Florian Freier (1979, Munich/Germany) is exploring social, cultural and political topics by working at the intersection of photography, digitization and communication. Freier’s works have been exhibited at international group shows, including works by Richard Prince, Marcel Duchamp, Hans-Peter Feldmann, Elaine Sturtevant and others. His recent project Cached Landscapes has been awarded by Trevor Paglen and Frankfurter Kunstverein with the “Eagle Eye” Photo Award and exhibited along Paglen’s solo show The Octopus at Frankfurter Kunstverein in mid 2015. Freier’s works have been cited in international blogs and magazines, including Monopol-Magazin, Fastcompany, WIRED, The Creators Project, ilikethisart.net and Frieze Magazine.

http://florianfreier.de
Digital interfaces have been usually designed upon familiar metaphors taken directly from the world of things and everyday life. Notoriously adopted, for the first time, for the development of the Graphical User Interface (GUI), this approach proved so effective that it was never seriously questioned in the following years. We have to design an office machine, a tool for designers as well as accountants – and we have to sell out: how can we make sure that they will instantly understand, and love, it? So, here is the desktop: the contents stored in it are called “documents”, and if you have many of them you can organize them into “folders”. If you don’t want to keep something, please drop it in the “waste bin”. Easy as hell. It worked so well that, in a field subject to programmed obsolescence and frantic innovation, in about 35 years the GUI was never seriously questioned, and it became the model for other successful remediations. The Photoshop interface, used mainly by artists and designers, provides a “palette” of tools including the “pencil”, the “paint brush”, the “rubber” - each of them doing exactly what you think. The web page was modeled in the early Nineties after the newspaper layout, and although other references (such as TV) were introduced along the years for specific websites, it still bears some resemblance with print media. Blogs (short for “web logs”) were designed to allow people to keep daily logs online, and like a diary they are organized around entries (called “posts”) featuring a title, some text, and some media. Tumblr, a micro-blogging websi-
te ideal for maintaining image mood-boards, can be fed through a content management system called, guess what, “dashboard”. And Facebook was designed after “facebooks” and “yearbooks”, college publications distributed at the start or the end of the academic year by university administrations with the intention of helping students get to know each other better.

But this is common knowledge, and we don’t need to waste time on it. We also know, because it’s very easy to acknowledge and because people like Jay David Bolter and Richard Grusin explained it very clearly, that remediation can be a round trip, especially when a digital interface becomes so commonplace and fashionable to offer a model for other, once mainstream, media: so, the web looks at TV and TV looks at the web.

Putting remediation aside, the relationship between digital interfaces and habits and so called reality gets really interesting when the first become so familiar to offer new ways of looking at the latter, or to say something. Did you ever hear some weird guy say “LOL” when a funny situation happens? Did anybody you know ever write a ;-) or a <3 on a post-it? Did you ever use the word “selfie” to talk about a Van Gogh, or a Rembrandt self portrait? Ok, you got it.

On a more refined, complex level, this is what is happening in this book. If you have it in your hands, you are probably one of the 1.44 billion people currently on Facebook, an online social networking service founded in February 2004 and currently available worldwide, except for a few countries which banned access to it. Otherwise, you won’t probably be attracted by a book displaying, on a light blue cover, the rather prosaic title Profile Page. The book features a collection of 100 images, depicting two different environments: pictures of the bedrooms of 50 students living in a huge housing unit
in Germany are compared with screenshots of each student’s Facebook profile page. What do these images have in common? Why are they displayed in front of each other? What do they tell us?

On Facebook, a profile page is a given user page. It allows you to choose a “profile picture” and a “wallcover”, featuring the image that you ideally would like to display behind your head. Basic biographical information is displayed on the left column, followed by featured images, a selection of the friends you mostly interact with, a selection of the photos and videos you posted, the music you listen to, the movies and TV shows you watched, the books you read etc. In the center column, you have the posts you made, shared or have been tagged into. In the right column, updates from your friends and the chat bar. Unlike other social platforms, Facebook doesn’t allow you to change the layout of the page according to your design or color preferences: you can’t choose the font, move sections around, add a starry night background etc. Only the “contents” make your profile page different from anybody else’s page. This looked unfair to early adopters, especially those coming from wilder environments like MySpace; but soon we got used to it, especially when we all happily entered the wonderful world of smartphone apps, where customization of the framework is rather impossible, and nobody cares about it. Feeding personal content into impersonal interfaces have become our daily, unpaid – though quite profitable for others – job.

It’s pretty easy to draw the connection between the Facebook interface and the “huge uniformed brutalist housing unit” that attracted Florian Freier’s attention, and to understand why it got interesting for him. Like Facebook, this place provides each student with a standard environment: a room with the same size, same shape, same
green metal window, same white curtains, same wooden door, same basic furniture. Each of them has to leave it as it was when she got in. As on Facebook, the framework cannot be changed. As on Facebook, only the content can say something about us.

We already know, of course, that private space reflects the personality of its inhabitant. No human being can inhabit a space – be it a computer desktop, an apartment, or a bench – without making it look like her. What the comparison between a profile page and a bedroom reveals is the relationship between frameworks and content, uniform design and customization, conformism and originality, social control and freedom, and how it develops within the “virtual” and the “real” world. Additionally, this comparison allows us to understand more about both environments. If a standardized housing unit reminds Facebook, Facebook reminds a standardized housing unit, and we should keep it in mind when we think about the ways we inhabit the online environment. Is Facebook – and all the other app-based, commercial social services we use to bring our subjectivity online – really the place we call home? Shall we keep looking for a better place?

On the level of image making, the analogy between the Facebook profile pages and the apartments brought Freier to develop an interesting solution. From Renaissance painting onward, the simple idea of portraying anybody by offering a picture of the space they inhabit was subject to myriads of variations. What’s interesting – and “new” – in Freier’s pictures is that he, in a very German, “Becher’s school” approach, chose to reproduce, as much as possible, the very same shooting conditions for all of them: the same light, the very same point of view. In other words, these photos look like screenshots. This allows us to forget about the act of photography and to focus,
both in the screenshots and in the photos, on the elements of the framework and on the way each inhabitant turned it into its own personal space: by adding pictures on the wall or choosing a wallcover, by filling the space up or leaving it as empty as possible. On the other side, looking at the screenshots one thing can’t go unnoticed: Freier’s effort to protect the privacy of the people. Photos are blurred, names are censored, and the gender and identity of all of them are carefully hidden by replacing their profile picture with the default male avatar picture Facebook provides when we don’t upload a profile image. The fact that censorship only takes place in the screenshots says a lot about the sharing habits we developed in the digital age, and the different ways we perceive personal space online and offline: we are usually very careful in choosing the people we allow in our living space, although little or nothing in it can reveal sensitive data about us; are we as careful when we build public profiles on social networking sites, in choosing the personal information we share, the friends we want to share it with, etc.? As some of the most interesting artworks today, Profile Page is a book about living in the panopticon. Enjoy!

_ Domenico Quaranta
Brescia, December 2015_
Our private living rooms are the profile pages of our physical world.

Messed up, pretty arranged or even inconspicuous, silent and private. How do they reflect our lives and what’s their relationship to our online identities?

In 2014, I started documenting the living rooms in a huge uniformed brutalist housing unit with more than 600 standardized student flats – taking a photograph of each room and a screenshot of its inhabitant’s Facebook profile page.

This book is featuring a selection of 100 pictures.
Dear Mrs. Alianza, Iwo müssen meine Aggressionen hin 😊

A Day To Remember - 2nd Sucks (Full Song)
Download link is in the description. 2nd Sucks - The latest release from American-based Pop Punk/Post Hardcore band A Day To Remember. Album: What...

YOUTUBE.COM

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6 people like this.

View 6 more comments

2

May 18, 2011 at 10:04pm

May 18, 2011 at 10:04pm

May 18, 2011 at 10:20pm

May 18, 2011 at 10:23pm

May 18, 2011 at 10:24pm

May 18, 2011 at 10:25pm

assi

April 15, 2011 - q

Das härteste Foul aller Zeiten

YOUTUBE.COM

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3 people like this.

2

April 15, 2011 at 5:13pm

April 15, 2011 at 5:14pm

March 23, 2011 - q

Jack Johnson - To the sea
To the sea by Jack Johnson! Enjoy the title song from his new album. Lyrics included. Bring on your hunters. Let them bring their dogs! It's me that you wanted I've been right here all along. Right here all along. You better bring your buckets. We've got some dreams to drain. I'll be at the bot...

YOUTUBE.COM
And the party never stops

and 18 others like this.
In the end, only three things matter: how much you loved, how gently you lived, and how gracefully you let go of things not meant for you.

-Buddha
Danke an die Nominierung vom @... Ich freue mich bestimmt auf ein weiteres Mal ;D und @... sind auch schon bestimmt ganz heiß drauf, @... du bekommst von uns die Gelegenheit deine Ehre wieder herzustellen @ und dann noch @... und @...

11 people like this.

View 1 more comment

@... Nix gibts Burschen I ich war schon haha
February 4, 2014 at 2:01pm  Like

@... Haha egal ich auch.:) D
February 4, 2014 at 3:21pm  Like

@... Shit, Sry @... hab vergessen dich zu markieren. DD
February 4, 2014 at 5:52pm  Like

@... Das war ein lauter witz' haha
February 4, 2014 at 6:04pm  Like 3

Write a comment...

@... uploaded a new video.
February 4, 2014

#socialbeergame
Hallo liebe Leute,
Schlussendlich hat uns der Scheiß also doch erwacht ... naja. Erstmal danke für die Nominierung an @... aka @... du langbeiniger Zipfelkatscher.
Besonderen Dank auch noch an @... für deine harte Kampfansage :D... See More
And God said

$\nabla \cdot \vec{E} = \frac{\rho}{\varepsilon_0}\\
\nabla \cdot \vec{B} = 0\\
\nabla \times \vec{E} = -\frac{\partial \vec{B}}{\partial t}\\
\nabla \times \vec{B} = \mu_0 \vec{J} + \frac{1}{c^2} \frac{\partial \vec{E}}{\partial t}
$

and there was light.
Manche Menschen sind wie farbenfrohe Zuckerstreusel. Unwiderstehlich süß und sie machen dein Leben bunter.

Like · Comment · Share

IT ISN’T FAIR THAT YOU CAN ACCIDENTALLY MAKE A BABY BUT YOU CAN’T ACCIDENTALLY MAKE A PIZZA.

Ask for a music recommendation

5 people like this.
Studies Mechatronics at [University Name]. Started in 2014.
Lives in [City].
From [Country].

Bin mit dem Rad durch die Highlands in Schottland getourt... Hier n Paar Fotos.

22 people like this.

Sehr gute Fotos!

Like · Reply 1 · October 17 at 1:15pm · Edited

ich danke dir 😊

Like · Reply 1 · October 18 at 8:52pm

Write a comment...

October 14 at 9:18pm · vi
Became friends with [friends] and 10 other people

Studies at
Started in 2015

Lives in [location]

PHOTOS: 3

Updated profile picture:
October 2 at 9:28pm

[Image of outdoor scenery with birds]

[Image of a person standing in front of a waterfall]

[Image of people at a beach]

Engage on Facebook
Choose your language
Terms
Cookies
Advertising
AdChoices
More
Facebook © 2015
Wenn ich hierfür nur ein passendes Smartphone hätte...

nexpaq: the first truly modular smartphone case

braucht eigentlich keinen weiteren Kommentar. Finde es nur sehr interessant, dass man sogar einigermaßen die Umrisse Deutschlands erkennen kann. Definitiv aber die Alpen 😄

I Pinged All Devices on the Internet, here’s a Map of them - Imgur

The most viral images on the internet, curated in real time by a dedicated community through commenting, voting and sharing.

2 people like this.
One day a local evangelist bragged during a crusade that his God was more able than all the other gods in the town and the powers of the universe that the villagers worshiped put together. Just then, rainstorm sounds started sounding overhead, threatening the progress of the crusade. The evangelist lifted his voice and declared with confidence that if the rains fell, then he wasn’t a man of God; he would stop preaching! Before he could finish his bluff, the rains began to … See More

Restore unto me the joy of your salvation that I might not sin against you. Your love surrounds me like air. What is man that you cloth us with your mercy and sworn by yourself never to live us nor forsake us. This love requires, demands and deserves our entire life dedicated and committed to HIM. Lord plant eternity values on my eyeballs and build in me the strong defensive walls of protection, grace and resistance to stand against all the wiles and schemes of the devil. Paul… See More
War lecker mit Freunden essen. Jetzt da wir alle in München wohnen, sollten wir öfter treffen 😊 — with [username] and 4 others at Fire Dragon Lounge.

Like · Comment · Share

Wir wohnen doch gar nicht alle in München. Ein paar Freunde hast du auch in Berlin. Hast Du uns vergessen? 😊

November 20, 2014 at 9:18pm · Like · 1

Write a comment...

Was feeling excited with [username] and 2 others at Zugspitze 2962.

November 1, 2014 · vh

Like · Comment · Share

Oktobefest in Shanghai — with [username] and 7 others at Paulaner Xintiandi Shanghai.

October 1, 2014 · vh

Write a comment...
FRIENDS - 325 (1 Mutual)

PHOTOS - 29

PLACES

MUSIC - 5
Going to [Persisted Place] this Sunday

Became friends with [Persisted Name] and 3 other people

Works at: [Persisted Place]

Studies Informatik: Games Engineering at [Persisted Place]

Started in 2011

Lives in [Persisted Place]

Your friend since August

Post

Photo / Video

Write something...

[Media Post]

[Briefly describe the media post]

Like | Comment | Share

Write a comment...

Like | Comment | Share

Write a comment...

Like

likes this.

Write a comment...

Mars Red Sky - Arcadia

Toujours sur un montage du film de Wong Kar Wai "Fallen angels", dans sa partie thriller cette fois, j'ai ajouté un morceaux du dernier album de Mars Red Sky...

YOUTUBE.COM

Like | Comment | Share

Write a comment...

likes this.

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likes this.
AushiffeMitarbeiterin at

Studied Japanese Studies at

Attending from 2014 to 2017

Lives in

From

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Post   Photo / Video
Write something...

deadman Wonderland Opening HD
Para ver mis AMV's y suscribase click aquí: https://www.youtube.com/user/QuilleAnne07 Aqua el Opening de Deadman Wonderland con la letra (lyrics), un anime...

share a link to

Timeline,

December 11, 2013

Deadman Wonderland Opening HD
Para ver mis AMV's y suscribase click aquí: https://www.youtube.com/user/QuilleAnne07 Aquí el Opening de Deadman Wonderland con la letra (lyrics), un anime...

YOUTUBE.COM

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Like   Comment   Share

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Like   Share

---

Write a comment...

---

Like   Comment   Share

---

Ich will, dass alle Fußball-Fans brennen.
Oder allein ein 90-Minuten-Spiel selber spielen!!!

---

Like   Comment   Share

---

Ich verreise nach Deutschland für 23 Monate!

---

Like   Comment   Share

---

From this day forth I am an assassin.
Quanto mi manchi!

See Translation

Pizza Fritta da Zia Estelina

See Translation

5 people like this.

Write a comment...
Thank you for a great semester! Thank you everyone! Miss you guys already!