HDK-VALAND – ACADEMY OF ART AND DESIGN

the CONTROLLED HALLUCINATIONS OF A FRAGMENTED GAZE

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T a b l e o f

c o n t e n t s

Introduction

I break down images, both physically as well as philosophically, into bits and pieces to explore questions surrounding visual perception; examining ways of dismantling, reconstructing, and fragmenting them; and questioning the way an image is (or can be) built up by breaking it down and building it back up again. What I am after is to dissect images and dive deep into them. Both in the process of painting but also in the way I construct my images - so much is about giving attention to every part of an image; looking and activating spaces. Often when I look at a particular part of a painting I have made, I can remember what I listened to or thought about when painting it, which is one reason why I find it interesting, when making fragmented portraits, to sometimes also choose "unnecessary" parts to paint. Parts the eye may not be drawn to naturally, but through painting them - becomes activated.

I am deconstructing images and assembling fractions that in one way correspond but in another way clash, by using multiple images, closely related to each other but with minor inconsistencies or changes in perspective, distance, etcetera, which makes them not fully fit together. I am driven by putting together parts that do not quite belong together, both physically as well as thematically; turning them into entities that create their own time and space. The images are manipulated. They are modeled on reality but undergo a process of manipulation, applying to them a sense of uncertainty about what is real and what is not. What connects and what does not. By referencing both art history and contemporary image culture I search for ways that these fragments intertwine, but also what pulls them apart.

In this essay I will be looking at fragmentation of the image and its relationship and tension with material, space, the brain, and the eye. In order to do this, I will be using theories and research regarding visual perception and fragmentation, as well as politics of gaze, looking, and seeing with a focus on the act of active viewing. A great deal of the theoretical references in this essay are art historians. This was at first not a conscious decision on my part, but I do generally have an interest in looking at the present through the past. Canadian philosopher Marshall McLuhan once wrote: "We look at the present through a rear-view mirror. We march backwards into the future".[1] To me, it is a way to clarify change by putting the present

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[1] Marshall McLuhan, The Medium is the Massage (1967), London, Penguin Books, 2008, p.75

in perspective. In my artistic work I frequently apply art historical references or things typical for a time. This method has intertwined with building this essay.

What does fragmentation and a fragmented   gaze do to our understanding of an image?

What happens with our perception

when what we see is

disrupted, fractured, and thrown into disarray?

How might this have changed in the age of a   constant exposure to rapid image-flow and a high-paced information stream compared to pre-internet?

I

I n s e a r c h
o f h a r m o n y

When painting, I frequently reflect on how my brain believes it knows how something actually looks and how wrong that assumption always is compared to what the shapes and forms look like in their physicality - the shape of a nose as it sits and exists on a person's face.[2] Therefore, I actively try to stop myself from giving in to my mind's presumptions; the idea that we *think* we know what we see when looking at a familiar object or scene and that we believe we have a clear image of the way something looks. The *craving* and *wanting so badly* to see a whole and unitary fullness because something scattered and fragmented is less harmonical. Too chaotic. Too disruptive. I believe this is at least partly because society in general stresses people out and therefore we have a desire to declutter our minds. It is as if there is a person sitting inside of our heads, constantly working their hardest to piece things together while our eyes are observing something. The truth is that though most of us might believe that we do experience the visual world in completeness and in detail, that is not really the case. According to visual science, when we look at a visual scene, we don't actually perceive much of it fully intact or in any great detail at all.[3] It seems to me, however, as though the pieces we do pick up are detailed enough for us to knit them together into something good enough to be able to fool ourselves into recognizing as a unitary scene. I imagine it is comparative to looking at a Chuck Close painting; hundreds and hundreds of abstract formations building up a manufactured wholeness.[4]

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[2] I use the word "wrong" here in lack of a better word. One thing I aim to point to in this essay is that there is not really such a thing as true or false. Or, at least that it is never that simple. But I also feel it is important for the essay to include these ideas about the mind's presumptions. Throughout the essay, therefore, similar words will be of a lighter, gray text colour to highlight the problematics (and fading definitions) of these words

[3] George Mather, The Psychology of Visual Art, Cambridge , Cambridge University Press, 2014, p.54

[4] Chuck Close, 'Stanley (Large Version)' (cropped) [oil on canvas], 1980-1981, http://chuckclose.com/work093.html (accessed 2020-10-29)

On the basis of the theory of predictive coding, the impressions that our eyes, ears, and other sensory organs perceive constitute only a small fraction of our experience of the outside world while our brains fill in the gaps.[5] Science journalist Gorm Palmgren refers to it in the science magazine *Illustrerad Vetenskap* as forms of controlled hallucinations.[6] The way I would interpret this is that it means expectations and stored knowledge create these kinds of "hallucinations". What you see is not really what you get. George Mather, a professor of vision science, explains in the book *The Psychology of Visual Art* recognition as a process of comparing the representation currently being viewed, with stored representations of the object held in our brains.[7] It appears to me that we subconsciously search for clues to bind everything we see together to a unity. As if we, without really knowing, try so hard to always be one step ahead of ourselves.

These are the very things I wanted to explore when structuring my painting *Mimicry* (2018). Having earlier worked with glitched portraits, in this piece I allowed the glitch to become more physical.[8] Each canvas that the portrait was built up by translated as a glitch. I let certain lines intertwine between the separate canvases to give the appearance of a unitary portrait (see image on page 7). The hemline of the dress runs through three of the canvases and the outline of the sleeve fits together to the left but not to the right. Furthermore I chose to do one glitch in the image that was *not* cut by a frame but instead was done *inside* of one. The reason for this was to create a further contradiction in a painting already constructed out of contradictory parts. Breaking the "rules" of this painting. Going against my own rulesets.

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[5] Gorm Palmgren, 'Ditt liv är en hallucination', Illustrerad Vetenskap #11, Copenhagen, Bonnier Publications International AS, 2020, p.60
[6] Ibid
[7] Mather, p.62
[8] A glitch is an immediate error or malfunction typically referred to within computers & various other technology.

Ideas around illusionary activation in the spectator is dealt with by art critic Brian O'Doherty in his book *Inside The White Cube*. "The greater illusion - the greater invitation to the spectator's eye", he writes.[9] But he goes further and looks closer at the edges of a picture and how they might limit the experience to within the frame on which the picture sits. He refers to the frame as
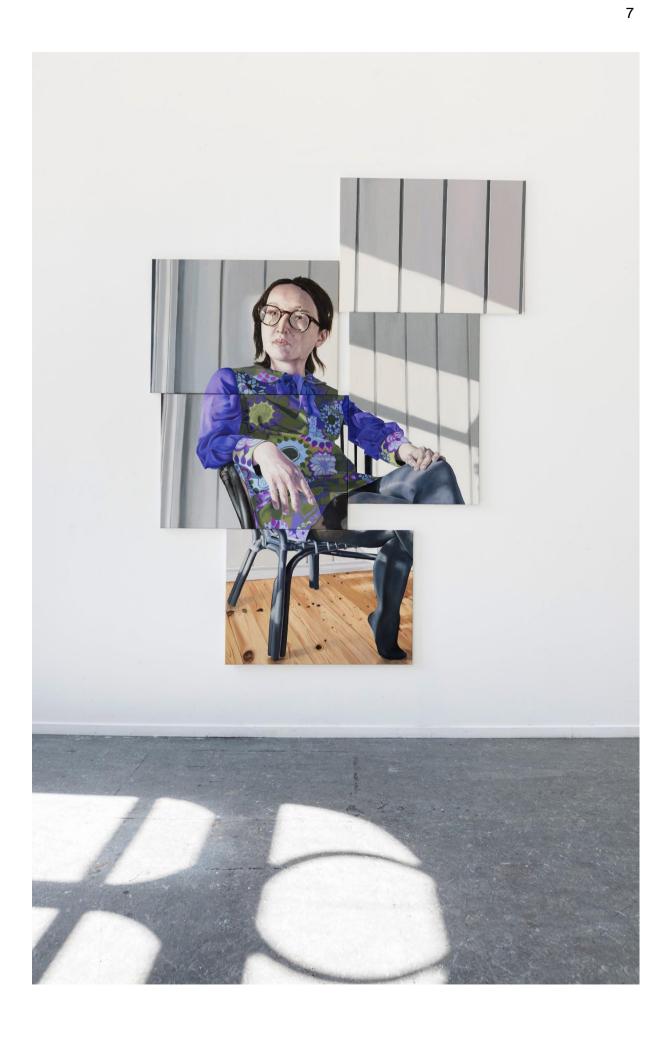
a psychological container which leaves no suggestion
t   s
h   i
a   d
t   e   of it. [10]
the space within the picture is continuous on either

I do not believe that this is necessarily true. I understand that O'Doherty probably refers to a more conventional way of constructing an image, but at least I think there are ways around it. To go back to *Mimicry* as an example of how this could possibly be dealt with, I was using fragmentation and illusion as tools to activate the spectator's will to seek the cause and their eagerness to connect the pieces available for them to stitch together. Incorporating empty space between parts of the painting allowed for also negative space to be included in the image as though parts of a puzzle were missing; parts to be imagined by a spectator. Inviting them to make the image float out of the edges. Inviting them to imagine the parts I might not depict and using the negative spaces between the frames to act like a bridge. Like what art historian René Démoris refers to as a way to draw people in; for the viewer to enter into a conversation before she grasps the idea of the canvas's subject.[11] In my mind, I look at it like the way one would observe old ruins; looking at the fragmented architecture and imagining what it once might have looked like in its completeness.

[9] Brian O'Doherty, Inside The White Cube: The Ideology of the Gallery Space, San Francisco, The Lapis Press, 1986, p.18
[10] Ibid
[11] René Démoris, 'Body & Soul' in Painting Beyond Itself: The Medium in the Post-medium Condition, Isabelle Graw & Ewa Lajer-Burcharth (eds.), Berlin, Sternberg Press, 2016, p.205

II
Y o u r
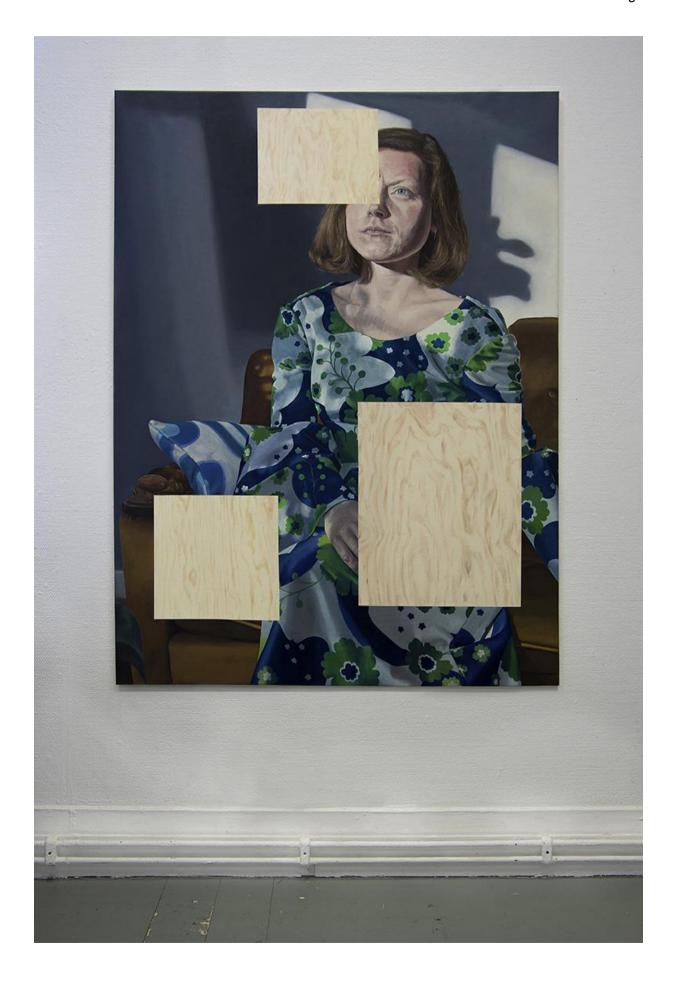## g a z e
i s o n
m y m i n d

In a painting series of mine, titled *Oil on Wood* (2020), consisting of one fairly large-scale painting and multiple smaller ones on canvas (see images of parts of this work on following two pages), I have cropped out squares from a motif and painted these squares to look like a plywood surface. The square thus functions as a form of fabricated pseudo-window to a fake background surface. In the smaller paintings in this series, the images are seemingly taken out of the larger piece, but they do not fully correspond. If one looks closely, they would notice that it is different images of the same motif but from slightly shifted perspectives. Playing with the illusion of a full portrait through a fragmented construction and using both the subject which is represented and the surface of the canvas to create forms of false truths. In the book *Visual Time*, author and art history professor Keith Moxey talks about how:

[...]the contrast between the presence of the painted surface and the illusionary space it represents lies the painting's intimacy, its power to fascinate and elude, to engage, and to defy interpretation. The unmistakable evidence that the painting is an object, that its capacity for illusion is limited by our desire to believe in it, suggests that if the painting has a time, it lies not in its nonexistent narrative so much as in its capacity to provoke response in the observer.[12]

As Moxey touches on here, I also believe that there is an intimacy to be created in the triggering of a response from a spectator. Leaving pointers, hints, and indications to be picked up and carried out. To leave traces is to invite someone to follow and allowing for a sentence to be built without spelling out each word beforehand. As a riddle that leans in and whispers:

"solve me".

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[12] Keith Moxey, Visual Time, Durham, Duke University Press, 2013, p.99

Through the displaced imagery and the way they are painted, the paintings are left to be deciphered. The public need to make connections between the visual information provided. In regards to this I think about philosopher Jacques Ranciére *The Emancipated Spectator* where condemned to the role of a reflect on how the spectator has been spectator does not need to be passive voyeur but argues that a confronted with a spectacle of something strange to be an active observer.[13] Instead he suggests the spectator, through their own mind and imagination, can be part of a collective activity and that the opposition between looking and acting need to be dismissed.[14] I would agree that the spectator never is truly passive; I think that to state that would be to completely underestimate the capacity of the human mind. However, I also believe that there are certain ways of observing that might demand more activity from the spectator to take part in. A swift gazing, I would say, leads to observations - you might be able to state what you see and you might have formed an opinion about it. A longer, more active gazing on the other hand can lead to reflections - you are then able to reflect on what it is you are seeing, what it does and why you might have formed the opinion you have. I would argue that this could be connected to bell hooks' thoughts on active silence. She is a writer, feminist and political activist and in her book *Teaching* *Critical* *Thinking*, she separates *listening* from the act of *active* listening and *active silence* in defense of the silent student in the classroom.[15] She talks about active silence as something that includes pausing to think before one speaks.[16] This seems to me like the essence of reflective thought. Though, the painting to be looked at would also need to contribute to the equation. In *Blick och Blindhet* (Gaze & blindness, my translation), author Astrid Söderbergh Widding writes about how visibility is not the same as readability.[17] Meaning that just because something can be seen and looked at does not mean it can be solved or understood. She speaks about this in terms of film theory but I would suggest it can be applied to painting theory (or image theory in general) as well. There needs to be room for reflection.

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[13] Jacques Rancière, 'The Emancipated Spectator', Artforum, Vol. 45 No. 7, New York, 2007, p.272
[14] Ibid, p.274
[15] bell hooks, Teaching Critical Thinking: Practical Wisdom, Abingdon, Routledge, 2010, p.22
[16] Ibid
[17] Astrid Söderbergh Widding, Blick och Blindhet, Stockholm, Bonnier Alba, 1997, p.20

To be able to
decipher something,

does there not first
need to be a **clue**?

In *Techniques of the Observer*, art critic Jonathan Crary argues that the necessity for the gaze to be anchored in a body changes the conditions for seeing.[18] I think this ties up well to what Margaret Olin, senior research scholar in the departments of Religious Studies, Judaic Studies and History of Art at Yale University, writes about the gaze being a double-sided term because, unlike "opticality", for a gaze to be manifested there needs to be someone to gaze and someone to gaze back.[19] I use the subjects' gazes in my work to create a distance and a form of voyeur. I do not want them to meet the viewer's gaze. Shaming the viewer, in one sense, through the refusal of the mutual gaze. Photographer Julia Peirone refers to this in relation to her images of young girls as them in one way being the victims of gaze but at the same time, they are holding the power over the gaze and the image.[20] And (of course), the piece by Barbara Kruger which depicts the head of a female bust statue with the text "Your gaze hits the side of my face" comes to mind.[21] They are the ones being observed while we are the spectators. We are ignored.

The portrait's ability to connect viewer and subject does fascinate me. Art historian Carol Armstrong writes that mediums not only are their materialities but also their histories of thought about medium and materiality.[22] Which is to say there are conventions attached to making; a material is never just a material. I am using the material's baggage to mark the elapsed time between then-and-there and here-and-now. By drawing inspiration from old painting techniques, depicting mid-century patterns, and incorporating it with screen defects and other technology-based ideas, I connect subject matter with process and material while creating a time-contradiction. This method allows me to spend time with the images, to give attention to details, and to introduce aspects of fragmented temporality to the work, which through this becomes part of the subject. I am trying to defy the convention that a portrait is merely a documentation of the past by connecting it to the present through every gaze that it encounters.

[18] Jonathan Crary, Techniques of the Observer : On Vision and Modernity in the Nineteenth Century. Cambridge, Mass.: MIT Press, 1992, p.70

[19] Margaret Olin, 'Gaze' in Critical Terms for Art History, Second Edition, Robert Nelson & Richard Shiff (eds.), Chicago, University of Chicago Press, 1996, p.319

[20] Eleonor Ekström-Frisk 'Starka flickor med makt över bilderna', interview with J. Peirone, 2017-11-02, GöteborgsPosten, https://www.gp.se/kultur/starka-flickor-med-makt-%C3%B6ver-bilderna-1.4789849 (accessed 2020-08-10)

[21] Barbara Kruger, 'Untitled (Your gaze hits the side of my face)', [photograph and type on paperboard], Washington, D.C, National Gallery of Art, 1981

[22] Carol Armstrong, 'Painting Photography Painting: Timelines & Medium Specificities' in Painting Beyond Itself: The Medium in the Post-medium Condition, Isabelle Graw & Ewa Lajer-Burcharth (eds.), Berlin, Sternberg Press, 2016, p.124

The double gaze:
>> one from outside *(the observer)*
>> and one from inside *(the observed).*

Or a triple gaze:
>> if one is to count the depictions.
>> The imagery. The canvas and the
>>> information being put there.

>>> As a gaze
>>> of its own.

Your

> gaze is

>> on my mind.

>>>>> From the start.

III

L o o k i n g
i n t h e
a g e o f t h e
i n t e r n e t

In a conversation with André Perinaud, sculptor Alberto Giacometti talked about the change of the gaze in the century of cinema; how the invention of photography overturned our perception of the world and that in the past only painting and sculpture really gave us an idea of the world around us.[23] I think that now, in the contemporary society of the Western world, with the internet as many people's main source for.. well.. basically everything, the perception of the world has overturned yet again. Or, perhaps it is now in a state of ceaseless overturning? We, in this society, live in a constant, rapid, never-ending image-flow which can at times be somewhat overwhelming and, honestly, often ridiculous. Widding so beautifully and metaphorically describes this sped-up information stream as "the fear that manifests itself in a kind of vertigo in the face of the never-ending flow of images".[24] But I wonder if our present-day obsession with depictions has changed the way we perceive images in the age of the internet? Have we gotten so used to high-speed scrolling that we don't have the capacity to spend time with one image anymore? Art historian David Joselit and curator Omar Kholeif both (in similar ways) touch on the subject of how the image culture of today has changed how we visit art spaces. Joselit talks about how people move "from painting to painting taking pictures with their cell phones - storing artworks for a future moment that may never arrive".[25] And Kholeif talks about it as an "ever-expanding database of art in the digital age, where the internet itself has become a gallery".[26] I would say that this is an indication of several things, but maybe mainly that where we used to go to see - we now go to document. The looking has been postponed.

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[23] André Parinaud, 'Écrits' (1962) cited in Astrid Söderbergh Widding, Blick och Blindhet, Stockholm, Bonnier Alba, 1997, p.5
[24] Widding (my translation), p.13
[25] David Joselit, 'Marking, Scoring, Storing & Speculating (On Time)' in Painting Beyond Itself: The Medium in the Postmedium Condition, Isabelle Graw & Ewa Lajer-Burcharth (eds.), Berlin, Sternberg Press, 2016, p.11
[26] Omar Kholeif, Goodbye World! Looking At Art In The Digital Age, Berlin, Sternberg Press, 2018, p.173

Does this influence how much effort we put into attempting to "read" images? In a letter correspondence between Friedrich Nietzsche and his close friend Heinrich Köselitz in 1882, after Nietzsche had started using a new kind of typewriter, Köselitz noted that Nietzsche's style of writing had changed; it had gained a new forcefulness.[27] Nietzsche replied that our writing equipment takes part in forming our thoughts.[28] Though our internet-based technological devices are for far more than writing, I think that Nietzsche's words are still relevant and can be linked together with contemporary technology and its impact on the mind. Similar ideas were developed some 80 years later in the late 1960's by Marshall McLuhan. "Electric circuitry, an extension of the central nervous system", he wrote in the book *The Medium is The Massage*.[29] He believed that the media, through changing the environment, alters the way we think; the way we perceive the world.[30] Firstly, I would say that the distance created when you put a screen between yourself and the artwork which you are observing, complicates the relationship and understanding you will get of the work. There might, then, easily be a remoteness manufactured in the observation through pixels which can obstruct the work's ability to get through more profoundly. It can serve as a barricade disabling a more in-depth understanding of a work's narrative of reason, weakening the ability to get a "connection" to the work through not giving it time; the time that it might require. Artist and cultural theorist Mieke Bal talks about this in terms of a meaning-producing sequentiality that emerges when a viewer walks through an exhibition and she refers to the exhibition as a syntax.[31] Works in an exhibition generally have connections to each other in one way or another and are carefully placed to produce what could be seen as a sentence structure. If the works are then not given time, it is as if words from a sentence are partly erased.

It also seems to me like our mania for constant connection through our smartphones impact the way that we think and how our brains function. According to (among others) author Nicholas Carr whose focus lies in researching and writing about how technology affects the contemporary human - the frequent interruptions that it provides are scattering our thoughts.[32] Carr is writing about the feeling he has of how the internet seems to be chipping   away at his

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[27] Friedrich A. Kittler, Gramophone, Film, Typewriter, 1999, cited in Nicholas Carr, The Shallows : What the Internet Is Doing to Our Brains, New York, W.W. Norton, 2010, p.18
[28] Ibid, p.19
[29] McLuhan, p.40
[30] Ibid, p.41
[31] Mieke Bal, 'Exhibition as a Syntax of the Face', Manifesta Journal no 7, Amsterdam, 2009, p.14
[32] Carr, p.132

capacity for concentration and contemplation and, whether he is online   or not, his mind is expecting to take in information in the same way as the internet would swiftly be distributing it.[33] Look at Instagram for example. It is built up out of a seemingly infinite array of snapshots. You can scroll till your thumb goes numb but there will always be more, more, more. On average a person lingers on each post in their feed for 10 seconds.[34] So if Carr is correct in his claims that the brain of a regular internet user is expecting the same high-speed information-flow that they get while operating their technological devices also when offline, then the attention span for viewing a painting would also not be longer than approximately 10 seconds. A disrupted image that might demand engagement from the viewer's mind could then lose some of its understanding if 10 seconds of gazing is all it gets given.

Dutch artist, curator and art theorist Rosa Menkman has devoted her practice to dealing with (in both a practical, conceptual as well as theoretical way) glitches. She has written a manifesto on the topic which is titled *Glitch Studies Manifesto*.[35] In this text she writes:

Once the glitch is understood as an alternative way of representation or a new language, its tipping point has passed and the essence of its glitch-being is vanished. The glitch is no longer an art of rejection, but a shape or appearance that is recognized as a novel form (of art).

What she seems to be doing is recreating and manufacturing the flows and forms of the digital spaces. Mimicking the (failures and errors of the) techno-idiom to the tipping point. She also refers to her audience as the ones in charge of the reception: the *decoding*.[36] This is similar to how I, myself, see the reception of my own work. Like I mentioned earlier in the text: *deciphering*.

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[33] Ibid, p.7
[34] Askwonder [website], 'What Is the Average Time Someone Spends Looking at an Instagram Post?', https://askwonder.com/research/average-time-someone-spends-looking-instagram-post-o1oyu31rb, 2017 (accessed 2020-10-07)
[35] Rosa Menkman, 'Glitch Studies Manifesto' [website], https://amodern.net/wpcontent/uploads/2016/05/2010_Original_Rosa-Menkman-Glitch-Studies-Manifesto.pdf, Amsterdam/Cologne, 2009/2010 (accessed 2020-10-07), p.6
[36] Ibid

I have also approached the fragmented (or glitched, if you like) gaze of the internet age in a different way in my work. In *Imaginary Wholeness/Fragmented Real* (2019), I used small, square canvases to build up a series of portraits. I utilised the size of the canvases as references to Instagram format and phone screen images. I was interested in flow as well as looking into a contemporary, rapid image-disrupted self-image and applied this to psychoanalyst Jacques Lacan's theories regarding the gaze and "The Mirror Stage". He wrote about self-awareness of being viewed and how people will never experience us the same way we see ourselves and that there is a time early in life, when we recognize ourselves in the reflection in the mirror and how that marks the moment of the turning of oneself into an object that can be viewed from outside. [37] The mirror thus provides a visual identity and contributes an imaginary wholeness to one's experience of the fragmented real. He also claimed that the self is a construction which is acquired from our connections with other people.[38] These theories delve into fragmentation also as a psychological state and conception of self. The scattered cluster of paintings in this project allowed me to play with what is not there; being aware of what is not depicted. I used multiple images to portray one subject; creating a controlled, organized chaos together with a "controlled" image of the subjects in the motifs. In this way, reflecting the way images of the self posted online – selfies – are constructions of our own fragmented self-images and put on view to acquire an identity through the connections with other people. Looking at ourselves looking (at social media and of self-representational images) gets put into a wider context under the light of this theory. Perhaps making it all the more absurd? The gaze upon ourselves and trying on the gaze of the other.[39]

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[37] Jacques Lacan, 'The Mirror Stage as formative of the function' (1949), in Ecrits, New York, W.W. Norton & Company, 2006, p. 94

[38] Peter Wollen, 'On Gaze Theory', New Left Review, no. 44, London, 2007

[39] Dmitry Uzlaner, 'The Selfie and the Intolerable Gaze of the Other', Moscow, Int J Appl PsychoanalStudies, https://doiorg.ezproxy.ub.gu.se/10.1002/aps.1525, 2017, p.283

C o n c l u s i o n
[T h e   w h o l e   i s
t h e   u n t r u e]

When thinking about the gaze as something fragmented, interrupted, disrupted, and perhaps
infected by the speed of society, I contemplate whether a fragmented image is actually
a more "true" representation of the world than a unitary one is? Perhaps it mirrors
our perception of the world more accurately, especially if we now see, read
and think in a more fragmented manner.

Painter David Hockney claims that Picasso's
cubist work better represented figural reality than his
earlier figurative work did.[40] What he means is that the cubist paintings
may appear distorted, but only if you think of one particular way of seeing:

from a distance and in a stopped, frozen moment in time.[41]

The figures can be seen from different angles simultaneously.
Creating a movement*. Creating a time. Creating a space.
The bodies may be spectated from multiple angles in one
and the same painting. Challenging the very idea that painting
is to be capturing a fixed visual moment within an image.

*Is   it   the   subject   that   is   moving   or   is   it   I

?

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[40] David Hockney, That's The Way I See It, London, Thames & Hudson, 1999, p.102
[41] Ibid.

Philosopher Theodor Adorno states that the whole is the untrue.[42] He believes that an artwork's turn to the fragmentary is indeed more "true" and is dismantling the claim that an artwork is what it cannot be (and "what they nevertheless must want to be").[43] It seems to me that in a postmodern worldview, a work of art in its unbrokenness does not belong. It does not fit unless it is broken. I would say that this means a fractured image could mirror Western society perhaps more accurately than an intact and undamaged one might be able to. Quite like how artist and philosopher Daniel Rubinstein refers to fragmented photography as not merely visual images, but as a new way of inhabiting the immaterial materiality of contemporary augmented reality.[44] This is similar to my own entry points into image-making: using the materiality of the medium to enter into a conversation with immaterial image structures.

A lot of what this essay has brought up boils down to time. Time spent making. Time spent looking. Time between then and now; between art history and contemporaneity. The time it takes to decipher. The time we demand to take. The time we are willing to spend. A changing time and a time lost. Though as Moxey says, if the painting (or an image of any medium, in my opinion) does have a time - the core of it lies in the response from an observer.[45] Because no matter when the image was produced, every time it gets gazed at it is activated by that time and by those eyes. That gaze marks the elapsed time and creates an intimate duration. The now meets the then.

I would also like to say that it seems to me that vision is applicable both as a tool as well as a metaphor for how the world might be perceived. Donna Haraway - theorist, historian and feminist - writes that subjectivity is multidimensional and so, therefore, is vision.[46] Just like how we, due to having stereoscopic vision, quite literally constantly see things from two slightly different perspectives. Though vision is multidimensional also in a less scientific sense. Haraway claims that the knowing self is always partial; never finished, never whole;

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[42] Theodor Adorno (Translated by Lars Bjurman), Minima Moralia : Reflexioner Ur Det Stympade Livet, Lund, Arkiv Moderna Klassiker, 1986, p.58

[43] Theodor Adorno, Aesthetic Theory (1970), London, Continuum, 2002, p.190

[44] Daniel Rubinstein, Fragmentation of the Photographic Image in the Digital Age, New York, Routledge History of Photography, 2020, p.5

[45] Moxey, p.99

[46] Donna Haraway, 'Situated Knowledges: The Science Question in Feminism and the Privilege of Partial Perspective', Feminist Studies 14, no. 3, Maryland, 1988, p.586

always constructed and imperfectly stitched together.[47] This ties up with what I discussed earlier about a fragmented self-image. That infinite strive for completion. We are our own Frankenstein's monsters.

There is an incompleteness and shatteredness about the human sense of self that I think reflects the fragmented gaze of the contemporary human. Similar to how Rubinstein assigns the fragmented photograph to inhabiting an immaterial materiality, Charlotte Ross - researcher on gender, bodies, and sexuality at the University of Birmingham - talks about bodily wholeness in terms of something that cannot be entirely material, but also involves immaterial supplements.[48]
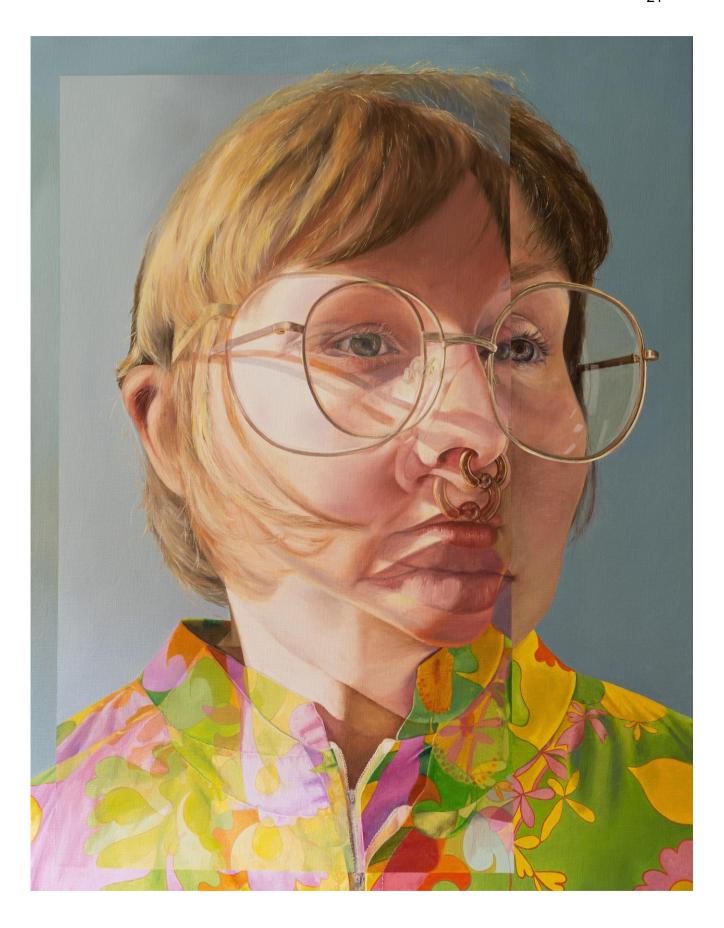
This is an essay about fragmentation. How we gaze and how we see. But maybe most of all it is an essay about the complexities (and confusions) of being human.

We are all in parts.

Bodies in pieces.

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[47] Ibid
[48] Charlotte Ross, 'The "Body" in Fragments: Anxieties, Fascination and the Ideal of "Wholeness"', Birmingham, University of Birmingham, 2010, p.5

"A work of art is to look at. Theories of the gaze attempt to address the consequences of looking. Sometimes, however, it is important to look at ourselves (looking). We not only need to 'see ourselves as others see us', we also need to see ourselves seeing one another. But to visualise looking is not as easy as it might appear. What might seem to be a purely visual theory, or a theory of pure vision, has become lost in the mysteries of human relationships."[49]

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[49] Olin, p.329

B i b l i o g r a p h y

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