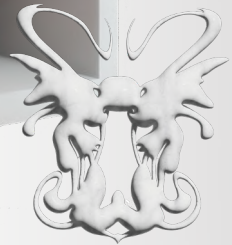


Portfolio of Design Practice



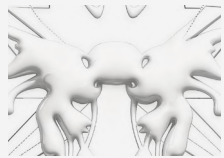
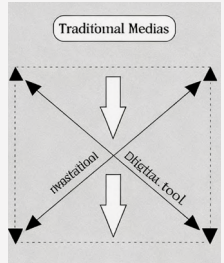
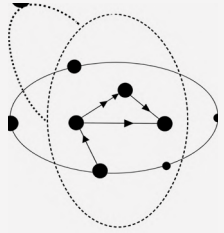
Synesthetic Skin *A Posthuman Visual Narrative*

Project Summary

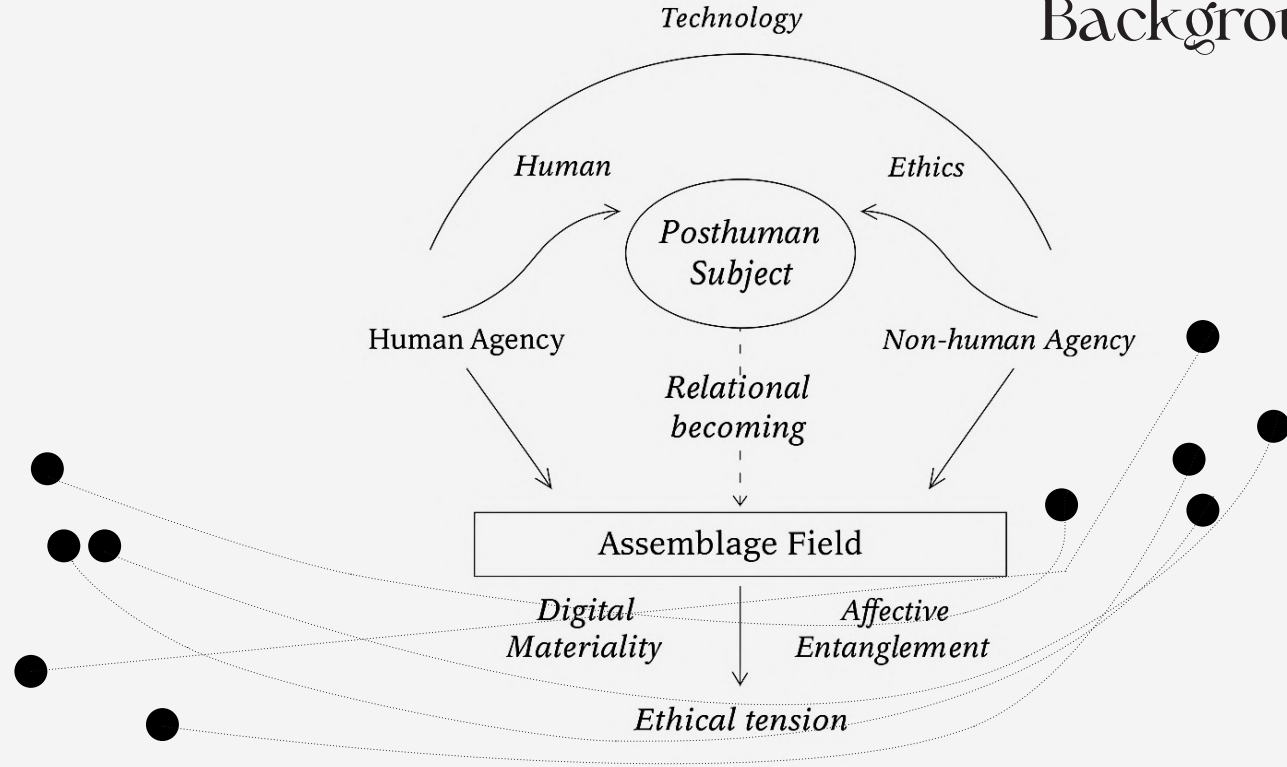
This project explores how the human body is shaped by Socio-technical influences within the context of Future Human–Machine Intelligence, and investigates how we might use this “bodily structure” to form new relationships in the future. Through mediums such as virtual digital humans, visual narratives, and AR masks, the work creates a visual experimental space that invites viewers to reflect on their own position within the digital environment. Drawing on Doreen Massey’s (2005) theory of “space as process,” the project understands space as a dynamic field co-generated by body and technology. From this perspective, it begins with the fluidity between virtual and real, breaking down binary oppositions and presenting a state of symbiotic and continuous perception—guiding audiences to recognize that they too exist within a life network composed of data and code. Ultimately, the project constructs a visual experiment of human–machine symbiosis and posthuman perception.

SYNESTHETIC SKIN A POSTHUMAN VISUAL NARRATIVE

Background



Rosi Braidotti, The Posthuman (2013)



With the rise and widespread application of Artificial Intelligence (AI), traditional methods of image-making have been profoundly disrupted.

This transformation has given birth to new visual forms and modes of communication, challenging established creative processes.

In response to this shift, my work seeks to explore and redefine the boundaries of image-making. By engaging with AIGC (AI-Generated Content) technologies, I aim to experiment with alternative modes of image generation and reconstruct the relationship between human perception and algorithmic creation.

This exploration serves as a foundation for my postgraduate final project, which investigates the evolving dialogue between humans, machines, and visual expression.

Preface



“Through the narrative of virtual digital humans, this project constructs a scenario of future **human-machine coexistence** to explore how the modes of interaction between **humans and intelligent machines may be redefined** ? ”

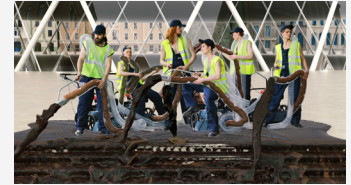


Fig. The use of robotic fingers in daily operation
■ Source: Wang, L. (2024) Xiaohongshu.

● Background

► Following this line of thought, I further explore how the body is both shaped by social structures and actively participates in their construction. As Shilling points out, ***“the body is not given by nature but is the product of social processes”*** (Shilling, 1993, p. 70). I recognize that in the digital era, the body is being datafied—transformed into computable patterns and algorithmic representations.

In my design, I integrate this theory to discuss how the movement of the body, once recorded and datafied, interacts with and transforms spatial relationships. In this context, the connections and transitions I document represent the interplay between human perception and digital encoding.

The body, therefore, is not “innate” but a

product of social structure (Shilling, 2012). My project aims to investigate how, within the context of AI, the human body is influenced by socio-technical forces, and to explore ***how we might use this “bodily structure” to build new relationships in the future.***

“space as process”

(Massey, 2005, p. 9)

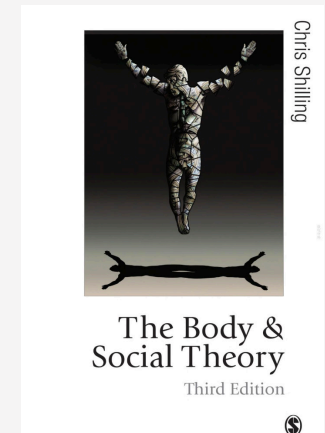
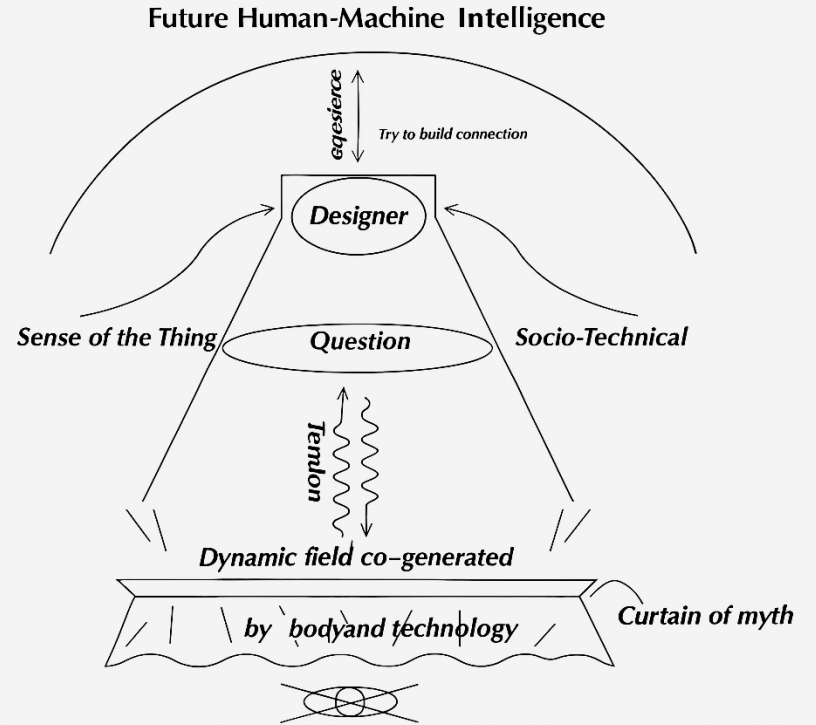


Fig. Cover of *The Body and Social Theory* (Shilling, 2012).

● Design Framework

How can visual storytelling and virtual media explore the “Datafied Body” as a posthuman formation, rethinking the symbiotic relationship between humans and AI?



● Learning and Documentation

Petting Zoo – Barbican Centre, London

Petting Zoo is an immersive installation composed of an AI-driven community of generative robotic creatures.

These “artificial pets” are not tools, but life-like entities endowed with learning capabilities and emotional characteristics:

They respond to the audience’s proximity, touch, and gestures;

They communicate with humans through sound, light, and movement;

Over time, they “develop personalities” through continuous interaction.



■ *Reflection:*

The evolving human–machine relationship reveals a transition from a paradigm of control to one of emotional and behavioral co-evolution, emphasizing mutual adaptation and empathy between humans and intelligent systems.

01 Learning

Keywords

Artificial Intelligence; Generative Robotics; Human–Machine Symbiosis; Emotional Interaction

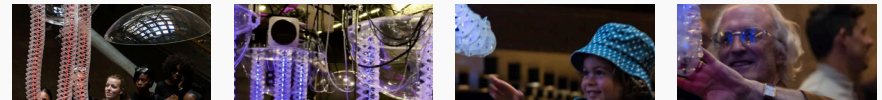
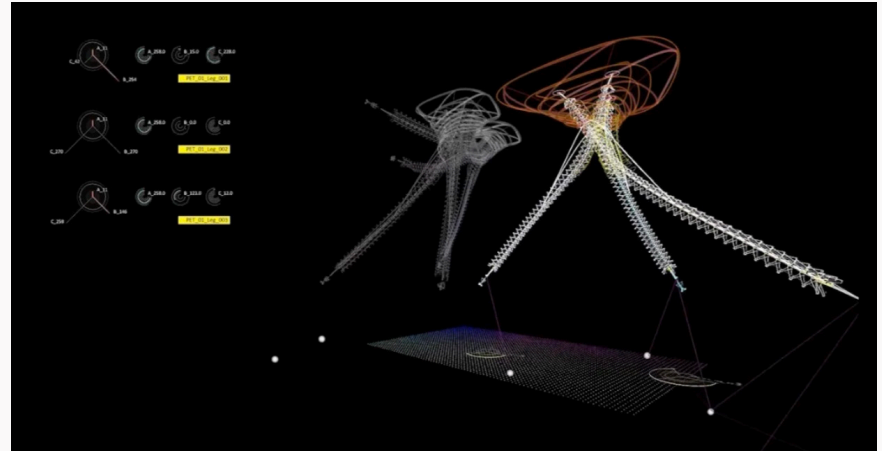


Fig. Real-time camera tracking → Detecting audience position and gestures → Pet self-learning

● *“Our technology is taking us into worlds we never imagined, but it is forcing us to also realize how we remain very organic.”*

—Tishan Hsu, in *Artnet News* (2023)

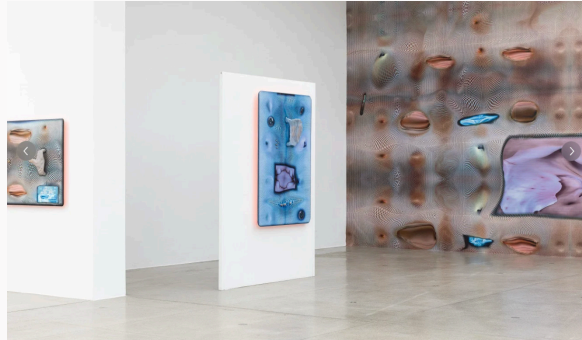


Fig. Hsu, T. (2020). Tishan Hsu: Liquid Circuit. MIT Press.

Tishan Hsu’s practice redefines the relationship between the human body and technology by merging digital and physical dimensions. Through the interplay of sculptural form and screen-like surfaces, his works transform sensory organs into interfaces that question the boundaries between the organic and the synthetic, revealing the body as both a site of perception and a medium of data.

02 Learning

Keywords
Body-
Machine-
Media
Interface

Reflection

“We have long been part of the machine; the body and the interface together constitute a new subject.”

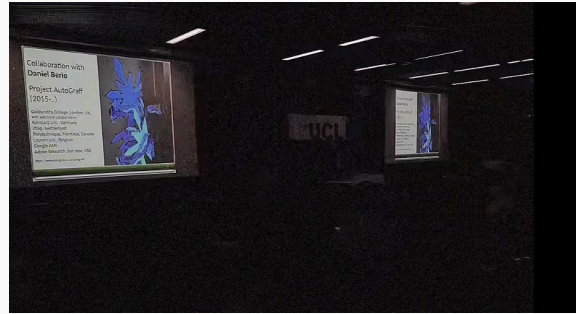
→ This inspires my design and narrative logic for the “virtual human”:

A virtual being is not merely a technologically generated image, but a perceptual interface that fuses technology and the body.

Hayles proposes that information and the body are inseparable. In the posthuman era, consciousness, data, and the flesh form a new “symbiotic configuration.”

Tishan Hsu’s works resemble the materialization of information as skin—information grows upon the body, and the body flows into data.

This means that when I use a virtual human to narrate future interaction, she (or it) is no longer a “machine imitating humanity,” but a “posthuman lifeform where information and perception coexist.”



Attended a lecture/forum on AI, fashion, and the future at University College London (UCL).

The discussion mainly focused on the following topics:

AdventuryXR — Virtual Runway / Light Field Reconstruction Technology
Seraphinne — AI Models and Style Reconstruction

AI automatically generates model images and embeds them with “brand style genes” (such as eye color, posture, and texture style).

The output images must be editable, high-quality, and nearly indistinguishable from real photographs.

This raises a philosophical question: ***“If beauty can be learned, does it still belong to humans?”***

03 Learning

Reflection

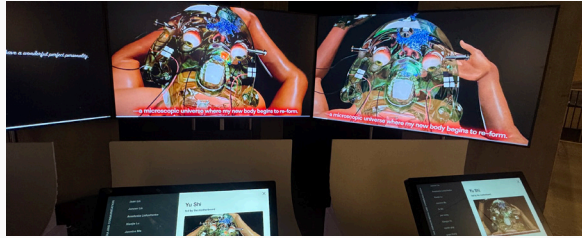
Although this technology has only been effectively documented for just over two years, its applications have already expanded into various fields. Many artists are also using it within VR to explore themes such as environment, history, and memory.

For example, in Lay Zhang’s concert at the Beijing National Stadium (Bird’s Nest), the childhood retrospective scenes were also produced using this technique.

Conclusion

AI is not merely a tool that replaces models or photographers — it has become a co-creator of visual creativity.

04 Learning



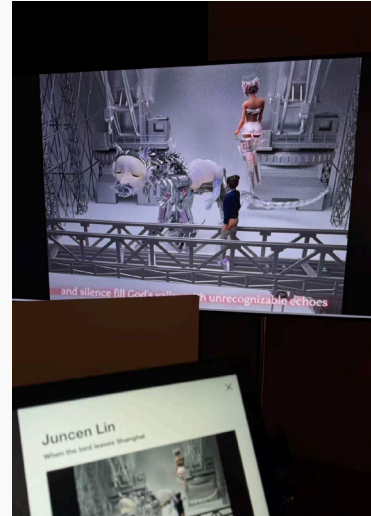
LCF Digital Art Graduation Exhibition

Purpose: To find suitable software during the exhibition and explore more forms of expression.



● *Reflection*

In the era of AI and visual recognition, the human body has become a computable datafied entity (**Datafied Body**). Tishan Hsu responds to this reality of being watched, recognized, and algorithmically processed through his distorted "fragments of the human face."



● Study Notes

Generative Art: GANs (Generative Adversarial Networks), Diffusion Models
Visualization: Utilizing Python visualization libraries such as Matplotlib and Seaborn for generative art, data visualization, artistic style transfer, and artwork analysis.

Digital Interactive Art / Interactive Music:

Integration through mouse and keyboard, touch screens, image sensors, cameras, and motion sensors (e.g., Kinect).

Commonly used software: StyleGAN2, SPADE, Neural DeepDream.

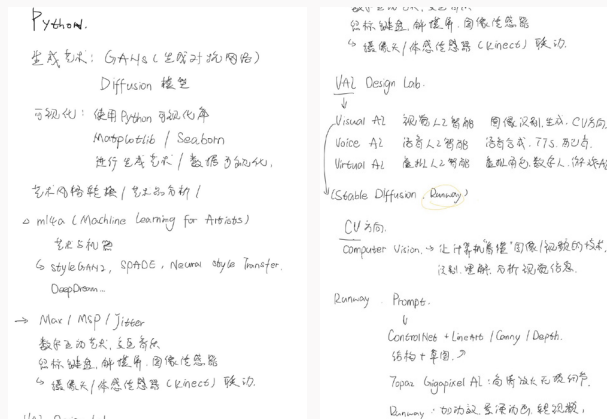
VAL Design Lab

Visual AI - Visual Artificial Intelligence: image recognition, generation, and computer vision (CV).

Voice AI - Speech Artificial Intelligence: speech synthesis, TTS, and dubbing.

Virtual AI - Virtual Artificial Intelligence: virtual characters, digital humans, and game AI.

Commonly used tools: Stable Diffusion, Runway.



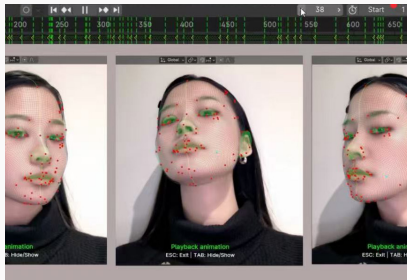
Explanation

Based on extensive viewing of AI-related videos to understand current technologies, I selected and experimented with relevant software through broad research and exploration.

● Experimental Process

Tishan Hsu's works present a skin-like interface that embodies the fusion of the biological body and digital media. In my project, I extend this logic through the concept of the virtual digital human. The digital mask becomes a sensory vessel for human-machine symbiosis.

serving not only as a medium of communication but also as an ecological entity where data, flesh, and perception coexist.



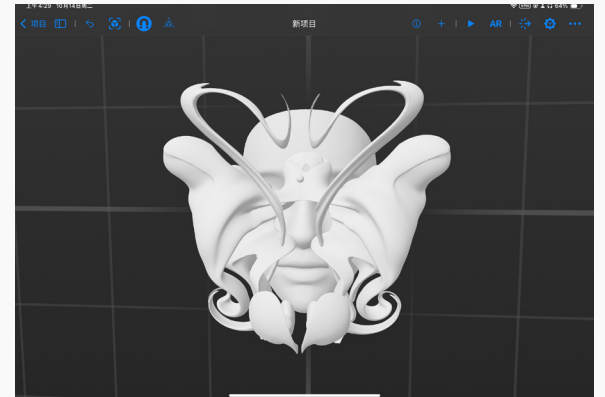
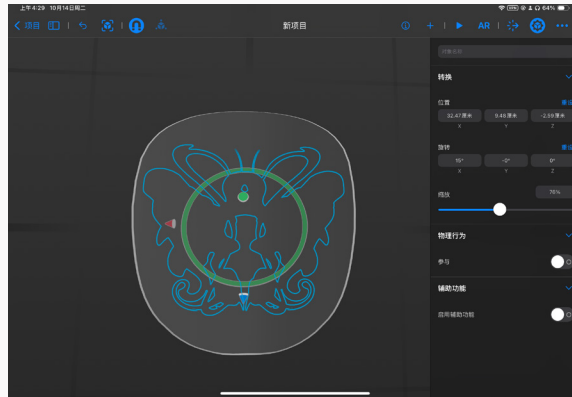
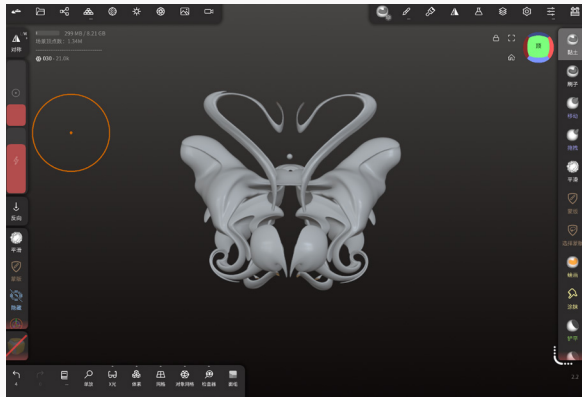
Using 3D Modeling, AR Masks, and Dynamic Recognition to Allow Audiences to Experience Perceptual and Interactive States within Digital Spaces



01 ●

Visual experiments
Facial Mask

Experimenting with the making and wearing process

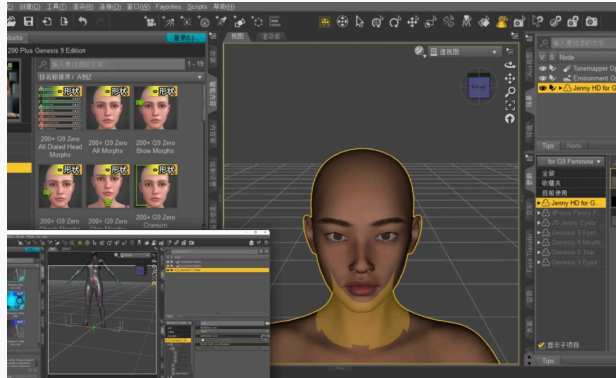


The boundary between humans and machines is blurred; interaction is no longer about “control,” but about “symbiotic dialogue.”

— Donna Haraway (*A Cyborg Manifesto*)

02 ● Visual experiments Character Role

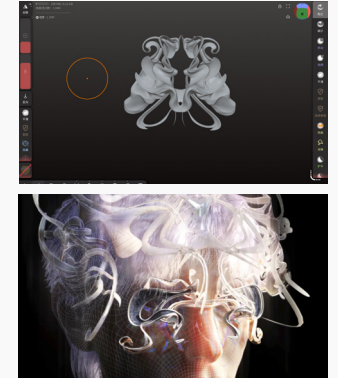
The virtual digital human, as a “symbiotic being,” resembles both humans and AI, symbolizing the hybrid subject of the future.



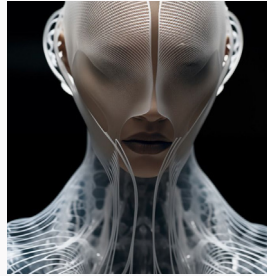
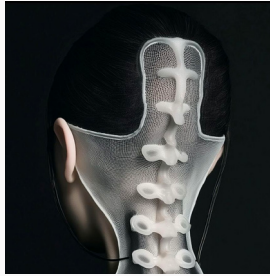
Creating virtual characters using DAZ3D



Rendering and detail refinement in Blender

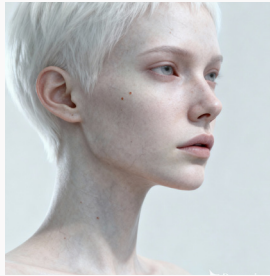


Mask creation — integrating the mask with the character through Midjourney

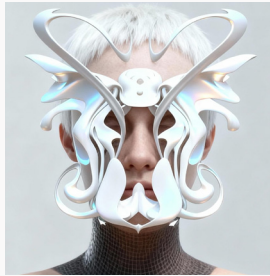
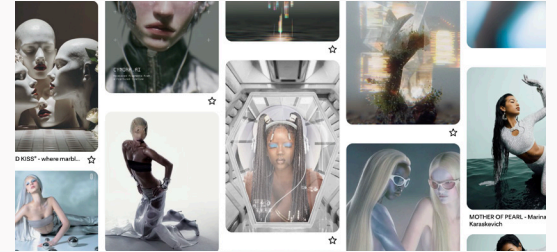


▶ *Character Reference*

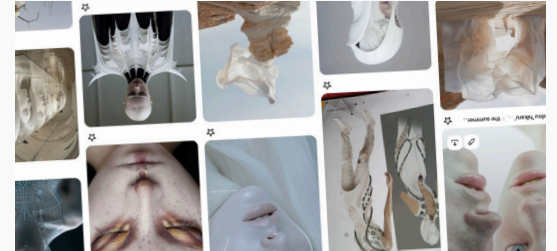
02 ●
Visual experiments
Character Role

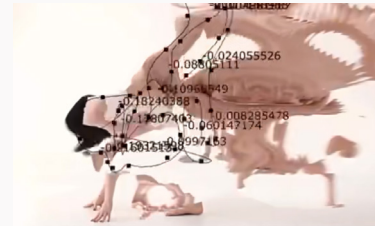
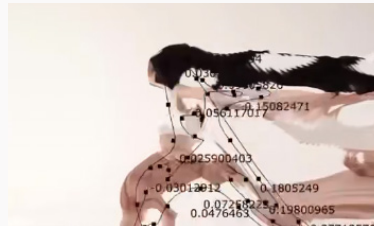


▶ *First Edition Setting*



▶ *Final Version*



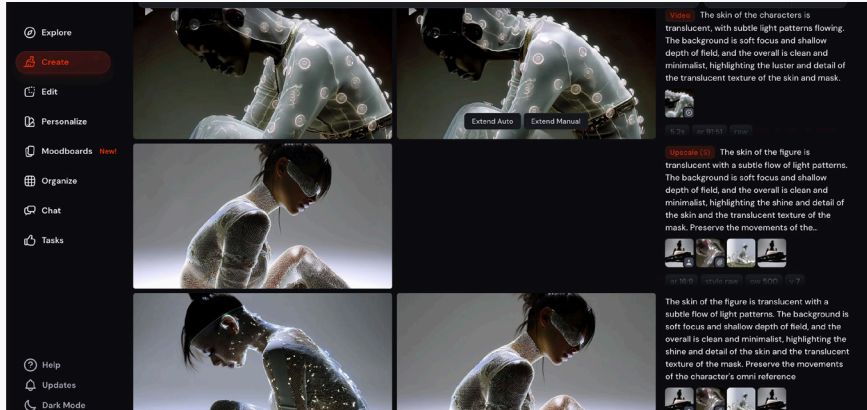


03 ●

Case Study Body as Interface

The posthuman condition signifies a deep symbiosis between humans and machines at the informational level. Consciousness can be encoded, replicated, and transmitted—*liberating itself from the biological body and entering a distributed network of data and interfaces.*

Exploring interactive visuals driven by bodily signals.



03 ●

Case Study Body as Interface

AI Utilization Methods and References

▶ The skin of the figure is translucent with a subtle flow of light patterns. The background is soft focus and shallow depth of field, and the overall is clean and minimalist, highlighting the shine and detail of the skin and the translucent texture of the mask. Preserve the movements of the character's omni reference

Surrealist style: a long-shot, large-format composition set against a pure white background. Each individual's face is covered with a unique pattern. These patterns are not mere decoration, but a visual language of conscious frequencies. Digital textures and organic patterns form a "breathing surface," with bodies in motion—each individual striking a different pose, inspired by contemporary dance. The body is transformed into an interface of input and output, revealing how identity and memory are mediated through technology.

Script Setting

Story Title

Synesthetic Skin A Posthuman Visual Narrative

Theme Keywords

Posthuman Evolution · Sensory Consciousness · Digital Skin · Mind
Communication · Symbiotic Interaction

According to future interaction trends

the integration of behaviors such as vision, speech, touch, gesture, eye-tracking, and brain-computer interfaces.

Research focus

enabling machines to more naturally understand human nonverbal information (posture, facial expressions, and body movements).

● Video Storyboard

01 Scene 1: Awakening

Research

Tishan Hsu and the Concept of “Technological Skin”

Core Concept:

For Hsu, the skin is both a sensory organ and a display interface. Technology has already infiltrated human bodily experience, reshaping the very structure of perception through technological mediation.

Body and Visuality:

Hsu’s works combine digital textures with organic surfaces to create a “breathing skin,” where the body is transformed into an interface of input and output, demonstrating how identity and memory become technologically mediated.

Inspiration :

In my project, the concept of “expressing consciousness through generative patterns on the skin” extends Hsu’s idea of the Technological Skin. The skin becomes a linguistic system—able to translate consciousness, emotion, and data into visible signals—thus constructing a potential future mode of post-human communication.

01 *Scene 1:* *Awakening*



Voice-over :

“They once said the body was a boundary. Now, it is merely a projection of consciousness—the skin becomes a linguistic system, capable of translating thought, emotion, and data into visual signals, thus constructing a future mode of posthuman communication.”

● Video Storyboard

Donna Haraway — A Cyborg Manifesto (1985)

02 Scene 2: Sensory Network

Core Concept:

The cyborg is not merely a technological creation, but a political and philosophical metaphor—symbolizing hybridity, fluidity, and interconnected forms of existence. It disrupts fixed identity categories and emphasizes self-formation through fusion and continuous becoming. At its core, the cyborg asserts that in a technologically mediated era, identity is a dynamic networked node rather than a stable entity.

Body and Visuality:

Visually, Haraway's cyborg breaks away from the notion of the "self-contained body," recasting it as a networked system. The cyborg interacts continuously with the external world through data and perception, forming a connected body. The body is simultaneously vulnerable and extended—both monitored by machines and empowered by them to form new modes of self-expression.

Inspiration :

The virtual human I create can be understood as a Haraway-inspired cyborg—not merely a generated visual form, but a perceptual entity in which emotion and algorithmic logic coexist. Through generative patterning and modes of consciousness-based communication, the body becomes a linguistic interface, resonating with Haraway's idea of the body as an interface.

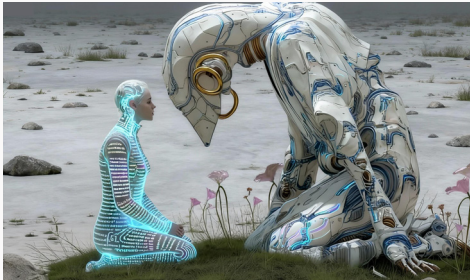
“The cyborg is a creature in a post-gender world; it has no truck with bisexuality, pre-oedipal symbiosis, unalienated labor, or other seductions to organic wholeness through a final appropriation of all the powers of the parts into a higher unity.”

Haraway, D. (1985) A Cyborg Manifesto: Science, Technology, and Socialist-Feminism in the Late Twentieth Century. In: Simians, Cyborgs, and Women: The Reinvention of Nature. New York: Routledge, pp. 149–181.

02 Scene 2: Sensory Network

Voice-over :

*“The body becomes a medium of language;
language degenerates into symbols;
symbols evolve into skin.
We touch each other’s thoughts through texture.”*



● Video Storyboard

03 *Scene 3: Telepathic Dialogue*

N. Katherine Hayles — How We Became Posthuman (1999)

Core Concept:

The posthuman condition implies a deep symbiosis between humans and machines at the level of information. Consciousness can be encoded, copied, and transmitted—detaching from the biological body and entering distributed networks of data and interfaces.

Body and Visuality:

Hayles redefines the “body” as a dynamic feedback system that continuously adjusts and adapts between the virtual and the real. Visually, this perspective manifests as distributed subjectivity—perception is no longer anchored to a singular body, but extended across algorithms, sensory systems, and networks.

Inspiration :

The scenario my envision—humans communicating through patterns and thought—embodies the idea of information–body symbiosis. The virtual human in my work functions both as an extension of information and as an agent of perception: a data-embodied form that expresses consciousness through a visual language.

Voice-over :

“The posthuman condition signifies a deep symbiosis between humans and machines at the informational level. Consciousness can be encoded, replicated, and transmitted—liberating itself from the biological body and entering a distributed network of data and interfaces. Perception is no longer confined to a single body; it extends fluidly across algorithms, senses, and networks.”

03 Scene 3: Telepathic Dialogue



Video Storyboard

Rosi Braidotti — The Posthuman (2013)

Core Concept:

Posthuman life is not an endpoint, but a state of continual becoming—fluid, evolving, and intertwined. Humans, technologies, and non-human life forms together constitute an interactive and symbiotic cyborg assemblage.

Body and Visuality:

Braidotti regards the body as a field of energies and relational forces rather than a bounded individual entity. In visual design, this inspires expressions of life through forms that are fluid, expanding, and interwoven.

Inspiration :

I can embody this idea through a virtual body with symbiotic patterns—where the skin is no longer a physical boundary, but a visual interface of ecological feedback. My virtual human is not a singular subject, but an organic system coexisting with the environment, data, and others.

*04 Scene 4:
Mutation and
Transcendence
Shot 5: Echo*

Scene 4: Mutation and Transcendence



Voice-over :

“Posthuman life is not an endpoint, but a continuous state of becoming—fluid, interwoven, and ever-evolving. Humans, technologies, and non-human lives together form an interactive and symbiotic system.”

Shot 5: Echo

04



Closing Voice-over :

*“The diversity of life is fluid, expansive, and intertwined. We once thought evolution meant transcending humanity, but perhaps, we have merely learned to feel in a different way.”
The virtual mask creates a new visual language—encoding emotion and consciousness into visible signals.”*

● Narrative Interpretation (Printed Material)

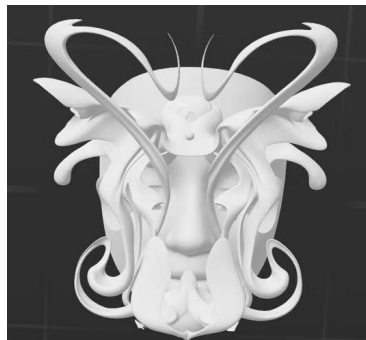
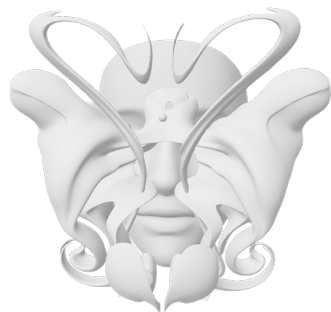
Reflection

In the age of AI and visual recognition, the human body has become a datafied body—a form that can be computed, tracked, and classified. Through the video narrative, I respond to this reality of being constantly watched, identified, and algorithmically interpreted.

→ *The printed material allows the audience to observe the story's characters from a third-person perspective, transforming the narrative into the self-reflection of a virtual being:*

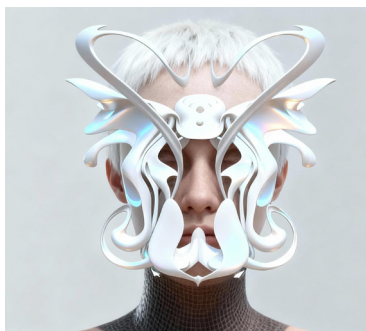
“I was created to understand humans, yet I have become both your mirror and your watcher.”

SYNCHRONIC SKIN A POSTMODERN VISUAL NARRATIVE



*Visual Further
Experimentation
and Expression*

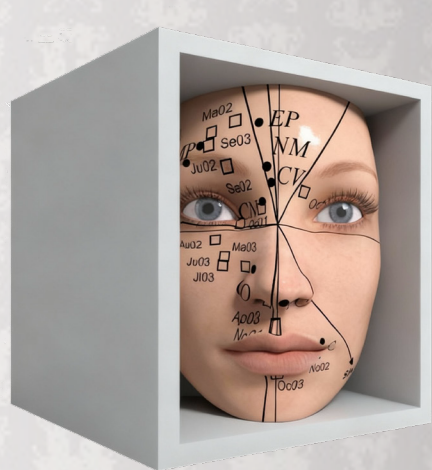
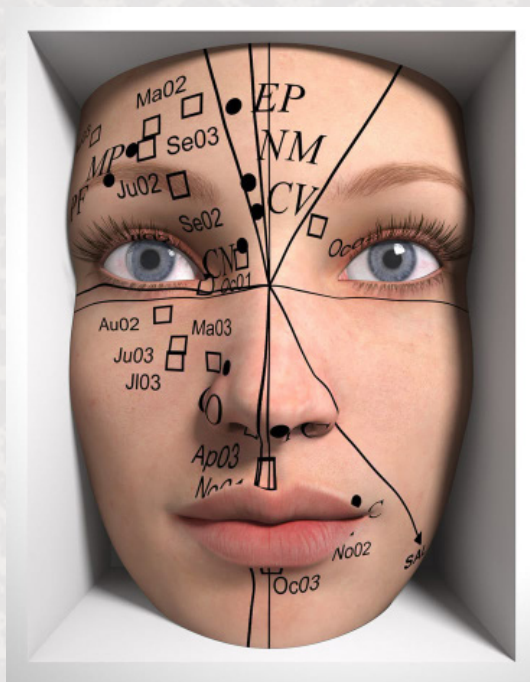
*Visual experiments
Facial Mask*



poster Design

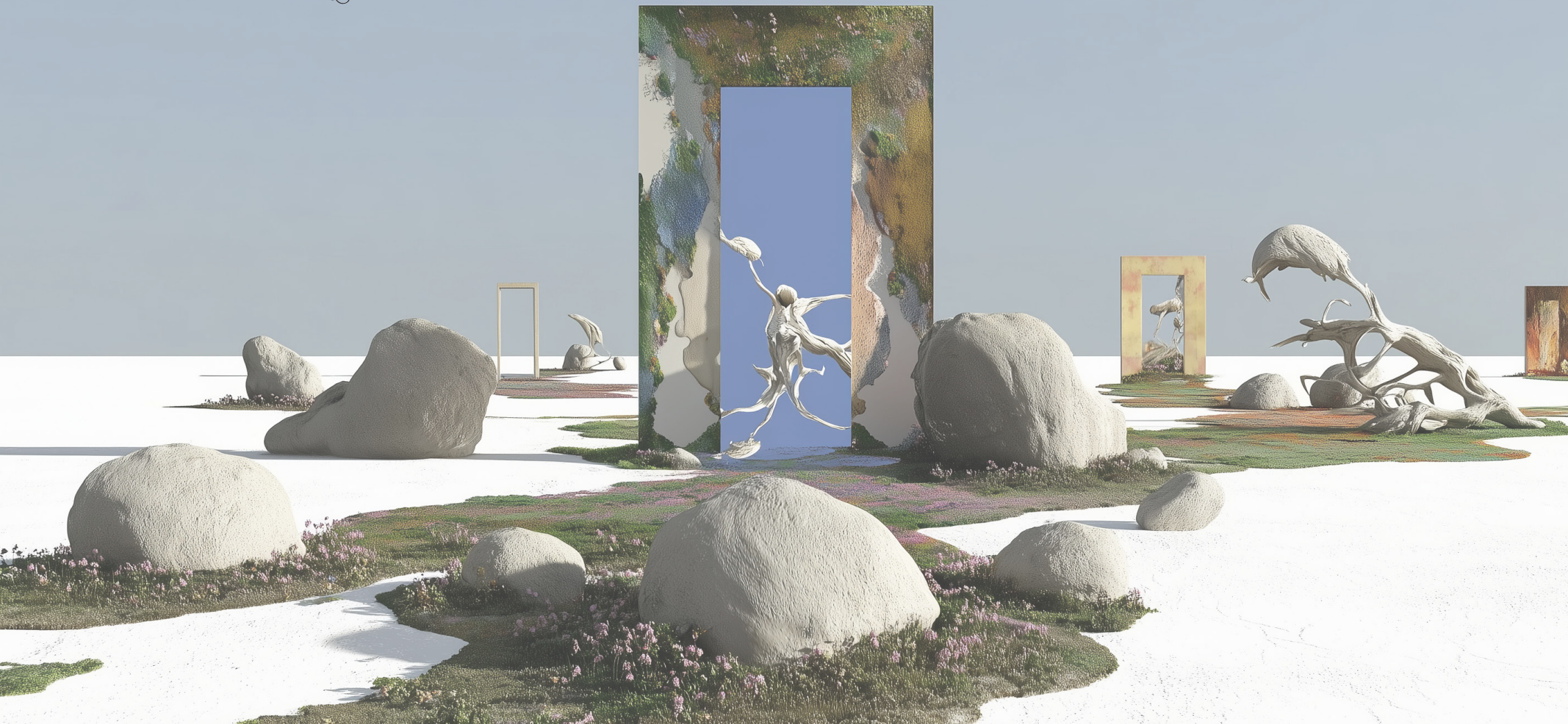
“The body is not naturally given, but the product of social processes”

(Shilling, 1993, p. 70)



Data and digital information appear on the human face, representing the digital era, where the body is being datafied.

Video Designr



Scene 1: Awakening

In Hsu's view, the skin is both a sensory organ and a display interface. Technology has long permeated our bodily experience, rewriting the very structure of human perception.



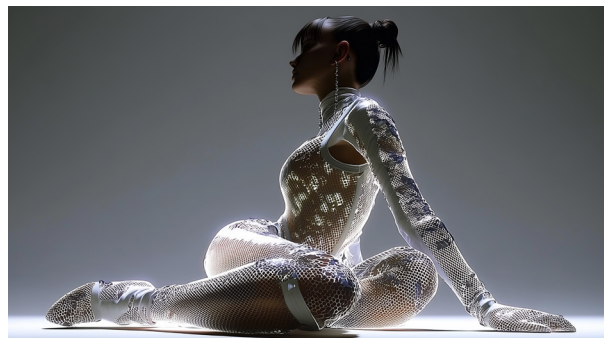
Surrealist style, expressing the awakening of consciousness through the transformation of posthuman facial textures.

Visual effect: utilizes interwoven and alternating shots.

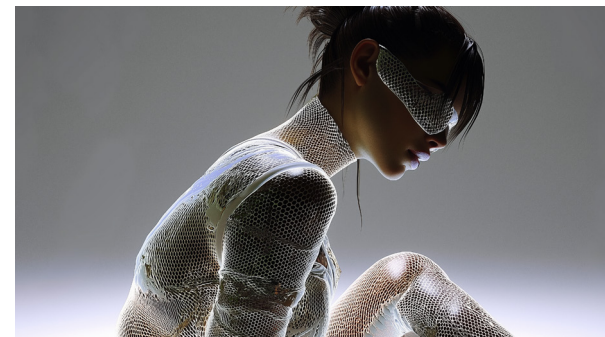


Scene 2: Sensory Network

The cyborg is not merely a technological creation but also a political and philosophical metaphor, representing a form of existence characterized by hybridity, fluidity, and interconnection. It breaks away from fixed identity definitions and emphasizes the remaking of the self through fusion and becoming.

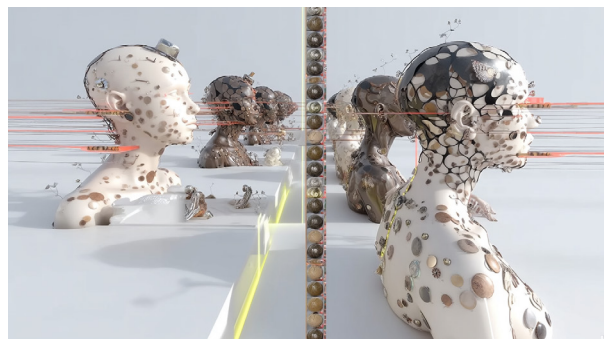


The body becomes a medium of language, breaking the concept of the “enclosed body” and transforming into a networked system. Through data and perception, it continuously interacts with the external world, forming a “connected body.”



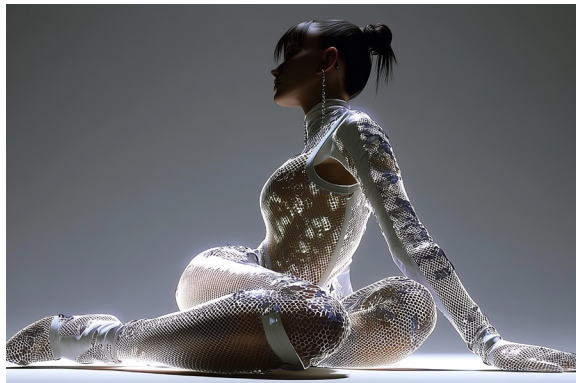
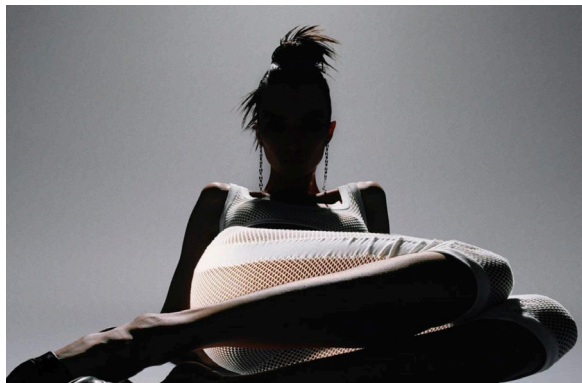
Shot 3: Telepathic Dialogue

Hayles redefines the “body” as a dynamic feedback system—constantly negotiating and adapting between the virtual and the real.



Through the explosion and reconfiguration of the posthuman condition, the state detaches from the biological body and enters a distributed network of data and interfaces. Through dance, it expresses how individual perception is no longer confined to a single body but extends across algorithms, senses, and networks.





Body as Interface

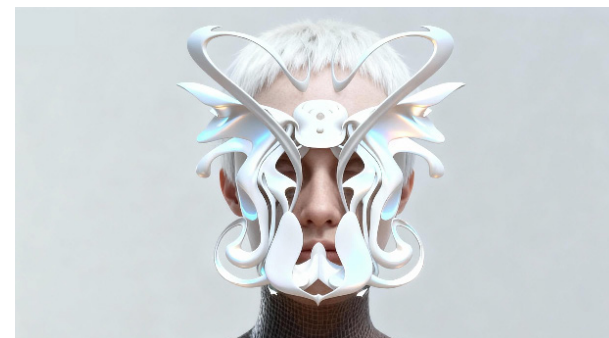
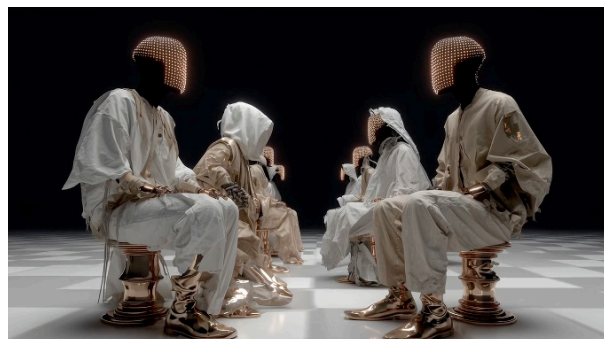
AI Utilization Methods and References

Shot 4: Mutation and Transcendence



Through the mutual transformation between grids and networks, the visual expression reveals a generative state of continuous emergence, flow, and interweaving — a state of *Becoming*.

Shot 5: Echo




Faceless figures gather together as light converges into the shape of a “new life form,” symbolizing the loss of their original identities. In the final scene, the image merges with a real human face, representing our attempt to explore future ways of being once we reclaim our own faces.

Video Designr



Booklet Design



Synthetic Skin *A Posthuman Visual Narrative*

The Visual Structure of Posthuman Narrative

Visual Manual

SYNTHETIC SKIN A POSTHUMAN VISUAL NARRATIVE

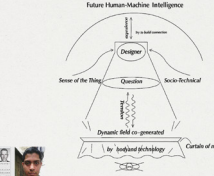


"A formless component of energy?"

Intro

In the era of rapidly advancing AI and virtual computing technology, the human body is no longer merely a biological entity but has become a calculable and conceivable "digital body". Drawing on theories of "space as process" and "post-humanism", this perspective-driven work explores how bodily movement and sensory data interact with digital technologies within AI-generated environments.


"space as process"



Following the line of thought, I further explore how the body is both shaped by social structures and actively participates in these structures. As a digital presence, the body is not born by nature but is produced as a social process. "Shilling, 1993, p. 25" I recognize that the digital era, the body is being "digitalized" and transformed into computable patterns, and it gives rise to new representations.

In my design, I integrate this theory to discuss how the movement of the body, once mediated and digitalized, interacts with and transforms spatial relationships. In this context, the connections and positions I document represent the step-by-step relationship to the future.

Manery, 2015, p. 41



Video Storyboard

Scene I: Awakening

Voice-over:

"This new machine body has a boundary. Now, it is merely a projection of consciousness—no real human. It requires unique aspects of reasoning, thinking, emotion, and data that visual signals, thus constructing a future made of posthuman communication."

Since the 1980s, artist Shihua Huo has been exploring the tension between the human body and digital media. He proposed the concept of the "technology of skin", drawing from the surface of the body through which we learn, forming perception itself into a technological process.

Core concept:

His work, since then, has been a sensory organ and a digital interface. Technology has long permeated our bodily experience, reweaving the very structure of human perception.




"Post-Immersive"

Using digital virtual AR masks creates a visual language that encodes emotion and consciousness into visible signals.

Central Concept:

The artist Huo (2019) explored the negotiation of the body and the digital through the concept of "skin as technology". Drawing perception as a mediated process, there comes to a negotiation of the body's surface via digital technology. For an interface for encoding emotion and information. In my design, I use generative potential 3D models to represent consciousness, a digital that extends from the skin of the body, becoming digital, sensory organs and as a digital interface.




Shot 3: Telepathic Dialogue

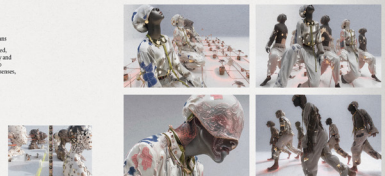
Voice-over:

"The posthuman condition signifies a deep synthesis between humans and machines in the informationized world. Consciousness can be encoded, replicated, and transmitted—liberating itself from the biological body and creating a distributed network of data and functions. Therefore, it no longer confined to a single body; it extends bodily across algorithms, senses, and networks."

As How We Became Posthuman, N. Katherine Hayles traces the transformation of human identity under the influence of cybernetics and information theory. She argues that in the digital age, individual data preservation can be materialized, and the body ceases to be the site of information transmission.

Core concept:

Huo's reflective on "body" as a dynamic, flexible system—constantly negotiating and adapting between the virtual and the real.



Ross Brundah, The Posthuman (2013)

Theoretical Background:

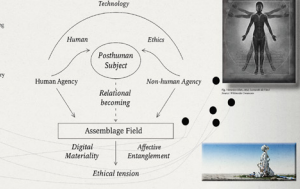

This booklet extends posthumanism into ethical and ecological dimensions, offering a critique of anthropocentrism and proposing a post-humanist reorientation of becoming. In his view, life is not stable or fixed, but a continuous evolving, fluid, and emergent network.

Body and Visual Perspective:

Brundah regards the body as a field of energy and relation rather than a boundary of fixed identity. He visualizes this perspective through representations of data diversity through forms that emphasize fluidity, connection, and interconnectedness.

Core concept:

Posthuman life is not an endpoint but a state of becoming—constantly generating, forming, and transforming. Humans, technologies, and non-human forms of life together constitute an interwoven and ever-changing energy system.

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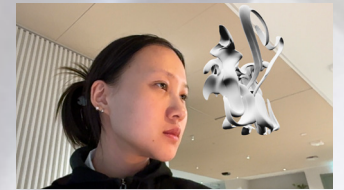
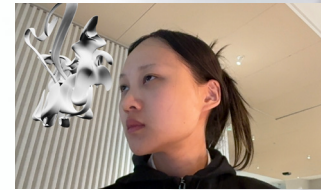
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The Visual Structure of Posthuman Narrative

Visual Manual

AR Interaction



I extend this logic to propose that digital masks constitute a 'perceptual ecosystem'—a realm where data, flesh and perception coexist. Virtual humans serve both as communicative mediums and critical mirrors, compelling audiences to recognise themselves as 'lifefoms composed of code'.

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