

++ PUNTERS: AUTO-PORTRAITS OF FAIRGROUND THRILL ++

"The show will feature an intriguing collection of photographs of fairground riders at their ultimate moments of thrill, and the thrill-sensing auto-portrait machine Walker designed to capture them."

Exhibition runs:

19th - 27th February 2005 Closed Mon/Tue/Wed

Opening hours:

1.00 - 6.00pm or by appointment

Address:

M+R

15a Kingsland Road London E2 8AA

Transport:

LU: Old Street, Liverpool Street

Bus: 26, 48, 55, 149, 242, 243

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Punters: auto-portraits of fairground thrill is an exhibition of photographs taken by a specially designed machine that is ultimately controlled by human emotion. This collection of intriguing portraits shows riders at the fairground as they experience their moment of ultimate thrill.

Brendan Walker, a Research Fellow at the Royal College of Art, designed and built the body mounted auto-portrait machine to detect the emotion of thrill through real-time sampling and analysis of physiological reactions. As the rider experiences their thrill peak, the machine fires its camera mechanism, taking an auto-portrait of the fairground punter.

Walker worked with Media Lab scientist, Dr James Condon, to develop the microprocessor algorithm at the heart of his machine. The algorithm identifies the moment of thrill by analysing GSR bio-signals measured at the rider's fingertips, and searching for specific arousal signatures. The rider's harness, with auto-portrait machine attached, is designed to withstand forces up to 4g. Walker developed the equipment in consultation with the government's Health and Safety Laboratory in Sheffield.

He spent the summer of 2004 following George Irvin's fairground around its London circuit, recruiting willing punters along the way. The machine was used on a variety of Irvin's rides. Each ride had its own particular effect on the punter's experience and the resulting portrait.

The work forms part of Walker's ongoing project, Chromo11, to design thrilling experiences, which is currently being published in the twin volumes The Taxonomy of Thrill and Thrilling Designs - supported by the AHRB. These volumes will be launched at this exhibition.

Punters: auto-portraits of fairground thrill is supported by a Wellcome Trust sciart award, and was conducted in the Interaction Design department at the Royal College of Art.

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For further information and images contact:

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