

WORK TITLE:*

”FREE, or hello bb, welcome to my world”

- a *Ballad of Global Reification*

MEDIUM, TECHNIQUE, MATERIAL:*

Video projection. Recorded material is Documentary film recordings from webcam streams on the internet.

WORK DESCRIPTION

I wanted to know what I would find if I actually searched for it. And how long it would take. So, I started surfing in order to investigate if I, or anyone, could find child pornography or child prostitution on the internet, without paying anything, or without becoming a member anywhere, in short without doing anything illegal.

In ten minutes of surfing the net, I found these “performers”, on a website for livesex.

They all claim to be 18 or older, and the website is approved by ASACP (Association of Sites Advocating Child Protection). It is an open, public space on the internet where anyone can enter without paying or becoming a member. Here you can chat live with hundreds of or even thousand performers sitting in front of their webcams and computers.

The men, women and transgendered adults and children are visible for everyone surfing the net. They are waiting for costumers to pay to “go private”. This means that when someone pays, he or she is the only one having access to the webcam image, for all others the image goes blank. In short, a peepshow on the net. The performers are from all over the world, and as it seems mostly poor countries. Colombia, Philippines, Moldavia, Russia, Thailand. Some sit in their own homes, but many seems to be in studios owned by someone else. (Same backgrounds may appear with different people sitting there from day to day. Curtains may separate one performer from the other.)

Costumers tend to come from richer countries; USA, Sweden, Italy, France, Bahrain, UK, Saudi Arabia.

This is a kind of prostitution, which easily (with a click on the computer) becomes pornography.

On the internet old boundaries between private and public are totally dissolved. If I want, anyone with a computer have access to my bedroom through a webcam.

This is the new reality. As a documentary photographer I am out on these internet streets, these alleys of the global Red Light District photographing and portraying the reality of these men, women and transgendered people. I want to show the waiting, the empty scene, the break from the work, when fetching cigarettes, food, or making a phone call to a friend.

I have chosen to present the waiting and the “gaps” of emptiness in between the action.

I want to portray the person, the human being and the human condition we all share, challenging the two dimensional frame and this role as objects ready to be consumed.

So I have been in a public space photographing the people there. I do not think they have anything to be ashamed of. It makes me sad though to see that cash, always, is King.

The term “reification”^{**} seems to me as relevant as ever.

PHOTOGRAPHER (S)

Cecilia Neantfalk / anonymous

*Reifikation är den process som gör relationer mellan människor till relationer mellan varor. När människans sociala relationer blir till relationer mellan ting börjar *tingen styra henne*, trots att det är hon själv som skapat dem. Samhällslivet framstår som något lagbundet,

eftersom det nu består av ting som står i vissa utbytesförhållanden till varandra.
Marknadskrafter blir naturlagar. Allt måste vara som det är.

ur artikeln "När människor blir varor" A. Malm/Arbetaren.