

A Life's Work

Art History / Humanities / Illustration / Political Science / Visual Arts

A Life's Work comments on and interrupts our overwork culture, where people are in a constant state of busyness, induced by daily demands to act and consume. Labour flexibility and developments in technology have normalised precarious working conditions and led to a collapse of work and leisure time. This is particularly apparent in the growth of co-working offices and the rise of “the digital nomad,” which reveal how private lives have been transformed into work spaces; friendships have become networking opportunities; and streets double as offices. The constant demand for hyperconnectivity, hypervisibility, and participation leaves little time for quiet, singular withdrawal and a space to just do nothing.

This project unfolds in the gallery space, online, and in the streets of East London – where we have used tape to mark out spaces

for disengagement on the pavement outside co-working offices and laptop-friendly cafes. In each setting, we expose the seeming impossibility to not work, and the ways in which spaces for rest are co-opted as sites of productivity, or become mere intermissions that make for a more efficient capitalism.

Drawing on the co-working aesthetic, the wooden pods appear as individual resting spaces for you to stop, sit, stare, sleep, or do nothing. Once inside, however, you are prompted to retreat onto your smart-devices, the very sites of oppression and discipline that demand your constant connectivity and availability. Using the QR code to access our 24-hour work cycle, we invite you to refresh. To tune into the dispersed intellectual, emotional, and physical labour put into creating a project about the refusal to work.

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