
Platform of Future-Past

2022

Project by fabric | ch

Funding: HOW Art Museum (CN)

Location: Shanghai (CN)

With the support of Swissnex China and Pro Helvetia

Exhibited during *Beneath the Skin, Between the Machines* (HOW Art Museum, Shanghai, 2022). Curator: Fu Liaoliao

- Architectural installation as a sensing platform and recording device
 - Performative and mediated environment
 - Two different mediated times within the space of exhibition
 - Data “shadow” of exhibition space and activities
-
- PoFP interfaces and software.
Environmental monitoring/recording



[Img. 1]



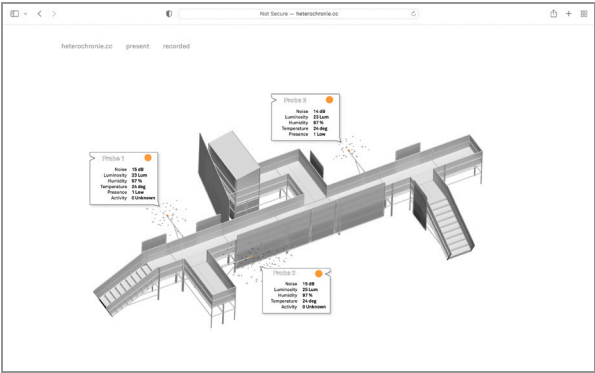
[Img. 2]



[Img. 3]

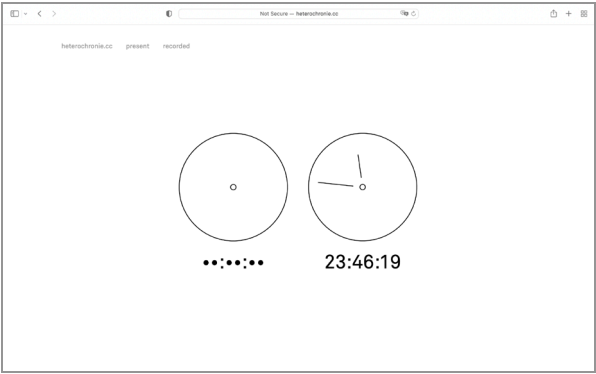


[Img. 4]



Two distinct times, two “presents” were observing each other, close to one another: the present of an exhibition space and that of a second place, the observation deck or walkway that overlooked the whole. The first one with its different spaces for potential activities, its “visitors”, and the second that allowed to structure in an open way the other one, to observe it, to sense and record it. (...)

19484 minutes of recorded time
 17536 data points
 70145 measurements at probes
 24 °C at probe 1
 14 dB is the highest value at probe 3
 23 Lm is the lowest value at probe 1



[Img. 5 - 8]



[Img. 9]



[Img. 10]



[Img. 11]



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how_art_museum HOW Art Museum is pleased to announce that the exhibition *Beneath the Skin, Between the Machines* will be on view from January 15th, 2022.

"Man is only man at the surface. Remove the skin, dissect, and immediately you come to machinery." When Paul Valéry wrote this down a century ago, he might not foresee that human beings – a biological organism – would indeed be incorporated into machinery at such a profound level in a highly informationized time and space. In a sense, it is just as what Marx predicted: a conscious connection of machine[Karl Marx, "Fragment on Machines", Foundations of a Critique of Political Economy]. Today, machine exists not only as a material form but also in the forms of data, algorithm and coding – virtually everything that is operable, calculable and thinkable. Ever since the idea of cyborg emerges, the relation between man and machine has always been intertwined with our imagination, vision and fear of the past, present and future.

Beneath the Skin, Between the Machines

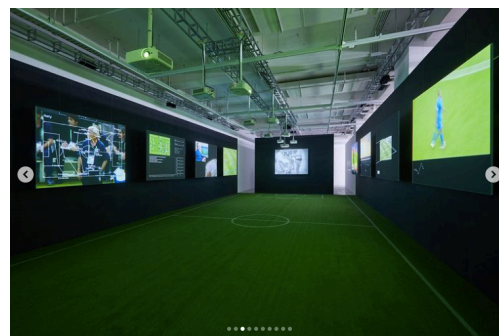
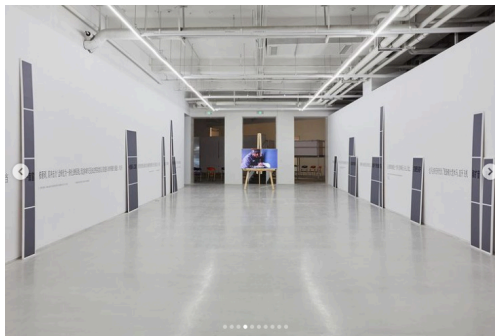
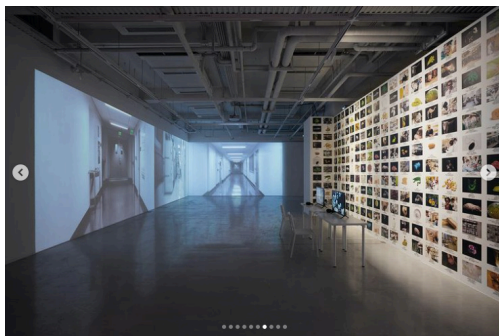
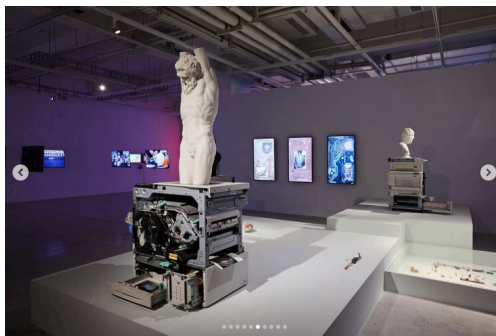
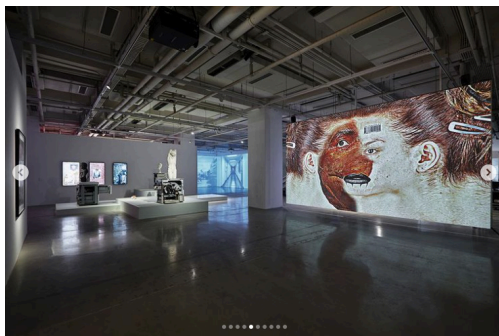
Duration: January. 15th - April. 24th, 2022
 Artists: Forensic Architecture, Revital Cohen & Tuur Van Balen, Simon Denny, Fabric | ch, Harun Farocki, Geumhyung Jeong, Nicolás Lamas, Lynn Hershman Leeson, Lu Yang, Lam Pok Yin, David O'Reilly, Pakui Hardware, Jon Rafman, Hito

Liked by fabricch_asfound and 53 others

DECEMBER 29, 2021

Comments on this post have been limited.

[Img. 12]



[Img. 13 - 18]

Image captions:

- [Img. 1-4] Platform of Future-Past, views from the exhibition floor (awaiting events) and from the observation deck, with an atmospheric and presence sensor in the foreground [Img. 4].
- [Img. 5-8] Screenshots of one of the screens in the server area, on the platform. Data points, axonometry with live data, time at the point of recording (Shanghai) and second clock without time, narrative elements.
- [Img. 9-11] Other views from the platform. Ground and deck views.
- [Img. 12] Exhibition flyer. HOW Art Museum's Instagram post with invited artists.
- [Img. 13-18] Various views from the show (with works by Hito Steyerl, Jon Rafman, Simon Demmy, Forensic Architecture, Geumhyung Jeong, Lu Yang, Harun Farocki, Lynn Herschmann, and others).

Txt

Platform of Future-Past

The HOW Art Museum invited the Lausanne-based artist group fabric | ch to create an architectural installation based on their former project "Public Platform of Future Past" (2015/16) and adapted to the museum space. Intended to be used also during public events within the museum, it promotes communication between practitioners of different fields and the public.

"Two distinct times, two "presents" were observing each other, close to one another: the present of an exhibition space and that of a second place, the observation deck or walkway that overlooked the whole. The first one with its different spaces for potential activities, its "visitors", and the second that allowed to structure in an open way the other one, to observe it, to sense and record it. (...)"

"Platform of Future-Past" is a temporary environmental device that consists in a twenty meters long walkway, or rather an observation deck, almost archaeological: a platform that overlooks an exhibition space and that, paradoxically, directly links the entrance of the room to its exit. It thus offers the possibility of crossing this space without really entering it and to become its observer, like archaeological observation decks overlooking excavation sites. The platform offers contrasting atmospheres and affordances in the form of potential and temporary uses on the ground and on its "skin", made of projection screen fabric.

As a default and starting configuration, the platform seeks to disappear as if under a "cloak of invisibility", projecting on its own surface in an anamorphic way views of the empty exhibition space. Then it is gradually filled with other anamorphic images of the same occupied space, during conferences or shows, thus revealing a kind of memory of the place with mixed temporalities.

The peculiarity of the work lies in the fact that it generates a dual perception for the same space and an imaginary temporal disturbance, which leads to the title of the work, "Platform of Future-Past": if the present time of the exhibition space and its visitors is in fact the "archeology" to be observed from the platform, and thus a potential "past," then the present time of the walkway could be understood as a possible "future", perceived from the ground.

"Platform of Future-Past" is equipped in three areas with environmental monitoring devices. The sensors record as much data as possible over time, generated by the continuously changing conditions, presences and uses in the exhibition space. The data is then stored on Platform of Future-Past's servers and replayed in a loop on its computers. It is a "recorded moment", "frozen" on the data servers, that could potentially replay itself endlessly or is waiting for someone to reac-

tivate it. A mobile and small "data center" on the deck, with its set of interfaces and monitoring screens, lets the visitors-observers follow the ongoing process of recording.

The work could be seen as an architectural proposal built on the idea of massive data production from our environment. Every second, our world produces countless amounts of data, stored "forever" in remote data centers, like old gas bubbles trapped in millennia-old ice.

As such, the project is attempting to introduce doubt about its true nature: would it be possible, in fact, that what is observed from the platform is already a present recorded from the past? A phantom situation? A present regenerated from the data recorded during a scientific experiment that was left abandoned. Or perhaps re-played by the machine itself?

Could it already, in fact, be running in a loop for years?

fabric | ch, February 2022

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fabric | ch (97-26)

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