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A Groundless Dream in Waking

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Abstract

Depersonalization refers to symptoms of detachment from one's body, mind, feelings, and/or sensations.

Derealization refers to symptoms of detachment from their surroundings (eg, people, objects, everything), which seem unreal.

A Groundless Dream in Waking

By

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BFA, Lyme Academy College of Fine Arts, 2014

Thesis

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Master of Fine Arts in *Studio Arts*.

Syracuse University
May 2018

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I remember running from him; I remember running from them.

I ran from his windowless black van until my legs gave out. I fell hard on my knees and into the soft mud of a grass field. I could hear them coming. Fear overcame exhaustion. My heart beat against my chest. Trembling, I lifted myself up and kept running.

In a familiar forest, my exhaustion caught up with me, I hid under the roots of an odd shaped tree. I forced myself deep within the fox den. I did so quickly and silently. I turned around and waited.

I remember my body experiencing uncontrollable spasms. My hands were shaking and my breathing was deep and fast. Forcing myself flat, I tried to calm my body down. The mud covered me like a blanket; it felt humid and it smelled. I will always remember that smell; it smelled like dogs—befitting, I felt like one. I focused on regulating my breathing.

Then, I heard them coming. I remember positioning myself the best I could, thinking that if they were to find me there'd be no other exits from this place. My best chance would be to force my way through. I faced the exit my legs poised, my arms ready and I held my breath.

I watched their legs pass by; “he just wants to talk to you” they said, “you can’t refuse to talk to him.” These kids knew him. Everyone did. I grew up in a small town where people talked. They thought of my father as a terrorist, and they thought of me as an animal, as “dirt”, and they’d always remind me.

Then I heard nothing, thinking I was safe, I exited the fox den. I felt my body relax, but a sudden hit to my spine knocked me off balance and two of them pinned me down. I begged them to let go. They forced me up, and walked me back to the parking lot I had ran from. My legs were numb and limp. I remember my mind racing as they dragged me. I was trying to find a way out, looking around for any possible escape. The gang that captured me was made up of five boys; two of them were older than me, two of them were brothers, and the last one was the mayor's son.

When we arrived, I saw my father's familiar black van. Once at face with the source of my terror, he grinned. I remember the kids settling as my father stepped towards me. But running had become a knee-jerk reaction and I saw an escape. The boys let go of my arms, I ran to my right and into a group of girls smaller than me, I pushed them as hard as I could, ran into the school building, rushed down the stairs and locked myself into a small cleaning product cabinet.

I stood there for what felt like hours now, though in fact I have no true concept of how long I actually waited. The school was a big building, too big for the amount of kids. It was an old building with countless spaces for hiding and I knew all of them. Students were few, teachers were fewer, and the open hours felt unregulated. It hadn't been the first time I had used the building for hiding but it was risky. Sometimes the building was locked and I'd find myself trapped in a corner. On these occasions my tormentors won. And then sometimes the building was open, and since no kids knew the building as well as I did. When I wasn't cornered, I had a better chance at winning.

The rest of this memory is hazy. I don't know when I came out of my hiding. All I know is that I didn't get caught that day. My father was violent, unpredictable, and obsessed with his religion. He stalked me for the first twelve years of my life. His first attempted kidnapping happened when I was three, thus during the most abusive time of my parent's marriage. Luckily, my mother was cautious of a kidnapping attempt and, after finding a Tunisian passport of me in his car, had foreseen it coming.

“You can leave me but if you do, you will never see your daughter again.”

That year was the year my mother left him. One night, my half-brothers and my mother packed our bags. We disappeared for three months. One of my first memories as a toddler is coming back to my house after this long “vacation” to find it in pieces. Furniture was turned over. My bedroom devastated, following a trail of debris— shattered glass and diverse beaten objects throughout the home. Bringing me to the memory I shared with you. Hopefully making sense of why I felt so much fear that day.

I remember the constant anxiety of being trapped. Throughout my childhood it was the prominent feeling I carried on my back. I had been conditioned to fear my father and the intentions of others. This anxiety drove my heart into a clinical sickness when I was eleven, and developed into something very different in my early adulthood; the two dissociative disorders you are now familiar with: Derealization and Depersonalization disorder.

The Hunter and the Hunted

I work with space. My process is spontaneous, it is spatial interventions. The process has shown itself at times as a need to fill, to trap or to colonize. Other times, it has shown itself as a need to frame or rationalize, though these works ultimately always seem to fall apart and verge on the irrational. The overarching aim is to transcend feeling.

The black string work invaded, trapped, and escaped itself all in simultaneity. This earlier series of string work is a manifestation of the hunter and the hunted which maps quick decision making preceding a state of anxiety.

As a young adult, at the worst of my dissociation, the feeling of entrapment reached its heights as I felt it regardless of location. Whether inside spaces or outside in open air, there were no such thing as an “outside”, everything was an “inside”. But there were no perceptible external limitations to be seen, and it took me time to realize it was my mind which had become the locksmith.

I found myself re-experiencing a phantom trauma. Somehow, my mind had been projected outward and the external world had been swallowed and internalized within. The external world now lived inside of my mind. My fear of insanity comes from those moments, because when you feel trapped within your own mind nothing seems out of the realm of possibility.

My earlier process with the black string work thus rides a thin line between madness and reason. The installations are structurally harmonious chaos; they are the aftermath of a performance, not

so dissimilar to action painting as they are the residue of a presence or a performer.

In dissociation, it is common to experience a death of ego and I am no exception. The performative residue found in this early work reflected a lost sense of self. Someone I knew I should recognize within the reflection of a mirror but couldn't, literally, as I too had become an estranged presence.

In the beginning I'd often stand away from the pieces and would find myself doubting I had been the one to have done them. The pieces seemed to have an awareness of their own, mysterious in a way which de-contextualized identity; a shadow self.

In these works, the string was used as a vehicle through which I'd attempt to reattach myself to reality. I remember my first string of installations clearly and the feeling that would overtake me; such as the desperate need to connect, to grasp or understand, and ground myself. There is a compulsive component to these works, as there were not one, but several pieces attempting to achieve the same thing. Thus, repetition plays a major role in my process.

But there is another component to this series worth exploring. One which can be found in my present work as well, though shown in different ways. It is one which is still estranged to me, or somehow remains more difficult to grasp and define verbally as it may be the one major aspect of the work which feels transcendental — hence, it may remain intellectually indescribable to me. This component is simultaneity.

Simultaneity.

As in contradictions that aren't really contradictions, or contradictions that somehow coexist together in a superposed manner; like shapes both realistic and abstract, or spaces both flat yet infinitely dimensional, or electrons here and nowhere and everywhere, frozen in place and yet remaining somehow kinetic, simultaneously filled and empty, or a hunted hunter.

Dissociation Lives Within the In-between, Simultaneity

A curious symptom of derealisation is called upon, and framed by psychologists, known as "subjective distortions of reality". This idea was what I found myself combating the most obsessively. Thus, my fear of going into psychosis drove me to fact check consistently throughout the first two years of my dissociation. In the beginning I'd rearrange objects. Such as furnitures, lighting, and ornaments in my apartment throughout the week to the annoyance of my roommates, as I'd attempt to regain control.

I consider those to be my first installations.

My world was flat, wide, and objects at equal focus. Sounds were flat also, though my experience of time felt spherical and had become a kind of ever present, in a way which enhanced my feeling of being trapped.

During this time, my study was profoundly rooted in observation; I was studying the figure, landscape, and perspective. As I began to fact check some of what felt like my most irrational thoughts, I met with my perspective professor at the time. I excelled in his class, yet hadn't been following the process taught by him. A brief conversation with him led me to realize that his study on vision had led him to similar conclusions about the human perception in the construct of our physical reality, as he too had seen the world in a similar way.

What this therapist called distortions of subjective reality such as objects appearing bigger than they are, I quickly realized, was actually foreshortening, or at times a specific moment of de-contextualized understanding of faraway objects. The reason why rooms felt shrunken was because my periphery of vision had become as equally focused as my directed gaze; which revealed the reasoning behind my flattened vision, curvilinear perspectives, and the shape of my iris.

Imagine a slightly curved mirror, a slightly curved reflective disc which would allow you to see from the very far right to the very left at once — that's how I saw my mother's soap shop the first time it happened to me.

My step father, Gregg, has only one eye. He lost his other during an oil rig job which nearly killed him. His description of the first few months of recovery is similar to my dissociative experience. It took him time to accustom his impaired vision, and to be able to move around in an environment denied of depth.

My friend Adam is deaf in one ear since birth, his experience of sound is unregulated and as he often describes it “A flat film of sound where it is impossible to know where the sounds are located, and where all sounds have equal importance. White noise.”

Like Adam, my auditory understanding of space flattened. Sounds had melted together into one flat film. Spaces which contain dense auditory information such as a bar or a city landscape became difficult to process. Sounds of glasses, laughter, background noises, cars driving by, a T.V. on with the news or a game of sports, chairs moving, sounds of forks and knives hitting plates, a person talking to me, all became one singular and utterly incomprehensible sound.

Though more than anything, it was my visual experience of space that became most affected. Similarly, to Gregg, I experienced a complete denial of it. If I was laying down, looking up at the ceiling for example, and say this ceiling was equally lit; I’d feel as if I could reach and touch it by simply lifting a finger, when in fact it was dozens of feet away from me.

Perspective, foreshortening, light, and shadow resultantly became my clue to depth as I negotiated my way around environments. Light and shadow can teach us tremendously about the volume of a tree, or a round object, or an organic shape. Perspective can describe angles and pathways of a city landscape, and foreshortening in relation to perspective is very useful when in mobility.

Though my relationship with space heightened in a different way. It reminds me of early RPGS video games such as The Elder Scrolls series. These game worlds attempt to recreate nature-like environments. They have it all; the trees, the grass, the animals, the plants and flowers, but

somehow they fail to recreate a believable feeling of filled space. These game worlds feel, visually, awkwardly empty. If you've ever played such video games you might know what I'm talking about. That's how everything felt to me. The trees were there, the sun hit the sides of buildings, yet somehow my surrounding seemed to remain a simulation of itself and the world looked empty.

During these times, I found myself wondering about the volume of our collectively experienced immediate reality. Space, though ever elusive to me, proposed the idea that physical objects weren't actually physical. That space in volume, what touched every part of my body, the oxygen I inhaled, was the only substantial form of physicality I sensed to be believable. I felt space to be the mother mold of every object, dead or alive — thus including me — a kinetic, ever present malleable kind mold which connected everything. Because of this, I find myself attempting to recreate a similar feeling in my work, I use string to frame space, to emphasize it and yet at the same time to deny the viewer of its presence.

Many times during various dissociative states, had I felt this experience of vision to be sacramental or “how things truly are”. This had been what I had told my psychologist after his — what I can best describe as— biased accusation that my perception had been tempered with. I remember thinking it was rather his vision that was, not mine. That his mind was polluted with utilitarian conceptions, a psychological subjectivity of his own limited interpretation of things thus in context to how he had been taught to perceive, and in a manner which handicapped his understanding of what I was experiencing.

Today I doubt myself of course, as one's own subjectivity never fully exhausts itself. But I do

remember why I felt this way. When dissociating the brain stops naming things. It ceases to define objects' utilitarian functions and logic. Objects (including nature, and people) lose their prescribed identity and context to the point of total obliteration of meaning. As Huxley describes himself in the doors of perception, objects just are, they become. Though he and I part in the sense that my dissociative experiences were not always blissful revelations and at times subjected me to an utterly terrifying isolation. Objects just were, yes, but coexisted with me absurdly, as disturbing aliens.

The indescribable beauty I saw at times as I gazed off deep within thought while observing my surrounding environments I will always remember. Such as specks of light only visible, I had noticed, when I'd adjust my gaze just the right way. These very specks small-like particles moving into random directions, appearing and disappearing out of reality and into the sky light. Or, the alarming constant terror I attempted to manage regarding my sanity. As I felt it shiver and thin out when my feeling of being completely uprooted, without any kind of believable personal history led me to experience a constant state of "jamais-vu". Meaning; an unrecognizable childhood home and town, a stranger looking back at me in the mirror, and a mother whose face and gaze I knew to be familiar, and yet somehow completely eluded me.

It would be right for me to describe my dissociative disorder as fascinating as it is terrifying. Something I definitely found myself growing obsessed with to the point of sickening indulgence. I both have attempted to conquer it as I've reveled in it, I've wanted it gone as much as I've desperately wanted it to stay. Because as I began to feel better, my fear of personal psychosis felt like an abducted vacation compared to the outer, external madness of mankind and what reentering the collective craze meant as it began to infiltrate my mind. Today, I may have grown

away from my childhood but I haven't outgrown my urge to run. Except I now can't seem to be able to figure out which madness is the more bare-able one to run to.

The dissociative states are hard to follow. Every time I experience a relapse it is slightly different, making it impossible to map them out. I say "map them out" because I consider them to be a realm of their own. A realm in which physical laws are simultaneously inhibited and revealed, where answers are not produced literally but remain as impressions — or as I've come to think of them: impressions of knowledge.

Some suggest a sublime component living within unrealities. An existential nightmare with a transcendental potential for the self. Some speak of the ism of objects, some get lost in the painterly colors and textures, or the perspectival genius of space or the revelation of light. It's gorgeous, it's disturbing. It widens vision and narrows it. Yet I find those people's adorations upsetting, because as far as what it means to me it is at its worst a complete dehumanization of the self and perceived external world, and at its best it may be a liminal passage. Though, nothing more.

Liminal Passages

"When I look at installations as passage works, it is with the intention of capturing a specific way in which these kinds of works make use of passages and thresholds. To clarify further: installations are artworks that work with thresholds, and on threshold, between different spheres and states. Of crucial importance are the subtle transitions between the physical, aesthetically organized space constituted by an installation, and the reflecting, sensing viewer who moves

through it. These transitions regard the relationship between subject and object, structure and movement, space and ritual. The idea of installations as passage works can be used to bring out the ritual aspects of installation art.”

— “Installation Art, between Images and Stage” Anne Ring Petersen

Liminal is a term used in anthropology to describe the quality of ambiguity and of disorientation within the middle stage of a ritual. In a liminal stage, individuals stand at a threshold.

Passage is a concept which appeared in connection with post-minimalist art in the 1970s. The term refers to the body’s movement through spatial, architectonic structures.

It was actually Rosalind Krauss’ influential book on the history of modern sculpture, *Passages in modern Sculpture*, published in 1977 which first defined the term passage in this manner. Krauss defined her concept as “the experience of a moment to moment passage through space and time”. She considered the viewer’s performative participation in the work to be one with the idea of passage. It was an attempt to highlight this relationship or reciprocity between object and subject.

Bruce Nauman’s Green Light Corridor is best suitable to represent the term passage. Nauman’s piece, a narrow passage which forcibly invites the viewer into a claustrophobic corridor, guides visitors through a pressurized construction lit by green neons. In his case, the term passage is presented quite literally. In Rosalind Krauss’ eyes however, the term passage isn’t synonymous with a corridor or a room in which the viewer walks through, rather it is a bodily action, it is focused on the action of temporal movements through space inhabiting these structures.

I think of the term passage and threshold within my work as standing for both the relationship between the viewer and the work, and the very nature of the black light series.

According to Anne Ring Petersen in her book (quoted above), passage is an experience of liminality, to which she linked anthropological and art-theoretical concepts of passage. I follow this idea intimately when thinking of dissociative spaces as a kind of rite of passage from one threshold to the next, literally and figuratively so. Literally because dissociation is affected by context and is often experienced through the senses. And figuratively because it affects not only sensory perception, but intellectual and emotional perception as well as it challenges faiths and things one once assumed knowable.

Resultantly, my goal through this work is to generate an experience of bodily liminality, yet also to create a discursive platform upon which diverse dissociations can be considered. In other words, to think of it whether it be through a psychiatric diagnosis or created through collective contexts. For example: the dissociative component of media, screen time, the political turmoil of a post-fact era, isolation, etc.

What I've come to understand is that dissociation exists on a neutral spectrum; it is a vehicle though no more than one, neither inherently transcendental nor destructive. These penchants result depending upon the context through which it is generated and experienced. For it to exist as both an individual experience as well as a collective one, lives within the understanding that they are as many ways to dissociate as there are people, things, perceptions, and feelings — as well as there are reasons and precursors to create such state within oneself.

Overall, the liminal nature of dissociation is found, as I see it, in-between the fall or deconstruction of a preceding knowledge and the rise of a new one; it is a moment of disorientation, a waiting room or purgatory of some kind — before (hopefully) momentary clarity.

In this series of works, I attempt to point to the process — in its liminality — rather than ascribing to it a specific end, meaning, or “discovery”, as any attempt to do so in the past has always resulted in failure to define. Considering the work this way allows these ideas to be implied yet to remain somewhat neutral, and for the experience of these works to live within one’s individual present understanding of themselves and their surrounding.

Finally, I am not interested in gaining control over one’s understanding of such an experience, as much as I am interested in creating bridges and guides through the chaos.

Physics and strings,

The theory of everything

Soon after this experience, I became fascinated with physics. I grew enamored with theoretical concepts rooted in quantum mechanics; such as Shroddinger’s cat thought experiment, such as the inexplicable misfit between microcosm and macrocosm orbiting in relation to gravity, such as electrons — the now famous wave-particles which defied all logic and attempts of being observed in a natural state. We are made of those things, the world is too. And these things are constantly moving, changing through gaze, and space.

These ideas followed me into my first year of grad-school and, since there was no way to explore something as indescribable as electrons, any attempt to illustrate certain aspects of quantum mechanics would only result in mere caricatures. Electrons' anamorphic nature, or changing upon observation, had invited me into a spinning carousel of thoughts about the nature of physicality, and the nature of consciousness in terms of their affect and mutual participation in the construct of a shared reality platform.

Because of these ideas, my first dissociative relapse happened as I began to experiment with my dissociative states. I'd induce it by using methods such as sleep deprivation, meditation, fasting, and caffeine abuse in order to enhance the sense of non-reality. I kept a journal in which I, unsuccessfully, attempted to map my experience. I paid close attention to my senses as I moved through spaces. Like the sound of my fridge I'd let overtake me in an attempt to feel the physical action of a sound wave, or the rivers I spent hours sitting next to, feeling the directional flow of the river stream — which I felt as a current flowing within my arms and inexplicably so.

There was a growing, peculiar relationship I sensed to exist between space, time, and dissociation. Finally, it occurred to me that this popular idea of consciousness being an “ever present”, thus superposed with a dissociative sense of absence created a feeling within me of inherent contradiction. This feeling may have contributed to the sense of unreality. I felt this experience of an unstable reality and my awareness of it to be similar to what I had imagined an electron to exist: here, everywhere, and nowhere.

Quantum mechanics taught me about dimensional theorems, guided me to string theory, and the

theory of everything, or how each dimensions folded upon themselves with each additional letter within an equation. Axis X and Y was the makeup of the second dimension, axis X, Y, and Z was the third, and axis X,Y,Z, in addition to time was the fourth.

String, a three dimensional line, if used correctly could bridge lower dimensional theorems.

The absolute foreground,

Through the reflective nature of translucency

There is a veil that separates my living room from my bedroom. This is not a metaphor, my bedroom is not segregated by a door. Instead, the threshold is parted by a pinned, very thin piece of translucent yellow ochre cloth. Through it, you can see the bedroom, the windows and the clothing on the floor.

There are two ways of looking at the setup. The common way guides the experience by looking through it and into the bedroom — or — focuses on the tightly drawn designs embedded onto it. Either way, the gaze draws out certain elements and focuses its attention onto a particular aspect of the experience. There is however another way in which it can be observed without canceling out any components; the space behind it, the designs, the cloth itself — all can be observed together at once. Hence in doing so, allowing the piece of cloth to become one solid object.

When looking in this way, the background becomes an image hardly distinguishable from the embedded designs. The ripples of the cloth flatten as well and begin to be perceived as vertical

streaks of darker yellow ochre or brown. Then the cloth reveals a curious component, light.

The cloth no longer invites the vision through, the gaze rests upon the luminous surface, and it is at this moment that the translucent veil reveals its reflective nature.

Scientifically, vision has everything to do with light. First, light passes through a protective sheet called the cornea then into the lens. Light gets bent and focused down into a point on the retina at the back of the eye, which is covered by millions of light-sensitive receptors known as rods and cones, this allowing one to see.

Similar to the reflective nature of translucency, we do not look into spaces. Rather, as I've come to think of it, spaces are reflected onto the gaze through the conduction of light. The observation of light itself is blinding, and it becomes the ultimate foreground; it pierces through the retina.

In my work, I think of light and shadow as foreground and background. The luminous string comes forward, and the black lights hide everything else into the back-ground. String under black light isn't merely lit, unlike white light, which, if used on string would create shadows and, resultantly, dimensionality. Black light doesn't project light onto the string, but rather generates light within it and at equal measure. In this way, as there are no shadows and no grades of lighting, the string becomes laser-like, the ultimate foreground as it inhibits any sense of dimensionality.

An immeasurable black

The blacker something is the more infinite it becomes. Common black hues are usually measurable unless we consider nano-black, a hue owned by Anish Kapoor which absorbs 98% of light. The closest I've been able to come to as far as the color black is regarded, thus to an immeasurable blackness, is through the use of black light. Black lights in combination with black paint almost completely deny all light onto the surface of a wall (rather than absorb it). Thus, instead of using Kapoor's unique hue, it is the natural darkness of a room which is put forward.

Furthermore, the relationship between light and shadow can become interesting when used in a manner which questions the traditional foreground/background. Like a thick outline around an object or a figure within a painting's foreground. The color black if used untraditionally can further contribute to the flattening of space.

The work plays with this binary, between light and shadow, between light projected onto gaze and darkness swallowing understanding. Both aspects find equal importance for dissociation to remain in the in-between tension of opposites.

An individual's experience of time

The importance of passage in this work is rooted in the importance of the anamorphic, individual experience of time.

While there is only one concept of linear time within classical theoretical physics, while a clock

frames time upon a societal platform, and while the sun rise is in accordance with the greater scale of time such as nature's rhythm and the rhythm of our mortal bodies; within one's awareness, time is something experienced privately. Time morphs, fastens, slows down dependently upon emotional, physical, and intellectual contexts of an individual's experience of living.

Even though I understand it is an artist's main hope to behold a viewer's attention for more than thirty seconds, few works of art have done this for myself. To me, beholding someone's attention and getting them lost in the act of perception is of main concern. Resultantly, the goal in this aspect of the work is to trap a viewer's awareness and attention.

In order to do this, I was inspired by an idea shared with me by Johnathan Aprea, a poet, who had described an idea in one of his works. It was called the poetic moment:

“The poetic moment is an illusion that precedes knowledge. When an illusion succeeds knowledge it is religion.”

The use of illusions is in accordance with the dissociative concept of unreality. The work entertains the idea of an illusionistic veil which separate the mind to a different reality. This illusion, as I see it, is created by an individual's sense of self, which may be rooted in survival, conditioned by context, or of personal attributions of meaning ascribed to things encountered. Once the “veil” lifted and a total obliteration of meaning occurs, the theory is that the act of seeing itself will then reflect layers upon layers of infolding illusions which may be bottom-less.

Thus in a manner in which an individual may never discover the “true” form of things.

One optical illusion dies quickly and is fairly hollow. It is a quick trick of the mind easily dismissible after its first encounter. A series of superposed illusions however, combined with non-illusionistic shapes made of the same medium and of the same visual language, if complex enough, might transform the work into something very different. A unite body kinetic in passage.

Body sensitive kinetics

The black light series embody anamorphic rectangles through perspectival designs; at times illusionistic and at times not, are created through the use of a technique I’ve developed over time. This technique gives these static geometries a sense of movement, as they grow, shrink, or fall apart depending upon the viewer’s body movements through space.

The installations may be hard to document since they were never intended to be viewed from one angle. They are semi-kinetic, meaning: static spatial structures that become movement as one moves through spaces. Should a viewer stay still the installations would remain still with them. Should a viewer sit down or move through, a viewer would then be met with a change in the piece, or a different piece altogether. In this way I thrive to crystalize and unite space, time, and body.

The Fallacy of Perception

Now that I’ve described methods of constructions, I hope to have expanded understandings of

how I consider each of these mediums and processes in the making of the installations.

In the end, all the mediums are variables. My process of making has never been pre-calculated in the sense one makes a 3D rendering of a piece to apply it onto actual space. This has never had any pulling to me. Rather, all of the installations that have been made after black lights were introduced have been tests. To pursue a running question of how all of these elements, or variables, interact with each other within spatial interventions.

It would be right to say that my goal with this work is to create worlds rather than enhancing the pre existing environments. To create an environment in continuous change, to stretch liminal passage in time like an elastic. To create a kind of alternate reality within our own, a reality in which perceptually visual world laws are extracted and condensed to their quintessential. So far, I've come to introducing just a few; space, light, darkness, perspective, and movement. And I am still testing, unsure about my own theories.

These installations are what I've experienced our reality to be: sets. Lastly, I'm interested in a kind honesty, I'm not looking to hide illusions and processes as many of other artists working with perceptions have done in the past. Rather, I'm interested in exposing them.

Because that's the point — to expose the fallacy of perception.

Throughout the process of writing this thesis, some questions I had prior to this writing found answers, while others raised and multiplied. Like the question of perception beyond the humanly conceivable, perception outside of the body — beyond looking.

Because you see, I thought that my dissociation had revealed something about the makeup of our shared reality in its general construction of depth. When actually — and this is a new realization — dissociation may have done no such thing. Rather than deconstructing anything of the external world, it may have simply revealed how *we* construct and understand reality's composition. Perspective is something of a fallacy, we know that, a human construct barely — if at all different — from numbers and equations to speak of the otherwise illiterate natural world (this includes man's world). In addition, we now know that perspective was conceptualized in human translations in problematic ways when we consider why, where and when these concepts found page and ink.

I also used to think rectangles defined human constructions of interiority and concepts of order. The endless list of things made of shapes though differing in materials, contexts, utility, and meanings. I used to think of the rectangle as an emblem of some kind, one which could put forth the world of women and men and societal perception. I had thought of verticality as something of the west seen in the sky scrapers and economic ideals, as I had considered verticality verses horizontality to be in connection to predator verses pray mentalities. While some of these consideration may have root in something, or are interesting enough to be looked into further something else came to mind.

Rectangles and perspective, together, seem to only speak of one thing: stability. Or our perception and need for it anyway. This is the appropriate way to end this paper, to speak of my relationship toward perceptual stability and my intention to break it using the very perceptual laws which creates its illusion. We already know thanks to physics that reality is layered and

complex on a microcosmic level, but just like perspective, our understanding of such

complexities is through the human translation of it. We do not know what any of it looks like. We are presented with images and graphics that are not real, but we take them as actuality. Just like what makes the color white on a T.V. screen — an illusion made up of three colors.

What if outside of our human conception this reality was far from stable? And what would happen if one found a way to shatter the illusion?

These are the questions I ask myself.

My relationship to perceptual stability is something of a trap. There has to be some irony in being stuck in a dissociative unreality trying to reconnect to a grounded, shared one, and doing so through perceptual illusions. Which brings me to the last question I ask myself. By now I feel that I have established some of my most intimate downfalls and delusions; by now, I hope to have established the possibility that rationality is based on facts that are in continuous change, standing on an artificial ground within the groundless, a human construction for the purpose of commonality and sensical decision making but that lives off faith fuel as any other ideology. So, it makes wonder truly, exactly how delusional are you?

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