

Watched but Unseen

Abstract

This thesis uses the lens of the interactive installation "Watched but Unseen" to explore the state of people under the pressure of contemporary society and the complex relationship with individual freedom. This article draws on the growing rates of unhappiness, as well as social pressure and the relationship between art and society, to lead to our project "Watched but Unseen". We use symbolic and interactive elements to allow the audience to interact with it in the process. It further allows people to experience the standpoints of various social roles under the pressure of today's society, prompting people to reflect on individual needs in today's society.

1.Introduction

In recent years, with the growth of GDP and continuous technological advancements, various aspects of people's lives have become more and more convenient. However, this progress is accompanied by a simultaneous rise in people's unhappiness rates. Nowadays, individuals find themselves grappling with intricate social expectations and pressures that shape their roles and identities. It is within the context of these evolving challenges that the 'Watched but Unseen' project emerges.

"Watched but Unseen" is our intentional response to the increasing influence of social pressures on individual autonomy in today's rapidly shifting environment. By employing an interactive art installation, "Watched but Unseen" seeks to unravel some of the complex realities people encounter today, while acknowledging social expectations and pressures which exist daily within our daily lives.

Through interactive elements, our installation provides viewers with a rare opportunity to actively experience first-hand the tensions and compromises associated with social expectations. "Watched but Unseen" seeks not only to portray how societies shape realities but also give viewers an understanding of conflicts arising

between societal restrictions and individual freedom.

As we explore our project's methodology, artistic choices and interactive elements we invite our audience to embark on an educational and enlightening journey - not only is this exploration about society pressures but it's a heartfelt encounter between an individual's struggle for autonomy and the ever-evolving dynamics of contemporary social environments.

"Watched but Unseen" prompts audiences to reflect upon an individual's state under social pressure and the delicate balance struck between fulfilling society roles and maintaining personal freedom. By depicting various societal roles with associated pressures, viewers will reconsider any restrictions placed upon their lives by society - especially given today's culture where individuals are constantly monitored in an attempt to fulfill roles successfully while their emotional states may often go overlooked as this process takes place.

"Watched but Unseen," an engaging project, provides viewers with a lens through which they can consider the profound ramifications of social pressures on their daily lives and spark meaningful discussions on balance between societal expectations and personal autonomy, stimulating rich conversations about modern human experience.

In the sections that follow, we embark on an illuminating journey, exploring the project's methodology, artistic choices, and the profound impact of interactive elements on shaping audience perceptions. Through this engaging exploration, we aspire to reveal the multifaceted nature of social pressures and provoke profound reflections on the true nature of individual freedom in complex societies.

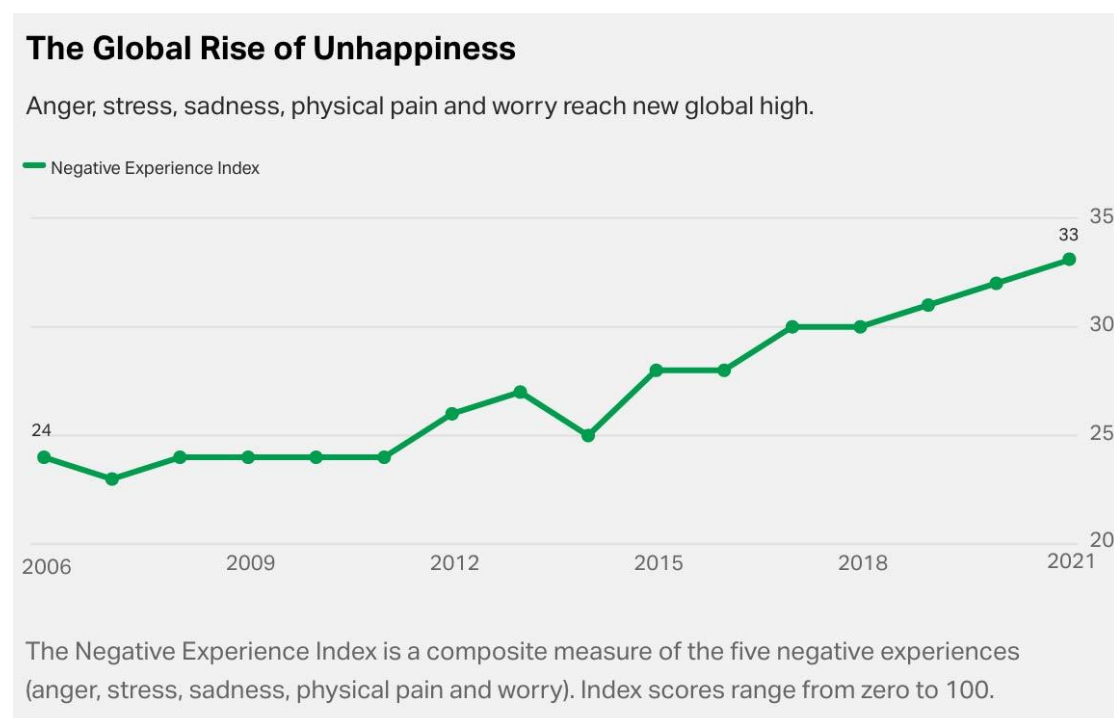
2.Literature and Artwork Review

2.1Global Rise of Unhappiness

Blind Spot: The Global Rise of Unhappiness and How Leaders Missed It" provides an in-depth insight, detailing the rise in global dissatisfaction as leaders overrely on outdated economic indicators such as GDP and unemployment rates. Furthermore, this book analyses its effect - specifically how it has contributed to shaping major events such as Arab uprisings, Brexit negotiations and Donald Trump's unexpected election - like Arab uprisings, Brexit or his unexpected election as US president.

This book urges leaders to adopt a holistic framework for measuring happiness and well-being beyond traditional economic measures, using Gallup research on key contributors of an enjoyable life as well as specific, actionable plans for improvement.

As part of our art project, this book serves as an integral backdrop, helping us gain greater insight into the impact of social pressure on individual lives. By aligning our project with its perspectives presented within it, we deepen our examination into this relationship between pressure and happiness; art serves to visually represent this complex dynamic; thus encouraging reflection upon contemporary human experience and stimulating profound insight from its audiences.



Clifton, J. (2021). *The Global Rise of Unhappiness*.

2.2 Social Pressure and Individual Freedom

To understand the complex relationship between social pressure and individual freedom, we must delve into Karl Marx's exploration of the "alienation of labor" in his groundbreaking work, the "Economic and Philosophical Manuscripts of 1844." Marx sheds light on how external sources impose labor upon workers, creating an environment where individuals struggle to experience true freedom and comfort. In today's work paradigms, employment extends beyond mere livelihood; it plays a fundamental role in shaping one's identity and social recognition. These societal expectations often force individuals to sacrifice their independence in the pursuit of social approval, succumbing to the pressures imposed by society. However, social pressure extends beyond the workplace, encompassing organizational expectations and societal roles that impede individual freedom.

"Escaping the Fantasy Land of Freedom in Organizations: The Contribution of Hannah Arendt" significantly contributes to our exploration of individual freedom within organizational settings. The author argues that organizational environments can potentially strip individuals of their authentic selves, fostering an illusion of freedom. According to the insights presented in the article, the social pressures within organizations act as barriers to genuine self-expression, thereby limiting the development of individual liberty. This perspective, as articulated in the research, provides valuable insights into the challenges individuals face in maintaining true freedom within the structured confines of organizational life.

Navigating the intricate interplay between social pressure and individual freedom becomes an ongoing dilemma. The quest for social acceptance often forces individuals to navigate between societal roles and independent freedom. This

dilemma, encompassing both internal psychological struggles and external societal influences, calls for a thorough exploration to comprehend the complex challenges individuals face in contemporary society.

2.3 Art as a Powerful Expression of Social Phenomena

In contemporary times, art is no longer just a simple aesthetic for people to appreciate, but has become a powerful medium to express social phenomena and trigger people's thinking. their work 'What is art good for? The socio-epistemic value of art,' Sherman and Morrissey highlight its socio-cognitive significance, positioning art not only as aesthetic expression but as a societal practice. Art facilitates self-understanding, understanding others, and challenges cognitive frameworks, playing a crucial role in conveying cultural and societal information.

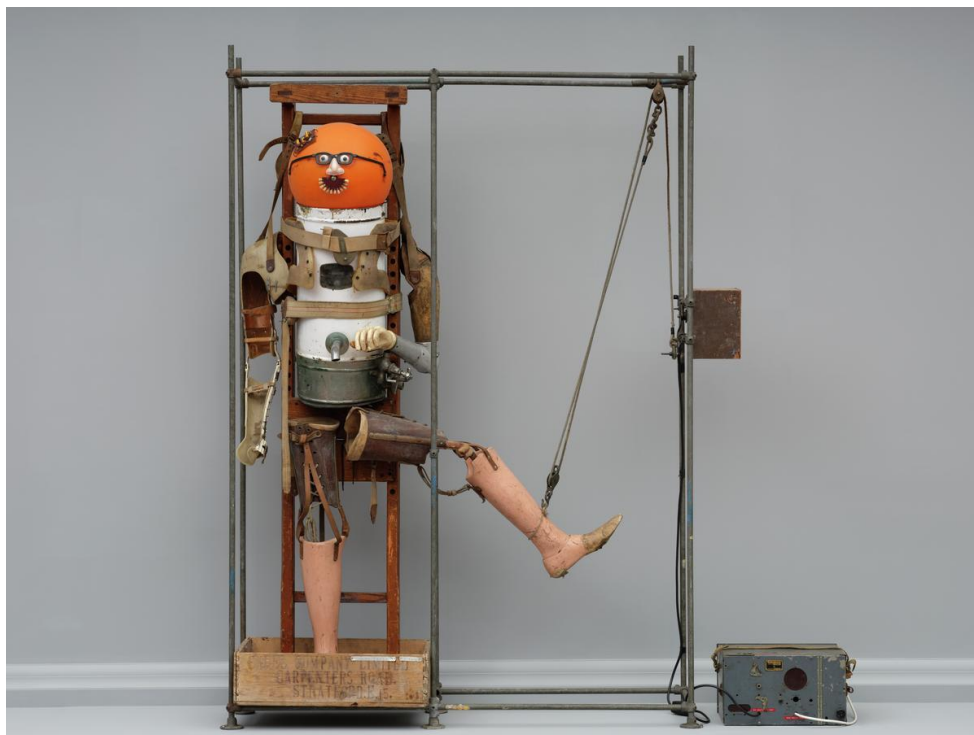
Viewing art as a societal practice enriches our understanding of its functions, cultivating social cognitive skills. Sherman and Morrissey emphasize the transformative power of art, guiding individuals away from mechanical thought processes and inspiring thought, observation, listening, and action.

As a catalyst for social change, art becomes a tool for pleasure and reflection, advocating a perspective beyond aesthetics. This sociocognitive approach reveals the specific value of the arts in promoting social connection, personal development, and community building.

Summary, considering art as a medium for expressing social phenomena can help to deeply understand its social cognitive value. This perspective offers a novel perspective on the role of art today, emphasizing its far-reaching influence as a powerful force for expressing social phenomena and promoting social change.

2.4 Reflection of Social Pressure in Contemporary Art

Combining discussions of social pressures and theories of individual freedom with art as social expression provides a comprehensive picture that promotes further investigation of how individualism intersects with society in modern culture. Contemporary artwork such as Tetsuya Ishida's "Wild" and "Cargo", as well as Bruce Lacey's "Boy, Oh Boy, am I Living!" reflect objectively the myriad social pressures individuals must cope with on a daily basis. These pieces use artistic techniques that capture the helplessness and disorientation experienced when faced with external expectations. As viewers appreciate these pieces, they become inspired to contemplate societal phenomena on individuals - sparking deep thoughts on the relationship between social pressure and individual freedom.



Lacey , B. (1964). *Boy, Oh Boy, am I Living!*



Ishida, T. (1999). *Wild*.



Ishida, T. (1997). *Cargo*.

2.5 The interactive nature of contemporary art and society

Interactive art plays a key role in social art, transforming viewers from passive observers to active participants, promoting participation and deep understanding of social dynamics.

In the study "Aesthetic Experience and Creativity in Interactive Art," interactive art is highlighted as a medium that promotes engagement and deeper understanding. Audiences no longer passively view artworks; instead, they become more connected through active participation and develop a deeper understanding of the social dynamics embedded in art. This interactivity transcends aesthetic experience and becomes a bridge between the audience and social art.

Michael Krzyzaniak et al. in *What Makes Interactive Art Engaging?* highlight key factors in interactive art, including the number of controllable parameters, the use of illusion, response time scales, and attribution agency. These elements together drive the audience to experience art more deeply, transforming them into active participants in the artistic creation process.

Overall, interactivity not only introduces new forms of artistic expression but also puts viewers at the forefront of creation and understanding. This art form provides richer and more personalized channels for social interaction, driving audiences to deeper social engagement and understanding.

2.6 "Watched but unseen" in Relation to Existing Studies

"Watched but unseen" as a novel societal art installation, resonates with recent research. Through profound interactivity and emotional expression, it seeks to evoke resonance on societal pressure among spectators and inspire profound reflection.

In alignment with recent studies, "Seeing But Not Seeing" utilizes deep interactivity and emotional expression to provoke resonance on societal pressure among spectators, prompting profound contemplation.

In summary, this literature review explores the complex relationship between social pressure, individual freedom, art as a form of social expression, contemporary art's response to social pressure, and the interactive nature of contemporary art and society. Although these topics cover a wide range, their interconnectedness contributes to a comprehensive understanding of the dynamics that shape individuals in the contemporary social landscape.

3. Methodology

In this section, we will explain the creative concept of the "visible but invisible" art installation as well as our design and production process from aspects such as eye elements and clay sculpture elements. Our creative approach to art aims at depicting social phenomena through art, emphasizing audience participation with works and expanding audience understanding of how social pressures impact personal freedom. Combining advanced technical means with traditional art forms, our installations aim at prompting contemporary people to pause for thought over social dilemmas.

3.1 Creative Concept

We use the title "Watched but Unseen" to explore the multi-faceted impact of social pressure on contemporary individuals, allowing the audience to feel the tension of scrutiny from the "eyes" and feel the status of various roles in society during the interaction with our works. , we use a combination of modern technology and traditional clay sculpture to convey the individual's current situation.

3.2 Eye Elements: Symbolic Meaning and Technological Craftsmanship

3.2.1 Symbolic Meaning

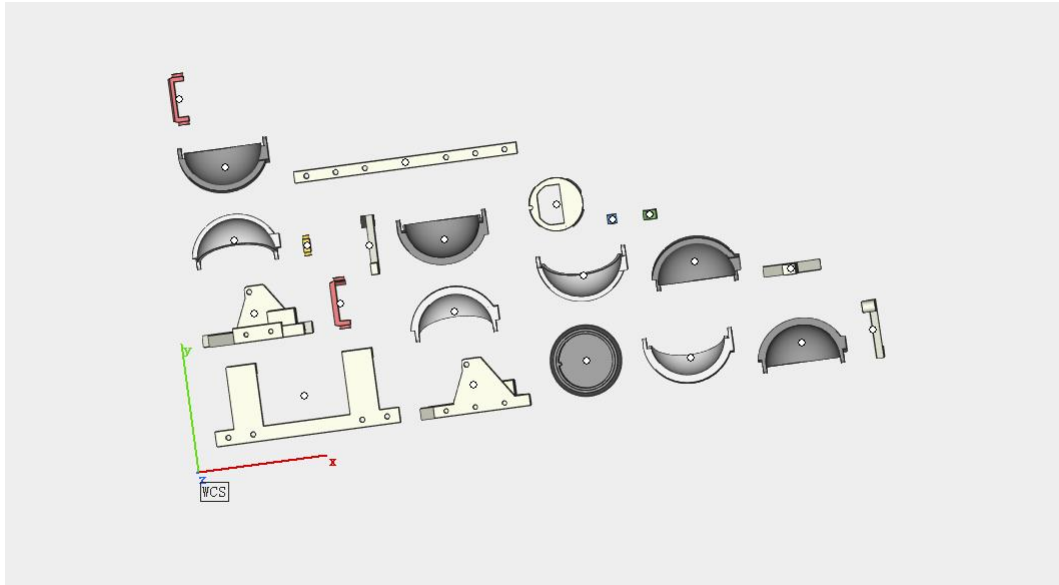
Central to our creative concept lies the symbolic integration of eyes throughout the installation, representing society's observation and scrutiny as well as pressure placed on individuals today. Their gaze becomes an immersive symbol representing that weight exerted by society and expectations that resonates deeply with viewers.

3.2.2 Technological Craftsmanship

To bring our visions into being, we employ an exacting process which integrates design with technology and craftsmanship. Herein lies an explanation of key steps involved in turning symbolic meanings into tangible realities using 3D printing technology and Arduino-based animation mechanisms.

3.2.2.1 Modeling and Printing

In the modeling and 3D printing stages, we repeatedly consider the complex details of the work. By constantly trying and adjusting optimizations, such as paying special attention to layer height, extrusion width, and fill settings, we ensure the highest quality results, enabling us to capture every detail.



Modeling

3.2.2.2 Post-processing

Post processing plays a crucial role in improving our creations, especially when it comes to demanding eye components. We pay attention to details and carefully polish and adjust each part. The optimal tolerance for fixed components is approximately 0.2 millimeters, and the maximum tolerance for moving components is 0.6 millimeters. This meticulous post-processing stage ensures seamless integration of complex eye elements.

3.2.2.3 Assembly

The process of assembly is a delicate dance that brings all the elements together, culminating in the realization of our vision. Connecting the push rods to the suspension rings, assembling the inner eye mechanism, and fitting the eye adapters to the pivots are meticulous steps in this process. The integration of the servo system into the left and right bases, securing each hole-eye bracket, and carefully placing the MG90s servo systems create a stable foundation. Finally, the connection between the

eyelids and the eyelid actuator arms breathes life into our creation, bestowing it with dynamic eye movement.



Eyes

3.2.3 Conclusion:

The Fusion of Symbolism and Craftsmanship Essentially, the eyes in "Watched but Unseen" transcend their symbolic representation. From 3D printing to electronic animation, meticulous technological craftsmanship breathes life into these symbolic elements. The eyes are no longer mere observers; they become vibrant storytellers, enabling the audience to delve deep into the realms of social pressure and personal authenticity. The fusion of symbolism and craftsmanship is an integral part of the immersive experience offered by the art installation.

3.3 Sculptural Elements

3.3.1 Conceptual Framework and Symbolic Significance

In the field of sculptural creation, the fusion of eight distinct figures symbolizes the social hierarchy. Clay sculpture serves as a powerful tool in shaping these figures,

each representing societal roles burdened by social expectations. These faceless clay figures are a suffocating metaphor for the pressure society puts on individuals to conform. In a world filled with expectations, these characters seem deprived of the ability to explore their inner selves, constrained to follow societal norms and predetermined paths.

3.3.2 Character Descriptions

Students: young people carrying heavy backpacks, with academic studies and parental expectations weighing them down.

White Collar: Sitting at a desk with a curved chair back, the figure assumes a compromising pose. This design symbolizes the limitations of office life.

Designer/Artist: Although this profession is creative in nature, artists are described as being constrained by social expectations, creating soulless artwork within strict boundaries.

Doctors: Doctors and nurses are noble professionals, but their compassionate instincts are gradually obscured by pressure from the system, society, and rules.

Sanitation worker: wearing work clothes and walking with his eyes lowered, highlighting his low social status. Details on their uniforms emphasize the menial nature of their work.

Service staff: Wearing uniforms and holding service trays, they represent the continuous provision of service and emphasize the monotony caused by rules.

Salesperson: Holding a product billboard in his hand, his expression is blank and he has lost enthusiasm for the product. The twisted features on the logo symbolize the twisted nature of business rules.

Farmers/workers: wearing work clothes and holding tools, their posture emphasizes their continuous labor under social rules.



Clay sculpture "Student"

3.3.3 Meticulously Crafted Invisible Narratives

Each sculptural figure contributes to a collective narrative of societal constraints. The absence of facial features conveys a deeper message than expressions alone, illustrating the profound impact of social expectations on individuality. The sculpture group in "Watched but Unseen" invites viewers to contemplate the hidden struggles within these societal roles, prompting reflection on the broader theme of societal pressures and personal freedom.

3.4 Emotion and Interaction

3.4.1 Emotional Expression

Through the organic fusion of eye elements and clay sculpture, we aim to evoke emotional resonance deep within the viewer's soul. The dynamic movement and changing expressions of the eye elements seek to convey the anxiety and helplessness of individuals under societal surveillance. The clay figures, through their simplicity yet expressive nature, depict the struggles and losses experienced by these societal roles. Each character is carefully designed to give the viewer an intuitive sense of the emotional complexity.

3.4.2 Deep Interaction

By combining 3D printing and Arduino technology, viewers can control eye elements, move left and right, blink, and interact deeply with the device in real-time. The audience's interactive behavior and emotional state affect the movement of eye elements, establishing a connection between personal and social pressure.

Through this deep interaction, the audience is no longer a passive observer, but an important component of the device. Their participation not only involves simple interactions but also stimulates deeper emotional engagement. By manipulating eye elements, viewers can deeply experience and understand the impact of social pressure on individuals. This interactive design not only enhances the audience's sense of participation, but also enables them to fully perceive and deeply contemplate the complex situations faced by individuals in contemporary society.

4. Discussion

4.1 Analysis and Interpretation of Research Findings

4.1.1 Explore the Impact of Social Pressure on Individual Autonomy:

Through a comprehensive study, we have uncovered the profound effects of social pressure on individual autonomy. The intricate web of societal expectations greatly shapes and influences one's lifestyle. While life may seem to be improving, there is a growing unhappiness among people. If individuals have transformed into what they are today throughout the process of evolution, can we truly consider it a successful evolution? The freedom of choice is greatly hindered under the influence of social pressure, leading to the prevalence of depression.

4.1.2 Examine the complexities faced by individuals in contemporary society:

Our research uncovers the myriad challenges individuals face in contemporary society, surpassing all expectations and forming an intricate web that shapes personal experiences. Take students, for instance. They not only endure the pressures of academics, college admissions, and the school system, but also navigate the expectations of their parents and the multifaceted competition and comparisons among their peers. These interwoven pressures and expectations create a testing ground for the complexity individuals encounter in today's society.

4.1.3 Showcasing Tensions and Compromises Associated with Social Expectations

Embarking on the intricate dance between social pressure and individual freedom presents an ever-persistent quandary. The relentless pursuit of social acceptance compels individuals to skillfully maneuver through the labyrinth of societal expectations while preserving their independent spirit. This thought-provoking dilemma, entwined with internal battles of the mind and external forces of society, beckons us to embark on an immersive exploration. Only by delving deep into this enigmatic terrain can we truly grasp the multifaceted challenges that modern individuals encounter in today's ever-evolving world.

4.2 Evaluation of the Interactive Art Installation "Watched but Unseen"

4.2.1 Discuss the effectiveness of devices in alleviating social pressure

When evaluating a device that is ' **Watched but Unseen**', we analyzed its effectiveness in unlocking the complex layers of social pressure. Art forms become a lens through which the audience can gain a deeper understanding of the complexity we explore in our research.

4.2.2 Emphasizing unique opportunities for active audience participation

This device provides a unique opportunity for the audience to actively participate and experience firsthand. We evaluated how this interactive aspect enhances the connection between the audience and the theme, promoting a deeper understanding.

4.2.3 A depiction of the conflict between social constraints and individual freedom

Our evaluation extends to how the device vividly depicts the conflicts arising from the interaction between social constraints and individual freedom. The collaborative work of visual and interactive elements summarizes the essence of these conflicts.

4.3 Reflections on Societal Roles, Personal Freedom, and Emotional States

4.3.1 Exploring Forgotten or Overlooked Emotional States Amidst Societal Expectations and Surveillance

Venturing into the depths of our emotions, we uncover the often forgotten or disregarded states that exist amidst the weight of societal expectations and constant surveillance. This profound reflection brings a new level of understanding to the rich tapestry of the human experience within the confines of society.

4.3.2 Examining Delicate Tradeoffs Individuals Make Between Fulfilling Societal Roles and Maintaining Personal Freedom

Our discussion delves into the intricate dance individuals perform as they navigate the delicate balance between fulfilling societal roles and preserving personal freedom. This exploration sheds light on the tightrope walk individuals undertake in their everyday lives

4.3.3 Provoking Reconsideration of Constraints Imposed by Society and Fostering Discussions on the Modern Human Experience

Lastly, our reflections challenge the boundaries set by society, igniting conversations that delve into the complexities of the modern human experience. By fostering dialogue, our aim is to contribute to a deeper understanding of society as a whole.

5. Conclusion

"Watched but Unseen" art installation provides an engaging and thought-provoking response to the challenges individuals are confronted with in today's society. Through innovative use of interactive elements and symbolic representations, its interactive elements reveal the depth of social pressure's effect on personal autonomy; eye motifs and clay sculptures add another level of engagement with tensions associated with society expectations - providing viewers an interactive and thought-provoking experience!

Analysis and interpretation of research findings shed light on the complex social pressures individuals are under and the struggles they experience. By depicting conflicts arising from interactions between societal constraints and personal freedom, this installation serves as a powerful lens through which viewers can reflect upon how society limits personal liberties while at the same time sparking meaningful conversations about modern humanity's experience.

Evaluation of "Watched but Unseen" Installation emphasizes its remarkable capacity for uncovering societal pressure dynamics through viewer engagement, providing

them with a visceral sense of how social pressures impact individual lives. Furthermore, interactive nature of "Watched but Unseen" creates an immersive viewing experience and transforms it into an ideal tool for investigating relationships between expectations from society and personal autonomy in everyday life; prompting active participation that fosters understanding of tensions associated with such pressures as well as tensions that come as compromises associated with such pressures arising within individual lives.

Overall, "Watched but Unseen" art installation provides both visual and conceptual insight into social pressures while stimulating audience involvement. By prompting viewers to reflect upon the tradeoffs made between fulfilling expectations in society and personal freedom, this art piece sparks meaningful discussions regarding modern human experiences. With interactive elements and thought-provoking symbolism such as its interactive components and thought provoking symbols used throughout, "Watched but Unseen" becomes an opportunity for individuals to confront, question and gain greater knowledge of contemporary society dynamics.

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