Projective Bodies

Call for collaborations!

Projective Bodies is an experimental VR based performance directed by Saakib Sait. It is based on the ritualistic, everyday actions within the domestic interior. The increasing virtuality of our homes as a result of the pandemic has resulted in our private spaces turned public. Taking this as a point of departure, *Projective Bodies* questions notions of body, space, privacy, movement, rituals, memory and navigation.

This is an **Open Call** for dancers and choreographers to participate in a day - long workshop hosted by the artist. Through a series of trials, discussions and reiterations, the selected participants are welcomed to collaboratively develop the piece/ performance.

(More information about the project and details of participation on the following pages...)

ID_Tanzhaus Frankfurt Rhein-Main Residency 2021

Image Credit: Katrin Schander

When: 16th of October, 2021
10:00 - 17:00

Where: Z - Zentrum für Proben und Forschung, (Z Center for Rehearsals and Research)

(Backside of the) Kommunikationsfabrik, Schmidtstr. 12,
60326 Frankfurt am Main

Participation fee: 250 Euros

If you're interested in collaborating, please fill out the following survey-

https://forms.gle/RMQZbpdAHGzEFFxN6

Deadline: Please send in your requests by 10th of October, 2021.

IMPORTANT: This performance uses Virtual Reality. Many experience discomfort or dizziness through first-time use of VR goggles.

The participants will be filmed during the performances. The edited footage will be used to further the research project and for publishing on websites, social media, presentations.

Project Timeline:

16.10.21 : Collaborative workshop

17.10.21 : Presentation at Z

24.10.21 : Digital showing

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Concept

The world today functions within the intersection of the physical and the virtual as a result of the pandemic. The virtual affords us to navigate through and establish spatial relations within a 2-dimensional interface we call the screen. Inhabiting virtual space means to enter a condition of suspension; there is no ground in the virtual- it is only but an abstraction. And yet, we've become accustomed to visually hang on to spatial coordinates that imply a sense of grounding- a grounding driven by first-person perspective.

What happens if perspective in the virtual is no longer ours? Can one navigate space with the help of a borrowed, out-of-body perspective? What if this visual input multiplies- a multitude of perspectives, none of which is your own? How can one establish a sense of ground, a notion of stability, a return to one's own body?

First-person Perspective

VR Overlay
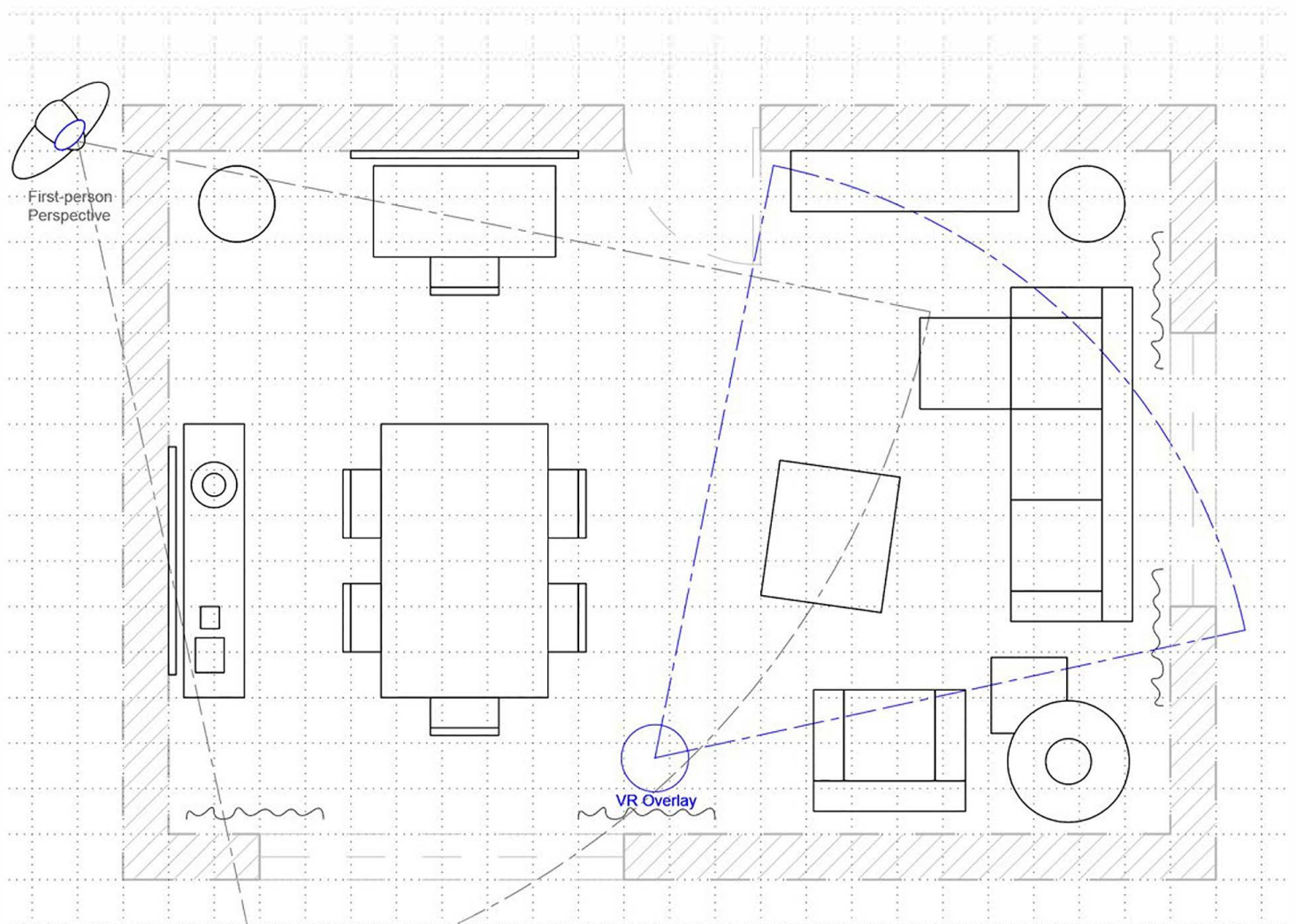
Research goal

The aim of this research is to find a sense of grounding in an ungrounded space. It is also to question ideas of body, navigation, ground and perception while being immersed in saturated visual (mis)information. Diverse subjects are invited to perform a set of instructions requiring them to navigate through a quasi-domestic space populated with furniture and items of daily use. With the help of a Virtual Reality headset, they are immersed in a virtual environment consisting of the exact same objects and arrangement- only here, the perspective doesn't match their own.

The entire act, choreographed with scientific rigour, is imagined as a negotiation between the limits of one's body at the intersection of the 'real' and the virtual, a provocation of one body's capacity to adjust with an-other perspective. The mismatch between visual impetus and the body's movement is measured comparatively and observations are filmed as the body moves through space while carefully re-calibrating, re-orienting and rearranging itself through time, forming a representation of our daily existence in the visual regime.

References

Lars von Trier's *Dogville*, 2003.
Dogville is an avant-garde film that uses a minimal set erected on a soundstage as the backdrop for its story. A distinguished element in the film is the absence of walls- taking the viewer directly into the domestic interiors of the houses in the fictional neighborhood.

The 'set' for *Projective Bodies* takes on a similar character, populating the stage with objects of the domestic interior- furniture, textiles, decoration, etc., sans the walls.

References

The Venn Room by Space Popular, 2019.
This project takes on augmented domestic interiors and deals with themes such as interface, representation, storage, ownership, etc. within the scope of possible (digital) cohabitation.

Projective Bodies problematises the "virtual" domestic interior as we have come to know through the many zoom/ video calls we participated in during the pandemic; the interior that forms the 'backdrop' of the conversations we participate in virtually, through the interface of the screen.

Through their project essay, Space Popular concludes by writing-
"And as you build your virtual home that is at once a part of many others', (...) you contribute to the forming of the placeless?, lawless?, unowned? Global Home."

At this intersection of the physical and the virtual, using *The Venn Room* as a point of departure, *Projective Bodies* investigates the very definition of the "body".

Saakib Sait is an interdisciplinary artist who lives and works in Frankfurt. His work is situated at the intersection of aesthetics and architecture. He uses digital technologies to investigate concepts of spatial perception through bodily motion. In doing so, he questions the opportunities and politics within image-based media including film, Augmented Reality and Virtual Reality.

Originally trained as an architect, he graduated from the Staedelschule Architecture Class, Frankfurt, in 2020. Recently, along with many others, he formed the interdisciplinary collective and artistic research practice called 'Liminal' which dissects social transformations taking place within the city.