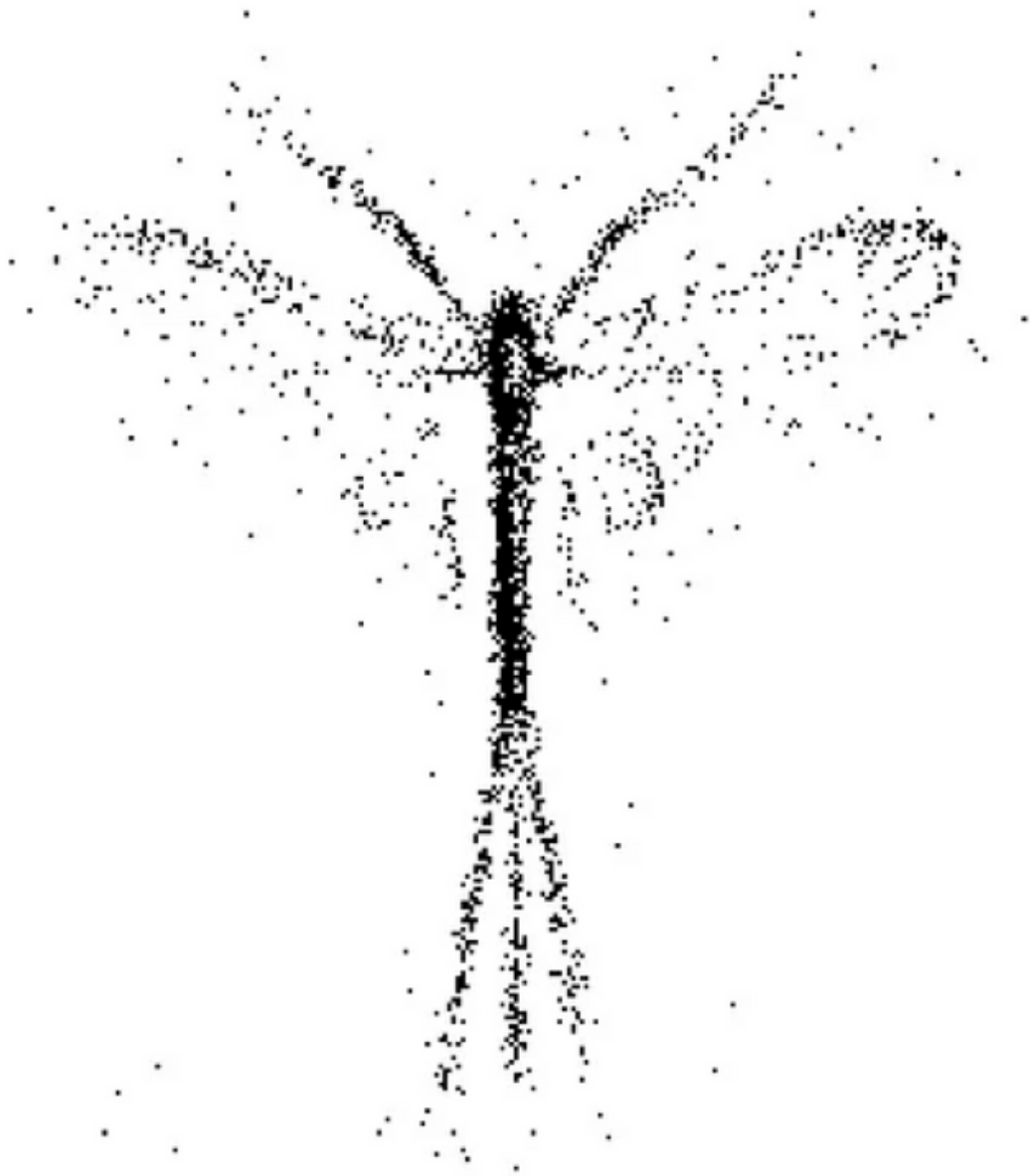


2022/2023

INSTAR

PAPER



WRITTEN BY:

Flora Lemmens

VISUAL COMMUNICATION |
PHOTOGRAPHY | 1916521

PROJECT TEAM



Flora Lemmens
Creative Director, Visual Artist



Hon Ning Cheung (Heddy)
Music Director, Composer

It is important to note that this is a duo project, made Hon Ning Cheung and me. In addition to collaborating closely with Hon Ning Cheung (Hereafter named Heddy), as the project's Composer and Music Director, we've also had the opportunity to work with a number of other talented artists and professionals who have provided support to the project. While these artists' roles are more supportive in nature, their contributions have been crucial in helping to bring our project to life. We are incredibly grateful for their involvement.

Special thanks to: Yoni Gotlibovitch, Britt Eberson, Hanne Lamon, Jos Gelissen, Stacey Sanders, Julia Caris, Casper Wortmann, Lizette Colaris and Ramzy Mechergui.

ABSTRACT

This paper delves into the concept of disconnection, exploring its meaning and possible artistic expression. Through an interdisciplinary approach, this study analyses philosophy, modern society, personal experiences, and artistic research, aiming to slowly unravel the concept of disconnection.

By exploring philosophical and ideological perspectives, this paper examines disconnection from a theoretical standpoint. It explores the works of philosophers such as Schopenhauer, Teal Swan, and ideas related to dualism, depersonalization/derealization, and solipsism. Through an analysis of these concepts, it creates a profound foundation for understanding disconnection.

In addition to philosophical research, this paper also analyzes the role of modern society in relation to disconnection. It examines the influence of individualism and technology on our sense of disconnection.

Personal motivation plays a crucial role in this project. Through introspection, the paper explores the emotional and psychological manifestations of disconnection within myself. By sharing my personal experiences, it highlights the significance of the project and its broader relevance.

Artistic research is described to show how we tried to capture the essence of disconnection. Within Artistic Approaches the paper discusses several techniques and media used to express disconnection and explores the work of various other artists. The Artistic Process is described by the step-by-step journey and experiments conducted, leading to the final artistic product.

Finally, the results are discussed, bringing together all the experiments in the virtual reality INSTAR installation. INSTAR is a virtual Reality landscape that encapsulates the theme of disconnection. Each individual can walk through the landscape and experience disconnection through non-linear visual and auditive storytelling.

In conclusion, this paper offers a comprehensive insight in the concept of disconnection through interdisciplinary research and artistic expression. By examining philosophical perspectives, analyzing modern society, sharing personal experiences, and engaging in artistic research, it provides a nuanced understanding of disconnection and its potential for artistic exploration. The paper concludes from the results that the virtual reality INSTAR installation embodies the theme of disconnection, while leaving its interpretation open for the individual viewer.

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I N T R O D U C T I O N

Imagine a moment when you feel disconnected, like you don't belong or don't fully connect with yourself or the world around you. The world seems fragmented, relationships feel shallow, and a sense of alienation and detachment fills your being. During these moments I would look at my hands, hoping they would offer me a way to reconnect.

Our hands hold a special power. With their unique lines and touch, they represent both our desire for connection and the weight of feeling disconnected. When I gaze at my hands, I acknowledge this dual nature—the longing for connection and the burden of feeling disconnected. Hands became an unexpected symbol that capture longing for connection amidst disconnection that pooled me towards creating a project about it.

Disconnection is a broad term and can mean different things to each individual. But it holds one thing in common: In today's world, it feels like the problem of disconnection is becoming increasingly prevalent. People feel more separated and detached, while the number of people with depression is rising. As an artist, I embarked on a profound exploration of the issue of disconnection, to create a better understanding of it and to create more awareness of its complexity.

In this paper, I explore the complexities of disconnection. Through research and artistic expression, I aim to unravel its layers, understand its meaning, and explore its potential for artistic exploration. By drawing from philosophy, societal dynamics, personal reflection, and artistic experimentation, I hope to shed light on the phenomena of disconnection.

"Like an instar tunneling to the surface..."

THE MEANING OF DISCONNECTION

1. The different philosophical and ideological perspectives on disconnection

As an artist, I think it is important to first discuss several philosophical concepts that lay a strong theoretical foundation for exploring the meaning of disconnection. They create a basic understanding for my broader artistic practices and the theoretical research for this paper. Moreover, they explore the relationship between the mind, the body and the world around us. In the following paragraphs I will discuss five philosophical concepts that shed some light upon the meaning of disconnection: Dualism, Schopenhauer's theory of the world as will and representation, Teal Swan's definition of disconnection, depersonalization/derealization, and solipsism.

Dualism

Dualism is a theory that states that the mind and body are two separate entities. It implies there to be a split between the physical and the mental, a distinct difference between these two aspects of the self (Dualism (Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy), 2020). Philosophers have debated this idea for centuries, of whether or not the physical and the mental operate independently of each other. Some believed that the mind and body were interconnected, while others believed they were fundamentally distinct.

Dualism can be traced back to ancient Greek philosophy. The first philosophers to talk about dualism were Plato and Aristotle. Plato proposed there to be two realms: the realm of the physical world and the realm of the forms. Aristotle had a different idea. He believed the body and soul to be separated, but at the same time intertwined. Schopenhauer there are two aspects of the world: the world as it is in itself (will) and the world as it appears to us (representation). Will is the force that brings everything to life in the universe, but it's not something that is guided by reason or purpose. It is kind of like a blind, instinctual energy. Representation is more about the way that this energy is perceived by us.

Teal Swan

Teal Swan is a spiritual teacher who has a unique idea on the definition of disconnection through her book *The Aschment of Unlenses* - How to find your way back to connection. She explains that disconnection is how sensitive we get to our own Dualism. One of the key concepts that Dualism suggests is the idea of a separation or split between our conscious experiences and the physical world around us. This creates a possible sense of disconnection, as we feel we are not fully present within our interconnected reality. Being disconnected to ourselves, other people, and the world around us, plays a big role (Swan, 2018). Teal Swan challenges the idea that disconnection is an inherent aspect of reality. Within Dualism this is believed to be true. Swan believes instead that this happens as a consequence of being wholly psychologically oriented with our own perceptions and lower our feeling to disconnection pretty nihilistic thoughts, since it says that moving on to the next topic, we have Schopenhauer's theory of the world as will and representation. Teal Swan also indirectly critiques Schopenhauer's theory of the world as will and representation by stating that disconnection is a mirage experience (Schopenhauer, 2018). She believes the will (underlying reality) and representation (our perceptions of reality). In contrast to this Swan argues that our disconnection is not inherent in the

Arthur Schopenhauer

Arthur Schopenhauer's theory of the world as will and representation is a philosophical concept that states that the world is essentially chaotic and without any purpose (Schopenhauer, 2018). He believes that the will (underlying reality) and representation (our perceptions of reality) are interconnected. In contrast to this Swan argues that our disconnection is not inherent in the

Depersonalization and derealization

Depersonalization and derealization are two related but very distinct psychological experiences. They are characterized by a sense of detachment or disconnection from oneself or the external world. This is often described as feeling like an observer of one's own life, or as if the world around them is unreal or distorted. The symptoms can be distressing and may significantly impact daily functioning.

Individualism

Individualism is a cultural and political ideology that emphasizes the individual's freedom, autonomy, and personal goals. It is a core value in many Western societies, where the individual is seen as the primary unit of analysis. This focus on personal achievement and self-interest can contribute to a sense of isolation and disconnection from others, which may exacerbate symptoms of depersonalization and derealization.

Depersonalization is the feeling of detachment from oneself, while derealization is the feeling of detachment from the external world. These experiences can be triggered by a variety of factors, including stress, trauma, and certain medications. They are often associated with a sense of unreality and a loss of connection to the world around them. People experiencing these symptoms may feel like they are watching their lives from a distance, or that the world is somehow distorted or unreal.

These experiences can be seen as extreme examples of the disconnect between the individual and the world. They represent a breakdown in the connection between the self and the environment, leading to a sense of alienation and isolation. This is often associated with a loss of meaning and purpose, and can significantly impact the individual's ability to function in their daily life.

Depersonalization and derealization are often associated with a sense of unreality and a loss of connection to the world around them. This is often described as feeling like an observer of one's own life, or as if the world is somehow distorted or unreal. The symptoms can be distressing and may significantly impact daily functioning. This is often associated with a loss of meaning and purpose, and can significantly impact the individual's ability to function in their daily life.

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"Heddy?..."

I don't think this is a good idea.

The whole point of us doing this project was based upon there being disconnection between us. I'm getting lost within the analysis of all the words and sentences I've written down. Besides, we never worked like that. It's ridiculous to pursue writing a thesis according to "the norm" if it doesn't add to the result. I don't want to platonically discuss something that was meant to be felt instead.

How about we create a paper together? And instead of the paper discussing the concept of disconnection, it represents it?

We represent it.

I'll send my idea through voice note. It's too much to type."

INSTAR

By Hans Cornelissen, Bieke Wijn Oosting

Instar is a virtual reality experience providing the viewer of the exhibition insight into a virtual world, a rich world of insects and animals, virtual reality and artificial intelligence of the exhibition.

Instar is the largest of all virtual reality experiences in the world. It is a virtual world of insects and animals, virtual reality and artificial intelligence of the exhibition. It is a virtual world of insects and animals, virtual reality and artificial intelligence of the exhibition.

Instar is a virtual reality experience providing the viewer of the exhibition insight into a virtual world, a rich world of insects and animals, virtual reality and artificial intelligence of the exhibition.

Genomineerd

Artificial Intelligence





"You know these ancient cassette tapes? People used to walk around with these very fat and flattering spotify-boxes, they called them walkmans. They disappeared after everything became digital.

The nice thing about these tapes is that they have 2 sides. Side A and side B. On the cassette player there is a button for choosing to which side it plays: to the right (A) or to the left (B).

You can rewind it or skip forward. You'll have to wait though, since it is actually rewinding the tape. It's not some digital button that instantly satisfies your need. Patience is important with these old technologies.

Normally people listen to side A and B separately or one after the other, but what if they couldn't? What if 1 audio track was cut up into small pieces, spread across the 2 sides: side A and B. You would need to listen to both, skipping from A to B and back to hear the original track. Though it would be nearly impossible to do so, given that when you listen to tape A for 1 minute it will have automatically skipped back 1 minute on tape B. Both A and B are part of the same tape but they can never fully connect.

You see Heddy? This is us. One of us represents side A and one of us represents side B. We are both part of the same, but disconnected."

INSTAR

By Flora Lemmens & Hon Ning Cheung

Instar is a virtual reality experience embodying the concept of disconnection. Embark on a journey through a captivating visual and auditory landscape, exploring the profound meaning of disconnection.

Derived from the concept of an arthropod's developmental stage, an instar represents a transitional phase between two periods of growth. Arthropods must shed their exoskeleton in order to grow or assume a new form. As humanity finds itself gradually dissolving into a parallel disconnected phase, we must "find the divinity within and emerge" (Liber Primus, p.57)

Instar serves as a meaningful reminder of the importance of connection and the challenges we face within that. As we continue to struggle with it, this project provides a starting point for further investigation and artistic practices, creating a greater appreciation for the need of interconnectedness within our human experience.

Genomineerd

Henriette Hustinxprijs



"I separated our voices. My voice is now on side A and yours on side B. When I ask a question you won't hear you answering it. You will have to look for it on the tape, if you can find it at all...

Just like in the real world a lot of questions go unanswered. They can just exist as questions on their own, disconnected from the many answers floating around us.

It's a metaphor, for the disconnection in this world. I can feel it. Are we lost?

There is a distance between things. When we originally had that conversation there wasn't. Now there is...



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Special thanks to: Ivan Golobovitch, Bill Stanton, Annie Larson, Jill O'Brien, Sherry Sanders, Julie Cain, Casper Stormann, Lisette Colara and Nancy Merzberg!



Side A:

<https://on.soundcloud.com/aqH2q>

Side B:

<https://on.soundcloud.com/cEJ4U>

Note: The digital experience through clicking on these links will give you an idea of what is on the cassette tape but it is much different from navigating through an analoge cassette tape with a cassette player. For the real experience of this thesis you can contact me directly and ask for the tape if for publication reasons. I might be able to send you one before they will be publicly available. You will need a cassette player to be able to listen to the tape.

Or visit one of my upcoming exhibitions. If instar is exhibited at the venue, the cassette tape will also be shown.