

Per.sonn.es

The first fake social network on the internet

Per.sonn.es (in French), Fakefriends.me (in English), is an art project aiming to realize the first fake social network on the internet. Launched in July 2009 it has garnered little media attention, but has managed to catch the web indexers' electronic eyes. With more than 500.000 (fake) profiles now indexed by search engines, it lures almost a thousand visitors each day from google and other websites.

One can only imagine what happens in the mind of search engine users suddenly confronted to fake information matching their request. They were looking for a name (their own name, their families, friends or colleagues'...) and suddenly they are faced with information that looks like personal information, has a picture, an age, some thoughts, an occupation, and pretends to live in some place.

Some of them back off immediately from the site, maybe with a feeling that something was wrong with their search. Others feel entrapped by the website's possibilities and start playing with it, hopefully realizing as they navigate from fake profile to fake profile what "googling a name" truly means.

As an art project per.sonn.es offers no specific informational section, and bears no other purpose than leading the average user of search engine to experience some discomfort about the too common practice of casually spying on any- and everyone. In the best of cases, this experience will help build conscious critical thinking.

This work in progress has been released under the license art libre and its engine's code is available under the GNU/GPL, so that anyone can start her own fake social network. This will foster translations so that this experience becomes available in tens of languages around the world. We are actively pursuing this translation project and looking for more contacts and participants.

Links:

- <http://per.sonn.es/> [FR] and <http://fakefriends.me/> [EN] is the website
- <http://zzz.rezo.net/-per-sonn-es-.html> project description [FR]
- <http://trac.rezo.net/trac/herisson/> software code (GPL) [EN]

External comments:

- <http://iriospark.splinder.com/post/20879210/> [IT]
- <http://www.ecrans.fr/Le-site-du-jour-per-sonn-es,7596.html> [FR]

About the artist:

"Fil" would not like to give out more information than what is strictly necessary for the purpose of this submission form. S/he can be reached at fil@rezo.net Should the jury need more information, they are welcome to ask directly... or google it.