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SELF-PORTRAITR: AN INTERACTIVE EXHIBITION CURATING THE FLICKR.COM COMMUNITY

June 30 through August 25, 2006

Gallery summer hours are: Monday-Thursday, 9:30-5:30, and Friday, 9:30-4:00. The gallery will be closed on Saturdays and Sundays. Summer hours begin on June 20 and continue through Labor Day.

Pace/MacGill Gallery and the School of Visual Arts' graduate photography department are pleased to present an interactive exhibition of self-portraits drawn from Flickr.com, the online digital photo-sharing network. Flickr's user base consists of over one million members who share images and image-related information. Two leading forces in the New York art world--a major photography gallery and a top art school--have joined together to observe this online conversation of image making. The mining and showcasing of this material strives to engage and expand a rapidly growing virtual arts community. The exhibition will be accessible to both viewers and contributors alike via the Pace/MacGill website www.pacemacgill.com. Pace/MacGill's gallery space will house ten computers on which visitors can peruse the pictures gathered from numerous global photographers as they would online. A few monitors will display slideshows of images specifically collected via the gallery website.

The exhibition will not only rely on the Flickr community for content, but will also depend upon the activity of the site's users for the organization and editing of what is anticipated to be thousands of images from the age-old genre of self-portraiture. Whether the image is taken by a professional photographer overseas or by an amateur experimenting with a camera phone in New York City, each image posted on Flickr and "tagged" as a self-portrait will automatically be filtered and directed into the exhibition. The Pace/MacGill Flickr interface, created by SVA's Jeremy Chien and Stephen Jablonsky and programmed by Kelvin Luck, allows users to vote for favorites, track the most viewed image, and create categories. Sorting options or subcategories (self portrait "with mirror" or at "beach," for example) within the virtual exhibition will enable further definition and refinement.

The work in the exhibition will perpetually expand with the proliferation of users until the popularity of each category aids

in its editing. As more images are collected and more users are interacting with the site to make selections, the work will become more discerning and interesting. One can choose the role they wish to assume: curator, artist, etcetera. With every click of the mouse, viewers become participants; the interactive community defines the exhibition. The hope is that the final result will be a 50 print exhibition of images chosen by the community.

The School of Visual Arts is widely recognized as one of the finest art schools in the country for its innovative and experimental program philosophies, its participation in the cultural life of New York City, and its unparalleled faculty comprised of professional artists. The MFA Photography, Video and Related Media department has been a leader in the implementation of photography in the digital world. The exhibition has been assembled by Pace/MacGill Gallery, Jeremy Chien, and Stephen Jablonsky. Chien and Jablonsky are both alumni and faculty members at the School of Visual Arts' MFA program in Photography, Video and Related Media. UK web developer Kelvin Luck programmed the exhibition software to search, filter and explore Flickr.com.