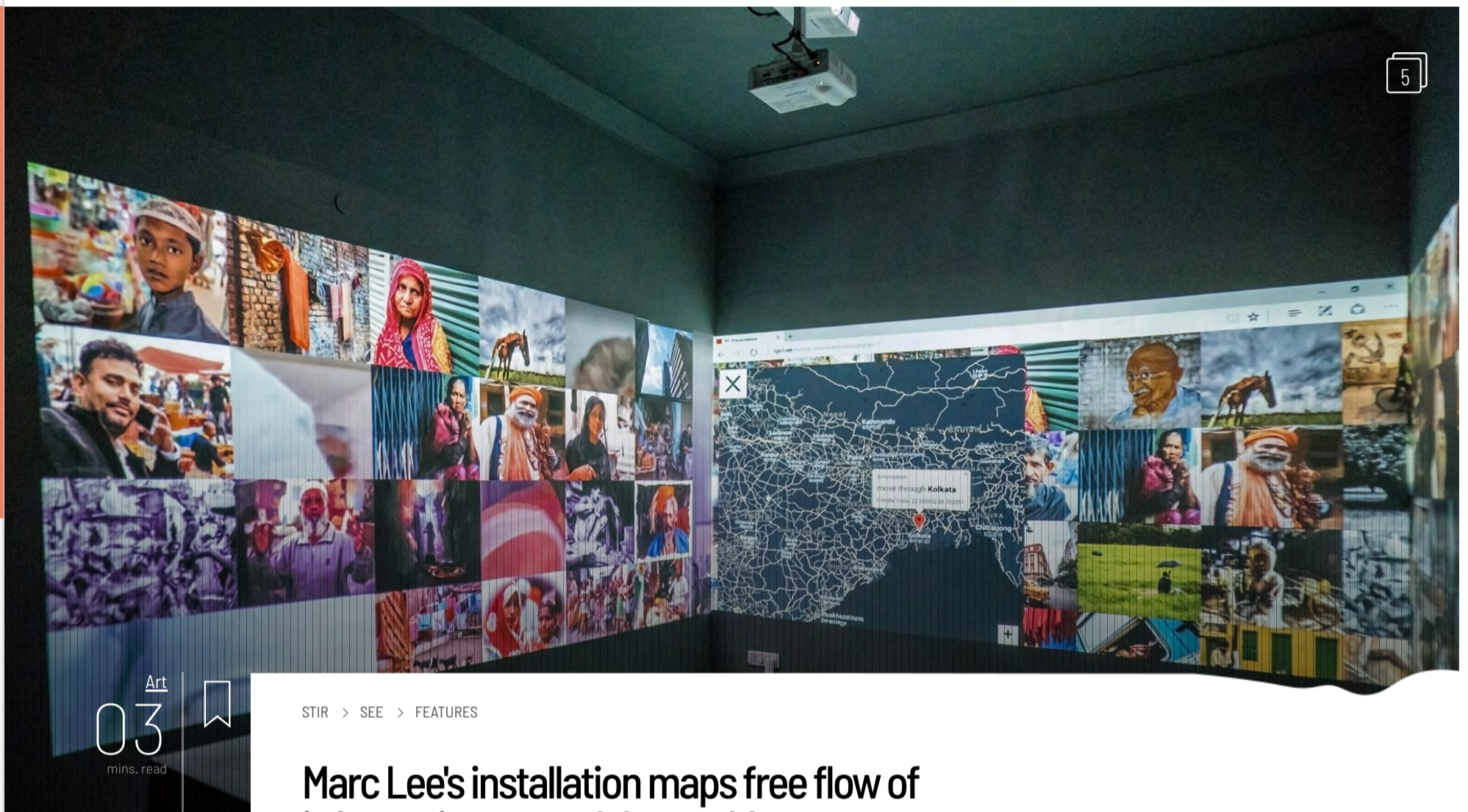# stir world

see. think. inspire. reflect.

see

think

inspire

reflect

Art

03
mins. read

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Marc Lee's installation maps free flow of information around the world

New media Swiss artist Marc Lee's latest work *Echolocation* used social media to travel the world in real time.

by Sukanya Garg | Published on : Aug 29, 2019

New media Swiss artist Marc Lee's latest work *Echolocation* is not just travelling places, but takes the viewer(s) along on the journey. The interactive net-based multi-screen installation maps the free flow of information around the world in real time. The work has been exhibited in Karlsruhe, Zurich, Johannesburg, and its latest installation sight was New Delhi where it was displayed as part of St+art Festival 's exhibition *F(r)iction*, organised at KONA, Jor Bagh, earlier this year.

01
min watch

Marc Lee, *Echolocation*, KONA
Video Credit: St+art India

On entering a dark room in the exhibition space, three of its four walls converted into digital projection screens; one was immediately flooded with social media feeds classified according to geography. Using a mouse, a viewer could navigate the world map, choosing any location or place to view all the media updates, feeds and tweets about the place from social media platforms like Youtube, Instagram, Twitter and Flickr among others. These digital screens, then, acted as windows into the creative, cultural, social, political, economic, historical and contemporary dynamics of the place. Through the exploration of real time images, videos, sound and text, made possible by the data-mining aspect of the installation, Lee's work lies at the intersection of art and technology on the one hand,

contrasting the homogeneity and diversity of our geographical landscape on the other. The continuous process of changing visuals and sounds is symbolic of the constant state of movement across cities and places and perhaps our own identities.
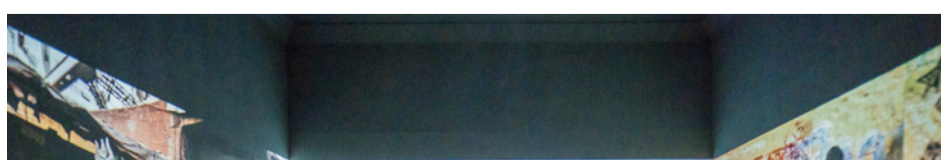
Marc Lee, *Echolocation*, KONA, Image 2
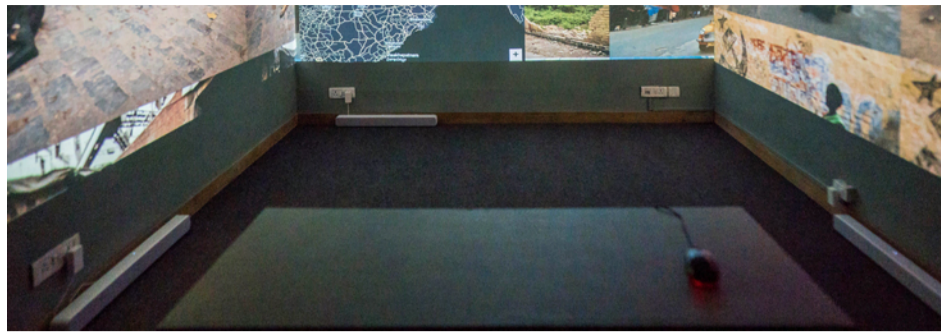*Image Credit: Pranav Gohil*

Describing Lee's work, St+art India co-founder, Akshat Nauriyal, said, "The idea with the *F(r)iction* exhibition was to explore how technology has ushered in a new paradigm for creation and consumption of art, but to also look at it through a critical lens - to address the good and the bad. Marc's work revolves around the use of technology and how us humans are engaging with it constantly. *Echolocation* aggregates localised content giving visitors a real-time sense of what users from different parts of the country are posting. It is also a great tool for socio-cultural mapping - giving an insight into issues that may be trending in different parts of the country while simplifying technical concepts of API's (application programming interface) and data-mining in a way that most people could understand. But it also showed how easy it is to access user data, which is publicly available and could be used detrimentally if the intent is malicious."

Marc Lee, *Echolocation*, KONA, Image 3
Image Credit: Pranav Gohil

For some years now, Lee has been creating interactive internet based works. *Echolocation* stemmed out of his other projects – *Realtime Stories* and *10.000 Moving Cities – Same but Different*. In *Realtime Stories*, Lee transferred user generated content from social networks directly into the exhibition space as soon as the user presses 'send'. His work, then, gave people all over the world a platform to voice their thoughts, concerns and stories. Further, in the work *10.000 Moving Cities – Same but Different,* users could not only navigate the internet to scout through images, videos and sounds of places, but they were also able to walk through the model of the place and experience the feed they selected in 3D.

Marc Lee, *Echolocation*, KONA, Image 4
Image Credit: Pranav Gohil

While the places and feeds in Lee's works seem diverse to begin with, it doesn't take long to identify a certain homogeneity, the globalised overshadowing the localised, the collective obscuring the individual. In an age, where there is increasing access to knowledge about cultures, there is also a simultaneous loss of cultural diversity. Perhaps then, Lee's work forces us to re-evaluate the loss and navigate the plain of identities, both individual and collective, with caution.

art and technology   digital art   echolocation   friction   immersive art

installation art   interactive art   internet art   marc lee   mixed media

new media   social media   video art   visual art

About Author

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Sukanya is an artist and writer with a Master's degree in Public Policy from Duke University, USA. She has been involved in research, planning and execution of gallery exhibitions and external projects in collaboration with curators. Her writing has been published in several art magazines, journals and as part of curatorial notes and catalogues, and her work has been showcased at multiple exhibitions.
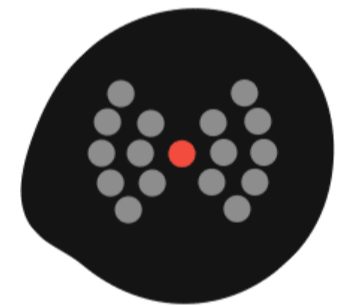
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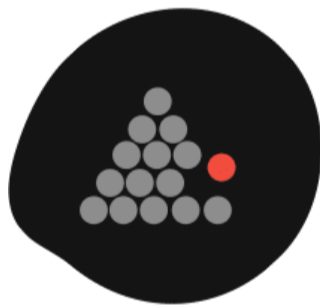
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