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On My Design

In order to explore the artistic method, specifically through mixed reality, I created

a fully interactive art installation. This installation, like the work of teamLab,

incorporates both natural and digital elements. Projecting animated water ripples to

augment the physical effect of an object entering a pool of water, I was able to fully

replicate and augment the experience of a "wishing well." Inspired by the concept of a

"wishing well"— a cultural act which augments the experience of throwing a coin,

stone into a well with the spiritualistic hope of a magical wish — this mixed reality

installation explores the intersection, the confluence of art, technology, and nature.

Here then, like the concept of making a wish, I created an installation that would fully

spiritualize the effects produced by the water. And as such, this work attempts to

question the nature of the physical world. I sought to explore the possible animistic,

sublime qualities of the experience.

On the Efficacy of My Design

Philosophically, I followed the philosophy presented by animistic creators, notably

teamLab, Miyazaki, and attempted to use human augmentation to work beyond the

horror's presented by Nietzsche's critique of the artist. In this way, my work— the

digital installation, sought to harmoniously blend the present (nature) with human

augmentation.

On the Artist

Centered in the artist's mind is a semblance of dream— that which is imperceivable within our current understanding of reality. There, "…the lovely semblance of dream is the precondition of all the arts of image making..." (Birth of Tragedy, 15), and we find the artist— desperate in their pursuit, to consider that which is not of this world. Buttressed by a foundation of their own dream, the artist explores the world of their own accord. And what then of the artist? Have they confined themselves to a world of pure subjectivity? As the artist continues to color the world in their dreamed image, should we not wonder, are they doomed to this obscurity, forever bound to their dreamed perception? Perhaps it truly is like Walter Benjamin urges, consider the automaton as it bounces up and down, and consider as the artist's perception shifts from nature to invention. There, should we not reconsider the metaphysics of the artist?

On the Artistic Method

At the technical core of any piece of art is a manipulation of the present. The artist takes in the world and dreams it into their own image. Consider then as the physical world abstracts? And physicality abstracts to concept? What then becomes of the artist ability to create? Does the artist reduce his perception to platonic form? Does the artist obscure into abstraction? At this point, art takes a radical turn. The artist is faced with a serious epistemic problem? Is there truth beyond the physical? Desperate to answer this question, the artist delves deeper into dream. Further and further into their dreamed image, the physical world, which once based the artist's method, slowly and slowly becomes more subjective, more of their own accord. And here, do not we here

the echoes of Nietzsche— the artist's "… deep hatred of 'the present', 'reality' and 'modern ideas'…" which they "…would prefer to believe in nothingness or in the devil rather than in 'the present'" (The Birth of Tragedy, 11) — begin to ring true? Is it not apt to call the artistic method an exploration of concept not of this world? What now do we call the metaphysics of the artist? With this question in mind, the artistic method is inherently based in the dialectic of the possible— at all points the artist harks, "Surely we can't see this, but might it be so." Here, like the romantics who sought to represent the sublime, the religious who attempted to represent the divine, the abstracts who attempted to represent physical abstraction, the artistic method is an attempt to highlight *noumenal* truths— objectivities: from science, religion, to aesthetics. Society is continually standing at this artistic precipice.

Everyday reality continues to shift by the artistic pursuit of the objective. Whether it be religious, social, ethical, or aesthetic, the nature of this pursuit continually appears to be centered by one call to action— let us perceive the imperceivable. We, society, teeter on a precarious edge between worlds we can perceive and dream. Today, in the modern age we have reached a new advent. With the increasing integration of computer based-technology into society— growing interconnectivity of devices, software integration into our daily lives, speed of data processing, graphical processing, the artistic method is coloring, augmenting our reality at a pace almost unfathomable. With the internet at our finger tips, access to media ever present, graphical user interfaces ingrained into the very architecture we live within, reality seems to appear to us through a technological lens. Here, should we note return to the seemingly trite aesthetic questions that have burdened philosophers for

generations— What is the nature of this reality? And we must ask ourselves, like Nietzsche urged, if the artist seeks to dream of reality beyond the present, what are we, the viewer, to observe?

The artistic method is expanding into new found horizons. The concept of augmenting our experience of reality has driven many an engineer and artist to create new ways of interacting with the physical world; these pieces of technology are largely known as mixed reality— AR, VR, etc. This artistic concept— mixed reality, is indeed the embodiment of the dream like products of art. Consider the work of Keiichi Matsuda, who in his piece, "hyper-reality," portrays a heavily augmented future world. In this world, the line between the physical and artificial is blurred (as it is for all mixed reality pieces). Physical space is covered with projection, and experience has become inexplicably tied with software— colored visuals, social messaging, online access. Matusda's work seems to present a perceived terror associated with the advent of mixed reality. Here, Matsuda, like Nietzsche, urges us to consider the effects of this kind of augmentation. Is there a point where we might go too far? Might we lose the realness of our reality? Art may eventually destroy the human experience it sought to define. In contrast to Matsuda's piece, I have been heavily inspired to consider the

work of teamLab, a Japanese art collective that uses mixed reality to replicate and augment nature.
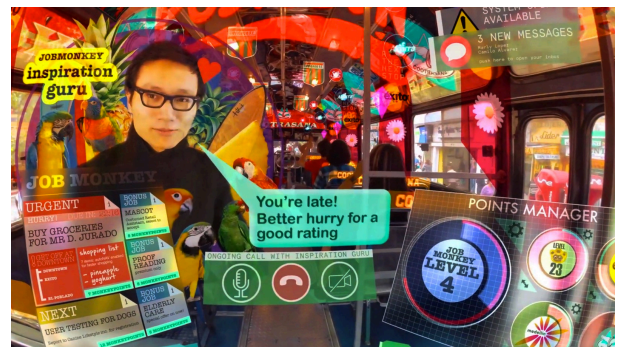
TeamLab
A Forest Where the Gods

Keiichi Matsuda
Hyper Reality

TeamLab focuses on interactive, digital art. Through careful integration of hardware and software, TeamLab blends reality and animation. This art form is not augmentative. Rather it is animistic, and upon careful urging by TeamLab's engineers, the core philosophy behind TeamLab seeks to "navigate the confluence of art, science, technology, design and the natural world." For TeamLab there is "no boundary between humans and nature." At its core, teamLab's movement is distinctly animistic. TeamLab is an attempt to not augment or separate reality into a scientific world, but rather, TeamLab's expresses reality as it might be, a boundless stream of possibilities; consider teamLab's words, "Everything exists in a long, fragile yet miraculous, borderless continuity of life." Consider technology thus as an arbiter of experience. Through art and technology, we can come to better understand our world. And through the artistic method, we come can come to expand our reality. The modern-day artist

has risen beyond painter. The artistic method is one of philosophy— seeking to define reality without finite medium, a technologist.

Additional Thoughts

Imagine life on an endless enema of Dopamine?

Sensation awoke to orgasm? Sense slipped still: sights, sounds, sensations blurred into totality? Triads tamed whole, and structure set to dissolve. The dimensions stagnant, solid, set upon ill course?

Imagine a boat on a tideless sea?

Can you classify its state? Ceaseless or stagnant, in a way, isn't it the same?

Semantic points can take one so far, but consider this, what do you call a point that is pointless? Consider as the midnight lamp burned, and the sea around you turned to oil? What do you make of this world, where light seems to fall at face? And so too does feeling turn to another? And you return, at each moment, to a question that you seem to have already answered— what state am I?

Sink back and look to the whole from whence you came. Do you recall Mother's words? Brought back, born back, by the beacons which appeared burned. Yet remain in full tack, light and you look back. We begin here, no? We arrive here, no? Like a continual stream of orgiastic pleasure?

And when the modern structure breaks, what chasm do you find?

Can you hear Mother's call?

And we begin by this rather shrill call. The question forced upon us, day by day, as if the conditions of our being have become intertwined. God is dead and our state seems without solid ground.

And as life wakes, we succumb to the moment, to a reality of our inexplicable fluidity, our inexplicable lack? For it is there, we have no bearing, and we killed our only unyielding lover?

And where does slave go without master? Here, we turn to technology, and we look to construction to fill void. Consider not the conditions of life, but the artifices which augment. Thus, it is life, now with the dullest of blades, that surrounds itself in its own making, augmentations— fanciful words, hopeful calls, dream like sensations. And there we happily reflect, and we find ourselves like a beached ship, peaceful and stagnant.

And when the tide turns, at each historical break, our ship sails no longer. Instead, it sits bolstered, with artifice at helm, over the water.

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And as we take a more realistic turn, let us again qualify our state? Mirrored, life reflects the augmented. And with technology at constant hand, is not our life reduced to an artificial state? As technology is created, reality is shown anew. In this way, if reality is continually augmented, how are we to qualify, quantify truth?

My project is one of confusion. Our definition of reality is unclear, and our interactions with it are augmented. Mixed reality, nature, objective, subjective… the line is being corroded.

> "Just as the boatman sits in his little boat, trusting his fragile
>
> craft in a stormy sea which, boundless in every direction, rises
>
> and falls in howling mountainous waves, so in the midst of a
>
> world full of suffering, the individual man calmly sits, supported
>
> by and trusting in the *principium individuationis*"
>
> - Arthur Schopenhauer