

The Eye Transposed

Introduction

The Eye Transposed is an international collaborative project of MARCEL designed to bring photography and its creative demands into the high-bandwidth network space and experiment with fixed images and new communication technologies.

On the surface photography seems to represent the world around us, reflecting an uninvolved observer behind the camera. Some photographers take painful steps in trying to disengage their own point of view, while others do the opposite in seeking to show us what is important to them in the way they see. This on-going collaboration is interested in those individuals who make deliberate step towards inviting us to see the world through their lens.

Photographers and artists are invited to upload work to the site of *The Eye Transposed*, making their work available to others sharing similar concerns. They will have the opportunity to participate in specific projects and events generated by the group, bringing photography into the network space while engaging in international collaboration and distribution. As the body of online work continues on *The Eye Transposed* website it will offer a potential pool of participants for more targeted thematic collaborative projects and an overview of their visual research. <http://www.mmmarcel.org/groups/eye-transposed>

Pilot Event

“Being in Time - What I saw today. What I thought today”

This project is the first of an ongoing series of thematic collaborations of *The Eye Transposed*, a celebration of the eye that sees and is intended to present photography as a point of view and an instance of what in a pedagogical context W. J. T. Mitchell has called “showing seeing.”

As part of the initial stages of the project, 25 photographers will be selected from around the world to upload daily images over a period of 100 days to create an evolving collage of work which a public could navigate from several points of view, by day, by artist, by theme, exploring multiple images using a navigational system already developed called Slider. The photos will then be

displayed in participating centers using especially designed technological support systems for public viewing of the work to explore what Sharon Daniel has called "the conditions of possibility of a "database aesthetics."

The initial 25 photographers run the gamut from amateur snapshot enthusiasts to seasoned and recognized professionals. Taking into account the buried argument about objectivity in photography, many practitioners either avoid or deny imbuing their photographs with opinion and point of view while others have created a set of standards to try to supersede the inevitability of the impression of their own voice. The 25 photographers that will create the formative material for this project are tied together by a desire to use photography as a means of personal expression; a desire and intention to create from a subjective point of view.

The Process

Artists/photographers from around the world are invited through the MARCEL network to send work to a server housing a dedicated web site from which work will be shown electronically over installations in the participating centers. Work will be a quotidian record of no more than three pictures a day, preferably uploaded either daily but no less often than twice a week creating a wall of constantly changing images in each of the centers.

MARCEL is also in the process of creating a network of members and places where the physical manifestations of the work will be shown. Over a wall of 25 screens the images will be automatically updated as they are uploaded creating a continuously changing composition of the personal view of the creators.

On adjacent walls separate screens will allow the public to investigate the work shown through several possible points of view, for instance, the work of a single photographer or the total uploads of a particular day. That work will be organized using a 3-D navigational system called Slider, made up of geometrical forms serving as a visual database containing all the pertinent images. Different Slider forms can be designed to represent different aspects of the collected work.

Open multicasting connections will allow real-time interactivity as well. During the showing of the work, MARCEL will open connections with as many of the sites as possible to allow contact with and conversation among spectators visiting the several sites of the exhibit. We imagine collaboration between institutions around the world in each continent to assure its widest dissemination.

MARCEL (<http://www.mmmarcel.org>)

MARCEL is an umbrella organization of like-minded artists, scientists and institutions interested in exchange and collaboration, operating over

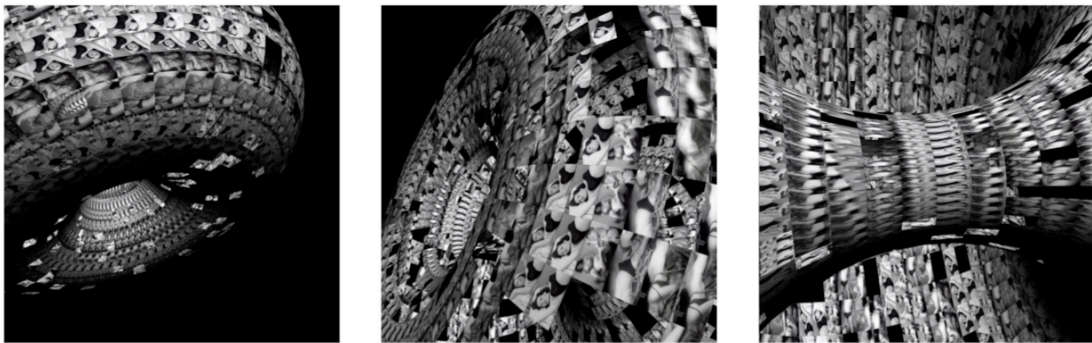
permanent very high bandwidth interactive networks dedicated to artistic, educational and cultural experimentation, exchange between art and science and collaboration between art and industry. MARCEL is a non-profit organization established as a Charity based in the UK governed by a Board of Trustees, Company No. 4785771, Registered Main Charity 1101627.

A MARCEL Member is an institution or individual who has agreed to participate in a project. Members commit to installing a high bandwidth connection, designate MARCEL contact people for that institution and install the multicasting platform.

A MARCEL project is an activity involving two or more members using the MARCEL network to fulfill its aims. Projects are based on artistic co-production in all artistic disciplines, technical projects working to make the network space function better, art- or science-related projects such as archiving, artists' rights, research and education questions or programs.

SLIDERS - Navigating Stored Images

Using an original 3-D display system developed by Jean-Marie Dallet and Frédéric Curien of the [SLIDERS lab](#) at the EESI, Poitiers, the work already uploaded could be seen by a public interacting with 3-D objects made from hundred of photos to select those they wish to see. Imagine a large screen with a floating 3-D geometrical object or objects made of images, forms which can be manipulated through a touch screen to pick an individual image and bring it to the fore.



Example of one such object built with Sliders. Each element is made up of several images, either a film or a series of individual images. The 3-D figure can contain the entire body of work of a single artist.

Photographic Precedent

SLIDERS_lab has already built an installation for showing the photographic work of Jules Etienne Marey for that museum in Beaune, France.



Specially designed furniture for showing Marey's photos and documentation accompanying it. All operations are touch-screen.

Three screens showing a circle of Marey images. Clicking on any image bring a vertical line of related images.



Installations using Sliders will be specially designed for *Being in Time*. The possible forms are almost unlimited and the user interface can be designed for either an intimate or pedagogical experience for individual spectators or a scaled-up more public and playful interface with a larger public.

Curatorial Pathways

Another dimension will be setting up curatorial pathways through the collected material presented by invited curators according to their interests, conceptual or pedagogical. This aspect could be shown online or using a Sliders installation for each curator's selection, or both. Such curatorial presentations could be shown throughout the exhibit on smaller screens dedicated to the curator or could be made available to a larger public over the web.

A project for putting Sliders online is being developed by Sliders, the Institut de recherche et innovation at the Centre Pompidou and with other partners of MARCEL.

Historical precedent

In 1982 Meridel Rubenstein and Don Foresta organized an exhibit of French-American photography transmitted by telephone. Rubenstein and Foresta had already experimented with a technology for sending images over phone lines and Foresta had started his long-term activity with the network the year before with an exchange between the American Center in Paris and the Center for Advanced Visual Studies at MIT.

They proposed a transatlantic exchange of photos with 11 American and 12 French photographers sending each other images, the first photo exchange over telephone networks. In Paris the images were photographed again off the receiving screen and hung in the Museum of Modern Art of the City of Paris as the American participation at the 12th Paris Biennial. "[Unraveling Sound](#)"



Meridel Rubenstein

A celebration of that anniversary could include three sections:

- 1 a reproduction of a selection of that work shown as it was seen in 1982
- 2 a presentation of the video tapes of the actual transmission to and from the Paris Biennale, tapes which are now being digitized by the Institut national de l'audiovisuel in Paris
- 3 a reconstitution of the Slowscan process using machines still in Foresta's possession, refurbished as a form of technical archeology with the Musée des Arts et Metiers, Paris.

Such a reconstituted exhibition could be a part of a larger show of the proposed contemporary work.

Conclusion

The principal objective of MARCEL is to bring all the arts into the very high bandwidth network space and claim a part of that territory for art before it is completely co-opted by the commercial world. That international academic research network – exponentially larger than the web - is the latest manifestation of communication technology which, as we are already seeing, will eventually envelope all other forms of communication media.

The Eye Transposed will continue expanding with many other collaborative projects as new themes are proposed by already present and added new participants. Curators, as well as the interested public will be able to follow these developments and observe new trends. Photography centers will be encouraged to organize online activities, exhibits, collaborative work, conferences, etc. with the goal of promoting the presence of photographic work in the network space.

Gabriella Kardos, Don Foresta & Serge J-F. Levy, September 2013

gabriellakardos@yahoo.co.uk

don@donforesta.net

sjflevy@gmail.com