



#prank4offices

Philip Welding

The output is a creative project, #pranks4offices, consisting of a series of photographs.

Research process

Over several years, Welding has regularly searched the hashtag ‘#officepranks’, and collected an archive of hundreds of vernacular images. This led him to make informal comparisons on an aesthetic and process level with the work of art photographers. lamronjay42 and laminstapauli0 were the Instagram names of two fictional office workers that engaged in a fictional office prank war. These characters were created as a vehicle to make the project #prank4offices for FORMAT International Photography Festival in 2015. Their office desks were set up in the exhibition venue at either end of the room, positioned facing each other. Over a number of weekends in March 2015, a series of pranks were staged on their desks, photographed then dismantled. The photographs were shared on the Instagram accounts, with the characters commenting on each other’s posts and continuing the fictional narrative. In the final exhibition, the two desks remained; one was surrounded by 700 plastic cups filled with water, the other completely wrapped in cling film. The audience was directed to view the photographs of the previous pranks on their phones whilst they stood in the exhibition space, revealing evidence of the office prank war.

Research insights

The project raises questions about the role of creativity within the sphere of art practice and within everyday environments and the project playfully considers the merging of these two areas of production. The project also continues an ongoing critique of our relationships with daily working lives, where creative activities often run counter to the wider company aspirations of productivity.

Dissemination

The project was disseminated at the FORMAT International Photography Festival, Derby, 13 March - 12 April 2015.



FORMAT International Photography Festival Exhibition Venue: Pearson Building with Francesca Savavalle, Nicolo Degiorgis, George Miles, Tom Stayte, Discipula, Alex F. Webb, Boris Eldagsen, Chris Shaw, David Fathi, Karl Orihi, Marianne Bjornmyr, Matter Collective



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formatfestival A conversation between two fictional employees engaged in an office prank war: "instapauli0: It's amazing what you can achieve during a 45 minute lunch break when when the whole office pitches in. Mission control, I am ready for launch...do I mean lunch? Welcome back to NASA #Ihopetheplantdoesntdie #prank4offices" "ronjay42: You know I had that report to write by



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formatfestival A simple search on Instagram using the hashtag [#officepranks](#) reveals a wealth of creativity that has many similarities to the processes of an artist, albeit with very different intentions.

I decided to test this out for real. I invented two fictional employees (Instapauli0 and Ronjay42) who have their own Instagram accounts and are engaged in an ongoing prank 'war'. I set their desks up in a disused office



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