Come closer!
– online exhibition at <https://online.officeimpart.com/>
up from October 2020

Aarati Akkapeddi, Raphaël Bastide, Bob Bicknell-Knight, Stine Deja, Constant Dullaart, Anna Ehrenstein, Will Fredo, Jonas Lund, Tristan Schulze and Yadichinma Ukoha-Kalu

There are different approaches to proximity. While physical closeness can be measured simply physically with a spatio-temporal perspective, emotional closeness to a counterpart is always experienced in a purely subjective way between people. And even the closeness to oneself can be felt in so many different kinds of ways and is such a complex subject that it could fill bookshelves only with guidebooks on this subject. Sometimes it takes a certain distance to get closer to oneself or to a topic. As a consequence, the feeling of closeness always has to do with space and room, with distance and detachment from oneself and others or even with social affiliation and social acceptance.

Today's technologies have significantly changed our relationship to space and time and therefore also our perception of closeness has taken on new dimensions. Despite great physical distance, we communicate in real time. We are always available, act in a simultaneity of information, are part of diverse networks. On many levels the feeling of distance becomes marginal. But what does this mean for our feeling of closeness? Do these developments really bring us a little closer or do the new possibilities only seem to bring us nearer? How do I feel closeness to others through the digital tools? Can networks create proximity? Can digitally generated facial expressions, which are based on human mimics and gestures, create emotions?

The artists of the exhibition „Come Closer Pt.1" refer in different ways to the topic of closeness and in their works they deal with questions of empathy, emotions, self-reflection or self-optimization. On display are works by Aarati Akkapeddi, Raphaël Bastide, Bob Bicknell-Knight, Stine Deja, Constant Dullaart, Anna Ehrenstein, Will Fredo, Jonas Lund, Tristan Schulze and Yadichinma Ukoha-Kalu. The online exhibition „Come Closer Pt.1" with exclusively digital works will be followed by a second part with an exhibition in a physical space.

Aarati Akkapeddi
Generative Memorial Flower System for The CLOUD9 Memorial Garden,
2020
HTML, CSS, Javascript, P5.js

The CLOUD9 Memorial Garden is a space for collective remembrance with care, gentleness and respect. Pandemic times limit how we can gather to mourn and remember. During periods of mass loss and isolation, creating intentional spaces to enact and celebrate collective memory is vital. Our community continues to plant new seeds for all of ours that we have lost in this time, due to state violence, due to Covid and due to the continued systems centered on harming Black people, Indigenous people, brown people, low income people, trans people, undocumented people, and marginalized people. In this garden, each flower is unique to its dedication. We invite you to transform personal grief into collective healing, growth and liberation.


my pre_2020 hopes and dreams

[Anna Ehrenstein](#)
[Real Thomas Metzinger, 2017](#)
Video, 3:38 min

In the two-part video work „Real Thomas Metzinger", Ehrenstein reflects our perception of our own „true self", which, according to neuroscientist and philosopher Thomas Metzinger, always remains just a construct of our brain and can never correspond to reality. Ehrenstein performed her own rhinoplasty on Instagram and used her nose splint to present various images of women, after her followers seemed to know best whether the new or the old nose corresponded most closely to her „true self". In a very humorous approach, Ehrenstein asks the nevertheless serious question: How can mass culture be so sure of the „true self" when neurological constructions of personal reality and consciousness cannot be definitively understood even by the current state of neuroscience?grief into collective healing, growth and liberation.
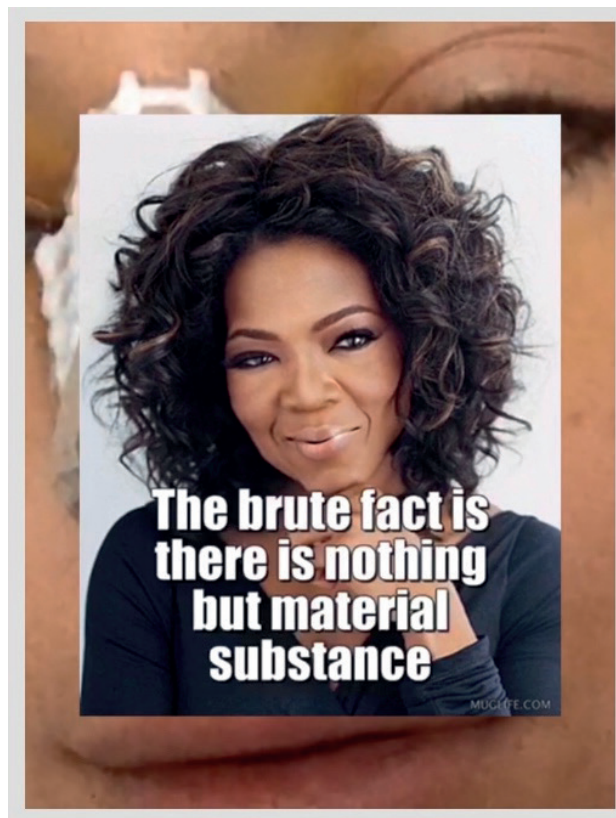
[Bob Bicknell-Knight](#)
[I Wish I'd Been Born a Balloon, 2020](#)
HD video with sound, 09:44 min

Bob Bicknell-Knight's new video work „I Wish I'd Been Born a Balloon"
centres on the life of a nano drone, a tiny unmanned aerial vehicle that
is primarily used in military operations. Throughout the video, the device
reflects on its own existence and laments its primary purpose, wishing to
be played with rather than deployed in combat zones, and speaks about
the history of drones in relation to various wars. The work utilises footage
captured from within the world of the 2013 video game Grand Theft Auto
V, widely renowned as one of the most accurate digital simulations of the
physical world.

Constant Dullaart
Detour World, 2020
interactive website

Detour World contains the tactility of a digital map, nostalgically planning a route we have travelled before. With restricted international travel because of the COVID-19 pandemic, these dreams of walking the planet take place in a different light. The default route is set to Mark Zuckerberg's daily commute as suggested by Google Maps. While Facebook and Google discuss making user data available to combat an infectious disease, the bright technological future fades like an old photograph. With each browser rendering this trip differently, we encourage you to travel your own route through memories of when the world seemed open and at your fingertips, while in lockdown. Detour World is part of a series of essays and artist contributions that together form an interdisciplinary study into how we feel and touch in our technologically mediated, dematerialized digital cultures and how this is expressed in our social and artistic practices.
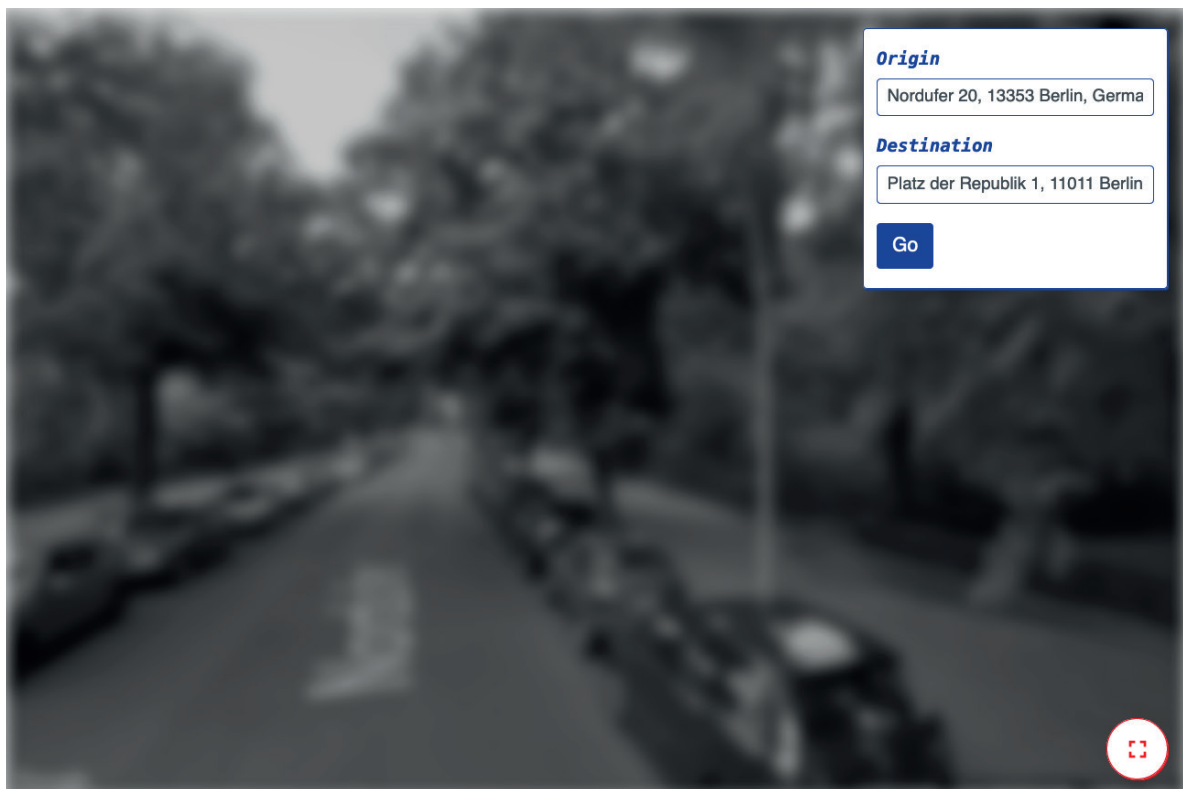
Jonas Lund
We Watch Ourselves Watching, 2020
a self generated series of 7 websites

„We Watch Ourselves Watching" is a network of websites all connected through their visitors, each unique in its presentation, yet connected and influenced by each other and what occurs in their space. Based on the experience of isolation that many people have had in Covid-19 times, Lund asked himself: although everyone sits alone in his room and everyone stares at his own screen, are there still any parallels in our everyday life, that connect us? A simultaneity of moments that unite us beyond spatial separation? Are we all connected by the same experience of isolation in the end? We Watch Ourselves Watching is about revealing the loneliness as well as being together at the same time.
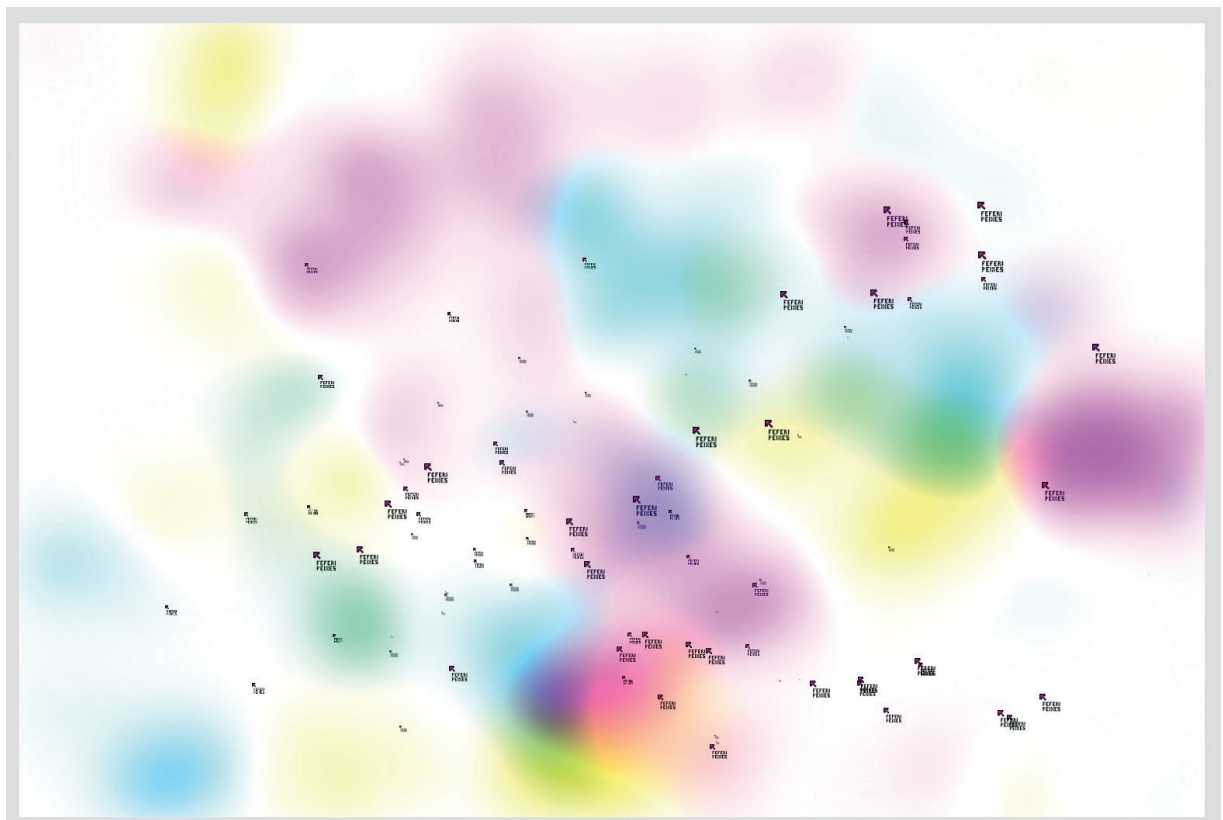
Raphael Bastide
empathi.cc, 2020
HTML, CSS, Javascript, generative sound

The ability to understand and share other people's feelings and problems is known as empathy. On the web page empathi.cc, artist Raphaël Bastide created a graphic element which can be moved and can mimic graphic attributes from its neighbors. The style transfer of this graphic element is considered as a technical equivalent of empathy, where the distance bet-ween objects triggers graphic mutations. Consequently, the main graphic element gets affected by an accumulating memory of style properties de-pending on its path.
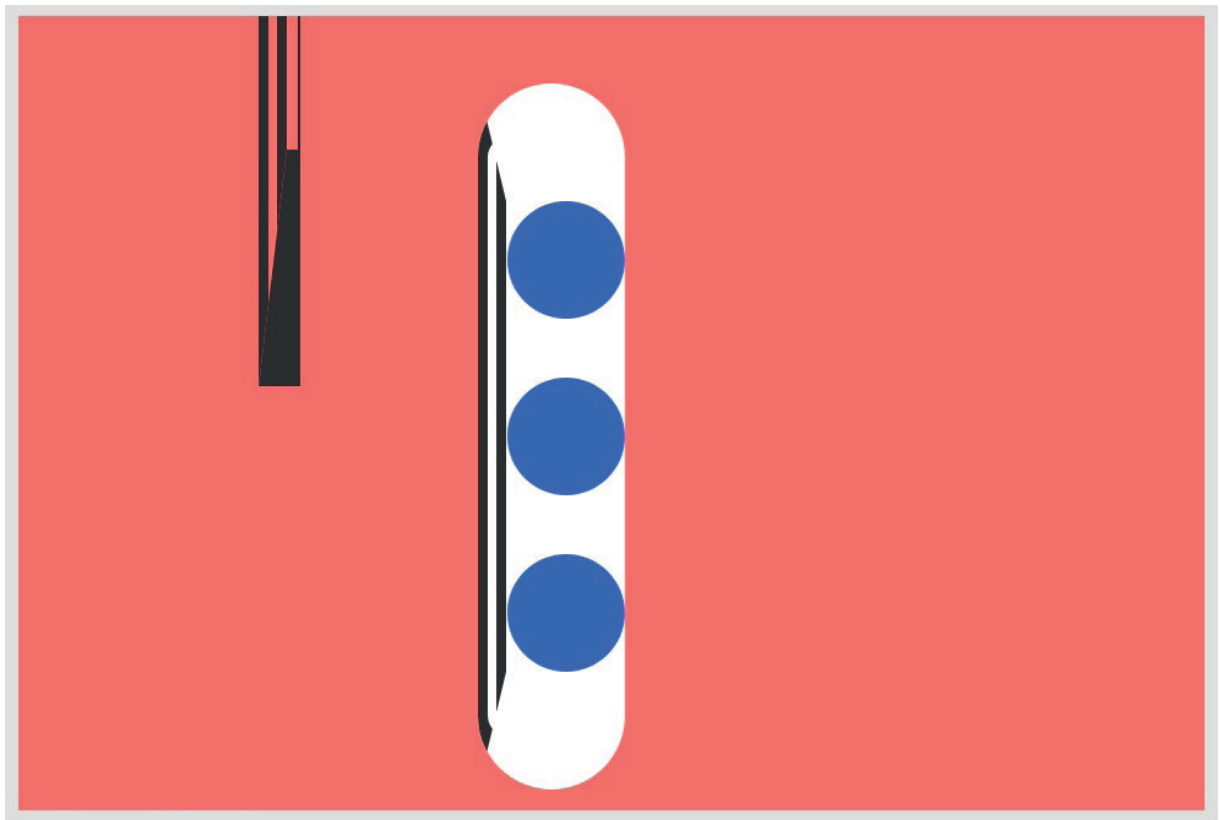
Stine Deja
4K Zen, 2017
Video II (Relaxation video), 11 min 38 sec
Dimensions variable Ed. 1 of 3, 1AP

With the 4K Zen 'distraction installation', artist Stine Deja offers visitors an escapist route away from stress into a safe and relaxing state of mind. The work is based on scientific studies which have revealed that we are more relaxed when we watch TV than when we sleep and that this 'passive active' state actually reduces our cortisol levels. Therefore, the immersive experience of 4K Zen requires the user to surrender themselves to the screen's soothing imagery. In this way the mind passively enters a state more restful than sleep. 4K Zen can be understood as a 'stress diet' that promises an escape from the complexity of modern life by combining the wisdom of meditation and infomercials.

Tristan Schulze
SCREENTEST, 2020

SCREENTEST shows an experimental, interactive dialogue between man and machine. The work invites the viewer to interact with a digital avatar, in the form of a continuous, algorithmically generated dialogue. The dialogue is controlled by the user via touch or click and works with text and dialogue fragments generated from a database of song lyrics and chat histories. The avatar's facial expressions are controlled by an algorithm based on the course of the dialogue. The basis for this is the „facial action coding system" (FACS) which is used in psychology to describe basic emotions. In SCREENTEST, the relationship between man and machine is playfully explored by the visitor, who becomes an actor in a constantly varying action.
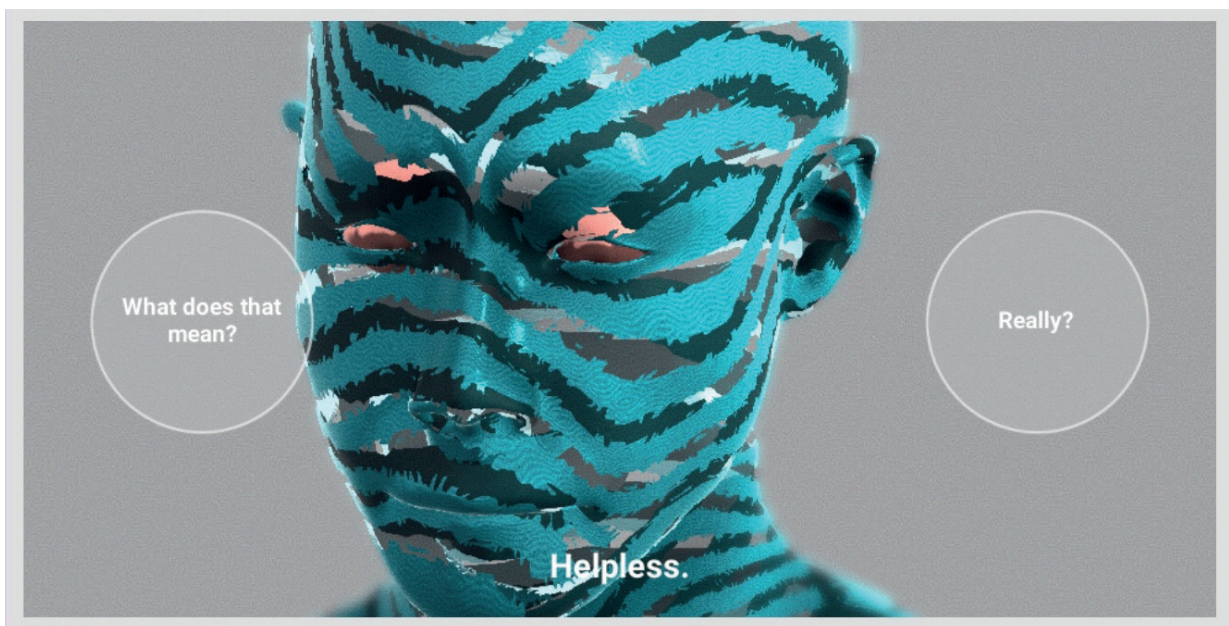
[Will Fredo](#)
[Enclosures, 2019](#)
Video, 21:10 min

https://vimeo.com/456932316/a733edfa6b

"Enclosures" questions two bubbles we might live in: the art bubble and the western bubble. For this film the artist interviewed seven locals in Beijing and Shanghai whom he met via dating apps. They answered the same questions on a range of topics from love life, to late-capitalism and anthropocene, detailing their first memories of these terms. At at time when capitalism offers global solutions in the form of ubiquitous products, what subjectivities prevail? By asking these questions, artist Will Fredo reflects the meaning and influence of certain buzzwords prominent in global arts circles, from the perspective of young men who live in Chinese metropolises.
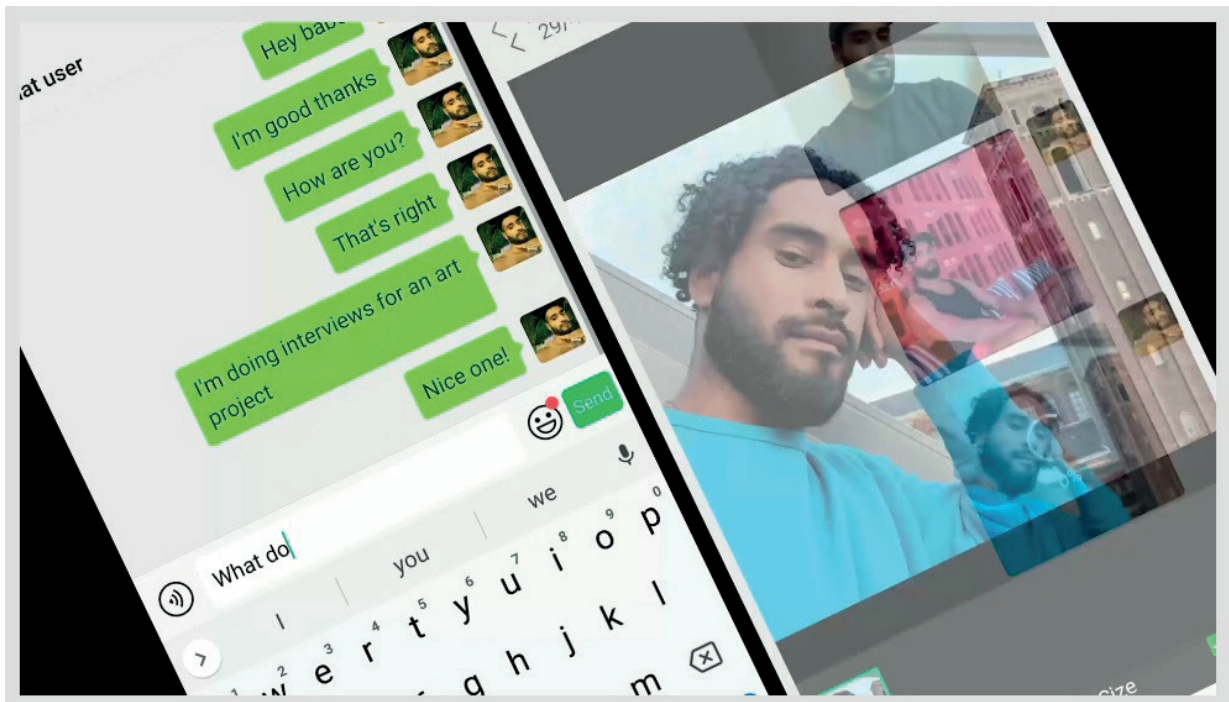
Yadichinma Ukoha-Kalu
GREEN SCREEN, 2020
Video, 3:44 min

The work „GREEN SCREEN" plays with the word „green", which both de-
scribes the color of the plants and captures the term „green screen",
which like the camera, iMovie, Voice Recorder or Instagram is an important
tool and is often used in Ukoha-Kalu's work.
With self-recorded videos and photos, the artist sets out in her immedia-
te surroundings on Lagos Island, the central part of the city of Lagos, in
search of the „paradisiacal" idea of a garden.
The artist transplants the sparse flora of the city into a virtual space and
backgrounds it with a combination of natural and artificial sounds, in order
to imagine the ideal garden. The transplanting is the process which allows
the change of the real world into an artificial one with the possibility to
approach the ideal ideas.