

Trauma Machines

Bodies Without Organs - An Embodied Mixed Reality Experience

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ABSTRACT: *"We live in the world of data, information, and viruses. Algorithms making calculations, making decisions. In a certain way, the city of today is a very traumatizing city, where perhaps the real human is inside the databases, not here."*(Colomina & Wigley, 2016)¹

Similar to what William Gibson dreamt of in his 1984 cyberpunk novel, *Neuromancer*: The ubiquitous machine that came with its own cyberspace in which people are born and connected with machinic intelligence that has its own modes of perception, modes of governance, and constructing new post-human subjects. Warren Neidich draws upon how the brain and body turned into sites for continuous data production. Individuals became cognitive labourers in front of luminous pixels in which human substances, such as nerves, attention, navigation, and cognitive processes, are inexhaustible material resources for the growth of the networked society. This displays itself in daily technological rituals as when we are reminded to verify our humanity with our selfie cameras function as biometric face scanners or when we casually log in to our Cloud personalities. As our bodies and brains leak between in real life (IRL) and the online culture (URL), transforming us into multiple

¹ Beatriz Colomina & Mark Wigley, *Are We Human?*, Lars Muller Publisher 2016

schizo-selves, we become what Deleuze once called **bodies without organs** “*who trade attention in exchange for global infrastructural services that provide each of them a fixed and formal online identity and a license to use its services*”².(Bratton, 2015)

For Deleuze and Guattari, every actual body has a limited set of traits, habits, movements, affects, etc. But every actual body also has a virtual dimension: a vast reservoir of potential traits, connections, affects, movements, etc. This collection of potentials is what Deleuze calls the BwO. To “**make oneself a body without organs**,” then, is to actively experiment with oneself to draw out and activate these virtual potentials. These potentials are mostly activated (or “actualized”) through conjunctions with other bodies (or **BwOs**) that Deleuze calls “becomings.”

Bodies without Organs is an Embodied Mixed Reality Experience examines the potentiality of these “becomings” in a fully embodied virtual dimension overlapped onto the physical one, where senses of **cognition** and **proprioception** are perceived as digitally embodied agents in the world stripped from their biological origins. Thus, It aims to open a speculative territory of discussion on how ubiquitous technologies are affording new modalities of spatiality comprised of human and nonhuman experiences within vast mediascapes. Deleuze exemplifies **BwOs** in **Francis Bacon: The Logic Of Sensation** as follows: “*The body without organs is opposed less to organs than to that organization of organs we call an organism. It is an intense and intensive body. It is traversed by a wave that traces levels or thresholds in the body according to the variations of its amplitude.*”³ (Deleuze, 1981) The Installation demonstrates this type of **BwOs** inside the Mixed Reality Experience. It offers an embodiment of a virtual proprioceptive body that aims to synchronize with cognitive, proprioceptive, and tactile processes of visitors through its spatial computational abilities, in the style of Francis Bacons' dysmorphic painting figures, using 3D VQGAN displacement shaders.

2 Benjamin H. Bratton, *The Stack: On Software and Sovereignty*, The MIT Press 2016, Cloud Layer p.110

3 Gilles Deleuze *Francis Bacon: The Logic of Sensation*, University of Minnesota Press; First edition (June 15, 2005)

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Virtual Human

Valdemar Munch - VQGAN+CLIP Neural Network Architecture

Artificial Images in style of Francis Bacon

IBM Watson Cognitive Cloud Computing

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