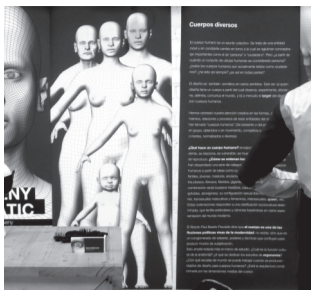


INFORMATION FOR USERS

INFORMATION LEAFLET TO ACCOMPANY
A BANNER FOR *SOMATIC DESIGN*,
DEPICTING FIVE 3D-GENERATED
HUMANOID REPRESENTATIONS



Please read carefully. This leaflet contains important information:

- Save this leaflet, it might be useful in other circumstances.
- If you have additional questions, discuss with your colleagues.
- If you experience a worsening of your condition, document and publish.
- If you experience any of the side-effects described in this leaflet or you experience additional side-effects not described in this leaflet, report a bug.
- See under 4 to find out if you are specifically at risk.

1. What is this image?

The image is circa 80 cm wide and 250 cm high, printed on a high resolution inkjet printer.

It accompanies a display of results from the course *Somatic Design – Fonaments del Disseny I* (2014-2015) and can be found in the hallway of Bau, Design College of Barcelona, May 12–18, 2015. The image consists of five 3D-generated humanoid representations, depicted as wireframe textures on a white contour, placed on a blood-red background. The 3D-generated humanoid representations are depicted on nearly life-size, without clothes and holding the same body posture.

The software used to generate this image is MakeHuman, an 'open source tool for making 3D-characters'.

The perspective used is orthogonal, the figures appear stacked upon each other. Height is normalized: the figure representing a grown-up male is larger than the female, the older female figure is smaller than the younger female. The genitals of the largest male figure and elder female figure are hidden; the genitals of the adult female figure are only half-shown; the genitals of the children are shown frontally.

2. Important information about 3D-generated humanoid representations:

- There is an illusionary trick at work related to the resolution of the image. 3D-generated images might appear hyper-real, but are generated from a crude underlying structure.
- 3D-generated imagery has a particular way of dealing with inside and outside. The 'mesh' that is depicted here as a wireframe, necessitates a binary division between inside and outside, between flesh and skin.
- Software for generating 3D humanoid representations is parametric. This means that its space of possibilities is pre-defined.
- The nature of the algorithms used for generating these representations, has an effect on the nature of the representation itself.
- 3D-generated humanoid representations often depart from a fundamentally narcissistic structure.
- These 3D-generated images are aligned with a humanist cultural paradigm, otherwise known as The Modern Project. They are not isolated from this paradigm, but are evidence of an epidemic.
- The Modern Project produces a desire for an ecstasy of the real.

3.1 Before engaging with humanoid representations:

- Remember that viewing images has always an effect. In this leaflet *engagement* is used rather than *seeing* or *looking*. It is not possible to view without being transformed.
- Representations are made by a collective of humans and non-humans. Here, algorithms and tools are co-designing.
- Scientific data suggests perfection through averaging. An average is the result of a mathematical calculation and results in hypochondria.

3.2 In case humanoid representations are grouped:

- What is placed in the foreground and what is placed in the background matters. If bodies are ordered by size and age (for example smaller and

younger in the foreground, larger and older in background), a hierarchy is suggested that might not be there.

- Size matters. The correlation between age, gender and size is usually not corresponding to the average.
- Nuclear families are not the norm. The representation of gender and age, as well as the number of bodies depicted, is always a decision and never an accident.
- The depiction of figures with a variety of racial physiological features matters. Even if this group is not all caucasian, There is no mestizo in the image. The reality of hybridisation is more complex.
- The lack of resemblance to how people physically relate in daily life, matters. Bodies are not usually stacked that closely, nor positioned behind each other frontally, neither holding all the exact same body posture.
- The represented space for relational possibilities can be unnecessarily limited. For example: if in a group only one male is depicted, it is assumed that this body will relate to the others in a hetero-patriarchal manner.

4. Counter-indications:

Be especially careful with this type of image if:

- You have (or belong to) a family.
- You are pregnant or lactating.
- You feel traumatized by hetero-patriarchal, capitalist or religious institutions.
- Your body type does not fit.
- You think another world is possible.
- Your unconscious shines.

Take care if you are concerned by the over-representation of nuclear families.

5. How should I engage with this image?

Approach these images with care, especially when you are alone. It is useful to discuss your impressions and intuitions with colleagues.

- Try out various ways of critically engaging with the representation.
- Measure yourself and your colleagues against this representation.
- Try decolonial perspectives.
- Ask questions about the ordering of figures, what is made visible and what is left out.
- Ask why these humanoids do not have any (pubic) hair.
- Problematize the parametric nature of these images: What is their space of possibilities?

Be aware of your desire apparatus.

6. Interactions with other images:

These images are part of an ecosystem: they generally align with gender-stereotypes and neoliberal post-colonialist imagery, found in mainstream media. They might look 'normal' just because they seem to fit.

Pay attention to the hallucinatory effect of repetition.

7. What to avoid while engaging with this image:

Avoid trusting this image as a representation of your species. The pseudo-scientific atmosphere it creates is an illusion, and constructed for a reason. Do not compare yourself with these representations.

8. What are the most common side effects of engaging with humanoid representations:

- Vertigo and dis-orientation
- A general feeling of not belonging
- Anger, frustration
- Insomnia, confusion
- Nausea
- Speechlessness
- An agitation of life conditions
- It may increase thinking or extreme questioning

9. In case of overdose:

In case of overdose, a false sense of inclusion might be experienced. Apply at least three of the methods described under 5. Repeat if necessary until the condition ameliorates.

This leaflet provides basic information about engaging with 3D-generated humanoid representations.

After reading, it is not uncommon that an initially passive reception transforms into another level of engagement. You might experience a desire to generate action and political work vis-a-vis humanoid and other representations. In this case, it is advisable that you approach your condition collectively.