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Google Gets A Facelift

by Kevin Holmes January 04, 2011



Google, the ubiquitous search engine that has become the crux of information harvesting for our modern age, gets a lick of digital paint in this net art project. Barely a day goes by when we don't use Google for one reason or another—for research purposes, to find a restaurant, to settle a dispute about who invented the hamburger. It is both vilified and championed in popular culture because of its ability to deliver information on demand, but whatever side of the fence you may be on, one thing's for sure: because of its omnipresence, our interaction with the search engine has become commonplace and mundane. We take this tool for granted and choose to ignore the fact that it's mired in contradictions; it's open yet secret, it ranks popularity while also determining it. With all that in mind, artist [Leonardo Solaas](#) has used Google as a canvas for his latest work [Google Variations](#).

With the idea that a change is as good as a rest (from using it) Leonardo Solaas has used a variety of formal and conceptual ideas to transform the Google homepage into a series of micro-experiments to "de-naturalize our relationship with the brand, the corporation and the technology". While they range in scope and scale, one of them a cascading variation on their famed and numerous homepage themes ([Google Pond](#)), another turns your cursor into a [painting tool](#); others imagine the web giant as a frightening mythological beast in a far away land ([All the birds try to avoid the Google](#)), or turn Google's eye-in-the-sky in on itself by using Google Maps and Street View to show Google's HQs in various cities throughout the world ([The Glooal Village](#)). While there are plenty more variations like Google is God and Google is Gold, also collected here are Google hacks and reinterpretations by other people found throughout the web like Epic Google, Annoying Google, and Google Makes Music, making it a kind of online museum for Google homepage experiments.

While we're not convinced these Google homepage experiments, entertaining though they may be, will actually succeed in altering your perspective or your user habits (it may be this digital force is a far too large and invisible part of our online lives), Solaas Google projects repository is still an intriguing place to have a look around.

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