

# Metaphysical Environments

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**ABSTRACT:** Metaphysical Environments situates itself at the flux/integration of body and technology. Technologization of the body is a nonlinear concept. Don Ihde reflects about technology as it is concretely present in our daily existence and ask what form of world disclosure is made possible by the technological artifacts<sup>1</sup>. The research explores the medium of immersive and virtual environments in relation to an amorphous, dematerialized representation of the human body. It posits an enactive immersive environment, a dynamic body-technology-embodiment where the human body is a participant of the system living and acting with the environment instead of just using it.

The project Disquiet Objects is inspired by the Covid lockdown looking at the uncertainty of the time and visualizing the developed emotions in an immersive experience. It investigates the concept of uncanny as an emotion to the constructed environment of a residential apartment.

In the times of the lockdown, the residential setup takes up multiple roles of living, working, sleeping, socializing, entertainment, and relaxing. The objects of the house like bed, chair, table, dining tables, sofa are used for multiple functions. It is being repetitively repurposed in the real and the virtual zoom and skype world of communication. Leading to the blurring of boundaries between the mental and physical, real, and imaginary, living and non-living. The project views the uncanny from the perceptual perspective of the space of the inhabitant. A continuous state of being in this environment elides the edges of the living and the non-living to provoke a disturbing ambiguity a slippage between waking, dreaming, and sleeping. A state of elision, visualizing a familiarly unfamiliar perspective of the house as distancing from reality caused by reality.

Disquiet Objects is a multisensory location-sensitive project. The projection mapping on the wall with the furniture setup presents an already uncanny situation of a residential apartment. A dream-like set with multiple light conditions and varied visuals brings out a sense of the strangeness of a familiar setup looking unfamiliar.

The virtual world gives a tactile, embodied experience of the feeling of uncanniness and melancholia. The visual language has a dreamy scenography where the same familiar apartment setup becomes uncanny in the virtual with the change of colors, textures, and materiality. The inanimate objects pick up animate living behaviors that one can interact with. The body inside the headset has an amorphous representation. All the objects in the virtual are seamlessly blending/ merging into one another. The viewer feels a sense of being an object itself in a room along with other objects thereby losing the sense of self and ego and coexisting with the environment.

Architecture articulates the experience of our being in the world and strengthens our sense of reality and self<sup>ii</sup>. Disquiet Objects is a speculative project that whether immersive experiences can change our everyday narratives of relating to objects in the house whereby affecting our perception of self and reality?

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<sup>i</sup> Ihde, Don. 1990. *Technology and The Lifeworld: From Garden To Earth* (Indiana Series In ThePhilosophy Of Technology). Indiana University Press.

<sup>ii</sup> Pallasmaa, Juhani. 2014. *The Eyes Of The Skin*. Chichester: Wiley