



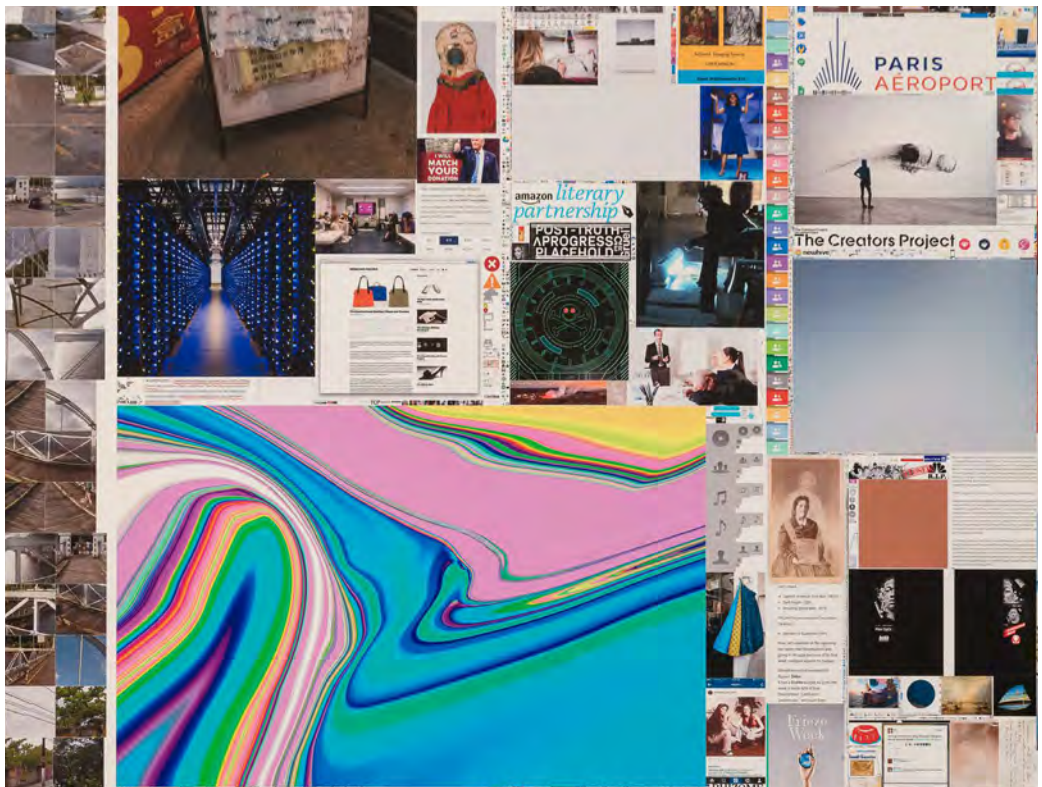
MOCA JACKSONVILLE
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PROJECT ATRIUM: EVAN ROTH

SINCE YOU WERE BORN

MARCH 16 - JUNE 23, 2019



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Berlin-based American artist, Evan Roth presents *Since You Were Born*, an intimate self-portrait consisting of densely compacted and visually striking imagery that spans the walls and floor of the Atrium Gallery. The installation, which is a part of Roth's series, "Internet Cache Portraits," depicts imagery from Roth's personal internet cache drive—a transient folder included on every computer, which stores temporary internet files that are constantly re-written. Roth increases the memory allocation to his cache drive so that it never re-writes itself, and thus retains every record of his browsing search history. For this installation, Roth displays four months of browsing history since the day his second daughter was born on June 29, 2016.

For *Since You Were Born* and Roth's other cache portraits, he utilizes software typically used by web and game designers to make sprite sheets—images that consist of several smaller images (sprites) or animations. Roth, however, misuses the software to generate his own algorithmically image-packed prints. Applying a hacker philosophy to art permeates Roth's larger body of work as a visual artist and collaborator in collectives such as the Free Art and Technology Lab (F.A.T. Lab) and the Graffiti Research Lab.

While for many, the term "hack" connotes "malicious meddling" or suggests the intention to uncover sensitive information, the term more broadly addresses clever, playful, and creative interventions within an existing system.¹ As Roth notes, even the genesis of graffiti began as a hack. Graffiti writers applied spray paint to trains, intervening and inserting their work into a system that would allow their tags to travel throughout the city. In this way, misusing or reworking technologies becomes a tool of empowerment for Roth.

¹ Ben Yagoda, "A Short History of 'Hack,'" *The New Yorker*, March 6, 2014, <https://www.newyorker.com/tech/annals-of-technology/a-short-history-of-hack>



Not only does the inundation of saturated images in *Since You Were Born* provide viewers a portrait of Roth through his uncensored interactions on the web, it also presents a portrait of the Internet at this moment in time. Roth archives and visualizes data that is seemingly incidental, prompting viewers to consider their own experiences with the Internet. Viewers may be reminded of targeted advertising as well as government surveillance. Additionally, the amount of time captured in the space directly confronts the viewer. Many viewers may wonder what several months of their own browsing histories might look like.

Roth's other series including the "Multi-Touch Paintings," such as *Scroll*, 2016, and the "Red Lines" works for example, explore the significance of this period of the Internet by visualizing the invisible and by exploring the speed at which technology and the Internet evolve. Like *Since You Were Born*, both series address themes of memory, time, and the archive. For Roth's "Multi-Touch Paintings," he applies tracing paper to hand-held computing



▲▲ ABOVE © EVAN ROTH, *Scroll*, 2016. Vinyl print, 4 feet 9 inches x 31 feet 6 inches. Image courtesy of New York University.



devices such as a cell phone or calculator, inks his fingers, and tracks the gestures of his fingertips as he undergoes routine tasks ranging from entering a username and password to playing Candy Crush. The resulting works are enlarged scans of these gestural interactions, formed from the surface of a screen.

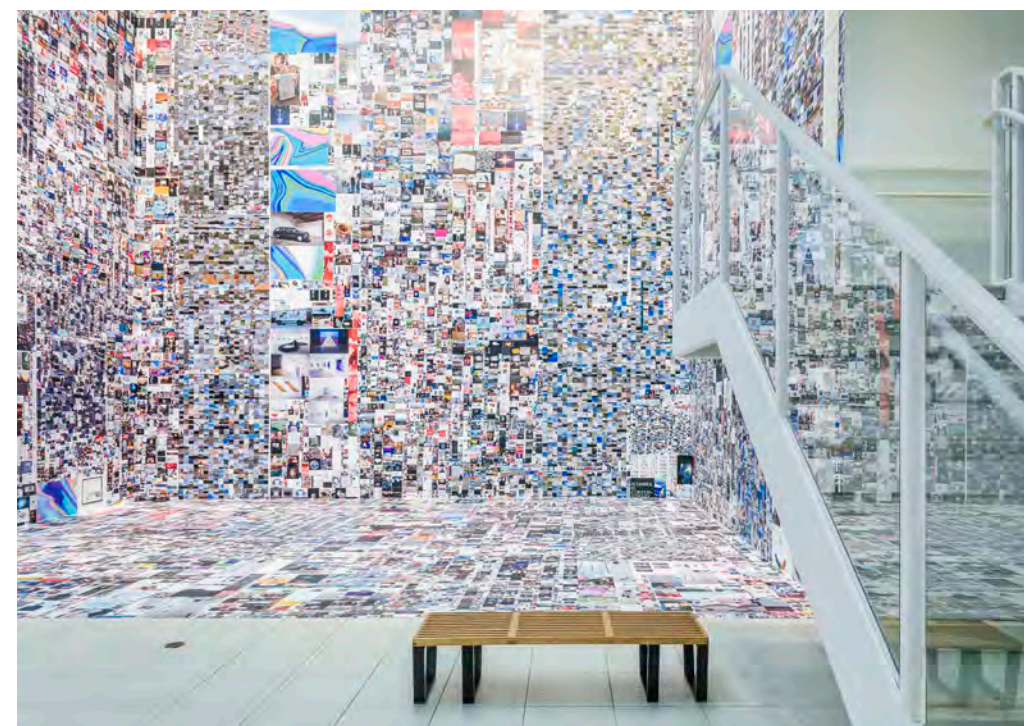
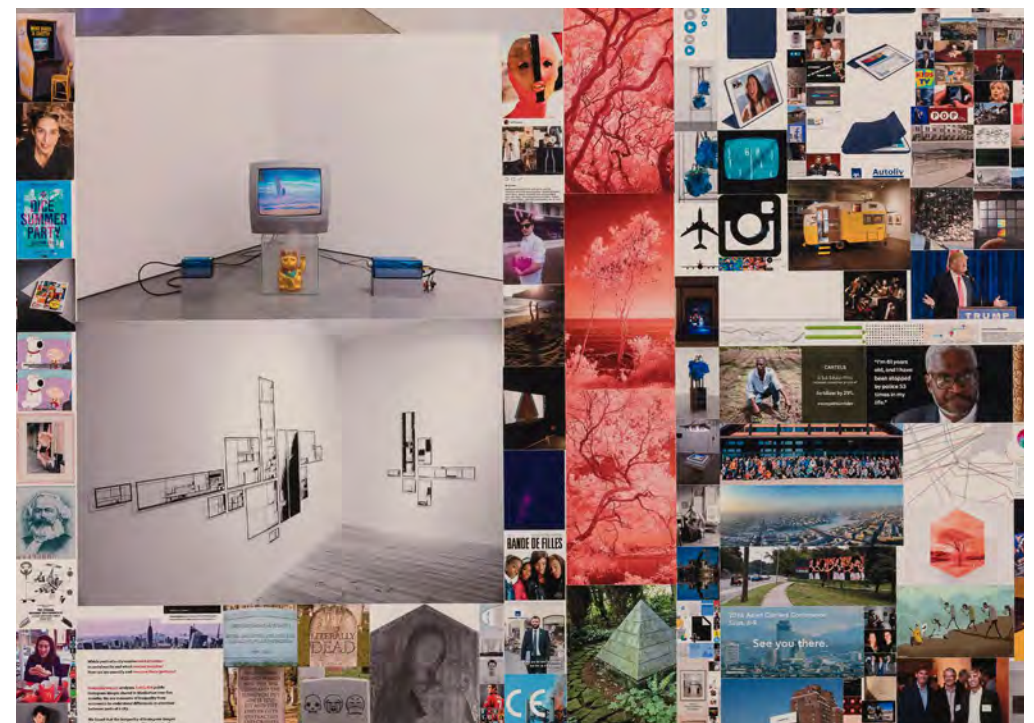
Roth's "Red Lines" works are a network of infrared video landscapes created from places where intercontinental fiber-optic cables are located. Almost resembling a photograph, the resulting videos move at the speed of nature, capturing the slightest movements of the landscapes where internet data flows through. The resulting videos are streamed to smartphones, tablets, and computers allowing users a more still experience of the Internet rather than a cluttered version of the web with constant work emails, social media notifications, and news updates. In doing so, the "Red Lines" pieces, like the "Internet Cache Portraits," become a reflection of time, technology consumption, and popular culture.

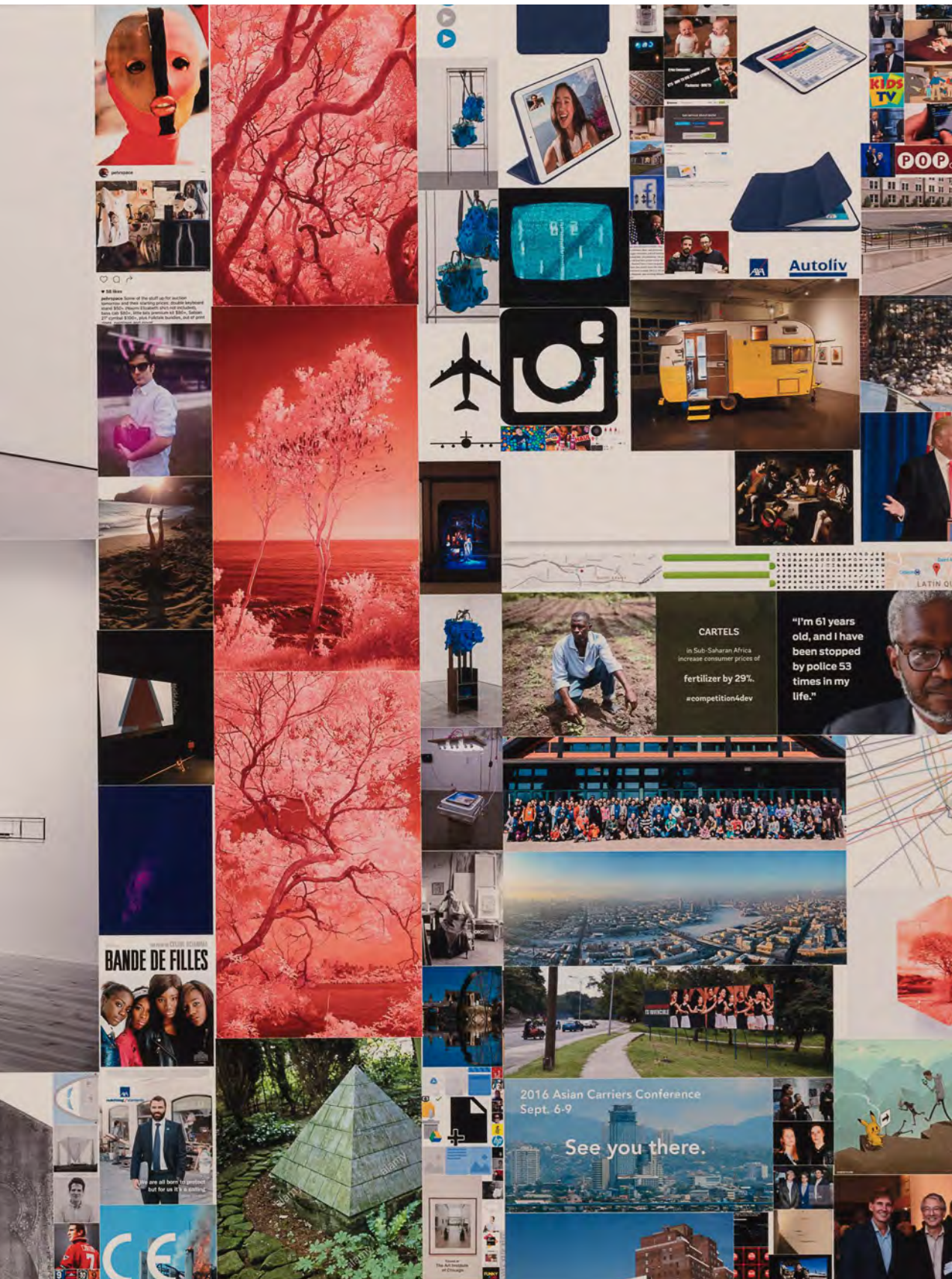
▲▲ ABOVE © EVAN ROTH, *n22.207525e114.258659.hk, n22.208606e114.256798.hk, n22.209240e114.257359.hk, n22.210230e114.256256.hk, n22.210512e114.256075.hk, n22.228900e113.936487.hk, n40.733106w72.870375.us.com, n40.756073w72.930950.us.com, n48.879773e2.367629.fr, n50.204520e1.538171.fr, n57.675322e11.662511.se, n57.680235e11.668160.se, n57.888698e11.688815.se, s33.734152e151.304727.com.au, s33.806901e151.299299.com.au, s33.820180e151.184813.com.au, s33.849695e151.244546.com.au, s33.898239e151.275644.com.au, s36.787854e174.775050.co.nz, s36.809596e174.417374.co.nz, s36.810855e174.422624.co.nz* from the Landscapes series, 2017. Network located videos, 18 minutes, 209 x 130 inches. Installation at the Armory Show. Photo by Joshua Citarella. Image courtesy of Carroll/Fletcher.



Since You Were Born marks many firsts for the artist as it is the largest installation of the series to date, and the first time Roth has covered several surfaces with the cache imagery in one installation. The title of the piece is also different from the series' previous title conventions. Rather than title the work with his name and the date and year from which the images derive, Roth instead personalized the title for MOCA's installation, reminding himself and viewers of this significant period in his life. While it may seem slight, the title *Since You Were Born* provides a fundamental shift for Roth as he ties the work directly to his daughter rather than to himself. The installation also bears the same title as a book Roth created for a 2014 exhibition, *Memory*. The book, dedicated to Roth's first daughter who was born July 19, 2013, similarly records browsing search history from the date his child was born, but instead presents the data as a chronological list of URLs rather than algorithmically generated images.

Viewers are encouraged to read the book in the Atrium Gallery as they reflect on *Since You Were Born*. Roth hopes that in doing so a duality emerges for viewers, questioning whether the installation more accurately depicts the Internet or Roth. While users can control what they choose to type into a search engine, they do not have control over the images (advertisements or otherwise) that are found on a website they may visit. Therefore, the book may function as a more intimate and perhaps more accurate portrait of the artist, while the installation may be a stronger reflection of the Internet. *Since You Were Born* and its overflowing sea of imagery morphs into many forms for the viewer—a netscape, landscape, “nude” portrait of the artist, an archive of the Internet, and perhaps, most importantly, a reminder of this moment in time.





BIOGRAPHY

Evan Roth is a Berlin-based American artist who visualizes transient moments in public space, online, and in popular culture. He received a BS in architecture from the University of Maryland and graduated class valedictorian of his MFA Program in Communication, Technology, and Design at Parsons School of Design. Through a range of media including prints, sculptures, websites, installations, and videos, his work addresses the personal and cultural effects surrounding technological change and the role of individual

agency within the media landscape. Roth is particularly interested in the philosophies of hacker communities, as applied to digital and non-digital systems, and in the relationship between misuse and self-empowerment. In 2016 he was awarded a Creative Capital Emerging Fields Award and in 2012 he was awarded the Smithsonian Cooper-Hewitt National Design Award. His work has been exhibited at the Museum of Contemporary Art Chicago, the Smithsonian National Portrait Gallery, the Tate, and the Whitechapel Gallery. His work is included in the collections of the Whitney Museum of American Art, the Museum of Modern Art, New York, and the Israel Museum.

▲▲ ABOVE Portrait of the artist. Photo by Matthew Andrews. Courtesy of Artangel.
 << LEFT TO RIGHT © EVAN ROTH, *Since You Were Born* (detail), 2019. Site-specific installation at MOCA Jacksonville. Image courtesy of Doug Eng. © EVAN ROTH, *Since You Were Born* (detail), 2019. Site-specific installation at MOCA Jacksonville. Image courtesy of Jeremy Paterno.

ABOUT PROJECT ATRIUM

The series features site-specific and site-sensitive installations by emerging and mid-career artists. The unique placement, dimensions, and scale of MOCA Jacksonville's Atrium Gallery provide a compelling challenge to the chosen artist—a call to reinvention and active collaboration with the architecture of the Museum on a monumental scale.



▲▲ **CLOCKWISE FROM UPPER LEFT** SARAH EMERSON, *Black Sea of Trees*, 2012. Photography courtesy of Doug Eng. ANGELA GLAJCAR, *Terforation*, 2015. Photography courtesy of Thomas Hager. JOELLE DIETRICK, *Cargomobilities*, 2015. Photography courtesy of Doug Eng. Installations at the Museum of Contemporary Art, Jacksonville, FL.

<< **PREVIOUS PAGE** © EVAN ROTH, *Since You Were Born*, 2019. Site-specific installation at MOCA Jacksonville. Image courtesy of Nan Kavanaugh.

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