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Kaleidoscope and Disco Balls

Ileana Crim & Noé Herrli

I have been lost for a while now, wandering through this labyrinth of mirrors, reflections all around as far as I can see. Overwhelming masses surrounding me with their unfathomable presence. Or is it their absence? Each prism crushed and absorbed by the next one. Reality is diffracted here, shredded into shards and tossed back in every direction, like light on a disco ball.

Meandering through this constellation, I am left unable to grasp what I want to see. Distinguishing between real bodies and their reflections is almost impossible. Identifying their location with precision has become a game which I cannot win, as the duplicated images float and emerge, dislocated from their surroundings.[1] Nothing stands out here, as each street seems to be a copy-paste of the next one, merging and melting into a ubiquitous network. I am hovering in a stream of reflections, looking for a tangible reality to hold on to but I perceive only an infinite grid of windows flying all around.

I want to escape this dazzling maze, I move on, but every new surface adds to the physical realities, absorbing the reflected reflections and throwing them back on to the fictional mirror's reality.[2] A dull feeling of nausea begins to gnaw at me inside and a sense of foreboding tells me that the mirrors have defeated me. I want to find the way out, but I am not sure that it even exists. Anxiety cripples me, I am condemned to this sensation, this feeling of placelessness. I fear never to find places that are reassuringly unechoed and unabsorbed anymore.

The computers populating the other side of the glass have no such fears, as they only create and process

Untitled, 2021. Image: authors

data, for they are in their element, while I am not in mine.[3] This environment, analogous to their inner-workings, makes me wonder whether they are its sole creators. The faceless buildings function like computers without interfaces, only understandable by themselves, speaking their own language, beyond the comprehension of a human user.[4] Neighbouring images are fed in to be spat out in an ever expanding loop. Input, output, input, output, input, output...[5]

A car passes by. I can see the back lights drift away, whereas the headlights seem to be coming at me, their image reflecting in the facade at the end of the street. I see the four lights projected on the other end as I turn around. They ricochet all around from one glazing to the next, creating an infinity of luminous points gliding onto the cold surfaces. The driver brakes, projecting an explosion of red eyes, all staring at me. The kaleidoscope stops as the machine turns and disappears behind the corner.

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