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Lawrence McDonald photography: Augmented Reality: an interactive exhibition delivered through the digital technology of QR Codes

Photography is the process, activity and art of creating still or moving pictures by recording radiation on a radiation-sensitive medium, such as a photographic film, or an electronic sensor.

The result on film or plate is a latent image, subsequently developed into a visual image (negative or diapositive). An image on paper base is known as a print.

For decades upon decades, In film photography the viewer has to go through a mechanical process, a series of technical and chemical steps to ultimately see the image

In this exhibition I am creating a new experience of the photographic journey to the image, through an exciting new process, augmented reality, the QR Code.

The 6 photographic works I produced for this exhibition are presented entirely as QR encoded pieces.

These QR Codes bear a strong resemblance to geometric abstract paintings, and in particular, reminds one of Op-Art of the sixties whose purpose was to play with the optical senses and create a state of altered reality. The image was constructed in such a way that it gave the illusion of movement, depth and image manipulation in a single optical dimension.

Coded messages are an integral part of our contemporary visual culture today, across all platforms, and embedded in all forms of mass media, on line, digital entertainment delivered to mobile screens and traditional broadcast, marketing advertising, music, and the arts .

QR Code is a fifteen-year old technology originating in Japan where it was created by Toyota subsidiary Denso-Wave in 1994, the QR code is one of the most popular types of two-dimensional barcodes. *QR* is the acronym for *Quick Response*, as the creator intended the code to allow its contents to be decoded at high speed.[1]

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Although initially used for tracking parts in vehicle manufacturing, QR Codes are now used in a much broader context, including both commercial tracking applications and convenience-oriented applications aimed at mobile phone users (known as mobile tagging). This act of linking from physical world objects is known as a hardlink or

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physical world hyperlinks.

The QR code itself tends to be square in format, and it is loaded with information, the implications of this technology is a game changer – this will have a profound effect on everything we do. QR code will change us, it will at play in our day to day living, the food we eat, what we drink, our health care, medicine, business, economics, shopping, what we buy, when we buy, from where we buy, entertainment, everything ! You may indeed buy your next work of art by way of a QR Code.

In this photographic exhibition I set out to explore the experience of the photographic image through a new process, a journey not unlike the process of film photography. However in this case the negative is in a sense, the digital QR Code. The photographic the photograph itself is embedded in what might be considered a digital emulsion, and the image itself is revealed, not unlike a photo print from a negative, when the code is scanned and processed as a digital print.

To see the photographs in the gallery, on their smart phone, an android or iphone, all one has to do is download the free app “Mobio” and simply scan the QR Code, the data will directly link the phone to the embedded content and reveal the photo on the screen as a digital image.

In each of the six framed pieces in the gallery, the codes are imbedded in a graphic design which is the iconic expression of classic photographic print remnants, such as the Kodak edge frame film strip, the unmistakable look of sixties Polaroid photo or Kodachrome slide frame.