

Room with 24 views: 'Cube' exhibit is portrait studio, 21st-century style

by Robert L. Pincus

"Cube," as Lincoln Schatz has dubbed the space, possesses 24 video cameras, which all film the person or people in the room for 60 minutes. Then, the existing videos will be combined into one continuously runningstream, in which a software program randomly determines what appears on a 42-inch screen. He calls it a Generative Portrait, since what you see will shift constantly.

'CUBE' EXHIBIT - Artist Lincoln Schatz takes a peek at one of the 24 video cameras that film everything going on inside the cube he's set up at Quint Contemporary Art in San Diego. It will soon be on display in New York City. CNS Photo by Eduardo Conteras. You can view Schatz's "Cube" and parts of several finished portraits made within it at Quint Contemporary Art in La Jolla, Calif., where he is having his second solo exhibition. As you might guess, people use their hour in the "Cube" in widely different ways. What they bring with them or wear is open-ended too, of course.

Jeff Dauber, who directs the Mobile Mac Systems for Apple, did his morning ritual: shaving, getting dressed, making coffee and even doing a crossword puzzle. Porn star turned performance artist Annie Sprinkle and her partner Beth Stephens, also a performance artist, made outfits for "love actions - kissing, cuddling and wrestling; they were joined by Bob, their Labrador retriever.

"Some people worry: What am I going to do for an hour?" says Schatz, standing inside his "Cube." "But without exception, you end up having to fish them out. Self-consciousness quickly dissipates."

Schatz's Generative Portraits aren't cheap. They're priced at \$45,000. But two people in San Diego - both prefer to remain anonymous - have commissioned them already.

After it comes down in La Jolla, his "Cube" will travel to New York. Hearst Communications is planning a series of 40 video portraits, Schatz says, to coincide with an Esquire "portrait of the 21st century," which will include 75 people. Schatz will spend about eight months in Manhattan making these, and then all of them will end up on view at Hearst Tower, probably in the fall.

You might say he's made a portrait studio suited to the 21st century.

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