

Manu Luksch

The FACELESS Project

2002 - 2008



The FACELESS Project

interrogates the culture of surveillance by redeploying authentic CCTV images recorded in London, the most surveilled city on Earth. These images are heavily inscribed by laws relating to privacy and freedom of information, and are in effect 'legal readymades'.

In addition to a 50-minute manifesto-driven fiction film, a number of works in different media have emerged from the process of image acquisition.

1. The Mistake (2008)
2. Manifesto for CCTV Filmmakers (2002)
3. Mapping CCTV in Whitehall (2008)
4. I wish to apply, under the Data Protection Act, for any and all CCTV images of my person held within your system. I was present at [place] from approximately [time] onwards on [date]. (2006)
5. How to anonymise (2003)
6. FRAMED (2003)
7. The Eye – choreography for surveilled space (2005)
8. The Eye – print edition (2008)
9. The Spectral Children (2006)
10. Faceless (2007)

MANIFEST
wer fängt fängt
schon an,
wenn einer
nicht anschickt
Kerlrahmen
und
Leinwand
zu kaufen
Joseph Beuys
1. 11. 1985



The Mistake (2008)

chalk writings in public space

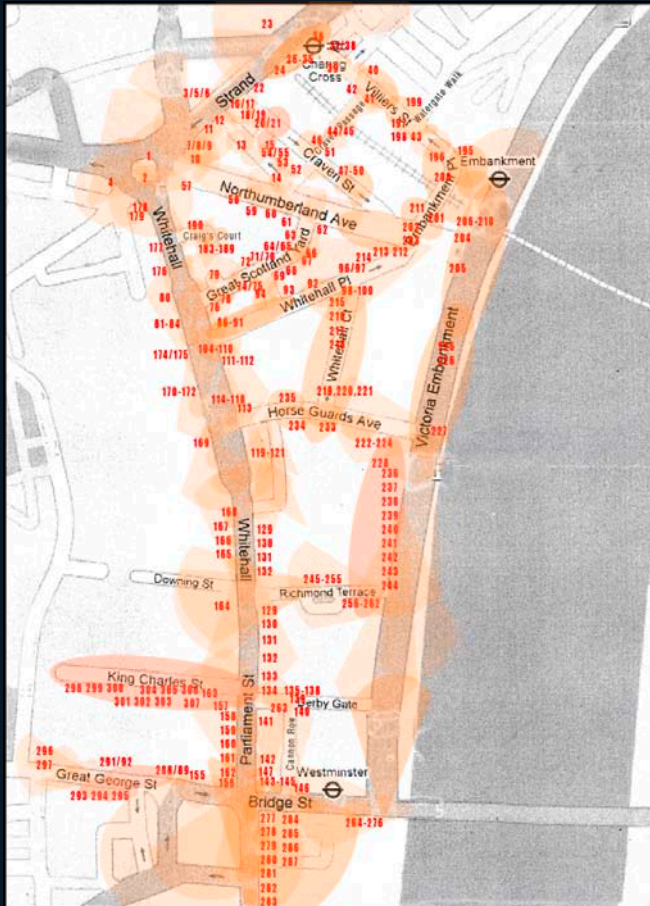
"The mistake begins with the intention to buy camera and tape"

An adaptation of the Manifesto by Joseph Beuys (1985)



Manifesto for CCTV Filmmakers (2002)

The Manifesto declares a set of rules, establishes effective procedures, and identifies further issues for filmmakers using pre-existing CCTV (surveillance) systems as a medium in the UK. The manifesto is constructed with reference to the Data Protection Act 1998 and related privacy legislation that gives the subjects of data records (including CCTV footage) access to copies of the data. The filmmaker's standard equipment is thus redundant; indeed, its use is prohibited.



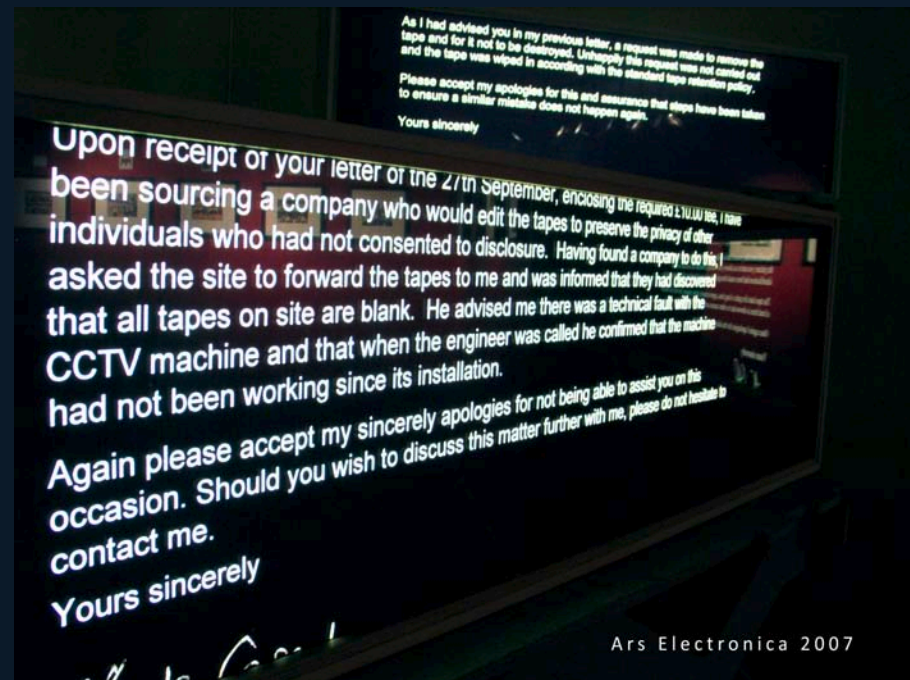
Mapping CCTV in Whitehall (2008)

map; documentation video 2min DVCAM/DVD

The map shows the estimated range of 300 CCTV cameras within the SOCPA (Serious and Organized Crime ACT) zone in Whitehall. The frame of one wireless camera was mapped accurately onto the pavement by 'video sniffing' the signal.



KunstHaus Graz (2007)

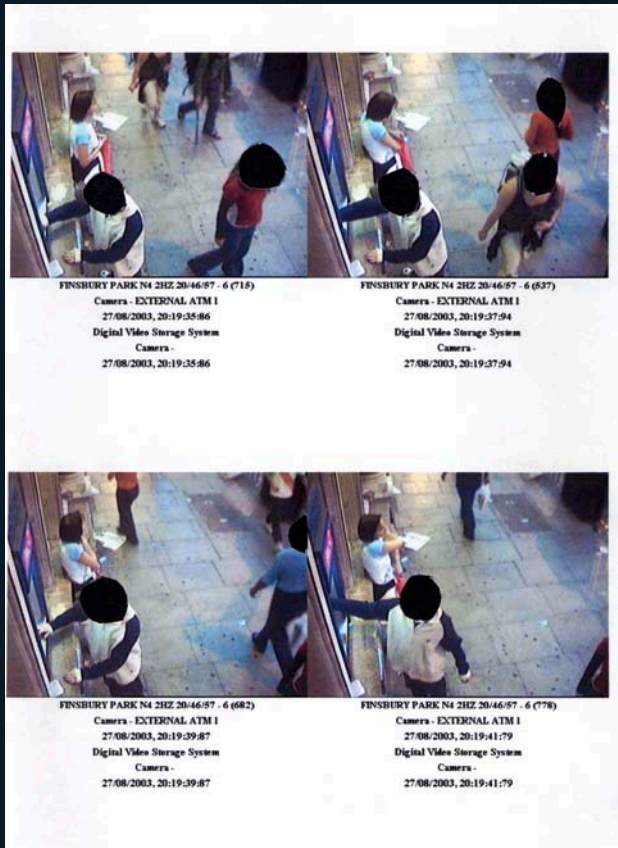


Ars Electronica 2007

'I wish to apply, under the Data Protection Act, for any and all CCTV images of my person held within your system. I was present at [place] from approximately [time] onwards on [date].' (2006)

set of three inkjet prints in wooden light boxes, 150 x 37 cm

Narrative excerpts from letters written by CCTV operators in response to subject data requests. The title of the piece is taken from the artists' standard request letter.



How to anonymise (2003)

original documents provided by a data controller in compliance with the Data Protection Act (1998) UK and Article 8 of the Human Rights Act 1998

The institution delivered hard copies of each of the several hundred relevant frames from the time-lapse camera, with third parties' heads cut out, apparently with nail scissors. Two documents had (accidentally?) slipped in between the printouts – one a letter from a junior employee tendering her resignation (was it connected with the beheading job?), and the other an ironic memo: 'And the good news – I enclose the £10 fee to be passed to the branch sundry income account. (Head of Security, internal communication 09/2003)'

FRAMED (2003)

inkjet prints, 300 x 91 cm,
unique edition

FRAMED: THE MINISTRY, FRAMED: THE
TRANSPORT and FRAMED: THE MONEY
are serial stills of 'faceless' CCTV
recordings.





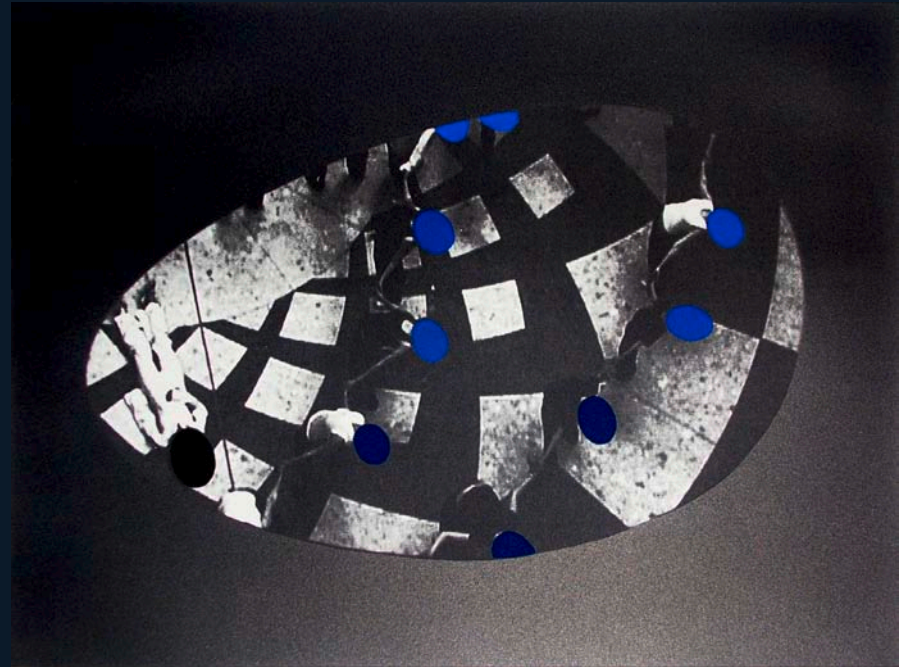
The Eye – Choreography for surveilled space (2005)

concept of guerrilla choreography for public space;
documentation video, DVCAM/DVD, 7 min

The Eye 01: in collaboration with the Ballet Boyz (Michael Nunn & William Trevitt)

The Eye 02: in collaboration with Alluminae Dance Project

The site-specific dance piece, conceived for a minimum of 60 performers and to be watched from an elevated point of view, unfolds like a kaleidoscope, while recorded by CCTV. The choreography, a humorous response to the Busby Berkeley Hollywood revue movies, intervenes with the panoptic qualities of the space by the act of returning the gaze.



The Eye – print edition (2008)

edited by Lindsay Croall at Peacock Visual Arts. Edition of 12. 59 cm x 69 cm
The screen prints are based on stills of *The Eye* as featured in the film *FACELESS*.



The Spectral Children (2006)

multi-screen video installation. set of 4 DVDs. 15 min.
Dolby 5.1 surround soundtrack by Mukul.

Video installation that uses CCTV images obtained under the UK Data Protection Act as 'legal readymades (objets trouvés)'. Four screens simultaneously show the story of the Spectral Children from the multi-angle view of the CCTV control room.



FACELESS (AT/UK 2007)

a film by Manu Luksch. voice by Tilda Swinton.
 50 min. DigiBeta; Dolby 5.1 surround sound
 produced under the rules of the Manifesto for CCTV filmmakers

Synopsis: In an eerily familiar city, a calendar reform has dispensed with the past and the future, leaving citizens faceless, without memory or anticipation. Unimaginable happiness abounds - until a woman recovers her face ...

The FACELESS Project: shows and screenings

2008

FONCTION / FICTION dazibao, centre de photographies actuelles, Montreal

Hors Pistes 08, Centre Pompidou, Paris

GOOD MORNING PARANOIA Galerie Motte et Rouart, Paris

TRANSMEDIALE 08, Haus der Kulturen, Berlin

ATLAS OF THE FUTURE Centro di cultura contemporanea a palazzo strozzi Firenze

5th Bangkok Experimental Film Festival

Teleport Färgfabriken, Färgfabriken Norr, Sweden

EXIT festival, Paris

RECODED, Peacock Gallery, Aberdeen

Filmavantgarde und aktuelle Videos aus Österreich, PHOENIX Halle Dortmund

LIFT, London

Don't You #&ing Look At Me! Surveillance in the 21st Century , 911 Seattle Media Arts Center,

28th Cambridge Film Festival

17. dokument ART, Neubrandenburg

Hors Pistes 2008, Istanbul Modern

2007

Quotidien sous contrôle, La Ligue des droits de l'Homme, Bruxelles

10th JUNCTION Festival, Bruxelles

BBC Radio 3 Festival of Free Thinking. Liverpool

Galerie im Taxispalais, Innsbruck

Goodbye Privacy – Ars Electronica, Linz

ENTER_Unknown Territories, Cambridge

DEAF 07, Rotterdam

Digitally Yours, Aboa Vetus & Ars Nova museum, Turku

pixelACHE 2007, Helsinki

DIAGONALE 07, Graz

Hinter den Zeichen, Medienkunst Labor / KunstHaus Graz

Gallery Barry Keldoulis, Sydney

