf around his neck. He stands close by the camera and stares right into the lens and smiles under his ragged moustache. He holds up his arm and frames a little measure with two of his fingers. In the lower right bottom of the photo the date, 2009.11.21 is written with rough pixelated font and saturated yellow – a mark of the apparatus. The second photo shows a tiny bit of the ground he stands on: green grass with brown leaves all over – this corresponds with the Parisian weather of the date, November. This is a full 'body shot' of him posing: his legs are wide apart and his hands are pointing towards the sky: he imitates the shape of the Eiffel tower. The same yellow date stamp appears on the same spot: this date signature is situated in the same place throughout the whole series.

Every image brings a new pose but the artificial smile and the stare into lens remains the same. We can find no evidence what is faded into complete darkness in the backgrounds of the photos.

The visual language

This series uses exaggeration as a core effect: by adjusting the flash light on the the top of the photo apparatus to extreme it reveals how amateurism can subtract and eventually destroy one of the two subjects by adding an enormous amount of the essential element of photography: light.

This extra amount of light subtracts the purpose of the photo and with the background fading into darkness the photos are hard to understand and junk. The other essential part of the project is the project's title itself and the separate of each photo.

The titles are naming something what is completely missing from the photos.

The titles (La tour Eiffel, Trocadéro, Le Pont d'Alma etc.) gives the verbal aid, a key for the solution of this weird photo series to the viewer and invites it to contribute by projecting these symbolic, iconic, well-known clichés on the plain black background. The verbal aid of the labels that brings concreteness to the project – without this key the series is almost impossible to read. The titles reveals the fact that these photos are not what they are meant to be – they are a result of an unfortunate artefact. The core of the series is the tension that the void creates: the absence of what is named. The 'showdown' or revealing brings tension to the project – the titles and the clumsy photos invites the spectator's imagination to fill the void resulting in a playful, witty and humorous experience.

My personal position against tourist photography is fed by two reasons. First, vanity: when I have to face my face staring back on me in the form of a photo. Many people dislike to hear their own voice through speakers since it sounds so different from what they are used to hear with their inner hearing and same goes with photography since photography provides a different angle that they are used to see usually: 'the angle zero' of a mirror. And additionally I have a physical disability: one of my eye is suffered from an accident hence my eyes most of the time does not stand parallel that often embarrasses me. By performing the tourist I expose and embarrass myself rather than pleasuring exhibitionism.

The second reason is how distracting is the acting of taking photos from just being the present. The notion of One night in Paris project is to raise awareness in the heads of the spectators how ridiculous is to make these tourist photos. The project visually illustrates the loss of subtracting oneself from the present of the moment by the act of taking photographs. The notion is to spread the idea: be there – do not take photographs.





digital sketch of the idea,
'Their Mona'

'Their Mona'
2013
photo print

'Their Mona' is a single photograph of the painting Mona Lisa by Leonardo Da Vinci as it is exhibited behind a plexi glass in the Musée de Louvre in Paris. In the middle of the photo there enormous white reflection caused by the flash light reflected on the plexi glass covering and bleaching the painting into nothing but a white splash.

In the case of *L.H.O.O.Q.* the postcard as a reproduction is the container but not the subject of the project. This reproduced postcard is just an easily accessible *ready-made* for Duchamp: the intention of the piece goes way beyond just being a comment on the mass-produced reproduction.

[TO BE EXPAND]

Empty spots
[[TO BE EXPAND, FURTHER EXPLAINED]]

Empty spots is a series of snapshot style photographs of a traditional painting exhibition. The photos show the empty, plain wall and hooks mounted to the wall which are supposed to hold the paintings – but the paintings are absent. Below the space of the paintings labels are mounted on the wall revealing which paintings are supposed to hang above them: Claude Monet's *Waterloo Bridge, London* and *Charing Cross Bridge, London*, Pablo Picasso's *Tete d'Arlequin*, Paul Gauguin's *Femme devant une fenêtre ouverte*, Henri Matisse's *La Liseuse en Blanc et Jaune*, De Haan's *Autoportrait*, and Lucian Freud's *Woman with Eyes Closed*.

'Empty spots' 'steals' back what has been stolen: it revalues a great value-loss. A value that is actually completely fictitious – because clearly the paintings were not for sale – but has been multiplied by this real event.

The project creates artistic value out of pure loss.

The technique it uses – commissioned Chinese artists to transpose the photos to handmade oil paintings – creates the loophole effect: several original modern oil paintings have been stolen when they were exhibited feeding my final project creating new oil paintings and exhibited again.

Further than that it also applies a paradoxical – controversial technique: the fact that an art student can exhibit and claim as his own work a series of handmade oil paintings without ever touching a brush or canvas.



[PHOTO FROM EMPTY SPOTS SERIES]

Subtraction

*'Duchamp showed the usefulness of addition (moustache).
Rauschenberg showed the function of subtraction (De Kooning).'
– John Cage ('26 statements re. Duchamp', 1963)*

At this point I came to the realization how closely my method is related to the early works of the founders of conceptual art. I had a general knowledge about the history of conceptual art in the back of my head that now have been deepened by analysing the language they have established. Evidently the legacy of the origins of conceptual art is tangible in the my practise.

'All art (after Duchamp) is conceptual (in nature) because art only exists conceptually.' (in Osborne: Joseph Kosuth – Art after Philosophy) *The toolset of my projects and some particular works from this era shows direct relation and resemblance.* This chapter examines this relation though juxtaposing descriptions of my own and works from this era.

Even though conceptual art's main aim was to change the concept of traditional art and leave it completely behind, many artists directly referred today's most celebrated traditional painting and art object: Da Vinci's Mona Lisa.

John Baldessari previously was working as a fine art painter and he was producing rather traditional paintings until he came to the realization 'that "high art" had little relevance to most citizens everyday lives. He gave up traditional painting and began to work with photography and text.' (quoted in Osborne, 2002, p.125) I share his opinion and a similar thought was the motivation when I created the project 'One Night in Paris'. I stumbled upon the photographic activities of tourists or *travelling citizens*.

Everything is purged from This Painting but Art: No Ideas have Entered This Work (1966-1968) is an acryl painting: nothing but the title is painted by a 'sign painter' (not by Baldessari himself) in two lines with capitals in the middle of the plain white canvas – simple and clean as it can be alike credit labels next to the art pieces in an exhibition environment. *Everything is purged* or one could say *everything is subtracted* but Art: this painting enhances the claim of conceptual art: art is way beyond what is painted on the surface of the canvas. *Art* is already there if the idea is perceivable. The canvas served to claim the direct relation to traditional paintings or to high art. He did not purge the materiality of the piece even though he was already a step further in his mind: 'That is a notebook entry about painting could replace the painting. ... The only art signal I wanted was the canvas.' (quoted in Osborne, 2002, p.125) Followed the example of many other conceptual artists he took away himself from the manufacturing process which again serves the concept 'not even my labour is there but the idea'.

Baldessari excluded on purpose every traditional aesthetic aspect from this painting and replaced it with a verbal message. 'Empty spots' does not carry a verbal message in this sense: it uses as a source the act of an art heist that erased physically the 'traditional art piece' from the world and what is left behind is its aura related to exhibition label – which indeed is a written, verbal reference. 'Empty spots' is a visual document, could be part of the police investigation that has been leaked.

Allen McCollum's *Plaster surrogates* is a series of painting-alike objects in frames whereas 'each of

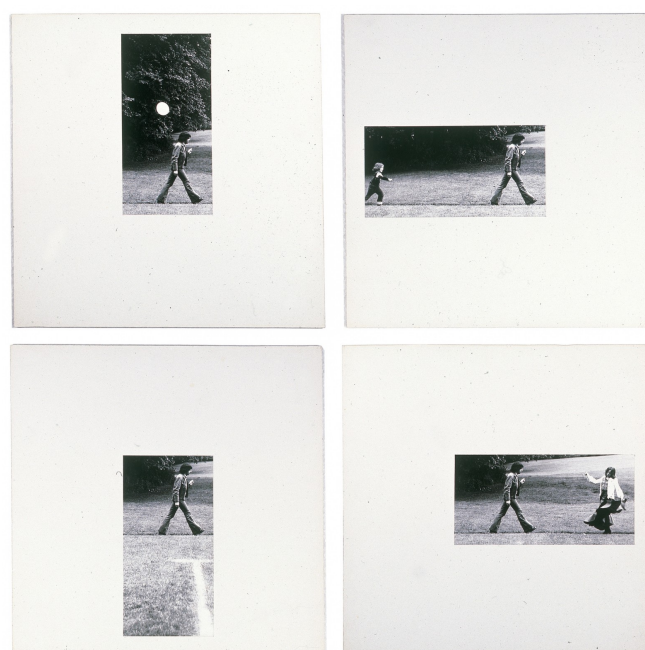
these works is a plaster mould in the shape of a painting, including the frame, but with blackness where the image should be. Produced and installed in numbers of several hundred, they suggest the absence of the aura of the artwork in the age of mechanical reproduction. At the same time paradoxically, through their variations and as an aesthetically pleasing spectacle in their own right they are endowed with a presence which contrasts with the negation they imply.' (Osborne, 2002, p.180) McCollum subtracts the painting and the canvas as well (and replaces with a different material but this is not necessarily noticeable for the spectator without the inside info). Inside the frames there is nothing but pure blackness without detail. McCollum uses the frame and the gallery space as the last direct indications: no matter how black, how nothing is in the frames it remains to be art anyway. Then he creates the complete installation by multiplying these pieces and placing them densely next to each other (almost as digital pixels) adjusting their placement according to the gallery space – the piece only exist in a gallery context. Interestingly John Cage wrote some years before '*Duchamp showed the usefulness of addition (moustache). Rauschenberg showed the function of subtraction (De Kooning). Well, we look forward to multiplication and division. It is safe to assume that someone will learn trigonometry. Johns*' (quoted in Osborne, 2002, p.196)

John Hillard's *Across the park*, (1972) represents the opportunities of how subtraction can alter meaning. By subtracting different segments from the whole original image he creates four different, stand on their own images. By juxtaposing them he establishes the relation between them. The complete work does not include the the full size original uncropped photo: it contains the four differently cropped blow ups. Without seeing the original full size image the spectator's mind can solve the puzzle and render the 'fifth' original full size image.

By presenting these four photo prints on paper-cardboards that are slightly bigger than the cropped photos he makes me suspicious: the spectator renders the full image out of the four but the full size image does not reach the edges of the paper-cardboard – is the full size photo what the spectator believes the full size photo?

In my reading it claims something universal about photography: no matter how objective we believe photography is, it will always be a segment, a 'crop' from the whole 'world'. It can never step over this boundary.

John Hillary legacy effects recent debates on media representations: on facebook I am confronted with friend's posts about how cropping photos effect the meaning of the images that are published in the news.



Subtraction in my projects is different.

The equivalent version of *Across the park* if the title of the single photo featuring the man only with the ball above his head would have been titled: 'A Girl throws a ball'. The author gives an aid in the title and invite the viewer to solve the photo puzzle and to project its own girl throwing a ball.

Hilliard chooses a different tool: he visually aims to help the spectator with one another cropped segment of the whole photo to solve the photos puzzle in their heads. The assistance is not embedded in the visual part of the *One night in Paris* and the *Empty spots*: the labels of the exhibition context are the guides. The nature of subjects are very different from Hilliard's: the solved puzzle shows a small but complete segment of the universe: a three member family crosses the park. They are composed equally, symmetrically. The final picture brings calmness – it is complete. Contrarily in my projects completeness visually is not achievable: the absent visual piece has to be made in the mind of the viewer

'A Girl throws a ball'.

Paris.

La Tour Eiffel.

Pablo Picasso.

Claude Monet.

We immediately feel the difference: a girl and throwing a ball is not more than what it is however the names listed below are granted with several layers of cultic, iconic meaning.

Once the spectator reads the title 'La tour Eiffel' is not only the materiality of the metal tower that is geographically positioned in Paris but a whole avalanche of connotations launch and start to twirl in its mind. The knowledge that everybody has in the back of his head when they skim over the letters that all together gives a name like

Paris, Pablo Picasso, Paul Gauguin.

Their influence on today's society is enormous: Even people who never been to Paris they are surrounded with its aura. The Aura of Paris is today globally present – just like the impact of such great artists. It has a mysterious disease that can infect the minds of the travellers, tourists: The Paris Syndrome. Even if there is no scientific proof yet of its existence – the fact that it had been invented as a hoax establishes its relevancy.

Everyone has a unconscious passive knowledge about such names, stars, celebrities, clichés, city sights. But how do they *picture* such complex concepts? Picturing, imagine something is a great creative task. Hilliard invites his viewer the *play an easy visual game*. My projects count on the viewer almost as a equivalent participant in the process of completing the piece.

Final project

After researching the two major books about the history of conceptual art I have dived into the work of the first ambassador of the era: Marcel Duchamp. I realized to what a great extent our methods of labelling or nominating works are similar. I have read several studies and essays of 'L.H.O.O.Q.' and it led me back to the very the source of my inspiration for my project 'One Night in Paris': On the 21st of November 2009 my two best friends were visiting me on my Erasmus study and we were visiting the Louvre: rather than stumble upon the greatness of The World Most Celebrated painting I stumbled upon that ambience surrounding it: children sliding on the floor up and down like in a playground meanwhile their parents turning the painting into a disco-like flashy attraction with their up-to-date fancy DSLRs.

The tourists distracted themselves with taking photos and by doing so, they distracted me. I wished to experience the aura, the power, the effect of the painting but instead I experienced nothing but distraction.

I have came up with the idea to adjust the flash into extreme and fading the painting in the background between us into black. Following this One Night in Paris was born.



Me on the left, Mona Lisa in the middle and my friend on the right and our friend behind the camera invisible, subtracted from the photo.

The Act of Photographing as a distraction/subtraction

At this point once again I changed the lens I was observing with, analysing my intuitive ideas, studies and projects. What is common in terms of subject and interest within these works of mine?

One Night in Paris
Empty spots
Their Mona
Leisure Factory

In the first four works subtraction is a key element: faded backgrounds in 'One Night in Paris', the absence of the painting in 'Empty spots', 'La Gioconda' washed out into nothing but a white reflection, and the empty label of the exhibited plastic bottle in the photo print of 'Recycled Drinking Bottle'.

Art is fading into absence in 'Empty Spots' and 'Their Mona'.

All four projects are 'interactive' in the sense that they do not present a complete experience to the spectator but invite them to actively participate. In other words I have a deep interest, curiosity for what is in the spectators mind. Empty spots and Their Mona play with the absence of an art piece meanwhile One Night in Paris similarly refers to cultic architecture sights. They all examine the relationship of the spectator and these cultic phenomena.

Their Mona and One Night in Paris question the purpose of photographing using specific technical artefacts. Is it worth to photograph such things? They reveal that even if the result has an essential mistake we can still complete and correct the faulty photo. How much loss we can achieve by trying to gain profit by photographing?

I find the photographing a distracting act: The photographer has to step out of the situation, subtract oneself from the moment for a moment to take a photo.

I find it paradoxical to take the effort to travel somewhere for the purpose of being there and then with the act of photographing remove yourself from your original purpose: to be present.

With every photo the photographer exposes he loses that moment but simultaneously gains a photo for eternity. With the SLR photo cameras it is also technique-wise valid: once the photographer pushes the exposure button the mirror flips up *covering his sight completely*.

I do not wish to declare that photographing is pointless. It has certainly its point to a certain extent. In the end it is about finding a balance just like with many other things. Sun makes biological life possible on our planet but it can also easily blind someone if it stares right into it longer than not more than a minute. An exaggerated version of photographing would be observing the world through a camera that constantly shoots picture and turns the vision of the photographer into darkness.

A way to go with this concept could be to become a tourist myself – to get in touch with tourists. Similarly as I have got in contact and interviewed the exhibition guards of Kunsthall related to Empty spots.

I stood up from my desk and went out for research in practise my subject. My first trip took place at the windmills Kinderdijk. This exterior location turned out to be not the best choice. My subjects were too distant and 'intimate' connection was hard to establish. I returned with no useable footage.

The video 'Lost Moments #' was born during my second trip. I approached the location with a clear mind and I improvised: I wanted to measure how many photos are taken once I point my camera towards my subject. The measuring became visual by making my apparatus 'blink' by sweeping my finger in front of the lens and to count out loud according on my mother tongue. It start off with a tower of a church and its bell chiming. The camera pans down and the tourists standing in front of the church come in frame. The tourists are chatting and taking photos.

I came to two conclusions after finishing the editing.

I understood the root of my fascination towards the subject of tourism. I clearly remember that this fascination of mine raised when I have studied in Paris in 2009 and the project discussed before 'One night in Paris' was born. I understood why this fascination outcrop since I moved to The Netherlands again. My position repeats itself.

I was a 'Parisian' for a period of time. I wished to be one – although it was obvious and I was realistic about it that is not possible to be a real 'Parisian'. I wanted to experience Paris as truthfully as I could. I do not wanted to be an alien living in Paris: I wanted to integrate into the society as much as I could. This behaviour is not my invention: this is what is called the 'backpacker' new, modern way of tourism that stands against the 'classical' way of tourism. The backpacker usually travels alone tries to avoid usually labelled as 'touristic' places according to the old therm and tries to integrate and learn about the society and culture on the spot by *being* there. The classic tourist pays a trip at a travelling agency, gets on the bus or plane and let himself showed around the sights that the brochure suggests. The mindset of this two ways of approach is very different: the backpacker has a deep interest, a will to give up himself to a certain extent, to live through processes meanwhile for the classic tourist a trip is nothing more than entertainment.

I faced the regular shallow behaviour of the classic tourists. It bothered me. The shallow nature of their visit was unacceptable for me, I felt offended. It made me realize that I am not a Parisian no matter how much I try to be. I realized my position: I am in between them and the Parisians. I had to learn how not to just keep, but raise the distance between them and myself and by that get closer to the Parisians. To achieve a less alienated state.

Taking this conclusion into account it is actually a paradoxical act performed by myself: 'approaching' them on purpose. *Approaching* with the aim of increasing the *distance*. Further than feel uncomfortable with the voyeuristic nature of the situation probably there was this additional awkwardness: I was almost becoming one of them. I applied their behaviour and made them its subject. I was observing and *capturing* them the very same shallow way: I had no preference of who to capture I was greedy and I wanted to capture them all as they capture the sights. My connection was no stronger towards them than the relation they established with their environment.

This same sense of alienation is also traceable in the matter of language choice. I learned how to count in Dutch, I could have choose English but instead I have chose my mother tongue. Its effect can be interpreted in two ways: the spectator could feel also alienated from the counter caused by the language barriers or it makes the spectator aware that how alienated the counter is from his environment.

The video 'Lost Moments #' is an observational piece but I myself also find it hard to actually realize what is happening. My subject was too distant. I wanted to get closer without unveiling. But the boundaries of the bubble surrounding the tourist group is pretty resistant. No stranger or 'local' is allowed to enter nor to join. I was looking for an environment which allow me to get closer: an interior place! I reminded the crowd in the room in La Musée Louvre where the Mona Lisa is exhibited.

Fortunately I did not have to travel so far away. Kunsthal's Jean Paul Gaultier exhibition provided the similar dense situation I could take advantage of.

My first visit I dedicated to a single, continuous video shot. I pressed the record button and visited the exhibition. At this occasion I was more curious about measuring time itself rather than the counting with numbers: how much time can be captured with video technique that the visitors spend behind their cameras – and looking at the exhibition with this meditated method. I hold the camera in my hand, next to my body pretending that it is not running. Every time I spotted my subject I sneaked behind them and capture their view over their shoulder. Visitors were captured when they were capturing the exhibition. The screen of the devices usually showed an animation of an diaphragm imitating the classic analogue process of a photographing or blacked out for a short amount of time. Either way the device literally *blinds* its user.

The selection of the clips that show a visitor with a device in front of his vision gave an impressive result: 25 out of 47 minute shows this mediated state. I processed the original full length clip and increased its speed with the quota of these numbers. Literally I shortened with speed enhancement technique the clip from 47 to 25 minute. I titled it 'Experience Shrink'. After watching it I did not find this effect appropriate anymore. It turned out to be just a messy and shaky video that made me dizzy and does not emphasise but flatters the point: it shrinks the experience of my viewer and does not represent the visitor's loss in the video.

The 25 minute selection was not that strict yet. I processed the selection through another time. I trimmed my clips shorter and shorter until the point when I had a few short video clip in my timeline: the captured exposures of the devices. This required frame-by-frame editing and this method made me discover the length of the exposures measured in video still frames. I was overwhelmed by the amount of stills it took to go through one single exposure. Clicking through one by one extended its duration. I converted these video sequences into stand alone photo sequences, developed and attached them to the wall under each other. Every photo sequence sets of with the very last moment before the button is pushed and the process of the photo shot starts and the device's screen shows a full image. Between the fist and last photo the sequence shows the process: some instance an animation mentioned before or the blacked out screen. Every sequence ends with the device showing again a live image on its screen: indicating the end of the process.

I stretched these *moments* out in 2 dimensional space: representing their 'momentic' nature is debatable.

By lining up under each other these photo sequences they cover and invade the surface of the wall – referring to the fact that how numerous the amount of pictures are being taken every single moment in our age.

Deeper connotations

My experience of an exhibition is not anymore the true experience of the exhibition and the focused gaze of the visitors but rather an eager crowd to such an extent where they with instant secondary experience. This phenomena fragments my direct experience of the present and it distracts my attention. My personal goal is to go against this pressure and learn orient better my focus of attention. I chose to focus on their attention.

These devices promises that they bring closeness, connectedness – certainly they do, but as an unfortunate side effect they increase distance between the user and its experience of the present. The direct experience is being replaced by indirect experiences – only media had the privilege to do so but nowadays everybody became media contributor.

The exponentially growing trend, the unappeasable eagerness of taking images turns the society's way of experiencing of the present to an instant secondary, mediated experience. This way of experiencing took over the position and now rules the primary ways of experiencing the present. It continuously fragments our primary reality with our virtual one and visually covers our sight is fragmented with black drop-outs, animations of diaphragms for seconds.

My photo installation converted from a video footage to a series of still photos resonates with this phenomena: it recreates the sense of fragmentation. The *smoothness* of a flowing video footage is replaced with segments of a longer video clip presented in the *fragments* of the video material: still frames.

The installation creates a series of realities. First layer is the exhibition – the reality itself. The second layer of reality is the screen of the cameras and the artist's reality is the third one: filming the camera screen with a camera. And there is even a fourth layer: the experiences of this photo installation of the viewer. Experiencing the original exhibition through my installation is hard if not impossible. By this mediation the original focus of attention become untraceable, blurred and noise. There is a great loss in quality of the experience by this mediation process.

One way of interpretation is that visitors capturing the exhibition in shown in my series of photos are losing experiencing art, exhibitions – if my message goes through my viewer was able to focus his attention to such a level where he understands the piece.

Conclusion

Camera – as the agent of performance

Leisure Factory driven by curiosity who are the workers? Webcams were used as mediators. Because of the nature of the task and because a camera was involved to document their actions they started to behave for the camera. Camera made them behave in certain ways.

Webcam makes visible this invisible mass.

Curiosity in masses

One night in Paris

Every describes himself as a traveler and everybody else is the tourist except oneself.

It is cynical about the performance that the camera generates for the tourists.

The inexperienced use of the camera makes well-known sites invisible.

Fed from western culture, to western viewers.

Curiosity of the tourist masses

Mona Lisa

How is the Mona Lisa represented in the masses photo library?

Empty spot

Plays with the unconscious visual experience / knowledge

Final project

is the continuation

The result is that my practice shaped and became more defined: it shifted from ad-hoc or intuition driven working mode to a consciously developed method.

Working through the graduation year and looking back on my pre-graduation practice I certainly believe that my mind as an artist matured. I feel superior to my prior state.

My thesis will guide you through the log of this process of my personal artistic maturing which is resulting not only in a graduation project but also in starting point of a path that can be continued in the future.

Bibliography

Alberro, Alexander and Stimson, Blake (editors): Conceptual art: a critical anthology, 1999, The MIT Press, Massachusetts Institute of Technology, Cambridge

Lewitt, Sol: Sentences on Conceptual Art, First published in o-g (New York), 1969, and Art-Language (England), May 1969.

Osborne, Peter: Conceptual Art, 2002 Phaidon Press

Roberts, John (edited by): The impossible Document: Photography and Conceptual Art in Britain 1966-1976, 1997 Camerawords

Egri, Péter: Playing games with renaissance Art: Leonardo, Duchamp, Dalí, Rauchenberg and Warhol, 1995 Hungarian Journal of English and American Studies (HJEAS), Vol. 1, No. 1 (1995), pp. 59-87 Published by: [Centre for Arts, Humanities and Sciences \(CAHS\)](#), acting on behalf of the [University of Debrecen](#) Stable URL: <http://www.jstor.org/stable/41273881>

Walter, Benjamin – The Work of Art in the Age of Mechanical Reproduction, 1936

Mull the work of art in the age of digital recombination

Menick, John: Paris Syndrome, 2012, documentary, 27mins, video 16:9, released on Vimeo in April 2012 under URL: <http://vimeo.com/38610414>

Klein, Naomi: No Logo,

Zizek, Slavoj: RSA Animate – First as Tragedy, Then as Farce, <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=hpAMbpQ8J7g>

The Bearded Lady and the Shaven Man: Mona Lisa, Meet "Mona/Leo" Author(s): Antoinette LaFarge Reviewed work(s): Source: Leonardo, Vol. 29, No. 5, Fourth Annual New York Digital Salon (1996), pp. 379-383 Published by: [The MIT Press](#) Stable URL: <http://www.jstor.org/stable/1576403>