



Feel The Device

Exhibition by Otakar Hyps

Follow Your Teacher

Screen print and acrylic on paper
9 pieces, 50x70 cm each
2019

Otakar's greatest passion always involved getting to know new people. Thanks to alternative ways of traveling such as hitchhiking and couch surfing, Otakar had the chance to meet people from all over the world. After each adventure and despite sometimes being thousands of miles apart, he managed to keep in touch with some of his new friends thanks to the advances of new technologies. After moving to Barcelona, Otakar started realizing how draining online communication could feel. Otakar turned into a more device-conscious person. He became determined to start research on the topic, while closely observing the interactions between people and their devices.

The *Internet addiction* [1] study from 2008 concludes that Internet addiction exists. It tells the story of gamer Tommy, who prefers interacting with his virtual community rather than with those physically closer to him. His condition showed signs of depression, anxiety, dysfunctional family relations and lack of sleep. This might sound like a typical story of a nerdy teenager lured into the digital world by gamification, eventually leading to addiction to social connections of the virtual community. In 2019, we have all become hooked in virtual communities.

If you don't feel hooked, find the article *These are the sneaky ways apps like Instagram, Facebook, Tinder lure you in and get you 'addicted'*. [2] After reading the article you might start observing how recurrent these patterns of addictive behaviour are in other apps.

Cell-phone use is a good example of what is referred to as "a paradox of technology". The use of modern smart-phones can be both freeing and enslaving at the same time. (...) It is incumbent upon researchers to identify the all-important "tipping point" where cell-phone use crosses the line from a helpful tool to one that enslaves both users and society alike. [3]



Flirt In The Moment

Screen print and acrylic on paper
12 pieces, 50x70 cm each
2019

Pieces

The rationale behind the three pieces presented below follows the same guiding principle. A straight-forward, factual message such as "*flirt in the moment*" and visual outlines of device screens humans of 21st century are familiar with. It is combined with abstract expressions of the content. The message and device context are priming visitor towards the specific topic. Abstraction is releasing storytelling imagination of the emotional brain and makes our mind wander. This process springs the imagination towards the primed topic and inspires.

Flirt In The Moment

We do not flirt in the moment anymore when meeting an attractive stranger at a bus stop. Hearing "no" from a person we ask out is something we cannot deal with. Our life is success only. Technology gives us likes and matches, never a rejection.

Your Attention Please

We love notifications. They make us feel good, wanted and important. However, they are stealing our attention from more important tasks, for example living our lives. They behave like next generation drugs.

Follow Your Teacher

The accounts we follow help to shape our personalities, same as the teachers form personalities of their students. Nowadays, we have the power of choice - we can choose our digital teachers.

The fourth piece described in the following page features a colorful personal device. The fourth word in the "Feel The Device ..." message seems hidden, making us feel curious. This is mimicking common behaviour around our devices. We curiously look at the screen "*to just check whats new*". After closer inspection, the visitor discovers the forth previously hidden word that completes the message to "*Feel The Device Addiction*".



Feel The Device
Acrylic on canvas
20x30 cm
2019

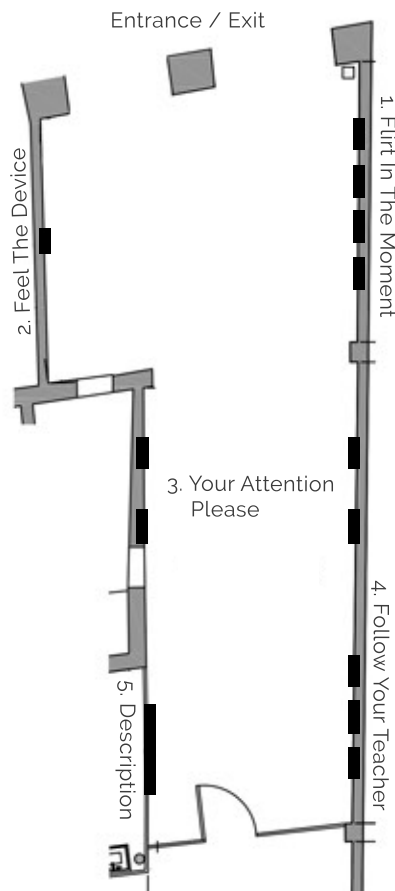


Feel The Device

It is so attractive, so colorful, so much to discover through simple interaction, yet it can become so dangerous if dealt with irresponsibility. Technology is a good servant but a bad master.

Possible setup

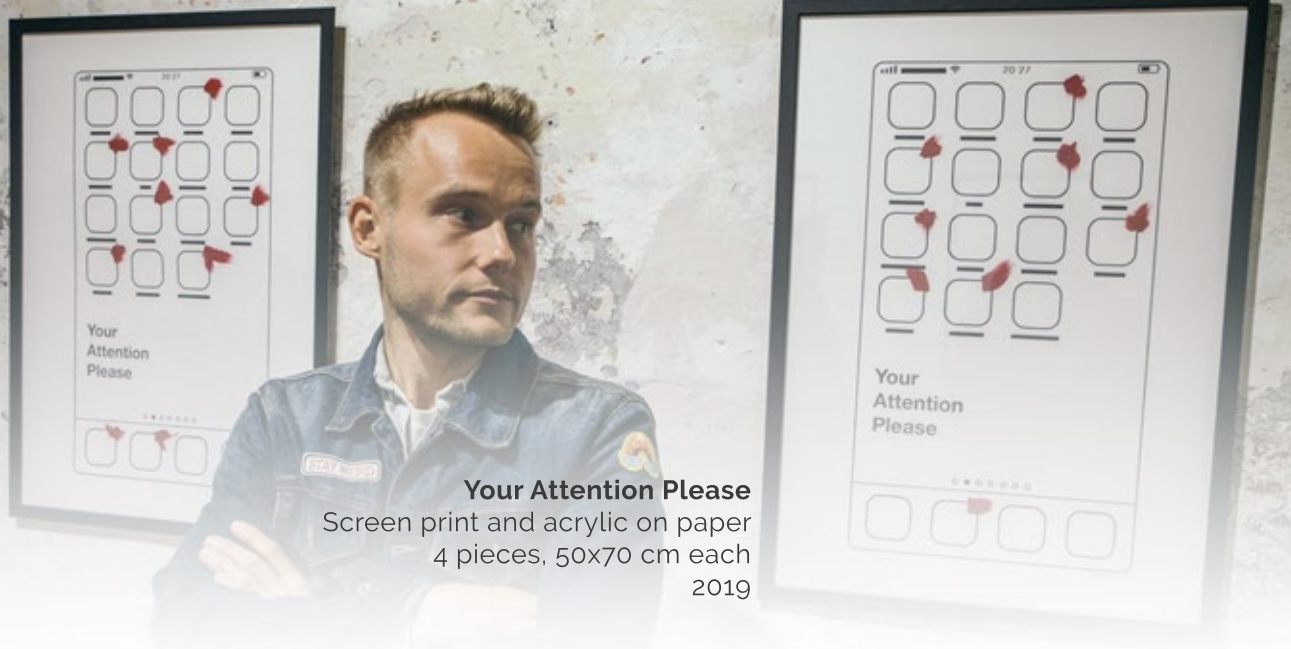
1. The most interesting areas on any scale are the extremes. Feel The Device is using this design principle to grab audience attention. There comes the first extreme - the largest piece. A twelve-card grid, *Flirt In The Moment*.
2. Right opposite, there is the smallest piece, placed in the middle of the largest gallery wall. That makes it to completely stand out and deliver message of the whole exhibition, *Feel The Device*.
3. The second stage needs to be somewhat easier viewing experience. This piece features four rather similar paintings that use only black and red colors. They contain the most familiar screen visitors could recognise on any device - the home screen. The pieces spread on both walls and are setup facing each other. When the visitor stands in the middle, ▶



it is impossible for them to escape the notifications *Your Attention Please* is broadcasting. Same as it would happen in a real life. Notifications are all around us.

4. Once the visitor is fully engaged, the most intense piece, *Follow Your Teacher*, is displayed. Multiple colors, and shapes, nine paintings in a grid. This is where people often start reflection.

5. The last wall is dedicated to the description. It closes the journey as a reward that clarifies and connects the pieces together. ■



Your Attention Please
Screen print and acrylic on paper
4 pieces, 50x70 cm each
2019

Exhibitions

2019 Mutuo Gallery, Barcelona

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Reference

[1] Douglas et al., 2008, *Internet addiction: Meta-synthesis of qualitative research for the decade 1996–2006*, Purdue University, University of New Haven, Indiana University, University of Notre Dame, United States; KwangWoon University, South Korea. Available online http://plaza.ufl.edu/svetlana.-step/research/papers/Douglas_et_al_2008_Computers_in_Human%20Behavior.pdf

[2] Hartmans, 2018 *These are the sneaky ways apps like Instagram, Facebook, Tinder lure you in and get you 'addicted'*, Business Insider. Available online <https://www.businessinsider.com/how-app-developers-keep-us-addicted-to-our-smartphones-2018-1>

[3] Roberts, Petnji Yaya, Manolis, 2013, Baylor University, Xavier University, USA; Universitat Internacional de Catalunya, Spain. Available online <https://akademai.com/doi/pdf/10.1556/JBA.3.2014.015>

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