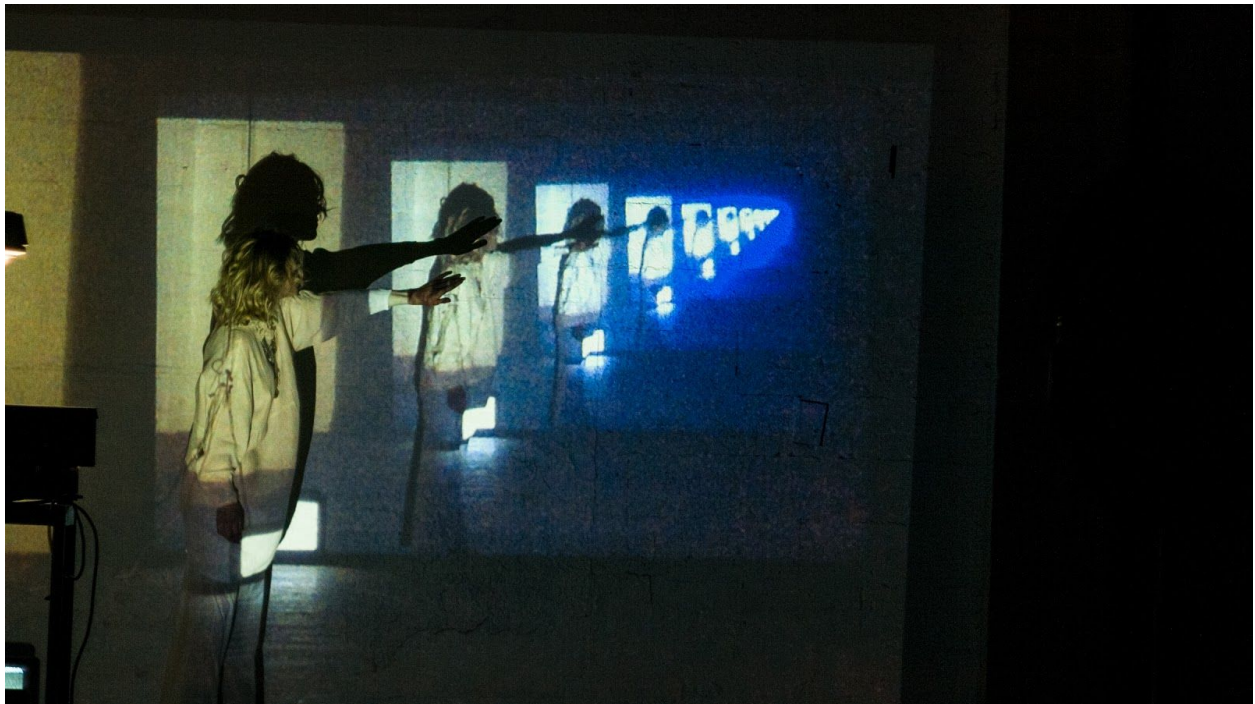


ARTIST AND ART OBJECT

The confusion into which an artist himself all too easily falls, out of psychological contiguity, to put it as the English do: as if he himself were what he is able to depict, think up, express... A perfect and whole artist is separated to all eternity from the 'real,' the actual; on the other hand one understands how he can at times become tired to the point of despair of this eternal 'irreality' and falseness of his innermost existence--and that he makes the attempt to encroach for once upon what is most forbidden precisely to him, upon what is real--makes the attempt truly to be.the typical velleity of the artist
Nietzsche



Video Feedback Experiment 3 (ArtsUp FL), *STILL*

Adorned in a white dress, seven necklaces, and alligator boots with a television playing only static, I applied myself to represent a body interacting in space for my third experiment within the fractal environment of a video feedback loop. I felt as though my selfhood, if there was such a spirit, rested somewhere else as I moved improvisationally, observed the projection, and noticed its relation to my body. In the loop, many times coexist as a moment is split through the system of projected light and real-time video. Each scaled copy of myself in the space appears above and with a slight delay of the subsequent copy, moving consecutively through the feedback loop, light accumulating and brightening with each iteration. The copies align in an array that converges at the top in empty white light. I am myself in real space and real time, in the company of delayed copies of myself, reducing to the limit of vanishment. I watch myself move in the immediate memory of the moment before and the linearity of progressing time collapses. I see myself move through the space in each copy and she seems to be being someone else, going somewhere else. Stunned, I seemed to have represented, in video experiment, my own experience of mind, time, and memory contained within this system.

My mind often elects to disconnect in an internal segregation from self, so as to disregard a nagging, sustained, and silent scream resounding in my head in real time or in remembering. In this retreat inside of myself, for many years I missed a level of complexity in the relationship between artist and art object that had been guiding my artistic process and conceptualization--made abruptly apparent in my third video feedback experiment last winter, a few months following a strange synchronicity of self dissolution and actualization catalyzed by the shamanic brew of a sacred vine that jolted me into an unexpected awareness of and as oneself within the world.

I thought I'd precisely toss all my nightmares into the matrix among the galaxies, as I had planned to witness in the sky above me, when I drank ayahuasca the past summer. I anticipated emerging to being someone else, unburdened... another version of myself that only the promised ego death on a spiritual level may accomplish--- but in this vine dream I was consumed by a black-hole-like-abyss. In the cold black night under the stars wearing a borrowed white dress 2 sizes too large, everything halted--stilled in a timeless suspension of apparent kinetic inaction--something like static friction on a particle level, absorbing force but remaining fixed in position, I experienced a certain death of self I did not at first perceive. Glimpses of the matrix in the stars dissolved; black empty space, that was neither silent nor empty but appeared so, became my mind became space and I was thrust into wakefulness with the mysterious epiphany:

I have been pretending

A deluge of tears I could not quell took my composure and I could not stand, although I did not know why. Emotion of this intensity was entirely foreign to me, but the catharsis was welcoming

and I felt more present and aware than ever--something had shifted that was too great for me to immediately comprehend. The following night I could not sleep, I cried like a young scared girl I did not know and to contain the energy and confusion within, I began the series of expression experiment finger paintings I currently paint. I felt somehow shocked by the vine into an iteration of a child-like-myself without the burden of experience, terror tailored out of my past in sewing a new soul impervious to the world and to even myself. My hands spontaneously expressed gestures in the paint that had been silenced, arrested in my physicality for years, and I cried without knowing why.

I was grieving the death of something that I now believe to be my ignorance; my ability to exist on a surface level as I had been was elusively pleasant, empowering, and freed from the gravity of remembering--in effect rewriting lingering recollections to be someone else, of a girl that may resemble me but she was not, nor were her captive emotions or her memories or even her body. In hindsight, the status quo of my past means of *being* stood in stark contrast to the naïve awareness brought online by the ayahuasca, and I began to realize over the next six months how disconnected my familiar normal truly was. In many moments I witnessed, in remembered retrospect, I was not myself fully there.

Through the summer and fall, I became dependent on the paintings, constructed intuitively in reverse and mirror image on transparent material to contain and express the emotional body I had suddenly arrived to. The tactile and immediate nature of their production made sense to my energy on a personal level, and it seemed I was representing a daydream of my perceptual space in a direct and cathartic way. A level of consciousness and complexity that I seek to imbue my work with towards meaning for an audience seemed to be misplaced, but the self-revelation was staggering enough to occupy me entirely. A lost acknowledgement of relationship between artist and art object surfaced as I had not experienced for many years.

Flashes of memories from years, weeks, or days before return to my mind and throw me, temporarily blinding my vision. Appearing behind my eyes, the self I saw from my newly-aware perspective, I do not know.

Who is that girl with my face?

She seems a stranger to me, but I kept painting her mind in my isolation. I have been looking *through* rather than at myself in the mirror for so long, it was all I knew. Frightened beyond consolation, I exert my mind towards locating myself as the subject of my own life rather than the object of an idea. Having spent the past decade in the disconnected-dissociated-mind-fuck I had been oblivious to, I run away from haunting memories as distant selves. These insights bombarded me, and the malleable sense of self contributed to me no solid identity I could grasp

onto. I remained without a nucleus, undefined and unqualified on a fundamental level of being in time and new to my orbit within and about my 29-year old body.

Memory floods knock me into their turbulent waters, and unfixed as though time-traveling, I am in my past. My eyes can see only inward and emotions displaced of time and place overwhelm me, screaming or sobbing at the air in front of my face. The random access memory experienced in vivid recall invariably becomes too much, and I subconsciously abandon my aware and present self again. In efforts of psychological survival, I hide from my reality. Self-perception shifts, manifested as another me, in a spirit reminiscent of myself in disparate times. I am always an artist, but in these extended moments I am someone different who does not contain my past. Hollowed of a history, I can feel propelled by an adrenaline and an energy not my own, as a costumed anachronism of myself dislocated within my timeline. I had been, unaware, a shifting simulacra disguised to my self as *myself*.

I could paint but my purpose deceived me; reason eluded me.

I move through a video environment, but I cannot discern relational position.

Distinction dissolves between the fixed and variable; history projects into the present.

The certain present is dropping off.

I did not understand either the relic of my expression in the paintings or my apparent objecthood within the video experiments, only the overwhelming compulsion to make. I had begun the series of video feedback experiments as research for an experiential installation and collaborative performance environment that I continue to develop, but in these months after my mind spun into a strange acknowledgement of self and memory the original intention faded in a departure of purpose similar to the paintings, wherein chromatic gestures become post-lucid depictions of unmediated mind. I seem to spontaneously occupy my art objects and locate my missing self within my art practice.

Punctuated moments of horror, confusion, and inspiration overtook my perceptual space as I begin to recognize such within my life, after the fact. In remembered retrospect, I was both myself and watching myself in a fractal structure of perceptual space in time, alarmingly depicted in the projected light of my third feedback experiment that December. It seemed I was subconsciously detailing a representation of my own experience, as emotions too great forced a shutdown of history-informed-reality and I occupied some empty sphere as someone else above the trajectory of my function, a scaled copy and disconnected iteration of self, shifting with

experience and further fragmentation through time. Each copy of myself appeared on the wall in isolation, although all were derived from the same body. As my art object, the feedback loop experiment seems to represent the liminal space between reality and an insulated redrafting of my experience on a level divergent from its intended purpose. Contending with a nascent experience of being, as an artist within, my art object attributes a new perspective on my world and persuades my mind toward memory, body, and being.



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