

Manuel Minch launched Internet Moon Gallery in 2016 with the intention of exploring new modes of creating and engaging with digital art. This article is the result of a collaborative conversation between Manuel Minch and Rosemary Lee, which has evolved from their work together on the exhibition "Memory Palace", launched on Internet Moon Gallery on the full moon, May 2017.

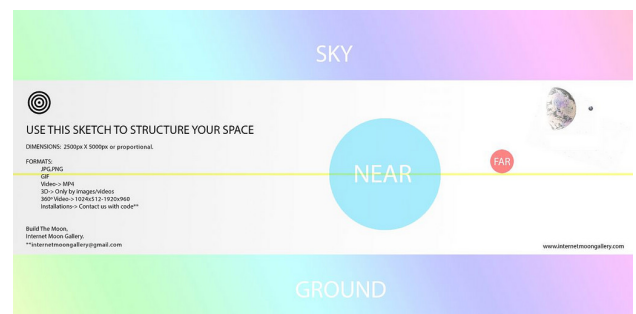
Art on the moon?

Rosemary Lee, Manuel Minch

Rosemary Lee: How did Internet Moon Gallery get its start?

Manuel Minch: For a long time, I have been interested in new practices of exhibition making and Institutional Critique. I began to reflect on aspects of the exhibition space which condition my digital art pieces: how interfaces, screens, projectors restrict the piece's size into normative display sizes. I wanted to enhance the works' digital specificity and avoid exhibition models that require low-quality translations.

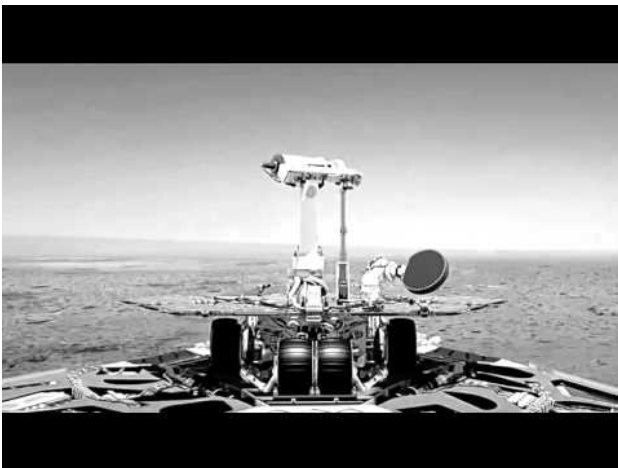
For this reason, I began developing technical solutions which allow me to generate an online environment that moves away from models normalized by web 2.0 and which provide a certain spatial nexus between the viewer and the environment. By generating an exhibition space that uses the strategies of viral images and memetics, Internet Moon Gallery incorporates the intimacy of the home during daily web browsing. When the user surfs the web, their eyes focus on the inside, forgetting the framework imposed by the screen. I think this can be an effective way of showing intangible artworks. We are in the adolescence of the Internet and mass media, virtual reality, augmented reality, and 360, among others, make it possible to make approximations of a new type of Internet that works by establishing relations with space and human codes.



Currently, the whole project tries to adapt to the suggestions and the needs of the artists involved. They are the fundamental part of the project because their work is to rethink the entire gallery through their exhibitions.

RL: The way you coordinate the shows with the phases of the moon makes a connection between digital and physical site-specificity. Can you explain a bit about how you work with these themes?

MM: The moon and the exploration of the outer space has been called into question, as the only way to verify the truth of the facts- like man landing on the moon- is through representation. Since we can't all travel to the moon ourselves, we must rely on representations to understand space exploration. This fact seemed to me quite interesting, so I generated an audiovisual history that placed the gallery in this context. Through this system of appropriation similar to the works of Joan Fontcuberta, I established a nexus between this type of physicality only accessible through the immateriality and specificity of the digital medium. I love that the gallery serves as conceptual infrastructure to facilitate a collaborative construction environment in which the entire lunar territory is composed of proposals of the exhibited artists.

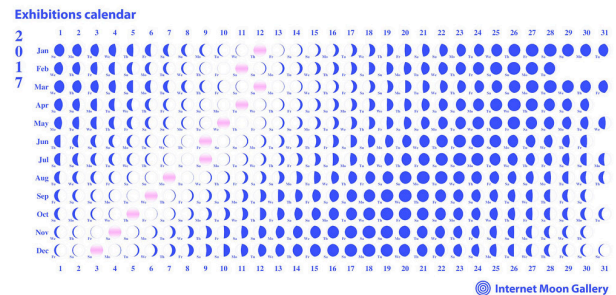


[Link to video](#)

MO.Fi router installation. 2:21. (April 30th, 2016)

The Moon has always seemed to me a very interesting space for creation in a society that

works with the productive rhythms implanted by capitalism and the artificial system imposed by the clock. This natural rhythm became a ritualistic aspect of making exhibitions with each lunar cycle. The moon can be thought of as a space of creation where one can imagine possible contexts, different experimental proposals and grant physical relations to intangible contexts. On the other hand, the offline look at the Moon is an indicator of the exhibitions calendar, so the lunar phase serves as an interface to know the current state of each exhibition.



Exhibitions calendar, 2017.

RL: By creating your own digital platform from the ground up, rather than fitting something into existing frameworks, you have been able to establish an individual way of presenting net-based works. Can you explain a bit about your thought process in developing Internet Moon Gallery?

MM: The currently popular infinite scroll stores too much information on the same narrative and this establishes a monotonous navigation with the user. Images and posts all exist in the same surroundings of fixed template structures, they work as cells that you can fill with images, videos or text. As a creator, you can not place content outside the pre-established frame. In this context, I am interested in a type of exhibition environment that is completely blank for each exhibition. The horizontality and the relationships established by 360 degrees view are directly identified with the physical space and how we move our gaze through it.

Every full moon night a new exhibition opens on the Internet Moon Gallery, which involves working online with other artists in the creation of site-specific environments. I like to work hand-in-hand with artists, establish feedback relationships, understand their concerns and generate unique exhibitions only accessible through the net.

Therefore, when I curate an exhibition on the moon, it's necessary to have the artist present during the whole process, to make their own moon and convert the whole exhibition into a unique piece.

Contact with artists is done through the medium itself, so the Internet becomes an active part of communication, serving as work space and to spread the generated content.



[Link to video](#)

Internet Moon Gallery history video. 3:30. (Made before the opening on May 5th, 2016)

RL: In the same way you created your platform, it also seems like you have invented an audience for a specific kind of art. What are your thoughts on this?

MM: I don't know if I have invented a specific audience, but it is true that, as far as I can see, there is more interest from researchers and artists than from people away from the cultural sector. The Internet facilitates access to the gallery because it collapses the geographical borders so it is much easier to access a web link than to move physically to a traditional exhibition space. In this sense, the audience is no longer geographically delimited to be conditioned by other factors. I suppose that the diffusion circuits in networks respond to the logic of the social media algorithms and to mainstream culture.

RL: What are your thoughts on the collaborative and collective aspects of using the internet as a forum?

MM: I come from the underground culture, and since I started Internet Moon Gallery I seek a horizontal and collaborative space in which the artist and the visitor increase the feedback. I would like to be able to promote this kind of relations. I think the Internet is an incredible medium that should be used for more important purposes than we are made to think through the biggest web industries.

I am really interested in the idea of a community in which users can offer their knowledge. It is intended to incorporate a section as a library or cafe bar in where facilitate access to papers and academic writings.

Manuel Minch (Santander, ES, 1993) is the founder and curator of Internet Moon Gallery community. His current research is focused on the relationship between the teenage culture codes on the Internet through his own term Teenternet.

Rosemary Lee (Providence, US, 1986) is a media artist and Ph.D. candidate at the IT University of Copenhagen. She examines interrelations between life and technology through concept-driven art and practice-based research.