

This residency at Ars Electronica, 2019, sees the Seeing I team host a public trial-run.

Seeing I is a psychological art experiment that examines the implications of surveillance technologies on our experience, and questions how much of the individual is an inherent personality and how large a portion of the individual is conditioned through a cultural identity.

For seven consecutive days, British artist Mark Farid is living in the exhibition space. In the morning he puts on on a virtual reality headset and watches the first person point-of-view perspective of seven different people (the 'Other'), from the moment they get out of bed in the morning, to the moment they go to sleep in the evening. Each day, Farid will watch a different person's life, eating when they eat, and sleeping when they sleep. Otherwise, Farid is free to do as he pleases within the exhibition space, so long as the headset remains on.

Each night, after the Other goes to sleep, Farid will take off the VR headset and speak to the projects' clinical psychologist, Dr. Tamara Russell, through a microphone and speakers in the room. On the final night of the residency, a public conversation between Farid and Dr. Russell will take place in the exhibition space. This will be the first time Farid will have seen a real human being for seven days.



Seeing I, 2020

Inspired by psychologist Philip Zimbardo's 'Stanford Prison Experiment' (1971), philosopher Jean Baudrillard's 'Simulacra and Simulation' (1981), and artist Josh Harris' 'Quiet: We Live in Public' (1999), Seeing I uses new technologies to examine constructions of the self in the 21st Century.

For 24-hours a day, for 14 days, artist Mark Farid will wear a virtual reality headset, seeing and hearing only what one person (the Other) sees and hears for two weeks. The Other is an individual who will record a continuous 220x165° HD panorama of all their immediate sights and sounds, facilitated by a headband fitted with miniature camera lenses and microphones. Farid will witness every waking moment of the Other's life; from brushing their teeth, to their commute, their work and social life, and their most intimate moments with their partner, family, and friends.

Seeing I will confine Farid to a gallery space, subject to the simulated life of the Other. With Farid unable to hear his own voice or see his own hands for two weeks, and with the only stimulation being what the Other sees and hears, how will the constant stream of artificial sights and sounds start to affect Farid's movement, mannerisms, and personality? How will his indirect relationship with the Other start to affect his own rationale? Without agency to determine all conversations, actions or any expression of self, will Farid start to see himself as the Other, or will his own sense of self be enough to deter significant change?

Professor Simon Baron-Cohen Developmental Psychopathology, University of Cambridge

Seeing I documents an extraordinary social psychology single-case study, an experiment in which for one month Mark sees the world only through other people's eyes. All this is possible through new technology. One might imagine various outcomes of this experiment: that he might become more empathic, being other- rather than self-focused; that he might experience distorted perceptions and even delusions, given that his own brain is not receiving its normal input but instead is experiencing a kind of sensory deprivation; or that he might establish that the brain can in fact adapt relatively quickly (hours or days?) to a new reality, and then adapt back again at the end of the experiment, with no serious side-effects.

Whatever the result of Seeing I, the documentary will be ground-breaking and give rise to a raft of new hypotheses and methodologies for social psychology to explore more systematically and in larger samples. I am reassured that Mark has taken sensible precautions in case there are side-effects, and one hopes if these occur that they are temporary and reversible. The ethical issues are important, and at a minimum the fact that the experimenter is also the consenting participant makes this more ethical. The documentary will take us on a journey in the tradition of Timothy Leary and Aldous Huxley, experimenting on one's own perception through a manipulation, in this case not pharmacological but technological.



Professor Barbara Sahakian Professor of Clinical Neuropsychology at the Department of Psychiatry, University of Cambridge.

My initial thoughts are that it is an extremely interesting project and raises a number of important topical issues about society and our human interactions with technology. It also raises ethical issues, including of personhood and what the effects of reality distortion are on the brain and psychological processes. I found the description of the project fascinating and very thoughtfully and creatively conceived. However, I am concerned about how such a long project which involves voyeurism on the part of Mark and also on the part of the public in regard to Mark will affect his mental health and wellbeing. It could be extremely disturbing and it is unclear whether any potential damage to Mark's mental health could be repaired. I would recommend a further trials of the project to get an understanding of possible problems that may arise and what kinds of psychological difficulties might be experienced so that these can be monitored carefully in the longer project.

Gilad Ratman Artist

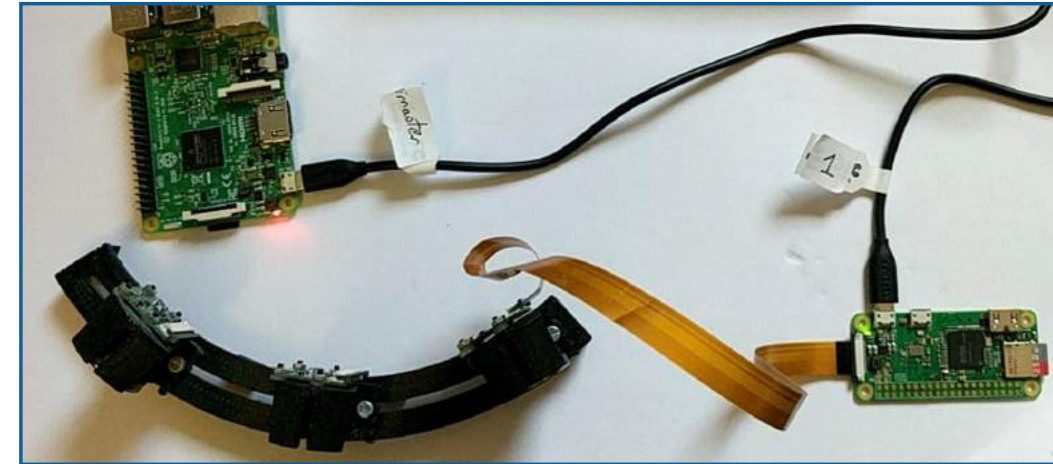
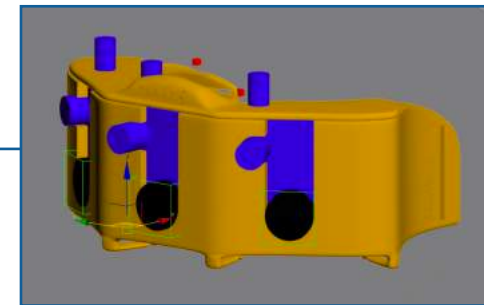
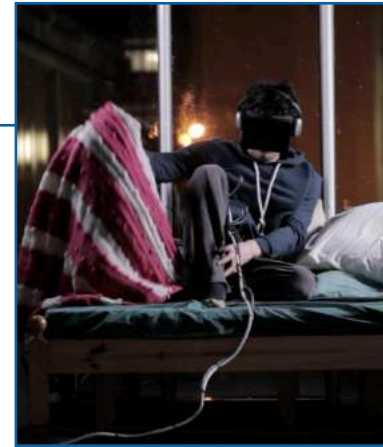
One of many aspects of this project that really interests me, is the connection between the reality which is being experienced by Mark and the Other. If I was able to create an identical situation for Mark within the Gallery: temperature, touch, smell, it would be a bad piece of work, because what is happening is exactly linear. What we call Mark right now, is trying to find itself, and this is exactly between the real space and time we are in; everything else that is projected into his mind. This must be in collision, and once it is, then we will have something very interesting. Here, as an image and as a situation, any attempt to put Mark into the exact situation where temperature, smell, touch etc. are the same as the Other's, makes this a boring scientific experiment, but where it becomes Art, is because of the creation of this friction and discontinuity.



www.seeing-i.com
#seeingi

Seeing I

Mark's first 24-hour trial run in a Virtual Reality headset watching one person's life
arebyte Gallery, Hackney Wick, London, UK



Website Launch
Seeing I launch Kickstarter Campaign at BI_nk Shoreditch, London, UK
Talk at BI_nk London, UK
Vice
This Guy Is Going to Spend a Whole Month Alone in a Room with Virtual Reality Goggles Strapped to His Face. British artist Mark Farid is going to spend 28 days seeing entirely through the eyes of another human being.
The Verge
How to live for a month in virtual reality - Artist Mark Farid will spend 28 days as someone else in 'Seeing I'
The Independent
Man to live as someone else for 28 in Virtual Reality
Gizmodo
This Dude Wants To Wear Oculus for a Month and Live As Someone Else
Mashable
Artist plans to wear Oculus Rift virtual reality headset for 28 days straight
Dazed Digital
Artist launches fundraiser to live 24/7 in virtual reality
Daily Mail
Would YOU live in a virtual world for 28 days? Artist to wear Oculus Rift headset for a month to experience life through another person's eyes - but is it safe?
Talk at OneDotZero
London, UK.
The Guardian
What a virtual reality art show could say about the future of games
Fox News
Varney & Co - Mark Farid
Cnet
Wearing-oculus-rift-for-28-days
USA Today
News segment
Sky News
Digital View - Mark Farid
BBC Radio 5 Live
In Short - Mark Farid

London Live
Lunch Time News - Mark Farid
Talk at Cybersalon
London, UK
ARTE
Tracks
ID
Who are you, after living virtually as someone else 24/7 for 28 days?
First prototype of The Other head mount is developed
Site specific testing using first head mount prototype, production and exhibition at Imagine Science Film Festival
New York University, Abu Dhabi
Talk at DécaLabs
Google Cultural Institute, Paris
Project Development with Red Bull for Redbull TV
Talk at Node15
Künstlerhaus Mousonturm, Frankfurt

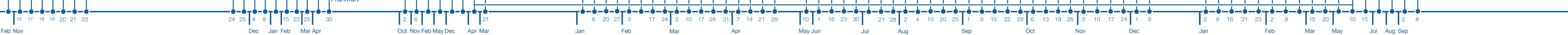
Talk at ISMAR
Fukuoka International Congress Center, Japan
Talk at SMK
National Gallery of Denmark, Copenhagen
48 hour trial run of The Other, using the first head mount prototype
Participation at Sundance New Frontier Story Lab
Sundance Resort, Utah, USA
Photoshoot for marketing and website
180 The Strand
Website 2.0
Continued development of the The Other head mount
Talk at Virtual Futures Salon
Lunch Time News - Mark Farid

Mark immersed in VR for 40+ hours per week.
Things Mark was specifically working on:
- Slight motion sickness
- Eyes feeling tired within 20 minutes of putting VR on
- Not falling asleep in the day with VR on, as a result of the brightness of the screen
- Practising sleeping with a VR headset on, and the light from the screens
- Feeling claustrophobic in VR after long periods of time in it
- Lots of eye examinations to check how it would affect Mark's eyesight
- Wearing the harness to collect data from Mark
- Being bored and carrying on
What Mark was watching/doing in VR:
- Watching someone else's life - test footage
- Netflix
- YouTube
- Games

Mark spends 4 consecutive days continuously immersed in VR, also sleeping with the VR headset on (watching Netflix, playing games)
Testing eye health and wearing a harness to collect data
Mark immersed in VR for 40+ hours per week.
(4 days in VR)
Mark immersed in VR for 40+ hours per week.
(4 days in VR)
Mark spends 4 consecutive days continuously immersed in VR, also sleeping with the VR headset on (watching test footage)
Testing sleeping with the headset and the light from the screens
Mark immersed in VR for 40+ hours per week.
(23 consecutive days in VR)

Mark is immersed for an average of 16+ hours a day in VR for 23 consecutive days (watching YouTube, TV and test footage)
Testing motion sickness and eye health
Mark immersed in VR for 40+ hours per week.
(4 days in VR)
Mark spends 4 consecutive days continuously immersed in VR, also sleeping with the VR headset on (watching Netflix, playing games)
Testing eye health and wearing a harness to collect data
Mark immersed in VR for 40+ hours per week.
(Meditation)
Talk at Fotopub
Novo Mesto, Slovenia
Mark attends a 10-day Vipassana retreat
(silent meditation)
Mark immersed in VR for 40+ hours per week.
(Meditation)

Mark attends an 8-day Vipassana retreat
(silent meditation)
Mark immersed in VR for 40+ hours per week.
(Meditation)
Mark attends a 5-day Vipassana retreat
(silent meditation)
Mark attends a 5-day Vipassana retreat
(silent meditation)
Nine different people record 24-hours of their life (The Other) for Ars Electronica
Participating in Ars Electronica Festival



2014 Feb Nov 15 17 18 19 20 21 22
2015 Dec 24 25 4 8 Jan Feb 15 23 25 Mar Apr 30
2016 Oct Nov Feb May Dec 2 6
2017 Apr Mar 21
2018 Jan 6 20 27 3 Feb 17 24 3 10 17 24 31 7 14 21 28
2019 May Jun 10 1 16 23 30 Jul 21 28 2 Aug 4 10 20 25 Sep 1 8 15 22 29 6 13 19 26 3 Nov 3 10 17 24 1 Dec 8

Mark Farid
Artist, Producer, and Subject

Nimrod Vardi
Funder and Co-Producer

Tadej Vindis
Development of the custom built recorder System Design and Project Management

Frank Davies
Development of the custom built recorder System Design and Software Development

Drew Richards
Development of the custom built recorder Prototyping, Manufacture and 3D Design

Dr. Tamara Russell
Clinical Psychologist
Mindfulness Centre of Excellence

Petri Luukkainen
Film Director
Unikino Productions

Carl Smith
Live Biometric Research
Ravensbourne University

Mark Ransley
Live Biometric Research
Ravensbourne University

Nick Lambert
Live Biometric Research
Ravensbourne University

Rebecca Edwards
Curator
arebyte Gallery

John Ingle
Film Director & Co-Producer
(2014-2016)

Funders
arebyte Gallery, UK

Partners
Sundance Institute, USA
Mindfulness Centre of Excellence, UK
Imagine Science Films, USA

Supporters
Ravensbourne University, UK
Body > Data > Space, UK
Fotopub, SI
The University of Greenwich, UK

Seeing I
www.seeing-i.com
#seeingi

