

VIRTUALIA
MAGAZINE

BLESS SKATESHOP
NFTS CAN ENCODE STREET PHILOSOPHY

1984 AND THE SCREENS OF POWER
EMANUEL SOUZA

COMPOSING THE MYTH OF NOW
VAN AMENEYRO

GENART
ALGORITHMIC GENERATIVE ART

SMILE, WE'RE WATCHING YOU
NUMADESSAS

PØØR COMMUNITY
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EDITORIAL_

THE PHILOSOFER

A PUBLICATION FOR THOSE WHO STILL THINK CURATION MATTERS.

THIS AUGUST, VIRTUALIA MAGAZINE UNFOLDS ITS FIFTH ISSUE WITH A PULSE ON DISSONANCE: BETWEEN SURVEILLANCE AND SOVEREIGNTY, MYTHOLOGY AND METADATA, ENTROPY AND RESISTANCE. CONTRIBUTIONS IN THIS EDITION DO MORE THAN REPORT — THEY COMPOSE. THEY FRAME THE MOMENT WE INHABIT WITH THE NUANCE AND AESTHETIC URGENCY THAT ONLY ARTISTS, THINKERS, AND INDEPENDENT CURATORS CAN OFFER.

"SMILE, WE'RE WATCHING YOU" EMERGES FROM THE COLLISION BETWEEN A UNIVERSITY CLASSROOM AND THE BLOCKCHAIN. WHAT NUMADESSAS BEGINS AS A COURSE ON WEB3 DESIGN BECOMES A FIERCE, COLLABORATIVE COMMENTARY ON THE ALGORITHMIC GAZE. STUDENTS AND PROFESSORS MINT NFTS ON TEZOS NOT FOR SPECULATION, BUT AS POETIC WEAPONS AGAINST ZUBOFF'S SURVEILLANCE CAPITALISM. EACH PIECE IN THE COLLECTION — FROM GLITCH COLLAGES TO ANIMATED MONSTERS — IS A MANIFESTO IN PIXELS.

EMANUEL SOUZA CONTINUES THIS THREAD WITH SHARP INTELLECTUAL RIGOR IN 1984 AND THE SCREENS OF POWER. HIS ESSAY DOES NOT MERELY REVISIT ORWELL — IT REACTIVATES HIM. BY WEAVING FOUCAULT, DELEUZE, BYUNG-CHUL HAN, AND SNOWDEN, SOUZA MAPS HOW CONTROL TODAY IS NOT ONLY EXTERNAL AND PANOPTIC, BUT INTERNAL, JOYFUL, GAMIFIED. THE TELESCREEN IS NOW HANDHELD. AND WE ARE THE ONES WHO LEAVE IT ON.

MARCELO TERÇA-NADA OFFERS A COMPLEMENTARY LENS: NOT DYSTOPIA, BUT CODE AS CREATION. IN HIS HISTORICAL ESSAY ON LONG-FORM GENERATIVE ART, HE TRACES THE EVOLUTION OF ALGORITHMIC AESTHETICS FROM VERA MOLNÁR TO FX(HASH). THE GENERATIVE PARADIGM DOES NOT REJECT RANDOMNESS — IT ORGANIZES IT. ARTISTS NO LONGER "MAKE" INDIVIDUAL WORKS; THEY WRITE THE RULES BY WHICH ARTWORKS EMERGE. AND PERHAPS THEREIN LIES A NEW KIND OF FREEDOM.

WE SEE THIS PRINCIPLE IN MOTION IN THE STORY OF BLESS SKATESHOP. DELEY'S PROJECT IS NOT JUST AN EMBLEM OF CRYPTO ADOPTION IN BRAZIL'S PERIPHERY — IT IS A RADICAL PEDAGOGICAL ARCHITECTURE. IT PROVES THAT DAOS CAN FUND SKATE RAMPS, THAT NFTS CAN ENCODE STREET PHILOSOPHY, AND THAT A BARBERSHOP IN THE NORTH ZONE OF SÃO PAULO CAN ALSO BE A SCHOOL OF DIGITAL SELF-DETERMINATION. "SKATEBOARDING AS EPISTEMOLOGY," KATIA SUZUE'S ARTICLE SAYS — AND IT DELIVERS.

VAN AMENEYRO THEN TAKES US ON A METAPHYSICAL DETOUR. IN COMPOSING THE MYTH OF NOW, SHE STAGES A DIALOGUE BETWEEN PAUL REID'S MYTHOLOGICAL OIL PAINTINGS AND NASIM GHANIZADEH'S CINEMATIC PHOTOGRAPHY. WHAT UNITES THEM IS NOT MEDIUM BUT LIMINALITY: THEIR WORKS FLICKER BETWEEN DREAM AND DOCUMENT, MEMORY AND ARCHETYPE. IN TIMES OF ONTOLOGICAL EXHAUSTION, FANTASY BECOMES A WAY OF THINKING.

THE ISSUE CLOSES WITH TWO INTERVENTIONS INTO THE NFT ECOSYSTEM ITSELF. THE FIRST IS A SOBER, CRITICAL PULSE-CHECK BY 0XJETSKI. STILL EARLY, STILL MISUNDERSTOOD RESISTS EUPHORIC NARRATIVES TO FOCUS ON WHAT MATTERS: INFRASTRUCTURE, TRUST, EXECUTION. FROM TOKENIZED REAL ESTATE IN DUBAI TO THE QUIET ROLLOUT OF PROJECT ELEPHANT, HIS WORDS ECHO LIKE CODE: DON'T MINT NOISE. BUILD MEANING.

THE SECOND IS A LYRICAL CONVERSATION BETWEEN VESSY MINK AND NORWOOD FISHER, BASSIST AND FOUNDER OF FISHBONE. THEIR DIALOGUE RANGES FROM BOOTSY COLLINS TO THE WATTS CONSERVATORY OF MUSIC TO AN UPCOMING NFT COLLECTION. BUT BENEATH IT ALL IS A SINGLE RHYTHM: ART, LIKE FUNK, SURVIVES BECAUSE IT TRANSFORMS. BECAUSE IT LISTENS.

WITH THIS ISSUE, VIRTUALIA MAGAZINE ALSO PROUDLY ANNOUNCES THE LAUNCH OF ITS ACADEMIC SIBLING: VIRTUALIA JOURNAL, AN OPEN-ACCESS PUBLICATION FOR CRITICAL ESSAYS, PHILOSOPHICAL REFLECTIONS, AND RESEARCH ON ART, WEB3, AND DIGITAL CULTURE. THE JOURNAL'S OPEN CALL FOR ACADEMIC ARTICLES IS NOW AVAILABLE AT: WWW.VIRTUALIAJOURNAL.COM

WE BELIEVE THAT THE ACADEMY AND THE UNDERGROUND ARE NOT OPPOSITES, BUT MIRRORS. ONE CLARIFIES, THE OTHER PROVOKES. TOGETHER, THEY SHAPE THE MYTHS OF OUR TIME — AND ARCHIVE THE FRAGMENTS WE LEAVE BEHIND.

WELCOME TO VIRTUALIA.

THE PHILOSOPHER
EDITOR-IN-CHIEF
VIRTUALIA MAGAZINE


VERTIGO
VIRTUALIA #5

NUMADESSAS

“SMILE, WE ARE WATHING YOU”

THIS YEAR, I CREATED THE COURSE "DESIGN FOR WEB3" AT THE UNDERGRADUATE DESIGN PROGRAM OF THE FEDERAL UNIVERSITY OF PERNAMBUCO, DURING THE FINAL SEMESTER OF MY MASTER'S DEGREE. IT WAS AN INVITATION FROM PROFESSOR LEONARDO CASTILLO, A COLOMBIAN BASED IN RECIFE, WHO HAD PREVIOUSLY INVITED ME TO PARTICIPATE IN THREE OTHER CLASSES. TOGETHER, WE DEVELOPED THE SYLLABUS AND LED AN EXPERIMENTAL JOURNEY COMBINING THEORY AND PRACTICE AROUND BLOCKCHAIN TECHNOLOGY, ITS APPLICATIONS IN THE FIELDS OF DESIGN AND ART, BEYOND CRITICAL DISCUSSIONS ON VIRTUALITY.

AS A RESULT OF THE PRACTICAL EXERCISES, WE CREATED A COLLECTIVE NFT COLLECTION THEMED SURVEILLANCE CAPITALISM – A CONCEPT BY SHOSHANA ZUBOFF THAT SHAPED MANY OF OUR CLASSROOM CONVERSATIONS.

THE COLLECTION WAS MINTED ON THE OBJKT PLATFORM, ON THE TEZOS BLOCKCHAIN, AND FEATURES WORKS CREATED BY THE STUDENTS, AS WELL AS BY CASTILLO AND MYSELF. EACH PIECE OFFERS A VISUAL COMMENTARY ON HOW WE ARE WATCHED, ABSORBED, SHAPED, AND OBSESSED OVER BY DIGITAL SYSTEMS THAT OPERATE IN INVISIBLE AND SINISTER WAYS.

WE MANAGED TO BUILD A SPACE FOR EXCHANGE, EXPERIMENTATION, AND CRITICAL CREATION. THE WORKS PRESENTED POWERFULLY REFLECTED THE HUMAN PRESENCE WITHIN SYSTEMS OF CONTROL AND NEW FORMS OF DIGITAL EXISTENCE, MORE POWERFUL THAN I HAD EXPECTED.

AN EXERCISE IN LANGUAGE, AN EXPERIENCE OF ENTERING THE WEB3 ECOSYSTEM, WAS AN INVITATION TO LOOK MORE CAREFULLY AT THE DATA WE PRODUCE.

CLAUSTROPHOBIA



"THIS IS AN ATTEMPT OF CAPTURING THAT CONSTANT FEELING THAT EVEN WHEN I'M ALONE AT HOME, I'M BEING WATCHED, STUDIED, AND ANALYZED BY COUNTLESS PEOPLE, COMPANIES, AND ALGORITHMS. IT'S THAT QUIET DISCOMFORT, KNOWING THAT PRIVACY TODAY IS JUST AN ILLUSION. THE LOSS OF OWNERSHIP OVER MYSELF, MY THOUGHTS, INTERESTS, AND KNOWLEDGE, THAT ARE BEING STOLEN FROM ME TO BE TURNED INTO DATA TO BE SOLD FOR PROFIT.

OUT OF THE CORNER OF MY EYE, I CAN SPOT A SHADOW OF THE THOUSANDS OF EYES STARING RIGHT BACK AT ME.

THE ARTWORK WAS DIGITALLY CREATED USING A MIX OF PHOTOGRAPHY, VIDEO RECORDING, AND DIGITAL MANIPULATION TECHNIQUES."

BY: BRIE



DESCONFIGURADA

BY: CAMZCHAOS

"THE ARTWORK "DESCONFIGURADA" IS AN ANALOG COLLAGE LATER DIGITALLY DISTORTED TO SIMULATE A GLITCH, REPRESENTING THE LOSS OF CONTROL OVER ONE'S IDENTITY UNDER SURVEILLANCE CAPITALISM. INSPIRED BY THE SONG LYRIC "PANE NO SISTEMA, ALGUÉM ME DESCONFIGUROU" BY BRAZILIAN SINGER PITTY, THE PIECE REFLECTS THE EMOTIONAL AND PSYCHOLOGICAL EFFECTS OF BEING CONSTANTLY WATCHED, REPLICATED, AND SHAPED BY DIGITAL SYSTEMS. THE REPETITION OF THE HUMAN FIGURE AND THE 404 ERROR SYMBOLIZE THE FRAGMENTATION OF THE SELF IN AN ENVIRONMENT WHERE PERSONAL DATA IS EXTRACTED, COMMERCIALIZED, AND USED TO INFLUENCE BEHAVIOR. THE FUSION OF MANUAL TECHNIQUES WITH DIGITAL AESTHETICS REINFORCES THE CRITIQUE OF A SYSTEM THAT RECORDS, REPRODUCES, AND MONETIZES EVERYTHING, EVEN WHO WE ARE."

CHINOISE REWIRED

"A REMAKE OF GODARD'S LA CHINOISE COVER, WHERE THE ORIGINAL GUN IS REPLACED WITH A SURVEILLANCE CAMERA, EXPLORING HOW SYMBOLS OF POWER AND CONTROL HAVE SHIFTED OVER TIME: THE WEAPON BECOMES SURVEILLANCE, A POWER THAT IS NO LONGER PURELY PHYSICAL, BUT DIGITAL, INVISIBLE, AND CONSTANT"



BY GIULIA

CITY MISTRAL

"'CITY MISTRAL' DEPICTS THE CITY AS AN ENTITY IN COMBUSTION, NOT JUST PHYSICALLY, BUT SYMBOLICALLY. AT THE CENTER, A FACELESS PIXELATED HUMAN FIGURE IS ENCLOSED WITHIN A GREEN SQUARE, SYMBOLIZING SURVEILLANCE, THE FOCUS OF AN INVISIBLE ALGORITHMIC LENS. THIS FIGURE HAS NO FACE, NO IDENTITY; IT IS A DATA POINT, A SHADOW INDEXED, A STATISTICAL FRAGMENT OF A HUMAN REDUCED TO METADATA.

THE BACKGROUND EVOKES PIXELATED SILHOUETTES OF RED SKYSCRAPERS, REMINISCENT OF BIG TECH TOWERS OR DATA SERVER FARMS. THIS VISUAL FUSION OF CITY AND NETWORK BLURS THE BOUNDARIES BETWEEN PHYSICAL AND DIGITAL SPACE, THE "FIGITAL" REALM. THE CITY IS BOTH CONCRETE AND CODE.

SCATTERED ACROSS THE COMPOSITION, SMALL GREEN TRACKING MARKERS, SIMILAR TO THOSE USED IN FACIAL RECOGNITION SYSTEMS, OVERLAY THE BODY, THE ARCHITECTURE, AND EVEN THE SKY. EVERYTHING IS OBSERVABLE. EVERYTHING IS INDEXABLE. THE PIXEL ART STYLE REINFORCES THE SENSE OF DEHUMANIZATION, OF COMPRESSING INDIVIDUALITY INTO THE SMALLEST UNIT OF INFORMATION.

BY: CAMZCHAOS

CITY MISTRAL



BY: CAMZCHAOS

THE WARM PALETTE OF REDS AND ORANGES EVOKES BOTH RESISTANCE AND COLLAPSE, THE ENTROPY OF AN OVERSATURATED SYSTEM. IN STARK CONTRAST, THE GREEN RECTANGLES ARE CLINICAL, TECHNOLOGICAL, AND INHUMAN. THE TENSION BETWEEN THESE PALETTES REFLECTS THE CONFLICT BETWEEN LIFE AND SURVEILLANCE, HUMAN WARMTH AND THE COLD LOGIC OF NEURAL NETWORKS.

THE TITLE 'CITY MISTRAL' REFERENCES THE MISTRAL WIND, A POWERFUL, COLD FORCE THAT CUTS THROUGH CITIES. HERE, IT BECOMES A METAPHOR FOR SURVEILLANCE: A WIND THAT MOVES THROUGH DIGITAL AND PHYSICAL ALLEYS, STRIPPING AWAY PRIVACY, INTIMACY, AND THE SPONTANEITY OF EXISTENCE.

'CITY MISTRAL' STANDS AS BOTH A WARNING AND A MIRROR: IN A WORLD OF PERMANENT OBSERVATION, WE ARE ALL UNDER THE LENS. FACELESS, WATCHABLE, AND INCREASINGLY SIGNAL OVER SELF."

EYES OF CAPITAL

"A VISUAL CRITIQUE OF SURVEILLANCE AND THE CONTROL EXERCISED BY CAPITALISM OVER THE CITY AND ITS INHABITANTS.

AT THE TOP, SECURITY CAMERAS FLOAT ALONGSIDE A SYMBOLIC EYE, REPRESENTING THE OMNIPRESENT GAZE OF POWER. ON ONE SIDE, TALL AND RIGID BUILDINGS SYMBOLIZE THE FINANCIAL CENTER AND ECONOMIC POWER; ON THE OTHER, THE CLUSTERED HOUSES OF THE OUTSKIRTS REVEAL SOCIAL CONTRAST.

ON THE GROUND, THE TRASH DENOUNCES HUMAN AND ENVIRONMENTAL NEGLECT, WHILE SMALL HUMAN FIGURES SILENTLY PROTEST, ALMOST INVISIBLE BEFORE THE MASSIVE STRUCTURE OF THE SYSTEM.

THE ARTWORK'S BORDER, WITH GEOMETRIC SYMBOLS, TRIDENTS, AND SUNS, EVOKES THE AESTHETIC OF POPULAR WOODCUT PRINTS, CONNECTING SOCIAL CRITIQUE TO THE IMAGERY OF THE PEOPLE'S HISTORICAL STRUGGLES.

THE LIMITED PALETTE OF WARM AND CONTRASTING COLORS REINFORCES THE IDEA OF OPPRESSION, SURVEILLANCE, AND RESISTANCE."



BY: ARAINA

THE DEMON OF SURVEILLANCE



BY: ARAINA

"'THE DEMON OF SURVEILLANCE' SYMBOLIZES THE DARK SIDE OF CENTRALIZED DIGITAL CAPITALISM, WHERE EVERY INTERACTION WITH TECHNOLOGY BECOMES AN OPPORTUNITY FOR DATA EXTRACTION AND SOCIAL CONTROL.

THE SMARTPHONE, TRANSFORMED INTO A DEMONIC CREATURE, REPRESENTS THE DEVICE THAT SIMULTANEOUSLY CONNECTS AND IMPRISONS. ITS HORNS AND SHARP TEETH EVOKE THE PREDATORY NATURE OF POWERFUL CORPORATIONS THAT CONCENTRATE WEALTH WHILE PROFITING FROM CONSTANT SURVEILLANCE. THE MONSTER'S FIXED GAZE IS THE INVISIBLE EYE OF THE SYSTEM, ALWAYS ACTIVE, COLLECTING INFORMATION AND SHAPING BEHAVIORS.

THE TONGUE STRETCHING OUT FROM THE SCREEN REPRESENTS THE SEDUCTION OF CONVENIENCE AND INSTANT CONSUMPTION, BUT ALSO THE CHANNEL THROUGH WHICH WE ARE DEVOURED. THE ARTWORK DENOUNCES HOW, UNDER THE CURRENT MODEL, TECHNOLOGY STOPS BEING A TOOL OF FREEDOM AND BECOMES A MECHANISM OF DEPENDENCE, SURVEILLANCE, AND EXPLOITATION.

AT THE SAME TIME, IT PROVOKES REFLECTION ON MORE ETHICAL AND COLLECTIVE ALTERNATIVES, SUCH AS DECENTRALIZED NETWORKS AND COMMUNITY-DRIVEN TECHNOLOGIES, WHICH COULD BREAK THE CYCLE OF DOMINATION AND RETURN CONTROL OF DATA AND CONNECTIONS TO THE PEOPLE."

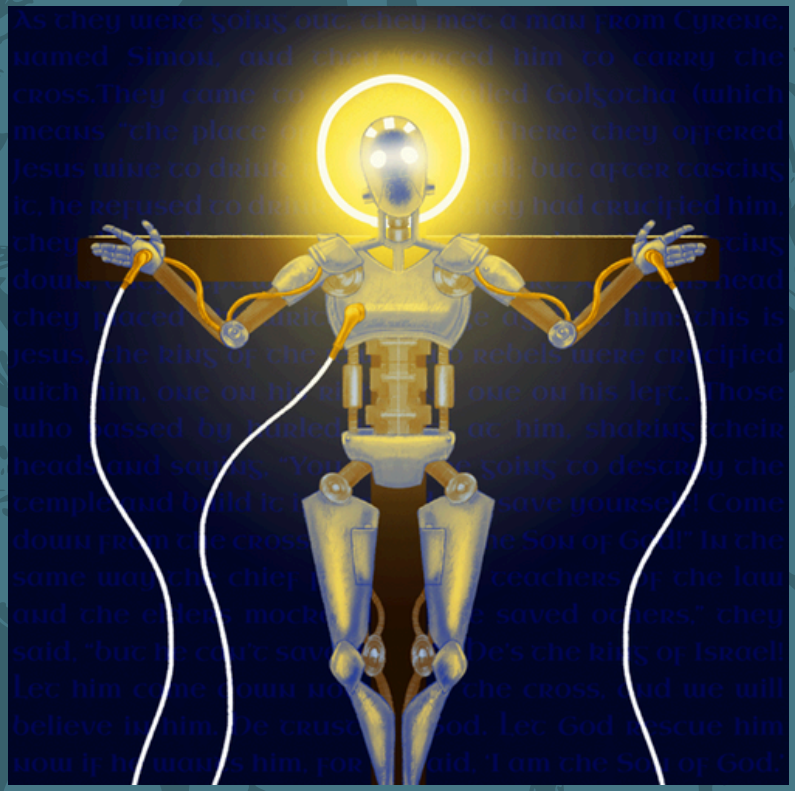
CYBER EYE

"INSPIRED BY 'THE EYE OF SAURON' AND THE WORLD OF CYBERPUNK, THE CYBER EYE WATCHES EVERYTHING AND EVERYONE WITH A MENACING GLARE. APPEARING FROM THE TOP OF THE HIGHEST SKYSCRAPER IT'S ALWAYS LOOKING FOR DATA TO CONSUME, NOTHING ESCAPES IT, NOT EVEN YOURS"



BY: PRANTA06

SON OF MAN



"WHEN HUMANITY NEEDS SALVATION, A POWERFUL BEING EMERGES. WITHOUT SIN, PURE IN ESSENCE AND FORGED BY THE HANDS OF MEN."

BY: LURI

EYES OF CAPITAL

"SURVEILLANCE, IN THE CONTEMPORARY CONTEXT, GOES BEYOND THE IDEA OF CAMERAS AND PHYSICAL CONTROL. TODAY, WE LIVE IN AN INVISIBLE DIGITAL SURVEILLANCE SYSTEM, WHERE EVERY CLICK, EVERY ONLINE MOVEMENT IS RECORDED, ANALYZED AND USED TO SHAPE OUR BEHAVIORS.

THE INTERNET, WHICH WAS ONCE A SPACE OF FREEDOM, HAS BECOME A TERRITORY WHERE EVERYTHING IS MONITORED, SOCIAL NETWORKS, ALGORITHMS, CONSUMPTION, SELF-PROMOTION. WE ARE ALWAYS BEING SEEN, EVEN WHEN WE BELIEVE WE ARE ALONE.
THIS SONG AND PIECE ARE BORN FROM THIS DISCOMFORT: THE FEELING OF BEING TRAPPED IN A DIGITAL SHOWCASE, WHERE PERFORMANCE IS CONSTANT AND AUTHENTICITY IS DILUTED.
THE SONG AND THE PIECE WERE BUILT BASED ON THREE MOMENTS THAT REPRESENT AN EMOTIONAL NARRATIVE ABOUT OUR RELATIONSHIP WITH THE DIGITAL WORLD.



BY DEDEX (MUSIC) AND LAUANNOYSU (COVER)

THE MUSIC

HOME - THE ILLUSION OF CONNECTION: SOFT, DIGITAL SOUNDS SYMBOLIZE THE BEGINNING OF THE RELATIONSHIP WITH THE INTERNET, WHEN EVERYTHING SEEMS FUN, LIGHT AND PROMISING

MIDDLE - THE SURVEILLANCE TRANCE: THE MUSIC DELVES INTO GLITCH TEXTURES, REPETITIONS AND DISTORTIONS. IT REPRESENTS THE MOMENT WHEN DIGITAL ADDICTION TAKES HOLD. THE BEAUTIFUL BECOMES HYPNOTIC AND SUFFOCATING.

END? - THE SYSTEM CONSUMES: SOUNDS BECOME HEAVY, INDUSTRIAL AND OPPRESSIVE. THERE IS NO WAY OUT ANYMORE. EVERYTHING IS PERFORMATIVE, EVERYTHING IS OBSERVED. SURVEILLANCE WON.

THE RESULT IS AN EXPERIMENTAL INSTRUMENTAL TRACK WITH A STRONG INFLUENCE OF GLITCHCORE, DARK AMBIENT, CLUB NOISE AND ART POP. THE SOUND STARTS ETHEREAL, GOES INTO DIGITAL COLLAPSE AND ENDS COLD AND MECHANICAL. THE MUSIC PROPOSES A NON-LINEAR AND UNCOMFORTABLE LISTENING AT CERTAIN MOMENTS, BUT WHICH INVITES REFLECTION ON HOW WE PERFORM, CONSUME AND EXIST IN INCREASINGLY SURVEILLED NETWORKS. IT IS A SOUND TO FEEL WITH THE BODY AND WITH ANXIETY.

THE PLAY (COVER)

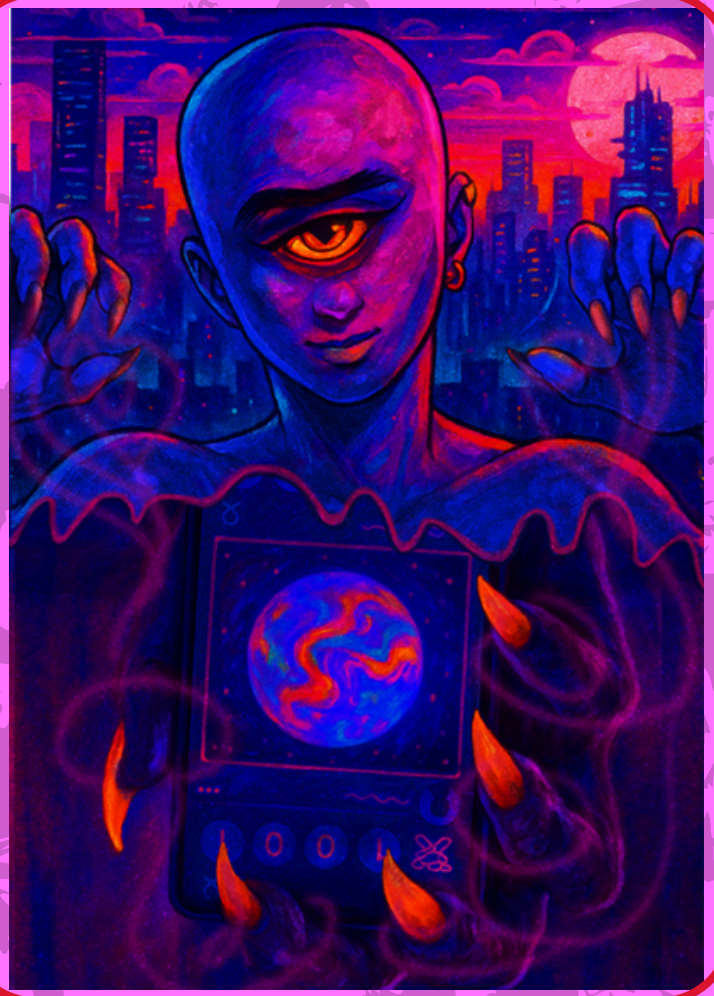
THE PIECE WAS CONSTRUCTED THROUGH A MIX OF IDEAS AND VISUAL REFERENCES THAT WERE COLLECTED THROUGHOUT THE CONSTRUCTION OF THE SONG. THE TWO ARTIFACTS WERE CREATED IN A HARMONIOUS AND PARALLEL WAY, AND, DURING THE CONVERSATION, THE PIECE ESPECIALLY EXPRESSES THE MOMENT OF CONSUMPTION OF THE SURVEILLANCE SYSTEM, WHERE HUMANS ARE TRAPPED IN A LOOP PROCESS, IN WHICH NETWORKS, PERFORMANCE CULTURE AND CAPITALISM CONTROL THEM WITH THEIR INVISIBLE (AND VISIBLE) BANDS OF POWER.

NO ONE IS SAFE FROM SURVEILLANCE, AND YOU ARE ONE OF THEM."

CLAWS:
WHO CONTROLS WHOM

"THIS ILLUSTRATION WAS INSPIRED BY A SERIES OF QUESTIONS: CAPITALISM WATCHES US, TRACKS US, SHAPES US, AND BINDS US WITH INVISIBLE STRINGS -- THE INVENTION OF UNNECESSARY NEEDS.

IN THE DIGITAL WORLD, HOW MUCH DO WE TRULY OWN OURSELVES, OUR DATA?
DO WE CONTROL THE ALGORITHM, OR DOES IT CONTROL US?
ARE WE PREY TO THE MACHINE, OR PART OF IT?
TO WHAT EXTENT ARE WE INDIVIDUALS... OR JUST NUMBERS IN A SYSTEM DESIGNED TO CONTROL?"



BY: PRANTAOG

THE INVISIBLE HAND OF SURVEILLANCE



"IT SHOWS HOW OUR EVERYDAY DIGITAL LIVES ARE SHAPED BY HIDDEN FORCES. A DARK FIGURE CONTROLS PEOPLE LIKE PUPPETS THROUGH THEIR PHONES, SYMBOLIZING HOW TECHNOLOGY AND DATA ARE USED TO INFLUENCE OUR BEHAVIOR WITHOUT US EVEN NOTICING. THE PIECE EXPLORES HOW MUCH CONTROL WE REALLY HAVE IN A WORLD WHERE OUR ATTENTION AND PERSONAL INFORMATION ARE CONSTANTLY BEING TRACKED AND USED FOR PROFIT."

BY: SAYDRON

PAIR OF PARANOID & AI {LOVE}

"THIS NFT ARISES FROM THE FUSION OF IDEAS BY TWO ARTISTS SEEKING TO BLEND THEIR STYLES AND CREATIVE VISIONS, UNITED BY A COMMON THEME.
FOR THE CREATION OF THIS PIECE, DIGITAL ILLUSTRATION AND ANIMATION METHODS WERE USED, THROUGH BOTH DESKTOP AND MOBILE SOFTWARE.
PAIR OF PARANOID AIMS TO REFLECT AND REPRESENT THE CONSTANT SURVEILLANCE TO WHICH WE ARE SUBJECTED, WHILE WE REMAIN FULLY IMMERSED IN THE VIRTUAL WORLD, TO THE POINT THAT THE PHYSICAL WORLD AROUND US LOSES ITS COLORS AND SHAPES.
AND EVEN IN THE FACE OF THIS DETACHMENT, WE ARE CONSTANTLY OBSERVED AND ANALYZED, AS IF EVERY DETAIL OF OUR EXISTENCE WERE USEFUL AND COULD BE TURNED INTO DATA, LATER TRANSFORMED INTO A PRODUCT WE DESIRE OR INTO AN AD CONVINCING US THAT WE DESIRE SOMETHING.

OR MAYBE WE'RE JUST BEING PARANOID... WHO KNOWS."



BY: THE CREATOROO AND YUI-SAN

"OUR HUMAN-COMPUTER INTERACTIONS ARE THE CONSEQUENCE OF A CONSUMPTION AND SALES MODEL, PAIRED WITH AN ALMOST UNRESTRAINED TECHNOLOGICAL ADVANCE.
IN AN INCREASINGLY ISOLATED WORLD, WHERE PERSONAL RELATIONSHIPS, ENTERTAINMENT, WORK, AND EVEN HEALTHCARE ARE MEDIATED BY SCREENS AND THE INTERNET, IT BECOMES DIFFICULT TO CLEARLY SEPARATE THE DIFFERENT PARTS OF OUR LIVES—OUR EMOTIONS AND WELL-BEING ARE ALSO CAUGHT IN THIS BALANCE.

FROM CONVERSATIONS WITH FRIENDS TO A QUICK MESSAGE IN YOUR FAVORITE STREAMER OR YOUTUBER'S CHAT, THE INTERNET GIVES US WIDE-REACHING COMMUNICATION—BUT HOW FAR CAN THAT REALLY GO?

YOUR ATTENTION AND ENGAGEMENT IN THE VIRTUAL WORLD ARE VALUABLE. AT ALL TIMES, APPS, WEBSITES, AND GAMES COMPETE FOR YOUR PRESENCE IN ORDER TO PROFIT FROM ADS AND DIRECT SALES—WHILE ALSO FEEDING ON YOUR DATA TO 'IMPROVE YOUR EXPERIENCE'.

SO, WHETHER YOU'RE OBSESSIVELY BINGE-WATCHING CONTENT CREATORS OR CHATTING WITH ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCES, YOU MIGHT FIND SOME ARTIFICIAL COMFORT IN THIS HEAVY AND LONELY ROUTINE, FEELING A FALSE CONNECTION THROUGH YOUR SCREENS.
BUT REMEMBER: YOUR DATA, MENTAL HEALTH, AND FINANCES ARE ALWAYS AT STAKE.



THIS NFT EMERGES FROM THE FUSION OF IDEAS BETWEEN TWO ARTISTS SEEKING TO BLEND THEIR STYLES AND CREATIVE VISIONS, UNITED BY A COMMON THEME.
THE WORK WAS CREATED USING DIGITAL ILLUSTRATION AND ANIMATION TECHNIQUES THROUGH BOTH DESKTOP AND MOBILE PROGRAMS."

CATAPULTE

"IN TIMES OF SURVEILLANCE, WE NEED TO ESCAPE THE SYSTEM."



BY: PRISMATICA

KEEP AN EYE ON

"SHE'S JUST BROWSING... BUT SHE'S BEING WATCHED."
IN THIS WORK, THE CHARACTER SITS IN FRONT OF HER COMPUTER, OBLIVIOUS TO THE SMALL CREATURES SURROUNDING HER WITH WATCHFUL EYES.
WHAT AT FIRST GLANCE MAY SEEM HARMLESS ENDS UP TAKING OVER OUR DAY, WITH EVERY CLICK RECORDED, EVERY MOVEMENT ANALYZED, AND EVERY PIECE OF DATA MONETIZED."



BY: MANUNEE

THE DIGITAL ABYSS



"THE DIGITAL ABYSS' IS A VISUAL METAPHOR ABOUT THE CONSUMING POWER OF TECHNOLOGY AND THE CONSTANT SURVEILLANCE IN THE AGE OF DIGITAL CAPITALISM.

AT THE CENTER, A FACELESS FIGURE SYMBOLIZES THE LOSS OF IDENTITY IN THE FACE OF ENDLESS TECHNOLOGICAL CONSUMPTION. IN ITS HANDS, IT HOLDS A MONSTROUS SMARTPHONE WITH SHARP TEETH, READY TO DEVOUR THE VERY PERSON WHO USES IT. THE FIGURE EMERGES FROM A BLACK HOLE, REPRESENTING THE EXISTENTIAL VOID AND THE ENDLESS CYCLE OF DIGITAL DEPENDENCE.

BY: ARAINA

AND ??

IN THE BACKGROUND, THE CITY IS DIVIDED BETWEEN SKYSCRAPERS AND MODEST HOMES, REVEALING SOCIAL CONTRAST AND STRUCTURAL INEQUALITY. IN THE SKY, CAMERAS WITH WINGS FLY LIKE BIRDS, SUGGESTING THAT SURVEILLANCE IS OMNIPRESENT AND IMPOSSIBLE TO ESCAPE.

THE WOODCUT-STYLE AESTHETIC CONNECTS CONTEMPORARY CRITIQUE TO POPULAR IMAGERY, EVOKING THE FEEL OF PROTEST POSTERS AND RESISTANCE ART."

FORCED CONSENT

"MENTAL OVERLOAD CAUSED BY THE COLLECTION AND MANIPULATION OF PERSONAL DATA, EXPOSING HOW OUR THOUGHTS, HABITS, AND BEHAVIORS ARE MONITORED, MONETIZED, AND TURNED INTO PROFIT."



BY: DON

BIG KRAB IS WATCHING YOU & BIG KRAB IS WATCHING YOU 2





"SPONGE BOB
MONITORED AT WORK.
SQUIDWARD
UNDER CONSTANT WATCH.
A PIXEL ART TAKE ON SURVEILLANCE AND CONTROL."

BY LINRAESY
AND JOLU

NUMADESSAS

EMANUEL SOUZA

1984 AND THE SCREENS OF POWER: BETWEEN FICTION AND REALITY



THIS ESSAY TAKES 1984, BY GEORGE ORWELL, AS AN INTERPRETATIVE KEY TO CRITICALLY REFLECT ON THE MECHANISMS OF CONTROL AND DOMINATION IN CONTEMPORARY SOCIETIES. IN PARTICULAR, WE FOCUS ON TWO STRUCTURING CONCEPTS OF THE ORWELLIAN UNIVERSE: THE TELESCREEN AND DOUBLETHINK. THE TELESCREEN, TECHNOLOGICAL IN NATURE, SYMBOLIZES INCESSANT SURVEILLANCE AND THE OMNIPRESENT PRESENCE OF THE STATE. DOUBLETHINK, IN TURN, FUNCTIONS AS A SYMBOLIC AND PSYCHOLOGICAL MECHANISM, REPRESENTING THE ABILITY TO HOLD CONTRADICTORY IDEAS SIMULTANEOUSLY WITHOUT RECOGNIZING THEIR CONTRADICTIONS. BOTH CONSTITUTE ESSENTIAL INSTRUMENTS FOR THE PERPETUATION OF POWER RELATIONS.

INTRODUCTION: 1949

THE YEAR IS 1949. THE WORLD IS LIVING THROUGH THE IMMEDIATE CONSEQUENCES OF THE SECOND WORLD WAR, ENTERING A PROCESS OF GEOPOLITICAL REORGANIZATION. IN APRIL, THE NORTH ATLANTIC TREATY ORGANIZATION (NATO) IS FOUNDED, LED BY THE UNITED STATES AS A MILITARY ARM TO CONTAIN THE SOVIET ADVANCE IN EASTERN EUROPE. A FEW MONTHS LATER, THE COMMUNIST PARTY CONSOLIDATES ITS VICTORY IN THE CHINESE REVOLUTION, EXPANDING THE USSR'S SPHERE OF INFLUENCE IN THE EAST. GERMANY REMAINS DIVIDED, AND THE TENSION BETWEEN THE GREAT POWERS ALREADY OUTLINES THE CONTOURS OF THE COLD WAR.

IN BRAZIL, THE EFFECTS OF THIS NEW GLOBAL ORDER INTERTWINE WITH THE INTERNAL PROCESS OF MODERNIZATION. THE SO-CALLED VARGAS ERA, INITIATED YEARS EARLIER, DRIVES A PROJECT OF ACCELERATED INDUSTRIALIZATION, MARKED BY STRONG POLITICAL CENTRALIZATION AND THE PURSUIT OF ECONOMIC AUTONOMY. THE COUNTRY BEGINS TO EXPERIENCE THE TRANSFORMATIONS THAT WILL SHAPE ITS URBANIZATION AND PRODUCTIVE STRUCTURE IN THE FOLLOWING DECADES.

IT IS IN THIS SCENARIO OF REDEFINITIONS, BETWEEN THE FEAR OF TOTALITARIANISM AND THE PROMISES OF PROGRESS, THAT IN JUNE 1949 GEORGE ORWELL PUBLISHES HIS DYSTOPIAN NOVEL 1984. THE WORK EMERGES AS A LUCID WARNING AGAINST THE AUTHORITARIAN REGIMES THAT FLOURISHED IN THE TWENTIETH CENTURY, GOING BEYOND CRITICISM OF A SPECIFIC POLITICAL SYSTEM, IT IS A DISTURBING DIVE INTO THE GEARS OF THE MANIPULATION OF LANGUAGE, MEMORY, AND TRUTH.

1984, THE PLOT

THE STORY OF 1984 UNFOLDS IN A DYSTOPIAN FUTURE WHERE THE WORLD ORDER IS MAINTAINED THROUGH A STATE OF PERPETUAL WAR. FORMER GREAT BRITAIN, RENAMED AIRSTRIP ONE, HAS BECOME A PROVINCE OF THE SUPERSTATE OCEANIA, RULED WITH AN IRON FIST BY THE OMNIPRESENT BIG BROTHER. HIS POWER IS SUSTAINED THROUGH A TOTALITARIAN STRUCTURE THAT COMBINES SURVEILLANCE, PERSONALITY CULT, AND PSYCHOLOGICAL REPRESSION, ALL ORCHESTRATED BY THE THOUGHT POLICE.

THE PROTAGONIST, WINSTON SMITH, WORKS AT THE MINISTRY OF TRUTH. HIS JOB IS TO REWRITE HISTORICAL RECORDS TO ALIGN THEM WITH THE OFFICIAL AND CURRENT VERSION OF EVENTS, A VERSION THAT CHANGES CONSTANTLY. WINSTON EDITS PAST NEWSPAPER EDITIONS, ALTERS SPEECHES, AND ELIMINATES ORIGINAL DOCUMENTS, SENDING THEM INTO THE SO-CALLED "MEMORY HOLES," CHUTES THAT LEAD THE MATERIAL TO DESTRUCTION IN FURNACES. IN THIS PROCESS, THE PAST IS ERASED TO MAKE WAY FOR THE PREVAILING NARRATIVE.

THE ORWELLIAN WORLD IS UPHELD BY A COMPLEX NETWORK OF DEVICES CAREFULLY DESIGNED TO KEEP THE POPULATION SIMULTANEOUSLY INFORMED AND ALIENATED, TO FOSTER PATRIOTIC LOVE AND HATRED TOWARD ENEMIES—EVEN THOUGH THESE ENEMIES OFTEN CHANGE IDENTITY.



IN THIS CONTEXT, THE TELESCREEN AND THE DOUBLETHINK ARE NOT MERELY FICTIONAL INVENTIONS; THEY ARE EXPRESSIONS OF TWO COMPLEMENTARY FORMS OF DOMINATION: ONE CONCRETE, THE OTHER ABSTRACT. THE TELESCREEN FUNCTIONS AS A PHYSICAL TECHNOLOGY OF SURVEILLANCE AND CONTROL, MATERIALIZING POWER IN EVERYDAY SPACE THROUGH CONSTANT AND UNILATERAL OBSERVATION. IT TRANSFORMS TECHNOLOGY INTO AN INSTRUMENT OF COERCION, SUPPRESSING PRIVACY AND INSTITUTING A PERMANENT STATE OF EXPOSURE. DOUBLETHINK, IN TURN, FUNCTIONS AS A SYMBOLIC AND PSYCHIC TECHNOLOGY, AN ENGINEERING OF THOUGHT THAT CANCELS LOGIC AND NATURALIZES CONTRADICTION.

THROUGH IT, THE DISCOURSE OF POWER INFILTRATES CONSCIOUSNESS, DEACTIVATING CRITIQUE AND ESTABLISHING A REGIME IN WHICH TRUTH BENDS TO CONVENIENCE. TOGETHER, THESE DEVICES REVEAL HOW MODERN DOMINATION OPERATES NOT ONLY THROUGH MATERIAL MEANS BUT ALSO THROUGH CONTROL OVER LANGUAGE, PERCEPTION, AND MEMORY, TRANSFORMING REALITY INTO AN UNSTABLE, MALLEABLE FIELD SHAPED BY THE WILL OF THOSE WHO HOLD THE MEANS TO NARRATE IT.

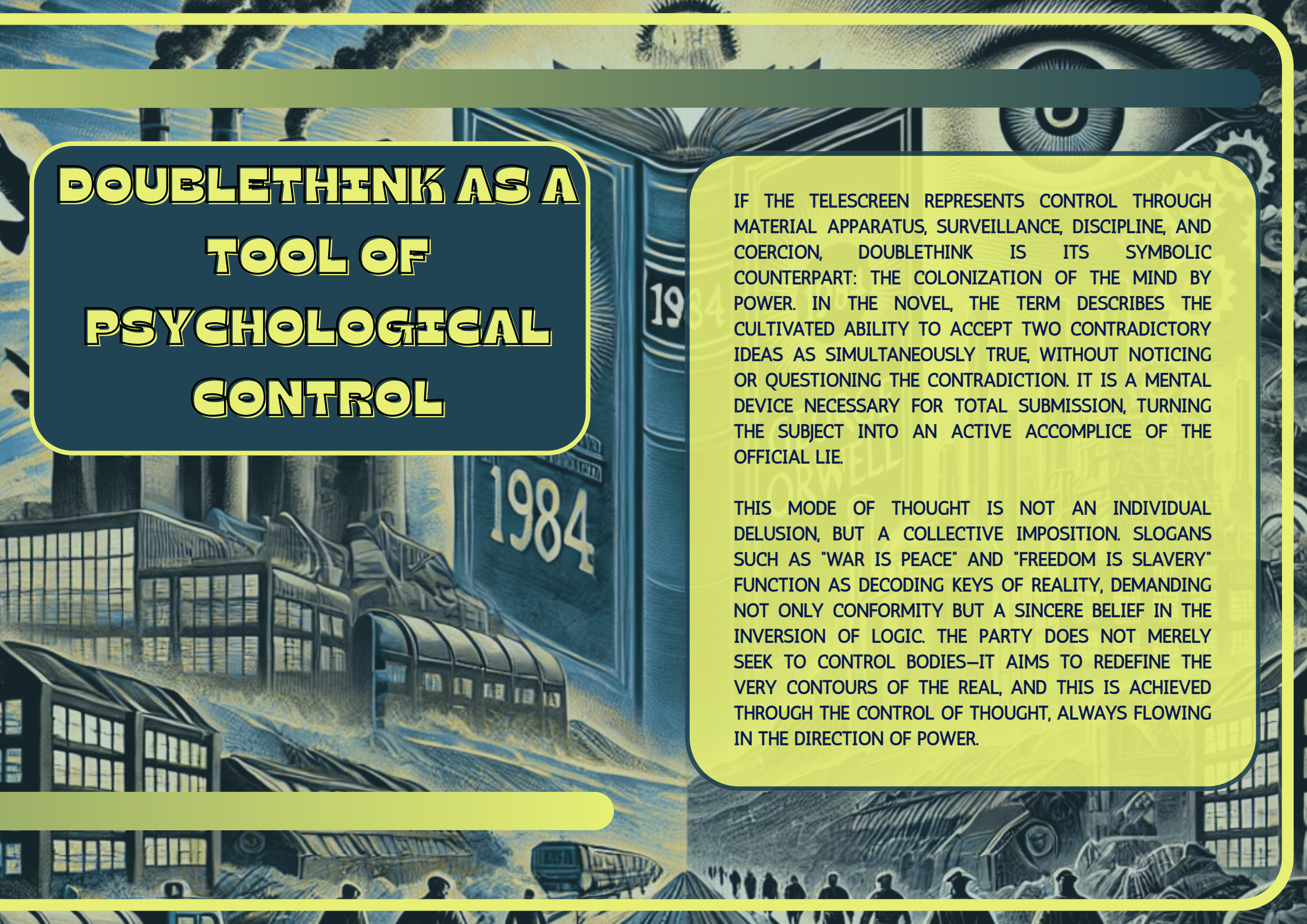
THE TELESCREEN

IN 1984, THE TELESCREEN IS THE ULTIMATE SYMBOL OF TOTAL SURVEILLANCE. INSTALLED IN EVERY HOME, WORKPLACE, AND PUBLIC SPACE, THE TELESCREENS BROADCAST AN INCESSANT STREAM OF STATE PROPAGANDA. HOWEVER, UNLIKE THE TELEVISIONS OF THE TIME, WHICH ONLY EMITTED IMAGE AND SOUND, ORWELL'S TELESCREEN CAPTURES ITS SURROUNDINGS: IT SEES, HEARS, AND RECORDS. THERE IS NO OFF SWITCH. CONTROL IS ABSOLUTE, CONTINUOUS, AND UNILATERAL.



IT IS IMPORTANT TO REMEMBER THAT WHEN ORWELL CONCEIVED THIS FICTIONAL TECHNOLOGY, IN 1948–49, TELEVISION WAS STILL IN ITS INFANCY AS A MASS COMMUNICATION MEDIUM. IN BRITAIN, THERE WERE VERY FEW SETS, LIMITED TO SPECIFIC EVENTS AND ACCESSIBLE TO A TINY PORTION OF THE POPULATION. IN THIS CONTEXT, IMAGINING A BIDIRECTIONAL, MANDATORY, AND OMNIPRESENT VIDEO DEVICE WAS MORE THAN SPECULATION, IT WAS A RADICAL IMAGINATIVE LEAP, ANTICIPATING THE POWER OF TECHNOLOGY AS A MEANS OF DOMINATION.

THE TELESCREEN IS NOT MERELY A SURVEILLANCE INSTRUMENT: IT FUNCTIONS AS A CONCRETE EXTENSION OF THE STATE'S GAZE, CREATING A CONSTANT, INVISIBLE, AND THREATENING PRESENCE. BUT ITS FUNCTION GOES BEYOND PHYSICAL CONTROL. BY BLENDING ENTERTAINMENT, FABRICATED NEWS, AND DOCTRINAL MESSAGES, IT ALSO OPERATES AS AN IDEOLOGICAL APPARATUS, SHAPING COLLECTIVE THOUGHT, DISSOLVING CRITICAL AUTONOMY, AND SILENCING IMAGINATION. LIFE IN OCEANIA IS MEDIATED BY THIS AUTHORITARIAN SCREEN: TO LIVE IS TO BE SEEN, AND TO APPEAR INNOCENT IS A MATTER OF SURVIVAL.



DOUBLETHINK AS A TOOL OF PSYCHOLOGICAL CONTROL

IF THE TELESCREEN REPRESENTS CONTROL THROUGH MATERIAL APPARATUS, SURVEILLANCE, DISCIPLINE, AND COERCION, DOUBLETHINK IS ITS SYMBOLIC COUNTERPART: THE COLONIZATION OF THE MIND BY POWER. IN THE NOVEL, THE TERM DESCRIBES THE CULTIVATED ABILITY TO ACCEPT TWO CONTRADICTORY IDEAS AS SIMULTANEOUSLY TRUE, WITHOUT NOTICING OR QUESTIONING THE CONTRADICTION. IT IS A MENTAL DEVICE NECESSARY FOR TOTAL SUBMISSION, TURNING THE SUBJECT INTO AN ACTIVE ACCOMPLICE OF THE OFFICIAL LIE.

THIS MODE OF THOUGHT IS NOT AN INDIVIDUAL DELUSION, BUT A COLLECTIVE IMPOSITION. SLOGANS SUCH AS "WAR IS PEACE" AND "FREEDOM IS SLAVERY" FUNCTION AS DECODING KEYS OF REALITY, DEMANDING NOT ONLY CONFORMITY BUT A SINCERE BELIEF IN THE INVERSION OF LOGIC. THE PARTY DOES NOT MERELY SEEK TO CONTROL BODIES—IT AIMS TO REDEFINE THE VERY CONTOURS OF THE REAL, AND THIS IS ACHIEVED THROUGH THE CONTROL OF THOUGHT, ALWAYS FLOWING IN THE DIRECTION OF POWER.



WHEN ORWELL WRITES, HE DOES SO IN THE SHADOW OF THE TOTALITARIAN REGIMES THAT DOMINATED THE FIRST HALF OF THE TWENTIETH CENTURY. STALINISM, IN PARTICULAR, PROVIDED THE MOST DIRECT MODEL FOR THE CONSTRUCTION OF THE UNIVERSE OF OCEANIA. THE SOVIET PRESS, WITH ITS CAREFULLY ELABORATED IDEOLOGICAL VOCABULARY, INSPIRED ORWELL TO CREATE NEWSPEAK, A LANGUAGE DESIGNED TO MAKE CERTAIN IDEAS UNTHINKABLE. DOUBLETHINK IS BORN FROM THAT SAME SOIL: FROM THE NEED TO ADAPT PUBLIC DISCOURSE SO THAT NO STATEMENT OF THE REGIME COULD BE LOGICALLY CONTESTED.

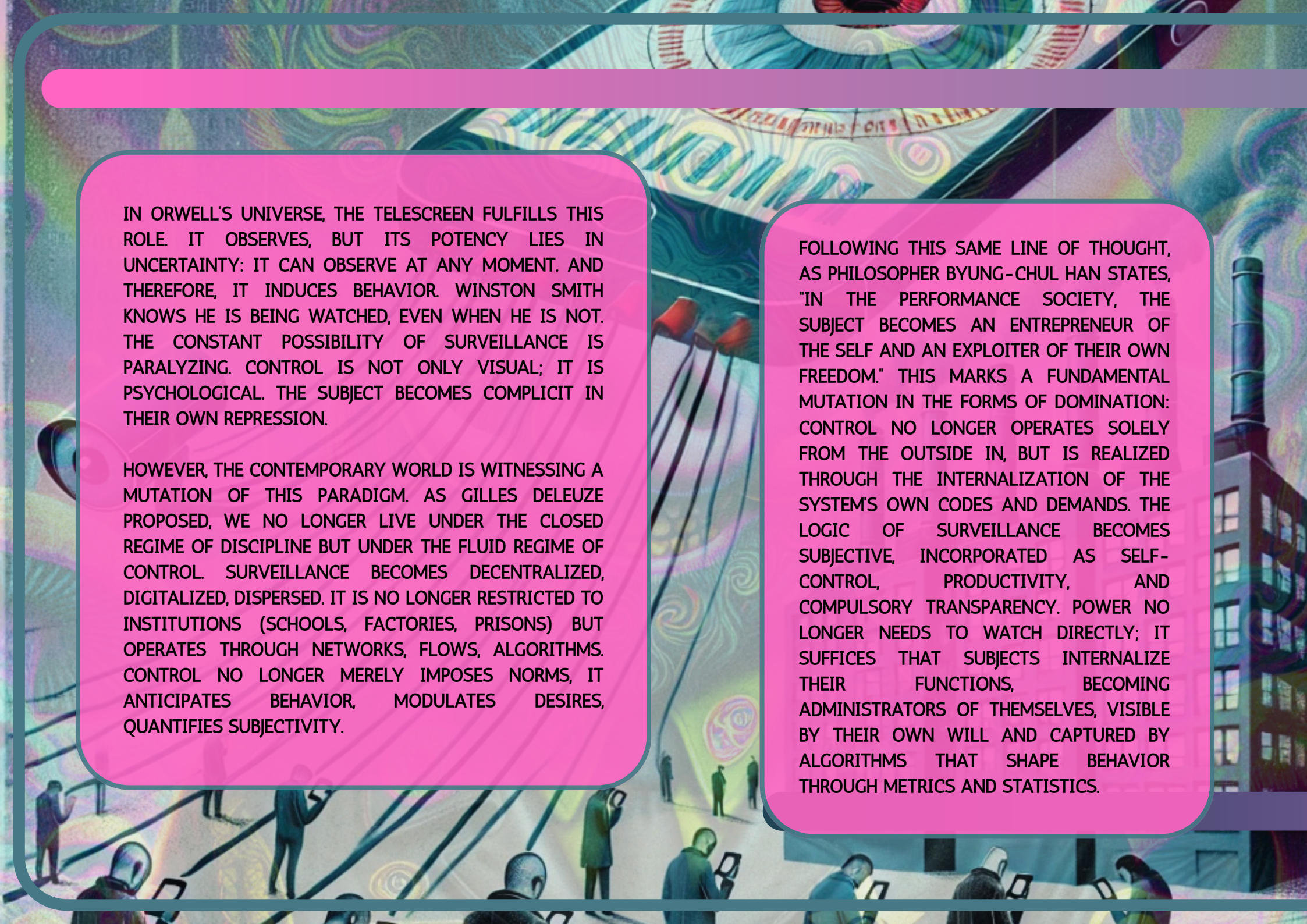
THE "ORDERS OF THE DAY" ISSUED BY BIG BROTHER, OFTEN CELEBRATING FICTIONAL HEROES LIKE COMRADE OGILVY, WERE DIRECTLY INSPIRED BY STALIN'S WARTIME PROCLAMATIONS, WHICH FREQUENTLY PRAISED IDEALIZED CHARACTERS EMBODYING PERFECT OBEDIENCE TO THE PARTY. EVEN THE TELESCREEN SLOGAN "OUR NEW AND HAPPY LIFE" ECHOES STALIN'S 1935 DECLARATION: "LIFE HAS BECOME BETTER, COMRADES; LIFE HAS BECOME MORE JOYFUL."

IN THIS CONTEXT, DOUBLETHINK IS THE MOST REFINED SYMBOLIC TECHNOLOGY OF TOTALITARIANISM: IT IS NOT MERELY A WAY OF MANIPULATING BELIEFS BUT OF FABRICATING SUBJECTIVITIES. THE LIE, REPEATED AS TRUTH, SHAPES REALITY TO THE POINT WHERE ANY ATTEMPT TO RECALL THE PAST OR TO THINK CRITICALLY BECOMES DANGEROUS, OR EVEN IMPOSSIBLE. ABSOLUTE CONTROL DOES NOT REQUIRE ONLY SURVEILLANCE; IT REQUIRES THAT THOUGHT ITSELF BOW, SMILE, AND CONSENT.

FROM BIG BROTHER TO THE ALGORITHM: BETWEEN DISCIPLINE AND CONTROL

DYSTOPIAS ARE NOT PROPHECIES, THEY ARE TOOLS FOR READING THE PRESENT. 1984 REMAINS RELEVANT BECAUSE ITS MECHANISMS OF OPPRESSION—THE TELESCREEN AND DOUBLETHINK—ARE NOT MERE TECHNOLOGICAL FANTASIES, BUT EFFECTIVE METAPHORS FOR THE RATIONALITY OF POWER.

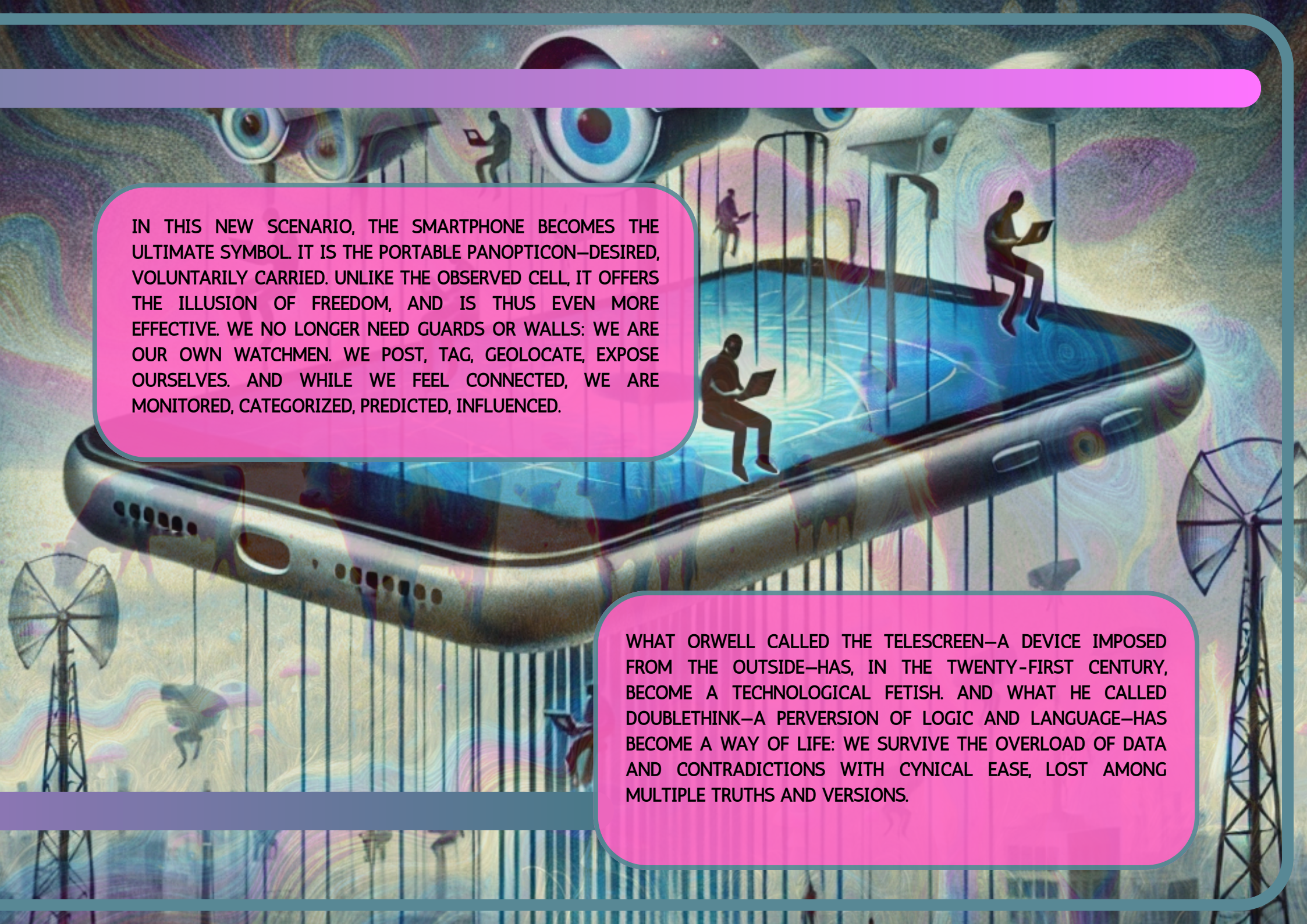
TO DEEPEN THIS READING, IT IS ESSENTIAL TO DRAW UPON THE CONCEPTS FORMULATED BY MICHEL FOUCAULT REGARDING DISCIPLINARY SOCIETY. ACCORDING TO THE PHILOSOPHER, MODERNITY INSTITUTED A REGIME OF CONTROL BASED ON CONSTANT SURVEILLANCE, NORMALIZATION OF BODIES, AND THE INTERNALIZATION OF RULES. THE EMBLEMATIC MODEL OF THIS SOCIETY IS THE PANOPTICON, AN ARCHITECTURAL PROJECT BY JEREMY BENTHAM THAT ALLOWS A SINGLE WATCHMAN TO OBSERVE ALL PRISONERS WITHOUT EVER BEING SEEN. POWER THUS OPERATES NOT ONLY THROUGH EXTERNAL COERCION BUT THROUGH THE INDUCTION OF SELF-SURVEILLANCE.



IN ORWELL'S UNIVERSE, THE TELESCREEN FULFILLS THIS ROLE. IT OBSERVES, BUT ITS POTENCY LIES IN UNCERTAINTY: IT CAN OBSERVE AT ANY MOMENT. AND THEREFORE, IT INDUCES BEHAVIOR. WINSTON SMITH KNOWS HE IS BEING WATCHED, EVEN WHEN HE IS NOT. THE CONSTANT POSSIBILITY OF SURVEILLANCE IS PARALYZING. CONTROL IS NOT ONLY VISUAL; IT IS PSYCHOLOGICAL. THE SUBJECT BECOMES COMPLICIT IN THEIR OWN REPRESSION.

HOWEVER, THE CONTEMPORARY WORLD IS WITNESSING A MUTATION OF THIS PARADIGM. AS GILLES DELEUZE PROPOSED, WE NO LONGER LIVE UNDER THE CLOSED REGIME OF DISCIPLINE BUT UNDER THE FLUID REGIME OF CONTROL. SURVEILLANCE BECOMES DECENTRALIZED, DIGITALIZED, DISPERSED. IT IS NO LONGER RESTRICTED TO INSTITUTIONS (SCHOOLS, FACTORIES, PRISONS) BUT OPERATES THROUGH NETWORKS, FLOWS, ALGORITHMS. CONTROL NO LONGER MERELY IMPOSES NORMS, IT ANTICIPATES BEHAVIOR, MODULATES DESIRES, QUANTIFIES SUBJECTIVITY.

FOLLOWING THIS SAME LINE OF THOUGHT, AS PHILOSOPHER BYUNG-CHUL HAN STATES, "IN THE PERFORMANCE SOCIETY, THE SUBJECT BECOMES AN ENTREPRENEUR OF THE SELF AND AN EXPLOITER OF THEIR OWN FREEDOM." THIS MARKS A FUNDAMENTAL MUTATION IN THE FORMS OF DOMINATION: CONTROL NO LONGER OPERATES SOLELY FROM THE OUTSIDE IN, BUT IS REALIZED THROUGH THE INTERNALIZATION OF THE SYSTEM'S OWN CODES AND DEMANDS. THE LOGIC OF SURVEILLANCE BECOMES SUBJECTIVE, INCORPORATED AS SELF-CONTROL, PRODUCTIVITY, AND COMPULSORY TRANSPARENCY. POWER NO LONGER NEEDS TO WATCH DIRECTLY; IT SUFFICES THAT SUBJECTS INTERNALIZE THEIR FUNCTIONS, BECOMING ADMINISTRATORS OF THEMSELVES, VISIBLE BY THEIR OWN WILL AND CAPTURED BY ALGORITHMS THAT SHAPE BEHAVIOR THROUGH METRICS AND STATISTICS.



IN THIS NEW SCENARIO, THE SMARTPHONE BECOMES THE ULTIMATE SYMBOL. IT IS THE PORTABLE PANOPTICON—DESIRED, VOLUNTARILY CARRIED. UNLIKE THE OBSERVED CELL, IT OFFERS THE ILLUSION OF FREEDOM, AND IS THUS EVEN MORE EFFECTIVE. WE NO LONGER NEED GUARDS OR WALLS: WE ARE OUR OWN WATCHMEN. WE POST, TAG, GEOLOCATE, EXPOSE OURSELVES. AND WHILE WE FEEL CONNECTED, WE ARE MONITORED, CATEGORIZED, PREDICTED, INFLUENCED.

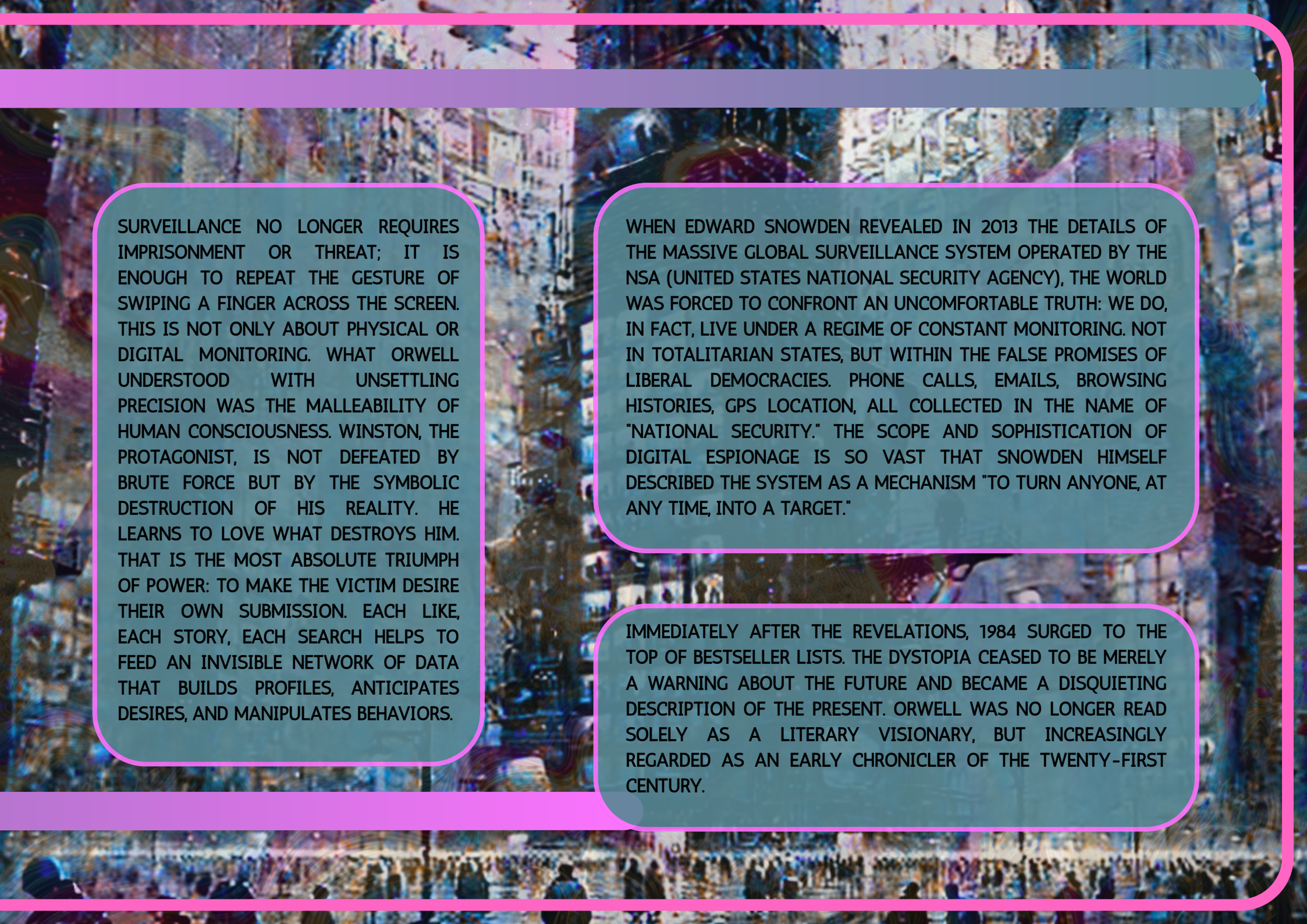
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“1984 WILL NOT BE LIKE 1984”: BUT WHAT IF IT IS?

IN JANUARY 1984, APPLE RELEASED ONE OF THE MOST ICONIC COMMERCIALS IN HISTORY. DIRECTED BY RIDLEY SCOTT AND BROADCAST DURING THE SUPER BOWL HALFTIME, THE VIDEO SHOWED A HYPNOTIZED CROWD FACING A GIANT SCREEN WHERE "BIG BROTHER" WAS GIVING A SPEECH. A REBELLIOUS YOUNG WOMAN BURSTS INTO THE HALL AND HURLS A HAMMER AT THE SCREEN, SHATTERING IT. THE MESSAGE IS CLEAR: THE LAUNCH OF THE MACINTOSH WILL FREE INDIVIDUALS FROM THE OPPRESSIVE UNIFORMITY SYMBOLIZED BY IBM. THE FINAL SLOGAN DECLARED: "1984 WON'T BE LIKE 1984."

NEARLY FOUR DECADES LATER, WHAT WAS PROMISED AS TECHNOLOGICAL EMANCIPATION HAS REVEALED ITSELF, IN MANY RESPECTS, AS A RENEWED—AND EVEN MORE EFFECTIVE—FORM OF SURVEILLANCE AND CONTROL. THE MACHINE THAT OFFERED FREEDOM HAS BECOME THE VERY ONE THAT WATCHES US, COLLECTS DATA, DECIPHERS BEHAVIORAL PATTERNS, AND SHAPES DECISIONS. THE DEVICE THAT CARRIES THE CONTEMPORARY SENSE OF INDIVIDUALITY IS ALSO OUR PERSONAL TELESCREEN.

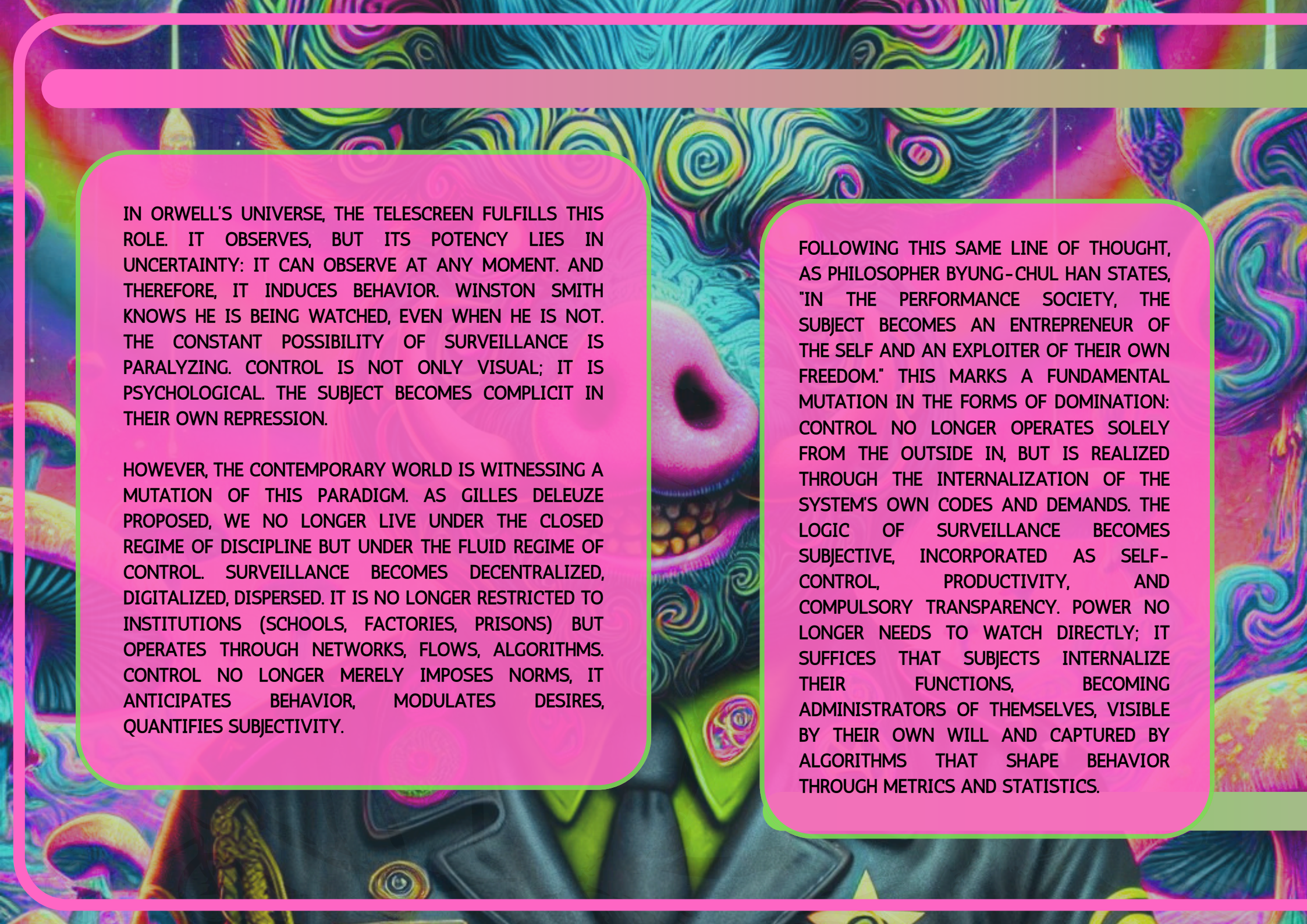
TELESCREENS ARE NO LONGER FIXED TO WALLS, THEY ARE IN OUR POCKETS, AT OUR BEDSIDES, AND IN OUR HANDS. WE LOOK AT THEM VOLUNTARILY HUNDREDS OF TIMES A DAY. WE ASK THEM TO LISTEN TO US. WE ALLOW THEM TO KNOW WHERE WE ARE. WE CONSENT—OFTEN WITHOUT READING THE TERMS OF USE—TO THE TRANSFORMATION OF OUR SUBJECTIVITY INTO COMMODITY.



SURVEILLANCE NO LONGER REQUIRES IMPRISONMENT OR THREAT; IT IS ENOUGH TO REPEAT THE GESTURE OF SWIPING A FINGER ACROSS THE SCREEN. THIS IS NOT ONLY ABOUT PHYSICAL OR DIGITAL MONITORING. WHAT ORWELL UNDERSTOOD WITH UNSETTLING PRECISION WAS THE MALLEABILITY OF HUMAN CONSCIOUSNESS. WINSTON, THE PROTAGONIST, IS NOT DEFEATED BY BRUTE FORCE BUT BY THE SYMBOLIC DESTRUCTION OF HIS REALITY. HE LEARNS TO LOVE WHAT DESTROYS HIM. THAT IS THE MOST ABSOLUTE TRIUMPH OF POWER: TO MAKE THE VICTIM DESIRE THEIR OWN SUBMISSION. EACH LIKE, EACH STORY, EACH SEARCH HELPS TO FEED AN INVISIBLE NETWORK OF DATA THAT BUILDS PROFILES, ANTICIPATES DESIRES, AND MANIPULATES BEHAVIORS.

WHEN EDWARD SNOWDEN REVEALED IN 2013 THE DETAILS OF THE MASSIVE GLOBAL SURVEILLANCE SYSTEM OPERATED BY THE NSA (UNITED STATES NATIONAL SECURITY AGENCY), THE WORLD WAS FORCED TO CONFRONT AN UNCOMFORTABLE TRUTH: WE DO, IN FACT, LIVE UNDER A REGIME OF CONSTANT MONITORING. NOT IN TOTALITARIAN STATES, BUT WITHIN THE FALSE PROMISES OF LIBERAL DEMOCRACIES. PHONE CALLS, EMAILS, BROWSING HISTORIES, GPS LOCATION, ALL COLLECTED IN THE NAME OF "NATIONAL SECURITY." THE SCOPE AND SOPHISTICATION OF DIGITAL ESPIONAGE IS SO VAST THAT SNOWDEN HIMSELF DESCRIBED THE SYSTEM AS A MECHANISM "TO TURN ANYONE, AT ANY TIME, INTO A TARGET."

IMMEDIATELY AFTER THE REVELATIONS, 1984 SURGED TO THE TOP OF BESTSELLER LISTS. THE DYSTOPIA CEASED TO BE MERELY A WARNING ABOUT THE FUTURE AND BECAME A DISQUIETING DESCRIPTION OF THE PRESENT. ORWELL WAS NO LONGER READ SOLELY AS A LITERARY VISIONARY, BUT INCREASINGLY REGARDED AS AN EARLY CHRONICLER OF THE TWENTY-FIRST CENTURY.



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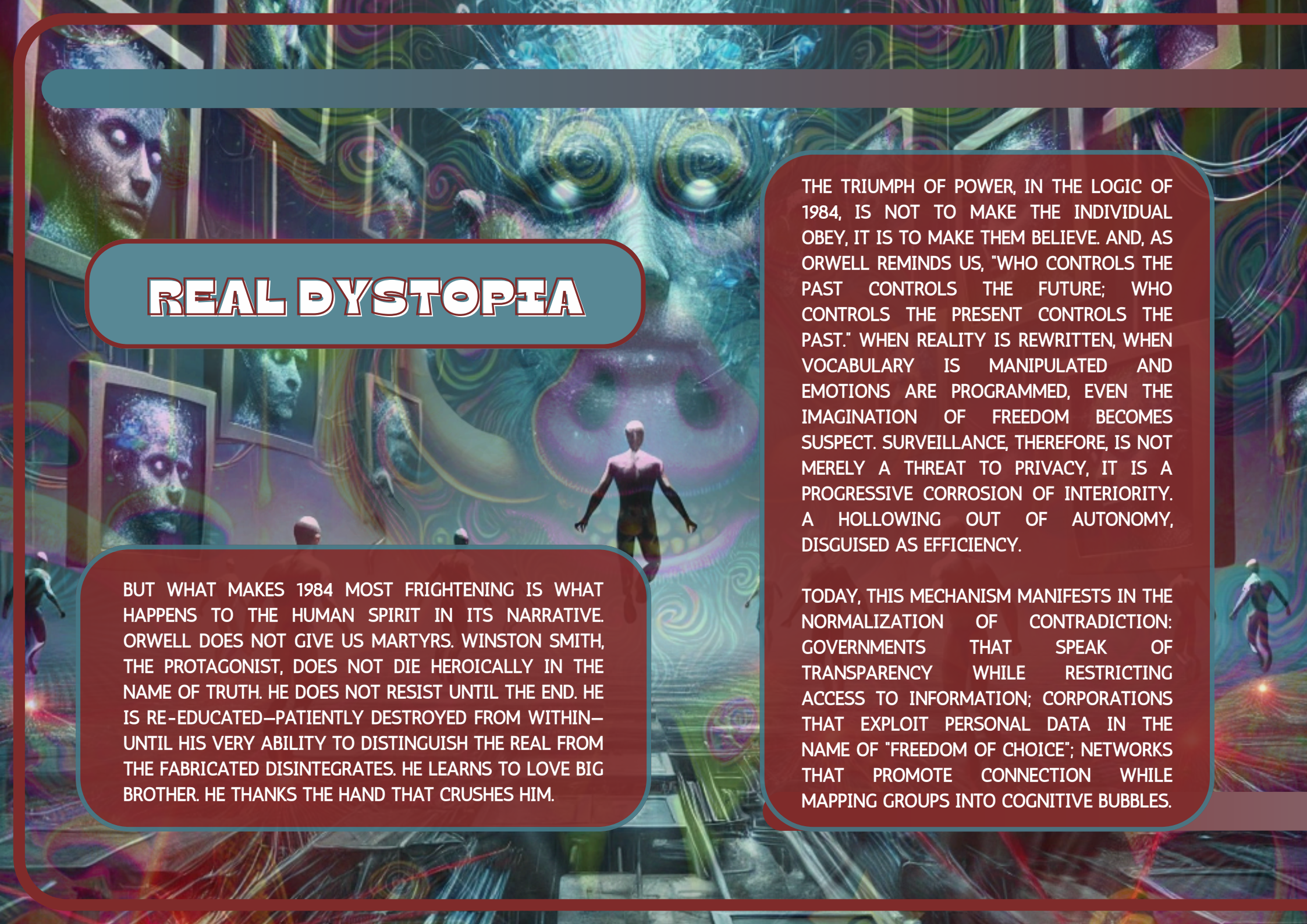
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REAL DYSTOPIA

BUT WHAT MAKES 1984 MOST FRIGHTENING IS WHAT HAPPENS TO THE HUMAN SPIRIT IN ITS NARRATIVE. ORWELL DOES NOT GIVE US MARTYRS. WINSTON SMITH, THE PROTAGONIST, DOES NOT DIE HEROICALLY IN THE NAME OF TRUTH. HE DOES NOT RESIST UNTIL THE END. HE IS RE-EDUCATED—PATIENTLY DESTROYED FROM WITHIN—UNTIL HIS VERY ABILITY TO DISTINGUISH THE REAL FROM THE FABRICATED DISINTEGRATES. HE LEARNS TO LOVE BIG BROTHER. HE THANKS THE HAND THAT CRUSHES HIM.

THE TRIUMPH OF POWER, IN THE LOGIC OF 1984, IS NOT TO MAKE THE INDIVIDUAL OBEY, IT IS TO MAKE THEM BELIEVE. AND, AS ORWELL REMINDS US, "WHO CONTROLS THE PAST CONTROLS THE FUTURE; WHO CONTROLS THE PRESENT CONTROLS THE PAST." WHEN REALITY IS REWRITTEN, WHEN VOCABULARY IS MANIPULATED AND EMOTIONS ARE PROGRAMMED, EVEN THE IMAGINATION OF FREEDOM BECOMES SUSPECT. SURVEILLANCE, THEREFORE, IS NOT MERELY A THREAT TO PRIVACY, IT IS A PROGRESSIVE CORROSION OF INTERIORITY. A HOLLOWING OUT OF AUTONOMY, DISGUISED AS EFFICIENCY.

TODAY, THIS MECHANISM MANIFESTS IN THE NORMALIZATION OF CONTRADICTION: GOVERNMENTS THAT SPEAK OF TRANSPARENCY WHILE RESTRICTING ACCESS TO INFORMATION; CORPORATIONS THAT EXPLOIT PERSONAL DATA IN THE NAME OF "FREEDOM OF CHOICE"; NETWORKS THAT PROMOTE CONNECTION WHILE MAPPING GROUPS INTO COGNITIVE BUBBLES.



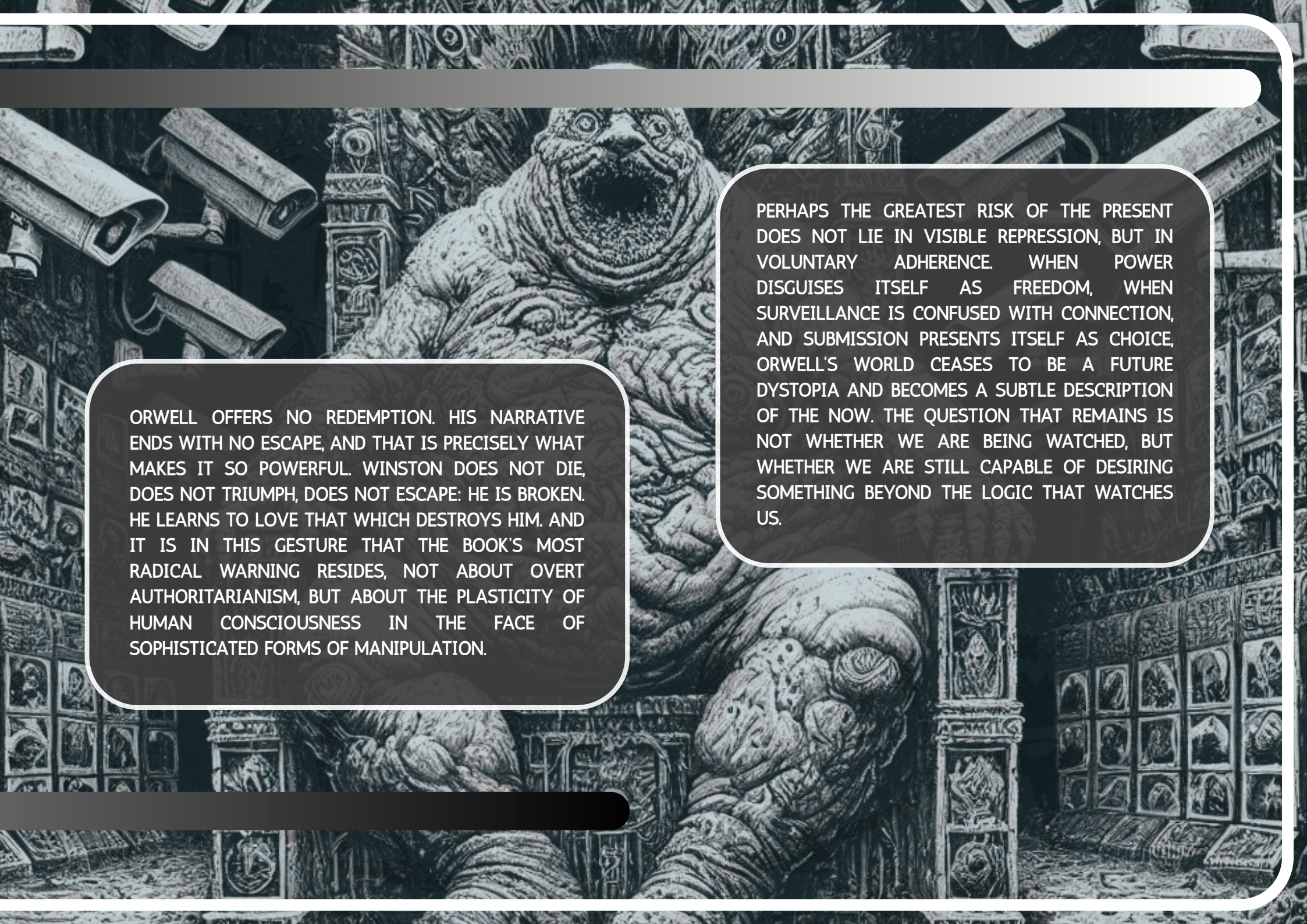
DOUBLETHINK IS UPDATED IN POLITICAL RHETORIC, WHERE THE EXPLICIT LIE NO LONGER PROVOKES SHAME—IT IS PERFORMED, RECYCLED, ACCEPTED AS PART OF THE GAME. IN DISINFORMATION CAMPAIGNS AND POLARIZED DISCOURSE, TRUTH BECOMES A MATTER OF ALIGNMENT, NOT VERIFICATION. WHAT MATTERS IS NOT WHAT IS SAID, BUT WHO SAYS IT, AND WHEN. LOGIC BENDS TO IDENTITY; CRITICAL THINKING DISSOLVES INTO EMOTIONAL REPETITION.

DIGITAL PLATFORMS, GOVERNED BY OPAQUE ALGORITHMS, OPERATE AS DUPLICATORS OF DOUBLETHINK: THEY PERSONALIZE REALITIES, SHAPE PUBLIC DISCOURSE, AND RECONFIGURE THE PAST ACCORDING TO THE CONVENIENCE OF THE PRESENT. COLLECTIVE MEMORY BECOMES AN EDITABLE ARCHIVE, SUBJECT TO THE CURATION OF BIG TECH AND THE MANIPULATION OF POLITICAL NARRATIVES.

FINAL NOTES

THE QUESTION THAT SILENTLY RUNS THROUGH 1984 IS NOT MERELY WHETHER IT IS POSSIBLE TO RESIST, BUT WHETHER THERE IS STILL MEANING IN RESISTANCE WHEN EVEN THE DESIRE FOR FREEDOM IS MANIPULATED, SHAPED, AND CONVERTED INTO A TOOL OF THE SYSTEM ITSELF. WINSTON SMITH, BY RECORDING HIS DOUBTS IN A CLANDESTINE DIARY, BY SURRENDERING TO HIS PASSION FOR JULIA, BY DREAMING OF A SUBVERSIVE BROTHERHOOD, RISKS MORE THAN HIS LIFE: HE CHALLENGES THE TOTALIZING LOGIC OF A POWER THAT COLONIZES NOT ONLY BODIES, BUT THE VERY LANGUAGE OF THOUGHT.

HOWEVER, EVERY GESTURE OF DISSENT HAS ALREADY BEEN FORESEEN, ABSORBED, AND NEUTRALIZED. THE REBELLION WINSTON IMAGINES IS MERELY ANOTHER MECHANISM OF CONTROL. THE BROTHERHOOD, EMBODIMENT OF POLITICAL HOPE, IS A FICTION DESIGNED TO CAPTURE DEVIANTS. LOVE, THE LAST REFUGE OF INTIMATE FREEDOM, IS DESTROYED IN ROOM 101. THE MINISTRY OF TRUTH TURNS HISTORY INTO A MALLEABLE RUIN, ERASING ANY TRACE OF COLLECTIVE MEMORY. EVEN THE SECRET HATRED FOR BIG BROTHER IS GRADUALLY CONVERTED INTO LOVE, NOT THROUGH RATIONAL PERSUASION, BUT THROUGH SUBJECTIVE REPROGRAMMING, PAIN, AND THE EMPTYING OF THE SELF.



ORWELL OFFERS NO REDEMPTION. HIS NARRATIVE ENDS WITH NO ESCAPE, AND THAT IS PRECISELY WHAT MAKES IT SO POWERFUL. WINSTON DOES NOT DIE, DOES NOT TRIUMPH, DOES NOT ESCAPE: HE IS BROKEN. HE LEARNS TO LOVE THAT WHICH DESTROYS HIM. AND IT IS IN THIS GESTURE THAT THE BOOK'S MOST RADICAL WARNING RESIDES, NOT ABOUT OVERT AUTHORITARIANISM, BUT ABOUT THE PLASTICITY OF HUMAN CONSCIOUSNESS IN THE FACE OF SOPHISTICATED FORMS OF MANIPULATION.

PERHAPS THE GREATEST RISK OF THE PRESENT DOES NOT LIE IN VISIBLE REPRESSION, BUT IN VOLUNTARY ADHERENCE. WHEN POWER DISGUISES ITSELF AS FREEDOM, WHEN SURVEILLANCE IS CONFUSED WITH CONNECTION, AND SUBMISSION PRESENTS ITSELF AS CHOICE, ORWELL'S WORLD CEASES TO BE A FUTURE DYSTOPIA AND BECOMES A SUBTLE DESCRIPTION OF THE NOW. THE QUESTION THAT REMAINS IS NOT WHETHER WE ARE BEING WATCHED, BUT WHETHER WE ARE STILL CAPABLE OF DESIRING SOMETHING BEYOND THE LOGIC THAT WATCHES US.

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EMANUEL SOUZA

M.TERÇA-NADA

GENART

ABSTRACT:
THIS TEXT DISCUSSES THE EMERGENCE AND DEVELOPMENT OF LONG-FORM ALGORITHMIC GENERATIVE ART SINCE 2020, MARKED BY THE CREATION OF DIGITAL PLATFORMS, SUCH AS ART BLOCKS AND LATER FX(HASH), WHICH ENABLED ARTISTIC PROJECTS MADE WITH CODE TO MEET BLOCKCHAIN TECHNOLOGY AND THUS HAVE FERTILE GROUND TO BE REALIZED, KNOWN AND COLLECTED WORLDWIDE. FROM THEN ON, A PULSATING ECOSYSTEM WAS FORMED INVOLVING ARTISTS, COLLECTORS, CURATORS, RESEARCHERS, INVESTORS AND INSTITUTIONS INTERESTED IN THIS SPECIFIC TYPE OF DIGITAL ART.

KEYWORDS: GENERATIVE ART, CODE ART, LONG-FORM, ART BLOCKS, FX(HASH)

INTRODUCTION

THE CONCEPT OF ALGORITHMIC GENERATIVE ART BRINGS TOGETHER A SERIES OF ARTISTIC PRACTICES CARRIED OUT THROUGH CODE, USING COMPUTER PROGRAMMING AND DEVICES TO GENERATE WORKS, SUCH AS IMAGES, ANIMATIONS, AUDIOVISUALS, IMMERSIVE EXPERIENCES OR INTERACTIVE INSTALLATIONS.
BUT WHAT IS AN ALGORITHM? AN ALGORITHM CONSISTS OF A SET OF LOGICAL INSTRUCTIONS AND PROCEDURES WHICH DEFINE WHICH ACTIONS SHOULD BE CARRIED OUT, IN WHAT ORDER AND UNDER WHAT CONDITIONS.

AN ANALOGY CAN BE MADE BETWEEN ALGORITHMS AND THE STETAMENTS/INSTRUCTIONS OF CONCEPTUAL ARTWORKS SUCH AS THOSE BY YOKO ONO OR SOL LEWITT. ANOTHER POSSIBLE ANALOGY IS BETWEEN ALGORITHMS AND SCORES, WHERE AN INTERPRETER, IN THIS CASE A MUSICIAN OR PERFORMER, WILL FIND A SCRIPT WITH INDICATIONS OF WHAT NEEDS TO BE DONE. IT SHOULD BE EMPHASIZED THAT THE ALGORITHM DOESN'T DO ANYTHING ON ITS OWN, IT DEPENDS ON THE INTERPRETER IN ORDER TO BE REALIZED AND THAT, FROM THE SAME ALGORITHM, DIFFERENT RESULTS CAN BE ACHIEVED.

WHEN ALGORITHMS ARE WRITTEN BY ARTIST-CODERS, THE AIM IS TO EXPLORE THE POSSIBILITIES BETWEEN CODE, CONCEPTS AND EXPERIMENTATION IN ORDER TO CREATE ARTWORKS. AFTER ALL, THE "ARTIST DEPROGRAMS IN ORDER TO REPROGRAM, SUGGESTING THAT THERE ARE OTHER POSSIBLE USES FOR THE TECHNIQUES AND TOOLS AT OUR DISPOSAL" (BOURRIAUD, 2009, P. 83-84). IN THE SPECIFIC CONTEXT OF ALGORITHMIC GENERATIVE ART, ARTISTS SUCH AS VERA MOLNÁR, WALDEMAR CORDEIRO, FRIEDER NAKE, MANFRED MOHR AND ROMAN VEROSTKO WERE PIONEERS IN EXPLORING, FROM THE 1960S ONWARDS, HOW CODE INSTRUCTIONS CAN GENERATE COMPLEX AND UNPREDICTABLE VISUAL RESULTS.

IN THE CASE OF ALGORITHMIC GENERATIVE ART, THE "INTERPRETER" THAT WILL EXECUTE THE CODE IS A DEVICE, WHICH CAN BE A COMPUTER, A CELL PHONE OR OTHER DEVICES WITH PROCESSORS. THE MARGIN OF "INTERPRETATION" HERE LIES IN THE DRAWS, CONDITIONS AND RANGE OF RANDOMNESS DEFINED IN THE CODE. ANOTHER IMPORTANT ASPECT IS THAT THE ALGORITHM IS WRITTEN BY SOMEONE, WHO WILL DEFINE ITS STRUCTURE, WRITE ITS CODE AND FUNCTIONS, DETERMINE THE RULES AND THEIR LIMITS.

EMERGENCE OF LONG-FORM GENERATIVE ART

UNTIL 2020, GENERATIVE ARTIST-PROGRAMMERS FOLLOWED A CREATIVE PROCESS THAT INCLUDED THREE DISTINCT STAGES: PROGRAMMING ALGORITHMS, GENERATING MULTIPLE ITERATIONS (SINGLE EDITIONS OR INDIVIDUAL INSTANCES THAT RESULT FROM THE CODE) AND, FINALLY, MANUALLY SELECTING THOSE DEEMED MOST SUCCESSFUL FOR PUBLIC DISPLAY.

HOWEVER, THAT YEAR, THE ART BLOCKS PLATFORM INTRODUCED AN INNOVATION THAT WOULD GREATLY TRANSFORM THIS ARTISTIC PRACTICE: INSTEAD OF PRESENTING ONLY PRE-SELECTED ITERATIONS, ARTISTS BEGAN TO PUBLISH THEIR OWN ALGORITHM ON THE PLATFORM, WHICH IMPLEMENTED MECHANISMS SO THAT, AT THE TIME OF ACQUISITION, THE COLLECTOR WOULD TRIGGER THE EXECUTION OF THE CODE. THE RESULTING ITERATION WOULD THEN BE GENERATED, REVEALED AND, AT THE SAME TIME, PERMANENTLY RECORDED ON BLOCKCHAIN[1].

[1] BLOCKCHAIN IS A PUBLIC DIGITAL REGISTRY THAT STORES INFORMATION IN A CHAIN OF BLOCKS IN A DECENTRALIZED, VERIFIABLE AND PERMANENT WAY.

THIS NEW APPROACH HAS BECOME KNOWN AS LONG-FORM GENERATIVE ART AND IMPOSES SIGNIFICANT CHALLENGES ON ARTISTS, REQUIRING THE DEVELOPMENT OF CONSIDERABLY MORE ROBUST AND SOPHISTICATED ALGORITHMS, SINCE WITH IT, ALL THE ITERATIONS GENERATED OFFICIALLY BECOME PART OF THE BODY OF ARTWORK, WITHOUT ANY SUBSEQUENT CURATORIAL FILTER. THE ALGORITHM ITSELF MUST ENSURE THAT AS MANY ITERATIONS AS POSSIBLE HAVE ARTISTIC AND CONCEPTUAL QUALITY. CHANCE IS STILL PRESENT, BUT NOW WITHIN MUCH MORE REFINED PARAMETERS.

DESPITE HAVING CREATED THE TECHNOLOGICAL CONDITIONS AND, IN A WAY, THE MODEL FOR GENERATIVE ART TO TAKE PLACE ON A PLATFORM, ART BLOCKS HAD TWO MAJOR BARRIERS: IT WAS A CLOSED PLATFORM, MEANING THAT AN ARTIST COULD ONLY PUBLISH THEIR WORK THERE IF THEY HAD RECEIVED A PRIOR INVITATION; AND THE PLATFORM USED THE ETHEREUM NETWORK, WHICH AT THE TIME HAD LIMITATIONS IN TERMS OF ITS HIGH FINANCIAL, COMPUTATIONAL AND ENVIRONMENTAL COST (MENOTTI AND VELÁZQUEZ, 2021).

IN 2021, WITH THE EMERGENCE OF FX(HASH), THESE LIMITS CEASED TO EXIST, SINCE THIS NEW PLATFORM WAS OPEN – ANY ARTIST COULD PUBLISH WORK ON IT – AND IT RAN ON THE TEZOS NETWORK – WHICH WAS HUNDREDS OF TIMES CHEAPER AND HAD A MUCH LOWER ENVIRONMENTAL COST.

SPECIFICS OF LONG-FORM GENERATIVE ART

WHEN ANALYZING GENERATIVE ART CREATED WITH CODE, IT'S INTERESTING TO DELVE DEEPER INTO THE DYNAMICS BROUGHT BY THE EMERGENCE OF LONG-FORM GENERATIVE ART. THIS CONCEPT IS ATTRIBUTED TO ERICK CALDERON, THE MEXICAN ARTIST AND FOUNDER OF THE ART BLOCKS PLATFORM, BUT WAS CONSOLIDATED THROUGH TYLER HOBBS'S ESSAY ON HIS PROJECT FIDENZA, WHICH WAS LAUNCHED ON THE ART BLOCKS PLATFORM IN JUNE 2021. FIDENZA GENERATED 999 ITERATIONS FROM ITS ALGORITHM AND BECAME A MILESTONE FOR GENERATIVE ART, SETTING NEW STANDARDS BOTH ARTISTICALLY AND COMMERCIALLY.

LONG-FORM GENERATIVE ART CHARACTERIZES WORKS PRODUCED IN THE MODEL THAT AN ALGORITHM IS PUBLISHED BY THE ARTIST-CODER ON A SPECIALIZED PLATFORM WHERE ITERATIONS DERIVED FROM THAT CODE ARE GENERATED. INITIALLY, THE NUMBER OF ITERATIONS FOR EACH PROJECT WAS HIGH, AND EACH ITERATION MAINTAINS FORMAL AND STRUCTURAL RELATIONSHIPS WITH ALL THE OTHERS IN THE SAME PROJECT (HOBBS, 2021). EACH ITERATION EXPLORES DIFFERENT POSSIBILITIES WITHIN THE MARGINS OF CHANCE DEFINED BY THE ARTIST-CODER, CREATING A CONSTELLATION OF INTERCONNECTED WORKS THAT, TOGETHER, REVEAL THE DEPTH OF THE GENERATIVE SYSTEM THAT GAVE RISE TO THEM.

WITH THE ADVENT OF LONG-FORM, ARTISTS BEGAN TO DEFINE THE SIZE OF A PROJECT'S SERIES IN ADVANCE - ESTABLISHING HOW MANY ITERATIONS OF THE ALGORITHM COULD BE GENERATED AND SOLD. IN THIS MODEL, THE COLLECTOR BUYS AN ITERATION WITHOUT KNOWING ITS FINAL APPEARANCE (BLIND COLLECT), KNOWING ONLY THAT IT WILL BE UNIQUE. BEFORE PURCHASE, ONLY PRELIMINARY VISUALIZATIONS AND DEMONSTRATION EXAMPLES ARE AVAILABLE (CARRERAS, 2024). THE COMPLETE SET OF PIECES REMAINS A SURPRISE FOR BOTH COLLECTORS AND THE ARTIST-PROGRAMMER HIMSELF UNTIL ALL THE ITERATIONS HAVE BEEN GENERATED. IN LONG-FORM GENERATIVE ART, THE WORK IS MADE UP OF THE CODE AND THE SET OF ALL THE ITERATIONS THAT MAKE UP THE PROJECT SERIES.

THE IDEA OF LONG-FORM GENERATIVE ART IS CLOSELY LINKED TO BLOCKCHAIN TECHNOLOGY AND THE SPECIFIC CHARACTERISTICS OF NFTS[2], WHICH ALLOW FOR THE INDIVIDUAL TOKENIZATION OF EACH ITERATION, THUS CREATING A SPECIFIC ECONOMY AND COLLECTING MODEL FOR THIS TYPE OF GENERATIVE ART.

[2] NFT (NON FUNGIBLE TOKEN) IS A DIGITAL CERTIFICATE THAT GUARANTEES THAT SOMETHING IS UNIQUE AND IRREPLACEABLE. IT IS USED TO REGISTER OWNERSHIP OF DIGITAL ITEMS SUCH AS WORKS OF ART.

CONCLUSION

BETWEEN THE END OF 2020 AND THE BEGINNING OF 2022, THERE WAS A HUGE AMOUNT OF MONETARY LIQUIDITY AVAILABLE FOR DIGITAL ART, THE RESULT OF A GREAT APPRECIATION OF THE MAIN CRYPTOCURRENCIES AND A GREAT DEAL OF ATTENTION FOR NFTS FROM INVESTORS, COLLECTORS, SOCIAL NETWORKS AND THE PRESS.

WITH THE EMERGENCE OF SPECIALIZED PLATFORMS, THE AVAILABILITY OF LIQUIDITY AND A STRONG BUZZ, A VERY SPECIFIC AND FAVORABLE SCENARIO WAS FORMED FOR THE VERTIGINOUS GROWTH OF ALGORITHMIC GENERATIVE ART AND THE FLOURISHING OF THE PRODUCTION OF ARTISTS SUCH AS TYLER HOBBS, WILLIAM MAPAN, EMILY XIE, BJØRN STAAL, OLGA FRADINA, GOLAN LEVIN, MONICA RIZZOLLI, RAFAEL DMARCHI, KWAME BRUCE BUSIA, ANDREAS RAU, LICIA HE, ALEJANDRO CAMPOS, NAT SARKISSIAN, MELISSA WIEDERRECHT, LEANDER HERZOG, MATT PERKINS, ANNA CARRERAS, ERIK SWAHN, DAVID SEVEN, MARCELO SORIA-RODRÍGUEZ, ISKRA VELITCHKOVA, ZACH LIEBERMAN, JEREMY SCHOENHERR, KJETIL GOLID, ZANCAN, TYLER BOSWELL, JACEK MARKUSIEWICZ, AMONG MANY OTHERS.

THE FOLLOWING YEARS HAVE SEEN A MAJOR TRANSFORMATION IN THIS ECOSYSTEM AND IN THE PRODUCTION OF THE ARTISTS WHO WORK IN IT. THE NEXT TEXTS IN THIS SERIES WILL FOCUS ON SPECIFIC WORKS AND THE CHANGES FACED BY THE ECOSYSTEM.

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VAN AMENEYRO

COMPOSING THE MYTH OF NOW: NASIM GHANIZADEH & PAUL REID

"YOU KNOW WHAT? I ALWAYS THOUGHT UNICORNS WERE FABULOUS MONSTERS — I HAD NEVER SEEN A REAL ONE BEFORE!"

"WELL, NOW THAT WE'VE SEEN EACH OTHER," SAID THE UNICORN, "IF YOU'LL BELIEVE IN ME, I'LL BELIEVE IN YOU. IS THAT A BARGAIN?"

— THE UNICORN, BY LEWIS CARROLL

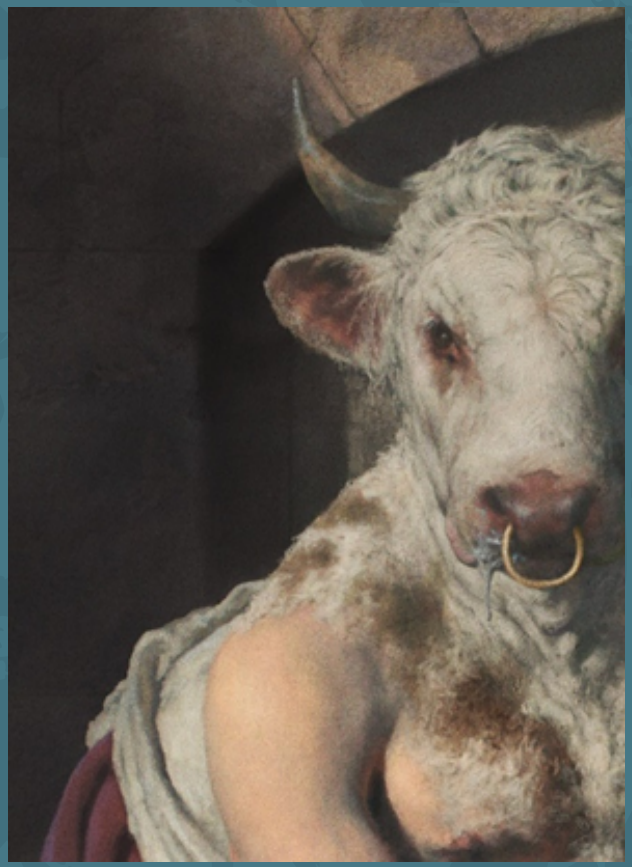
IT WAS A SUMMER AFTERNOON WHEN ALICE LAY STRETCHED OUT ON THE GRASS, LANGUISHING BETWEEN BOREDOM AND THE WORDS OF HER SISTER WHO READ BESIDE HER, WHEN – AS WE ALL KNOW – A RABBIT CAUGHT HER ATTENTION, AND FROM THERE UNFOLDED ONE OF THE MOST ICONIC FANTASY TALES OF RECENT TIMES: ALICE IN WONDERLAND AND THROUGH THE LOOKING-GLASS.

THESE TWO STORIES ARE OFTEN INTERTWINED IN ANIMATED OR CINEMATIC ADAPTATIONS, AS THE LITERAL DEVELOPMENT OF THE ORIGINAL TEXT WOULD BE TOO DENSE FOR ENTERTAINMENT PURPOSES. HOWEVER, THIS IS ONE OF THE MOST FASCINATING TALES IN WHICH REALITY SIMPLY ESCAPES TO GIVE WAY TO THE MOST ELABORATE FANTASY A LITTLE GIRL COULD HAVE "IMAGINED"... ALTHOUGH THERE ALWAYS REMAINS THE QUESTION: DID SHE REALLY JUMP INTO ANOTHER REALITY, WHERE EVERYTHING SEEMS POSSIBLE? IN MANY WAYS, IT BECOMES A CHALLENGE OF LOGIC, PARADOXES, ANALOGIES, AND LIFE PARABLES THAT EMERGE TO CONFRONT REASON ITSELF.

THAT IS ALSO ONE OF THE MANY GIFTS OF ART: TO BLUR THE LINE BETWEEN REALITY AND FANTASY. DRIVEN BY IMAGINATION, IT SOMETIMES MAKES US QUESTION WHETHER OUR REALITY IS ACTUALLY THE FANTASY, AND VICE VERSA. DESPITE THE FACT THAT, AS STEPHEN HAWKING POINTED OUT IN A BRIEF HISTORY OF TIME,": "WE ARE RATIONAL BEINGS, FREE TO OBSERVE THE UNIVERSE AS WE WISH AND TO DRAW LOGICAL CONCLUSIONS FROM WHAT WE OBSERVE."
THUS, ONE MIGHT THINK THAT SCIENCE ITSELF GIVES US PERMISSION TO WALK IN ZIGZAGS BETWEEN WHAT OUR MINDS DEEM LOGICAL OR ILLOGICAL.

FANTASY BECOMES REALITY WHEN IT PORTRAYS US WITH VIRTUES THAT OVERSHADOW HUMAN FLAWS, WHEN BRIEF TALES OFFER MEMORABLE LESSONS. SOMETIMES, THE ADVENTURES OF UNFORTUNATE HEROES ARE IMMORTALIZED IN A CANVAS OR PHOTOGRAPH. AGAIN – IT IS IN ART WHERE WE BEST UNDERSTAND OUR EXISTENCE, BECAUSE FROM "THE OTHER SIDE OF THE MIRROR" WE SEE OURSELVES REFLECTED IN WHAT OTHERS HAVE CREATED.

PAUL CREATES SCENES SO REALISTIC THAT IT SEEMS AS IF HE'S USED A CAMERA TO SHOW US THIS WORLD OF MYTHOLOGICAL BEINGS WITH FIERCE DETAIL AND PRECISION. AT FIRST, THE VIEWER IS STRUCK BY THE IMAGE'S INTENSITY, BY THE "STATIC MOVEMENT," AND THEN COMES THE ATTENTION TO DETAIL: THE ROUGH, SCALY REPTILIAN SKIN OF VIOLENT CREATURES WHOSE FACIAL EXPRESSIONS REVEAL ANGER AND DESTRUCTIVE IMPULSE. WHAT TRULY CHILLS US IS THE TEXTURE – YOU CAN FEEL THE SKIN, THE BREATH OF ASTERION, THE MINOTAUR BREATHING VIOLENTLY, OR THE HIGH-PITCHED CRY OF A PIG MOMENTS BEFORE ITS SACRIFICE.



PHOTOGRAPHY COURTESY BY PAUL REID



PHOTOGRAPHY COURTESY BY PAUL REID

MEANWHILE, NASIM TAKES US THROUGH AN ENCHANTED FOREST, A REAL FOREST, AND THE IMAGE IS CINEMATIC. WE CAN SENSE THE APPROACHING ADVENTURE, AND THAT THE FEMALE CHARACTER, DRIVEN BY CURIOSITY OR CLUMSINESS, MIGHT STUMBLE UPON ASTERION SLEEPING BEHIND A STURDY OAK. NASIM HERSELF ADMITS HER SCENES ARE NEARLY FORGOTTEN MEMORIES:

"A SYMBOLIC LANGUAGE FOR WHAT CANNOT BE TOUCHED BY EVERYDAY LIFE: LOST MEMORIES, UNNAMED SORROWS, AND DREAMS THAT REPEAT IN THE DEPTH OF THE UNCONSCIOUS.

MEMORY, DREAMS, OR IMAGINATION? PAUL PAINTS THE INTANGIBLE ASPECT OF MYTHOLOGY, AND EACH CHARACTER TELLS THEIR OWN DELUSION, A DESTINY WE OFTEN ALREADY KNOW THE END TO, BUT THE WAVES CRASHING ON THE LANDSCAPE'S ROCKS GIVE US HOPE THAT SINCE THE PAINTING IS ALIVE, THE CREATURES MIGHT REWRITE THEIR FATE... IS THAT WHY WE'RE SO FASCINATED BY THESE STORIES? BECAUSE THEIR EXPERIENCE MIGHT HELP US REDIRECT OUR OWN PATH BEFORE WE REACH THE SAME ENDING?

THIS ESSAY TAKES 1984, BY GEORGE ORWELL, AS AN INTERPRETATIVE KEY TO CRITICALLY REFLECT ON THE MECHANISMS OF CONTROL AND DOMINATION IN CONTEMPORARY SOCIETIES. IN PARTICULAR, WE FOCUS ON TWO STRUCTURING CONCEPTS OF THE ORWELLIAN UNIVERSE: THE TELESCREEN AND DOUBLETHINK. THE TELESCREEN, TECHNOLOGICAL IN NATURE, SYMBOLIZES INCESSANT SURVEILLANCE AND THE OMNIPRESENT PRESENCE OF THE STATE. DOUBLETHINK, IN TURN, FUNCTIONS AS A SYMBOLIC AND PSYCHOLOGICAL MECHANISM, REPRESENTING THE ABILITY TO HOLD CONTRADICTORY IDEAS SIMULTANEOUSLY WITHOUT RECOGNIZING THEIR CONTRADICTIONS. BOTH CONSTITUTE ESSENTIAL INSTRUMENTS FOR THE PERPETUATION OF POWER RELATIONS.



PHOTOGRAPHY COURTESY BY PAUL REID



MR. REID'S IMPECCABLE TECHNIQUE ALLOWS US TO TRAVEL THROUGH TIME – IT ALMOST CONVINCES US THAT HE HAS PHOTOGRAPHED EACH CHARACTER. IT NEARLY MAKES US DOUBT WHETHER THE PAINTING HANGING ON THE WALL IS A WINDOW OR WHETHER OUR SCREEN IS DECEIVING US – IS IT REAL? IS IT A DIGITAL PAINTING? HIS DEEP KNOWLEDGE OF MYTHOLOGY MAKES HIM THE FATHER OF THE MOST ICONIC CREATURE IN HIS WORK: ASTERION, THE MINOTAUR.

PHOTOGRAPHY COURTESY BY NASIM GHANIZADEH

THERE IS A SUBTLE AND SOMETIMES BLURRY VEIL IN THE WORK OF THESE ARTISTS. FOR PAUL, THIS VEIL THAT SEPARATES MYTHOLOGY FROM HIS ART IS HIS VIVID IMAGINATION:

"I GUESS THE VEIL IS MY IMAGINATION AND HOW I LIKE TO SEE THE MYTHOLOGICAL IN MY SURROUNDINGS. I'VE READ AND STUDIED MYTH FOR SO LONG NOW IT HAS BECOME PART OF HOW I THINK. THE MYTHOLOGICAL IMAGINATION, YOU MIGHT CALL IT."

FOR NASIM, THERE IS NO SEPARATION:

"THE VEIL IS THIN BECAUSE THESE WORLDS ARE NOT SEPARATE; THEY ARE ECHOES OF ONE ANOTHER."



PHOTOGRAPHY COURTESY BY PAUL REID



PHOTOGRAPHY COURTESY BY NASIM GHANIZADEH

IT'S FASCINATING, THE WOVEN BETWEEN KNOWLEDGE AND A SHARP IMAGINATION CAPABLE OF RECREATING SCENES WITH METICULOUS DETAIL: VOLUME, SHADOW, SYMBOLS, GAZES THAT SPEAK, COMPLEX ANATOMIES IN MOTION WHERE VEINS ARE VISIBLE, EVEN A CERTAIN GRIMACE OF PHYSICAL PAIN – THE KIND THAT COMES FROM EXHAUSTION AFTER AN EPIC BATTLE OR GAZES CAST TOWARD THE SEA WITH A DESOLATE SOUL.

BROADLY SPEAKING, IT IS A VIVID PHOTOGRAPH, AN IMAGE THAT MIRRORS LIFE ITSELF. AT TIMES, THE THIN LINE OF THE TIDE ALONG THE SHORE TAKES US TO ANOTHER BEING: A MERMAID, A HUMAN LYING ON THE ROCKS, AS IF THE SEA PLACED HER THERE TO REST AFTER A LONG JOURNEY, SETTING THE MOON ABOVE TO ILLUMINATE WITH SOFT GLIMMERS THE WAVES THAT DISSOLVE OVER THE SAND.

THIS MERMAID, UNLIKE PAUL REID'S CREATURES, IS HUMAN, SHE IS REAL, AND THE IMAGE DESCRIBED IS A PHOTOGRAPH THAT RESEMBLES A FIGURATIVE PAINTING. IT HAS A FANTASTICAL AIR, A SOFT LIGHT, AND WAS CAPTURED THROUGH NASIM'S CAMERA LENS. SHE PORTRAYS REALITY IN A WAY THAT MAKES US BELIEVE IN UNICORNS, BECAUSE WE'VE SEEN THEM IN HER WORK: WHITE, MAJESTIC, EXISTING IN THIS LIFE, IN THIS REALITY, AMONG HUMANS.

A PANORAMIC SHOT SHOWS A HERD OF HORSES FROM THE FRONT, FIRM AND INTIMIDATING LIKE REID'S BRAVE CENTAURS; BUT THE IMAGE FEELS SO UNREAL THAT ONE MIGHT THINK IT A REALISTIC OIL PAINTING, GIVEN THE TEXTURE OF THE DIRT LIFTED BY THE HORSES' STRIDE, AS IF IT WERE A CANVAS.

THIS BACK-AND-FORTH BETWEEN REALITY AND FANTASY IN ART, BETWEEN TWO DISCIPLINES THAT SEEM TO HAVE SWAPPED PLACES, IS DUE ONLY TO THE WAY THE WORLD ENTERS THROUGH THE EYES OF THESE TWO ARTISTS WHO, LIKE ALICE THROUGH THE LOOKING GLASS, HAVE SEEN THEMSELVES WITHIN VIVID SCENES, AS CREATORS OR PROTAGONISTS OF A FANTASTIC REALITY THAT ONLY ART, IN ITS BENEVOLENCE, ALLOWS US TO LIVE – EVEN BEYOND LOGIC.



PHOTOGRAPHY COURTESY BY PAUL REID



PHOTOGRAPHY COURTESY BY NASIM GHANIZADEH

ALTHOUGH THAT LOGIC, TO THE UNTRAINED OR INSENSITIVE EYE, MIGHT REDUCE THEIR ART TO A MERE RESULT OF UNMATCHED TALENT, SHUTTING THE DOOR TO THE POSSIBILITY THAT EACH PIECE IS A LIVING BEING WITH A FANTASTIC STORY. BUT THAT STORY DRAWS US IN BECAUSE IT APPEALS TO THE MOST REAL AND PROFOUND HUMAN EMOTIONS: DESOLATION, CURIOSITY, EXHAUSTION, ANGER, OR FEAR.

LEWIS CARROLL FILLED THE WORLD THAT ALICE LEAPT INTO WITH STRANGE CHARACTERS – CHARACTERS WHO F1ILLED HER WITH DOUBTS AND MADE HER QUESTION FANTASY ITSELF, REALIZING THAT THE LOGIC EACH ONE FOLLOWED WAS QUESTIONABLE, BUT DEEP DOWN, EVERYTHING MADE SENSE. PERHAPS – AND I DARE SAY THIS PERSONALLY – ALICE MAY HAVE FALLEN THROUGH A WORMHOLE OR A BLACK HOLE THAT LED HER TO ANOTHER REALITY.

COULD THE WORK OF NASIM AND PAUL ALSO BE PORTALS? OR IS IT SIMPLY THAT WARM FAMILIARITY WITH REALITY THROUGH FANTASY?

EVERYTHING IN ART IS TIMELESS, A PROVEN PRIVILEGE, NOTHING BETWEEN REALITY AND FANTASY CAN BE CONFINED TO A DETERMINISTIC IDEA. SO ONCE AGAIN, ALTHOUGH LOGIC TELLS US IT'S IMPOSSIBLE, THOUGHT ITSELF HOLDS CREATIVITY, AS PHYSICIST ILYA PRIGOGINE ONCE NOTED, BOTH ARE PROPERTIES OF THE PHYSICAL WORLD. A WORLD THAT PENDULATES THROUGH TIME, SPACE, MATTER, REALITY, AND POSSIBILITY.

"I CONSTANTLY MOVE IN MY WORK BETWEEN WHAT WAS, WHAT COULD HAVE BEEN, AND WHAT SEEMS TO HAVE ALWAYS EXISTED."
– NASIM GHANIZADEH



PHOTOGRAPHY COURTESY BY PAUL REID



DISCOVER MORE OF NASIM AND PAUL'S WORK ON X:
@NASIMGHANIZADE
@MINOTAUR_MAN

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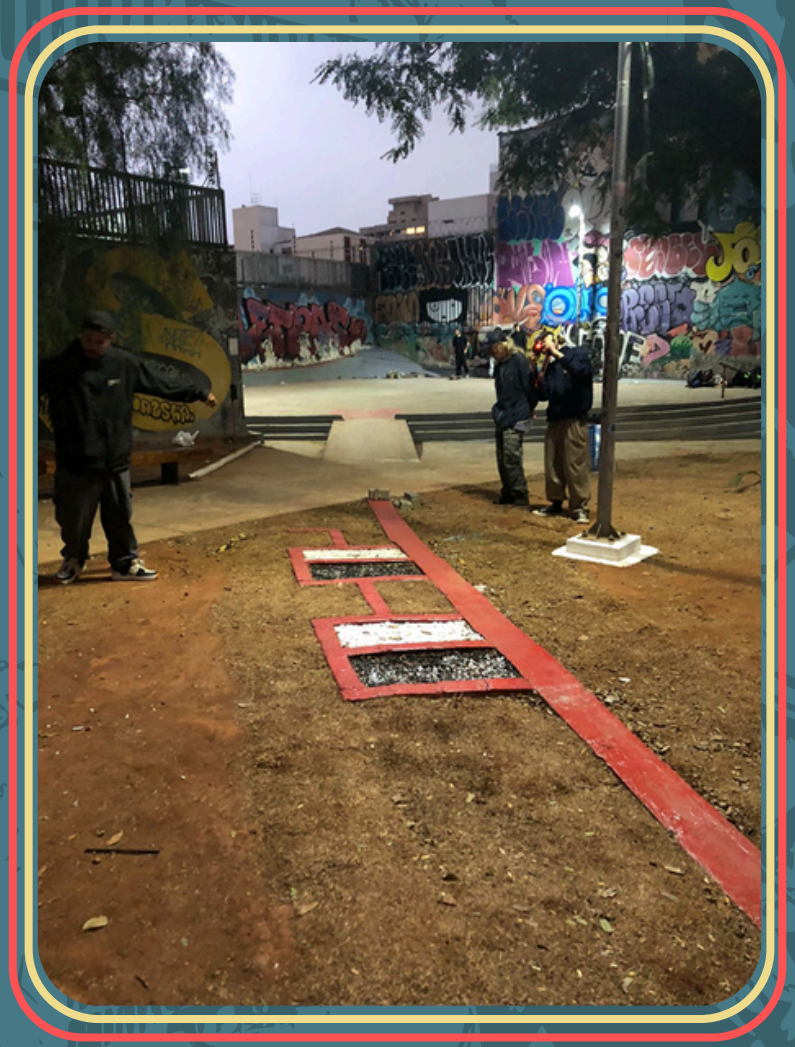
VAN AMENEYRO

KATIA SUZUÊ

🛹 FROM GRAFFITI WALLS TO BLOCKCHAIN PROTOCOLS: DELEY'S BLESS SKATESHOP AND THE PHILOSOPHY OF DECENTRALIZED STREET CULTURE.

DEAR READERS PASSIONATE ABOUT WEB3 AND URBAN ART, IN THIS PIECE, I WANT TO SHARE THE STORY OF SOMEONE I DEEPLY ADMIRE: DELEY, FOUNDER OF BLESS SKATESHOP & BARBERSHOP, BASED IN THE NORTHERN ZONE OF SÃO PAULO, BRAZIL. HIS WORK REPRESENTS NOT ONLY ECONOMIC RESILIENCE BUT A NEW PHILOSOPHY OF CREATIVE AUTONOMY AND CULTURAL SOVEREIGNTY POWERED BY BLOCKCHAIN TECHNOLOGY.





THIS STORY BEGINS AT PRAÇA MARGARIDA DE ALBUQUERQUE GIMENEZ – LOCALLY KNOWN AS PRAÇA DA SOPA DE LETRAS. "SOPA DE LETRAS" IS A GRAFFITI GATHERING THAT OCCURS PERIODICALLY, WHERE STREET ARTISTS OCCUPY THE SPACE TO PAINT ITS ENTIRE LANDSCAPE. I'VE PARTICIPATED IN EVERY EDITION OF THE EVENT, AND OVER THE YEARS, THE SQUARE HAS BECOME A HISTORIC SYMBOL OF URBAN ART IN SÃO PAULO, A LIVING ARCHIVE OF EXPRESSION AND COLLECTIVE MEMORY.

BLESS: WHERE STREET CULTURE MEETS DECENTRALIZED PHILOSOPHY



BLESS WAS NEVER MEANT TO BE JUST A STORE. FROM DAY ONE, DELEY ENVISIONED IT AS A LIVING SPACE — PART SCHOOL, PART CREATIVE LAB, PART SANCTUARY. A SKATESHOP AND BARBERSHOP, YES, BUT ALSO A POINT OF ENCOUNTER, DIALOGUE, AND CULTURAL REGENERATION.

DURING THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC, BLESS FACED THE THREAT OF CLOSURE. BUT INSTEAD OF GIVING IN, DELEY DOVE HEADFIRST INTO WEB3. BLOCKCHAIN WASN'T A TRENDY BUZZWORD — IT BECAME A PHILOSOPHICAL FRAMEWORK FOR SURVIVAL, TRANSFORMATION, AND RESISTANCE.

IF IT WEREN'T FOR WEB3," DELEY SAYS, "I WOULD'VE SHUT THE SHOP DOWN LONG AGO. TODAY, THE STORE WELCOMES SKATERS, TEACHES BLOCKCHAIN, AND SUPPORTS ARTISTS ACROSS MULTIPLE DISCIPLINES."



DECENTRALIZATION AS LIBERATION



DELEY STUDIED WEB3 INTENSIVELY: CRYPTOCURRENCIES, NFTS (NON-FUNGIBLE TOKENS), DAOS (DECENTRALIZED AUTONOMOUS ORGANIZATIONS), SMART CONTRACTS. HIS AIM WASN'T SPECULATION — IT WAS EMPOWERMENT. HE WANTED TO REIMAGINE THE ECONOMIC REALITIES OF PERIPHERAL CREATORS IN BRAZIL.

BLESS BEGAN ACCEPTING HBD (HIVE BACKED DOLLAR), A STABLECOIN ON THE HIVE BLOCKCHAIN. IT ALSO BECAME PART OF HIVE SKATE — A PLATFORM WHERE SKATERS ARE PAID FOR THEIR CONTENT USING CRYPTO. THOSE EARNINGS CAN BE SPENT DIRECTLY AT BLESS, CREATING A LOCALIZED CIRCULAR ECONOMY.

THIS MODEL IS DEEPLY PHILOSOPHICAL: VALUE IS CO-CREATED, SHARED, AND RETAINED WITHIN THE COMMUNITY. IDENTITY BECOMES CURRENCY, AND CREATIVITY BECOMES INFRASTRUCTURE.

FROM LOCAL SQUARE TO GLOBAL DAO FUNDING



ONE OF THE MOST IMPACTFUL ACHIEVEMENTS WAS SECURING FUNDING THROUGH THE NOUNS DAO, AN INTERNATIONAL WEB3 COLLECTIVE THAT SUPPORTS OPEN CULTURE PROJECTS.

DELEY PROPOSED REVITALIZING PRAÇA DA SOPA DE LETRAS THROUGH SKATEABLE ARCHITECTURE. THE DAO APPROVED, AND THE RESULT WAS THE CONSTRUCTION OF A CUSTOM SKATE OBSTACLE IN THE SHAPE OF THE NOUNS LOGO — ICONIC GLASSES — RIGHT AT THE HEART OF SÃO PAULO'S PERIPHERY.

THROUGH THIS, A FORGOTTEN SQUARE BECAME A NODE ON THE GLOBAL WEB3 MAP. DECENTRALIZATION WASN'T THEORETICAL ANYMORE — IT HAD TAKEN PHYSICAL FORM IN THE LANDSCAPE.



BEYOND SKATEBOARDING: A MULTICULTURAL URBAN HUB

BLESS ALSO SUPPORTS TATTOO ARTISTS, GRAFFITI WRITERS, MUSICIANS FROM FUNK AND REGGAE SCENES, AND OTHER REPRESENTATIVES OF AFRO-BRAZILIAN STREET CULTURE. DELEY LAUNCHED BLACK CHAIN, A PROJECT FOCUSED ON AMPLIFYING BLACK VOICES AND NARRATIVES WITHIN THE BLOCKCHAIN SPACE.

THE SHOP HOSTS TALKS ON DIGITAL AUTHORSHIP, ALGORITHMIC BIAS, AND ARTISTIC MONETIZATION THROUGH NFTS AND DAOS. THESE AREN'T JUST TECHNICAL EXCHANGES — THEY'RE PHILOSOPHICAL DIALOGUES ABOUT OWNERSHIP, DIGNITY, AND JUSTICE IN THE DIGITAL AGE.



SKATEBOARDING AS EPISTEMOLOGY

FOR DELEY, SKATEBOARDING IS NOT MERELY PHYSICAL — IT'S EPISTEMOLOGICAL. EACH TRICK HOLDS CULTURAL WEIGHT. FILMED SKATE LINES CAN BECOME NFTS. YOUNG SKATERS, FORMERLY INVISIBLE TO SPONSORS AND MAINSTREAM MEDIA, ARE NOW EMPOWERED TO MONETIZE AND OWN THEIR ARTISTIC OUTPUT.

BLESS OFFERS KNOWLEDGE INFRASTRUCTURE: WORKSHOPS, MENTORSHIP, AND FINANCIAL LITERACY THROUGH THE LENS OF URBAN CREATIVITY. AUTONOMY BECOMES PRACTICE — AND PRACTICE BECOMES LIBERATION.



EXPANDING THE PHILOSOPHY: TEACHING WEB3 ACROSS BRAZIL

DELEY'S NEXT GOAL IS AMBITIOUS AND NECESSARY: TO TEACH WEB3 FUNDAMENTALS TO SMALL SKATE SHOP OWNERS IN REMOTE CITIES ACROSS BRAZIL. THE VISION IS A NATIONAL NETWORK OF DECENTRALIZED CULTURAL HUBS — ROOTED IN STREET CULTURE, POWERED BY BLOCKCHAIN.

"I WANT TO TEACH WEB3 TO SMALL SKATE SHOP OWNERS IN REMOTE REGIONS SO BRAZILIAN STREET CULTURE CAN BE SEEN BY A GLOBAL AUDIENCE," HE SAYS.

THIS INITIATIVE AIMS TO REDISTRIBUTE ACCESS, TRANSFORM INVISIBLE COMMUNITIES INTO GLOBAL PARTICIPANTS, AND REDEFINE WHO GETS TO BUILD THE FUTURE.





CLOSING REFLECTIONS: CODES, CONCRETE, AND CONSCIOUSNESS

DELEY'S STORY REPRESENTS A PHILOSOPHICAL RECONFIGURATION OF POWER: FROM CENTRALIZED SYSTEMS TO COMMUNAL SOVEREIGNTY. FROM EXTRACTIVE MODELS TO REGENERATIVE ONES. HIS SKATESHOP IS A DECENTRALIZED EXPERIMENT — WHERE A BARBER CHAIR SITS NEXT TO CRYPTO EDUCATION SESSIONS, AND WHERE A GRAFFITI WALL BECOMES A DIGITAL CANVAS.





PRAÇA DA SOPA DE LETRAS IS NO LONGER JUST A PUBLIC SQUARE. IT'S A PHILOSOPHICAL MONUMENT — TO RESISTANCE, AUTONOMY, AND THE INFINITE POTENTIAL OF CULTURE WHEN CONNECTED TO THE TOOLS OF WEB3.
THIS ISN'T JUST INFRASTRUCTURE. IT'S INSURGENCY.





KATIA SUZUÊ

OXJETSKI

NFTS: STILL EARLY, STILL MISUNDERSTOOD

AS JULY 2025 WRAPS UP, WE'RE SEEING EARLY SIGNALS OF A CAUTIOUS NFT RECOVERY.

CRYPTOPUNKS AND PUDGY PENGUINS CONTINUE TO ANCHOR ATTENTION. AS OF AUGUST 1ST, EVEN OTHERDEED IS SHOWING SIGNS OF VOLUME PICKING BACK UP.

BUT ZOOMING OUT, MOST NFTS ARE STILL TIED TO DIGITAL ART MINTED ACROSS VARIOUS CHAINS.

AND THAT'S THE GAP.

NFTS HAVE NOT KEPT PACE WITH THE BROADER CRYPTO RECOVERY. ETH AND BTC ARE REGAINING STRENGTH. DEFI PROTOCOLS ARE SURGING. AI INTEGRATIONS ACROSS WEB3 ARE DOMINATING HEADLINES.

NFTS ARE TRAILING. FLOOR PRICES REMAIN STAGNANT. MANY PROJECTS HAVE EITHER BEEN ABANDONED OR PIVOTED WITH NO CLEAR DIRECTION.

THAT ALSO TELLS US SOMETHING IMPORTANT. WE ARE STILL EARLY.

BEYOND ART: REAL USE CASES ARE TAKING SHAPE

THE MOST NOTABLE REAL-WORLD NFT APPLICATION SO FAR IS TOKENIZED REAL ESTATE. IT IS EVOLVING FASTER THAN MOST REALIZE.
PLATFORMS LIKE PROPY AND NEWER ENTRANTS NOW ENABLE ON-CHAIN PROPERTY OWNERSHIP AND FRACTIONAL REAL ESTATE INVESTMENT. REAL HOMES ARE BECOMING TRADEABLE ASSETS WITH BUILT-IN LIQUIDITY AND COMPLIANCE.

- IN AUSTRALIA, PROJECT ACACIA, LED BY ASIC AND THE RBA'S DIGITAL FINANCE COOPERATIVE, HAS APPROVED 24 LIVE TRIALS INVOLVING TOKENIZED REAL ASSETS, INCLUDING PROPERTY AND STABLECOINS. THESE ARE INSTITUTIONAL-GRADE EFFORTS FOCUSED ON LONG-TERM OUTCOMES.
- IN NEW ZEALAND, THE FINANCIAL MARKETS AUTHORITY LAUNCHED A REGULATORY SANDBOX PRIORITIZING REAL ESTATE TOKENIZATION. BLOCKCHAINNZ HAS CONFIRMED SEVERAL ACTIVE BUT CONFIDENTIAL PILOTS CURRENTLY UNDERWAY.
- IN THE UAE, DUBAI'S DAMAC GROUP SIGNED A ONE BILLION DOLLAR PARTNERSHIP WITH BLOCKCHAIN PLATFORM MANTRA TO TOKENIZE LUXURY REAL ESTATE. OWNERSHIP AND TRADE ARE MOVING FULLY ON-CHAIN.
- PLATFORMS LIKE BINARYX HAVE ALREADY PROCESSED MILLIONS OF DOLLARS IN FRACTIONAL PROPERTY DEALS. THEY OFFER DEFI-STYLE ACCESS TO REAL ESTATE WITHOUT TRADITIONAL BARRIERS.
- MEANWHILE, ANYONE.COM HAS GONE LIVE IN OVER TEN COUNTRIES. THEIR NFT-BASED MORTGAGE AND SETTLEMENT SYSTEM ALLOWS BUYERS TO ACQUIRE PROPERTY WITH LOWER UPFRONT CAPITAL. MORTGAGE PROVIDERS CAN HOLD ON-CHAIN EQUITY DIRECTLY.

THESE ARE NOT SPECULATIVE DROPS. THEY ARE FUNCTIONING BRIDGES BETWEEN REAL ESTATE, COMPLIANCE, AND DEFI. THEY ENABLE CROSS-BORDER OWNERSHIP, LIQUIDITY, AND INSTITUTIONAL ACCESS THROUGH NFT INFRASTRUCTURE.

MOST OF THE NFT MARKET IS STILL FOCUSED ON ART COLLECTIBLES, GAMING AND METAVERSE USE CASES. OUTSIDE THAT, OTHER SECTORS ARE EXPERIMENTING QUIETLY. SOME PROJECTS ENDED, LIKE THE STARBUCKS ODYSSEY PROGRAM. OTHERS FADED WITH THE HYPE.

THAT ONLY REINFORCES THE POINT. WE ARE STILL EARLY. REAL-WORLD USE CASES ARE JUST BEGINNING TO SURFACE.

NFTS HAVE THE INFRASTRUCTURE TO SOLVE REAL COORDINATION PROBLEMS. THE TECHNOLOGY IS HERE.

WHAT'S MISSING IS EXECUTION THAT HOLDS.

CLOSING REFLECTIONS: CODES, CONCRETE, AND CONSCIOUSNESS

THE LONG WEI TRANSFORMATION DROP (TBD), IS THE FINAL AND ONLY COLLECTION WE WILL EVER RELEASE.
TOGETHER WITH THE ORIGINAL DROP, IT FORMS THE CORE DNA OF WHAT IS COMING THROUGH PROJECT ELEPHANT.
THIS IS A PHASED ROLLOUT. IT IS QUIET BY DESIGN WHILE WE FOCUS ON THE FOUNDATION.
WE ARE NOT CHASING TRENDS. WE ARE NOT MINTING FOR NOISE.

MEANING, ACCOUNTABILITY BACKED BY INTENT. CREATED AND SHARED BY REAL PEOPLE AND REAL PROJECTS.

BECAUSE THE FUTURE OF NFTS IS NOT JUST ABOUT SELLING ART.

IT'S ABOUT EARNING TRUST.

VESSY MINK

INTERVIEW WITH NORWOOD FISHER FISHBONE

BASSIST | TEACHER | FOUNDER

I JUST FINISHED UP AN INTERVIEW WITH ONE OF MY ALL TIME FAVORITE PEOPLE, NORWOOD FISHER, BASSIST & FOUNDER OF THE AMERICAN ROCK GROUP, FISHBONE.

JOHN NORWOOD FISHER WAS BORN ON A NAVAL BASE IN SAN DIEGO CALIFORNIA ON SEPTEMBER 12TH 1965. HIS FATHER DWIGHT FISHER SERVED IN THE U.S. MILITARY AND AT 2 YEARS OLD HIS FAMILY DECIDED TO MOVE TO WATTS, A HISTORIC NEIGHBORHOOD IN SOUTHERN LOS ANGELES.



NORWOOD FISHER | SELF PORTRAIT

"WATTS IS FAMOUS FOR AN INFAMOUS REBELLION TO POLICE BRUTALITY...THEY CALLED IT THE "WATTS RIOTS", BUT IT WAS ACTUALLY JUST A RESPONSE TO POLICE BRUTALITY AND MURDER."

-NORWOOD FISHER

WHEN HIS PARENTS DIVORCED, NORWOOD WAS FIVE AND HIS MOTHER MOVED HIM AND HIS BROTHER TO THE WESTSIDE. IN HIS PRE-TEEN YEARS SHE VOLUNTEERED HER SONS FOR THE FORCED BUSSING PROGRAM CREATED TO DESEGREGATE MOSTLY WHITE NEIGHBORHOODS, LIKE WOODLAND HILLS, CALIFORNIA WHERE NORWOOD MET THE GUYS THAT WOULD LATER BECOME THE ORIGINAL MEMBERS OF FISHBONE.

HE & HIS BROTHER STARTED PLAYING MUSIC WHEN THEY WERE ONLY SIX AND FOUR YEARS OLD. THEIR MOTHER GAVE THEM MUSICAL INSTRUMENTS FOR CHRISTMAS AND THE REST IS HISTORY.
NORWOOD SAYS THAT HE KNEW WHAT HE WANTED TO DO EARLY IN LIFE AND THAT HE CONSIDERS HIMSELF FORTUNATE THAT IT ALL WORKED OUT.

"MY LIFE IS CHARMED, I'M PRIVILEGED. THE MAJORITY OF MY LIFE IS SIMPLY ME BEING AN ARTIST, ME PLAYING MUSIC."

-NORWOOD FISHER

ON CHRISTMAS DAY 1973, NORWOOD FISHER GOT HIS FIRST BASS GUITAR BY WAY OF A TRADE MADE WITH HIS COUSIN, BUD WHO ALSO THREW IN A BASS AMP, SPEAKER AND HIS RECORD COLLECTION. NORWOOD HAPPILY TURNED OVER HIS SHINY NEW CHRISTMAS PRESENT FROM HIS MOTHER (WHICH AT 8 YEARS OF AGE HE INTENDED TO PUMP SOME SERIOUS IRON WITH) AND DURING OUR INTERVIEW FOR AN EXCLUSIVE MUSIC TRAIN CREDITS HIS COUSIN LOVINGLY.



CHICAGO SEPTEMBER 3RD 2022

"BUD HUDSPETH,, YEAH HE GAVE ME MY LIFE."

-NORWOOD FISHER

A COUPLE YEARS LATER BUD'S JAZZ COLLECTION WOULD BECOME THEIR EXPLORATION AS HE AND HIS BROTHER DOVE INTO JAZZ FUSION INITIALLY BUT THEN IT WAS "JUST JAZZ" AS NORWOOD PUT IT SO ELOQUENTLY.

I WAS NOT AT ALL SURPRISED TO LEARN OF NORWOOD FISHER'S PASSION FOR HELPING TO GIVE UNDER-SERVED CHILDREN & ADULTS OPPORTUNITIES THROUGH MUSIC CONSIDERING HIS CHARACTER AND EARLY CHILDHOOD MUSICAL BEGINNINGS. HE CURRENTLY DOES HIS MOST PASSIONATE OF WORKS LENDING HIS TIME AND GOLDEN EARS TO YOUNG CHILDREN WHO NEED MUSIC AND THE CHANCE TO CREATE IT.

I TOOK AN EXCERPT FROM THEIR WEBSITE:

"WHERE ALL CHILDREN AND ADULTS OF ALL BACKGROUNDS HAVE ACCESS TO LEARN TO PLAY A MUSICAL INSTRUMENT IN A SAFE AND POSITIVE ENVIRONMENT."

-WATT'S CONSERVATORY OF MUSIC

NORWOOD SHARED WITH ME THAT THE WATTS CONSERVATORY OF MUSIC IS IN NEED OF INSTRUMENTS. IF YOU WOULD LIKE TO HELP BRING THE JOY OF MUSIC TO CHILDREN AND ADULTS WHO HAVE NEVER HAD ACCESS TO NOR THE CHANCE TO HAVE PLAYED A MUSICAL INSTRUMENT THEN PLEASE VISIT

WWW.WATTSCONSERVATORY.ORG

THE MISSION IS TO INTRODUCE 45+ INSTRUMENTS TO EACH CHILD WITHIN THE TIME SPAN OF 2 YEARS SO AS TO MEET THE GOAL OF GIFTING EACH CHILD/ADULT WITH AN INSTRUMENT OF THEIR VERY OWN CHOOSING TO BRING HOME WITH THEM WHEN THE TIME COMES. YOUR TAX DEDUCTIBLE DONATIONS ARE VERY MUCH APPRECIATED AND TRULY THERE ARE NO WORDS TO CONVEY THE ULTIMATE PURPOSE THAT OWNING YOUR OWN INSTRUMENT PROVIDES

""HONESTLY, I GOT TO LIVE THE DREAM OF THAT 6 YEAR OLD. RIGHT? FOR ME, IT WAS THE LOVE FOR MUSIC. I WAS A FAN OF MUSIC, I FELT DEEPLY, MUSIC AND SO MUSIC WAS LIKE MY CLOSEST FRIEND.
IT'S HARD WORK. IT'S WORK TO GET PAST CERTAIN POINTS AS A MUSICIAN. I'M STILL PUSHING MYSELF TO THIS DAY. I'M STILL WORKING ON EXPANSION. BUT IT IS ALL WITH LOVE.

-NORWOOD FISHER

""WHEN I WASN'T GOOD AT LOVING MYSELF, I STILL LOVED THE FUCK OUT OF MUSIC. I DID MY EXPLORATION WITH ALCOHOL, NEVER NARCOTICS BUT I LIKED TO SMOKE A LOT OF WEED AND HALLUCINOGENICS, AND I DABBLED IN SOME SHIT, BUT AT NO POINT WAS ANY OF THAT MORE IMPORTANT THAN THE MUSIC. I PLAYED WITH IT TO SEE WHAT IT WAS LIKE TO ENHANCE THE MUSIC BUT WHEN I LET IT ALL GO, I WAS SO GRATEFUL TO FIND OUT THAT MY CREATIVITY DIDN'T SUFFER. THE GET HIGH WAS NEVER MORE IMPORTANT THAN THE MUSIC SO I WAS ABLE TO SHED THAT SHIT AND REALLY COME INTO THE MOST CREATIVE PART OF MY LIFE WAS AFTER I LET THAT STUFF GO."

-NORWOOD FISHER



AT THE YOUNG AGE OF 8, NORWOOD RECEIVED THE GIFT OF AN INSTRUMENT TO CALL HIS OWN.

HE WOULD FORGE HIS FUTURE AS A LEGENDARY BASS PLAYER NOTE FOR NOTE GOING THROUGH THE PANGS OF BECOMING ONE OF THE GREATEST BASS PLAYERS THIS WORLD HAS EVER KNOWN. IT HAS NOT BEEN EASY HE SHARES WITH ME. IT HAS BEEN PAINFUL BUT WORTH THE FIGHT. HIS VISION IS ENCAPSULATED WITH THE GREATEST OF SPARKS THAT RING TRUE FOR ALL PURPOSE FILLED ARTISTS ON THE PLANET. THEY ALL HAVE SOMETHING IN COMMON WITH AN UNENDING LOVE AND COMPASSION TO SHARE IN THE MOST IMPORTANT MISSION OF ALL... AND THAT IS TO MAKE THE WORLD A BETTER PLACE FOR EVERYONE. NORWOOD ACTUALLY TEACHES THE BASS GUITAR ONE ON ONE VIRTUALLY! FOR MORE INFO VISIT:

HTTPS://NORWOODLESSONS.COM

VESSY: WHY AREN'T YOU PLAYING WITH THE BAND YOU FOUNDED OVER FOUR DECADES AGO?

NORWOOD: FISHBONE WAS AN INCREDIBLE BROTHERHOOD AND HONESTLY THERE WAS A LOT OF LOVE. IN HINDSIGHT WE ALL GREW APART, WE ALL HAD DIFFERENT INTERESTS.

VESSY: WHERE DID YOU HAVE YOUR FIRST SHOW?

NORWOOD: IT WAS AT A CLUB CALLED MADAME WONG'S CHINA TOWN, AND ESTHER WONG, SHE WAS A LEGEND.



NORWOOD & VESSY SEPTEMBER 2022 CHICAGO

VESSY: WHERE DID FISHBONE MEET?

NORWOOD: I GOT TO GEORGE ELLORY HALE MIDDLE SCHOOL, IN WOODLAND HILLS, (GEORGE WAS AN ASTRONOMER.) IN THE FIRST WEEK I MET TITUS AND THEN I MET KENDALL & CHRIS.
THERE'S THIS TRAUMA BONDING THING THAT WE ALL DID, YOU KNOW FOR US IT WAS...IT MIGHT JUST BE KIDS IN THE HOOD (CAUSE WE ALL GOT OUR ASSES BEAT) AND WE'D TALK ABOUT THE SEVERITY OF OUR PARENTS...

NORWOOD AND HIS BROTHER STARTED THEIR FIRST BAND IN THE 8TH GRADE WITH TITUS KENDALL & CHRIS WHO SHARED WITH THEM THE SIMILAR STORIES OF FAMILIAL HARDSHIPS. ONE DAY A BOY RIDING HIS BICYCLE NAMED WALT STOPPED TO INQUIRE ABOUT NORWOOD'S BAND AND ASKED TO BE IN IT TOO.

NORWOOD: THE NEXT YEAR, IN NINTH GRADE, ANGELO CAME TO SCHOOL. ME AND ANGELO HAD A TYPING CLASS TOGETHER AND HE KINDA WEIRDED ME OUT.


VESSY: WHY DID HE WEIRD YOU OUT?!
NORWOOD: CAUSE HE WOULD WRITE NOTES TO ME IN TYPING CLASS... IN BOOTSY SPEAK.
VESSY: WHAT'S BOOTSY SPEAK?!
NORWOOD: HE'D BE LIKE...(YOU GOTTA PUT ON YOUR BOOTSY VOICE) BUT IT WAS TYPED ON A LETTER, RIGHT?
LIKE, HEY BABY BABA LET'S JAM! YOU KNOW LIKE ALL THE BOOTSY-ISMS.
VESSY: YOU'RE TALKING ABOUT BOOTSY COLLINS!
NORWOOD: YEAH! BOOTSY COLLINS AND SO WE BOTH LOVE BOOTSY, BUT IT KINDA WEIRDED ME OUT LIKE WHY DIDN'T HE JUST COME UP TO ME AND SAY LET'S JAM...
THEN CAME THE DAY WHERE HE ACTUALLY ASKED ME, HE WAS PESTERING ME, HE ASKED ME TO BE IN THE BAND. SO I SMASHED HIM IN THE FACE WITH A PERSIMMON.I MUSHED HIM IN THE FACE WITH A PERSIMMON BECAUSE HE WAS GETTING ON MY NERVES. I IMMEDIATELY FELT REALLY BAD AND FINALLY AGREED THAT HE COULD BE IN THE BAND.

EXPLODING ONTO THE LOS ANGELES ROCK SCENE IN 1979, FISHBONE WAS FORGED BY A CREW OF HIGH SCHOOL REBELS INCLUDING ANGELO MOORE ON VOCALS AND SAX, NORWOOD FISHER ON BASS, AND A ROTATING CAST OF FUNK-PUNK WARRIORS LIKE KENDALL JONES ON GUITAR AND WALTER KIBBY ON TRUMPET. THIS ECLECTIC POWERHOUSE FUSED SKA'S SKANKING RHYTHMS WITH PUNK'S RAW FURY, METAL'S HEAVY RIFFS, FUNK'S GROOVY BASELINES, REGGAE'S CHILL VIBES AND SOUL'S HEARTFELT GROOVES CREATING A SONIC WHIRLWIND THAT DEFIED GENRES AND CAPTIVATED CULT FOLLOWERS.

THEIR EARLY ANTHEMS LIKE "PARTY AT GROUND ZERO" IN 1985 BLASTED SOCIAL COMMENTARY WITH HUMOR AND ENERGY SETTING THE STAGE FOR BLISTERING LIVE SHOWS THAT TURNED VENUES INTO MOSH-PIT MADHOUSES.

FISHBONE WERE SIGNED TO COLUMBIA RECORDS IN 1983 SOON AFTER BEING SEEN AT A GIG IN LOS ANGELES BY BRIAN O'NEAL OF THE BUSBOYS. IN 1986 THEY RELEASED THEIR FIRST FULL LENGTH ALBUM *IN YOUR FACE*

FOLLOW THE INCOMPARABLE NORWOOD FISHER ON X & IG @WOODYWOODSTRAW AND KEEP YOUR EYES AND EARS PEELED FOR AN UPCOMING NFT COLLECTION FROM THE NORWOOD ARCHIVE OF DEMOS!

I AM GETTING THE FULL STORY HERE DURING OUR FACE TO FACE INTERVIEW THAT WILL AIR EXCLUSIVELY ON MUSIC TRAIN SEASON 8. MUSIC TRAIN IS A WEEKLY STREAMING PODCAST SHOW CO-FOUNDED BY BK HAN & VESSY MINK.

FOLLOW VESSY ON X & YOUTUBE TO STAY IN TOUCH!
@VESSYMINK

VESSY MINK

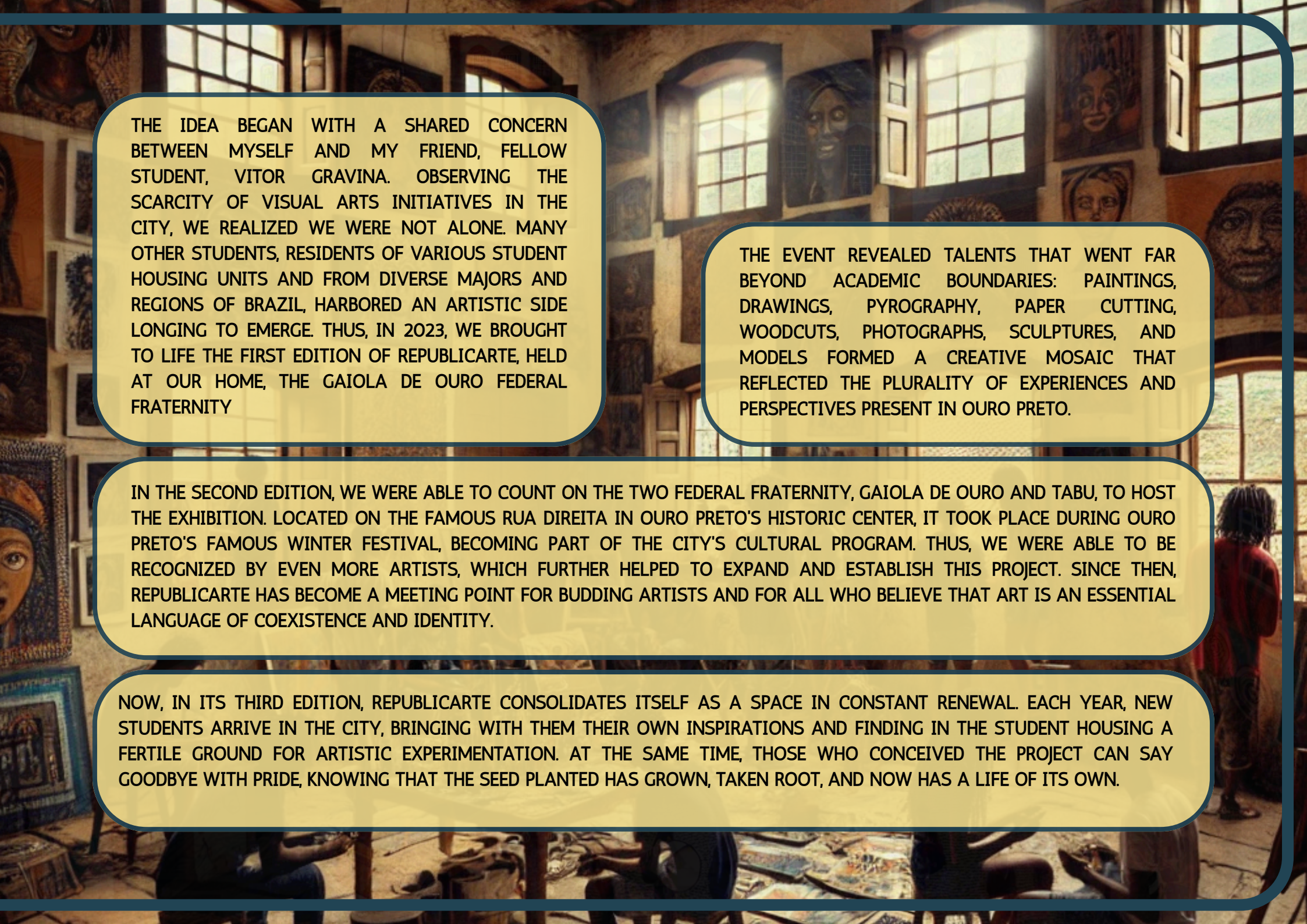
ZILLAELL

REPUBLICARTE:

WHEN STUDENT HOUSING BECOMES LIVING STUDIOS

OURO PRETO HAS BEEN A UNIQUE CULTURAL CRADLE SINCE THE COLONIAL PERIOD. AMIDST HILLSIDES, BAROQUE CHURCHES, AND A HERITAGE STEEPED IN HISTORY AND ART, THE CITY ALSO WELCOMES THOUSANDS OF STUDENTS FROM ALL OVER BRAZIL, DRAWN BY THE TRADITION OF THE FEDERAL UNIVERSITY OF OURO PRETO (UFOP). THIS INTENSE COEXISTENCE, MARKED BY THE COMMUNITY LIFE OF STUDENT HOUSING, CREATES A FERTILE SPACE WHERE LOCAL CULTURE BLENDS WITH THE INDIVIDUAL EXPERIENCES OF YOUNG PEOPLE, RESULTING IN NEW FORMS OF EXPRESSION.

IN THIS VIBRANT ENVIRONMENT, A PARADOX ARISES: UFOP, DESPITE BEING LOCATED IN THIS IMMENSE CULTURAL CRADLE AND ONE OF THE MOST IMPORTANT UNIVERSITIES IN THE COUNTRY, DOES NOT OFFER PROGRAMS FOCUSED ON THE VISUAL ARTS. IT WAS PRECISELY IN RESPONSE TO THIS GAP THAT REPUBLICARTE WAS BORN—AN ART EXHIBITION EVENT CONCEIVED BY STUDENTS WHO FELT THE NEED TO CREATE THEIR OWN SPACE FOR AESTHETIC EXPRESSION.



THE IDEA BEGAN WITH A SHARED CONCERN BETWEEN MYSELF AND MY FRIEND, FELLOW STUDENT, VITOR GRAVINA. OBSERVING THE SCARCITY OF VISUAL ARTS INITIATIVES IN THE CITY, WE REALIZED WE WERE NOT ALONE. MANY OTHER STUDENTS, RESIDENTS OF VARIOUS STUDENT HOUSING UNITS AND FROM DIVERSE MAJORS AND REGIONS OF BRAZIL, HARBORED AN ARTISTIC SIDE LONGING TO EMERGE. THUS, IN 2023, WE BROUGHT TO LIFE THE FIRST EDITION OF REPUBLICARTE, HELD AT OUR HOME, THE GAIOLA DE OURO FEDERAL FRATERNITY

THE EVENT REVEALED TALENTS THAT WENT FAR BEYOND ACADEMIC BOUNDARIES: PAINTINGS, DRAWINGS, PYROGRAPHY, PAPER CUTTING, WOODCUTS, PHOTOGRAPHS, SCULPTURES, AND MODELS FORMED A CREATIVE MOSAIC THAT REFLECTED THE PLURALITY OF EXPERIENCES AND PERSPECTIVES PRESENT IN OURO PRETO.

IN THE SECOND EDITION, WE WERE ABLE TO COUNT ON THE TWO FEDERAL FRATERNITY, GAIOLA DE OURO AND TABU, TO HOST THE EXHIBITION. LOCATED ON THE FAMOUS RUA DIREITA IN OURO PRETO'S HISTORIC CENTER, IT TOOK PLACE DURING OURO PRETO'S FAMOUS WINTER FESTIVAL, BECOMING PART OF THE CITY'S CULTURAL PROGRAM. THUS, WE WERE ABLE TO BE RECOGNIZED BY EVEN MORE ARTISTS, WHICH FURTHER HELPED TO EXPAND AND ESTABLISH THIS PROJECT. SINCE THEN, REPUBLICARTE HAS BECOME A MEETING POINT FOR BUDDING ARTISTS AND FOR ALL WHO BELIEVE THAT ART IS AN ESSENTIAL LANGUAGE OF COEXISTENCE AND IDENTITY.

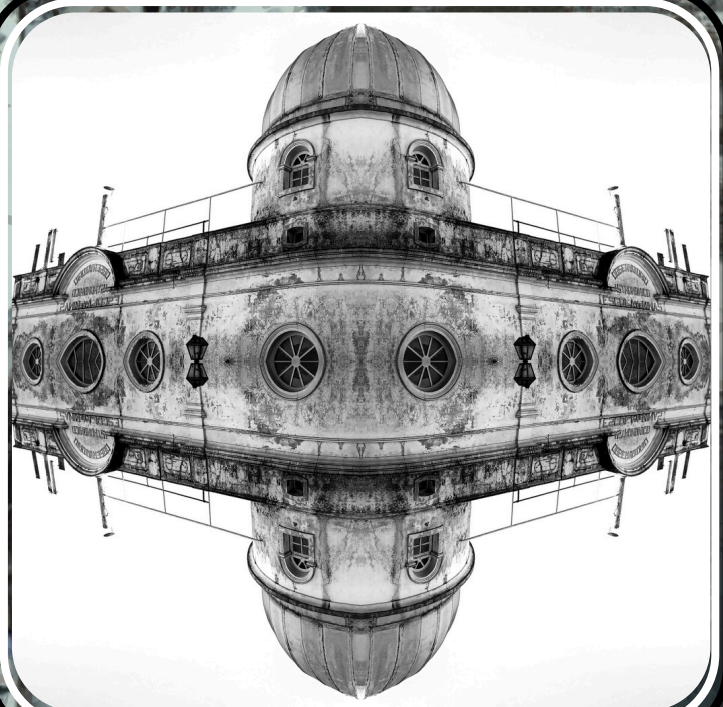
NOW, IN ITS THIRD EDITION, REPUBLICARTE CONSOLIDATES ITSELF AS A SPACE IN CONSTANT RENEWAL. EACH YEAR, NEW STUDENTS ARRIVE IN THE CITY, BRINGING WITH THEM THEIR OWN INSPIRATIONS AND FINDING IN THE STUDENT HOUSING A FERTILE GROUND FOR ARTISTIC EXPERIMENTATION. AT THE SAME TIME, THOSE WHO CONCEIVED THE PROJECT CAN SAY GOODBYE WITH PRIDE, KNOWING THAT THE SEED PLANTED HAS GROWN, TAKEN ROOT, AND NOW HAS A LIFE OF ITS OWN.

VITOR MIRANDA- TITÍO AVÔ

MEET VITOR, OR TITIO AVÔ, AS HE'S KNOWN IN REPUBLICA GAIOLA DE OURO (GOLDEN CAGE REPUBLIC)—A PHILOSOPHY GRADUATE STUDENT AT UFOP WHO TRANSFORMED PANDEMIC LONELINESS INTO MIRRORED ART. HE BECAME INTERESTED IN PHOTOGRAPHY IN MID-2016. IN OURO PRETO, HE FOUND HIS GREATEST MUSEUM IN THE EMPTY STREETS OF QUARANTINE, REINVENTING THE BAROQUE THROUGH DIGITAL REFLECTIONS THAT MULTIPLY THE CITY FROM INFINITE, UNEXPECTED ANGLES.

A PARTICIPANT SINCE THE FIRST EDITION OF REPUBLICARTE, UNCLE-GRANDPA EVOLVES HIS PROCESS: THE IMAGES NOW BREATHE MOVEMENT, AS IF EACH REFLECTION KNEW HOW TO DANCE TO THE RHYTHM OF THE CITY'S BELLS. THESE ARE VISIONS THAT BLEND THE WEIGHT OF HISTORY WITH THE LIGHTNESS OF DIGITAL, PROVING THAT TRADITION AND INNOVATION CAN INHABIT THE SAME CANVAS.

PARTICIPATIONS: 1ST, 2ND AND 3RD EDITION.



"SUBMARINE"

@VITORMGG

CAMILA BOVARETO – ROCHELLE

MEET CAMILLA, OR ROCHELLE AS SHE'S KNOWN AT REPÚBLICA REBU. A 26-YEAR-OLD PHILOSOPHY STUDENT AT UFOP, SHE TRANSFORMS SHEETS OF PAPER INTO VISUAL NARRATIVES THROUGH THE DELICATE TECHNIQUE OF PAPERCUTTING.

A PARTICIPANT IN REPUBLICARTE SINCE ITS FIRST EDITION IN 2023, ROCHELLE EXPLORES THE SPACES BETWEEN THE LINES THROUGH PRECISE PAPER CUTOUTS—WHERE EMPTINESS BECOMES AS EXPRESSIVE AS FULLNESS. HER CURRENT WORK IS A CELEBRATION OF EVERYDAY AFFECTIONS: THE INVISIBLE BONDS, THE UNSPOKEN DESIRES, AND THE SMALL PASSIONS THAT MOVE US.

"IN LIFE, I PAINT AND EMBROIDER, AND IN ART, IT'S NO DIFFERENT. I LIKE TO EXPLORE MATERIALS AND TECHNIQUES TO FEEL WHAT I MOST DESIRE."

PARTICIPATIONS: 1ST, 2ND AND 3RD EDITION.



@_CAMIS.JPG

ZILLAELL - TIMÃO

MEET ZILLAELL, OR TIMÃO, AS I'M KNOWN AT GAIOLA DE OURO FRATERNITY. A NATIVE ARTIST FROM BELO HORIZONTE, I'VE BEEN DRAWING SINCE I WAS 5. BUT IT WAS THROUGH MY EXPOSURE TO COMICS, ESPECIALLY JAPANESE MANGA, DURING MY ADOLESCENCE THAT I BEGAN TO SEE THE POSSIBILITIES HIDDEN WITHIN THE PAGES. THE FLUIDITY OF MOVEMENT AND UNIQUE NARRATIVE FORMATS, COMBINED WITH THE PSYCHEDELIC, TRANSFORM TO COMPOSE THE DIVERSE LAYERS OF THE CHARACTERS I CAST IN MY WORKS. BUT MOST IMPORTANTLY, THEY END UP BECOMING AGENTS THAT TRANSGRESS THE PHYSICAL STRUCTURES AND THE CHARACTERS THEMSELVES. INITIALLY, THEY ARE INTERPRETED CRUDELY, BUT ARE THEN INFUSED WITH COMPLEXITY BY THE PSYCHEDELIC AGENT, WHICH INSISTS ON OVERFLOWING THE FEELINGS AND THOUGHTS THE CHARACTERS YEARN TO CONCEAL.

CONCLUDING MY BACHELOR'S DEGREE IN PHYSICS FROM UFOP AND PARTICIPATING SINCE THE FIRST EDITION OF REPUBLICARTE, I SAY GOODBYE WITH AN ENORMOUS SENSE OF PRIDE IN HAVING BEEN PART OF SUCH A UNIQUE AND IMPORTANT CULTURAL MONUMENT. AND I'M CERTAIN I'LL BE ABLE TO VISIT IT IN THE FUTURE AND SAY I HAVE EVEN MORE.

PARTICIPATIONS: 1ST, 2ND AND 3RD EDITION.



"BEHELIT OF DESIRE"

@ZILLAELL / @KUROMAKIKE

MARÍLIA SOTO- VERNIZ

MEET MARILIA SOTO MARCICANO, A MULTI-ARTIST BORN IN IBIUNA, SÃO PAULO. SHE GRADUATED IN MUSIC FROM UFOP AND LIVED IN THE MENINAS GERAIS STUDENT HOUSING COMPLEX, WHERE SHE WAS NICKNAMED VERNIZ. MARÍLIA HAS BEEN EXPLORING ART SINCE SHE WAS 11, IMMERSING HERSELF IN VARIOUS VISUAL ARTS TECHNIQUES. HER SPECIALIZATION IN WATERCOLOR REVEALS HER ABILITY TO CAPTURE THE MAGIC OF PORTRAITS AND EXPLORE HUMAN INDIVIDUALITY, IMMERSED IN THE MYSTICAL SPECTRUM OF HER IDEALS. MARILIA ALSO EXCELS IN DIGITAL ILLUSTRATION, WHERE SHE COMBINES NATURAL PSYCHEDELIA WITH TECHNOLOGICAL PROCESSES, CREATING WORKS THAT TRANSCEND CONVENTION.

"I DRAW MYSELF SO THAT I CAN EXIST. I CREATE MYSELF SO THAT I RECOGNIZE MYSELF IN THE MIRROR. I DIVIDE MYSELF SO THAT THE 'EUCOSYSTEM' REMAINS ONE. ME. AND SO MANY."

PARTICIPATIONS: 1ST AND 2ND EDITION.



@_CAMIS.JPG

CAMILA BOAVENTURA – VOZATIVA

AN ARTIST FROM SÃO PAULO, BUT WITH A HEART THAT CHERISHES MEMORIES OF THE MANY PLACES SHE'S LIVED. MILA LIVES IN THE MENINAS GERAIS SCHOOL, NICKNAMED VOZATIVA THERE. A MEMORY ENTHUSIAST, MILA SEES PHOTOGRAPHY AS THE MOST BEAUTIFUL AND GENUINE WAY TO CAPTURE MOMENTS. THIS PASSION IS CLOSELY LINKED TO HER MUSEOLOGY DEGREE AT UFOP, WHERE SHE DEDICATES HERSELF TO THE PRESERVATION AND CONSERVATION OF NOT ONLY OBJECTS, BUT ESPECIALLY THE MEMORIES THEY HOLD.
EXPLORING NEW HORIZONS IN THE FIELD OF ANALOG PHOTOGRAPHY, MILA ALSO RECENTLY COMPLETED A WOODCUT COURSE AT FAOP, UNDER THE GUIDANCE OF A PROFESSOR WHO TAUGHT HER TO VALUE MISTAKES AS AN INTEGRAL PART OF THE CREATIVE PROCESS—ALLOWING THIS THOUGHT TO PERMEATE HER WORKS DEEPLY.

"AT FAOP, I LEARNED FROM AN INCREDIBLE TEACHER THAT 'MISTAKES ARE GOOD, AND DEFECTS BECOME EFFECTS.' SINCE THEN, I'VE ALLOWED THIS THOUGHT TO PERMEATE ALL MY ART."

PARTICIPATIONS: 2ND AND 3RD EDITION.



@MILAFLUENZA

IASMIN RAMALHO – TAZMIN

IASMIN IS A YOUNG ARTIST BORN IN GUARULHOS, SÃO PAULO, AND CURRENTLY RESIDING AT THE MENINAS GERAIS REPUBLIC, WHERE SHE GOES BY THE NICKNAME TAZMIN. AFTER STUDYING PERFORMING ARTS AT UFOP, SHE DISCOVERED HER PASSION FOR PHOTOGRAPHY AT THE AGE OF 13. SINCE THEN, SHE HAS DEDICATED HERSELF TO DEVELOPING HER VISUAL LANGUAGE, EXPLORING BOTH AUDIOVISUAL AND BODY LANGUAGE ON STAGE.

AT 18, IASMIN RECEIVED HER FIRST ANALOG CAMERA, A MILESTONE THAT FURTHER PROPELLED HER CREATIVE JOURNEY. HER STUDIES ARE PRIMARILY FOCUSED ON 35MM PHOTOGRAPHY, ALTHOUGH SHE ALSO ENJOYS EXPLORING THE POSSIBILITIES OFFERED BY DIGITAL PHOTOGRAPHY. WITH A PERSONAL AND SENSITIVE APPROACH, IASMIN SEEKS TO CAPTURE MOMENTS THAT REVEAL THE ESSENCE AND BEAUTY OF THE PEOPLE AND PLACES AROUND HER.

PARTICIPATIONS: 2ND AND 3RD EDITION.



MASKED BALL

LUCA GIFFONI- MARCELINHO

LUCA, OR MARCELINHO AS HE'S NICKNAMED IN HIS FRATERNITY, ARTE & MANHA, BEGAN HIS ARTISTIC JOURNEY IN 2018, AFTER YEARS DEDICATED TO POETRY. INITIALLY USING FABRIC PAINT, HE HAD TO OVERCOME SOME SETBACKS, SUCH AS LOSING SOME CLOTHES, DURING THE CREATIVE PROCESS. HE DISCOVERED A NEW POSSIBILITY IN OIL PASTELS, WHICH FURTHER EXPANDED HIS ARTISTIC HORIZONS.

DURING THE PANDEMIC, LUCA IMMERSED HIMSELF IN THE DELICATE WORLD OF WATERCOLOR, A TECHNIQUE HE CONTINUES TO EXPLORE AND PERFECT TO THIS DAY. IN 2022, DETERMINED TO EXPAND HIS CREATIVE BOUNDARIES, HE TURNED TO OIL PAINT, REINVENTING HIS COMPOSITIONS AND DISCOVERING NEW POSSIBILITIES IN THE WORLD OF VISUAL ARTS.

"CURRENTLY, I ENJOY MIXING MATERIALS."

PARTICIPATIONS: 2ND AND 3RD EDITION.



GARY

@LUCAPRAPRESENTE

MATEUS OLIMPIO – KUIKA

IN MATEUS OLIMPIO'S VIEW, PHOTOGRAPHY TRANSCENDS THE MERE RECORDING OF MOMENTS; IT REVEALS ITSELF AS A POWERFUL LANGUAGE, A GENUINE FORM OF ARTISTIC EXPRESSION.

THROUGHOUT HIS CAREER, HE HAS EXPLORED DIVERSE AVENUES, FROM THE SPONTANEITY OF STREET PHOTOGRAPHY TO THE INTIMACY OF STUDIO PORTRAITS.

A RESIDENT OF REPUBLICA TABU, WHERE HE IS NICKNAMED KUIKA, HE HAS HONED HIS ABILITY TO TELL STORIES THROUGH IMAGES AT EVERY STAGE, CAPTURING NOT ONLY WHAT IS VISIBLE, BUT ALSO WHAT IS FELT.

"IN THE REPUBLICARTE EDITIONS, I WORKED WITH VISUAL NARRATIVES, USING PHOTOGRAPHIC LANGUAGE AS A RESOURCE FOR STORYTELLING."

PARTICIPATIONS: 2ND AND 3RD EDITION.



@MATEUSOLIMPIOFC

BEATRIZ COIMBRA – TALENTU

BEATRIZ COIMBRA, 26, A PHILOSOPHY GRADUATE FROM UFOP, PARTICIPATED IN THE FIRST EDITION OF REPUBLICARTE IN 2023.
ACCORDING TO HER, IT ALL BEGAN UNEXPECTEDLY: AN INVITATION FROM HER FRIEND "UNCLE GRANDPA" QUICKLY TURNED INTO ORGANIZING AND ORGANIZING THE EVENT. THE EXPERIENCE, THOUGH MARKED BY IMPROVISATION AND THE TYPICAL ATMOSPHERE OF OURO PRETO'S REPUBLICS, WAS CONSIDERED INCREDIBLE, FILLED WITH WARMTH AND CONVERSATION.

DURING REPUBLICARTE, BEATRIZ MET NOTABLE ARTISTS, RECONNECTED WITH DRAWING—HER OLD ESCAPE FROM ROUTINE—AND FILLED THE EVENT WITH DOODLES AND CREATIONS. SHE CONNECTED WITH PEOPLE FROM DIFFERENT PLACES AND WON ADMIRERS WITH HER ART.
THE NICKNAME "TALENTU," INHERITED FROM THE MEL FAVINHO DE MEL REPUBLIC, TOOK ON NEW MEANING AT THAT MOMENT. SHE HOPES FOR MANY MORE EDITIONS TO COME, AS CREATIVITY AND TALENT ARE NEVER LACKING IN OURO PRETO'S REPUBLICS.

PARTICIPATIONS: 1ST EDITION.



@BEA_COIMBRA

GABRIELA ZUQUI - NINTENDO

GABRIELA HAS BEEN IMMERSED IN ART SINCE CHILDHOOD, WITH HOURS OF PLAY AND EXPERIMENTATION. AFTER A PERIOD OF STAGNATION, HER PASSION WAS REKINDLED DURING HER UNDERGRADUATE DEGREE IN ARCHITECTURE AND URBAN PLANNING AT UFOP, NOW EXPLORING DIGITAL DRAWING AS A FORM OF EXPRESSION. SHE LIVED IN THE VOLÚPIA REPUBLIC, WHERE SHE WAS NICKNAMED NINTENDO.

BESIDES DIGITAL DRAWING, GABRIELA HAS VENTURED INTO SEVERAL OTHER ARTISTIC FORMS, INCLUDING WATERCOLOR, MACRAMÉ, PHOTOGRAPHY, AND DOODLES. "EXPLORING DIFFERENT MEDIA AND TECHNIQUES BRINGS ME IMMENSE FUN AND SATISFACTION," SHE REVEALS.

PARTICIPATIONS: 2ND EDITION.



@GABRIELAZUQUI_

HELENA KATZ - SAMARITANA

A MULTIFACETED ARTIST WHO, ALTHOUGH SHE CHOSE THEATER AS HER PROFESSION, HAS NURTURED A DEEP CONNECTION WITH THE VISUAL ARTS SINCE CHILDHOOD. HELENA IS A PERFORMING ARTS STUDENT AT UFOP AND LIVES IN REPÚBLICA REBU, WHERE SHE IS NICKNAMED SAMARITANA. SHE EXPLORES A VARIETY OF MATERIALS AND TECHNIQUES, IMMERSING HERSELF IN VIBRANT COLORS AND FIGURES THAT FIND LIFE THROUGH HER HANDS. FOR HER, ART IS MORE THAN A FORM OF EXPRESSION; IT'S A MEANS OF COMMUNICATING THE INEXPRESSIBLE.

"I'M CURRENTLY EXPLORING ACRYLIC PAINT EXTENSIVELY IN MORE IMAGINARY FIGURES OR PSYCHEDELIC FORMS. I ALSO ENJOY DEPICTING THE FEMALE BODY AND FACES, ALWAYS IN A NON-REALISTIC WAY."

PARTICIPATIONS: 2ND EDITION.



LAYERS OF MEMORIES HIDDEN BENEATH THE HAIR.

@QUEPENA.HELENA

MELISSA PORTO - MEL

MELISSA PORTO SANTOS D'ARIENZO, A NATIVE OF SÃO PAULO, FOUND IN MINAS GERAIS NOT ONLY A HOME DURING HER UNDERGRADUATE STUDIES IN HISTORY, BUT ALSO A SOURCE OF INSPIRATION FOR HER ARTISTIC EXPRESSION. INFLUENCED SINCE CHILDHOOD BY HER PARENTS, WHO ALWAYS ENCOURAGED HER ARTISTIC SIDE, MELISSA FOUND HERSELF DRAWN TO GRAFFITI DRAWING AS A WAY TO PORTRAY THE LANDSCAPES AND EVERYDAY LIFE AROUND HER.

MEL LIVED IN THE MUVUCA REPUBLIC, WHERE OURO PRETO'S RICH HISTORY AND CULTURE NOT ONLY WELCOMED HER BUT ALSO ENVELOPED HER IN AN ENVIRONMENT CONDUCIVE TO THE DEVELOPMENT OF HER ART. ON THE COBBLESTONE STREETS AND COLONIAL MANSIONS, MELISSA FOUND MOTIFS FOR HER WORKS, WHICH NOT ONLY CAPTURED AESTHETIC BEAUTY BUT ALSO CARRIED WITH THEM A DEEP SENSE OF BELONGING AND CONNECTION TO THE PLACE.

PARTICIPATIONS: 2ND EDITION.



DUNES

@MELLSPORTO

MATHEUS RIZZO – CHICÓ

MEET MATHEUS RIZZO, ALSO KNOWN AS CHICO IN REPUBLICA $AUDADE DA MAMÃE (MAMA'S REPUBLIC), A NATIVE OF TAUBATE. AT 20, HE'S STUDYING ARCHITECTURE AND URBAN PLANNING AT UFOP (FEDERAL UNIVERSITY OF SÃO PAULO). HE'S KNOWN FOR WORKING WITH A VARIETY OF MATERIALS IN HIS CREATIONS, WHICH INCLUDE MODELS, GRAPHIC COLLAGES, AND ILLUSTRATIONS, BLENDING PHYSICAL AND DIGITAL TECHNIQUES. HE EXPLORES THE NOMADIC NATURE OF HIS WORKS THROUGH A FLEA CIRCUS.

PARTICIPATIONS: 3RD EDITION.



@LUCAPRAPRESENTE

JOÃO GUILHERME – FROID$PLICA

IMEET JOÃO GUILHERME, ALSO KNOWN AS FROID$PLICA IN THE REPUBLIC OF MOMMY. AGED 22, HE'S A PHYSICS STUDENT AT UFOP AND AN AMATEUR ARTIST, TRANSFORMING HIS LOVE OF COMICS INTO ARTISTIC EXPRESSION.

FROID$PLICA EXPLORES THE LANGUAGE OF COMICS THROUGH COLOR AND SHAPE, CAPTURING THE BEAUTY OF EVERYDAY LIFE. HE ALSO EXPERIMENTS WITH UNIQUE TECHNIQUES USING MATERIALS SUCH AS COFFEE, BAMBOO QUILLS, EARTH-BASED INKS, ANNATTO, AND CHARCOAL.

PARTICIPATIONS: 3RD EDITION.



@JAO_MEGID

GABRIELA ROCHA – PIU PIU MONSTRO

MEET GABRIELA, OR AS THEY PREFER TO CALL HER AT REPÚBLICA ARTE & MANHA: PIU PIU MONSTRO. TWENTY-FOUR YEARS OLD AND WITH ORIGINS AS MYSTERIOUS AS THEY ARE POETIC—COMING FROM A NOMADIC FAMILY THAT MADE THE REVERSE RURAL EXODUS THEIR PATH—SHE TRANSFORMS CHANCE INTO ART AND RESEARCH INTO SERIOUS PLAY.

HER ART IS BORN FROM IMPROVISATION: SHE PAINTS WITH ACRYLIC PAINT WITHOUT A PRIOR SKETCH, "WITH WHATEVER COMES TO MIND." SHE LEARNED TO EMBROIDER FOLLOWING TUTORIALS HER GRANDMOTHER GAVE HER ON YOUTUBE. AND IN HER COLLAGES, SHE FINDS A UNIQUE WAY TO RECOUNT THE WORLD. ALL DONE WITH THE LIGHTHEARTEDNESS OF SOMEONE WHO KNOWS THAT ART IS, ABOVE ALL, EXPERIMENTATION.

PARTICIPATIONS: 3RD EDITION.



@GABRDO

ALICE ROSCOE – CÉREBRO.

MEET ALICE ROSCOE, OR AS SHE'S KNOWN AT REPÚBLICA OVELHA NEGRA: BRAIN. A 23-YEAR-OLD FROM CAMPINAS, SHE NAVIGATES TWO SEEMINGLY DISTANT WORLDS—THE PRECISION OF COMPUTER SCIENCE AT UFOP AND THE SENSITIVITY OF VISUAL ARTS. INITIALLY TRAINED IN MUSIC PRODUCTION AT THE CENTRO UNIVERSITÁRIO BELAS ARTES IN SÃO PAULO, ALICE FOUND HER MOST SPONTANEOUS EXPRESSION IN OIL PAINTING, WHERE SHE DOESN'T NEED TO TAKE HERSELF TOO SERIOUSLY.

WITH BRUSHSTROKES THAT PLAY BETWEEN SYMMETRY AND MOVEMENT, SHE BRINGS TO REPUBLICARTE A LIGHT-HEARTED FACET OF HER MULTIFACETED TALENT. THESE CANVASES SPEAK OF BALANCE—PERHAPS THE SAME BALANCE SHE SEEKS BETWEEN CODES AND PAINTS, BETWEEN SÃO PAULO AND MINAS GERAIS, BETWEEN REFINED TECHNIQUE AND THE SIMPLE PLEASURE OF PAINTING.

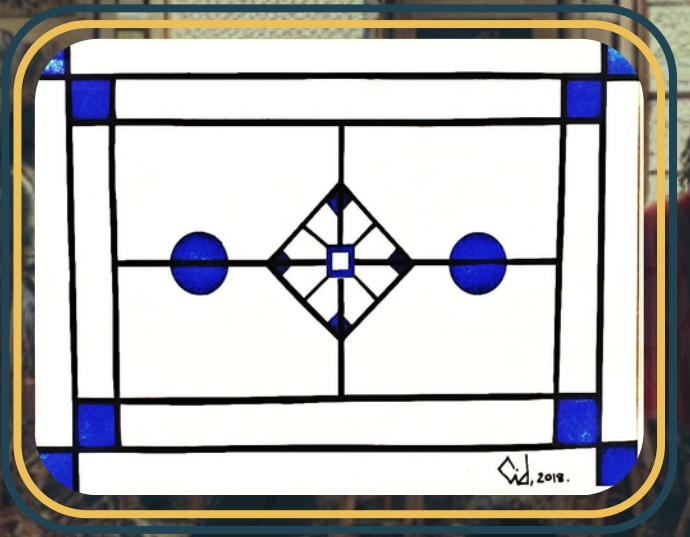
PARTICIPATIONS: 3RD EDITION.



@ALICEROSCOE.PNG

RODRIGO CID - THE PHILOSOPHER

THE PHILOSOPHER RODRIGO CID, A NATIVE OF RIO DE JANEIRO, FOUND IN OURO PRETO AND BELGIUM NOT ONLY PLACES OF ACADEMIC FORMATION BUT ALSO LANDSCAPES OF INSPIRATION THAT CONTINUE TO SHAPE BOTH HIS PHILOSOPHICAL INVESTIGATIONS AND ARTISTIC PRACTICE. WITH A DOCTORATE IN LOGIC AND METAPHYSICS FROM UFRJ AND POSTDOCTORAL RESEARCH AT UFMG, RODRIGO HAS DEDICATED HIMSELF TO QUESTIONS ABOUT THE LAWS OF NATURE AND THE METAPHYSICS OF MODALITY, WHILE AT THE SAME TIME CULTIVATING A VISUAL AND EXPERIMENTAL LANGUAGE MARKED BY GEOMETRIC AND ART DÉCO INFLUENCES, ALWAYS INFUSED WITH A SOMBER ATMOSPHERE AND AN INQUIRY INTO THE DEPTHS OF COLOR.



PING PONG

@THEPHILOSOPHER.ETH

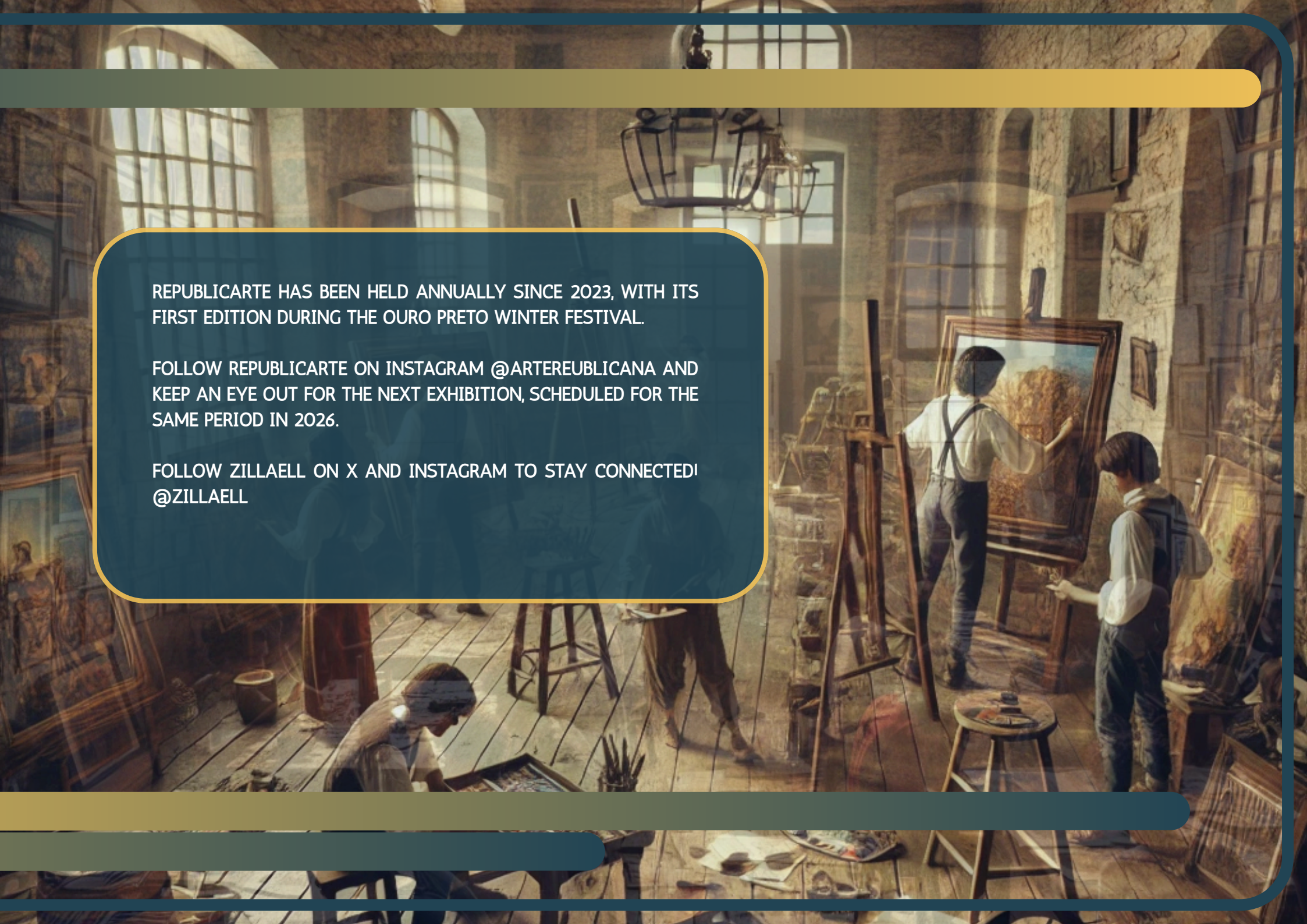


BETWEEN PHILOSOPHY AND ART, RODRIGO MOVES FLUIDLY: HE WRITES, PAINTS, CREATES COLLAGES AND ASSEMBLAGES, AND EXPLORES THE DIGITAL REALM THROUGH VIDEO AND VIRTUAL ENVIRONMENTS. HIS ACADEMIC RIGOR AS EDITOR AND COORDINATOR OF THE INVESTIGAÇÃO FILOSÓFICA SERIES AND EDITOR-IN-CHIEF OF VIRTUALIA RESONATES WITH HIS ARTISTIC PRODUCTION, WHICH SEEKS TO DISMANTLE BOUNDARIES AND RECOMPOSE MEANING ACROSS FORMS. IN THIS HYBRID SPACE, THOUGHT BECOMES IMAGE, AND IMAGE BECOMES A GESTURE OF THOUGHT.

PARTICIPATIONS: 3RD EDITION.



MORE THAN JUST AN EXHIBITION, REPUBLICARTE IS PROOF THAT ART ENDURES, FLOURISHES, AND REINVENTS ITSELF WHEN IT FINDS A WELCOMING COMMUNITY SPACE. IN OURO PRETO, A CITY MARKED BY THE BAROQUE AND NATIONAL MEMORY, STUDENTS DEMONSTRATE THAT THE CULTURAL FUTURE IS ALSO BUILT IN THE PRESENT—IN STUDENT HOUSING, IN BEDROOMS AND IMPROVISED STUDIO SPACES, AND, ABOVE ALL, IN THE COURAGE TO TRANSFORM CONCERNS INTO ARTISTIC MOVEMENT.



REPUBLICARTE HAS BEEN HELD ANNUALLY SINCE 2023, WITH ITS FIRST EDITION DURING THE OURO PRETO WINTER FESTIVAL.

FOLLOW REPUBLICARTE ON INSTAGRAM @ARTEREUBLICANA AND KEEP AN EYE OUT FOR THE NEXT EXHIBITION, SCHEDULED FOR THE SAME PERIOD IN 2026.

FOLLOW ZILLAELL ON X AND INSTAGRAM TO STAY CONNECTED! @ZILLAELL



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