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The Artist as Surveillant: The Use of Surveillance Technology in Contemporary Art

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The Artist as Surveillant:
The Use of Surveillance Technology in Contemporary Art
by

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Introduction

> "Surveillance is about gathering, processing, and presenting information, especially information that can lead to the curtailment of the freedom of the individual and the right-to-privacy. Coincidentally, artists tend to be observers, gathering information, processing it and presenting it."—Joy Silverman, Introduction for *Surveillance,* exhibition catalog at LACE Contemporary.

Artists have long been called observers, voyeurs, and watchers, and with a particular interest in human behavior and society, they frequently use unknowing passersby as their subjects for works. Curators and scholars explored how artists put citizens under surveillance with photography and videography, which dates back to the early 1900s, years before governments deployed surveillance systems. Since the 1980s, artists have explicitly explored surveillance technology and theory to alert viewers to the rise of surveillance. Today, this genre is called artveillance, a term coined by Andrea Mubi Brighenti in 2010 to categorize art that explicitly deals with surveillance. This genre developed parallel to the rise of mass surveillance which created the current-day surveillance state. Since artveillance dominates the contemporary art scene, I was interested in the history of surveillance technology and themes in art. Although that history is brief, there is a wealth of artworks and studies on the topic.

This thesis explores artists who use surveillance technology, specifically close-circuit video, in their practice and how this work has changed over time compared to the rise of government surveillance systems. To properly examine the artwork, each artwork's technological history and broader cultural context is considered, with careful attention to the artists' intentions. The thesis starts in the 1970s with Bruce Nauman and Peter Campus's closed-circuit video installations. The artists did not aim to create a surveillance area but wanted to explore the viewer's identity with their moving image. In

Chapter 2, Julia Scher and Lynn Hershman Leeson's work from the 1980s and early 1990s is discussed. Created when state surveillance was on the rise, the artists' work used surveillance technology to critique the systems. The third chapter explores surveillance in a post-9/11 state through Jill Magid and Laura Poitras's work. The artists exploited and exposed government systems to show how the public's privacy is invaded. Finally, the paper concludes with an investigation into the public's relationship with video surveillance, which resembles an apathetic acceptance.

Most works discussed fall into the category of participatory artwork, which requires viewer participation for the artwork to be realized. Torin Monahan writes that "surveillant relationships can be visibilized and contested through participatory art" and "uses first-hand experience as a mechanism for raising consciousness and altering social dynamics."[1] Since I could not see the works in person, I read many reviews of the exhibitions and artworks to understand the experiences. While there is no replacement for viewing the works, these first-person experiences helped build my argument and connect the artworks to scholarship on surveillance.

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[1] Torin Monahan, "Ways of Being Seen: Surveillance Art and the Interpellation of Viewing Subjects," *Cultural Studies* 32, no. 4 (July 4, 2018): 565, https://doi.org/10.1080/09502386.2017.1374424.

Chapter One: The Electronic Mirror

The origins of video art can be traced to the 1960s when the video portapak became available to the consumer market. As explained by Charles Bensinger in *The Video Guide*, the video portapak is "a portable or mobile video system that is completely self-contained, battery-powered and can be carried and controlled by one (strong) person."[2] Technical writers and art historians celebrate the portapak as the "essence of decentralized media."[3] Barbara London writes that "[video] had been restricted to well-lit television studios, with their heavy, two-inch video apparatus and teams of engineers."[4] The Sony portapak was the camera favored by users—including artists—because it was dependable and "capable of reproducing good picture and sound quality."[5] Nonetheless, portapaks were oversized. Users held the video camera—which featured a built-in microphone and electronic viewfinder—and wore a backpack with the VTR [Video Tape Recorder] and monitor. The battery-powered unit "weigh[ed] from 15 to 50 pounds and record[ed] up to 30 minutes of videotape."[6]

Before video, artist commonly used film to incorporate moving images in their work. John Hanhardt writes that in the 1960s, "the increased portability of film and the introduction of video expanded the presence of the moving image into the consciousness of the art world."[7] However, video offered more than just portability. Video's ability to

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[2] Charles Bensinger, *The Video Guide*, 2nd ed., rev (Santa Barbara: Video-Info Publications, 1981), 155.
[3] Bensinger, 155.
[4] Barbara London, *Video Spaces: Eight Installations* (New York: Museum of Modern Art, 1995), 13.
[5] Bensinger, *The Video Guide*, 155.
[6] Bensinger, 156.
[7] John G. Hanhardt, "From Screen to Gallery," *American Art* 22, no. 2 (2008): 3, https://doi.org/10.1086/591162.

be "live" is a distinct and unique quality. London explains "once a video camera is turned on, an image of an action unfolding in real time can be displayed indefinitely on the monitor to which the camera is connected."[8] Hanhardt writes that live video granted artists the "ability to transmit images from the camera to the monitor in real time, avoiding the complexities and delays inherent in film editing."[9]

Despite artists' willingness to pick up the medium, video art existed as an "outsider" art for years and was popular in the avant-garde scene. In the 1960s, many artists explored relations between audiences and artworks, as seen in Minimalism's interest in phenomenology, Fluxus's emphasis on ephemera, and the emergence of Happenings and performance art. Initially, artists used film and video as tools to document performances. It was not until later, when the portapak became available, that artists discovered video's potential outside of its pictorial qualities and began to creatively experiment with video technology. Catherine Elwes writes that "video, along with performance and experimental film, offered a way out of the conceptual impasse of high art practices."[10] Margaret Morse draws a connection between video installation art "to other anti-commodity art forms that emerged in the 1960s, such as conceptual art, performance, body art, earth works, and expanded forms of sculpture."[11] As the 1960s counter-culture art scene developed, "live" video fit in with the popular idea of "now" and as the technology became affordable, video became popular. Video art then quickly

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[8] Barbara London, *Video Art: The First Fifty Years* (New York: Phaidon Press Limited, 2020), 14–15.
[9] Hanhardt, "From Screen to Gallery," 5.
[10] Catherine Elwes, *Video Art: A Guided Tour* (London: I.B. Tauris, 2005), 2.
[11] Margaret Morse, "Video Installation Art: The Body, the Image, and the Space-in-Between," in *Illuminating Video: An Essential Guide to Video Art* (New York: Aperture Foundation, 1990), 155.

splintered into separate camp, including performance, documentation, single channel video, and video installations.

The focus of this chapter is video installations, specifically closed-circuit video installations, which is heavily dependent on audience participation. Ann-Sargent Wooster writes in her essay "Reach Out and Touch Someone" that audience participation was "integral part of the art/theater/music works of the 1960s" which stands "an important precedent for the role of the viewer/participation" in work today.[12] Some artworks took this idea further and made it so "the spectator is a necessary component of the work and completes [it]."[13] Borrowing ideas from Michael Fried's influential essay "Art and Objecthood," Wooster points out that closed-circuit installations by artists like Peter Campus and Bruce Nauman do not withdraw "into an aesthetic space," but instead require an active viewer in the audience.[14]

Although rooted in the avant-garde, video's connections to technology and television are why some critics initially dismissed it as an insignificant trend that was not important enough to include in art historical discourse. Video art and television not only "share common tools and similar imagery…video art constantly compared itself to broadcast television" in an attempt to borrow some of television's power.[15] However, writers like Morse and David Joselit argue that this connection is crucial to understanding video art, especially when the work addresses media culture or the relationship of spectatorship and spectacle.

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[12] Ann-Sargent Wooster, "Reach Out and Touch Someone," in *Illuminating Video: An Essential Guide to Video Art* (New York: Aperture Foundation, 1990), 279.
[13] Wooster, 280.
[14] Wooster, 280.
[15] Wooster, 283.

This chapter focuses on a selection of works by Bruce Nauman (b. 1941) and Peter Campus (b. 1937), created between 1969-1976. In the early 1970s, Nauman and Campus had similar ideas to use new video technology, like closed-circuit video, time delays, and analog video cassette recorder (VCR), to stage an encounter between the viewer and their image. Categorized as video art, the works are in the subcategory of closed-circuit video installations, a term Campus specifically used to describe his work. Perhaps for the first time in a gallery setting, the viewer encountered their moving image. However, unlike a mirror, they might only glimpse a fragment of their distorted image, which made the encounter quite unsettling for the viewer who did not expect to see themselves. These live-feed projections of the image lead enhanced self-awareness and strengthening of the self or misrecognition and alienation of the self, depending on the artists' intent.

Elwes argued that "every generation and nationality has used video as a personal medium, an electronic mirror with which to investigate social identity."[16] In an interview with Willoughby Sharp, Nauman explained that "the closed-circuit [video technology] functions as a kind of electronic mirror."[17] The term electronic mirror provides a succinct explanation of what the work aimed to do—give the viewer a glimpse of themselves through this new technology. But unlike mirrors, which confront viewers with their reflections, the video monitor did not automatically invert the images. Campus's text for his 1974 Everson Museum of Art exhibition titled "Video as a Function of Reality"

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[16] Elwes, *Video Art*, 2.

[17] Willoughby Sharp and Bruce Nauman, "Interview with Bruce Nauman, 1971," in *Please Pay Attention Please: Bruce Nauman's Words* (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 2003), 150.

further explains this phenomenon: "Because we are conditioned to a reversed mirror image, we are constantly surprised when the direct video image is presented. Any asymmetric movement causes loss of identification with the projected self image."[18] Campus and Nauman manipulated the video further to make the image more alien compared to the viewer's image in the mirror. The electronic mirror showed them an image they have never seen before. These works are early explorations of people's reactions when they encounter a new image of the self.

Bruce Nauman

Bruce Nauman is an American artist who came to prominence in the 1960s. A contemporary of Robert Morris, Dan Flavin, and Jasper Johns, Nauman stood apart through his use of varied mediums like neon, wax, found objects, and video. Exploring concepts of architecture, language, and the body, Nauman's early work takes a humorous tone and satirically toys with other artists' work and motifs. Concerned with the body and phenomenology, Nauman explored performance and later used film and video "as a substitute for public performance" and opted to film himself doing mundane activities or tasks.[19] Neal David Benezra writes that while pacing in his studio, Nauman "consider[ed] how his behavior might be documented," and turned his private actions into a public spectacle.[20] In the late 1960s, Nauman's work took an interesting turn when "the artist

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[18] Peter Campus, "Video as a Function of Reality," in *Peter Campus: Analog + Digital Video + Foto 1970-2003*, ed. Wulf Herzogenrath and Barbara Nierhoff (Bremen: Kunsthalle Bremen, 2003), 82–83.
[19] Neal David Benezra, "Surveying Nauman," in *Bruce Nauman: Exhibition Catalogue and Catalogue Raisonne*, ed. Joan Simon (Minneapolis: Walker Art Center, 1994), 28.
[20] Benezra, 24.

was suddenly absent from the work."[21] After years of recording his own words, body, and actions, Nauman opened his work to viewers, starting with his corridor installations.

The first corridor appears in the video *Walk with Contrapposto,* 1968 (Figure 1), which shows the artist walking through a constricted corridor. The video's frame is tightly cropped so the viewer only sees the walls. Nauman then walks through the frame with his hands clasped behind his neck as he swings his hips to animate a classic contrapposto pose. Nauman walks up and down the length of the corridor, which is just wide enough to fit his hips. The video, which is ten minutes long, is exhibited on an endless loop. Nauman recreated this corridor for *Anti-Illusion: Procedures/Materials,* a 1969 group show at the Whitney Museum. Titled *Performance Corridor,* 1969, the walls were eight feet high and twenty feet long and placed twenty inches apart, same as the corridor in the video. Viewers walked through the corridor and reached a dead end—the wall—and then turned around. Writing about this shift in Nauman's work in the late 1960s, Benezra claimed that "all traces of Dadaist wit and irony, integral to the earlier work, were replaced in these audio and architectural installations by a fascination with phenomenology and behaviorism and in particular, with Gestalt psychology and the exploration of human behavior in anxious or uncomfortable situation."[22]

Nauman created various corridor works that incorporate mirrors, lights, video cameras, and other elements. *Live-Taped Video Corridor,* 1970 (Figure 2) will be the focus. The work is made from wallboard, a video camera, two video monitors, and a videotape player. It looks almost identical to *Performance Corridor,* but dead ends at two

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[21] Benezra, 26.
[22] Benezra, 28.

monitors next to a wall. Stacked on top of each other, the monitors play different videos. The top monitor displays a live image recorded by the closed-circuit camera and the bottom monitor plays a recorded videotape of the empty corridor, which was filmed from the same perspective as the live footage. As the viewer walks deeper into the corridor, their image on the monitor (seen from above and behind) appears to move farther away and diminish in size and reflects the viewers actual movement from the camera.[23]

Writing in her book *Screens,* Kate Mondloch states that the setup of *Live-Taped Video Corridor* "ensures that spectators will never achieve the mirrorlike proximity between bodily experience and its representation that they struggle to attain."[24] Since the camera records the viewer's back as they enter the corridor, the live footage never shows the viewer the image they see in the mirror. Instead, viewers "are obligated to see themselves in an unfamiliar way or, more precisely, to see themselves form the position which others might see them."[25] Mondloch describes this experience as a "screen-based annihilation" of the self. This feeling is intensified by the second monitor that plays a tape of the empty corridor recorded from the same angle of the live camera. Not only does the monitor betray the viewer's desire to see their image, but it also interferes with their understanding of "live footage." Conditioned by broadcast television to understand that all video coverage is live, Mondloch writes that viewers assume that the monitors will display "real-time images of the corridor and should therefore confirm their presence

[23] Neal David Benezra, *Bruce Nauman: Exhibition Catalogue and Catalogue Raisonne*, ed. Joan Simon and Bruce Nauman, 1st ed (Minneapolis: Walker Art Center, 1994), 247.
[24] Kate Mondloch, *Screens: Viewing Media Installation Art*, Electronic Mediations, v. 30 (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2010), 29.
[25] Mondloch, 29.

within the space."[26] Yet, when the bottom monitor shows an empty corridor, it "upsets this conventual assumption; like so many presumably live television footage, the shots of this vacant space were prerecorded."[27]

Mondloch also points out that Nauman's environments coax viewers to carefully consider their relationship with his installations, seen when they "deftly arrange their bodies in a specific way."[28] Writers describe Nauman's corridors as an alienating and disturbing experience due to the constricting walls and screen-based annihilation. Yet, the viewers' image on the monitor completes the work, which intensifies the strange experience of Nauman's corridors. Janet Kraynak writes "while Nauman's installations depend upon the viewer's interactions, they are nonetheless ambivalent about the possibilities such involved affords and, as such, create uncomfortable experiences."[29] Nauman stated his desire to limit "the situation so that someone else can be a performer, but he can only do what I want him to do" in an interview; in fact, Nauman even declared he "mistrust audience participation" so his installations purposely limit viewer's choice.[30] *Live-Taped Video Corridor* allows the viewer one option: walk into the corridor to face the monitor—which shows their back—then turn around. Kraynak describes the experience as a "distributing disjuncture between vision and experience" as she approached the monitor which showed her image recede away from her—she felt as if the

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[26] Mondloch, 31.
[27] Mondloch, 31.
[28] Mondloch, 31.
[29] Janet Kraynak, "Dependent Participation: Bruce Nauman's Environments," *Grey Room*, no. 10 (2003): 25.
[30] Willoughby Sharp and Bruce Nauman, "Nauman Interview, 1970," in *Please Pay Attention Please: Bruce Nauman's Words* (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 2003), 113.

work mocked her.[31] Dörte Zbikowski writes that Nauman "makes the observer's responses an integral part of the of the work" which allows him to transpose his own emotional experience onto others which creates "situations to which we are not programmed to adapt."[32] Perhaps, Nauman offers *Live-Taped Video Corridor* as a self-awareness exercise for the viewer. Susan Cross highlights the repeated corridors in *Walk with Contrapposto*, *Performance Corridor,* and *Live-Taped Video Corridor* that Nauman made within a three-year span. Cross writes "the narrow passageway of *Performance Corridor* (designed to the width of the artist's hips) forces the viewer to move with the same deliberation and self-consciousness as the artist."[33] Since all three corridors share dimensions, Nauman seemingly instructs the viewer to walk in the corridor the same way he did. The artist once said that self-awareness comes through exercise and action, not thought.[34] However, since the viewer is unaware of the video cameras when they approach the work, the experience becomes disquieting rather than enlightening.

Peter Campus

A psychology student turned artist; Peter Campus did not have a long-standing practice when he created his first closed-circuit installation. In the 1960s, Campus was an editor for television. Inspired by Nauman and Joan Jonas, Campus bought his first video equipment in 1970. Campus's early works were single-channel videos, like *Double Vision,* 1971, that explore themes of self, split-identity, and fleeting images. *Double*

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[31] Kraynak, "Dependent Participation: Bruce Nauman's Environments," 28.

[32] Dörte Zbikowski, "Bruce Nauman," in *CTRL [SPACE]: Rhetorics of Surveillance from Bentham to Big Brother*, ed. Thomas Y. Levin, Ursula Frohne, and Peter Weibel (Cambridge, MA: The MIT Press, 2002), 67.

[33] Susan Cross, "Bruce Nauman: Theaters of Expereince," in *Bruce Nauman - Theaters of Experience* (Ostfildern-Ruit: Hatje Cantz Verlag, 2003), 16.

[34] Sharp and Nauman, "Interview with Bruce Nauman, 1971," 142.

Vision compares simultaneous images of a loft space produced by two video cameras, which Campus fed through a mixer to produce an electronic version of the film technique of double exposure. The video shows the space with a ghost-like disconnect between the two images that challenges the viewer to align them. The same year, Campus created his first closed-circuit installation *Kiva,* 1971, which features two rotating mirrors, one video camera, and one monitor that instantly replays footage.[35] Campus was interested in mirror reflections in juxtaposition to camera images. A smaller sculptural work, *Kiva* is his first installation that involved the viewer's image. In *Kiva,* a camera sits on top of the monitor, and the two mirrors hang on fishing wire and block the camera's lens. The larger mirror has a hole in the middle and the smaller one hangs in front of this hole at a distance. The mirrors block the lens while the monitors showed the camera's reflection from the mirrors. However, the air currents in the room cause the mirrors to spin, which unblocks the lens so the camera can record the viewer, which is directly played on the monitor. The mirrors constant movement makes it difficult for the viewer to see their image. At this moment, the viewers see the contrast between their reflection and the camera image. Campus's use of mirrors and reflective surfaces defined his early works as he explored the materiality of screens and surfaces. Campus used unconventional surfaces as his screens or monitors. After *Kiva,* Campus created 18 closed-circuit video installations that project the viewer's moving image in a gallery. However, these installations variously skewed, enlarged, reversed, flipped, or spun the image before projecting it on the wall for the viewer to see.

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[35] Slavko Kacunko, *Peter Campus: Analog + Digital Video + Foto 1970-2003*, ed. Wulf Herzogenrath and Barbara Nierhoff (Bremen: Kunsthalle Bremen, 2003), 94.

Created in 1972, *Interface* (Figure 3) staged the ideas of "double vision" or double exposure in a gallery space with cameras and projection. *Interface* is a closed-circuit video installation with one surveillance video camera, one video projector, one window glass mounted in a metal frame, and one light source. Set in a dark room, the camera and projector are placed on opposite sides of the reflective window glass. The video camera is directed towards the glass to record any action in its proximity. Meanwhile, the video projector sends the live video signal from the camera onto the sheet of glass. As the viewer approaches, the light source causes their reflection to appear on the screen (window glass), which is recorded by the camera and projected onto the same screen. This means the viewer sees their mirror reflection and the image projection, simultaneously. As Anne-Marie Duguet describes in the *Video Ergo Sum* exhibition catalog, the viewer sees their reflection—which is like a mirror and what they think they look like—next to their image from the camera—"which is flipped with respect to the reflection and is the image that other people see of them."[36] Wulf Herzogenrath writes that the experience feels like an "encounter with the self as another," since the images of the self are different.[37] However, projected or camera image of the self is perceived to be "more real" since it corresponds to the image seen by others.[38] In *Interface,* the viewer finds the two images at odds which never align due to the work's construction. In some installations by Campus, the viewer can move around until they "align" the two-images.

[36] Anne-Marie Duguet, "Slight Discrepancies. Persistent Images.," in *Peter Campus. Video Ergo Sum*, Anarchive 7 (Paris: Jeu de Paume, 2017), 36.

[37] Wulf Herzogenrath, "External Images as Internal Portraits," in *Peter Campus: Analog + Digital Video + Foto 1970-2003* (Bermen: Kunsthalle Bermen, 2003), 16.

[38] Herzogenrath, 16.

The viewer's double image, which appears in most of Campus's closed-circuit video installations, has stimulated fruitful discussions. To some scholars, the idea of split-image represents the incongruency between identity and media representation. Joselit's essay "The Video Public Sphere" asserts that "television fosters a particular form of spectatorship: it creates a split or multiple identification" where the viewer sees part of their experience on TV, which forces them modify the rest of experience to fit the approved "narrative" determined by the broadcast companies, so they assimilate into "the consumerist, "family-orientated" values needed for late capitalism to succeed.[39] Campus's work exposes this hidden process. When the viewer enters *Interface,* they are "submitted to a two-step process; first they are caught by surprise by their own multiplied image—a confrontation which forces them to recognize their identity as an image. This leads to the second step—an effort to unify and claim these various image of the self."[40] Through the viewer's movement, Campus "finds a place for the individual's agency within representation."[41] Mondloch has advanced a similar idea, suggesting that *Interface* "incites [viewers] to question the representational integrity of screen space" as they see two version of themselves in the window glass.[42] Focused on the materiality of Campus's chosen screen—*Interface* uses reflective window glass—Mondloch argues that Campus's challenges the notion of screen's "conventional role of depicting representations that are

[39] David Joselit, "The Video Public Sphere," *Art Journal* 59, no. 2 (2000): 47, https://doi.org/10.2307/778100.
[40] Joselit, 50.
[41] Joselit, 50.
[42] Mondloch, *Screens*, 72.

visually and/or conceptually discontinuous with the spectator's own space."[43] As the

viewer walks around the glass wall, they start to question the idea of screens.

In further exploration of differences between one's reflection and camera image,

Campus created *dor,* 1975, with one surveillance video camera, one video projector, a

black room, and a corridor with a light source (Figure 4). The camera is focused on the

doorway with the projection screened on the wall directly next to the doorway. As

viewers walk through the lit corridor into the dark room, their image is projected on the

wall which they cannot see. The projection is the only source of light in the room. When

the viewer enters the room, they are no longer in the focal range of the camera, so their

image is not projected on the wall which causes the room to darken. Thus, the viewer

only gets a glimpse of their image as they exit the hallway to enter the room. In Rosalind

Krauss's essay "Video: The Aesthetics of Narcissism," she describes the viewer's

position to their image as "totally peripheral."[44] Krauss writes how *dor* creates a new

situation that includes "two kinds of invisibility: the viewers presence to the wall in

which he is himself an absence; and his relative absence from a view of the wall which

becomes the condition for his projected presence upon its surface."[45] Eager to see their

image, the viewer distorts their body to see their image on the wall, which is impossible.

Krauss explains that the viewer becomes the narcissist in *dor* "and through the movement

of his own body, his neck craning and head turning, the viewer is forced to recognize this

motive."[46] To understand *dor,* it requires a second viewer. Once the second viewer enters

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[43] Mondloch, 72.
[44] Rosalind Krauss, "Video: The Aesthetics of Narcissism," *October*, 1976, 51–64,
https://doi.org/10.2307/778507.
[45] Krauss, 62.
[46] Krauss, 62.

the hallway and the viewer already inside the dark room sees the second viewer's image projected on the wall, they understand. In this artwork, the viewer cannot see their own image, but they can see another viewer perfectly. This enforces the idea that what others see is "more real." In a video about *dor,* Campus explains that he wants to "discourage people from looking at themselves because, in my opinion, we really can't."[47] When viewers enter, they twist their body in vain attempts to see their image. However, the viewer can never see themselves and despite their attempts, their narcissism will not be satisfied by *dor.*

Campus uses mirrors and cameras to create a double image, or split self, to compare the two different images of a person: a reflection versus a picture. While viewers may understand the difference between their reflection and an image, to see both side by side is a rare and unusual perceptual situation. This interest in perception of the self and human behavior stems from Campus's studies in psychology. When confronted with their split image, viewers question which image is "real" or most accurate and attempt to move to see the images better—an activity that Campus encourages yet makes it difficult in some works. While some consider this an indulgence of narcissism, Campus views narcissism as a "strengthening of self. It is like a short circuit, a losing of self," which implies a rediscovery of the self.[48] James Harithas writes that these confrontations between the viewer and their second image "leads the observer to the conclusion that he is encountering two selves—inner and outer, or conscious and subconscious—a

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[47] "Peter Campus Says, 'You Can't See Yourself,'" Video, San Francisco Museum of Modern Art, February 28, 2019, https://www.sfmoma.org/watch/peter-campus-says-you-cant-see-yourself/.
[48] Peter Campus, *Peter Campus: Anarchive 7*, ed. Anne-Marie Duguet, Anarchive 7 (Paris: Jeu de Paume, 2017), 36.

dichotomy which he accepts as innate to his nature, but which he rarely perceives in time and space."[49]

Conclusion

When grouped together, similar themes and ideas unite Nauman and Campus's closed-circuit installations. Along with phenomenology and narcissism, the notion of self-surveillance is exposed in both artists' work. Rather than the sinister state surveillance of today, self-surveillance relates closer to self-awareness—when the viewers saw their image, they change their posture. Since this was the first time the viewer became the subject in work and saw their moving image, they went through slight behavior adjustments. This might be as simple as adjusting one's posture or as outlandish as jumping to see the image. Nauman and Campus's early video installations were created during the fledging use of surveillance cameras, or closed-circuit television. Closed-circuit television (CCTV) is when a video camera feed is sent to a specific set of monitors rather than broadcast to the public, a ubiquitous practice today. Yet, in the 1980s, there was few areas under surveillance. The first known use of video surveillance in the United States was in 1973 when a small number of video cameras were installed in Times Square by the New York Police Department as a crime prevention tactic, which was quietly abandoned after two years.[50]

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[49] James Harithas, "Video/Time Space," in *Peter Campus: Closed Circuit Video*, ed. Anne-Marie Duguet, Anarchive 7 (Paris and New York: Jeu de Paume and Everson Museum of Art, 2017).
[50] Bilge Yesil, "Watching Ourselves: Video Surveillance, Urban Space and Self-Responsibilization," *Cultural Studies* 20, no. 4–5 (2006): 403, https://doi.org/10.1080/09502380600708770.

By the early 1980s, Nauman and Campus had abandoned closed-circuit video installations. Nauman worked in a variety of mediums with little emphasis on video while Campus focused on photography. As discussed, surveillance was not a theme in their work, however, their installations invoke themes and ideas about surveillance. In Nauman's catalogue raisonne, Benezra writes that surveillance became a concern in his work in the early 1970s, "with numerous installations utilizing video equipment to record and represent the movement of visitors."[51] He also suggests that Nauman purposely placed cameras in elevated positions to suggest surveillance cameras. Furthermore, Nauman created the work *Video Surveillance Piece (Public Room, Private Room),* 1969-1970, where the artist placed cameras and monitors in two rooms—one public, one private—then broadcast the other room's camera feed to the other room. Rather than making any overt statements about state surveillance, Nauman created a puzzling situation. Campus use of surveillance cameras in his installations also invokes discussion on the topic. However, he did this because he viewed surveillance cameras as pure video, which "was made with cameras you couldn't see through."[52] Duguet argues that seeing his work as a comment on surveillance is ironic, since the works made any monitoring impossible—and self-limiting. "The primary goal of Campus is to involve the beholder in a specific relationship to space-in this case, one of total disorientation."[53]

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[51] Benezra, "Surveying Nauman," 28.
[52] Campus, *Peter Campus: Anarchive 7*, 58.
[53] Duguet, "Slight Discrepancies. Persistent Images.," 26.

Chapter Two: New Surveillance, New Art

While the first known use of public video surveillance was in 1973 in Times Square, the mass deployment of surveillance systems did not happen until the 1980s. Bilge Yesil writes that the New York Police Department changed its strategy after the failed experiment in Times Square. Rather than install security cameras in isolated areas in hopes of catching criminal activity, police departments created comprehensive surveillance systems in focused areas, such as housing projects, public transportation stations, parks, streets, and schools. NYPD "added surveillance cameras to the already existing mix of preventive measures such as increased patrolling, fortified entrances and checkpoints in these spaces."[54] By 1980, extensive surveillance systems were in New York subway stations, followed by similar systems in housing projects and schools.[55]

Developments in video technology supported the growth of video surveillance systems. Herman Kruegle discusses the evolution in his comprehensive *CCTV Surveillance: Analog and Digital Video Practices and Technology*. Echoing the importance of the portapak in the 1960s, Kruegle writes that the analog tube system was replaced by the solid-state camera, which made cameras more affordable and durable.[56] Kruegle writes, "the availability of low-cost video cassette recorders (VCRs), digital video recorders (DVRs), and personal computer (PC)-based equipment," spurred the widespread use of the solid-state camcorder.[57] Color cameras became widely used, which

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[54] Yesil, "Watching Ourselves: Video Surveillance, Urban Space and Self-Responsibilization," 403–4.
[55] Yesil, 404.
[56] Herman Kruegle, *CCTV Surveillance: Analog and Digital Video Practices and Technology*, 2nd ed (Amsterdam: Butterworth Heinemann, 2007), 3.
[57] Kruegle, 3.

provided more detail than black-and-white footage and therefore made CCTV footage more helpful to identify suspects.[58] Innovations in surveillance technology and deployment strategies meant video surveillance no longer existed in the shadows. As federal and state governments implemented surveillance systems, there was a parallel increase in scholarship on surveillance where people contemplated what it could achieve, both good and bad. At the same time, discussions of power and control entered academia and mainstream popular culture.

Michael Foucault is a French philosopher who studied the mechanics of power and knowledge used as forms of social control by institutions. His seminal text, *Discipline and Punish: The Birth of the Prison,* was published in France in 1975 and translated to English by Alan Sheridan in 1977. The book investigates the evolving prison system and the shift from public punishment to private penal systems. Regarding the assertion of power through surveillance, Foucault writes about Jeremy Bentham's panopticon, an architectural plan for a prison with a central guard tower. The design allows the guards to see all the prisoners in their cells without the prisoners seeing the guards. Since the prisoners cannot know if the guards are watching, they internalize the gaze and correct their behavior in an act of self-discipline.[59] Foucault wrote that "he is seen, but he does not see; he is the object of information, never a subject in communication."[60] In addition, the overseer—the guard at the top—could be anyone since the gaze matters most.[61] Foucault clarified his analysis in "The Eye of Power," a

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[58] Kruegle, 4.
[59] Michel Foucault, *Discipline and Punish: The Birth of the Prison*, 2nd Vintage Books ed (New York: Vintage Books, 1995), 200.
[60] Foucault, 200.
[61] Foucault, 202.

transcribed conversation between himself, Jean-Pierre Barou, and Michelle Perrot, where

Foucault states the following:

> The system of surveillance […] involves very little expense. There is no need for arms, physical violence, material constraints. Just a gaze. An inspecting gaze, a gaze which each individual under its weight will end by interiorizing to the point that he is his own overseer, each individual thus exercising this surveillance over, and against, himself.[62]

Foucault explains the panopticon as a metaphor for power "reduced to its ideal form."[63]

His writings were widely read in academia in the 1980s and 90s and his ideas influenced

many artists during the same period.

Similar themes of surveillance were relevant in popular culture. George Orwell's

novel *1984,* published in 1949, became popular again in the 1980s. The book predicts a

dystopian future where the world fell into a perpetual war and citizens live under constant

state surveillance. Set in Airstrip One, formerly Great Britain, citizens live under the rule

of Big Brother, a dictator. Forced to abandoned free thought, citizens are controlled with

constant video surveillance and the Thought Police. When first published, the book

achieved fame and then became relevant again during its namesake year thanks to the

movie *Nineteen Eighty-Four,* filmed and released in 1984. The same year, Apple ran a

1984-esque commercial that borrowed the visual language from the movie and the

concept of Big Brother to introduce the Apple Macintosh personal computer. While both

Orwell and Foucault's books remain relevant, Orwell's Big Brother is an accessible

notion of surveillance compared to Foucault's writings. Today, Big Brother is a

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[62] Michel Foucault, Jean-Pierre Barou, and Michelle Perrot, "The Eye of Power: A Conversation with Jean-Pierre Barou & Michelle Perrot," in *Power/Knowledge: Selected Interviews and Other Writings, 1972-1977*, 1st American ed (New York: Pantheon Books, 1980), 155.
[63] Foucault, *Discipline and Punish*, 205.

commonly uses term to describe our surveillance state and Orwellian is used to describe a governmental overreach and state surveillance.

In 1987, Los Angeles Contemporary Exhibition presented an exhibition titled *Surveillance.* Curated by Branda Miller and Deborah Irmas, the large group show featured video, photography, and installations "by artists who have either usurped surveillance procedures employed by spies, private investigators and security companies, or who have incorporated state-of-the-art surveillance technologies into their work."[64] The catalogue's introduction speaks about the overreach in surveillance systems and technology that developed without many restrictions.[65] Many of the works derived from existing surveillance artifacts, like photographs and government files. Other artists, including Dieter Froese and Julia Scher, deployed surveillance technologies to place the entire gallery under surveillance. A review in the *Los Angeles Times* states the entire building—including the back office, bookstore, and the main gallery—were under video surveillance.[66] Monitors placed in the main gallery showed the recorded footage and allowed visitors in the main gallery to watch over the entire building. Even outside the gallery, visitors were under surveillance by Julia Scher's work that hung over the entrance. The banner-like piece features electronic infrared heat-seeking intrusion detectors that picked up viewer's presence when they entered the gallery and activated

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[64] Gary T. Marx and Joy Silverman, *Surveillance: An Exhibition of Video, Photography, Installations*, ed. Deborah Irmas and Branda Miller (Los Angeles: Los Angeles Contemporary Exhibitions, 1987).

[65] Joy Silverman, "Introduction," in *Surveillance: An Exhibition of Video, Photography, Installations* (Los Angeles: Los Angeles Contemporary Exhibitions, 1987), 5.

[66] Zan Dubin, "Spying on Lace Visitors," *Los Angeles Times*, February 22, 1987, https://www.latimes.com/archives/la-xpm-1987-02-22-ca-4922-story.html.

lights and bells. The purpose of the exhibition was to show viewers the numerous ways they were subjected to state surveillance, often without their knowledge.

Included in the exhibition catalogue is Gary T. Marx's essay "I'll Be Watching You: Reflections on the New Surveillance." Written in 1985 and originally published in *Dissent* magazine, Marx established the concept of new surveillance.[67] To begin, Marx discusses how personal information, which was once stored across various locations like banks, hospitals, or schools became centralized due to the creation of computers and data banks in the 1980s. Now, it is easier to construct someone's identity based on their trail of documents.[68] The centralized information led to the development of computer-matching systems to cross reference someone's entire life. While convenient, these programs lack the logic of humans, which leads to false accusations and quick assumptions.[69] In Marx's essay, he describes developing surveillance technologies and deployment strategies. While he describes some that still seem like far-off science fiction, others are real products that exist today. One is a telemetric device used by the criminal-justice system to track people's movement and alerts a judge if they go beyond a certain point; today it is called ankle monitors, a common practice for people on parole or house arrest.[70] Marx writes about surveillance of workers in a factory and office that requires workers "carry an ID card with a magnetic stripe and check in and out as they go to various stations," a common practice in workplaces today.[71] The essay also differentiates

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[67] Gary T. Marx, "I'll Be Watching You: Reflections on the New Surveillance," in *Surveillance: An Exhibition of Video, Photography, Installations* (Los Angeles: Los Angeles Contemporary Exhibitions, 1987), 14.
[68] Marx, 14.
[69] Marx, 14.
[70] Marx, 15.
[71] Marx, 16.

traditional surveillance from new surveillance through nine characteristics. Two of them are categorical suspicion and anticipatory preventions, which Marx explains makes everyone a suspect, therefore, new surveillance implements mass surveillance to monitor all. Invisible and omnipotent, this decentralized practice triggers self-policing more than traditional surveillance did in the past. Marx concludes the essay with a discussion of privacy and autonomy, intertwined elements of life that are diminished under mass surveillance. While privacy is indisputably harmed, the right to remain anonymous is another victim of mass surveillance, through the creation of data banks. Much of what Marx wrote is true today, and in some cases, more sinister than he predicted.

Artists like Julia Scher (b. 1954) and Lynn Hershman Leeson (b. 1941) created work in the 1980s and 1990s that predict the current state of surveillance and the fusion of humanity and technology. Unlike the work from the 1970s, Scher and Hershman Leeson's technology is no longer innocent and exploratory; it implicates the viewer in real-time systems of watching and being watched. Both artists' works make eerie predictions of surveillance systems and examine the wide-reaching effects of surveillance technologies while pointing to the paths of resistance.

Julia Scher

Julia Scher started her investigation on surveillance systems years before the topic entered the mainstream. Her practice is described as "a mechanism designed to activate consideration of a number of issues related to [surveillance]."[72] Giovanni Instra relates her work more to the "American post-sixties' political art: activist in nature and

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[72] Giovanni Intra, "Pulverized by Light," in *Julia Scher Always There*, ed. Caroline Schneider and Brian Wallis (New York: Lukas & Sternberg, 2002), 37.

only secondarily aesthetically gratifying."[73] Indeed, Scher's work overwhelms viewers with excessive wires and haphazard technology that parodies the architecture of surveillance systems.

In 1984, Scher received her MFA at the University of Minnesota in Minneapolis. In school she painted landscapes—until her last year when she used video to look at landscapes "under the eye of a surveillance camera."[74] Scher used surveillance gear shortly after she picked up video. In a 2019 interview with Jakob S. Boeskov, Scher mentions that an electronics school in Minneapolis rejected her, which prompted her to learn basic electronic skills and open a security company in 1986 called Safe and Secure Productions.[75] Partly as a means of support herself, Scher's company installed cameras for women as protection from intruders but ended within a year due to Scher's move to New York.[76] Scher then began to create larger installations that included video and performances. Her works extract the hidden control rooms of surveillance systems and placed them in the open for the public to see. Fueled by research, her work aligns with conceptual art and institutional critique, which emphasized the viewer's emotional response more than the aesthetics of the final piece. Irony and subversion of social norms adds a playful tone to Scher's work, seen in her over-the-top use of pink and security guards that subvert society's expectation of a guard.

Scher's work took inspiration from existing surveillance systems and some even used these systems. The work *Security Site Visits (SSV),* 1990, consisted of a bus and

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[73] Intra, 37.
[74] Intra, 45.
[75] Julia Scher, Dirty Data, interview by Jakob S. Boeskov, Kunstkritikk Nordic Art Review, June 14, 2019, https://kunstkritikk.com/dirty-data.
[76] Scher.

walking tour around high-tech surveillance zones in Minneapolis, led by Scher in her

signature pink security guard uniform. Presented as an informational behind the scenes

tour, the work grants the viewers an understanding of the surveillance they live in.[77] The

viewers visited a Honeywell research facility to see the Honeywell House, a six-room

secured domestic space prototype. Playing along with the surveillance company in order

to expose it, Scher "explore and confront an invisible and potentially insidious

surveillance system by penetrating it on her own terms."[78]

Security by Julia is an evolving series that Scher first exhibited in 1988 at The

Collective for Living Cinema in New York, around the same time the NYPD installed

their first surveillance systems. While site-specific, each work follows a similar idea:

create a surveillance system within museums and galleries that allows viewers to see

themselves in the monitors and understand how surveillance systems work. Anna Indych

writes that Scher "[uses] technological advancements of the information age against

itself; she capitalizes on the conflation of media to create large-scale interactive

installations and artistic landscapes that make one viscerally experience data collection

and social regulation."[79]

Scher created Security by Julia IV for the 1989 Whitney Biennial (Figure 5). The

work consisted of video cameras, black-and-white video monitors, video printer, time-

lapse video recorders, and video switcher which were spread across the museum.[80]

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[77] Julia Scher, *Julia Scher: Tell Me When You're Ready: Works from 1990-1995*. (Boston, MA: PFM Publishers, 2002).
[78] Scher and Indych.
[79] Anna Indych, "Introduction," in *Julia Scher: Tell Me When You're Ready: Works From 1990-1995*. (Boston: PFM Publishers, 2002).
[80] Richard Armstrong et al., eds., *1989 Biennial Exhibition: Whitney Museum of Art* (New York: Whitney Museum of American Art, 1989), 249.

Guards in pink jumpsuits stood at the entrance desk and in various galleries of the museum. Indych explains how the work muddies the reputation of art institutions as places without surveillance, while the truth is that museums have used guards as surveillance for years.[81] As the viewers walk around the Whitney, monitors display video feeds from cameras in different areas. Viewers could also see their own image in the monitor. The guards printed and distributed some of these images, which emphasized the idea of the self as a commodity.[82] In addition, the printouts reveal Scher's interest in participatory surveillance, the idea that people should surveil themselves to reclaim their identity and privacy. Indych writes that Scher aims to "expose the nature of video policing as regime of regulation in which our identities are always generated by other's description of who we are."[83]

Later works by Scher connect reality and virtuality through live feed video and pre-recorded "fake-feeds" and data collecting. *Predictive Engineering (PE),* 1993-present (Figure 6) uses live and recorded video to create a false sense of activity and confusion. The project is a multi-media installation that examines anticipatory preventions, an idea from Marx's new surveillance. Commissioned by San Francisco Museum of Modern Art, Scher created the exhibition in the museum's long hallways. Scher adorned the hallways, which acts as the main viewing area, with monitors and excessive wires. While some monitors play the live footage of viewers in the hallway, other monitors play pre-recorded videos of people running around naked, fighting, trying to open doors, and other erratic behavior, filmed in the same hallway where the viewers stand. This leads people

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[81] Indych, "Introduction."
[82] Armstrong et al., *1989 Biennial Exhibition: Whitney Museum of Art*, 241.
[83] Indych, "Introduction."

to believe everything was happening around the corner; Scher says "people would run around the corner into the next hallway thinking the naked people were there–and they weren't."[84] Inspired by Bruce Nauman's *Lived-Taped Video Corridor,* Scher presents the recorded video and live video the same way. When viewers realize they are watching recorded video—or fake feeds—the viewers feel betrayed, just like in Nauman's work. However, the viewers of *Predictive Engineering* are more aware of surveillance video and expect the acts they see to be happening nearby for them to function as witnesses or guards. In addition, each iteration of *Predictive Engineering* after the original 1993 work uses the recorded footage from the iteration prior. With each exhibition, the work accumulates video, mimicking a growing database that becomes bigger and more complex. The work and video files must be updated to work with modern technology; the videos from the 1993 iteration are not compatible with today's technology. To display *Predictive Engineering* for Scher's 2022 exhibition at the Kunsthalle Zurich, Scher and the staff upgraded the entire system and video files to work.[85] Like all technology, the work exists in a perpetual state of upgrade. Scher says "the piece grows exponentially with each showing. The data harvesting and gear accumulation cycle continues."[86]

In *Predictive Engineering,* Scher mixes the live and fake-feeds to confuse the viewer and play into their fears: Are they safe? Are they being watched? Are they the ones watching? This element of "who's watching who" is featured in all her installations and creates a confusing paradigm. Scher's works forces viewers into a state of alert,

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[84] Julia Scher, Maximum Security Society, interview by Daniel Baumann, Written, October 1, 2022,
https://www.kunsthallezurich.ch/files/KHZH_Interview_JuliaScher_EN.pdf.
[85] Scher.
[86] Scher and Indych, *Julia Scher: Tell Me When You're Ready: Works From 1990-1995.*

which breaks from them from their usual "resignation that defines the basic mechanism of control systems."[87] Instead of apathetic acceptance, Scher challenges the viewer to notice the surveillance around them and tempts viewers with voyeurism. This changes the viewer's role from the surveilled to the surveillant. Robert R. Riley writes that Scher's use of voyeurism is so the viewers "antagonize incongruent social conditions she perceives—indifference to search and disclosure surveillance tactics."[88] Known today as the original surveillance artist, Scher's work create a surveillance system in a microcosm and exposes the back room. It even invites viewers to see how their image appears on the security monitor which helps them acknowledge how surveillance crafts an identity for them. Most importantly, Scher's work rejects the viewer's passive state in a state of surveillance and highlights the needs for action, or at least awareness.

Lynn Hershman Leeson

One of the world's first media artists, Lynn Hershman Leeson, ventured into interactive art in the early 1970s. Interested in the complexity of human identity, Hershman Leeson explores the construction of identity and the split-self in various mediums, similar to Peter Campus. Despite being a trail blazer, Hershman Leeson works outside the typical art scene due to her medium and geographical location. In recent years, her work has received more attention and acclaim. In 2016, ZKM Karlsruhe Germany exhibited *Civic Radar,* the most comprehensive survey on Hershman Leeson and published a catalogue on the occasion of the exhibition which provides greater context for her work. In the 1960s, Hershman Leeson used wax to create masks that

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[87] Indych, "Introduction."

[88] Robert R. Riley, "Predictive Engineering," in *New Works* (San Francisco: San Francisco Museum of Modern Art, 1998), unpag.

represented a second self. Pamela M. Lee writes that these early works grounds

Hershman Leeson's "conceptual preoccupations, including the vicissitudes of the self and

its transformative possibilities and the performance of gender and interactivity."[89]

Hershman Leeson most famous work is *Roberta Breitmore*, 1973-1978, an extended

project about crafting a second identity. A private performance, Hershman Leeson lived

as an alter ego named Roberta Breitmore and documented the identity with a paper trail

and surveillance photos. The project was shown after the identity was fully developed.

Hershman Leeson created this identity through social systems—she opened a bank

account, saw a psychiatrist, and talked to people, as Roberta.[90] In addition, Hershman

Leeson "solidified a visual and social identity which she rarely varied from."[91] Feminist

art in the 1970s and 80s explored this idea of a woman in multiple roles, most notably in

Cindy Sherman's *Untitled Film Stills,* 1979. However, Hershman Leeson moved past the

visual creation with Roberta and placed her in the real world. As Peggy Phelan writes that

this "performance of co-identity" makes the work closer to guerilla theatre.[92]

Along with *Roberta Breitmore*, Hershman Leeson created complex video

installations in the 1980s, which blurred the boundaries between reality and fiction.

Lorna, 1984, is an interactive work that used laserdisk technology (the first artwork to do

so) that allowed viewers to manipulate the work's narrative. A later work, *Room of One's

Own,* 1993 (Figure 7) fused the laserdisk technology with CCTV video. The work pulls

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[89] Pamela M. Lee, "Genealogy in Wax," in *Lynn Hershman Leeson: Civic Radar* (Ostfildern: Hatje Cantz Verlag, 2016), 57.
[90] Peggy Phelan, "The Roberta Breitmore Series: Performing Co-Identity," in *Lynn Hershman Leeson: Civic Radar*, ed. Peter Weibel (Ostfildern: Hatje Cantz Verlag, 2016), 104.
[91] Phelan, 104.
[92] Phelan, 105.

from Virginia Woolf's 1929 essay titled "Room of One's Own," in which Woolf argues that women lack "material things on which intellectual freedom depends."[93] The work looks like a simple black box with a periscope. When the viewer looks through, they see a tiny bedroom decorated with miniature furniture. As they look around, the moveable periscopic tracks the viewer's eye movements and triggers video projection of the female occupant on the bedroom wall. As the viewer focuses on the different objects, particular scenes—seventeen in total—from a laser disk are projected and recorded audio plays where the female occupant questions, demands, and protests the viewer's gaze.[94] Next to the projection is a small monitor that play footage of the viewer's eye, captured by a surveillance camera as they look around and reverses the viewer's gaze back onto themselves (Figure 8). The artwork disrupts the viewer's expectation of a peephole with a passive subject and instead grants authority to the subject of the work.[95] In her essay "Conscientious Objectification: Lynn Hershman's Paranoid Mirror," Abigail Solomon-Godeau claims this work combines "dynamics of voyeurism, objectification, and spectacle—all more or less abstract concepts—[that] are materialized in forms that render them visible, literal, and thus available to critical reflection and analysis."[96] Solomon-Godeau also writes that Hershman Leeson's work represents "precepts of feminist theory in that the act of looking is neither neutral nor innocent," because the viewer's eye in

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[93] Margaret Morse, "Lynn Hershman's Room of One's Own," in *Lynn Hershman-Virtually Yours: National Gallery of Canada, Ottawa 4 May to 3 July 1995* (Ottawa: National Gallery of Canada, 1995), 6.

[94] Peggy Phelan and Pamela M. Lee, *Lynn Hershman Leeson: Civic Radar*, ed. Peter Weibel and Lynn Hershman-Leeson (Ostfildern: Hatje Cantz Verlag, 2016), 131.

[95] Phelan and Lee, 214.

[96] Abigail Solomon-Godeau, "Conscientious Objectification: Lynn Hershman's Paranoid Mirror," in *The Art and Films of Lynn Hershman Leeson*, ed. Meredith Tromble, 1st ed. (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2005), 129.

Room of One's Own is the catalyst to the cries of the woman in the room.[97] In the work,

the viewer is not innocent; the projection's sequence depends on where the viewer looks.

When the viewer looks at the bed, they trigger "an audio track of jouncing bedsprings,

the sounds of lovemaking, and a tiny radio playing a song, and a ghostly image of a

woman imprisoned behind the bedposts."[98] Mimicking a peep show, Solomon-Godeau

says Hershman Leeson captivates and makes the viewer "acutely aware of the equivocal

nature of this voyeuristic scenario."[99]

  The Dollie Clones, 1995/1996 (Figure 9) are a project by Hershman Leeson that

begins to connect the real world with the growing networks online. The works are

cyborgs, part human, part technology. Made from real dolls, *The Dollie Clones* have

webcams installed as their left eyes that are connected to the internet. When exhibited

together, the dollies operate in tandem and pirate each other's information. Each doll is

linked to a website where viewers can see footage from the surveillance cameras,

manipulate the cameras, and rotate the dolls' head 180 degree. The dolly twins are an

early example of a cyborg, a machine that adopts human features to blend into its

surroundings. Hershman Leeson writes "reliance on tracking and surveillance techniques

has resulted in a culture with peripheral vision. Sight extends beyond the borders of

physical location."[100] The humanoid cyborgs dolls function as an extension of viewer's

sight and allow them to be a voyeur regardless of their location. However, Hershman

Leeson does not make it that easy. When the viewer clicks to change the direction of the

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[97] Solomon-Godeau, 127.
[98] Solomon-Godeau, 131.
[99] Solomon-Godeau, 131–32.
[100] Lynn Hershman, "The Raw Data Diet, All-Consuming Bodies and the Shape of Things to Come," *Leonardo* 38, no. 3 (2005): 209.

eye cameras on the website, "every other click of the mouse displays a "view" of cyberspace rather than the physical space in which the doll is situated, along with one of a series of didactic text."[101] This frustrating element challenges the viewer's sense of control while online; the viewer is not in control, they are subjected to the dolls programming, just like the dolls. Steve Dietz suggests this false sense of control helps the viewer accept their fate as cyborg—a human seeing through the eyes of the camera.[102]

While both *Room of One's Own* and *The Dollie Clones* challenge ideas of control and voyeurism, the *Dollie Clones*' online viewing room creates a new set of viewers—the online viewers. Mondloch writes about the disconnect between viewing work online and in person. She argues that viewers online have a separate experience and take away a different idea of idea of control and spectatorship.[103] Since the online viewer choose to interact with the work, the passive viewer is redundant. They chose to interact with the work and on *The Dollie Clones* website have choices to make. However, Hershman Leeson writes in her essay "The Fantasy Beyond Control" that the idea of choice is an illusion since the viewer's choice "depends upon the architectural strategy of the program" and the artist only allows certain choices.[104] In this sense, Hershman Leeson grants her subjects—who are often women—power and control over the viewer. The

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[101] Steve Dietz, "Animating the Network," in *The Art and Films of Lynn Hershman Leeson*, ed. Meredith Tromble, 1st ed. (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2005), 192.
[102] Dietz, 192.
[103] Mondloch, *Screens*, 80.
[104] Lynn Hershman-Leeson, "The Fantasy Beyond Control," in *Illuminating Video: An Essential Guide to Video Art*, ed. Sally Jo Fifer and Doug Hall (New York: Aperture Foundation, 1990), 271.

viewer is aware of their position of power as they hear the protests from the women

Room of One's Own or when the *Dollie Clones* refuse to comply to their clicks.

Conclusion

Scher and Hershman Leeson combated a different culture than Bruce Nauman

and Peter Campus. If the video art of the 1970s was an attempt to persuade the "passive"

viewers of the dangers related to television culture and mass media, then the art of the

1990s was an attempt to shock the viewer at how prevalent surveillance had become in

their daily life. The artists set up mini surveillance areas where the viewer saw how

surveillance systems worked. Scher and Hershman Leeson also worked in the height of

feminism and discussions of power, which led both artists to reconsider the power

dynamics between the viewer and their work. Despite their different intentions, the work

connects Nauman and Campus's work through the exploration and creation of identity.

Chapter Three: The Art of Surveillance

By the end of the 1990s, video surveillance was viewed as a crime prevention tool. The development of surveillance systems meant police and government agencies installed cameras in "high-crime" areas with other crime deterrent tactics. In the early 2000s, surveillance quickly changed due to computers and data banks and closely resembled the new surveillance that Gary T. Marx had envisioned in the 1980s. The attacks on September 11, 2001 caused drastic changes to all aspects of life, including surveillance tactics. Shortly after the attacks, the United States government declared "war on terror," deployed troops, and led airstrikes. Internal investigations at the Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) and National Security Agency (NSA) discovered a wealth of information about the possibility of the 9/11 attacks. However, both agencies claimed that government policies had limited their ability to act, including laws that restricted cross-agency communication or the ability to search private citizens' computers and phones.

On October 26, 2001, President George Bush signed the Uniting And Strengthening America By Providing Appropriate Tools Required To Intercept And Obstruct Terrorism Act (USA Patriot Act) into effect. The Act removed all laws and barriers that the NSA and CIA claimed prevented action and was sold as a necessary safety measure to prevent further attacks. Even at the time, the public understood their privacy would be sacrificed. Yet, the public's fear of another attack—emphasized by lawmakers and politicians—trumped those privacy concerns. The PATRIOT Act expanded the surveillance abilities of law enforcement, allowed cross agency communication, and increased penalties for terrorism crimes. The act also created the basis of the surveillance state that exists today. After 9/11, video surveillance was

installed "out of [law enforcement and city officials] concern for public safety, and that their purpose is not to watch the public but to watch out for it."[105] The police admitted surveillance cameras allowed them to keep an eye on everyone, everywhere, at all times, which was presented to the public as a safety measure. Yesil writes that "After September 11, polls showed high levels of support for video surveillance as an anti-terrorism measure, pointing to a public opinion agreeable to make a trade-off between public safety and personal privacy."[106] Yesil references three different polls that were taken shortly after 9/11 that showed over 75% of adults were in support of expanded of public video surveillance.[107] While these findings are about video surveillance, this shift in public perception can be applied to other types of surveillance that emerged in the 21st century.

Before the 9/11 attacks, artists in the early 2000s interrogated surveillance systems. The exhibition *CRTL [SPACE]: Rhetoric of Surveillance From Bentham to Big Brother* opened at ZKM Karlsruhe in Germany on October 21, 2001 and surveyed the state of panoptic art over time. The exhibition started with Jeremy Bentham's panopticon and extended to current-day surveillance concepts. The work that dealt with surveillance explicitly, like Julia Scher's *Super Desk*, along with works like Bruce Nauman's *Live-Taped Video Corridor,* which used surveillance technology. The inclusion of non-surveillance themed work investigated the idea that while surveillance is unique to the twentieth century, "panoptical questions are clearly far form a new concern."[108] In his

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[105] Yesil, "Watching Ourselves: Video Surveillance, Urban Space and Self-Responsibilization," 401.
[106] Yesil, 401.
[107] Yesil, 401.
[108] Thomas Y. Levin, *CTRL [SPACE]: Rhetorics of Surveillance from Bentham to Big Brother*, ed. Ursula Frohne, Peter Weibel, and Dörte Zbikowski (Cambridge, MA: The MIT Press, 2002), 13.

curatorial statement, Thomas Y. Levin explains the exhibition "explored the historicity of surveillance practices in their relationship to changing logics of representation."[109]

While the curators established the concept in October 2000, the exhibition opened one month after September 11, 2001, and attempted "to intervene in the current date on security politics and largely uncritical public demand for ever greater surveillance in the wake of recent events."[110] The exhibition included a work by Laura Kurgan titled *New York, September 11, 2001, Four Days Later...,* 2001. The work is a photograph of Manhattan taken from the Ikonos satellite on September 15, 2001, four days after the attacks. Kurgan printed the work at a large scale that made it impossible to view all at once, an analogy for the 9/11 attack's widespread damage to New York and its effects on the world. This work signals the curator's idea to step back and see the larger picture of surveillance in society. While *CTRL [SPACE]* addressed surveillance and panoptic art, it did not explore the burgeoning trends of dataveillance. Despite this omission, the exhibition acts as a benchmark in the evolution of surveillance from visual surveillance to numerical or data surveillance.

The early 2000s also marked a shift where contemporary art became concerned with social and political issues, which has roots in the 1960s avant-garde. By the early 2000s, movement like institutional critique, relational aesthetics, and participatory art emphasized social concerns rather than visual art. Holland Cotter has claimed that this "new political art [was] slippery and evasive, as if reluctant to speak its mind."[111] He

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[109] Levin, 13.

[110] Levin, 11.

[111] Holland Cotter, "'Laura Poitras: Astro Noise' Examines Surveillance and the New Normal," *The New York Times*, February 4, 2016, sec. Arts,

wrote that this new wave of political art differs from the 1960s art, which believed in utopias and "a society built on absolute good for all."[112] Artists, and perhaps the greater society, is no longer sure there is a solution to fix the world, but there might be ways to escape it. As surveillance rapidly expanded, surveillance art changed in response. Artists moved away from deploying video cameras and technology. They instead used other means to investigate and expose existing surveillance systems. Trevor Paglen, for example, photographs government surveillance systems in order to expose them. Hito Steyerl's work presents tactics to avoid surveillance in addition to her scholarly writings. Laura Poitras's work investigates surveillance gone wrong. Such works attempt to expose the dark truth of surveillance and offer ways to evade the pervasive surveillance state.

Across disciplines, surveillance studies also grew. The peer-reviewed journal *Surveillance & Society* was created 2002 to explore this growing field. This humanities journal includes art and science to tackle the spread of issues related to surveillance. This cross-disciplinary expansion—seen in exhibition catalogues as well—grants viewers a chance to see or experience the visible and invisible acts of surveillance. As surveillance becomes harder to see, art has proven to be an essential tool to expose these systems.

In more recent years, various exhibitions examined the surveillance society, particularly in the Western world. *Watched! Surveillance, Art, and Photography* was a 2016 research project with an accompanying exhibition and publication by the Hasselblad Center in Gothenburg, Sweden. It reflected on the complexities of contemporary surveillance in the new millennium. By 2016, surveillance practices

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https://www.nytimes.com/2016/02/05/arts/design/laura-poitras-astro-noise-examines-surveillance-and-the-new-normal.html.
[112] Cotter.

expanded beyond lens-based practices into dataveillance, big data, and biometrics, which

occupies the majority of the discussion about surveillance and privacy. *Watched!*

addressed the power of the visual, since "images, visibility, and visualization continue to

play an important role in surveillance practices."[113] The Institutes Head of Research

Louise Wolthers states "photography is key to understanding our heightened visibility in

our current surveillance society," from its conception in the 1800s when photographs

enabled governments to classify and administrate people to today's covert recordings by

detectives, paparazzi, and journalists.[114] The cultural phenomenon of voyeurism,

exhibitionism and self-narration through social media depends on visibility through

images, especially horizontal or participatory surveillance that citizens conduct amongst

themselves through social media or map programs like Google Street View, known as

"soft surveillance." The project examines how the system harms some and privileges

others. The works collected expose and intervened the concept of 'multiveillance,' or the

overlapping of various surveillance methods.[115] With emphasis on visuals, *Watched!*

examined how visual surveillance, data tracking, biometrics, social media, smartphones,

and technological innovations combine to form the current day surveillance state.

  This chapter examines a selection of works by Jill Magid (b. 1973) and Laura

Poitras (b. 1964). The artists created most of their works in a post 9/11 landscape and

expose insidious realities of government surveillance systems. Magid's work features a

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[113] Louise Wolthers et al., eds., *Watched! Surveillance, Art and Photography* (Köln: Verlag der Buchhandlung Walther König, 2016).

[114] Louise Wolthers, *Watched! Surveillance, Art and Photography*, ed. Dragana Vujanović Östlind and Niclas Östlind (Köln: Verlag der Buchhandlung Walther König, 2016), 8.

[115] Wolthers, 8.

humorous tone as the artist parodies impermeable institutions. Working in the United States and Europe, Magid used her own body as the subject to expose how the public is under surveillance. Poitras, by contrast, reveals how the United States government weaponized surveillance post 9/11 to imprison and torture people and how the government spies on its citizens. With a background in filmmaking and journalism, Poitras's work tells the stories of how the United States government gravely affected lives after 9/11. While Magid and Poitras represent distinct artistic strategies in surveillance technology and theory, the artists have also collaborated. Magid authored an essay for the book published on the occasion of Poitras's exhibition at the Whitney in 2016 and Poitras was an executive producer for Magid's 2018 film, *The Proposal.*

Jill Magid

Deeply ingrained in her lived experience, Jill Magid's work explores and blurs the boundaries between art and life. Her early works are reminiscent of early 1960s video—exploring one's body with the camera—while investigating surveillance systems invented in the 21st century. Focused on the voyeurism of surveillance, Magid questions the roles people play in surveillance systems and the pleasure they gain. Her work, *Surveillance Shoe,* 2000, combines a surveillance camera and a high-heeled shoe. Magid designed a shoe with a surveillance camera with infrared technology affixed to the inside of the right shoe. The video, *Legoland,* 2000, is footage from the camera/shoe taken as she walks around at night. Due to the camera's fixed position on the shoe, her leg stays in the frame as she walks, a reclamation of the voyeuristic "up skirt" shot.[116] In other projects, Magid

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[116] Jill Magid and Miriam Perier, "« Look !» About Jill Magid's work on surveillance and security tools," Cultures & Conflits (Centre d'études sur les conflits - Liberté et sécurité, March 27, 2008), https://journals.openedition.org/conflits/2853#quotation.

works with or alongside institutions to expose loopholes and quirks. In *Lobby 7*, 1999, for example, Magid stood in a lobby at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology and hijacked a monitor with her own transmission. She used a lipstick camera and performed a real-time exploration of her body and the surrounding architecture as she moved the camera through the opening in her clothes. The footage, played on the monitor, showed flashes of Magid's body in contrast to the harsh architecture of the lobby. Police were called to the scene but could not identify who hijacked the monitor and were unable to stop the performance. At this moment, Magid became interested to see "what would happen if I worked *with* the police…If the authority was complicit with me, how would that affect the meaning of my action."[117]

System Azure Security Ornamentation was a multi-part project that started in 2002 when Magid proposed a collaboration to the Amsterdam Police Department to create work about surveillance cameras. After a swift rejection, Magid rethought the process and approached the department as a consultant from the fake company System Azure Security Ornamentation. After successful negotiations, Magid bejeweled the Department's CCTV cameras with colorful "rhinestones color-coded for police ethics— green for justice, red for 'full of love,' blue for strictness, and white for integrity." In Magid's project, the CCTV camera becomes a fetishized object that drew attention to the camera, which fostered discussions about public surveillance. Magid became familiar with the cameras, which she bejeweled by hand. Rather than disrupt the system with anarchist techniques, Magid seduces the powers to collaborate with her instead and

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[117] Jill Magid and Jeff Edwards, "Permission Is a Material. An Interview with Jill Magid," Magazine, *ArtPulse Magazine* (blog), May 14, 2013, http://artpulsemagazine.com/permission-is-a-material-an-interview-with-jill-magid.

creates a partnership where there is "mutual accountability, an exchange of power and vulnerability" between the artist and the power systems.[118] Magid views permission as a pact that "binds the institution and [her] together, and thus has the potential for intimacy."[119]

Evidence Locker, 2004 (Figure 10) is Magid's most well-known project and manifests in a book, video, video installations and website. A fusion of her interests of control, seduction, voyeurism, and working within a government, the project took place in Liverpool, which at the time had one of the largest CCTV systems in Europe, with over 224 cameras. The system worked as follows: footage captured by the cameras was held for 31 days and then deleted unless saved by the Liverpool Police Department or a citizen requested the footage. Police then placed footage in an evidence locker. Citizens could submit a Subject Access Request Form; a legal document that included a detailed description of the incident, who they are, what they look like, a photograph, and a small fee.[120]

While living in Liverpool for 31 days, Magid submitted a Subject Access Request Form every day to acquire footage of her in the city. Magid wrote the legal access forms as love letters. Through these intimate letters, Magid formed a relationship with the CCTV controllers—who were police officers—and visited their department to talk about movies and films or ask them to film her like she was Bridgette Bardot. Each day, Magid wore a red trench coat with red boots, so the stills from the CCTV footage resemble

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[118] Elizabeth Rubin, "Jill Magid: Love Letters to the Liverpool Police," *Bidoun*, no. 10: Technology (Spring 2007), https://www.bidoun.org/articles/jill-magid.
[119] Magid and Edwards, "Permission Is a Material. An Interview with Jill Magid."
[120] Rubin, "Jill Magid: Love Letters to the Liverpool Police."

movie stills. As the project developed, Magid noticed the CCTV cameras swiveled to follow her as the controllers became more involved. Eventually, she convinced the controllers to use a microphone connected to a headphone in her ear so they could talk while she was on the street.

In the video *Trust,* 2004, Magid asked a controller to guide her through a crowd as she walked with her eyes closed. The video's audio is from the controller's side, so viewers hear only his answers in the video. Before he leads her, the controller says, "I'm quite [far] away from you, let me zoom in on you" then he focused the CCTV camera on Magid. Worried for her safety, he coached Magid through the crowd. This act exposed the surveillance system's faults—the controller later told Magid her actions made them nervous because they could not protect her if something happened.[121] Surveillance cameras may deter crime in that area or help find the suspect after the crime is committed, but they cannot stop an active crime.

According to Johnathan Finn, *Evidence Locker* interrogates the "complexity of a life lived under surveillance cameras," including a "self-reflexive look at one's own participation in and contribution to a [surveillance] society," since Magid had a heavy hand in her own surveillance.[122] Finn argues that Magid's project examines three "interrelated aspects of contemporary camera surveillance," one being the "fragmented, partial and incomplete nature of the surveillance gaze"[123] The video footage alone does not tell the viewer much about Magid. Only when combined with the access forms does

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[121] Rubin.

[122] Jonathan Finn, "Surveillance Studies and Visual Art: An Examination of Jill Magid's Evidence Locker," *Surveillance & Society* 10, no. 2 (2012): 136.

[123] Finn, 136.

the viewer learn about Magid, which still features gaps, especially in comparison to social media profiles.[124] The cameras are unable to watch Magid when she enters a private space, a limitations of public surveillance systems. The second aspect that the project revealed is the ineffectiveness of visual surveillance, which is seen when the controllers admit they cannot protect Magid as she walks around with her eyes closed in *Trust*. In addition, the controllers tell Magid about moments when they must choose between areas to watch. One controller describes seeing four potentially dangerous incidents. Forced to focus on one, the controller soon realized it was harmless. However, his choice meant that the three other incidences were left to play out, unmonitored.[125] The last aspect discussed by Finn is the "visual pleasure of surveillance," where people enjoy watching surveillance camera footage and being the subject of surveillance.[126] Magid admitted she enjoyed being watched and controllers enjoyed watching her. One controller told Magid that the viewing experience is "really sensual."[127] The controllers, who became more involved, helped create *Final Tour,* 2004, which shows Magid and the aforementioned controller riding on a motorcycle in Liverpool, tracked by other CCTV controllers until they rode beyond the city and out of the camera's view. Indisputably, both sides experience a voyeuristic pleasure in this project.

Finn also mentions another layer of pleasure: the viewer watching the final project. Implicated in the visual pleasure while he wrote the article, Finn became enthralled with tracking Magid's movements. As he reads a detail from Magid's letters,

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[124] Finn, 144.
[125] Finn, 141.
[126] Finn, 136.
[127] Finn, 143.

he looked for correlating CCTV clips and becomes frustrated by the lack of video to accompany her writings—he wants to see what happens, not just read about it.[128] His actions betray the voyeuristic pleasure of watching. The desire to watch people is commonplace in our culture – even for surveillance scholars – and fuels the popularity of reality TV and social media. Finn argues that this urge to watch others is part of why visual surveillance is accepted—we like to watch and be watched.[129] This concept builds upon Thomas Mathiesen and David Lyon's ideas of voyeuristic pleasure in television, mass media, and surveillance. In 1997, Mathiesen wrote about Foucault's panopticon and argues that "forms of mass media, such as television, work in conjunction with the panopticon to control and regulate viewers through entertainment, specifically through titillating content."[130] Lyon extended this idea to why video surveillance is easily accepted by the public since "all sorts of watching have become commonplace within a 'viewer society' encouraged by the culture of TV and cinema."[131] Finn summarizes it as "we accept and engage in surveillance because of the pleasure of watching and being watched."[132] In the early 2000s, reality TV like *Big Brother* show the cultural fascination with watching, which only intensified with cell phones and social media. Magid explore ideas of voyeurism and the creation of an identity through surveillance, which she manipulated to suit her project. With *Evidence Locker.* Magid confirmed her earlier prediction that working together forms a pact that creates intimacy; however, she unknowingly created another layer of pleasure between the project and the viewers.

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[128] Finn, 144.
[129] Finn, 142.
[130] Finn, 142.
[131] Finn, 142.
[132] Finn, 142.

Laura Poitras

Laura Poitras is a documentary filmmaker and journalist who expanded her cinematic practice to video installations. Her most notable work is the 9/11 trilogy which examined the "global effects of the post-September 11, 2001 world on individuals' lives" and is comprised of three feature-length documentary films.[133] Poitras exists in the grey area between documentary and art. She often works alone on a modest budget, without a camera crew or support from organizations. This grants the films a tremendous emotional weight as Poitras builds relationships with her subjects. Without a crew, Poitras films with her camera at waist height so her face is unobstructed.[134]

Before critics and the public gave her films attention, United States intelligence agencies noticed Poitras's work in 2004 after she filmed in Baghdad. Detained upon return to the United States, she discovered security agencies had placed her on the terrorist watch list, which led to frequent detainment in airports around the world as she flew between countries to film. After six years of harassment, Poitras relocated to Berlin to work on her final film of her 9/11 trilogy. The first work in the trilogy, *My Country, My Country,* 2006, documents citizens' lives in Iraq under the U.S. occupation, following Dr. Riyadh al-Adhadh, an Iraqi medical doctor, father of six, and Sunni political candidate. *The Oath,* 2010, focuses on two men who worked for Osama Bin Laden, Abu Jandal, a bodyguard, and Salim Ahmed Hamdan, a driver, and follows their different journeys after 9/11. Jandal was in a Yemeni jihadist rehabilitation program after he was

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[133] Cotter, "'Laura Poitras: Astro Noise' Examines Surveillance and the New Normal," 25.

[134] Alex Danchev, "Troublemakers: Laura Poitras and the Problem of Dissent," in *Astro Noise: A Survival Guide for Living Under Total Surveillance*, ed. Laura Poitras and Jay Sanders (New York: Whitney Museum of American Art, 2016), 212.

detained in Yemen prison. The film shows a conflicted man who grapples with his world

view as a forced reformed al-Qaeda member. Poitras intercuts his narrative with

Hamadan's Supreme court trial and experience as a prisoner at Guantanamo Bay. The

final film, *Citizenfour,* 2014, is about Edward Snowden and the NSA spying scandal,

where Poitras films Snowden's release of classified documents that expose data

surveillance authorized by the NSA.

In 2016, Poitras presented *Astro Noise* at the Whitney Museum, an exhibition that

featured video work along with a series of prints and an interactive installation. Removed

from the typical cinema viewing experience, Poitras used installation techniques to give

viewers physical interactions with her video. In a 2013 journal entry, Poitras questioned

why she made long-form documentaries "when other ways…are so much more

energizing."[135] In other journal entries, Poitras wonders if an art exhibition could "mirror

themes of surveillance mechanism…to create an aesthetic experience and reveal

information that evokes an emotional response."[136] In conversation with Jay Sanders,

curator of *Astro Noise,* Poitras further discusses her interest in "having bodies in spaces

and asking them to make choices," so Poitras freed her work from the constraints of a

screen.[137]

The exhibition featured one of her complete films while the video works featured

footage and clips from her other films. Installed in unusual ways that divided the space,

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[135] Laura Poitras, "Berlin Journal," in *Astro Noise: A Survival Guide for Living Under Total Surveillance*, ed. Jay Sanders (New York: Whitney Museum of American Art, 2016), 88.
[136] Poitras, 90.
[137] Laura Poitras and Jay Sanders, "Introduction," in *Astro Noise: A Survival Guide for Living Under Total Surveillance* (New York: Whitney Museum of American Art, 2016), 31.

the work forced viewers around the gallery space in a new way which made viewers uneasy and on edge. This helped Poitras place viewers in an empathetic space, especially for the installation *Bed Down Location,* 2016 (Figure 11), an interactive work that featured a padded platform for viewers to lie on and look up at the footage of the night sky projected above. This work features CGI depictions of the night sky in Yemen, Pakistan, and Somalia. Viewers watch seemingly peaceful night skies filled with shooting stars. Eventually, the night fades into day, and the viewers realize the lights shooting across the sky were drones. In the exhibition's final room, the second part of *Bed Down Location* (Figure 12) shows real-time, heat-sensor images of the bodies quietly gazing up at the ceiling two rooms away.

Bed Down Location fulfills Poitras's aim to create an empathetic space, a drastic change from her documentaries. At this time, the public was questioning the motives and effectiveness of documentary film. In a review of the exhibition, Stephen Squibb writes that documentaries can fail to inspire any change and instead paints a virtuous and simple portrait of the subject without much interrogation into underlying issues.[138] In contrast, installations like *Bed Down Location* give viewers an experience to use "as a basis for an inductive process of understanding," rather than already deduced information.[139] Squibb writes Poitras shared a "mimetic reality that expresses the experience of being hunted, rather than the diegetic document that testifies to the reality of people being hunted someplace else."[140] Viewers think "this could be me" as they watch the drones fly

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[138] Stephen Squibb, "Moving Targets: The Work of Laura Poitras," *Artforum*, February 2016, https://www.artforum.com/print/201602/moving-targets-the-work-of-laura-poitras-57463.
[139] Squibb.
[140] Squibb.

overhead or track viewers moments on the heat map screen. Squibb writes about the freedom the viewer has when viewing this work in a museum compared to a theater, which Poitras provided "precisely to be jeopardized*"* as she puts the viewer under surveillance.[141]

The final room of *Astro Noise* added the crucial element of surveillance to unites Poitras's exhibition and documentary films. The room features two different works that show the viewer was under surveillance the entire time. One work is a continuation of *Bed Down Location* that shows an infrared video of viewers laying down on the bed, captured by a camera installed in the center of the video installation on the ceiling. The second work is called *Last Seen,* 2016, which uses a custom Wi-Fi sniffer software to log and display information about every wireless device connected to the museum's Wi-Fi network. The endless list of IP addresses, device IDs, and wireless providers scroll on the monitor next to the live infrared footage. The final room combines two different types of surveillance—dataveillance and visual surveillance. The most provocative works in the exhibition, *Bed Down Location* and *Last Seen* employ several military tactics. Bed Down Location, often abbreviated to BDL, is a military term that describes the sleeping coordinates of people targeted for assassination by drones, which also uses infrared location to track bodies. *Last Seen* tracks viewer's metadata when they take pictures or use their phone. The final room of the exhibition leaves the viewer with an unsettled feeling. The end of *Bed Down Location*—when the stars reveal themselves as drones— could work as a sufficient wake up call to the viewers about drone strikes, but the addition of the infrared tracking reinforces the fear.

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[141] Squibb.

Writers describe an unsettling moment when they walk in and see the chilling live stream infrared footage from a space where they had just laid down or even relaxed only minutes prior.[142] However, the viewer does not see their own image in the footage since the feed is live and runs without a time delay. Like Nauman and Campus's work described in the first chapter, the viewer sees others in a space where they used to be. Unlike the older works, the infrared footage conveys targets of assassination so the viewer feels relief that they cannot see their own body, rather than the frustration they felt with Nauman's *Live-Taped Video Corridor* or Campus's *dor* when they try to see their image. This change in reaction illustrates the militarization of surveillance technology in the 21st century, especially in the context of Poitras's work.

Conclusion

Despite the contrasting tones, Magid and Poitras's work provide viewers a moment and tools to reexamine their relationship with power and authority figures. Magid's *Evidence Locker* proves that police and state surveillance has blind spots, while also examining how people can be compliant in their own surveillance and the pleasure one might gain from being watched. Poitras undermines the sense of security that U.S. citizens possess with proof that they are not untouchable. In his review for *Astro Noise*, Holland Cotter writes that Poitras's work reexamines power in the 21st century, and her political art is not "'Power to the People' kind of art, because the very concept of power has been so polluted by abuse as to be held in terminal suspicion: Power is the problem,

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[142] Zan Zhong, "Everything Is Surveilled: In Conversation with Laura Poitras," *W Magazine*, accessed December 6, 2022, https://www.wmagazine.com/story/laura-poitras-whitney-museum-exhibit-edward-snowden-citizenfour.

for everyone, including us."[143] Through her work, Poitras challenges the viewer to rethink their ideas of power and become more vigilant in the fight against surveillance. The *Astro Noise* catalogue was even created to be "A Survival Guide for Living Under Total Surveillance" and provide practical insight into the surveillance state rather than be a glossy record of the exhibition.

Both artists' work shows surveillance systems biases when humans control the technology. Poitras's work exposes the reality of post-9/11 surveillance, which targets people from to Middle Eastern countries. Magid's project uncovered how CCTV controllers at times choose activities or areas to watch, which allows them to target people based on "visual appearance and their personal bias, with young, black men being disproportionately surveyed."[144] Later surveillance art will even further expose these biases. Some artists even put these biases on display so viewers can realize their own surveillance tendencies. While projects like *Watched!* claimed the discovery of these tendencies can lead to surveillance without biases, later artworks do not share the same optimism. As Artificial Intelligence becomes incorporated with surveillance, it becomes harder to imagine a society where surveillance is "for the good."

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[143] Cotter, "'Laura Poitras: Astro Noise' Examines Surveillance and the New Normal."
[144] Finn, "Surveillance Studies and Visual Art: An Examination of Jill Magid's Evidence Locker," 137.

Conclusion: Who's Afraid of Video Surveillance?

By the 2010s, terms like "multiveillance," "dataveillance," and "smart surveillance" emerged to explain the omnipotent and multi-faceted surveillance society that exists today. Cameras are no longer the government's primary tactic to watch citizens. Now, an extensive data trail follows everyone who uses the internet, GPS, social media, email, pays with credit card, and other daily tasks. Even if someone does not use these technologies, all their digitized records create trackable profile. Compounded together, data profiles create a new identity, which allows people to see someone without ever seeing an image of them. Invisible and omnipotent, dataveillance plays into our fear of the unknown. Furthermore, companies pay for data profiles to better target products to us online, which has led to laws that effect how companies can use and track people's data. As Big Data, biometrics, and other data-based tracking programs evolve, there has been less concern with visual surveillance. In fact, most of the public agrees surveillance cameras are good thing. In 2013, a *New York Times* and CBS News poll discovered that 78% of the American public favored surveillance cameras installed in public areas.[145] The polls, taken after the attack at the Boston Marathon where the police used surveillance footage to catch the suspects, are comparable to the polls discussed in Chapter 3, which were taken after 9/11 and showed a 79% support of surveillance cameras. One could say the numbers are inflated due to the timing of each poll; however, a majority of people today share this idea that video surveillance is a good thing. This

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[145] Mark Landler and Dalia Sussman, "Poll Finds Strong Acceptance for Public Surveillance," *The New York Times*, April 30, 2013, https://www.nytimes.com/2013/05/01/us/poll-finds-strong-acceptance-for-public-surveillance.html.

idea is echoed in the rise of doorbell cameras and home security systems that stream footage straight to our phones. As these systems become more affordable and accessible, private video surveillance is bound to increase.

In our culture there is abundant interest in what people do every day, first seen in the explosion of reality TV in the 2000s. A popular genre, the premise of reality TV is for viewers to see how people live, as if the presence of large cameras and crew do not change how people act. In fact, there is an expectation for people on reality TV shows to not act for the cameras or change their behavior. The most famous example of reality TV is *Big Brother,* a concept which originated in the Netherlands in 1999 before being franchised across the world. The premise of the show is a group of people living in a house under constant surveillance. In the U.S. series, the house was outfitted with 94 HD cameras and 113 microphones to record the occupants 24/7. In 2004, John McGrath wrote *Loving Big Brother* to explore our cultural infatuation with video surveillance using his own interest in the reality TV show *Big Brother* and the security footage from 9/11 as the basis of his studies. McGrath argues that the reason surveillance has thrived and expanded is because "we desire it—we enjoy it, play with it, and use it for comfort."[146] *Big Brother's* sustained popularity—the franchise consists of over 500 episodes in 62 countries—shows our cultural affinity with surveillance. McGrath's book explores how audiences crave surveillance through various plays and art installations. He uses Bruce Nauman's closed-circuit installation *Going Around the Corner Piece,* 1970, which is similar to the Nauman work discussed in Chapter 1. Both works never show the

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[146] John E. McGrath, *Loving Big Brother: Performance, Privacy and Surveillance Space* (London: Routledge, 2004), vii.

viewer their own image in the monitor, which highlights the viewer's "fascination with the elusive self-image" and our inherent dissatisfaction with this image.[147] McGrath questions if we would be happy to catch our image in Nauman's work, or would we seek another version of our self image. He writes "our self image almost inevitably disappoints us, and so we seek another vision, take another holiday snap in another location."[148] Written in the dawn of personal digital cameras, McGrath's theory is strengthened in today's age of cell phones and social media as we try to perfect this self image. As McGrath guesses, this "real version" never appears in the staged photos we take, so we seek out another image of ourselves, like surveillance footage.

While the phenomenon of reality TV remains a cultural milestone, social media plays a larger role in today's culture. Today, it is almost crucial for people to create an online persona where people share private information consistently. Since the rise of Facebook and Instagram, people share detailed descriptions of their lives to the point where it is now a career to share what they do. These profiles share more than a surveillance camera could ever track. In fact, constant CCTV reveals less about a person than a social media profile. Johnathan Finn compares Jill Magid's *Evidence Locker* to a Facebook profile, and while he agrees the project exposes a lot about Magid, he says that "following her for 31 days produces little more than an extended Facebook profile. In fact, it produces less."[149] With the rise of social media and users willing sharing their image, one questions if video surveillance is still relevant in our age of dataveillance. As

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[147] McGrath, 169.
[148] McGrath, 169.
[149] Finn, "Surveillance Studies and Visual Art: An Examination of Jill Magid's Evidence Locker," 140.

discussed by the lead researcher for *Watched!,* the power of visuals is "key to understanding the state of heightened visibility in our current surveillance society," therefore art that interrogates visual surveillance helps us understand the oppressive nature of surveillance systems.[150]

Despite our claim to understand our mass visibility—along with our participation in the culture of visibility through social media and cell phones—a recent project by Dries Depoorter forces people to rethink the acceptance of visual surveillance, especially when paired with artificial intelligence (AI). Depoorter's project *The Follower,* 2022, follows a multi-step process and accesses public sources and information. The artist uses an AI program to record a selection of open surveillance cameras for a couple of weeks and then scrapes all Instagram photos that are tagged in the same location (Figure 13). AI software then compares the subjects in both the Instagram photos to the surveillance footage. The artist has posted the Instagram photos—without the handle or user's name—next to the video footage that "showed the process of taking them."[151] Depoorter used Instagram—a social platform that is open to all—and EarthCam, the company that operates the Open Camera feeds. The company presents the network of livestreaming webcams as an opportunity for users to explore around the world without leaving their homes.

Subjects who were tracked by Depoorter have expressed horror, claiming that his work is another version of surveillance. While Depoorter's work enters a grey ethical

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[150] Wolthers, *Watched! Surveillance, Art and Photography*, 8.
[151] Kashmir Hill, "This Surveillance Artist Knows How You Got That Perfect Instagram Photo," *The New York Times*, September 24, 2022, sec. Technology, https://www.nytimes.com/2022/09/24/technology/surveillance-footage-instagram.html.

area, the project exposes that people, even ones who willingly post their photo and location online, are not comfortable with the constant surveillance of security cameras. Depoorter claims that the purpose of *The Follower* is to show people the danger of this information and technology, cautioning that "if one person can do this, what can a government do?"[152] Depoorter's work no longer exists beyond its reproduction in news articles; all footage of *The Follower* has been removed from Instagram, YouTube, and his website due to the violation of copyright, not privacy concerns. Both EarthCam and Instagram said that Depoorter violated the platforms' terms and conditions, yet the companies mentioned nothing about privacy. While the project's ethics are certainly questionable, the fact that Depoorter created it through open sources proves our cultural acceptance with surveillance and the proliferation of our image across the internet. In addition to surveillance, the project exposes identities that we create online. The contrast between real life and online life is stark as you watch the video of influencers test various poses for many minutes compared to their effortless post on Instagram. *The Follower* helps viewers understand how various online identities are different in real life.

An unsettling and uncomfortable viewing experience, Depoorter's project is similar to the works discussed throughout this thesis that rely on an uneasy viewing experience to shock the viewer. Since those works spans over sixty years, each one confronts different social and cultural issues. The work of the 1970s show the viewer their image so they can confront the second self and explore media representations. As viewers adapt, they realize they do not know what their "real" self looks like or if it matches what they see on television. The 1990s works are an exploration of how

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[152] Hill.

surveillance systems make viewers act, which leads to viewers policing themselves or others. Exhibited during the rise of state surveillance, the works allow the viewers to recognize this change. The 2000s works show the dark side of surveillance in a post 9/11 world and expose how the system can fail and prosecute innocent people. Through his recent project *The Follower,* Depoorter hopes that viewers can think more critically about our current state surveillance.

All these works hold an electronic mirror up for the viewer to see their image and expose flaws in media, surveillance, and social media. When viewing these works today, viewers scrutinize video surveillance and how it can invade our privacy and even contribute to self-discipline. While there was special focus to evaluate the works in their context, it is interesting to look at these artworks through the lens of our current surveillance state. Presented in a fine art context, viewers enter the works in a different state of mind with more skepticism than normal situations. Bruce Nauman's work shows us how our behavior changes when under video surveillance. Julia Scher's work helps us investigate the role we play when we enter a surveillance system. In Jill Magid's *Evidence Locker*, we can see how video surveillance tracks us and creates a partial identity that we cannot control. Some of the works also predicted technology that is common today, like Lynn Hershman Leeson's *The Dollie Clones,* which resemble the nanny cams that people use to watch their homes.

The artists created work for the viewers to be aware of the omnipotence of surveillance and how our behavior changes. However, our relationship with the surveillance state is complicated by the voyeuristic pleasures of surveillance and the viewer's desire for the elusive self image. Furthermore, the government's surveillance

systems make it difficult to reclaim the privacy and anonymity lost in the 1980s. Today, our reaction to state surveillance resembles an apathetic acceptance. However, with any good artveillance piece, viewers can acknowledge the various effects surveillance cameras have on us. While the works might not offer a route out of the surveillance state, they help explain why we feel someone is always watching us.
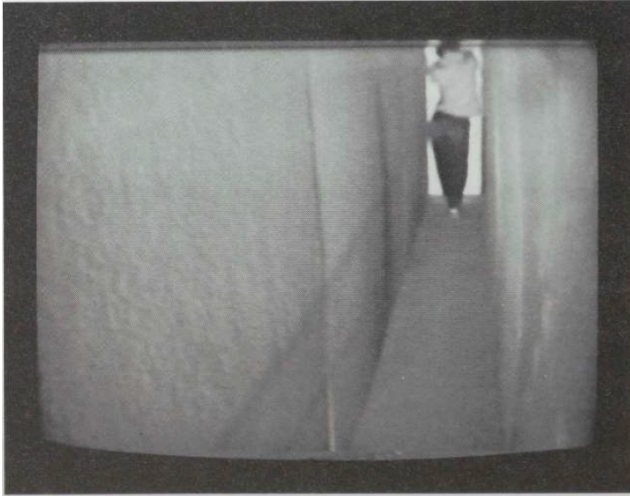
Illustrations

Figure 1.
Bruce Nauman, still from, *Walk with Contrapposto*, 1968, videotape, black and white, sound, 60 min. to be repeated continuously. Museum of Modern Art Collection
In *Nauman: Exhibition Catalogue and Catalogue Raisonne*. Edited by Joan Simon and Bruce Nauman. 1st ed. Cat res 189, Minneapolis: Walker Art Center, 1994.

Figure 2.
Bruce Nauman, *Live Taped Video Corridor,* 1970. Wallboard, video camera, two video monitors, videotape player, videotape. Dimensions variable. Solomon R. Guggenheim, Museum, New York, Panza Collection. In *Nauman: Exhibition Catalogue and Catalogue*

Raisonne. Edited by Joan Simon and Bruce Nauman. 1st ed. Cat res 136, Minneapolis: Walker Art Center, 1994.
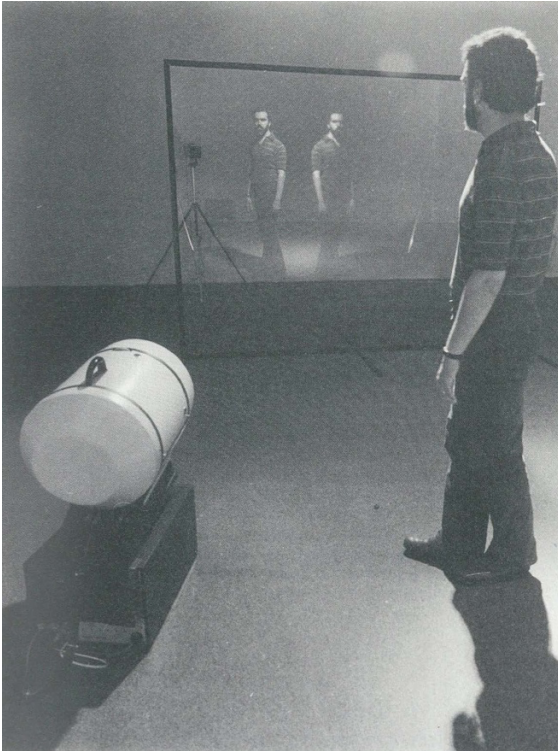

Figure 3.
Peter Campus, *Interface*, 1972. The Centre Pompidou Collection. In *Peter Campus. Video Ergo Sum*. By Anne-Marie Duguet. Anarchive 7. Paris: Jeu de Paume, 2017. Installation at the Bykert Gallery, New York, 1972. Photo Nathan Rabin.

Figure 4.
Peter Campus, *dor,* 1975.

Closed Circuit video installation. 1 surveillance video camera. 1 video projector, projection on the wall. Image app. 2m wide, hallway, darkened room, white walls. San Francisco Museum of Modern Art Collection. https://www.sfmoma.org/artwork/93.76/

Figure 5.
Julia Scher, *Security by Julia II,* 1989.
Artists Space, New York, 1989. https://news.artnet.com/art-world/julia-scher-wonderland-berlin-1423018
Note: No images of *Security by Julia VI* from the 1989 Whitney Biennial exist.

Figure 6.
Julia Scher, *Predictive Engineering*, 1993–present Multichannel video and sound installation, with live cameras, sensors, microphone, mirrors, tape, plastic balls, drone,

and text-messaging service; dimensions variable. San Francisco Museum of Modern Art Collection. Installation view: San Francisco Museum of Modern Art
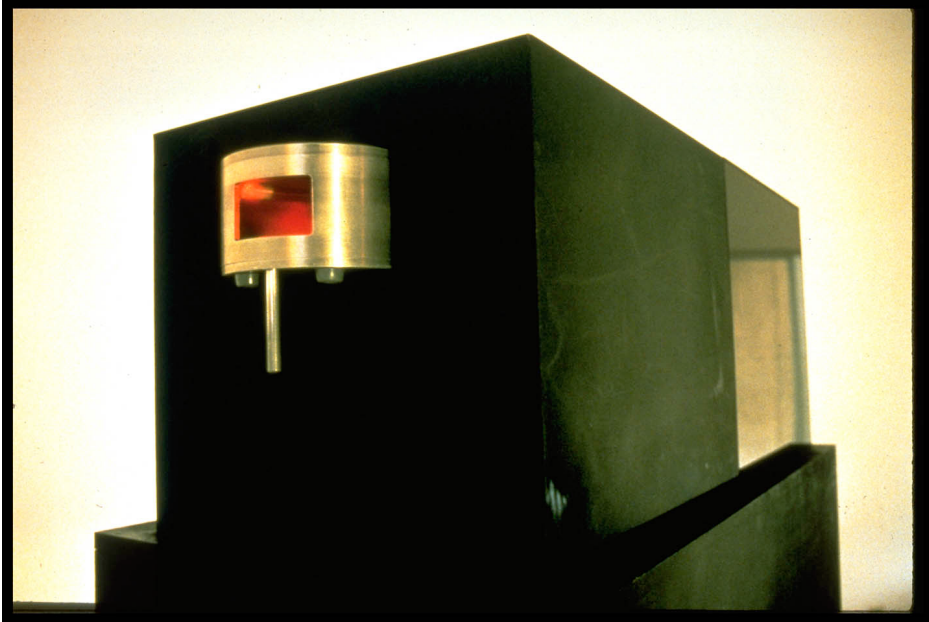https://www.sfmoma.org/artwork/98.513.A-PP/

Figure 7.
Lynn Hershman-Leeson, exterior view of *Room of One's Own*, 1993. In collaboration with Sarah Roberts. Interactive apparatus, computer, laserdisc, projection, surveillance system cameras, monitor, miniature furnishing. 15 x 16 x 35 in
https://www.lynnhershman.com/project/room-of-ones-own/

Figure 8.

Lynn Hershman-Leeson, interior view of *Room of One's Own*, 1993. In collaboration with Sarah Roberts. Interactive apparatus, computer, laserdisc, projection, surveillance system cameras, monitor, miniature furnishing. 15 x 16 x 35 in, https://www.lynnhershman.com/project/room-of-ones-own/

Figure 9.
Lynn Hershman-Leeson, *The Dollie Clones: Tillie, the Telerobotic Doll and CybeRoberta*, 1995–1998. *CybeRoberta:* custom-made doll, clothing, glasses, webcam, surveillance camera, mirror, original programming and telerobotic head-rotating system. approx. 17.32 x 7.87 in. *Tillie:* custom-made doll, clothing, glasses, webcam, surveillance camera, original programming and telerobotic head-rotating system. approx. 17.32 x 7.87 in. Exhibition view: *Lynn Hershman Leeson, Twisted*, New Museum, New York. Courtesy New Museum. Photo: Dario Lasagni. https://ocula.com/artists/lynn-hershman-leeson/
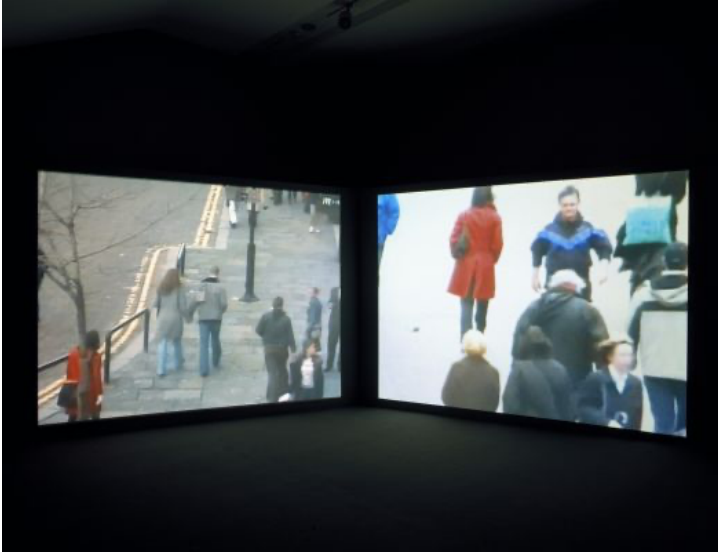
Figure 10.
Jill Magid, installation view of *Control Room (Evidence Locker),* 2004. Two-channel
digital video. 10 min loop. Installation at Tate Liverpool. 2004.
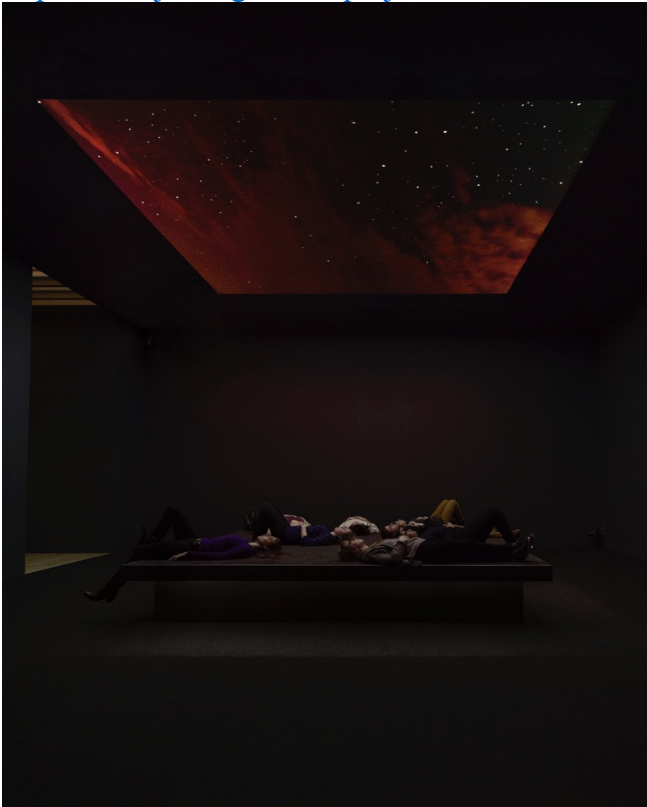http://www.jillmagid.com/projects/evidence-locker-2

Figure 11.
Laura Poitras, installation view of *Bed Down Location,* 2016. Mixed-media installation
with digital color video, 3D sound design, infrared camera, and closed-circuit video.
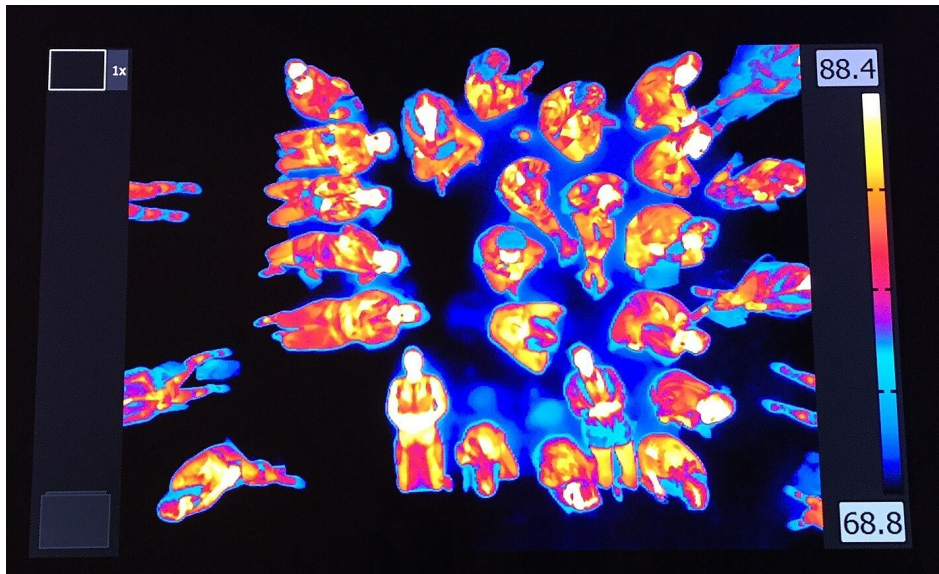Photo by Ronald Amstutz. https://whitney.org/exhibitions/laura-poitras#exhibition-
photography

Figure 12.
Laura Poitras, still from *Bed Down Location*, 2016.
https://whitney.org/education/forteachers/activities/103

Figure 13.
Dries Depoorter, *The Follower*, 2022. Video. Screenshot from YouTube video, which has now been deleted. Photo from Bloomberg article.
https://www.bloomberg.com/news/articles/2022-09-13/new-art-video-combines-instagram-posts-with-surveillance-footage

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