

6. after Oliver Laric and the Lincoln Collection

XI Veronica Wipes the Face of Jesus, 2012/2015

Plastic powder 3D print

This 3D-print of a scan made by Oliver Laric of a marble relief in the Usher Gallery, Lincoln was produced for this exhibition from the artist’s open source files without his oversight. The copied relief depicts Saint Veronica wiping the face of Jesus with a cloth, which according to Christian mythology, was then miraculously impressed with his image. The popularity of the so-called Veil of Veronica as subject matter in Renaissance art coincided with the emergence of the first means for mechanical printmaking, re-coding its mythical status as ‘acheiropoieta’—icons made without human hands—within the context of technological reproduction.

7. Xiaoshi Vivian Vivian Qin

Debate Competition, 2015

Performance, customized trophy

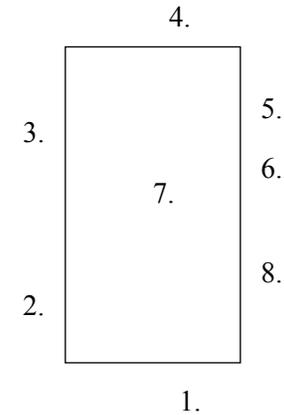
For her *Debate Competition* performances, Xiaoshi Vivian Vivian Qin enlists local youth debate teams to argue broad questions related to contemporary art. Qin adopts the Lincoln-Douglas format, where two debaters are asked to write and deliver timed speeches proposing contrary positions. For *Regular Expressions*, Qin conceived the prompt: "Can an artificial intelligence be an artist?" On November 7, a judged debate competition will be held at 221A in collaboration with University Hill Secondary School’s Debate Club. At the exhibition’s close, the winner will be awarded the trophy on display.

8. Jesse Russell and Ronald Cohn (VDM Publishing)

Selected on-demand books, 2014-15

Jesse Russell and Ronald Cohn are pseudonyms used by the German publisher VDM to list books created by an algorithm that scrapes and repackages Wikipedia articles and automatically lists them on various on-demand marketplaces. Appearing on over 125,000 books, Russell and Cohn are two of the most prolific ‘authors’ for VDM, which has published millions of books farmed from the Internet, the majority of which have yet to be printed.

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Regular Expressions

A blinking vertical line—an empty cursor inside a search field is the elemental form of this exhibition. A “regular expression” in computer science defines a set of symbols, which describe a specific search pattern. Here, the term also captures the irony of outcomes when artists work with digital systems governed by the grammars of the searchable and the scrapeable—that is, when they select amongst the Internet’s vast pseudo-inventories that do not quite contain things, but rather their possibilities that are suspended in arrays of presets and on-demand options.

Not readymades, but ready-to-be-mades. These objects and images that have been called, for the moment, “art” seem too strange and slick to have simply been picked from the mundane cache of the “real world;” they smack of a virtual well of potential forms that is somehow both more generic and at the same time more customized. What parts of these things even existed before they were searched for? And so the question of Duchamp’s drag-and-drop gesture is raised to another level of absurdity; not only when did these things turn into works of art, but when did they turn into things at all.

1. Lindsay Lawson

The Real Smiling Rock, 2014-ongoing
Agate geode and HD video, 27:25 (silent)

Lawson originally found the “Smiling Rock” listed on eBay while searching for objects that elicit ‘pareidolia’—the psychological phenomenon of recognizing human features in otherwise arbitrary visual stimuli. The artist authored and published an erotic correspondence between herself and the rock and was subsequently contacted by its seller after he found her online document. Their ongoing conversation forms the basis for the continuation of the project into various other forms, including a collaborative process whereby Lawson and the rock’s owner negotiate its temporary loan and display.

2. Jeremy Hutchison

Err, 2011
Correspondence, pipe, broken chair

Via email, Jeremy Hutchison commissions objects to be fabricated on-demand by factory workers, requesting that they insert an error of their choosing into the products that they ordinarily manufacture, therefore rendering them dysfunctional. The project was prompted by a Foxconn worker who stated that he deliberately drops objects onto the floor in order to have a few moments of rest from his work day. *Err* articulates the complex ethical issues inherent in contemporary art production: though this project was conceived of as a way to offer workers a moment for respite and personal expression into an otherwise relentless mass production process, the artist also knowingly benefits from his interventions in these systems.

3. David Horvitz

Mood Disorder, 2015
Publication

In 2012, David Horvitz uploaded a high-resolution photograph of himself onto the Wikipedia page for “mood disorder.” The purposefully clichéd composition of the image—face covered, hands cradling head, waves crashing in the background—along with its lack of copyright restrictions encouraged its circulation as a ‘stock image’. For this publication, Horvitz has compiled a broad sampling of the image’s ongoing reuse as illustrations for various online articles related to mental health.

4. Aleksandra Domanović

Turbo Sculpture, 2010-2013
HD video, 22:00

Turbo Sculpture investigates the monumental statues of celebrities and cultural icons like Bruce Lee, Johnny Depp, and Rocky Balboa erected across the former Yugoslavia since 1989. The video explores the complex ways in which contemporary image culture and information flows can conflate politics and entertainment, complicating the historical and aesthetic registers of public art in the country’s postwar environment.

5. Solid Gold Bomb

2013
Algorithmically generated t-shirt

In 2013, a small t-shirt company, Solid Gold Bomb, employed an algorithm to generate variations on the slogan “Keep Calm and Carry On” and listed them on Amazon as on-demand options. After a number of offensive shirt designs, including variations which referenced rape, murder, and violence against women, were discovered by shoppers, the company’s products were delisted, forcing the company into bankruptcy. The company claimed that they were unaware of the violent slogans, which were among thousands generated by the program, and furthermore that none of the offending designs had actually been printed.