

Paolo Cirio (IT)

Obscurity



This artwork is composed of over fifteen million mug-shots of people arrested in the US. It obscured the criminal records of mug-shot websites by cloning them. The mug-shots have been blurred to make the faces unrecognizable while their names have been shuffled by an algorithm that samples data based on common age, race, location, and charges, all of which are kept accurate in order to provide social context on the actual arrests. A participatory feature lets people judge the arrested individual by deciding to keep or remove their data from the mug-shot websites. *Obscurity* explores the emotional underpinning of unflattering personal information exposed on the Internet. Beyond the use of criminal records for the social experiment and the performative hack, the project promotes a legal Right to Remove personal information from search engines in US. The *Obscurity* artwork deployed strategies that are oriented on problem-solving as a form of Internet social art practice.

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