

EVERY POSSIBLE PHOTOGRAPH: INSTALLATION && RUNNING INSTRUCTIONS

Title	Every Possible Photograph
Artist	Jeff Thompson
Year	2013-14
Media	Projection, custom software

About the piece

This project investigates the idea of using computation to “use up” a piece of technology, in this case a digital camera. Using custom-written software (and a very long period of time), every possible photograph is generated, one at a time and in numerical order.

Though limited to eight colors at a very low resolution, the piece will take approximately 46,138,562,195,008,110,600,774,753,760,087,749,172,181,189,607,929,628,058,548,517,099,604,563,033,706,075 years to complete (assuming the computer runs flawlessly 24 hour a day). By way of comparison, the universe is about 13,770,000,000 years old. The piece offsets these combinations starting at Niepce’s famous 1826 photograph looking out his window, the first photographic image to be permanently captured.

The idea that extremely useless labor is interesting is central to this project, as is the eschewing of the utility of data and its representation in traditional visualization work. Attempting to create every image a camera is essentially a time machine; somewhere in the set of images and alongside billions of “meaningless” others are a photograph of me, a photograph of me if I didn’t get a haircut last week, and a photograph of me with someone who I have never met.

Additionally, this project interrogates the meaning of the camera. If the camera didn’t ‘see’ those events, are they real? They look like real people, but aren’t. Consider images created this way that are illegal (child pornography, for example): they are not ‘real’ but depict something very real.

Included components

- + Mac Mini running the piece
 - Username: Jeff Thompson
 - Password: password
- + Power cord for Mac Mini
- + Wireless keyboard and mouse
- + Video output adapter
- + VGA/DVI cable (depending on installation)

Problems or missing pieces?

+1-973-610-8202 or mail@jeffreythompson.org



A screenshot of how the projected project should look.

Installation

- + The project should be projected as large as possible in a darkened space. The image should be as crisp as possible, as it is very graphical and any focus or keystone issues are easily noticeable.
- + The above image shows the piece as it is presented: approximately 100 images with a current count at the bottom on a dark gray background.
- + The image should be carefully keystone to be straight and level.
- + An HD projector is preferred though not required.

Running the piece

The project is best left continually running throughout the show.

- + The computer will automatically restart automatically at midnight every night – the piece should start again on its own.
- + If the piece should crash or require restarting, simply double-click the “Every Possible Photograph” icon on the desktop.

If WiFi is available in the gallery, I can remotely log into the computer to perform basic troubleshooting on the piece.

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