

Personal Statement
ENTREPRENEUR 4.0 AWARD 2014

Jaqueline Hassink iPortraits



Since the Renaissance people have been portrayed reading books or letters. The interaction between the human body (eyes and hands) reading a text in a moment of concentration and the mind is a reflection of the human condition. It is a moment of total isolation in which there is no connection to the rest of the world other than the text on paper written by another human being. Johannes Vermeer depicted this in private settings brilliantly in his paintings (detail: Woman in Blue Reading a Letter; 1663-1664).

In our time, the smartphone has brought this form of isolation to a different level. Since 2007, when Apple computer first brought its iPhone into the global market 356.345 million people in 112 countries have used this device. The iPhone Apple's share in the global smartphone market is 17%. Because of its success, the company has now more money in their bank account (\$75.876 billion) than the US government. In general the iPhone has been the catalyst of smartphone development. It is the object that consumers most desire.

The iPhone has changed the way we communicate with each other and also the way people behave in public. For example in subways people all over the world get into a moment of isolation focusing on their screens.

I would like to propose a project entitled **iPortraits** in which I stay underground for weeks in major cities like Beijing, Tokyo, Seoul, Paris, London and New York following the iPhone life of commuters in the subway.

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It will be a fascinating portrait of the new human condition in which emotions and thoughts are exchanged no longer face to face but through a screen of an iPhone. Body posture and movements of the hands are the only reflection of emotions or information exchanged through a device. These moments of isolation reflects the way our society has changed over a short period of time.

The project **iPortraits** is part of an ongoing artistic investigation. Since 2011 I have been interested in one of the main reasons for the global economic crisis; the desire to consume more than one can afford.

Jacqueline Hassink, May 2013