

Excerpt from Richard B. Woodward, Art Review, 'Public, Private, Secret' Review: In the Heart of Darkness, The Wall Street Journal, Aug. 29, 2016

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'Public, Private, Secret' Review: In the Heart of Digital Darkness

Themes of voyeurism, self-promotion, celebrity, surveillance and criminality at the new ICP Museum.

By **RICHARD B. WOODWARD**

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New York

'Public, Private, Secret' at the International Center of Photography Museum is a group show worth a prolonged visit despite the slipshod installation.

Two videos on the first floor, playing on opposite wall-size screens, dramatize better than any other works of art I've seen this year the psychic and moral cost of releasing so much highly charged personal information into the world.

Natalie Bookchin's "Testament" (2009-16) and Jon Rafman's "Mainsqueeze" (2014) were made from video clips and photos freely available online. As such, both might be called appropriated documentary.

Ms. Bookchin views the internet as a new kind of public confessional where secrets that used to be shameful are indiscriminately shared. The anonymous faces and voices speak into the camera about being out of work, sexually confused, or ill and without the money to afford treatment or medication.

Expertly edited so that each person has a dignified presence within a group portrait of distress, the roughly seven-minute piece suggests that while serious emotional problems won't be resolved by going online, the sense of community provided by this electronic diary is nonetheless consoling and not to be mocked.

Public, Private, Secret

ICP Museum

Through Jan. 8, 2017