

The Kitchen

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Cory Arcangel and Olia Lialina: “Asymmetrical Response”
January 11–February 18, 2017

Checklist of Exhibited Works

Reception (Clockwise, from left):

Olia Lialina
ENGWB51, 2014-2017
Four A4 PDFs, glass frame

Asymmetrical Response begins with these 4 PDFs of failed printouts of an easyJet boarding pass. On the fifth attempt, Lialina successfully printed her boarding pass for a flight from London to Moscow. The artist shared this snafu and the boarding passes on Twitter, which evolved into online banter with Arcangel about trading images. Arcangel wanted the PDFs of the failed passes for his image archive; Lialina sought something comparable in return. An asymmetry emerged in this back-and-forth—no exchange was ever similar, no response quite matching up.

Cory Arcangel
Imgres, 2016
C-print

Cory Arcangel
100 Raves, 2016
C-print

Cory Arcangel
Krugman / Lakes, 2016
1920x1080 H.264/MPEG-4 Part 10 looped digital file (from 11 lossless TIF masters), media player, 70” flatscreen, armature, various cables.

These three works stem from *#currentmood*, an ongoing series where Arcangel appropriates images from the web. The archival strategy avoids privileging image content or quality. Instead, for Arcangel, this image archive interrogates the problem of objects, vis-à-vis digital technology, through a conflation of consumer technology, pop culture and web aesthetics. In *Krugman / Lakes*, a pixelated image of Paul Krugman’s *New York Times* profile picture is further distorted by a ‘90s Java Applet effect and displayed on a large monitor; the other two images—*Imgres* and *100 Raves*—appear, respectively, low- and hi-res in quality. The object here evidences the asymmetry between users and technology, with expectations around image quality forcing users into a constant cycle of equipment upgrades and revised compression algorithms.

Front Gallery:

Cory Arcangel

The AUDMCRS Underground Dance Music Collection of Recorded Sound, 2011-2012

839 trance LPs and corresponding catalogue in Machine Readable Cataloging standard, listening station, and latex gloves.

To interrogate what gets assigned historic and cultural value, Arcangel began *AUDMCRS*, a collection of 839 trance LPs purchased from retired trance and underground dance music DJ Joshua Ryan. Over the course of two years, Arcangel and his studio meticulously catalogued the entire collection, transforming these pre-EDM LPs into a museum-like collection. Only ever intended to be heard in a rave context, these LPs are now both a sculpture and performance that tease out the difficulty of preserving an experience through its related objects.

Olia Lialina

Bringing your talent to the web, 2010 - ongoing

GRI library

As the Internet changes and evolves, so too does web design. This personal library of web design manuals archives this evolution, from the table-based, column designed websites in the late '90s to the rise of Javascript in the mid-2000s. These trends all but vanished with parallax and responsive web design. Since early websites were not archived, web design manuals stand as one of the few sources to see early Internet aesthetics.

Hallway:

Cory Arcangel

Dunks, 2016

Pencil on paper

Since 2011, Arcangel has produced graphite drawings with a Mutoh XP-300 Series plotter printer—a technology predating the inkjet printer. By displaying duplicates of this gestural sketch originally made in Photoshop, Arcangel reveals the ability to endlessly replicate a seemingly unique drawing. In this instance replicating the act of dunking a basketball, which is for Arcangel the epitome of American bravado.

Main Gallery (clockwise, from left):

Cory Arcangel

Diamond Plate, 2016

Carpet

Diamond Plate is both a reference to '90s web culture (and the background image of Arcangel's first-ever homepage) but also how the Internet, art, and Internet art function as product. This wall-to-wall carpet transforms the gallery into a showroom for the display of objects.

Olia Lialina

MeetMyDog, 2016

Digitally printed wallpaper

Olia Lialina

PersonalPageBlue, 2016

Digitally printed wallpaper

Olia Lialina

CelebrityBckgd3, 2016

Digitally printed wallpaper

The three custom wallpapers covering the gallery walls are direct references to when Yahoo acquired GeoCities in 1999, and attempted to "clean up" its highly personalized amateur web pages with prefab templates. For

instance, Yahoo limited personal web pages to a similar blue and white aesthetic eerily reminiscent of Facebook's color palette. These early templates to web design signal an opening salvo in the asymmetrical conflict between corporate-led technologies and computer users.

Cory Arcangel
Photoshop Gradient Demonstration Bedsheets (SRF-011), 2014
Bedsheets

In 2014 Arcangel launched a new "lifestyle brand" and product line under the imprint *Arcangel Surfware*, that includes T-shirts, sweatpants, bedsheets and iPhone covers, all designed "to surf the Internet in comfort." *Fuck Negativity Gear* is the latest collection debuted in 2015.

Cory Arcangel
Solitaire Weekly, 2012–13
Webisode series, Facebook & Twitter social network presence
<http://www.solitaire-weekly.com>

For a full year, Arcangel screencast a weekly online solitaire game on YouTube and social media. The project was unattributed to any one person, creating confusion whether it was being produced and shared by an actual human or a bot.

Olia Lialina
Liquid Crystal Curtain, 2016
One Game & Watch Nintendo handheld game, four Elektronika handheld games

Liquid Crystal Curtain is a play on the post-WWII, Cold War allegory of the "Iron Curtain" that created a symbolic, ideological, and physical divide between Eastern and Western Blocs, effectively isolating the Soviet Union. Nintendo's "Game & Watch" LCD games were the company's first massively successful product launched in 1980; by the mid-80s cloned games appeared in the Soviet Union with a slightly altered console design and unlicensed characters, just one of many examples of how Soviets dealt with their shortage of consumer goods during that era.

Cory Arcangel
MiG 29 Soviet Fighter Plane, Clouds, and Android, 2015
Two LG Volt cell phones and chargers, *MiG 29 Soviet Fighter Plane and Clouds* (2005) Nintendo Entertainment System .nes Roms, Android OS Nintendo Entertainment System emulators

This work is a hack of the Nintendo video game, *MiG 29: Soviet Fighter* where the player occupies a Soviet Fighter Jet and tasked with bombing missions in various Middle Eastern countries. Release amid the Gulf War, the cold-war context of the *MiG 29*, as well as pointed role-reversal—military games often featured an American pilot—represent an ideological hack of sorts. In fact, Camerica, the developers of *MiG 29*, were a bootleg Nintendo game manufacturer, which, for Arcangel, might have explained the subversive thematic of the video game. For this exhibition, Arcangel emulates *MiG 29* on Android phones (a computational process in which new computers act like old computers in order to run old software), a gesture that translates his work across technical, historical and geo-political time.

Olia Lialina
Body Class Pimp, 2016
Six digital prints on plexiglass

This series of prints are a meditation on the immigrant youth who populated Hyves, a prominent social network in The Netherlands launched in 2004. Hyves allowed for a "pimp my profile" approach that allowed users a high degree of control over the appearance of their profile pages. Succumbing to the likes of Facebook, Hyves folded in 2013; however, *Body Class Pimp* provides a snapshot of the how users like "damlos" and "halim71" masterfully matched backgrounds and profile images to create nuanced self-portraits that made themselves visible online.

Olia Lialina
(*Nothing You Can Compare to Your Neighborhood Hoe*), 2011
1440x900 video, LED screen

In this video, Lialina distills multiple eras of Internet user culture in the form of a Tumblr screencast featuring the artist's infamous 2005 work, *Animated Gif Model*. Designed with open-source intents, Lialina's hula-hooping avatar has appeared on countless websites, in various resolutions and contexts. This Tumblr of user "ursulagaiofatto" stands as a testament to the abiding appeal of early web principles: tiled backdrops, pixelated animated gifs, poor quality audio files (in this case, David Guetta's 2009 hit "Sexy Bitch"), and images borrowed and recontextualized without attribution.

Cory Arcangel
Call of Duty, 2017
Foam pool noodles, power strip, USB cable, USB wristband, Call of Duty wristband, wire wraps, wire organizers, sock.

Cory Arcangel
The Internet, 2017
Foam pool noodle, Minecraft necklace, USB wristband, wristband, wireclip.

Cory Arcangel
Boss, 2015
Foam pool noodles, tailored Daisy Dukes, tailored sweatpant leg.

Cory Arcangel
Fucks, 2015
Foam pool noodles, black Beats By Dre™ headphones, iPod Nano and charger, iPod Nano 7 Shocksock Reflective Sports Armband, Avicii "Levels" MPEG-1 Audio Layer III file player, Deadmau5 wallet chain, USB plug, Nike sweatband, large studded bracelet, Fuck sock.

Cory Arcangel
You Only Live Once, 2014
Foam pool noodles, necklace, rubber wristband, tailored Nike sweatpant leg, tailored Hooters sweatpant leg, tailored Bravado Arcangel Surfware sweatpant leg.

These sculptures of pool noodles decked out in tailored clothing and tech devices are a nod to various typologies of culture—*Screen-Agers* and *Webmasters*—and the concomitant shift in vernacular that accompanies technologies. On view are several noodles propped up and vibing out to Lialina's *Neighborhood Hoe* concert. By aligning these shifts to a soft, foam medium Arcangel highlights the malleable nature of screen-based cultures, and how their interface and outputs are rematerialized, time and again, as products.

Cory Arcangel
Arcangel Surfware Fuck Negativity Gear, 2016
Clothing

Olia Lialina
Webmaster Summer, 2016
Clothing line

A slight riff on Arcangel's own lifestyle clothing brand, Lialina released her own clothing line this past summer with the tagline "Don't wear it if you never made a web page and aren't planning one." For Lialina, users have bodies and their work is real. These clothes—one uniform for labor and another for lounge—acknowledge the physical, embodied nature of our lives online.

Olia Lialina
Give me time/This page is no more, 2015
35mm slides

This slide projection documents the lifecycle of more than 200 pages from GeoCities.com, the now-defunct web hosting services. GeoCities was founded in July 1995 by “Beverly Hills Internet” and quickly became one of the most popular hosting services on the web. With the advent and professionalization of Web 2.0, Geocities became synonymous for bad taste. As social media ascended, GeoCities users continued to dwindle, until October 26, 2009 when GeoCities hosting services came to a grinding halt. Internet activists and archivists managed to download a terabyte worth of webpages hosted on GeoCities. *Give me time/This page is no more* presents Lialina and partner Dragan Espenschied’s archival study into this unprecedented cache of user culture. Of her ongoing research into this archive Lialina has said, “There are two types of homepages that break my heart on the daily basis. Ones that promise that soon—very soon, in two weeks, or till the end of the year, or when school starts or stops—the page will be built...Others are goodbye pages. Their masters say that they fail, or that they got real life or the real domain name, or that they are angry about Yahoo or rude comments. Both could be last updated on the same day and appear next to each other in the archives timeline.”

Olia Lialina
Online Newspapers, NY Edition, 2008
Screencast

Olia Lialina
Online Newspapers, French Edition, Liberation, 2013
Web Page

Olia Lialina
Online Newspapers, Post factual Edition: Frankfurter Allgemeine, 2017
Web page

Across *Online Newspapers*, Lialina revives a 1990s amateur aesthetic, pairing it with content from the mainstream press. The work imagines how major media outlets—which grew in dominance during the Web 2.0 era—might appear if developed by the lay journalists whose aesthetic choices defined web culture before the dot-com boom. By creating a faux precedent to today’s online media environment, *Online Newspapers* reflects a multitude of conflicts: the perpetual obsolescence of technology, the broad disruption of traditional journalism engendered by the web, and the demotion of user to “commenter” in our current mainstream media landscape.

Olia Lialina
Asymmetrical response, 2016
Video desktop background and GIFs

The titular work makes evident the underhanded practices of Blingee.com, a popular image generator and online community. The sparkling, blinged-out images users create on Blingee are embedded with an early web convention that uses a 1x1 transparent gif as a form of analytics and surveillance in which web developers can track users’ activity. Blingee’s use of the gif prevented its users from sharing their custom creations freely; thus its community of users created and distributed a 400 x 400 transparent gif which blocked Blingee’s template restrictions. These two browsers plainly compare the surveillance tool and the user-generated protest side-by-side.

All works by Olia Lialina are courtesy of the artist.
Works by Cory Arcangel are courtesy of the artist, Arcangel Surfware, Lisson Gallery, Team Gallery, and Galerie Thaddeus Ropac.