DATA AS CULTURE 3: Data Anthropologies

THOMSON & CRAIGHEAD

at the Open Data Institute
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25 March – 20 June, 2015

Data as Culture 3: Data Anthropologies
critically positions humans at the centre
of emerging data landscapes through
artistic exploration.

The Open Data Institute offers itself as the focal point of this
exploration by hosting a series of Artists in Residence. During
their time in residence at the ODI – from February to June, 2015
– Thomson & Craighead will develop a concept for
a new artwork, responding to or working with open data.

The artists will work within an open research model, likewise
sharing their own ideas and perspectives with a solo exhibition
of their existing works at the ODI.

Thomson & Craighead’s work explores the ways in which our
lives and experiences are mediated by technology. It raises
questions about what it means to aggregate and interconnect
large bodies of information, inviting reflection on how
mechanisms like the World Wide Web alter, extend and distort
our understanding of the world around us.

The artists are keen observers of the ways in which people
interact with these new spaces. Working with sound, video
and sculpture, their materials include found YouTube footage,
search-terms and extracted texts from individual and corporate
contributors to online media.

Photographic artist Natasha Caruana will be ODI Artist in
Residence from July – December, 2015

Data as Culture 3: Data Anthropologies is curated by Hannah Redler, ODI Associate Curator in
Residence, with Julie Freeman, ODI Art Associate and Gavin Starks, ODI CEO. It includes artists’
residencies, new commissions, events and partnerships.

theodi.org/culture
Thomson & Craighead encountered a Scottish man called Graham Smith online who has been posting time-lapse recordings of the weather every day from his window from 6 AM to 6 PM. Considering Monday as “an emotional day with a lot of narrative potential” they made a film of Smith’s Mondays which offers an alternative view of time, reducing six years to a time-slice of several minutes.
DECORATIVE NEWSFEED
2004 (ongoing)
Digital animation from online sources, dimensions variable
Live news headlines from around the world are transformed into algorithmically drawn animated lines that rotate and swirl around each other, generating unique pathways across the screen. As different headlines travel across each other, original meanings and implications are transformed. The work raises questions about the mutability of information and how its mediation informs its meaning as much as its content.

WEATHER GAUGE
2003 (ongoing)
Digital animation from online sources, dimensions variable
Numerical weather information from 105 countries is simultaneously displayed as a decorative animation offering an unusually extended view of the world beyond the physical location of the artwork.

CORRUPTION
2014
Lenticular photographic light boxes, each 56cm x 42cm
Three from a series of 12 are on display at the ODI
Twelve frames from a corrupted video file are displayed using lenticular technology more frequently associated with popular 3D images of animals or architectural spaces. Here they illustrate a flat moment taken from machine error. The work raises questions about the status and aesthetics of corrupted digital files. It also plays with notions of animation, as our own movement around the work animates the image.

(Opposite) Corruption. Photo: Ruth Clark
FLIPPED CLOCK
2008
Modified digital clock, dimensions variable
Although we are all bound by it, and largely accept it as ‘given’, the notion of clock time is a human construct. Flipped Clock is a fully functioning and accurate digital clock that displays the time by the hour, minute and second. However, each digit has been rotated 180°, defamiliarising our relationship and expectation of clock time.

VOYAGER (MICROMÉGAS)
2013
Woodblock print, 84cm x 119cm
The Voyager interstellar probe has travelled further into space than anything, or anyone, in human history. By transcribing the UN Secretary General’s greetings message sent out on the probe as a large-scale woodblock print, the artists rebroadcast humanity’s outward-facing call back towards us. They invite us to reflect on the aspirations at the heart of human endeavour and consider our own place in the universe.
LONDON WALL EC2
2010 (ongoing)
Fly posters, dimensions variable

London Wall EC2 displays a selection of tweets during February and March, 2015, captured from within the densely populated area surrounding the ODI in Shoreditch. Reflecting individual tweets as woodblock-style printed matter, where keywords are given unequal weight, the artists slow down the process of social media exchange, arresting rather than amplifying activity. The piece documents the way we broadcast ourselves online.

THE FIRST PERSON
2014
Generative video, dimensions variable
Equipment courtesy Carroll / Fletcher gallery

A looped video of a burning house is interspersed with endless random statements drawn from American self-help websites that call for like-minded people to share their experiences. Their need for clarity and a sense of wholeness is mirrored by uncertainty and a constant state of incomplete being.

HORIZON
2009 (ongoing)
Narrative clock from online sources

Horizon is a ‘narrative clock’ made out of images accessed in real-time from webcams in every time-zone around the world. The piece stems from the artists' interest in the increasing amounts of ‘virtual’ information layered over ‘lived’ experience. The result is a constantly updating array of images that read like a series of movie storyboards, but also as an idiosyncratic global electronic sundial.

The First Person. Courtesy the artists
Sam Meech, Purchased Economy ODI Knitted banner. Courtesy the artists.

(Opposite, top and below) Thickear, Pink Sheet Method. Ellie Harrison, Vending Machine.

Sam Meech, Purchased Economy ODI Knitted banner. Courtesy the artists.
Paolo Cirio,

*Your Fingerprints on the Artworks are the Artwork*

Courtesy the artists; James Bridle, AQD Remembrancer. Photo: ODI;

Benedikt Groß and Bertrand Clerc, Metrography. Courtesy the artist.
Data as Culture engages diverse audiences with artists and works that use or respond to open data as an art material and subject for artistic research. We exhibit and commission works from emerging, mid-career and established artists, and commission new works, reaching large audiences in Britain and beyond. We acquire or long-term loan selected artworks from the programme for ongoing display at the ODI.

Julie Freeman, We Need Us. Courtesy the artist.

Works on show at the ODI and online.

La Société Anonyme, The SKOR Codex, 2012

PAOLO CIRIO
Your Fingerprints on the Artworks are the Artwork Itself, 2014

ODI commission
dataasculture.org

Julie Freeman
We Need Us, 2014 (ongoing)

ODI and The Space commission
thespace.org/weneedus

James Bridle
AQD Remembrancer, 2014

ODI commission
theodi.org/data-as-culture-2014-collection

Thricear
Pink Sheet Method., 2014

ODI commission
theodi.org/data-as-culture-2014-collection

Sam Meech
Punchedcard Economy, ODI Knitted Banner, 2014

Thricear
The SKOR Codex., 2012

La Société Anonyme
Vending Machine, 2009

Ellie Harrison
Metrography, 2012

Benedikt Grob and Bertrand Clerc
the space of/against/on

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DATA AS CULTURE
La Société Anonyme. The SKOR Codex. Courtesy the artist.

The ODI’s Data as Culture art programme engages diverse audiences with artists interested in exploring data. Now in its third season, Data as Culture exhibits and commissions artworks for ODI space and external venues. For more information please contact dac@theodi.org theodi.org/culture

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The Open Data Institute is catalysing the evolution of open data culture to create economic, environmental, and social value.