



School: School of Art

Researcher: Gavin Turk

Project Title: Portrait of an Egg

UOA: 32

300-Word Statement (to be edited)

Portrait of an Egg was a multi-faceted project over 2018 – 2019, the public exhibition took place on 16th – 19th May at Somerset House as part of Photo London. The structure of the project broke into four main strands: a curatorial interactive website, a sculptural installation on the River Terrace, a sculpture, video and audio installation in the Great Arch Hall and a seminar with Matthew Collings (*'The fate of art under the gaze of the smartphone'*).

Photographing cultural visits has become a dominant way of behaving. Art is constantly being exposed to the glare of the internet and social media; the camera phone has created a new way of seeing. The project examined this phenomenon, taking it a step further, by openly inviting participants to upload their images in a mass creative act, which centered around a sculptural work measuring 2.5m. The website for **Portrait of an Egg**, was a purpose-built platform to collect and display submissions and to continue the conversation around the themes of authenticity and inauthenticity. The open call posed a simple question: *What does it mean to Portray an Egg?* Over one thousand photographs were submitted to the website. The Hall of Fame was a commissioned selection by Francesca Gavin, Sarah Lucas, Martin Parr, @world_record_egg to curate their top 5 works. Also included was a public 'liking' system to highlight the People's Choice. The **Portrait of an Egg Exhibition** was a site-specific 4D installation. Submitted works were curated and projected across four large wall screens, accompanied by a soundscape of farmed birds, theatrical lighting and centered around the *Ovum* 2019 work, a spotlight black bronze egg, on a Portland stone plinth, the same stone with which Somerset House was built .

Oeuvre 2018, a patinated bronze sculpture, was installed on the River Terrace a month before the opening , with a display board directing participants to the website and to interact with the work, as a beginning point for participants to get enthused about.