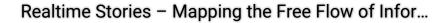JUN 5

Realtime Stories

INSTALLATION ART (/ART/CATEGORY/INSTALLATION+ART)

What if we could see the world-wide information that is uploaded to social media in realtime? What would we learn about each other, ourselves, and what would we get from the experience? Marc Lee is a Swiss born media artist whose installations attempt to find an answer to these questions. His work, *Realtime Stories,* situates a viewer in a square room that projects realtime social media posts on it's four walls in varying visual arrays. Like a giant digital mirror that reflects the entire globe's social media usage, the installation allows an individual to see the masses in an overwhelming, yet beautiful format.*Realtime Stories,* like other contemporary works, brings social media into real space.

Realtime Stories – Mapping the Free Flow of Infor...

Marc Lee says on his website that he made *Realtime Stories* so that individuals could see how they simultaneously live their independent lives alongside everyone else. He argues that the 21st century is a unique one, and that our ability to connect over great distances so easily will effect us by enabling a global perspective. Furthermore Lee was interested in creating work that used user-generated content, and not content that he himself made. Instead of creating content, Lee's work was in making a framework that allows the plethora of information in *Realtime Stories* to be made consumable. While Lee succeeded in creating this palatable format for a huge amount of information, it is the user-generated content that makes the work so compelling.

In describing the piece, a writer for German magazine PlusInsight wrote,

"Everyone speaks, everyone talks, everyone writes and everything appears together both superficial and pointless."

— Plusinsight Magazine

The viewer is immersed in this social media chatter as they enter the installation. Utilizing four projectors and eight audio channels, the square room overflows with visual and auditory stimuli. The projectors project a varying array of videos posted to YouTube, images posted to Flickr and Instagram, as well as word-based posts from Twitter. Occasionally, one feed will be displayed on an entire screen. Other times, one social media post will be superimposed upon another. Finally, at times, each screen will be filled with a multitude of feeds at once, sometimes neatly organized, and other times randomly placed. The Audio maximizes the immersive experience, enabling the viewer to hear a video as well as watch it. The social media is pulled from the internet in realtime, meaning it is reproduced in the installation moments after it is uploaded. The installation's stimulation is entrancing, it's size all-encompassing and impressive. While a viewer may not find all of the posts appealing, interesting, or even acceptable, these qualities of the space make it a captivating one nonetheless.

According to www.internetlivestats.com (http://www.internetlivestats.com), 40% of the Earth's population had access to the internet in 2016. With more and more people gaining access everyday, the internet has become a resource for people from around the globe to connect and better understand each other. What we often find, via Facebook and other social media tools, is how similar we all are. While *Realtime Stories* accomplishes the goal of bringing social media into reality, two other works similarly do this while also acknowledging the capabilities of social media that may often go unnoticed. W3FI, by Chris Coleman and Laleh Mehran explores how individuals can impact their real communities with their online selves, and Social Soul by Lauren McCarthy and Kyle McDonald, attempt to create a virtual match-matching service through twitter.

W3FI is an installation that brings the internet into a real community. It works to show how available each individual's information is, how "real" everyone's online self is, and how the impact of our online selves actively shape our community at large. *W3FI* is presented as a site-specific installation in a large room that neatly organizes massive amounts of online data that is produced by a local community. The data is displayed among vinyl depictions of local monuments, 3D printed, local terrains, and the real-time faces of the viewers who pass-by the installation, and choose to include their own identity. While *W3FI* localizes the online world into the creations of a certain city, unlike *Realtime Stories* which attempts to capture the entire globe, it achieves a similar goal of provoking awe in it's audience. A work by Lauren McCarty and Kyle McDonald, called *Social Soul*, is even more localized, being about the matchmaking of individuals within a community.

Social Soul is another installation that brings the internet into a real space. The real space *Social Soul* occupies is a small mirrored room that seems to ripple with online data as it pulls each viewers twitter feed and attempts to find their match, based off of algorithms. While *Social Soul* similarly attempts to overwhelm the user with data, as does *Realtime Stories,* it is differentiated in that it focuses on the individual, instead of on the masses. As such, *Social Soul's* goal of finding an individual's match through twitter is comparatively shallow and not as successful as the larger goals of *Realtime Stories.* However, if *Social Soul* is simply made to begin a conversation about how your online-self is representative of you real-self, it is a work that finds itself directly playing into the strengths of Coleman and Mehnran's *W3FI.* Regardless, all three works attempt to bring the internet into reality, creating awe within the a user.

As a viewer experiences the fluctuating walls of Marc Lee's *Realtime Stories*, Coleman and Mehran's *W3FI,* and McCarthy and McDonald's *Social Soul,* they are confronted by the vastness of the world, the relationship between the real world with the online world and the individuals impact on both. Though a viewer could experience a range of emotions from each work, one thing will always become clear, that the human condition is complex and universally experienced, and that our impact on it extends from both reality, as well as from our interactions on the internet.

QUOTE: http://marclee.io/wp-content/uploads/2016_ZKM-%E2%80%93-Globale_-Marc-Lee_-Real-time-Stories-%E2%80%93-Mapping-the-free-follow-of-information-around-the-world-in-real-time-_-plusinsight.pdf (http://marclee.io/wp-

content/uploads/2016_ZKM-%E2%80%93-Globale_-Marc-Lee_-Real-time-Stories-%E2%80%93-Mapping-the-free-follow-of-information-around-the-world-in-real-time-_-plusinsight.pdf)

VIDEO: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ZgBJAN2X440 (https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ZgBJAN2X440)

WORK WEBSITE: http://marclee.io/en/realtime-stories-mapping-the-free-flow-of-information-around-the-world-in-realtime/ (http://marclee.io/en/realtime-stories-mapping-the-free-flow-of-information-around-the-world-in-realtime/)

IMAGE: http://marclee.io/en/realtime-stories-mapping-the-free-flow-of-information-around-the-world-in-realtime/ (http://marclee.io/en/realtime-stories-mapping-the-free-flow-of-information-around-the-world-in-realtime/)

W3FI VIDEO: https://vimeo.com/26663495 (https://vimeo.com/26663495)

W3FI WEBSITE: http://thew3fi.com/ (http://thew3fi.com/)

SOCIAL SOUL WEBSITE: https://vimeo.com/90547410

SOCIAL SOUL: http://lauren-mccarthy.com/Social-Soul (http://lauren-mccarthy.com/Social-Soul)