

Stream

EN

*An installation
by Bruno Listopad
and Nikola Knežević*

SHOW MORE

Culture
of Control



SHOW MORE

Stroom Den Haag challenged the choreographer Bruno Listopad and the architect/artist Nikola Knežević to create an exhibition that reflects the impact of the increasing influence of control upon individuals. Instead of reflecting on this topic in a straightforward manner by presenting individuals as victims of surveilling corporations and states, they counter-intuitively present individuals who attempt to control their own public mediation.

The installation by Listopad and Knežević presents a selection of YouTube online activities of “non-artists” that facultatively and publicly share a designed image of themselves or their desires, according to their own principles. These are individuals that take charge of their online representation by transforming themselves into subject-objects that either comply with or challenge established norms of behavior.

The performative qualities these works have and the creative strategies they employ raise questions about the distinction between art and “non-art” practices. To intensify the qualities of such works they are shown within a digital art space – a museum – that is created to emphasize the notion of the Internet as today’s largest archive and panoptical museum. This “museum” is conceived as an expression of total control by the way it attempts to command the visitors’ gaze, all the data it aggregates in its collection and the subjectivity it engenders.



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Culture of Control

SHOW MORE is part of *Culture of Control*, a program about the impact of control on the city and our daily life. In collaboration with a wide range of partners we set out to research and play with the theme of control. We do not exclusively look at the known control mechanisms that are at work, like camera surveillance, data systems or physical barriers in the city, but also at the more unknown ones, like talking refrigerators, nudging or self-surveillance.

The title of the program is taken from the book by the American sociologist David Garland. In *The Culture of Control* (2001) Garland describes the vast changes in our attitude towards crime and crime prevention since the 1980s. The cultural response by private citizens, corporations and shops especially has laid the foundation for an 'infrastructure of crime prevention'.¹

Crime prevention is becoming more and more speculative, which has quite some consequences with regard to privacy and the rights of citizens. Smart cameras, chips and microphones can recognize and analyze movement, faces and sounds. The system detects abnormal behaviour and on that basis predicts unrest or worse. But very often the system is wrong.²

The question not only is how individuals can protect themselves against this system, but also what designers and artists can do to counter this predictive or pre-emptive policing.

Culture of Control poses the question whether it is possible to expose, evade, fake, reduce or challenge the control mechanisms and speculations that are at play. For example, by creating spatial solutions that are more interesting or by stimulating positive, more social and less anxious thoughts and feelings.

The works in SHOW MORE present individuals who use YouTube to expose themselves voluntarily to the view of strangers. To this end they use self-imposed (artistic) rules and poses. Nothing is done without reason, everything seems carefully constructed and most of all: under control. This YouTube world not only presents insight into an individual inner world that manifests itself publicly, it also shows us a glimpse of the controlled world we live in.

¹ http://www.marcschuilenburg.nl/_downloads/significantothersDavidGarland.pdf

² Z.n, 'Het misdrijf is al voorspeld voor het gepleegd is', in NRC Handelsblad 22 August 2015

Colophon

SHOW MORE

4 October - 13 December 2015

This exhibition is part of *Culture of Control*, a program about the impact of control on our daily life and the way we experience the city.

www.stroom.nl

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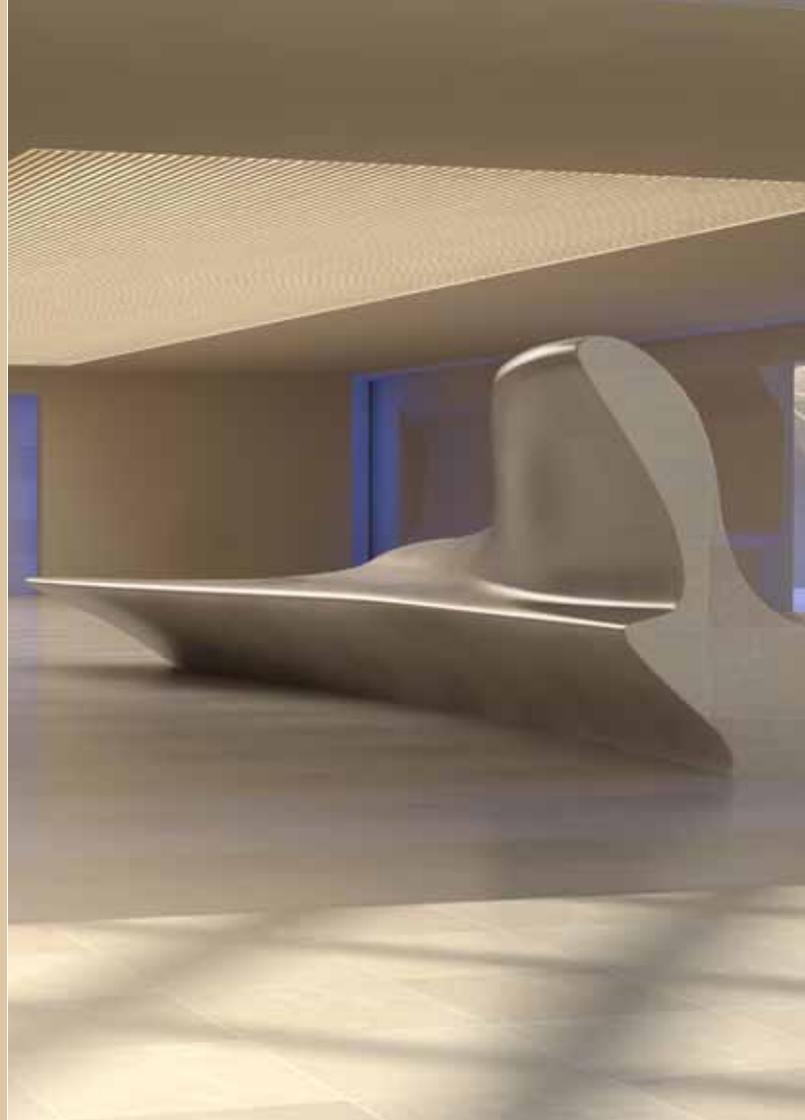
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YouTube stills:

01. Wasserspeier07
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03. AlphaTrooper
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05. murrfeeling
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