The Gaze Of The Other

by

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A thesis exhibition presented to OCAD University

in partial fulfillment of the requirements

for the degree of

Master of Fine Arts

in

Digital Futures

OCAD University, Black Box, 49 McCaul,

Toronto, Ontario, Canada

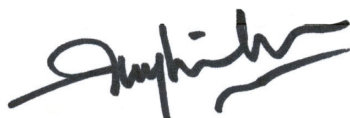April 15th – 19th, 2013

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The Gaze of The Other

Master of Fine Arts, 2013

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Abstract

The Gaze of the Other examines processes of travel/migration and image-making in terms of "the gaze". This supporting paper considers theories of identity and the gaze in the making of a digital media art installation. I investigate the process of being seen as the 'other' when moving between cultures, focusing on filmmaker and theorist Trinh T. Minh-Ha concepts of identity and displacement. Post-colonial and cinematic theory on ideas of 'anti-film', the gaze, and voyeurism are also considered. Including digital video projection and electronic sensors, the installation explores multiple layers of the gaze in a form of peepshow with a live-display of the viewer in the process of looking; in this construct, "otherness" becomes unstable. The installation evokes a place between older experimental film methods and new online, digital media, between older understandings of migration and newer conditions of multiculturalism and globalization.

Keywords: identity, travel, the Other, gaze, peepshow, digital media

Acknowledgements

The journey is most important but it feels good to finally arrive. I would like to thank many people who have made the realization of this thesis installation and supporting theoretical text possible. First and foremost, I want to gratefully thank my Principal Supervisor Judith Doyle for her continuous support and guidance on my work. I would also like to acknowledge my Secondary Supervisor Philippe Blanchard, Barbara Rauch, Paula Gardner, Tom Barker and the Digital Futures faculty for providing invaluable feedback and academic insight throughout our encounters. I want to warmly show my appreciation to David McIntosh for being such a dedicated Instructor in our thesis class.

Finally, I thank all my peers in the Digital Futures Program and the Department of Graduate Studies, for making my graduate study a valuable and memorable experience.

Dedication

To my beloved family for always watching over me.

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Chapter 1: Introduction

1.1 In between

Over the past eight years, I have relocated five times, across four

continents. Throughout this process of movement and traveling, my identity and

personality have been continuously challenged and changed. While feeling

connected to both the land where I came from and the countries where I have

been and am living, I do not necessarily feel myself to be a part of these places. I

consider myself to be a person living in between. This thesis is an examination

and articulation of this condition, through creative practice culminating in a

digital media installation.

In her 2012 book, *Elsewhere, within here: immigration, refugeeism and*

the boundary event, Vietnamese-American filmmaker/theorist Trinh T. Minh-Ha

titles an essay *Far away, From Home (the comma between)* (p.11). Her notion of

"the comma in-between" regards a state of being in between what is considered

our native home, and the 'far away' land where the body presently resides. Trinh

discusses this sense of identity including a nostalgic search for a 'home', which is

both rooted in memory of the past and within our body which always in transit.

"When I'm asked where home is for me," writes Trinh, "I'm struck by how far

away it is, and yet, home is nowhere else but right here, at the edge of this body of

mine." (p.12) In this formation, identity and place are both situated in the body.

1.2 Research

In the summer 2012, I pursued an independent study including a literature and film review, with the intent of examining gender differences through feminist analysis in Eastern and Western contexts. I applied this theory to my experience as an Asian women living by herself in Canada. I wanted to analyze the difficulties that have shaped my identity in terms of my sense of becoming in time.

Trinh T. Minh-Ha is an experimental filmmaker and noted feminist and post-colonial theorist born in Vietnam, presently residing in Berkeley, California, following her long residency in Japan. Her theoretical interests, creative writing and art practice (including film and more recently installation art) all focus on experiences of migration. Trinh focuses on embodied experience including effects of light and sound, to represent the emotional dimensions of migration. Her work evokes solitary reflection and a poetic consideration of the body's movement through space. Trinh's work has been described as part of a "cinema of displacement" which raises questions "about dislocated identities in a world increasingly marked by the mobility of goods, ideas, and peoples attendant with the "multinationalization" of the global economy." (Shohat, 2006, p.307) Trinh's work is experimental in form, creating new image-making approaches to address these political issues.

Literature Review: The narrative of the woman, sleeping

During my literature review, I investigated the image of the "sleeping woman" in various expressions in literature, cinema and visual art. This figurative motif appears in historical and recent art and culture, and appears to specifically evoke the vulnerable condition or state of its female protagonist. In the traditional Italian *Sleeping Beauty* folktale, the female protagonist is raped and bears two children while sleeping. In the Disney studio's animated feature *Snow White* (1937), a stepmother envies her stepdaughter's youthful beauty and poisons her, inducing a 'coma'. Similarly in Disney's *Sleeping Beauty* (1959), out of revenge for being overlooked, a wicked (female) fairy casts a curse on the princess; she pricks her finger on a spindle and falls into a long sleep. The sleeping victims in these stories are portrayed as dependent, passive females, whose primary virtues are beauty and immaturity and who wait to be rescued by a male hero. The hero gazes upon the sleeping (unconscious, unseeing) princess in her passive state. The story unfolds from the point of view or gaze of the (fully awake) male hero. However, in her 1978 paper from the Radcliffe Institute, feminist scholar Carolyn G. Heilbrun suggests that it is important to reconsider this reading of the sleeping beauty myth in terms of male/subject and female/object. Women also identify with the heroic point of view, as well as the process of awakening. Heilbrun that "the hero, who wakens Sleeping Beauty with a kiss, is that part of herself that awakens conventional girlhood to the possibility of life and action" (Haase., 2004, p.5-6). This interpretation opens up the conventional system of the gaze in these

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stories to accommodate instability and shifts in point of view, where gender is more mutable and unfixed. Princesses identify as male protagonists, and the male gaze operates as an inner gaze of the woman into herself.

Japanese writer Yasunari Kawabata's 1969 novel *The House of the Sleeping Beauties* and Julia Leigh's 2011 independent film *Sleeping Beauty* tell stories of old men who sleep next to drugged, unconscious, beautiful girls. In these stories, men find pleasure knowing that sleeping women are unable to see them. Paradoxically, this ascribes power to the sleeping women, who might awake and catch them. What would happen if the sleeping women awoke and returned the gaze?

I considered this question in my first video installation titled *Sleeping Beauty* (2012). It shows looped footage of a girl (myself) sleeping in a dark, small and quiet room. Upon entering the space and seeing the video, visitors can either quietly look at the girl and walk out of the room without her noticing, or come closer, and by doing so, wake her up. Upon wakening, the girl slowly opens her eyes and stares back at the viewer. This installation

Figure 01: *Sleeping Beauty* installation - screenshots from test video

engages with the notion of a sleeping woman as an object being looked at by the viewer. However, through the viewer's interaction, the installation also delivers the message that women have agency, even in vulnerable situations.

Through research, I came to recognize that gender instability is only one dimension of 'the gaze'. The exchange of looks certainly can be analyzed in terms of a male gaze, but also in terms of a post-colonial gaze, or - when I view the piece myself - as a gaze into my inner self. Variations, shifts and questions about the viewers' identity drive and define the situation.

1.3 Overview

Acknowledging that there is no such thing as an absolute self or fixed personal identity, I investigate in my research how identity transforms within time and surroundings. Identify is also alters through processes of self-representation and self-portrature. In my media art practice, I consider theories of identity and the gaze drawn from feminist film theory and post-colonial writing. I investigate how these can be represented in digital media art. To unpack this subject matter, I examine Vietnamese – American theorist Trinh T. Minh-Ha's writings which open up the concept of layered identity, and the cinematic effect of 'looking' in relation to processes of cultural movement and displacement.

My methodology and working processes are described in chapter 3. In chapter 4, I outline the creative development of the media installation, including documentation images. Chapter 5 concludes with a reflection on where this

project has concluded, and where I imagine my research will go in the future. The appendix includes description and documentation of several video experiments of my studio-based practice, documentation of the final project (coding, sound and video), some related works, writings extracted from my journal, and photos taken during my field trip to Vietnam in January 2013.

For my final media installation project, I revised the *Sleeping Beauty* installation for a new and different context. In *The Gaze of the Other*, the viewer peeks into the window of a traditional cabinet/ The glass door of this cabinet is partly concealed by curtains. When a viewer parts the curtains, a black and white video image of a sleeping woman seems to wake. When the viewer looks at this video, s/he is detected by a motion sensor. The viewer's eyes are filmed by a hidden camera and projected live in the gallery space. The enlarged projection of the spectator's eye is visible to other people in the gallery, but not by the one who is being filmed. *The Gaze of the Other* installation constructs a system of gazes where the the one who looks and the object of looking are constantly overlapping.

I am the artist/author of this media installation, as well as the performer/actor as the "sleeping woman". I am also a visitor to the installation space. It is complicated to define my position. The materials of the exhibition include : the vintage Vietnamese cabinet, a black and white video displayed on a monitor screen; curtains that veil the video from the viewer's gaze. Also, the installation includes new digital technology: a sensor that triggers a hidden surveillance camera, the projection of the viewer's eyes, and programmed circuits

that afford the physical computing of the work. These are part of contemporary,

digital conditions. The work is installed in "X-tension", a group exhibition of the

final thesis class of the Digital Futures graduate program. *The Gaze of the Other*

appears to look back to the origins of experimental feminist media art and theory,

including cinematic images with a retro feel. But it also points forward in the

Digital Futures context to an emerging digital world of contemporary art and

online media. It is my intent for the installation to span different times and places,

occupying a place between older experimental film and new online media, and

between older understandings of migration and newer conditions of

multiculturalism and globalization.

Chapter 2: Theoretical Framework and Artistic Influences

2.1 Being the other and the inner gaze

Years ago, during the first few weeks when I lived alone as a sixteen year old girl, I began to question identity, something it never occurred to me to do before when I lived in Vietnam. This uneasiness arises when questioning one's future, a state that Vietnamese-American theorist Trinh T. Minh-Ha (2012) identifies in her book *Elsewhere, Within Here: Immigration, Refugeeism and the Boundary Event* as the 'sleepless silence', the "feeling of a stranger living in a strange land" (p.11). For Trinh, she could not sleep for the first few months after coming to the United States. For me, I could not stop coming up with questions in my head, which kept me from falling asleep at night. I realized in this foreign land, I was different; I was the 'Other'. The state of being an outsider made me uncomfortable.

The initial shock of feeling like an outsider or 'Other' is aptly described by anti-colonialist writer Frantz Fanon (1967) in his book *Black Skin White Mask*. It is a moment of rupture when one finds oneself appearing as "an object" for everyone to look at. When Fanon left his hometown in the French colony of Martinique to live as black man in France, he was called a 'dirty nigger' or 'negro on the streets of Paris; this experience created the sense of rupture where he acknowledged his position as an 'Other' in the eyes of the white Parisians (p.84). This moment of rupture is visually represented in *Frantz Fanon, Black Skin White Mask,* an experimental documentary film directed by Isaac Julien (1996). In this

key scene, Fanon sees himself in the mirror as he is seen by a French child and his mother. "Mama, see the Negro! I'm frightened!" the child pleads. As Fanon identifies with the child's distress, he internalizes the sense of being the 'Other', completely breaking himself and his original self-image apart.

While discussing about Fanon in her book *Taboo Memories, Diasporic Voices* (2006), theorist Ella Shohat writes "…in *Black Skin, White Masks* Fanon distinguishes between experiencing the black body in the Caribbean in Africa, where blacks form the majority , and experiencing it in France, as a minority… Fanon offers a path for "reading" communities as a conjunctural shaping of comparisons. " (p. 264) She suggests that Fanon discovers the position of his otherness in terms of comparisions, not between himself and other people, but more so, between himself and his other self (the one in France and the one in the Caribbean). This affirms Trinh T. Minh-Ha's observation that the gaze can take the form of an inner gaze into one's self. She discusses this in the essay Other Than Myself, My Other Self :

> Depending on who is looking, the exotic is the other, or it is I. For the one who is off- and outside culture, is not the one over there whose familiar culture I am still a part of, or whose unfamiliar culture I come to learn from. I am the one making a detour with myself, having left upon my departure from over here not only a place but also one of my selves. The itinerary displaces the foundation; the background of my identity, and what it incessantly unfolds is the very encounter of self with the other – other than myself and, my other self (Trinh, 2011, p.41)

2.2 The exchange of gazes

The image of a bedroom and the figure of a woman sleeping have been represented in media installations by feminist artists and filmmakers in the past. This concept represents more than just a gendered figure (the sleeping woman), it symbolizes the idea of the 'Other', the state of sleeping as a metaphor for the fragile side of human beings where the bedroom operates as a personal, private space that is very close to the notion of a "home". Canadian artist Lynn Hershman Leeson's exhibition *Room of one's own* (1993) was modeled as a peepshow; it required the viewer/voyeur to peer into a miniature bedroom, one at the time, only to hear a woman tell them to look away. The eyes of the viewer appear inside this piece, projected on a tiny monitor.

In this 1993 installation, as well as visually demonstrating the feminist concept behind Virginia Wolf's novel *A Room of One's Own* (1929), Lynn Hershman Leeson also plays with the exchange of the gaze by turning the viewer into a double voyeur. In my final installation for *The Gaze of the Other*, I took on her concept of the 'multilayered' gaze but constructed and unpacked it differently. In Leeson's exhibition, the bedroom was made from miniature sculptures, while in my work the bedroom is presented though time-based media (film). This choice of material allows me to depict the notion of time, the idea of transition and temporality. The layers of the Gaze in the works are also different. In *The Gaze of the Other,* the exchange of looks between the audience and the girl inside the box is critical. The projection of the viewer's eye examining the box makes this even

more complicated and multifaceted.

"To gaze implies more than to look at," write Janet L. Borgerson and Jonathan E. Schroeder (2004) "it signifies a psychological relationship of power and sexuality in which the gazer dominates the object of the gaze" (p.588). They built this argument based on Laura Mulvey's theory of the 'male gaze'. In her text *Visual Pleasure and Narrative Cinema,* Mulvey (1975) coined the term "male gaze", when she argued that in film, audiences have to 'view' characters from the perspective of a heterosexual male. She explains that the concept of the gaze deals with how an audience views the people presented. Mulvey identifies 3 'looks', or perspectives that occur in film which objectify women (p.18). The first is the viewpoint of the male character and how he sees the female character in the movie. The second is that of an outside spectator who perceives the female character portrayed on screen. The third combines both previous 'looks': it allows the male audience to view the female character as his own personal sex object, by watching himself looking.

Later theorists Janet Bergstrom (1979) and Miriam Hanson (1984), drew upon Sigmund Freud's ideas of bisexual responses, to argue that the role of woman and man actually switch, either successively or simultaneously. Hanson suggested that women can view male characters as erotic objects of desire. In response, Mulvey revised her stance in *Afterthoughts on 'Visual Pleasure and Narrative Cinema' Inspired by Duel in the Sun* (1981) and confirmed that females can take two possible roles: the female object of desire or an active viewer of the

text.

My *Sleeping Beauty* installation in summer 2012 is a response to these complex systems of understanding the woman's role in the male gaze. I expand on the notion of sexuality in the gaze and consider it as a psychological relationship of power. In this, its meaning becomes much more diverse and powerful. Depending on the context, the look between the audience and the girl can be the 'male gaze', the 'colonial gaze', or the 'inner gaze'. From time to time, the interactivity can simply be a mere look without any clear meaning.

2.3 The multilayered gaze and the multilayered identity

In this quest to examine the relationship between layers of the gaze and the alteration of identity through the process of travel, I first looked into Trinh T. Minh-Ha's theoretical framework, her concept of being the 'Other', a person living in-between. In her writing, Trinh often dealt with questions related to identity - what does it mean to be the 'Other', to be a woman, a person of color or a person from a Third World country. In her most well-known book of theory *Woman Native Others,* Trinh (1989) declares that an identity has multiple layers (p.90). She writes that 'I' is "…not a unified subject, a fixed identity, or that solid mass covered with layers of superficialities one has gradually to peel off before one can see its true face. 'I' is, itself, *infinite layers."* (Trinh., 1989, p.90) Once the natures of I, *i, you, she, We, we, they,* and *wo/man* begin to overlap, the boundary between different identities that exist within a person get blurry.

In response to this idea, I came to consider my identify as a woman coming from a Third World country, a cross-cultural traveler, a person of colour… or all of the above at the same time. This understanding has helped me to realize that it is the overlapping of identity that creates the multilayered system of the gaze. At this point, the gaze becomes complicated, because it can confuse people about their roles in the system, and their sense of self as "other". *The Gaze of the Other* installation intends to create a space of being in-between.

Trinh (2001) explains the notion of "in-between" in her recent essay *Faraway, from home (the comma between)*, where she expresses a frustration. She writes, sometimes when she is invited to talk in events, she is forced to represent her identity as something larger than herself "...I'm asked with great expectations to speak as a representative – of a culture, a people, a country, an ethnicity or a gender considered to be mine and my own" (p.89). People expect her to "tell us about Vietnam, be Woman, talk Asian, stay within the Third World." (p.89). In order to deal with these expectation without denying herself, later when she was asked to submit writings in areas of race, ethnicity, class, gender or postcolonial theories, Trinh chose to only send out poetry - not as a means of being resentful, but as an attempt to provide something different.

This notion of frustration and stress is often described by other minority artists, especially writers. There are expectations that artists belonging to 'other' communities have to undergo. Eleanor Heartney (2001) writes in her book *Postmodernism:*

> As artists came to be categorized by race, ethnicity, gender and sexuality, an unspoken demand arose that they must speak for their group and for a certain vision of anti-modernism…Like the essentialist position that embraced women's designation as representative of nature, emotion and body, multiculturalism appeared to accept non-Western cultures as purveyors of spirituality, instinct and the irrational. (p.68)

Writer Amy Tan (2003) voiced her own worried opinions in her book *The Opposite of Fate: Memories of a Writing Life:*

> I am alarmed when reviewers and educators assume that my very personal, specific, and fictional stories are meant to be representative, down to the smallest detail, of not just Chinese-Americans but sometimes all Asian culture … Why do readers and reviewers assume that a book with Chinese-American characters can encompass all the demographics and personal histories of Chinese America? (p.305)

These frustrations come from a desire to be in charge of the gaze, to look instead of being an object of consideration. There is always an inner gaze that silently looks at everything happening around oneself from above. In this inner gaze, power dynamics are unstable.

2.4 Voyeurism, peepshows and surveillance cameras

In the final installation of *The Gaze of the Other*, in order to construct a complex system of gazes, I displayed the visitor's eyes onto the wall in front of them while they are examining an image of a sleeping woman, inside an object of display (the traditional cabinet). These prominent projected eyes were created using surveillance technologies where cameras are embedded in space and capture images of unsuspecting people. The focus on the eye also prompts me to consider

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questions of voyeurism. According to Mulvey (1975) in *Visual Pleasure and Narrative Cinema*, voyeurism is the pleasurable act of looking while not being seen, and the cinema satisfies a primordial wish for pleasurable looking (p.12). That is because the viewers in the cinema sit in a dark room, where they cannot be seen when watching the film. When the viewers are not in a darkened space, a peepshow (a form of private viewing screen) can be used to generate the same effect.

In my opinion, everybody is curious and loves to watch. Whether it is a traffic accident, a street performance, a hit in a hockey game or a confidential and personal space like a person's bedroom. My decision to create my media installation project for *The Gaze of the Other* in the form of a peepshow with a display monitor inside a traditional box for viewers to peek into came from my own interest and curiosity.

The viewer becomes a voyeur when he/she looks into the 'peephole', however the viewer is also looked at, when others see the unsuspecting image of his or her eyes, projected onto the wall. The position of the viewer (the waking woman, the viewer/projection) are both unstable and 'in between'.

2.5 In-between – spaces

A person traveling in-between cultures desires to find a new 'home'. As told in *Far Away, From Home: The Comma Between*, Trinh arrived in the United States in 1970, when Vietnam was still a war-torn land. (Trinh, 2010, p.13) In

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Vietnam, she had to face the fear of danger, hearing bomb explosion or gunshot every night. That was the reason why she found the silence of American nights uneasy and strange when first arriving. However, because the silence brought her a sense of safety and peacefulness, she liked it. Within those silent nights, she found a 'home' within herself:

> Home and abroad are sometimes intuitively determined according to the light of the sky on location, other times by the taste of native water, or by the smell of the environment, and other times yet, by the nature of the surrounding silence. Home then is not only in the eye, the tongue and the nose, but it is also, as in my case, acutely in the ear. (Trinh, 2010, p.12)

In *Eyewitness to History,* Trinh T. Minh-Ha (2001) affirms that sleeping is the state when "one was at one's most vulnerable" (p.86). Some people can fall asleep when the background is noisy; others require absolute silence in their bedrooms. Regardless, a person is usually at peace while he or she is sleeping. I eventually realized that, home for me is where I can happily fall asleep, where I can completely put my guard down and place myself in the most powerless condition. "Home is," writes Trinh T. Minh-Ha (2011) in *Far Away, From Home (The Comma Between),* "nowhere else but right here, at the edge of this body of mine." (p.12)

I acknowledge that home does not need to be a physical space, however it has to come with the body, peace and silence. The image of a girl quietly sleeping in her bedroom clearly demonstrates this notion of 'home'. In my media installation for *The Gaze of the Other*, in order to answer the question of how to represent space in relation to identity, I decided to display video footage of myself

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sleeping to the audience. The concept of 'home' is very private and personal, and the viewer can only see this video of me sleeping by peaking into a cabinet with a glass window that acts as a peephole monitor. In terms of 'silence', there is no music in the background. The only sound is the ambiance of the bedroom in the footage and the noise that the audience might cause. During the exhibition, this silence was repeated like a lullaby, to nullify the whole space into a peaceful dream. The 'home' displayed on screen in the girl's bedroom scene also is a metaphor for a different culture. Being displayed in a western country such as Canada, the traditional East Asian wooden cabinet suggests this cultural aspect. By using black curtains and lace fabric to separate the video from the outside environment, the final installation for The Gaze of the Other is located in an 'in between' space – a space that technically still belongs to the visitor's society and culture, but is represents a different one.

2.6 In between – technology

Traditional film and new interactive video display method

The use of black and white in the video of myself as the sleeping woman evokes a history of older experimental film at the time of early feminist film theory and video performance art (mid-late 1970s). It also evokes the anti-film genre. The term 'anti-film' was coined and made famous by Andy Warhol in the 60s with "Empire" (1964) and "Sleep" (1963). For five hours and twenty minutes, Warhol continuously filmed his friend sleeping in his debut film "Sleep" (1963).

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Later by filming eight hours and five minutes of the Empire State Building in
"Empire" (1964), Warhol experimented and challenged the conventions of
filmmaking. Though the final screened movie has been edited to be shorter than
the original clip, the scene remained uncut.

Warhol explained that people sitting in a movie theatre normally find
themselves in some dream world built of what is being shown on the screen.
When a disturbing scene happens, the viewers will, more likely than not, turn to
the person next to them, but only briefly so as to not miss the action on the screen.
Warhol claimed that, compared to conventional films; spectators can engage in
much more with his experimental work. They can eat, drink, smoke, cough and
look away from the screen and then back again, while everything happening in the
film is still there, right in front of them (*Andy Warhol Screen Tests: The Films of
Andy Warhol : Catalogue Raisonné*, 2006).

My interpretation from what Andy Warhol said about these anti-film films
is that they can bring up issues that reach beyond the content of what is happening
on screen, including issues in the location where the film is being shown. When
the screen keeps projecting a location without any cuts, viewers start to question:
where am I looking? This effect allows the notion of home to be clearly visible
and displayed.

With anti-film in mind, in my media installation for *The Gaze of the Other*
installation, the video of the girl sleeping inside the box is 30 second of footage
looped continuously. This looping technique tricks viewers from seeing a real-

time scene, and is a backdrop for the real-time interactivity that happens when the sensors are triggered. Audiences gain a sense of control during live shows, when they can interrupt the action. One cannot change a film that has already been edited in advance. By placing the idea of anti-film into an interactive media installation, I am hoping to give both the artist and the participants more ability to control the situation.

To construct interactivity between the viewer and the video, I a employed a system of digital fabrication, using sensors, arduino-based physical computing, digital screens, and programming using Processing. In a technical sense, *The Gaze of the Other* seems to span different times and places, occupying a place between older experimental film strategies and new digital technology. Digital production methods have eclipsed the traditional experimental media of film and video. Distribution networks and social media are the primary mechanisms of dissemination of moving images, and these are deeply embedded with issues of self and identity.

Revolution of Identity and self-portraiture

In *The Fabric of Self: A Theory of Ethnics and Emotions* (1998)*, theorist* Margolis argues that the way we view ourselves changes when our social environments change (Margolis, 1998, p.132). As a result, a person who is frequently relocated from a distinctive culture tends to experience more changes in personality than one who remains in a steady condition. Trinh T. Minh-Ha

(1994) writes in her essay "Other than Myself, My Other Self":

> Every voyage can be said to involve a re-sitting of boundaries. The traveling self is here, both the self that moves physically from one place to another… and the self that embarks on an undetermined journeying practice, having constantly to negotiate between home and abroad, native culture and adopted culture, or more creatively speaking, between a here, a there, and an elsewhere. (p.9)

In short, as a result of negotiating between inner self and outer self, one's personality changes constantly while moving from one culture to another. This happens because one's identity is challenged and modified by the opportunities and threats that the changing surroundings bring. However, even for those who do not move or travel, as time goes by, the surrounding environment changes; with it, personality, lifestyle and identity are altered as well.

The Internet and social media have changed our sense of space and the means of self-portraiture and identity formation. Never have online and offline identity been so merged. Also, the process of global travel is accelerating, creating new forms of displacement. Trinh acknowledges this by saying:

> It is said, for example, that writers or the diverse Diaspora around the world live in a double exile: away from their native land and away from their mother tongue. Displacement takes on many faces and is our very everyday dwelling. (But to say this is hardly to say anything foreign to this age of new technology where, with the spread of wireless devices, people of the mobile world spend their time more in airports, airplanes and in their cars than at home.) (Trinh, 2011, p.12)

Globalization and new media self-portraiture through Facebook or YouTube complicate the experience of physical traveling in the past. The system of the gaze - gazing at the other, being gazed at, and most significantly, gazing at

the self - have significantly altered in digital networks. This change is now crucial

when we examine "the gaze of the other". In the installation of *The Gaze of the*

Other, the use of the webcam and live display of the eyes of the visitors are

intended to evoke these conditions of online representation.

Chapter 3: Methodology/ Process

3.1 Methodology

My research questions how theories of identity and the gaze can inform digital media art. Alongside theoretical research, the methodologies I adopted include Self-Reflective Practice, Field Research and Prototype-lead Research. These methodologies are practice-based, interdisciplinary and overlapping. I will not distinguish each one but discuss the overall process in this section.

3.2 Process

3.2.1 *Sleeping Woman*

I initiated the project with an Independent Study on Asian Feminism. During this time, I was also taking a *Creation and Computation* class at OCAD U, as well as attending several workshops on Arduino, Processing and Max MSP. As a result, I became very interested in the idea of combining traditional art practices (sculpture, video and audio) with digital technologies (programming, sensors…) in an interactive installation environment. I focused on using sensors to communicate between human body and the machine. In the end of my four-month study, I produced a series of installations dealing with the topic of being woman. One of these, the *Sleeping Beauty* (2012), later became the foundation for *The Gaze of the Other*.

Figure 02: *Sleeping Beauty* installation – location setup (2012)

To construct the interaction in *Sleeping Beauty* (2012), I started by mapping out the interaction in the work. The circuit was designed to detect when a person approached the video; depending on the distance between the visitor and the projected work, different videos were displayed. I tested different types of sensors including Photocell, Proximity and Ultrasonic to calculate the distance between the visitor and the installation. Arduino computing was used to set up and control these sensors. Arduino generates and transmits data signals from the circuit to a computer. The computer runs Processing, which then receives the information and displays different videos in response. I filmed and edited two short videos of a woman (performed by myself) sleeping and waking up, then mapped these into the interaction.

The *Sleeping Beauty* installation performed as I expected. However, my research expanded beyond a binary consideration of the gaze in terms of gender. I moved on in my research to unpack different layers of the gaze.
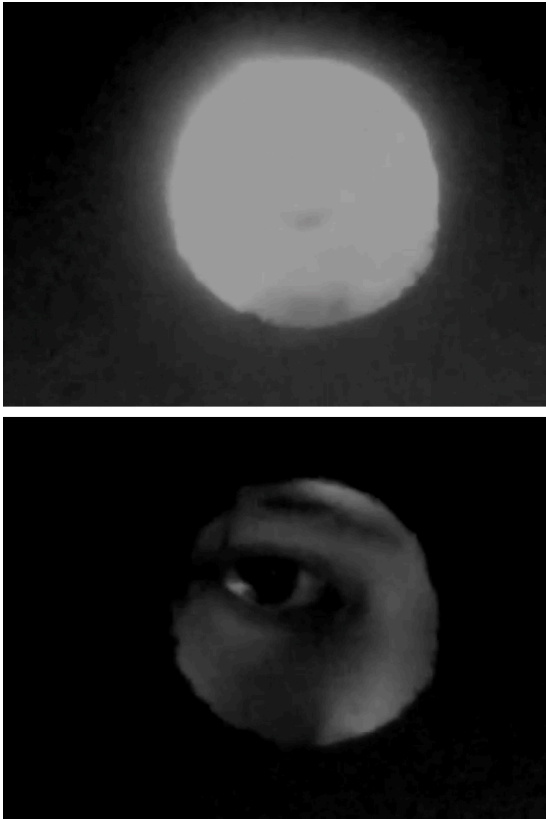
3.2.2 Peepshow

I shifted my study into the concept of the pleasure of looking – voyeurism. I then decided to revise *Sleeping Beauty* and construct the installation in the form of a peepshow. In the first version, I drilled holes into large heavy cardboard and placing these near the wall where videos were projected. I observed that viewer's eyes that are captured through these holes are quite interesting and intriguing

Figure 03: Test look through peephole on cardboard (2012)

(Figure 03). This finding actually prompted me to depict the viewer's gaze in the final installation. By looking into these holes, several viewers were able to see the same video at once. However this setting also made it difficult to locate the sensors in relation to the audience. When multiple sensors were triggered and only one video was projected, it confused the computer. It could not recognize which signal was triggering and how to response. Furthermore, adjusting the eyes of the woman in the video to look straight back into the viewers was hard because now the gazes came from more than one direction.

So, I decided to construct the installation for an individual experience. The

idea of a "peephole" box came up. Projecting video inside a box can provide an exclusive and personal communication between the individual viewer and the artwork. Also, the platform of a box allowed me to experiment with different types of interactions. In my initial installation, the work could only sense the viewer's distance in relation to it. In the final installation of *The Gaze of the Other*, I wanted to give the viewer a more active role and a better sense of control.

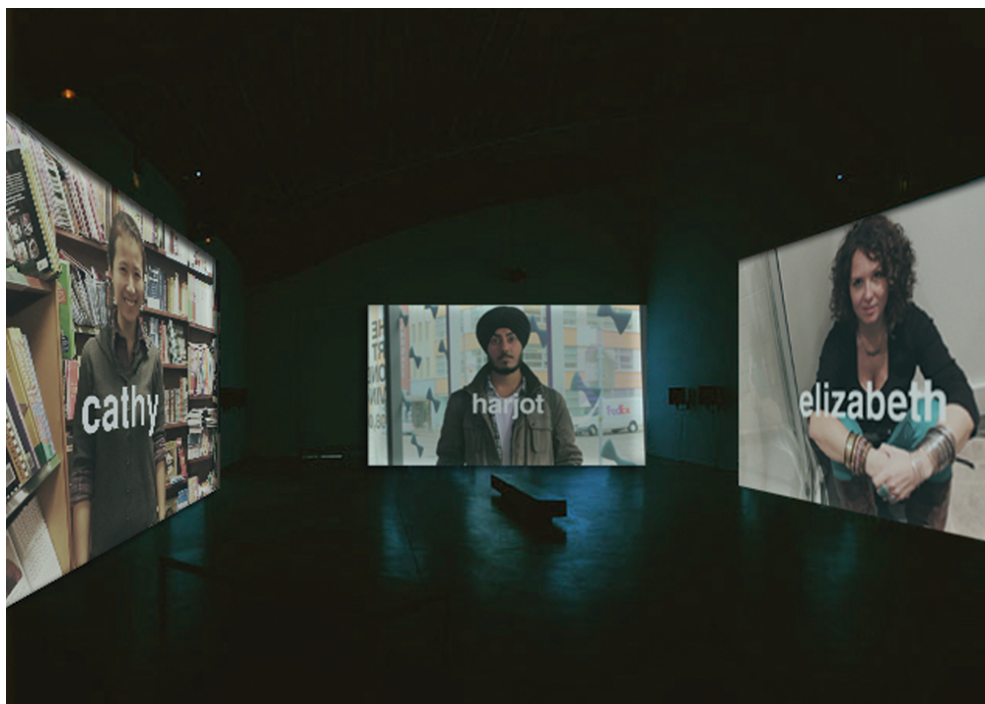### 3.2.3 *Singing birds in the locked cage*

Figure 04: *Singing birds in the locked cage* installation (2012)

I started the video installation project *Singing birds in locked cages* while studying the topic of 'the Other' in society. I recorded three conversations between three friends and myself. Each dialogue is about one hour long. Interview

subjects were chosen based on their distinct 'otherness' experiences – being immigrants, international students or first-generation persons in Canada. In the conversations, we shared stories and thoughts, memories, future plans and expectation in our lives. The audio files were cut and then edited into multiple short clips. I asked each person to choose a location where they felt most comfortable to be filmed in, and each looked straight into the camera lens.

In the installation, I showed all three videos in loop mode and projected them on three walls in a dark room. When visitors walked inside the room, they felt looked at by the people in the video. Utilizing the technical development from *Sleeping Beauty*, distance between the video and the audience was detected. Whenever a viewer got close to each of the videos, an audio clip was triggered and played, telling a piece of memory from each character. By the end of the creative process, I reached a level of comfort and general knowledge in representing the experience of otherness. I also was interested in considering how people responded when gazed at in a space. The fact of being looked at and examined put the audience members in the shoes of being 'the Other'. Through the gaze, power relations between the subjects and audience became unstable.

3.2.4 Field Research

One assumption I examined when researching personal identity is the notion of 'home'. I believed that in order to understand how identity is altered when one travels in between different cultures, one has to be able to define and

know exactly where one belongs. Since I was born and grew up in Vietnam, I used to believe it was my absolute 'home'. Later on through examining myself and observing people's lives around me, I realized that my belief might not be accurate.

Figure 05: Photographs extracted from Artist field study journal in Vietnam (2013)

During my winter break (2012-2013), I returned to Vietnam for over a month. I was excited because two years had passed since my last visit. I planned to conduct field research in my hometown. I wanted to film footage and capture a lot of images in order to collect visual documentation of my real 'home'. However when I actually arrived in Vietnam, I was surprised to feel like a stranger in my place of origin. I enjoyed reconciling with my family and old friends, but failed to identify a physical place where I could document my 'home'

on video. The footage and images I recorded were visually beautiful, but had no emotion or feeling of 'home' for me. They looked like videos or photographs a tourist would take of Vietnam. I finally admitted the truth - I felt disconnected.

However, surprisingly, my connection with Vietnam during my field research was deepened by my engagement with a traditional craft activity there. While in Vietnam, I took a workshop where I studied an old form of traditional craftsmanship, making bowls; this material practice connected me with my traditional culture and a sense of familiar embodiment and 'home'. My material practice as an artist working with media in Canada seemed to connect with this hands-on material creative process. Typically made from organic substances like bamboo, coconut or eggshells, for me these crafting products are very motivating because they are actually more often sold to foreign travelers than to Vietnamese

Figure 06: Vietnamese Traditional Bowl, Artist Sculptures (2013)

people. For example, the bowls that I made by the end of the class (figure 06) were originally crafted to be souvenirs in a traveler's boutique instead of being used in the country's households. The position of these traditional craft products in Vietnamese society reminds me of my situation of being in-between different cultures: created in one place but relocated into another.

Observing the form of the bowl, originally made from half of a coconut shell, I thought about the comparable shape of Vietnamese traditional one-man fishing boats – the bowl boat (Figure 07). The figure of the boat reminded me of the recurring image of a boat driven by a woman crossing a stormy sea in Trinh T. Minh Ha's film *Surname Viet, Given Name Nam* (1989). The image evokes the 'boat'

Figure 07: Vietnamese Traditional 'Bowl' boat, Artist Photo (2013)

peoples' struggle and loss of control while living in exile. Even though I do not consider myself as a person living in exile, I did have to grow up by myself in a strange land, without the apparent option of coming back. As a result, I relate to the sorrow and difficulty in this situation of transition. In response to my connection to traditional craft, I chose to use a blue wooden cabinet with a traditional texture of the sea carved on its surface in the final installation.

3.2.5 First Iteration

I returned to Toronto, and began my final work on *The Gaze of the Other* installation. I experimented with different types of sensors to add a diversity of interaction. During this time, I was also very involved in creating 'simulated' human interaction. Several works I produced during this period dealt with that topic. The *Wisdom Sweater* (2012) and *Smart Stuffed Robot* (2012) were among those.
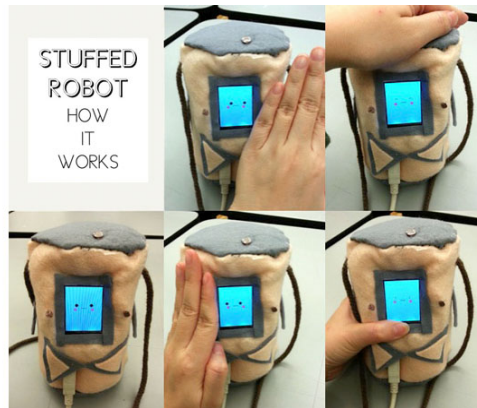
Figure 08: *Wisdom Sweater* (2012) Figure 09: *Smart Stuffed Robot* (2012)

The *Wisdom Sweater* is able to generate random audio answers to any

Yes/No question. The *Smart Stuffed Robots* are able to talk and rotate their eyes in

relation to the direction users' hand movements. Based on the technical

knowledge I obtained from these projects, I made the first prototype iteration of

the box. The box was constructed with hard cardboard and measured to fit a
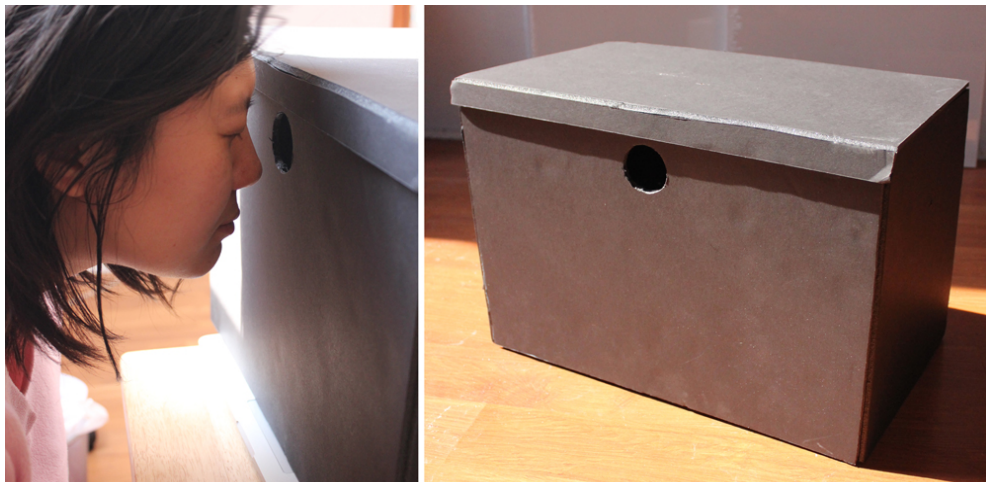
laptop inside (Figure 10).

Figure 10: *The Gaze of the Other*, First Prototype

Thanks to the compact design (everything is run by a laptop placed inside), the box is easy to relocate and test in different environments. In this first iteration of the work, I used touch sensors. When looking inside the box, the viewer can use his or her hand to feel the surface of the box (covered with conductive paper) to witness multiple interactions happening in the video.

I filmed footage of myself looking in different directions. I used these clips to suggest that the woman's eyes follow the direction of the viewer's hand movements in the box.

Figure 11: *The Gaze of the Other,* Video experiment

3.2.6 Issues of display location (exhibition space)

Once I had the first iteration of the peephole box up and ready, I thought about where to display it. To express notions of space and time in the installation, the location where the work would be presented is critical. For *Sleeping Beauty*, I requested a quiet, private room for the work to be presented in. In the form of a

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"peepshow" (a standing monitor box) the context outside the box could be

flexible. I started out by placing the box in different locations in the city.

Figure 12: First Prototype location testing

Figure 13: Exhibition space

Thanks to the compact design of the box, it was mobile-friendly easily relocated. With only a laptop and Arduino circuit inside, there was no need for extra power plugs or computer cables.

Later on, I decided to add another layer of the gaze into the work. I decided to project the eyes of the viewer on the wall in the exhibition site. Knowing that our defense and exhibition would happen in the Open

Gallery building at 49 McCaul, I carried out a site visit to identify the exact

location of the installation. As a result of my previous location testing, I knew the installation would have to happen in a quiet environment. I requested a separate room, but this was not available. Instead, I found a corner in the Black Box where my work would be displayed. This site for the installation – its strengths and limitations - formed how the final installation was created.
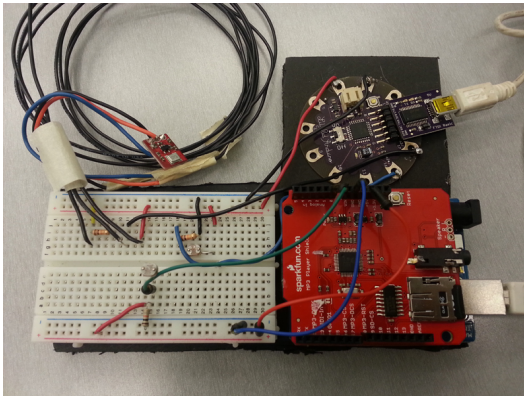
3.2.7 Interaction

Figure 14: Circuit with test sensors

Initially, I designed a sensor system where users would knock on the glass door of the cabinet, to trigger a response from the video within. After testing different types of sensors, a frequency sensor (microphone) was selected to detect the sound of a knock. Reworking the sleeping woman figure from *Sleeping Beauty*, I initially intended to let the girl inside the box sleep quietly until a visitor came and knocked on the glass window into the box. After testing, two separated circuits were used to communicate the sensor's signal: a system of Arduino + processing to control the video display and a system of Arduino + MP3 Player Shield to control the audio effect. The sound of a girl breathing while sleeping was looped; this stopped when she woke up.

To provide a more appealing experience for visitors, I decided to film new footage of myself sleeping with multiple reactions. By moving the camera angle
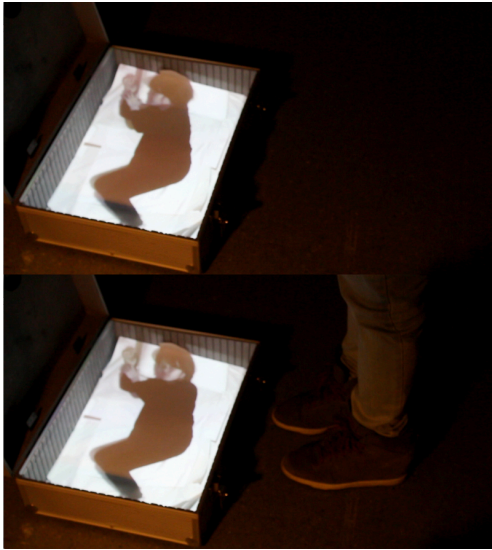
Figure 15: Studio experimentation
- Projecting on Suitcase

Figure 16: Nightstand cabinet

from side to top view, I could record all activities happening in the scene, and also provide a more interactive-friendly scene for the audience. In the studio, I experimented with the edited clips. Using a sound sensor (amplified microphone) as an input signal, I projected the new video of the sleeping girl onto a suitcase lying on the floor. The girl reacted depending on how loud a noise the visitors made (Figure 15 and Appendix F).

Later on I discovered a cabinet nightstand from an Asian furniture store in North York. Like the bowl I made in Vietnam, this nightstand was made and produced in Asia but delivered to Canada to be sold to foreigners. In fact, as the store owner explained, not many Asian immigrant families in Canada were interested in buying traditional furniture. After carefully examining the cabinet, the decorative texture carved in its front and the blue color reminded me of the scene of the 'boat people' in the sea in Trinh T. Minh-Ha's film *Surname Viet, Given name Nam*. At the same time, the

appearance of a nightstand holds a special meaning in Vietnamese culture. Back when I was a little kid, houses were very small and bedrooms usually were also living rooms and even dining rooms. A nightstand cabinet, usually placed in a bedroom, served different purposes. The cabinet immediately brought up a feeling of displacement to me. In the final installation, instead of making a new box from scratch, I wanted to use it as a representation of my cultural memory.

Figure 17: Nightstand - studio experiment

When I brought it back to the studio, the cabinet with its glass door opened up new opportunities for interaction and experimentations. I decided to revise the existing video footage from my previous installation *Singing birds in locked cages*. Instead of using the whole video, I cut out the eyes of the characters and displayed these images on a laptop screen inside the cabinet. I placed a light sensor and programmed the code so that every time the door is opened, a different pair of eyes would be displayed. This experiment created an unexpected event, as well as an exchange of the gaze between the audience member and the character inside the video. In the final installation for *The gaze of the Other*, the video footage of a woman sleeping, filmed from top view, was used to focus on the exchange of the gaze between myself – in the video - and the viewer. However to focus on the act

of looking, instead of providing multiple reactions as in the studio experiment with the suitcase, I chose to only use the video of the girl waking up and looking back at the visitor.

3.2.8 Final Installation preparation

I decided to build a separate system instead of using a laptop. By doing this, the final box was not as mobile-friendly as the first iteration (heavier and more cables), however will was more reliable and easier to fix and control in exhibition environment. In order to construct another layer of the gaze, I used a surveillance webcam inside the cabinet to record the eyes of the viewer. Because of this, the glass door acted as a peephole. It had to be stable and locked so that viewers could not open and mess up the location of the camera. After collecting all the required parts, including a surveillance

Figure 18: Separated parts inside cabinet and controlling laptop

camera, speakers, the Arduino + sensors circuits and display monitor, I located them inside the cabinet.

Figure 19: Cabinet cover experimentation with different lace materials

After everything was embedded inside, I faced a challenge to hide the materials from audience attention. I hoped visitors to the space would focus on the monitor screen where the video of the sleeping woman was displayed without noticing the extra cables, circuits, sensors and camera. Fabric was used to deal with this problem. I used black fabric to cover the inside of the cabinet, leaving only the monitor screen visible to outside audience. Lace was used to partially cover the glass door, giving the visitors only a glimpse of the girl sleeping. After experimenting (Figure 19), I ended up choosing black lace instead of white to imply the mysterious, personal aspects of voyeurism. Black lace also goes along well with the general setting in the exhibition site of the Black Box.

Choosing which activity to trigger the interaction was also a challenge. After experimenting, I realized that the signal from a sound sensor inside the cabinet in response to knocking was neither very sensitive nor accurate. Furthermore, without being told in advance, gallery visitors would not knock on the exhibited object. As a result, I chose to use a more natural activity. After

Figure 20: Setting up installation

observation I figured out viewers of the cabinet tended to lift the lace covering the glass door up to peek inside the box and examine the girl in clearer detail. I considered placing a light sensor inside the cabinet to detect the light coming in from the activity of lifting up the curtain.

In the testing process, I came up with a height that I felt comfortable with to locate the cabinet on. A podium that covered with a black fabric tablecloth was incorporated to serve this purpose. The space inside the podium was used to store all cables, electrical chargers and the main computer that controled the interactivity. Figure 20 shows the cabinet being placed on top of the standing podium in the exhibition space within the Black Box. This image was taken during the process of setting up the exhibition. In the photo a short throw projector is situated on top of the cabinet, which was later hidden behind it in the final installation.

Chapter 4: Exhibited Work – Installation Documentation

The final installation was situated in a dark, quiet and separated space in the Black Box in OCADU's Open Gallery at 49 McCaul Street. I used black lace and curtains to divide up a long, narrow space. Black does not emit or reflect light in any part of the visible spectrum, so it was chosen to secure complete isolation. Black also brings up feeling of mystery, power, and it helps to draw the visitor's attention into the main object of display – the traditional cabinet. In the Black Box Gallery, the installation was displayed when the lights are all turned off. A light bulb covered with black lace was used to provide lighting.

Figure 21: *The Gaze of the Other* – Space set up – outside light on/off

The installation was intended for one person to walk through at a time, to demonstrate the isolated and lonesome emotions of cross cultural travel and

migration. The walk down the long corridor represents the long transition from one's original culture to the new one. The object of display – a box in the form of a blue nightstand with a glass door – is placed on top of a table with black tablecloth in the middle of the space. This nightstand is the first thing a visitor sees when walking inside the installation space.

Walking around to examine the nightstand, the visitor hears the sound of a person breathing and sees that behind the lace curtain of the glass door, a black and white looped video displays a woman's figure quietly sleeping. Upon recognizing this, the viewer again is put in the position of being an outsider who is peeking into somebody else's personal space.

The visitor can come closer, parting the lace curtain to look inside the glass door for a clearer vision. The podium that holds the object was constructed at the height that I personally feel comfortable with. Therefore to be able to look into the window, the visitors must amend their height and bend down. Some visitors may find the act of bending down comfortable, others find it frustrating; in either case, they must adjust their posture.

When the curtain is lifted up, the woman all of a sudden wakes up and looks back at the audience. The breathing sound stops and there is only silence in the space. The woman and the visitor exchange gazes, quietly, until the curtain is lowered and the woman goes back to sleep again.
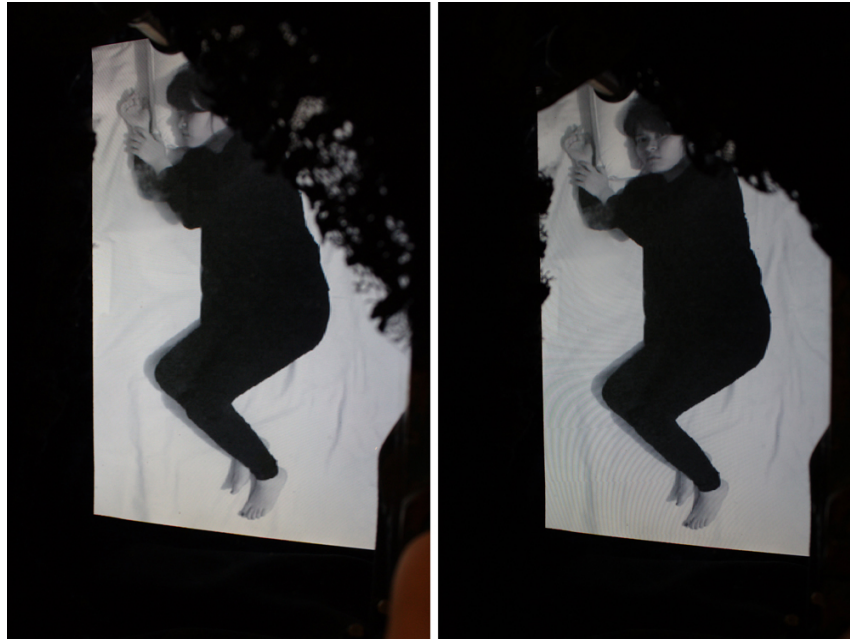
Figure 22: *The Gaze of the Other* – The girl wakes up when the curtain is lifted

Meanwhile, the viewer's eyes are captured by a hidden camera inside the nightstand and live-projected onto the wall behind the cabinet. The way the eyes are projected creates an illusion that the viewer is looking and examining him or herself, as well as exchanging glances with the character inside the box. The viewer is unable to see his or her own eyes projected, but outsiders (other visitors) can. After leaving the box, the visitor learns about how their eyes have been projected. They learn this by seeing another visitor interact with the box, or by being told by someone who has seen the projection.

Figure 23: *The Gaze of the Other* – Character's eyes are projected on the wall in front

In this media installation, I focus on the gaze and the eyes. Eyes are the sense used to visualize and identify things. Human see before they can speak or hear. The act of seeing is also very natural and influential physically, spiritually, and emotionally. Looking has been associated with life, soul and spirit, with communication, desire and love. A mere gaze, without visual expression or judgment, such as the look of performance artist Marina Abramović (Yugoslav, b. 1946) in her work *Artist is Present* (March 14–May 31, 2010) at the MOMA in New York, can become so powerful that it affects other's emotion and action.

Looking, or gazing, is also the only way one examines one's self-image from a third person point of view. In Isaac Julien's 1996 film *Frantz Fanon, Black Skin White Mask*, there is a scene where Fanon sees himself in the mirror being seen by French people. Fanon's sense of seeing himself as another complicated his sense of relation with colonial gaze he experienced from outside. In *the Gaze of the Other*, I attempt to recreate a sense of an inner gaze in the installation setting by projecting the eye of the viewers. In response to the notion of the gaze

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and being 'the Other', I tried to create a space where the division between looking and being the object of another's regard becomes unstable.
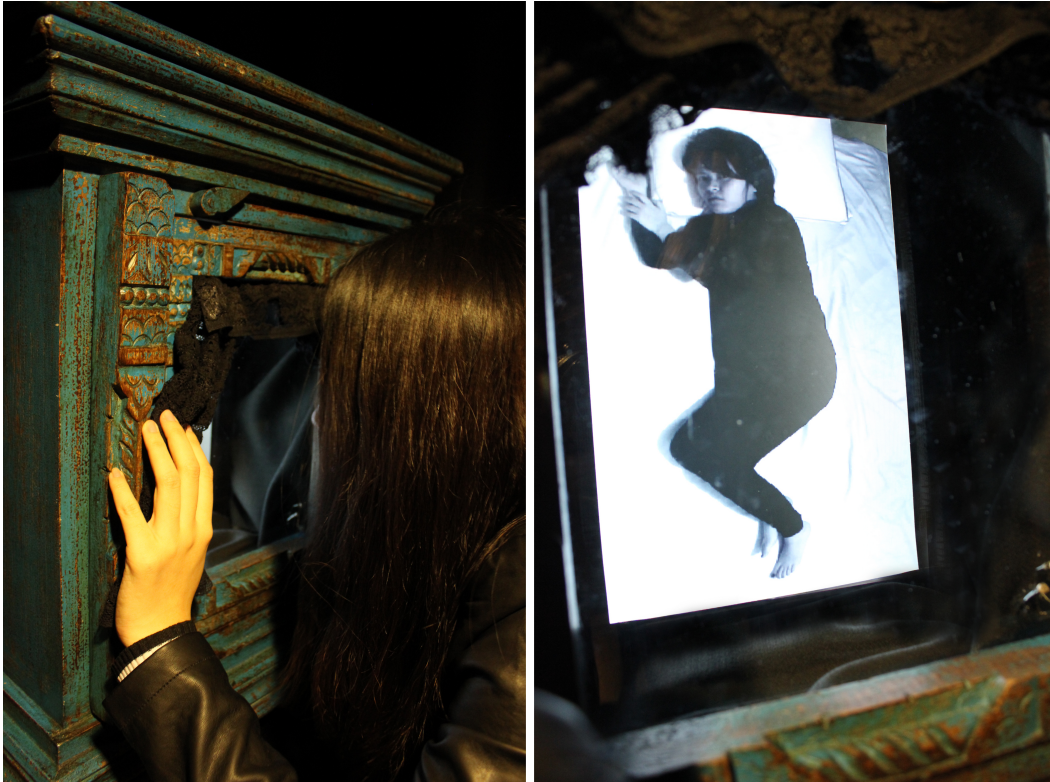

Figure 24: *The Gaze of the Other* – the exchange of the gaze between visitors to the site and character from the video

For me, the gaze and 'the Other' are both concepts that deal with power relationships. The point of view of the gaze and its object in cinema studies are a system to understand social norms and terms in which one is superior and in control of another. It is my intent to through this set-up to empower the Other with the authority of the gaze. I wanted to create a space where viewers to a certain extent inhabit the role of both a voyeur (the one looking into the window) and the object of being watched (being looked back by the sleeping woman in the video and being seen by others in the gallery).

Chapter 5: Reflection and Future Development

I came to the Graduate Program in Digital Futures two years ago with a background in multimedia design. My works tended to be produced in a very linear process, considering the viewers as end-users. During my study at OCAD I wanted to pursue a Fine Art degree to allow me to explore new digital technology and apply it in a media art installation. I wanted to experiment with interactivity in art gallery settings, evoking within visitors to the space a sense of being in-between. Without the audience interaction, the woman in the video would never wake up, and the system of the gaze in the space would not be activated.

My research examines theories of identity and the gaze from feminist film theory and post-colonial writing, and asks how these can be adapted to inform digital media art. My artistic investigations into the processes of travel/migration and image-making in terms of "the gaze" are really my investigations into contemporary questions of identity, including my own. As Trinh T. Minh-ha put it: "every work I have realized was designed to transform my own consciousness" (Chen, 1992, 87). I believe that my identity was influenced by my ancestors, as well as by the society and culture that I come from. On the other hand, when I relocated and experienced the enormous changes in my surroundings, lifestyle and communication, my identity had to be re-constructed. To move forward into my present, I had no choice but to generate new identities. This process is examined in both my theoretical and practical research, and is depicted in my final installation.

Reflecting back, the research content of the work was generated alongside my artistic studio-practice. My media installation and this supporting paper are not the only outcomes that result from my two-year study at OCAD University. The artistic experience and knowledge I have gained are also crucial forms of learning. The project began in the form of fragments. I would attempt to examine identity in terms of the meaning of being 'the Other', by unpacking layers of the gaze. This work began in the studio with a video installation I produced as part of an independent study on feminism in Asia, including hours of studio experimentation. I continued my research during a Field Study completed in my hometown in Vietnam, where I learned the art of Vietnamese bowl crafting techniques.

In the future, I look forward to experimenting with different technologies to provide more complex interactions between audiences and artworks. I will explore projection of live video as a more developed aspect of interaction. With my expanded knowledge and confidence in studio-based creative methods, I will experiment with new and traditional media, without fear of failure, and with a deeper understanding of hands-on processes and digital fabrication. I am certain that I will travel and relocate, and in this process of movement, my exploration of new, shifting and in-between identities is certain to continue.

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Appendix A

[Photos from *The Gaze of The Other* installation]
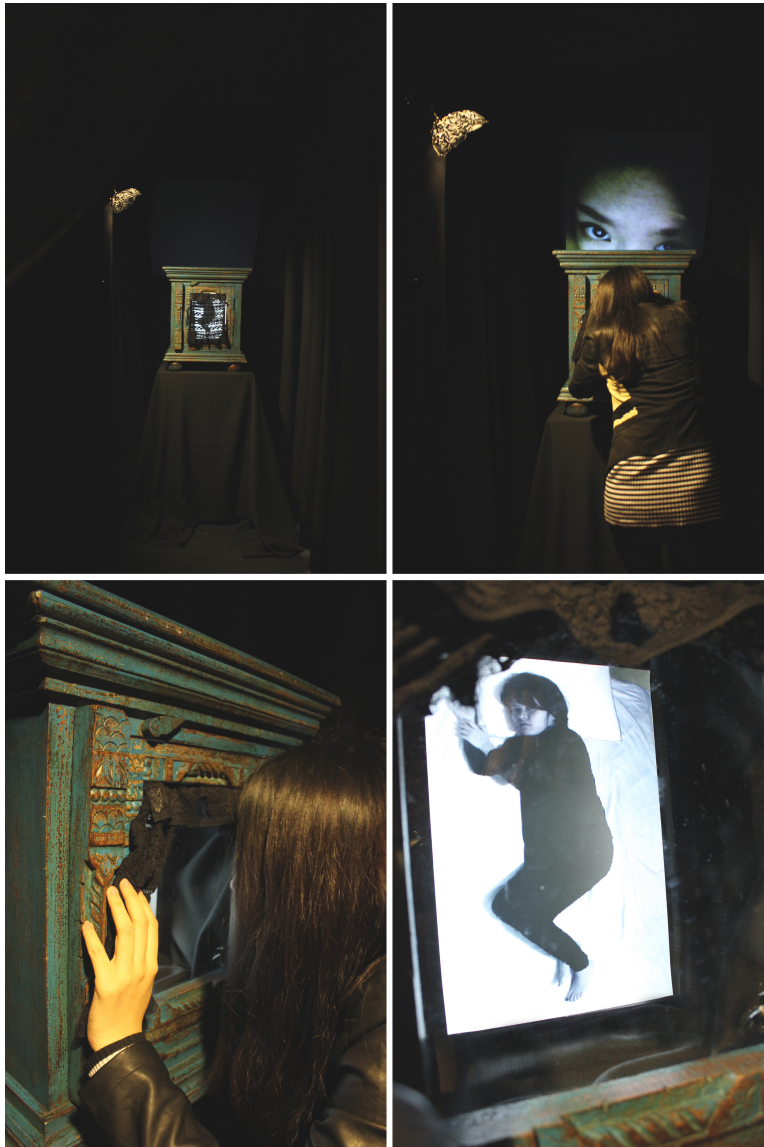
The Gaze of the Other – visitor journey

Appendix B

Processing and Arduino programming code

```
///01 - Arduino Code for Sound control using light sensor—
provided that SFEMP3Shield library is installed
//SOUND_FINAL.ino
/************************************
*Linh Do
*
*
**************************************/
#include <SPI.h>
#include <SdFat.h>
#include <SdFatUtil.h>
#include <SFEMP3Shield.h>

SdFat sd;
SFEMP3Shield MP3player;

void setup() {

  Serial.begin(9600);

  //start the shield
  sd.begin(SD_SEL, SPI_HALF_SPEED);
  MP3player.begin();

  //start playing track 1
  MP3player.playTrack(002);
}

//do something else now
void loop() {
  int sensorValue = analogRead(A0);
  sensorValue = int(map(sensorValue,0,1023,2,250));
  if (sensorValue >= 50) {
    MP3player.playTrack(002);
      Serial.println("light on!");
    }
  else if (sensorValue < 50) {
        MP3player.playTrack(001);
  Serial.println("light off!");
  }
  delay(1000);

}
```

```
///02 – Arduino Code for Sensor control — sending sensor value to
computer
// arduino2processing_sensors.ino
/*************************************
*Linh Do
*
*
*************************************/
int analogPin2 = A2;//light sensor 2 white wire
int analogPin3 = A3;//light sensor 3 yellow wire


int temp2 = 0;//value of light sensor 2
int temp3 = 0;//value of light sensor 3


void setup() {
Serial.begin(9600);
}

void loop() {
temp2=analogRead(analogPin2);
temp2=int(map(temp2,0,1023,0,255));//light sensor 2
temp3=analogRead(analogPin3);
temp3=int(map(temp3,0,1023,0,255));//light sensor 3


Serial.write(1);
Serial.write(temp2); // println add Linefeed to my float – mic

Serial.write(2);
Serial.write(temp3); // println add Linefeed to my float – short light

Serial.println ("temp2 :");
Serial.println (temp2);
//Serial.println ("temp3 :");
//Serial.println (temp3);
delay (500);
}
```

```
///03 — Processing code — use sensor value from Arduino to
control video display
//video_FINAL.pde
/***********************************
*Linh Do
*
*
/***********************************
import codeanticode.gsvideo.*;
import processing.serial.*;

Serial myPort;  // Serial port you are using
int[] buff = new int[10];

int num2 = 0;
int num3 =0;

GSMovie movie1;
GSMovie movie2;

GSMovie nowPlaying;

void setup() {

size(900, 600);

myPort = new Serial(this, Serial.list()[0], 9600);
myPort.clear();

  // Load and play the video in a loop
  movie1 = new GSMovie(this, "001.mov");
  movie2 = new GSMovie(this, "002.mov");
  nowPlaying = movie1;
  nowPlaying.loop();
}

void movieEvent(GSMovie nowPlaying) {
  nowPlaying.read();
}

void draw() {

while(myPort.available() > 0){
//read values
for (int i=0; i < 9; i++) {
buff[i] = buff[i+1];
}

buff[9] = myPort.read();
if (buff[9] == 2) {
num2= buff[8];
}

if (buff[9] == 3) {
num3= buff[8];
}

println ("value1:");
println (num2);
}
sensor(num2);
image(nowPlaying,0,0,900,600);
}

void sensor( int valuesensor){
 if(valuesensor < 50){
   movie2.goToBeginning();
  nowPlaying = movie1;
```

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```
//  movie1.goToBeginning();
//    nowPlaying.speed(1.0);
  nowPlaying.loop();
} else
//if (valuesensor <= 150)
{
  movie1.goToBeginning();
 nowPlaying = movie2;
// movie2.goToBeginning();
// movie2.goToBeginning();
// movie2.speed(1.0);
 nowPlaying.loop();
}
}
```

Appendix C

[Video footage from the installation]

00.mov

01.mov

02.mov

03.mov

[Sound from the installation]

001.mp3

Appendix D
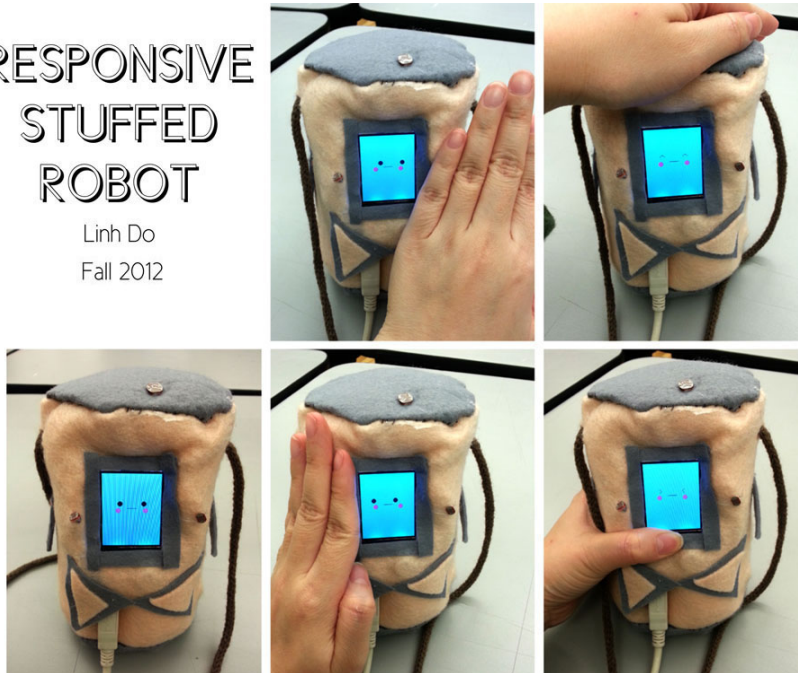
Photo journal from field study in Vietnam, January 2013

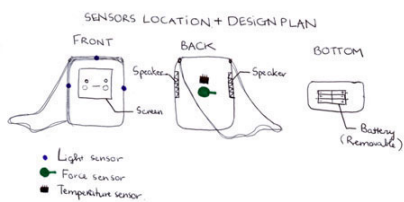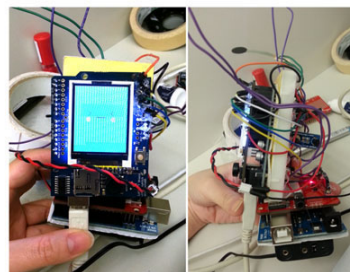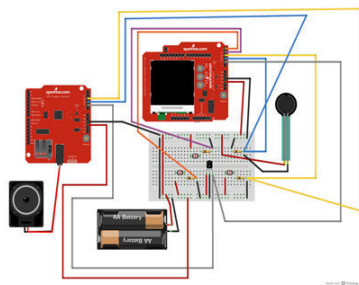Extracted from Artist's journal from field study in Vietnam, January 2013

Wisdom Sweater & Smart Stuffed Animal Project 2012
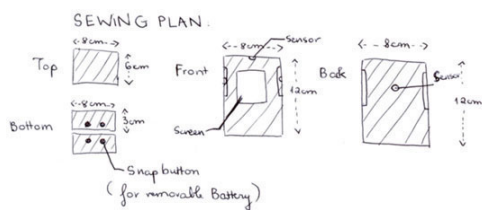
WISDOM **SWEATER**

Why spend time deciding?

Find a quick answer to any Yes/No Question.

Current possible answers including:

YES
Yeah, I am certain of it.
I'm going to have to say yes.
Definitely yes!
Yes, but keep it quiet.
Yes, and you'll never forget it.
I don't see why not.
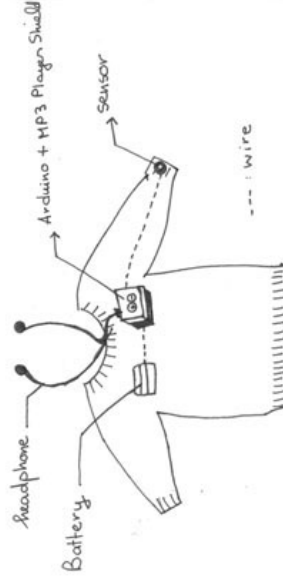Yes, as long as you're female.

NO
No, I can assure you that will never happen in a million years.
I'll have to say no to that one.
Of course not!
Believe me, I know what I'm

talking about, and the answer is 'no'!
No, it's not worth the trouble.
Only when the polar ice caps melt
NO! A thousand times, no!

MAYBE
This is a tough one. I might have to consult someone. Ask again in 30 second.
Listen, stop worrying! Go out and do something about it.
Please repeat your question I couldn't hear that.
I want to say yes, but I really shouldn't.
Hmmm. I have to ponder it.
Try again later

Design diagram

headphone
Arduino + MP3 Player Shield
Sensor
Battery
--- Wire

How does it work?

1 Got a question?
2 Wear the headphone, ask the question to the attached microphone. Cover the wrist part of the sweater
3 The sweater tells you what to do, problem solved!

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Appendix F

[Video experiments – studio-based practice]

001 sleepingbeauty.mov

002 peephole testing.mov

003 eyes.mov

004 suitcase and sound sensors.mov