Instant Protest

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Press Release: immediate release



http://www.ebay.com/itm/172469396828?ssPageName=STRK:MESELX:IT&_trksid=p3984.m1558.l2649

http://iocose.org/works/instant_protest.html

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IOCOSE are glad to announce Instant Protest.

Instant Protest is an online service offered by IOCOSE to sell customised protests. Photos of people demonstrating in the streets are bought on eBay for $10 each, and buyers can request any slogan they like to be written on the signs of the protesters. IOCOSE draws on crowdsourcing platforms (such as MicroWorkers.com) to commission online workers from anywhere in the world to take photos of themselves while staging the protest chosen by the buyer. The final product is a photographic documentation of a global protest, re-usable for news articles, social media campaigns, lobbying and political movements.

Instant Protest offers real images of real people, in an age when reality melts into air. ‘We live in a peculiar historical period, where values of truth and democracy are being reshaped’ says Paolo Ruffino of the collective IOCOSE. ‘What lies ahead is uncertain, and we do not know how our culture will be redefined in the next decade, or century. The real is under construction: the dynamics that regulate what we perceive to be relevant for our society, the definition of our collective dangers and fears or, in other words, what we believe to be true’.

In 2016, Oxford Dictionaries declared ‘post-truth’ to be the word of the year, defining it as the ‘circumstances in which objective facts are less influential in shaping public opinion than appeals to emotion and personal belief’ (Oxford Dictionaries 2016). Instant Protest is a direct response to the emergence of a new kind of political rhetoric, where facts are accepted to be manipulated and malleable, and can be turned at one’s own advantage.

Instant Protest is a provoking tool that allows users to take control of other people’s perception of reality. With $10, buyers can set their own photographic documentation of any demonstration they like, and use the pictures to deceive the audience of newspapers and social media by making them believe that a worldwide protest on a certain topic is currently taking place

At the time of writing, Instant Protest has already attracted the attention of dozens of wishful political campaigners. A ‘NO EURO’ campaign has already started, and features photos from India, Bangladesh and Eastern European countries. The ‘CLIMATE CHANGE IS A HOAX’ campaign is currently involving unconcerned online workers from anywhere in the world, who are taking photos of themselves in the streets, holding signs, for $1-$3 a picture. There are also more bizarre or personal protests going on, such as ‘STOP AUTOMATION NOW’ and ‘FREE THE NIPPLE’.

Background information

Instant Protest develops an ongoing artistic research of the collective IOCOSE. In 2012, they have worked at ‘A Crowded Apocalypse’, a collection of photos generated by online workers that represent a global movement of conspiracy theories generated, in their own turn, by other online workers.

In 2013 the group released ‘How to Make a Bomb’, a playlist of short videos, each demonstrating a step to make a domestic explosive. Each video represents an almost meaningless action, and was made by online workers who were unaware of the full picture. When seen in sequence, the videos instruct the viewer on how to make a bomb.

In 2013 IOCOSE presented ‘If the Kids are United’ during the opening days of the Venice Art Biennale. Protesters moved around the streets of Venice, Italy holding signs with the placeholder text ‘Lorem Ipsum’, to symbolise a protest that could be modified by copying any text to replace the one currently on display.

Instant Protest is presented in the framework of #Exstrange, a live exhibition project that showcases artworks conceived by contemporary artists to be encountered, auction-style, by the passersby of eBay. Curated by Marialaura Ghidini and Rebekah Modrak, #Exstrange will involve more than 30 international artists and will continue until the end of February 2017.

On Crowdsourcing

Crowdsourcing is the practice of solving a complex project or tasks by enlisting a large number of workers, each contributing to a minimal part of the work. Typically, crowdsourcing happens through the internet and is used for programming tasks. Amazon Mechanical Turk, available only in the United States and India, is the leading platform for crowdsourcing services, with a user base estimated to be around 500.000 and 750.000 by the end of 2015 (Keuk et al, 2015). Crowdsourcing became popular around 2006, when Wired magazine wrote about crowdsourcing as the practice that would bring together, via the Internet, the collective intelligence of people from all over the world (Wired magazine, 2006). More than 10 years later, we know that crowdsourcing has only replicated the divisions and inequalities already existent in the world, with large corporations from the USA and Western Europe using crowdsourcing to commission simple mechanical tasks to workers in Asia, South America and Eastern Europe.

Downloadable images:
https://www.dropbox.com/sh/97i4piaxlaehqdi/AACv9jfJSNlizi-Srq7lSA2Ma?dl=0

Website:
http://iocose.org/works/instant_protest.html

Additional links:
eBay sale
http://www.ebay.com/itm/172469396828?ssPageName=STRK:MESELX:IT&_trksid=p3984.m1558.l2649

A Crowded Apocalypse
http://iocose.org/works/a_crowded_apocalypse_photos.html

How to Make a Bomb
http://iocose.org/works/how_to_make_a_bomb.html

If The Kids Are United
http://iocose.org/works/if_the_kids_are_united.html

Exstrange
http://exstrange.com/

Wired Magazine 2006 article

https://www.wired.com/2006/06/crowds/

Keuk et al. 2015 ‘The Global Opportunity in Online Outsourcing’, The World Bank, (working paper). Accessible at http://documents.worldbank.org/curated/en/138371468000900555/The-global-opportunity-in-online-outsourcing

Oxford Dictionaries, 2016, ‘Word of the Year: Post-Truth’, oxforddictionaries.com. Accessible at https://en.oxforddictionaries.com/word-of-the-year/word-of-the-year-2016

Critical readings on IOCOSE and crowdsourcing:

Garrett, M. (2012), Crowdsourcing a conspiracy, interview with IOCOSE, published by Abandon Normal Devices [English]
Tanni, V. (2012), L’Apocalisse? E’ partecipata, parola di IOCOSE, Artribune [Italian]
Lechner, M. (2012), Le Complot carbure au pastiche, Liberation [French]
Sampson, T. D. (2012), Digital Milgram and the Spreading of Conspiracy Theories, Virality [English]
Ghedini, M. (2013) On The Upgrade, Wysiwyg editions [English]

Events and exhibitions of works cited:

Invisible Forces 16 June - 11 August 2012, Furtherfield Gallery, London, UK
Abandon Normal Devices 29 August - 2 September 2012, Manchester, UK
FOTOGRAFIA. Festival internazionale di Roma, 20 September - 28 October 2012, MACRO Testaccio, Roma, Italy
Augmented Place. L'arte aumenta la realtà, 23 November 2012, Galleria Cavour, Padova, Italy
Transmediale, 2 February 2013, Transmediale Festival - Haus Der Kulturen Der Welt, Berlin, Germany
Far Festa, 1 juny 2013, Giardini della Biennale, Venice, Italy

Artist Bio:

IOCOSE are a collective of four artists and have been working as a group since 2006. IOCOSE’s art investigates the after-failure moment of the teleological narratives of technological and cultural development, in regards to both their enthusiastic and pessimistic visions. They have been exhibiting internationally at several art institutions and festivals, including Venice Biennale (2011, 2013), Tate Modern (London, 2011), Science Gallery (Dublin, 2012) Jeu de Paume (Paris, 2011), FACT (Liverpool, 2012), Transmediale (Berlin, 2013, 2015), and featured in publications such as Wired magazine, The Creators Project, Flash Art, Neural, Liberation, Der Spiegel, El Pais.

Contacts:

contact@iocose.org