

Dan Duray, 'New project boots instagram followers for art world accounts',
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NEW PROJECT BOOSTS INSTAGRAM FOLLOWERS FOR ART WORLD ACCOUNTS

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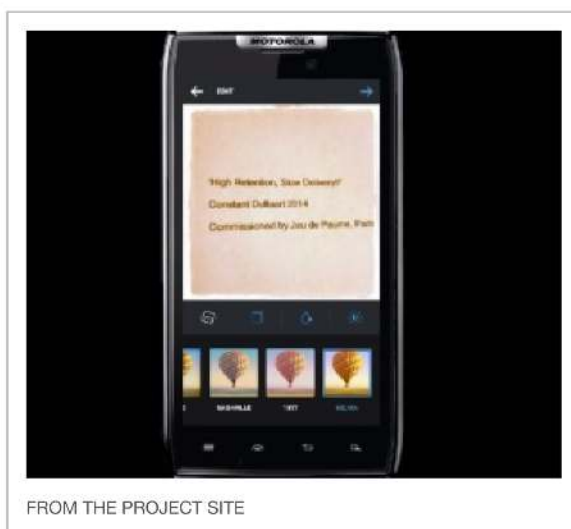
The artist Constant Dullaart has launched a new project, commissioned by Jeu de Paume, that aims to level the influence of a handful of players on Instagram by buying followers for certain accounts so that all have an even 100,000. Among those to receive followers are the likes of the Zach Feuer and Gagosian galleries, artists Jeff Koons and Petra Cortright, curators Karen Archey and Brian Droitcour, and Performa.

The project, *High Retention, Slow Delivery*, emerged from Dullaart's thinking about social media and saw the accounts begin to receive thousands of followers about a week ago.

"I quit Facebook in 2012, I gave away my passwords during a performance in the New Museum in New York and at that time I was annoyed with this idea that one person would be more 'liked' than another," Dullaart said over the phone. "It was kind of like in high school, like how much one person would be more popular than the other person."

On Instagram, as he says in a video and text that accompanies the piece, influence is almost more important, since influence there can have real consequence. Art is sold on Instagram, or people discover artists based on the authority of the account that introduces them to new work. "Audience is a commodity," he wrote, adding "They can be used to influence politics, by supporting political causes online, and even add relevance to art."

"We live in a representation of a world which we can influence in ways never imagined," he continued in the manifesto. "Let's do so performatively. Social bank accounts raised to the



same level to stimulate a utopian image of a shared responsibility for equality within a conscious user group, as a mere reminder of painful racial, financial and other social inequalities so much harder to destroy.”

Dullaart purchased 2.5 million fake followers from a site he described as “buysocialmedia.com,” through eBay, haggling over the price but eventually paying \$5,000 for them, \$2,000 over the original commission sum. Then began the difficult process of deciding which accounts to “equalize.” There were certain accounts he would have loved to bring to 100,000 followers, but it would have been too expensive to do so. Hans Ulrich Obrist, as it happened, was already fairly close to 100,000, which meant he hardly needed it but, Dullaart said, “If I hadn’t included Hans Ulrich Obrist, there would be this single art kingpin who wouldn’t be included in this equalization.” And Jeff Koons had relatively few followers, but could he leave out Jeff Koons?

The process will continue for the next few weeks. Asked if he was worried about discussing his project publicly, and thus alerting the authorities at Facebook (which owns Instagram), Dullaart said he didn’t mind if he was somehow shut down. “This is a symbolic gesture,” he said. “It exists within this realm of the poetic gesture.”

For his next project he hopes to clone himself via Instagram followers, by trying to find a way to incorporate his own photos into the kinds of bots he’s hired for this current project