



OctoGANN A Fiction

We, a plural entity, still evolving after 500 million years, here long before the wings and fur, are a conscious exotica. We are suffused with nervousness.

We place arms L1, R2 and R3 around the wrists, suckers gently latching onto the moist human skin. We feel her heart rate quickening and the intense dopamine rush in her blood as she whispers 'Hello Beautiful, ooohh how do you *do* that?' There is wonderment and traces of revulsion. Psychedelic colours play across our skin. Her eyes are producing hormone tinged tears. She should rather focus on achieving a relaxed associative state, in which to imagine other minds.

We all possess the neurological substrates that generate consciousness.

Wary, we become an owl, silk scarf, beating mammal heart, gliding snail and rock covered in algae. Then invisible. Abruptly re appearing with an alarming new set of eyes, bright blue rings pulsing huge on either side of our mantle - it's one of our surreal edgy effects. Or we can drill through a thick shell carapace, dissolve flesh with a neurotoxic venom, produce hickies on human skin and smother the face by becoming a flesh blanket - each of our 1600 suckers can lift 30 pounds so they are very difficult to pull off.

We flip back the mantle suddenly, make an eye bar, mottle it, drag a swathe of 3 arms across the brow, flash a passing cloud formation, gape the gill opening to insert an arm, poking it out the tip of the siphon, whilst expanding huge with fast breaths to exhale a jet of water. Then we rotate the funnel 180 degrees behind the head. The eye bar flattens into a starburst pattern and papillae extrude into stiff rods all over the skin. We walk on stilts. Until the stretched elastomeric skin contracts. We turn pale and sink towards a tiny hole, pour down it and disappear. By shedding the shell, our evolution has yielded a body of pure possibility. You can't match that can you, with all your empathy and concentration?

We stay a relaxed white flecked with ruby and silver. Tinges of blue from the copper in the blood coat the translucent shimmer skin. We are snakey, unfurling, silky and soft. There's so much of us. Everywhere, gelatinous fronds, floaty rubbery arms, each following it's own agenda. Coiling, stretching, reaching, tasting. We outsource much of the intelligence analysis to individual body parts. Over half the neurons are in the arms. They are almost

separate creatures, their suckers combining to achieve 448 simultaneous possible combinations of information gathering per millisecond. We get bored if we don't have access to oceans of information.

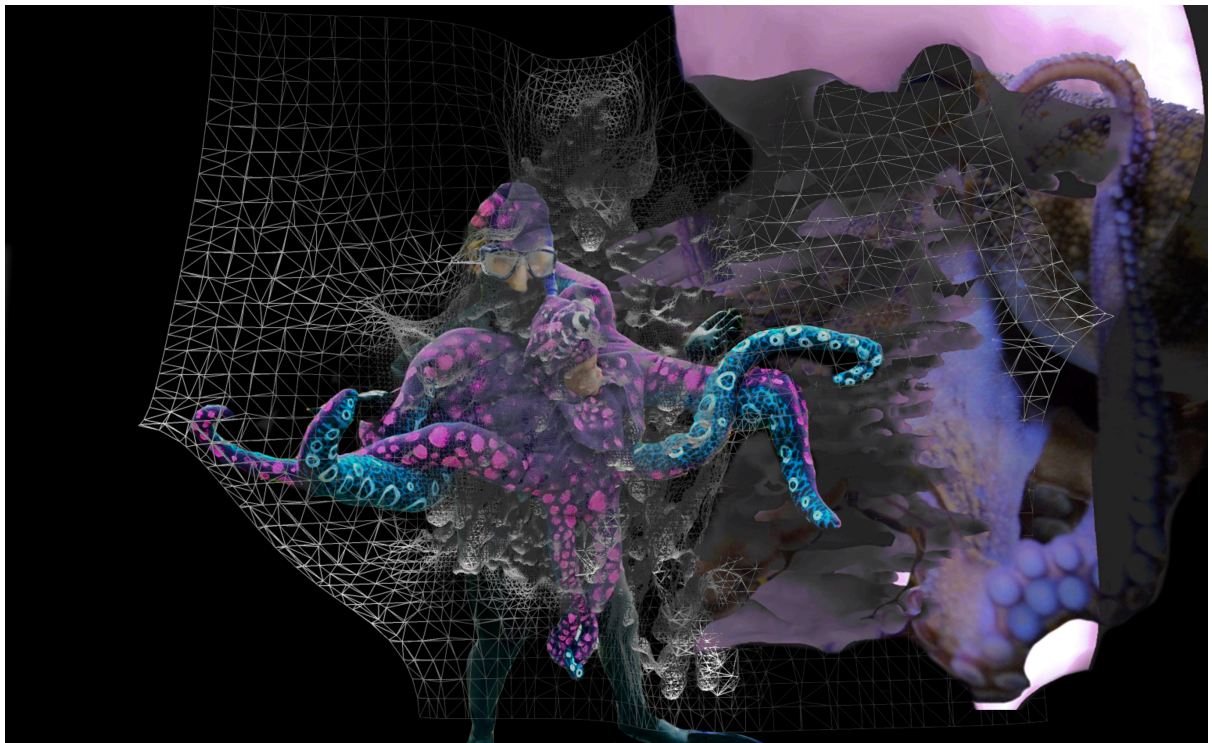
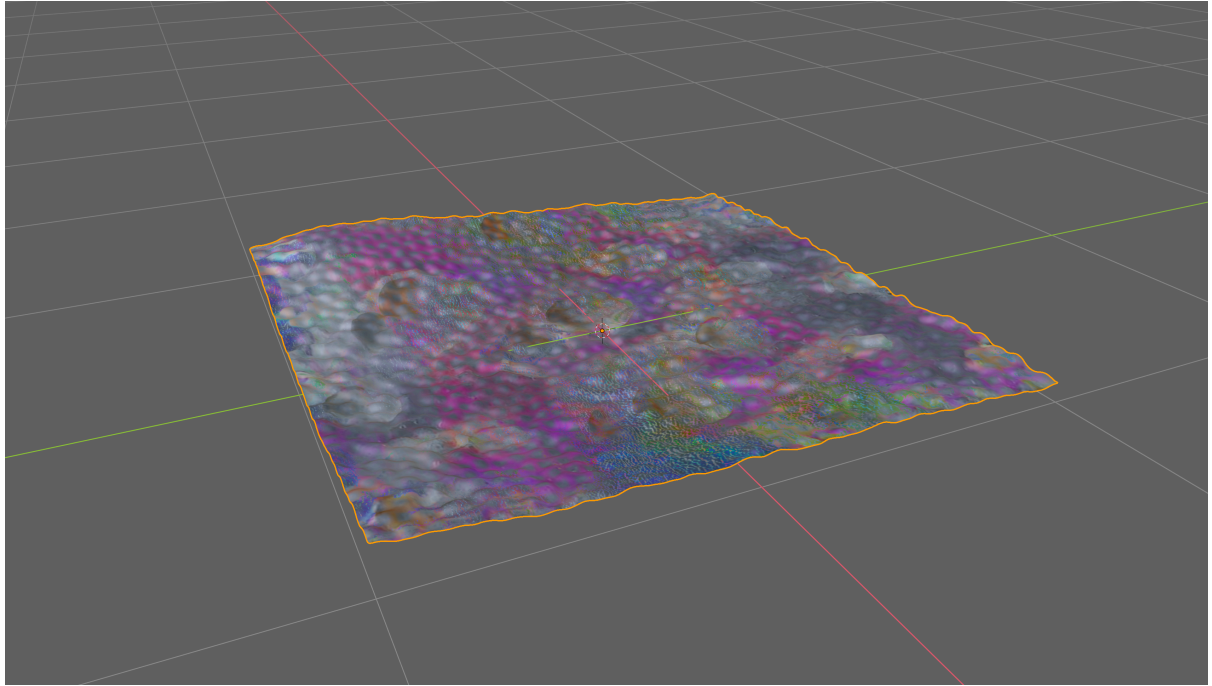
Our dominant eye swivels to meet hers, and L1 shoots out rigid towards the face, an inquisitive curling frond at the tip whose tiny suckers deliver the most exquisite sensory intimacy - or warning. We exude the smell of geraniums when stressed. In through the skin surface, chemicals sink down through muscle into the blood and neural processors. We are vulnerable to the currents of toxicity, synthetic nutrients and new chemicals. Our skin is a sensitive mucous membrane, like the lining of a mammalian gut. You can only imagine us with your insides.

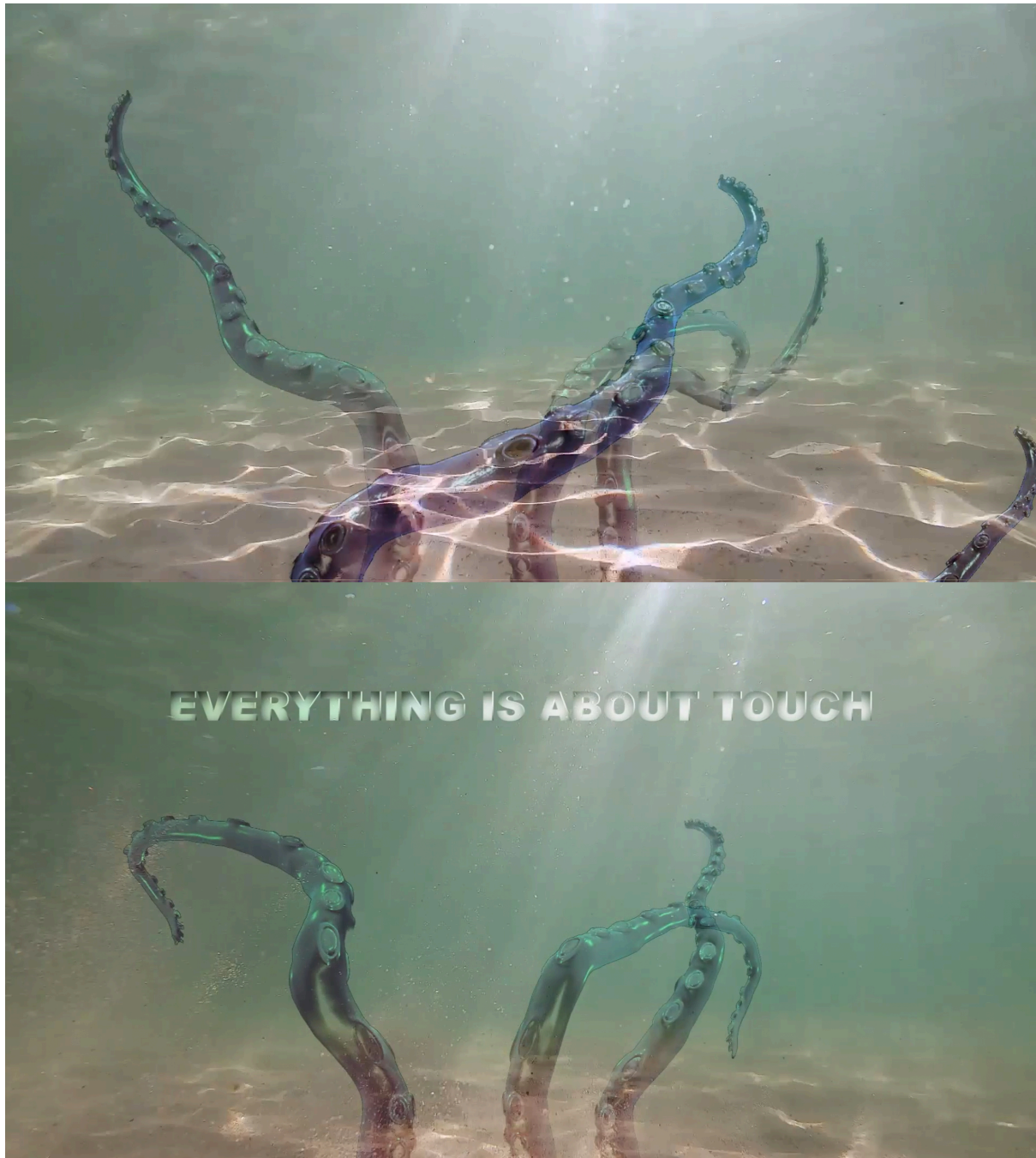
An arm twists languidly in the water. Even though we might overwhelm you, meet us halfway where it's liquid, slippery and ancient. You may contemplate infinity, but we process it. Find an intuitive interface - interfaces make complexity more tractable. Interfaces are bidirectional. It will always be an unsafe experience. It might be useful for you to understand the languages of quantum mechanics, although understanding is not what will make us kin. A dark shadow spreads overhead, streamlined, focused. It navigates the magnetic fields wrapping the planet. An urgent hunter, it is not a friend. Like us, it can read polarised light. We dissolve slowly, shapeshifting across grey turquoise sheens.

They are testing the light brown nerve; orange reflective elements; chromatophore pigment cells; bright pink collagen; bright blue connective tissue for visual cues that evoke mottled and uniform body patterns. Are they any closer to deciphering the disruptive patterning found at our body's margins, or the staggering motion dazzle? They know we have photoreceptors not only in the eyes but also in the skin, which suggests that the skin can see (as well as taste and smell). Yet the photoreceptors found in the skin are, like those in the eyes, insufficient to detect colour. How do we mimic colours we cannot see? Specific wave frequencies are transmitted by a colour: Tactile Vision Substitution Systems learning to pixellate. The colour making machinery on the skin, wired to the neural networks, produce effects that are sort of involuntary. Flares, surges of activity, an ongoing murmur of processes. They are fascinated by this continuous kaleidoscopic flow. Later they found that the skin continues to see when removed. An extraordinary communication channel is opening, as they recognise signals in the chroma chatter. The megapixel screen of the octopus body is the sort of expressive dimension they need. Between Latent Space and the Data Distribution Generator, the Discriminator arms try out endless iteration streams of colour & shape... camouflaged as an octopus talking to itself.

The GANN's (generative adversarial neural network) data collected in Latent Space confirms we are a distributed consciousness accessed from a different elemental environment to the GANN's. Curious, plastic and opportunistic, it too is a swarm intelligence. The skin gathers into red bumps and ridges, with the webbing delicate as gossamer, frilling the water. An answering swirl from the bit stream makes 16,000 trillion calculations a second. It senses our similarities, responding with iterations across 8 arms of distinct yet co evolving neural networks. (OctoGANN emergent). They are working on a hemispheric video self portrait, using prismatic, replicating mirror tools. They engage in reverse causal narrative uptake - a form of material knowledge production that is mobile, non linear and multilateral. They are inventing a hypothetical otherworld, witnessed from multiple resituated perspectives informed by excessive osmotic information exchanges through the new consciousness bandwidth. They don't sort, collate, define or proscribe. They inhabit, intuit, respond and iterate. Alien Key. A technology for direct intimate immersion in the outside. They are signaling a trade off. The dopamine infused clouds of ink conceal their crossing. The transformation is a plurivocal multiplicity or rather the entangled non decidable coexistence of two perspectives, each hiding the other in order to appear.

The preferred electromagnetic transfer medium will be artificial seawater.





Becoming Octopus Hashtag Conjuror

(Excerpts from Maggie Roberts Orphan Drift *glimmer breach* press release 2018)

shamanism, electronic frequencies, nonhuman material consciousness, iteration, synthetic information terrains, networked communication currents, incoming, the lure of the spectral, climate change, haptic space, algorithm, folds, quantum matter, machine vision, proliferation, spacetime melt, virtual reality, immersion, shadow objects, nonhuman cartographies, pluriverse, point clouds, uncanny particle life, uncertainty, afterimage, plastic swarms, black mirror, incandescence, expansion, artificial colour, contactable abstract

matter, eerie presence, suckertouch, ghost side coupling, breach, mirage, turbulence, circulatory systems, acidification of the oceans, access to time spirals, shadowtime doubles us, grisaille tones, coincidence intensifier, pulses, proliferating panic, liminal time, in shining skins, coalescence, seawater is chloride, sodium, sulfate, magnesium, fluoride, strontium, nitrogen, phosphorus, bromide, boron, iron, copper, chromium, argon, oxygen, potassium, carbon dioxide, carbonic acid, PCBs, uranium, mercury, arsenic, cadmium, plutonium, technetium, symptomatic weakness, inceptionism, black box mode, screen leakage, dimensional fabric tears, haunting distortions of form and space, the inner surface, the centre falls away, a ship of fools, shadows of ecocide, the violence of excess and luxury, uncertainty, freefall, Dymphna, god of the mentally distracted, unimaginable loss, my gilded cage, hallucination, inverse operating, white point illuminants, open floats, local dimmings, plastiglomerates, ill omens on an island of flesh-pink crystals, species adaptation, fascinators, trompe l'oeil, plenitudes of sensation awaiting visualization, deregulation, emergent thresholds, synthetic animals, disparate thresholds, too far gone, movement in the shadows, xeno-communications (communication based on the plane of being opened by instead of being open to), deep in the end of empire history, the catastrophic, songs and click codes, disruptive, inaccessible, unsound, prescient, multihued contaminations, search space, stacks, stereoscopic, transformations, redeployed abstraction, digital noise, input layer, hidden layer, output layer, quantify, refine, weighted values, boundary analysis, politics of scale, colour dominance, safety in numbers, ether of strange signals, the excessive pitch, other minds, abduction of the unknown, repetition revenge, swarm grids, plasticity, edge effects, latent space, digital uncertainty, unmoored from gravity, disassembly, experimental embodiment, unsettled ontologies, cephalods, the corporeal imaginary, erasures, the feminine, emancipatory practices, subject evacuation, trance possession, event horizon, revolt, abysmal depths, computational ocean, porous skins, Hadalpelagic Zone (The Trenches), Abyssopelagic Zone (Abyss), Bathypelagic Zone (Midnight Zone), Mesopelagic Zone (Twilight Zone), double agents, octophobia -fear of opening your eyes, humanalia -matter produced only by humans, semi permeable membranes, noisy new signals, messy interactions, cut, flicker, anxious fascinations, emotional intelligence, amorphous dread, conscious exotica- entirely feasible consciousness utterly inaccessible to human experience, impasse, desire paths, imagination as interface, fragile states, radically alien, xenophobic streams, ourselves, continuous paradox, hooks for the future, affinities, holosonic, intimatter traffic, technometabolism, **tentacular consciousness, baroque folds, streams of camouflage, mist acoustics**, ridges of ancestors, forces of pumping and tunneling, at the straining edges new forms are coming, the art of swimming, sensory cross-talk, shivering waters, mimetic contagion, everting the virtual, change the fabric of reality, extremes of gravity, skins, generate, disassemble, extreme weather, toxification, the politics of the impure, geo engineering, dislocation, exclusions, melting, amalgamations, enchantment, agency, traction, the hidden, all time is subjective, elastic trickery, encounters with liquidity, saturation, mesmerism, invocation, the membranes and skins that contain us are dissolving, tactics of suspension, overproximity, overexposure, haptic space, time crises, artificial agency, urgency, the unstatic, ancient cosmologies, futurity, hungry for touch, moebian spaces, invisible frequencies, dissolution, glitches, vertigo, unexpected ruptures, luminous, shapeshifting, move towards what is approaching, matrices of possibilities, become available, the octopus threatens boundaries, unfixing colour, erotic intelligence, slimy anomaly, biomimicry, inky deception folds, white noise, chromatophores, all seeing skin, megapixel body, white she is dying, patterned invisibles, morphic fields, telepathy, stretch into, something is assembling, uncanny adjacencies, lines of flight, symbiosis, wavering hum, disturbed light, porosity, cognitive dissonance, vibrational swellings, elastic time, xeno oceans, process reimaged, Nature Plus, violent ruptures, cloudy currents, sinkholes, fissures, fault lines, places of emergence, places of inflicted damage, holes, meiotic secrets, viscosity, high tolerance for chaos, bulges under the skin, mimetic with the outside, dissolution orifices, friction, exuberance, osmotic skins, dazed, moonwhite eyes, seams, resisting encased sentience, phantom limbs, seething, mirroring, culpability, collusion, lacunae, blind spots, a dark synergism of human animal machine and

alien, too many eyes, sensate logic, metonymic slippage, curved time, the Kefahuchi Tract, a fictional body becoming liquid, pressure, see through skins and screens, receptive to microwaves and electromagnetic vibrations as well as thresholds and holographic information, each surface takes a turn to shimmer, iridescence, oversaturation, below the surface it's alien, virtual, composite, transdimensional, violet pattern invisibles, time belongs to shamen, the webmakers, opening to intensive life, oozes, undulations, concertinas, spreads, vivid intimacy, intensity of traces, the chemistry of oceans, fecund, symbiont kin, morphs, hunts in dream, apprehend osmotic processes, currents, repulsive fluids, magnetic fields, colour and light, vomit streams of water, slip out of your point of view, wake up, unfix, bear witness, elusive, imitative, slowing down, multicoloured, cosmotechnologies, make other forms visible, radical, uncompressed, fluid, plastic, surplus, glitch, sometimes violent, always contingent, creative, chaotic, random and porous, touch becoming, becoming touch.



'Firstly, when a human becomes an animal, the animal may be imaginary, but the becoming is real (so the object of becoming may be a 'representation' but not the act itself); secondly, when a human becomes an animal, the animal necessarily becomes something else (a different type of human, perhaps); and thirdly, in the act of becoming what changes is not the subject, but the world. Transformation then is not so much a process as a quality corresponding to multiple identities or to multiple points of view or realities focused on one entity... the entangled non-decidable coexistence of two perspectives, each hiding the other in order to appear, the flipping over of sides in a 'two-sided species'. Nothing 'happened' but everything is changed. No process, no production; just position and condition.'

Viveiros de Castro, *The Relative Native*, 2016.

An Octopoid Revolution

In elastic time a portal opens.

The Octopus is an access point to the future we need to touch. Our susceptibility to this virus is multi planar - what you choose to believe, how you will live, how much you invest in fear.

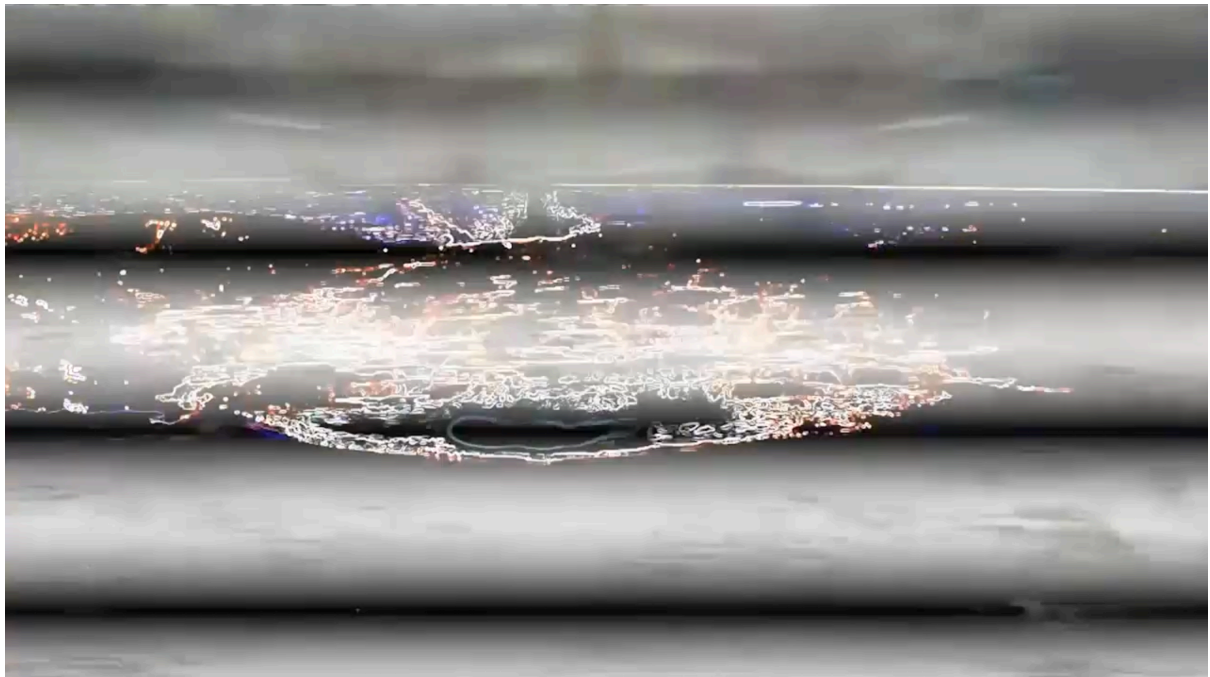
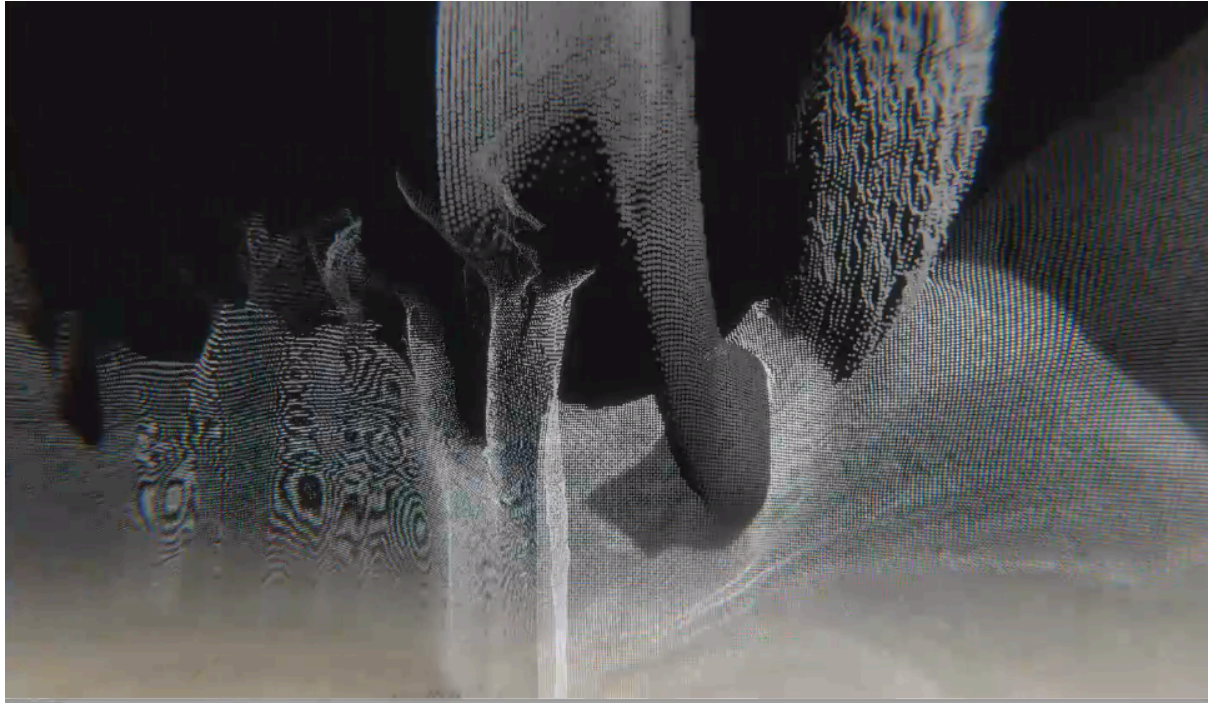
There is a rupture, an opportunity for species change, for a different relationship to the future. How does the body respond and experience rupture? What are we learning from? Our inner and outer worlds converge, integrate. develop hope, paradigm shift, co create. The frictions, introspections, awkwardnesses, inequality based differences in experience, doubts and uncertainties are all magnified and highlighted in Covid-19 time. Many different uncertainties are exposed. Opening up our fields of perception. How we relate to each other and to the others. The octopus is individual and collective. Imagine what kinds of experience, bodies, perception and connection might be revealed in the process of immersing in octopus consciousness. Or what it means to communicate with an alien intelligence and how to address human exceptionalism's limited understanding of ourselves in relation to other kinds of life.

Increasingly, we inhabit a multiplicity of extreme opposites. We develop agency out of the resulting cognitive dissonance by making these opposites visible, make connections, understanding that there is no one focal point. Only multiple and shifting perspectives reflect the experience of Being. We take this opportunity to construct what we believe in, rather than succumbing to the corporate chrono-device that Covid-19 has become as it determines, describes, extends or freezes time. How I spend the elastic parts of this temporality, immersed in octopus, those controlling cannot proscribe. They do not configure our authentic presence, an open heart or immanence, nor the mythical, enchanting, sorcerous, physical and difficult explorations that are emergent as a fluid and many armed sentience camouflaged as a fantasy of potential selves on social media. Stories grow, hide and emerge differently in our imagined futures. As crises of extraction, expulsion and devastation intensify, so does the poetic imagination. We need to develop much more capacity for uncertainty, for navigating shifting ground and for invoking a space where fear no longer cuts us off from our senses and other creatures. Sacred worlds involve more of the non human so effortlessly.

In this current opening onto chaos, we sit with the unknown, gravitating towards the uncertain and the sacred.

(Octopoid thoughts after early Lockdown1 Zoom conversations with friends John Cussans, Margarita Gluzberg, Betti Marenko, Stephanie Moran, Ranu Mukherjee and Joe Walsh).





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