

swiss institute

Jon Kessler

The Web

A commission by the Métamatic Research Initiative, Amsterdam

March 6, 2013 – April 28, 2013

Opening: Monday, March 4, 6 – 8 PM

The Web is an immersive installation that addresses the significance of the Internet and mobile devices in our lives while simultaneously examining the role of the viewer. The idea for the piece came to Jon Kessler on a New York subway ride when he realized that at least half of the riders were speaking on their cell phones, sending text messages, playing video games, or otherwise immersing themselves in their networked mobile devices.

The Web offers both an accessible and impermeable user experience, the title referencing a closed-circuit network accessed by viewers. Upon entering the exhibition, visitors are invited to download an iPhone app that feeds their images in real time onto surrounding monitors. Simultaneously pictured and reframed in Kessler's sculpture *Infinite Regress*, spectators render themselves as nodes within a feedback network, the space a physical support for their virtual daydreams. Kessler's creation broadcasts collected data, targeting viewers with images of themselves, their experience, and ultimately enticing input and generating output.

Much like the Internet itself, *The Web* acts as both a sentient organism and an environmental space: it facilitates the internal circuit between viewer, camera, and monitor, while simultaneously doubling as a sprawling architectural structure. While *The Web* conceptually foregrounds the role of networked technologies and our dependence on them, it is in many ways a tribute to direct experience. The viewer of *The Web* is repositioned among fellow viewers, with the feeling of sensory dislocation condensed into one geographic location—the exhibition space—and recast as a form of shared collective immersion.

Jon Kessler's work explores the connection between bodily movement and technical apparatus, often deploying mechanisms and video to facilitate this relationship. He has had solo exhibitions at MoMA PS1, New York; the Carnegie Museum of Art, Pittsburgh; the Phoenix Kulturstiftung; Sammlung Falckenberg, Hamburg, Germany; the Louisiana Museum of Moderne Kunst, Copenhagen, Denmark; and most recently, the Fisher Landau Center for Art, New York. Kessler has been awarded the Guggenheim Fellowship as well as honors from the Foundation of the Performing Arts; he is a professor at Columbia University's School of the Arts, Division of Visual Arts.

The Métamatic Research Initiative (MRI) stems from the fascination of art collectors Allard and Natascha Jakobs with the work of Jean Tinguely, and a more general interest in questions about the authorship of works of art. MRI strives to deal with issues that arise from the work of Jean Tinguely, in particular his Métamatic works. By initiating a variety of assignments for artists they instigate a process of artistic research resulting in contemporary works addressing these issues.

The exhibition will travel to Museum Tinguely, Basel, in October 2013.

For additional information on *The Web*, including press images, please contact Piper Marshall:

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