

Sorry to See You So Soon

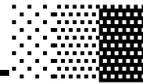
Graduate Project Artist Statement &

Exhibition Design Notes

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Johnny Beaver



PREFACE

This is the boring part.

In the 1990s, I was a teenager fumbling through the normal teenager shit, but also the onset of bipolar disorder with OCD tendencies. I didn't know there was a name for what I was experiencing. I had no frame of reference for even knowing there was something there to give a name to. But what I did know is that, there was a growing hole in me that seemed to only want to be filled by creative processes and the satisfaction of their unpredictable results. Every time I made something, the return outweighed the effort. It had measurable value. By diving into different creative systems and finding ways to make them my own, I discovered within art what I imagine most artists do: the ability to steer oneself into one surprise after another. Art is a dopamine factory.

In the very beginning, the nexus of this was the computer; a fertile crescent that first put me in touch with poetry, digital graphics, web design, and electronic music sequencing. I can still remember realizing that I didn't have to know *how* to do these things to *do* them. Brian Eno said it best when commenting on electronic music sequencing: "The great benefit of computer sequencers is that they remove the issue of skill, and replace it with the issue of judgment." While I won't put the quality or efficacy of my judgment on trial, the fact of the matter is that I wouldn't be here writing this if it hadn't been for creative platforms that lent themselves more to my conceptual interests than those that required time and attention I just didn't have. This isn't even to mention another part of the allure here, which was that these artforms were also fairly self-contained, in that I could complete the process from ideation to product all on my own. This provided a sense of safety and security in the process that still permeates everything I do; perhaps especially this project.

Because these early experiments were the only thing pushing dirt into the aforementioned chasm, what began as something automatic and thoughtless quickly became a studied dependence. No single mode of composition ever scratched all of the itches, though, and so before long I turned to software design, recording engineering, then painting, video, sculpture, conceptualism, and sound art. This material expansion continues as a primordial component of my creative activity, being one of the few non-destructive compulsions I've got. Opportunism at its healthiest -- and you'll be seeing a lot of it as you turn these pages.

Fast-forwarding to today, I can look back on 23 years of art and see myself as someone who went from making things simply to avoid what life looks like without it, to someone making for its potential to solve problems and generate real, tangible joy. Staying occupied and filling spacetime are still primordial drivers, but along the way I've come to understand the multidisciplinary ecosystem spawned in response to those forces as a linguistic spectrum; each voice informing one another in pursuit of a greater whole. It's a balance between sovereignty and communicativity that needs to be struck, and as I attempt to do so, I feel I must admit to myself that this was always going to be about self care before anything else. Having a mental illness all but guarantees this scenario. No context ever wholly belongs to you without its shadow. The need to be distracted, to move, weighs in on everything for me. However, I never said I wasn't fighting back.

Along these lines I've admittedly had a very intense inward gaze for most of my creative career, seeing myself as the sole viewer, and one who is only concerned with making it to the next day with as little struggle as possible. That remains a tremendous challenge, but art has been a dynamic solution in that it not only holds off the tides of anxiety and depression, but has provided a path from total ignorance to acknowledgment, to transparency, and then finally a place of advocacy that respects what art is and can be doing when made and shared, both in process and in result. The majority of everything I've made has confronted personal experiences with mental illness, dipping in and out of topics of anxiety, depression, memory loss, death, and isolation, and done so in a colorfully vibrant and agitated, yet generally hopeful fashion, **OH NOES! THIS IS WHERE THE PAGE HAD TO BREAK PREMATURELY.**

touching on the comedy of self-deprecation. It *has* helped, even if just by setting these narratives free from stagnation.

My graduate project, *SLLEEPdotnet*, feels like a particularly pronounced bump in the road of a specific narrative – one that addresses what I consider to be the worst side effect of mental illness: chronic insomnia. Thus far the most robust and self-aware body of work I've made to this end, it functions more like a tool than an art object (though which it is, or neither or both, is irrelevant). Whatever it is, what's most important to me is not that this project succeeds in fixing the underlying circumstance, but that it makes me happier, and as a side effect also provides an example that might resonate with others, perhaps giving them license to create their own systems and rituals for survival.

A distilled and more public way of looking at this would be to consider it a fight to normalize issues in mental health. To make it okay to communicate openly in a productive or cathartic fashion, and I believe it begins within the culture of the self -- in both an acknowledgment of the nuance of the individual, and subsequent transparent activations of such. Even stepping way back from this project, that's a major thread running through all of my art. Yes, I'm doing this because I need to do it for myself, but I hope it can tell others that there are ways to help themselves. If my art was ever going to do something outside of my own self-service, this is it. It's both a desire and a responsibility that I've willingly taken on.

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To understand *SLLEEPdotnet* and its physical exhibition, you've first got to understand insomnia to some degree. One of the most often dismissed, but deadly components of life with mental illness, insomnia is a murderer. Insomnia literally kills people. Conversations with those outside looking in often glance in the direction of "oh, that's annoying," but in reality it is demoralizing and debilitating under the best conditions.

For some clinical perspective, over 60 million Americans report at least one bout of insomnia per year, (Valentine, 2008) but those with mental disorders are at an especially high at risk. According to the Mayo Clinic, having a mental disorder is one of the most common causes of chronic insomnia. The condition itself leads to exhaustion, a poor memory, depression, anxiety, irritability, and increased risk of "personal injury" (a funny sounding, but accurate term). Making matters worse, the less someone is able to fall or stay asleep, the more they tend to worry about not being able to do so, and in turn have a harder time sleeping. ("Insomnia") An article from the University of Texas Southwestern's Medical Center's journal *BRAIN* puts things into further perspective, adding that people with insomnia are twice as likely to develop depression, 80% of people with Schizophrenia report sleep disturbances, and that soldiers with existing sleep disorders have an increased rate of PTSD after deployment. (Kawaja) These are just a few examples among many.

Largely related to my diagnoses, with a heavily sprinkling of sleep apnea for good measure, I haven't had more than a few dozen undisturbed, full nights of rest per year since around 1997. Throughout mood swings, depression, anxiety, etc. the one constant has always been a lack of sleep, and consequently a sense of fear and anger towards the night, my room, and my bed. Like everyone else, I manage; eventually your body gives out, if nothing else. But while my rested brain can be eloquent, surgical, and fortitudinous, my exhausted brain can't read, can't write, can't think, can't cope, can't even remember where it parked its car. I've gone through periods of time where I had to photograph it whenever I parked so I could remember where it was. Every time I open this document to work on it, I never know whether or not I'll have the clarity to do so effectively; for every word you see here, I probably wrote two hundred. Like many health problems, the cumulative result is a theft of life. You rarely get to be what you consider "you." Though there are many treatments and therapies, they can and often do fall short. Clearly I'm not a doctor, but I've found a lot of failure in the lack of help, as well as the quality of help that you can get. This seems to be a fairly universal experience, as not only are these issues still being reported among the sea of medical solutions, but in all my years of running in social circles with other severe insomniacs, I've never heard of anyone actually getting better.

In my mind, the key to effectively framing all of this is perfectly laid out in John Crary's book, *24/7: Late Capitalism and the Ends of Sleep*, where he suggests that we are living in a "non-stop work site or an always open shopping mall with infinite choices, tasks, selections, and digressions."(Crary, 32) It doesn't acknowledge chemical or other psychological causes, but it's definitely on point in a lot of other ways. While traditional treatment plans try to counteract the effect of what he's describing by recreating what I interpret as pre-industrial revolution conditions (cool, dark, quiet, no electricity, etc.), that doesn't work for everyone, or if it does, maybe not in such strict terms. While, as humans we spend our waking lives diversely -- either trying to go with the flow, ignore it, or fight it in various capacities and forms --wouldn't it stand to reason that our sleeping lives might need equally dynamic approaches? What if Crary's "non-stop work site" is the best place for certain individuals to be, only we've just been wrong about the context?

According to the Mayo Clinic and a number of expert sleep clinicians, such as Virginia Runko, Ph.D. of The Ross Center for Anxiety and Related Disorders in Washington DC, cognitive behavioral therapy (CBT) is the best weapon in the fight against insomnia. Publishing an article in 2016 titled *Insomnia treatment: Cognitive behavioral therapy instead of sleeping pills*, the Mayo Clinic laid out seven CBT approaches, each suggesting main points of concern, but at least loosely suggested an individualized approach. ("Insomnia Treatment")

Brushing the "your sleeping pills and TV are bad" aspects of it aside for a moment, you'll see very similar literature on CBT wherever you look. I am a very strong proponent of CBT, especially in the case of insomnia, but theory and practice are often two very different things. What one usually gets when proactively discussing their problems with insomnia looks a lot less like a personalized treatment plan, and a lot more like this:



"Keep your bedroom cool and dark. Sleep on a comfortable mattress and pillow. Go to sleep and wake up at the same time every night. Use your bed only for sleep and sex. Banish electronic devices. If you can't sleep, engage in a relaxing activity. And whatever you do -- don't eat or drink alcohol!"

--Your doctor, psychiatrist, therapist, sleep medicine specialist, family, friends, acquaintances, pamphlets, flyers, dogs, cats, mice, fleas, ticks, tardigrades, bacteria, viruses, proteins, molecules, atoms, subatomic particles, strings, God.

Over and over and over again.

If you've ever had more than one sleepless night in a row, you've probably had someone tell you this exact thing; and if the situation were professional in nature, you probably got a bonus pamphlet with this written on it before being sent on your way. For those with ongoing issues, the "20 minutes with your doctor and you're out the door" method of implementing CBT is fairly useless, as it isn't being tailored for the patient.(Greer) I browbeat myself for years over being unable to adapt to a strict, generalized guideline, having been told that said guideline list is the solution, and if it isn't working it's because I wasn't trying hard enough. What this does manage to do effectively, as described in a slideshow by Runko titled *Cognitive OH NOES, THIS IS WHERE YOU HAVE TO GO DOWN TO THE NEXT PAGE!*

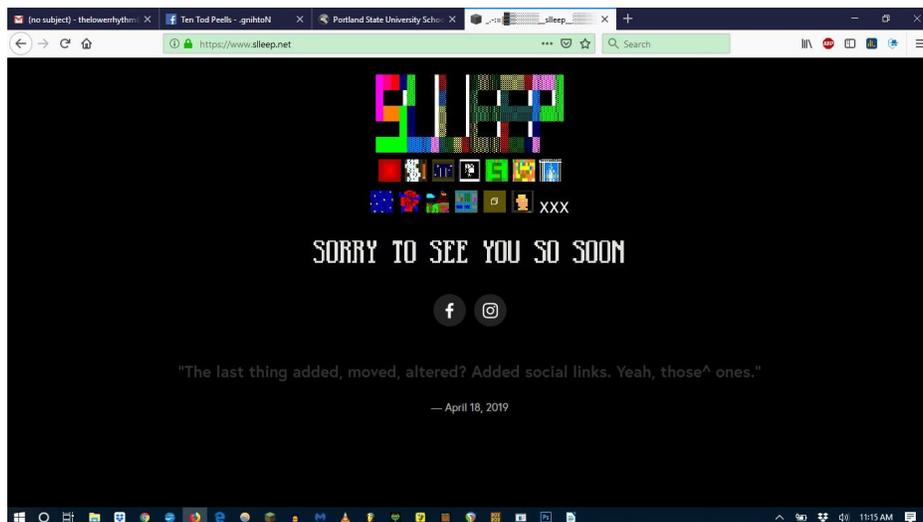
“Sonic Meditations are an attempt to return the control of sound to the individual alone, and within groups especially for humanitarian purposes; specifically healing.” (Oliveros, 1)

The ritualistic sets of instructions that make up the score walk people through a number of activities that either consider sound as the primary architecture of an experience, or use it as a medium through which to act or communicate in various ways. One example that has stuck with me is called *Environmental Dialogue*, directing the reader as follows:

“Each person finds a place to be, either near to or distant from the others, either indoors or out-of-doors. Begin the meditation by observing your own breathing. As you become aware of sounds from the environment, gradually begin to reinforce the pitch of the sound source. Reinforce either vocally, mentally or with an instrument. If you lose touch with the source, wait quietly for another. Reinforce means to strengthen or sustain. If the pitch of the sound source is out of your range, then reinforce it mentally.” (Oliveros, 3)

This really drove home the importance of ritual as an individualized thing, and exposed some failures of the institutional model. Although Oliveros explicitly states that this work is about healing, and I treat healing in my work in a pretty laissez-faire fashion, I don't consider that divergence deal-breaking. If anything, I take solace in her positive expression of these ideas, and continue to find new wisdom within the text as I get deeper into my own experiences of it.

As I *finally* begin to unwrap this project, I'd like you to go forward thinking of its dynamism as an activation of tits individuation. Consider how it relates to circumstances demands adaptation. How do we, as liquid beings, fill our containers?



At its most basic, *SLLEEPdotnet* (<http://sleep.neocities.org>) is a web-based platform I designed to provide myself with constructive opportunities for the mediation and intervention of anxieties that both disrupt sleep and make the subsequent sleeplessness unbearable. In many ways, it is a digital microcosm of my creative operation as a whole, but being web-based it has the benefit of being compact, readily accessible from multiple devices, and lacks the same material and documentative obligations of a studio practice (ie. the tedium of preparing materials, painstaking photography). I think of it as a multi-pronged scratch for a **OH GEEZ THE TEXT GOT PUSHED DOWN A PAGE AGAIN! DAMN PDFS.....**

specific and persistent itch that stems from different manifestations of mental illness. It's the anxiety that keeps me awake, and not all anxieties are created equal.

SLLEEPdotnet itself has an architecture that simultaneously facilitates itself as an archive and a workshop, containing multiple galleries of different visual and sound art projects, abstracted sleep and dream logs, semi-interactive elements, easter eggs & hidden content, etc. It is free to expand, change, suffer permanent deletion, or any other kind of modification. Instead of being a solid unflinching object with an endpoint, it bends and sways with time and concept. I expect that it will have changed drastically between these words being written and your eyes reading them (it actually has in between writing that sentence).

As previously discussed, this is not intended as a therapy in the way that word is often wielded. However, I do feel invigorated and less vulnerable. After months of use it has become the heart of my sleep culture, as well as the engine of its environment and ritual. Its fluidity in expectation, form, and content creates an interface between an inherently aggravated spacetime and one that promotes actions and observations that I've found to combat, or at least offset stress and anxiety. It provides opportunities for construction, exploration, and vegetation, which I see as the vital levers and cranks of my stability. If I feel a Thing, it gives me multiple opportunities for doing a Thing in response to the feeling.

Most importantly, perhaps, it's a companion that's always there for me when nothing else is or can be. Insomnia is incredibly lonely. Wherever it may have individual failings, it has yet to fail to exist.

HISTORICAL BITS

Before we get into the content of the site, lets rewind to September 2018. When the idea of this project was first forming, I had immediately gravitated towards the web because one of my few insomnia lifelines, as previously mentioned, had always been the computer. I grew up in a computer-centric subculture during the 1990s, and alongside my discovery of art I found myself heavily relying on the endless expanse of the Internet as a place to look around, learn, and simply *be*. There was a certain freedom and space afforded just by having a browser window open, knowing that the potential for connecting to new things was there. My teenage bedroom, which was oddly shaped, cramped, and built into a garage, was made to feel a lot bigger. This feeling persists today, especially late at night when the world seems to be at its smallest (ie. worst).

One of the most satisfying destinations of that first social-ish Internet (post primordial, pre social media) to land on were personal websites. Founded in 1994, GeoCities is the most historically notable host, and was absolutely overflowing with personal pages that were either an amalgamation of an individual's interests, or a compendium of an individual's most singular interest. It was a longer way around to the result than the three to four button presses between someone and a new Instagram post, but far less compressed in terms of individualization than most contemporary options. Social media in 2021 feels like a quantization upon which we throw our most compromised selves, lacking any real sovereignty in favor of ease of use. Of course, that doesn't mean I don't appreciate the big bang of user generated content that has occurred since my glory days (an overlap between myself and the billionaires...), or that I don't recognize the nearly infinite number of new options for exercising oneself creatively online. I don't actually even agree with my previous statements all the time; I suppose I'm just reacting to the lack of an absolute necessity to open up your *own* points of access anymore. Nobody is forced to forge anything, it's just a big game of pachinko. Even the MySpace era saw the biggest social media site allowing people code-level manipulation of their own pages. It was hideous and full of sparkles and emo band themes, but it was freedom (there might be a critique of western capitalism in there somewhere, but not today!).

Indeed, the Internet of my childhood's death throes could still be seen in circulation in the late 2000's -- the late era of MySpace customization, and websites like <http://pimp-my-profile.com> that were entirely dedicated to it. Both of those sites are still around (believe it or not), but they feel like ghosts dragging their chains in the attic. Irrelevant and obsolete. I thought that stuff was gross and idiotic at the time, but to quote hair metal band Cinderella, "*you don't know what you got, 'til it's gone.*"

And yet, despite those trends, the Internet is still an evolutionary winner. I still value the individual spaces of the old web, hence the invocation, but I wouldn't give up cyber warehouses like 4chan, post-post-neo-dada-post meme culture, or the vastly expanded ocean of knowledge and nonsense that has arisen over the last decade for anything. And I don't. These things are apparent throughout different bodies of *SLLEEPdotnet* work.

For example, you're going to see a lot of Netflix's presence. With the disappearance of the old web came this streaming behemoth -- maybe an unlikely conceptual successor, but it became a primary destination for late nights, presenting what seemed like the ultimate way the wide open fields of cyberspace could offer a place to bury my head in the sand. Thousands of hours of backlogs of TV shows provide nearly endless passive media to plug into. This became a safe space at bedtime, and as such became a positive sleep association. Whereas some people prefer a nice white noise, I'll always go for the sibilance of Captain Jean-Luc Picard, whistling through his teeth as he offers grandfatherly advice to androids (which I guess he is one himself now...), or commands boastful warriors in spandex pajamas to launch photon torpedoes at the bad guys (but only because they *drove* him to it). Not unlike memories of being read stories over and over again in bed as a child, revisiting the narratives of shows like *Star Trek* time and again creates a familiar space within which to be distracted without feeling an obligation to do so. Any level of paying attention works, and I believe that's an analog for my attraction to the Internet, as well as the way I approach art. I don't want it to feel like a chore.



Over the course of this project I've been questioned many times about the role of sound, or rather its absence -- especially considering what a central role sound is playing in my overall practice -- something that, at the moment, is transforming the way I view all composition, not just sound. Even just in terms of this project, there are echoes of a way of working that includes myself as the musician, conductor, and listener in a largely improvised performance.

But there's really two things worth unwrapping here for the time being:

1. White noise, ASMR trigger videos, ambient, Indian Night Ragas, etc. are all things that can help aid in meditative states and relax people. For me, however, that space within which to relax is too much space. OCD loves a blank slate. It loves to intrude upon that extra space and savage you. This entire project exists to minimize those effects. I have experimented with creating generative, chaotic soundscapes as an alternative, but didn't find them wholly beneficial. They did distract rather convincingly, but the positive effects didn't last. That work can be found here: <https://welp.bandcamp.com/album/reduce-expand-excite-rewrite>. There's something to get to the bottom of in terms of my sleep relationship with sound, so these experiments will be continuing.

2. Because *SLLEEPdotnet* wants to be compact and simple, I have yet to figure out a tech solution that would bring sound in on that process without making it a hassle. This is *absolutely* a problem I plan on solving in the near future.



SLLEEPdotnet's visual style emulates the layout of the 90s web because it helps to recreate the environment that helped me get through the early days of bipolar/ocd. It's a space where I felt good in the face of what I had yet to understand, and that seems like the right substrate to start with when trying to approach this space in a new way; a way that has me revisiting in a more nuanced, intentional, and mature mode. It's stark, simple, direct, rash, reinforces the cult of self, and achieves this in form and function. It gets me mentally and emotionally back in that place, at least to some effective degree. It's also something I know how to do / interact with.

Initially I decided to go with the modern website equivalent of a puppy mill, Squarespace, because it can

emulate an older look and function within reason, but provides a much faster turnaround in terms of site updates; you can drag and drop where you used to have to make manual interventions of code. Because *SLLEEPdotnet*'s functionality comes partially from a reduction in obligation and fluidity in use, this felt like an okay compromise. This lasted about 8 months before I realized that the trade off wasn't worth it and went with an option where I could hand-code the site with HTML, exactly how I used to do it. It's a lot more cumbersome to interact with, but it gives me far more control, and additionally stores the entire site in a form that can be easily downloaded, transferred to other hosts, or be viewed offline. Being able to archive work indefinitely is important to me. If I ever retire this project from active use, it would be nice for it to still exist in "museum-quality" form. It took a little adjusting to the slower HTML method, but I now find the entire process cathartic and enjoyable in its own right.

On the visual side of things, *SLLEEPdotnet* often calls upon not just the look of the web at the time, which was very much influenced by the technology available, but an early form of computer art that uses character sets to create images. You'll see this art form primarily as site design elements in the logo, as well as in the heading and layout of a number of pages.

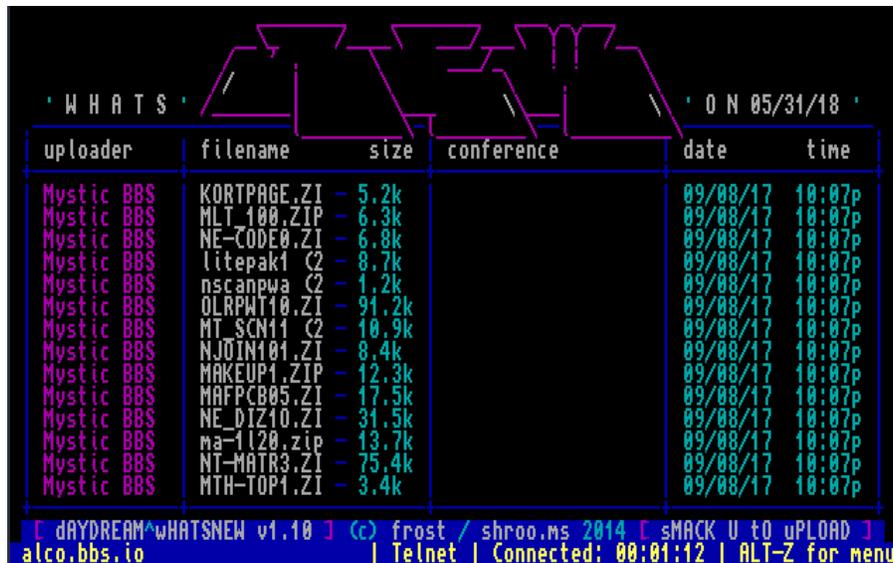


While text art is older than the hills, this particular genre of it developed in the 1980s, based on digital character sets like The American National Standards Institute (ANSI) and the American Standard Code for Information Interchange (ASCII). The community largely consisted of various groups (such as ACiD Productions and iCE Advertisements) who would upon occasion release "art packs," or compressed ZIP file archives full of artwork, onto dial-up bulletin board systems (BBS); later also using websites, forums, and email groups. Like the hacker and software piracy subcultures at the time, these artists often went under pseudonyms and still do to this very day. While it's an incredibly insular art scene, with many works containing built-in shout outs and other

references that outsiders have no hope of deciphering, their visual elements incorporate instances of glitch and graffiti that I believe people can more readily digest. From my standpoint, I was already into computers, first working with a horribly out-of-date machine that could barely draw any graphics at all, and found myself fascinated by the way text could be manipulated to make colorful and edgy underground paintings and graphical menus. This kind of art is exactly what initially propelled me towards web design and programming, and in retrospect, was probably my first introduction to visual art outside of cartoons.

Going far beyond the scope of these artworks, ASCII/ANSI was also often used to create visual interfaces when graphics either weren't possible or desired (such as in text documents). The image below is a screenshot of a modern BBS, showing a list of hosted files, who uploaded them, and time stamps.

OH NOES, IT GOT PUSHED FORWARD AGAIN. I GUESS YOU SHOULD READ "BELOW" AS "ON THE NEXT PAGE!!!!!!"



uploader	filename	size	conference	date	time
Mystic BBS	KORTPAGE.ZI	5.2k		09/08/17	10:07p
Mystic BBS	MLT_100.ZIP	6.3k		09/08/17	10:07p
Mystic BBS	NE-CODE0.ZI	6.8k		09/08/17	10:07p
Mystic BBS	litepak1 C2	8.7k		09/08/17	10:07p
Mystic BBS	nscanpwa C2	1.2k		09/08/17	10:07p
Mystic BBS	OLRPWT10.ZI	91.2k		09/08/17	10:07p
Mystic BBS	MT_SCN11 C2	10.9k		09/08/17	10:07p
Mystic BBS	NJOIN101.ZI	8.4k		09/08/17	10:07p
Mystic BBS	MAKEUP1.ZIP	12.3k		09/08/17	10:07p
Mystic BBS	MAFPCB05.ZI	17.5k		09/08/17	10:07p
Mystic BBS	NE_DIZ10.ZI	31.5k		09/08/17	10:07p
Mystic BBS	ma-1120.zip	13.7k		09/08/17	10:07p
Mystic BBS	NT-MATR3.ZI	75.4k		09/08/17	10:07p
Mystic BBS	MTH-TOP1.ZI	3.4k		09/08/17	10:07p

The history of this specific iteration of text art is rich and still very much underground. I admire it in that it has adapted itself to its surroundings, as opposed to trying to remake them. It dials up the restorative and opportunistic aspects of *SLLEEPdotnet* insofar as it further references the era of social computer use that provided the bedrock for its design.

To this day I remain profoundly influenced by text art groups, and owe my entire view on how art and computers coexist to them. Though I don't feel much connection to it at this point, I still often think about the ZIP Art Pack as a way I might like to deliver future Internet-based work.

ON STRUCTURE & CONTENT

SLLEEPdotnet's content is currently split into four archetypal categories: gallery, log, extension, and supplemental. Each gallery represents ongoing bodies of work, logs act as abstractions of different kinds of sleep-related logs, extensions that allow for threads of *SLLEEPdotnet* to be woven into other websites, and supplemental materials, such as statements, the landing page, easter eggs, soundworks, and interactive elements.

With few exceptions, *SLLEEPdotnet's* content is only made and managed during sleepless hours, generally between 10 PM. and 7 AM.

The following are summaries of existing content sections as they appear today, with allowances for some content that no longer exists, yet feels a bit important to shape the lineage of the site. So far there's nothing available on the site that really shows this history, but it's something I'm considering. There's something to say for things being gone in a way they can't be retrieved, as much as there is something to say about preservation. I'm not sure exactly *what* I want to be saying about that with this project at this time.

***note: by the time this current revision to this document was done, much of the below content had changed, but I'm keeping the descriptions in tact for archival purposes.**

Landing / Home Page

The opening page of the website contains a title graphic, navigation bar, extension links, a "last updated" note that informs visitors of the last major change, and any seasonal graphics (a good example of the site's dynamic nature). This is punctuated by "Sorry to See You So Soon," an ever-present message intended to act as a reminder that in an ideal scenario, this artwork wouldn't exist. The links used to be static and represented with graphical icons, but I've since traded that for random plaintext symbols that move and shake around, making them a bit difficult to click, and representing a visual extension of the vomit spewing from the main graphic's mouth. Something about making navigation an obscured hassle strikes me as funny. Being able to laugh at what is a fairly depressing subject matter is an essential fuel **OH NOES, HERE WE GO AGAIN WITH A PREMATURE PAGE BUMP!!!**

for all of this. Frustration is such a huge part of insomnia, that I'm glad to pay it forward. :D

Project Statement(s)

Most artist statements live and die within bodies of work that go from production to exhibition to storage / sale. Because *SLLEEPdotnet* is unending and focuses on the development of personal culture, I decided to keep a chronological log of all statements by date. The project's mission is not unrelated to the overall personal transparency I strive for throughout my work in general, and so it seems to make sense to keep a record of every stupid thing I've ever said as *SLLEEPdotnet* evolves. It also takes away a lot of the pressure to craft a coherent, all-encompassing statement for something that is always changing, so there's that. This page is accessible by clicking on a Pepsi can on the landing page. Using such an obvious commercial image feels like a bit of an injection of marketing into the site, which on the pre-ad-blocker Internet was just a fact of life. Ironically, most old statements were wiped out when Squarespace failed to properly back up the site when I was moving content over to Neocities. It's never too late to start over. I have plenty of dumb things to yet say.



They're On Stilts

This is a gallery of works by Lori Christine Cromer, an artist, partner, and friend who died by suicide in 2015. She was primarily a writer, keeping vast notebooks, all of which are lost. As far as I know, all that's actually left of her creative output are these five Microsoft Paint drawings, for which I had been looking for a home for a long time. It feels right to keep them with me in such a personal space, and like many people, it's often at night that I revisit traumas. Part of the curation I'm trying to engage in involves steering my internal conversations, and this is an ugly one.

Explaining the gallery name, my strongest memory of Christie comes from a time she was hallucinating on Zaleplon and insisted there were men outside our second story window, to which I responded "we're too high up for them to be out there." She replied, very matter-of-factly, "They're on stilts." What can you say back to that? It's strange, the things that stay with you as time passes. *SLLEEPdotnet* seems to engage in multiple eras of nostalgia.

Secluded Gallery

This is a failed space that's no longer accessible. The idea was to offer a permanent exhibition of works by artists suffering from insomnia or other sleep disturbances. I was hoping that this would help develop the site as a space that better serves visitors and invites them to engage in conversation surrounding insomnia and mental illness. However, it proved impossible to get any real interest going. I put out calls to artists on a few forums, as well as some social media outlets, with little luck. Though I got a number of positive responses, I never received any actual work. I'm not a particularly adept advertiser, so these sorts of issues had been expected from the very beginning. I was on the fence for a long time about how social the site needed to be, and after discussion at my Spring Panel in June, settled into the camp of "not very much." The web is great for interactivity, but it felt forced. Just because you can do something doesn't mean you should. I don't do this to interact in that way, and the use of the web as a platform, though it is very adept at interaction, is largely just a technological convenience.

SI There's a lot to be said about my role in this project as maker and viewer that it hasn't
DE matured into yet. Thanks to influence from Dana Reason, I'm starting to consider these
NO concepts in musical terms... conductor, composer, musicians, arranger, and so forth. I
T feel like I occupy all of these roles, and hope to hold those considerations close to my
E chest as move forward and teeter on the edge of different possibilities for interactivity.

This is a Completely Voluntary Stickup

This is another defunct page, previously linking to an external donation page on Patreon. For a while the cost of the site was publicly funded by a few individuals. I hadn't made any formal push to fundraise, and have since suspended this function because I made enough to pay for the site to be up for the year

leading to this moment. As I hit the end of my tenure on Squarespace and decided to move the site to HTML, I switched to a free hosting service, Neocities.org, and as such no longer need funding. Neocities was an obvious choice, as the platform offers services specifically tailored to those still using hand-written HTML. This seems a good time to also mention that I abandoned the sllleep.net domain in favor of using the sllleep.neocities.org subdomain. Not only does this support Neocities, but I was unable to really determine why having a dedicated domain mattered in the first place. The site functions just fine without it.

Hork

Continuing on with ex-content, this was a form site users could fill that allowed them to send anonymous text to my inbox. In most cases I reposted whatever that content was on the page just below it, timestamped by hour and minute, but not day, month or year. I enjoyed this sort of half-assed manual archiving, and blind interaction, but it didn't translate well to the new site. This, along with a number of other interactive elements have been scrubbed, simply because I'm not interested in their upkeep, and they did little for what I wanted to get out of my experience with *SLLEEPdotnet*. They'll be kept in my back pocket in case things change (and they probably will).

Wind Temple(s)

This used to be a password protected page that required some hoops to be jumped through in order to access, but is now readily accessible. It is essentially a series of 10 minute recordings of sonic environments I find myself in during bouts of insomnia, which are mostly highlighted by fans; the exhaust vent in the bathroom, the box fan in the bedroom, the refrigerator compressor, etc. They are essentially acoustic drones, and will at some point be joined by more diverse works on other sound-oriented pages. As aforementioned, I'm not totally ready for these more advanced explorations yet. I need to find the right equipment and methodology to maintain the low-cost, low-effort environment of the project. It'd defeat the purpose if I was juggling audio interfaces, extra cables, or additional devices.

Note: When the aforementioned password system was functioning, trying to access the page forced you to an input screen telling you that the code to access it was right in front of you. In order to find it, you had to hit Ctrl+A to select all text, then paste it into a text editor – this was because the text was pushed way off the screen, but horizontal scrolling was disabled so you couldn't just scroll over to it. I'm interested in bringing back these sorts of puzzle elements at some point, but at this stage I'm still in the process of transmuting the Squarespace era content into the new HTML site. This current iteration of the design needs to be stable before all of the cracks and crevices return. This requires me to spend some extended time with it so things can unfold at the right pace – something that will unfold naturally over continued use. To add to this though, I recognize that there are a lot of elements in this work that make the user put some extra effort in to achieve things. I'm still feeling this out, and will discuss it a bit later in the document. But there's a balance I'm trying to strike between my own guilt of throwing these transparent, vulnerable things in peoples' faces, the fear of it, and the guilt-free desire to do so because I think it's the right thing to do. This work approaches this by looking at some of these extra steps of access as a way to create a social contract with the viewer. Maybe not a good one, but that's a mechanism I'm experimenting with. I don't want to hide my fear by projecting nothing but strangeness, etc. The nuance is important to capture for me.



Wear & Tear

This log contains rough recollections of dreams, typically captured just upon waking. The material predates *SLLEEPdotnet*, stretching back to September 24th, 2013. Trends over time can be observed, such as a good year-long period where I had gone slightly toxic on Lithium and felt like I was going to piss myself all night long, or when I kept encountering instances of strangling dogs. A future project would be to search these entries by keyword and visually map them. I'm also toying with the idea of writing fiction based on the prevalence of those recurring elements. A possible future growth spurt for this project. Probably not, but I like the idea.

For a Good Heart

A severely abstracted log of hours slept per night. I've never been able to keep these up because I either forget when I fell asleep, forget to do it at all, or do remember, but don't feel like it. Part of this response is most definitely related to the lack of faith that it actually matters, and so as a consequence this content gets added only when I remember it's a thing and also happen to be in the mood. It definitely takes the stress out of the process, even if a more practical result is completely absent.

I see the narrative and visual appeal here (as well as in Wear & Tear) as having roots in poetry, with each entry dominated by some sort of wordplay or structure based on circumstance and / or whim. I feel like it goes beyond the scope of this project's current development, but I do write poetry most effectively at night and am open to how that might one day find a place here.

Example:

```
====JUNE (7 hours a night -- depression sleep) JULY==== (do not give a shit atm) MARCH | | 7
hours // ~ ~ ~ ~ THE GREAT AMBIENDROUGHT // 2 nights on the floor, 11 hours total and
a bad back // FEBRUARY first seven hours of sleep in a month — great expanse of laziness / one five-
day-awake period, stretching from late December into January 18 — [dec - light era ... .. 2 - 4 for weeks]
4.5 5.5 3.5a {6 ? 3} 3.5 5 6 ? ? 5a ___ 4 7a 5a 5 4 x45mx45mx45mx45m 5a 6 4 7 6 6a [nov 18 ?] 7 4 [oct
10, 22 18 ?]
```

LERCHLAND

LERCHLAND is a gallery of works about a fictional world, referencing my interest in both science fiction and fantasy, as well as giving a nod to this material as my go-to “safe media” while sleepless; safe, in this sense, meaning that it's always a place that feels good. LURCHLAND is an infinitely (and finitely) diverse star system inhabited by space-faring sentient balls of chewing gum, floating machine guns, and at least one man-eating Triceratops. These images are created using GraFX2, a 256 color pre-GUI art program first published in 1996 (which is when I first started using it), but still continues to get developer's updates. When you can't find the narrative you're looking for, make your own. In relation to the self-fulfilling prophecy of its name, LURCHLAND is a slow moving narrative. This work requires a lot more articulation to create than some of the other material, and as such makes itself a less likely evening focus. In the end I *am* actually trying to fall asleep (something that may be easy to forget amidst all of this stimulus...), so the more effort I have to put into something, the less likely I am to do it. Again, this is an opportunistic venture. If I can't find a way to push something comfortably, I won't push it.



@sllleepdotnet

In the Squarespace era this page hosted a gallery of recent images from the Instagram extension. Clicking any one of them loaded the Instagram page. This has been replaced by a simple, direct link on the landing page. When it came down to it, implementing a built-in Instagram app was impractical to do in the current iteration of the website. It's also easy enough to just link to it. This is something I might look

back into once more interesting areas of the project get further filled out.



Polarandroid

A longstanding phrase among heavy Internet surfers has been “I’m in that weird part of the Internet again,” referencing the tendency to go down deep content rabbit holes and wind up in bizarre spaces with chaotic or unpredictable content. These works explore the web browser as both a portal and a canvas, consisting of screenshots that capture happenstance, intentional manipulations of the frame, or post-shot visual alterations. Collectively they are a travel journal, serving as documentation and reflection upon the content and capacity of different online

spaces.

This feels like the most traditionally “Internet Artsy” of the *SLLEEPdotnet* subprojects. It’s probably not a coincidence that there’s a parallel I’ve been investigating between Polarandroid’s mode of composition and Mark Amerika’s concept of “surf-sample-manipulate.” Talking about his project *PHON:E:ME* in *META/DATA*, he describes this as being “a process in which data is sampled from ‘other sources and, after some digital manipulation, immediately integrated into the work so as to create an ‘original’ construction.” (Amerika, 182) This is probably the most satisfying of all *SLLEEPdotnet* visual work, because I’m able to capture what I consider to be really rich content with the click of a single button and some flicks of the touchpad. I can do this pretty easily even when right on the verge of unconsciousness, so it feels like there’s a lot of return for how much it commands from my attention and motor control. Some of the time I just copy them to the computer’s clipboard and don’t even paste or save until the next evening.

Untitled

This gallery contains Microsoft Paint drawings done while watching / listening to TV shows on Netflix. I have a longstanding personal entanglement with Paint, being one of the first accessible art tools I encountered. Its visual style is both highly recognizable and comes with a lot of history / nostalgia for many other people as well. The TV shows that work for me in this space are ones I can consume over and over again, thanks to a rich tapestry of culture and circumstance that allows multiple viewings to



yield new experiences. In that way, these are, as I mentioned previously, “safe” programs; the digital streaming version of a battle-hardened Teddy Bear. Most of the current images in this section refer back to specific scenes within *Star Trek: Deep Space Nine* and *Star Trek: Voyager*. In terms of the former in particular, I’ve formed strong bonds with the characters and circumstances over time, leading to a number of illustrations containing elements of my own thoughts, or rendering events that happened entirely off screen. They feel alive and never get old.

Side note: contributing to a recurring theme here, the relationship between Paint and Netflix is one of coincidence and convenience. This is the work that started me on thinking about what would eventually become *SLLEEPdotnet*, and at the time I just wanted to use something that was very no-frills to illustrate so I could free myself from the distractions and complexities associated with more robust graphics software.

XXX

This (nearly) blank page had some sort of intention behind it when it was first made, but I've never been able to remember. Until the right synapse fires, it's going to stand as a monument to forgetting. I'd like to think that the empty page contributes to the overall balance of *SLLEEPdotnet* as a composition -- I can fill 1,000 pages with different content, but none of them will bring to the table what a blank one can. Admittedly, I also like to imagine people hunting for something that isn't there. Sometimes I visit this page just to say hi.

ON EXTENSION

While *SLLEEPdotnet* was originally intended to be a self-contained ecosystem, I eventually found myself thinking, "contained in what, and why?" What else could it be? And if it could be something else, how might I further manipulate those other systems to serve its cause? More specifically (as it serves this section of the document), what do tendrils of this project look like, and what can they do? This line of inquiry first led to plans to explore some of these questions by manipulating the easiest targets: social media platforms. So far, I've mostly experimented with Instagram and Facebook. Both of these have somewhat extensive abilities to capture, synthesize, edit, and share digital media, so they provide a lot of opportunities for utilizing their platforms for what they're good at, but also for bending them into a perhaps unintended, but useful shape. In the very least, I consider them to be like vacation spots, or summer homes, for *SLLEEPdotnet*.

Facebook

The Facebook extension can be found at <http://www.facebook.com/slleepdotnet> and exists under the name Ten Tod Peells. The inverted text is a reference to an awareness that text forms can accept any character codes, not just linear, intelligible language. This is a crude gesture and doesn't take that concept very far, but the social response has been interesting. Few have taken the time to read it backwards, and I've received a number of "why did you add me?" and "who are you" messages from people who were fully aware of or have engaged with *SLLEEPdotnet*. Efforts that have involved posting and replying with nonsense strings of text only (ie. 09yBU*O#!OUbfubiA_S, or nonsensical language based on what I'm watching at the time, such as partial quotes) seem to get responses that range from laughing or confused emojis to actual anger and annoyance. While I'm not viewing this as a platform for trolling in particular, interacting with people in this way was unexpected and may lead to some interesting things in the future. In the simplest sense, being able to reach out and brain-vomit into a space where people are readily available to see it feels good and adds to the dynamic environment that is *SLLEEPdotnet*. It's one more place to *be*, and turns something as simple as a text box into a blank canvas for all sorts of things. In the very least, it does what *SLLEEPdotnet* always intended to do -- take up time in engaging, but low-energy ways. So far I'm excited to report that it seems to do this *really* well, and with a vast expanse of possibilities for modes of composition. For example...

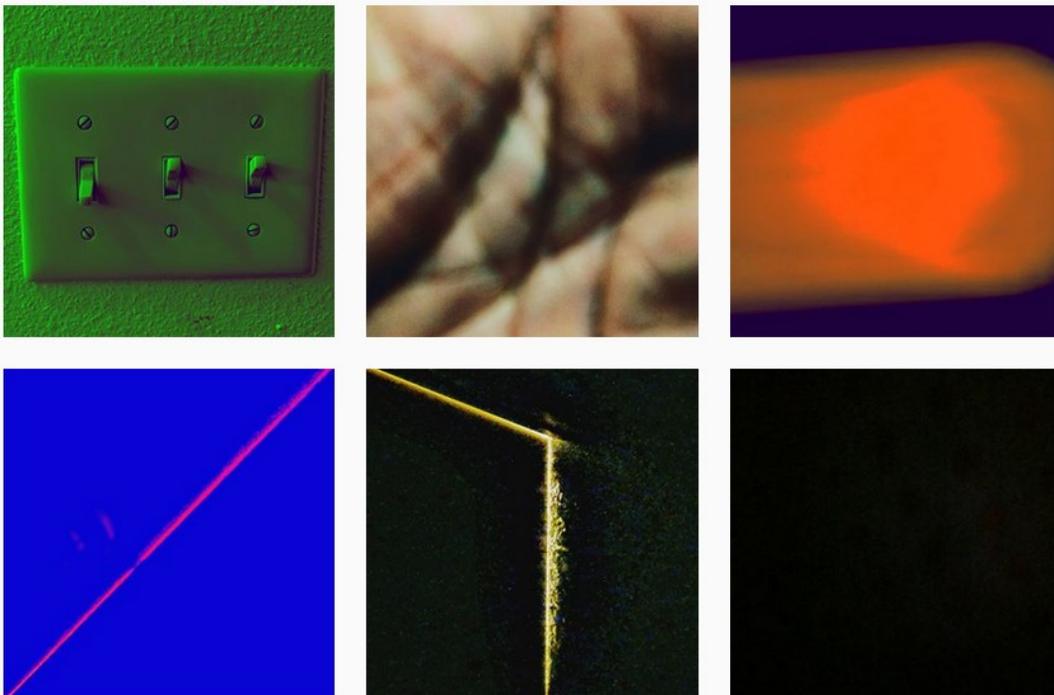
OH

NOES! LOOKS LIKE YOU GOTTA DO SOME SCROLLIN' TO FIND THE IMAGE!!!



The image above is from a series of posts in which I blatantly plagiarized the posts of people connected to the page. Some investigative work was happening in the comments just as some of them had started to catch on. So far nobody seems to know how exactly to respond to it, or what the motivations might be. I find that entertaining. What's the value in this? So far just amusement, which I'm okay with. That's definitely a part of this project. How can I use this more intentionally though, in a way that lets people who visit or interact with it know what it's about? Should I? Those are very good questions that I just don't have answers to yet. This highlights both the biggest strength and greatest weakness of this project – there are a lot of I don't knows due to how expansive it is.

Instagram



Moving on to Instagram, *@sleepdotnet* (examples above) is a much more active and older component of *SLLEEPdotnet*. It began as a series of photos I took when roaming the house late at night, and has since emerged as a regular photo journal that documents sleeplessness. A large portion of the content is devoted to macro studies of objects throughout my environment, such as close up shots of walls, candle wax, or various textiles. These are then abstracted by abusing editing features built into Instagram. Not only is it immediate, but said features are just expansive enough to be diverse, but not so capable that they don't provide opportunities to try and "hack" the features. One such example would be to max out the Structure setting on an image, post it, take the saved image from the post, max out the Structure... rinse, repeat, until the image is heavily abstracted. Working within these confines, rather than resorting to Photoshop or other heavy-duty editors, honors the platform and provides opportunities for experimentation within a relatively finite system. Closed systems like that, where the rules are simple but can be used diversely, is a long term interest I'll have mentioned several times throughout this document. It was the focus of a graduating BFA project of mine, Foundry, and can be seen in the very fabric of *SLLEEPdotnet*, in that it takes form as a largely self-contained website. Either way, and even if there's a deeper relationship to describe that will reveal itself in the future, the Instagram extension here occupies an important corner of *SLLEEPdotnet*. It provides a disciplinary voice that no other avenue of it does.

Reinforcing photo documentation as an important part of this work is a 2016 collection of photos called *Wired* from Minnesotan photographer and curator Christopher Atkins. I found the following passage from his artist statement of particular interest, as he seems to have gravitated towards some of the same things I have:

"I often wake up in the night, with a feeling of needing to be connected to technology, sometimes thinking about work or personal issues or just feeling anxious. I decided to visualize these moments of wakefulness—when I feel the least rested and the most wired. Taken at night, during periods when I couldn't sleep, these photographs are reflections on living in a light-filled world and a culture that values 24/7 technological connectivity."

Atkins' work is wholly different in form than my own, but I find it curious that he also found himself seeking out cracks, crevices, and objects that may have gone unnoticed during the day. I've been unable to reach him to engage in some dialog on the topic, but I'm definitely curious as to the relationship between navigating the sleepless environment and being drawn to these sorts of visual phenomena. I feel like there's more to it than coincidence.

I've chosen not to publish images of his work here because I've been unable to ask permission.

Side Note: *@sleepdotnet* also contains videos that, for the most part, are just moving versions of the same subject matter of the photos.



Though efforts to locate it have come up empty, Mack Macfarland, a Portland-based artist currently serving as the Director of the Center for Contemporary Art & Culture at PNCA, once wrote an art review for some gallery show and posted it on Yelp. Using the platform in this unintended way really struck me as interesting, and definitely contributed to my thinking on the topic of the Internet as a canvas (specifically text forms, in the way that they have purpose but will literally accept anything). It's in the same vein as how I see extensions of this project existing. The implication I recognize is that we have access to this vastly complex space of inputs and outputs that are just waiting for data, and through that the subversion of intent is incredibly easy. It feels like there's potential for such incredible graffiti, ranging from aggressive to opportunistic. Scrawling on a wall without necessarily defacing it. This is a territory that no matter how explored it may get, by the time those explorations are done, it will have changed into something new. That's exciting to me.

My current plans for the near-ish future include wanting to start invading other spaces that allow accounts to be made and content to be posted, regardless of what it is. When this comes to outlier social medias, such as forums, or completely unrelated things, like a complaint form on the Taco Bell website, I'm fascinated by what I would call guerrilla posting. Taking advantage of the fact that I can put something in those spaces to do just that, regardless of what or who they're for. Who will see it, and what will they think? Does it matter if anyone sees it, or that they think anything? What will happen to the more impermanent content? How long can something sit inappropriately on a forum before a moderator kills it and bans me (2 days, so far)? Can an entire project exist *just* within these spaces – for example, can a growing body of digital visual art grow just by being transferred from one forum to another, like a vagabond? Can the content exist through purely user-generated or crowd-sourced means? What if a circumstance calls for authorship by authors unaware of their participation. There are a *lot* of questions here that need answering, and I believe they will help shape this project as it expands.



SLLEEPdotnet is very much the hub and anchor (and engine, and particle accelerator) of my insomniac experience. However, the process of curating my sleeplessness involves considerably more than just plugging into the website. Time passes, I get up, I piss, I move around. Things happen. Inextricably tied to *SLLEEPdotnet*, what goes on around the creation and management of the website is equally important to the overall picture, and in many ways supersedes even the website's ability to be in-the-moment, as it seeks to be less reflective and more direct than other parts of my practice (in the sense that it is an improvised intervention before something that is long considered and then polished). This was all very unexpected, and very welcome. It's also the basis for the form my graduating exhibition takes, so I'd like to offer these narratives before we get to that.

Each subsection below addresses a specific ancillary practice, though these are always growing, and so this list should be treated as implicitly incomplete.

ATLAS I

On the rare occasion that nobody is home, or more likely I'm tapping into the faulty ninjitsu of my youth and think I can get around without waking anyone up, impossible tasks become a way to threaten time with ineptitude and pointlessness. Like you (most likely), absurdity makes it more difficult to be overly serious and grim. The corpse of a loved one with a red clown nose on it.

One such activity that I've tried a few times has been to look for an exceptional thread in the carpet. The best one. The champion fiber. To what end this classification is made, I don't know. It's a feeling. It's a judgment without any implied criteria. There's a length vs. width vs. coloration vs. state of degradation argument to be made, but the late hours forge a space where I can be free to choose to analyze those things, or not. In this space, I am Lord of the Rugs, and it is a vast kingdom indeed. It doesn't need to be anything more than that.

The first time I found myself engaging in this activity, I had been sleeping on the floor for about a week, which was horribly uncomfortable and gave way to flipping around on my stomach and feeling around in different positions for one that wouldn't break my back. Twisted up in my headphones, I took them off, closed the laptop, and got on my hands and knees (a Freudian slip). The floor felt like ancient gravel under a thick layer of dust. It smelled like it, as well. I'm now one of those people on HGTV who will specifically reject a new place to live because it doesn't have hardwood floors.

Slowly opening the bedroom door and moving out into the hallway, there were a few spots where gaps in the blinds and curtains let in enough light from the outside lamps to let me look around unimpeded

(though other times I had to use my mobile phone's light). I noticed a few things right away: that I felt way heavier than when standing, floppy bits flapping around, and that my cats had literally barfed and shed everywhere.

As this was going on I had found a great thread near the spot where the shag gives way to a fake wood floor in the dining room. It was fat and frazzled, either from being walked on too much, or taking too many strikes from some random harsh mechanism on the bottom of the vacuum cleaner that only about 100 people on the planet can name. It's like it had been skewered with a harpoon and immediately had it ripped out multiple times. Or perhaps it was subjected to a series of violent noogies by a Smurf. At first I felt sorry for it, but eventually decided that it was a survivor, granting it a depth of narrative most of these other, lesser threads weren't providing. Still, it had a contender in this other one, a half-yanked-out and unfurled skinny bit I found around the right (stage left) side of the couch. It was poking out from the edge of a fresh barf, and though I wasn't happy about realizing 10 seconds too late that I was fingering the former contents of Yuri's stomach, it felt like a palm tree at the end of a desert island, just poking out of the substrate. It was fate.

I'm not sure how long I was at it, but after a while I came to the conclusion my living room in particular was being hoisted up by a seemingly endless sea of individuals, and I had never noticed. There was going to be a lot of work ahead of me in terms of defining this caste system. Thank heavens.

Cataloging the first finds on 4-27-19, I placed the winners in a nearby mason jar and labeled the lid. It seemed like something worth keeping track of.

MOTION I

In a two bedroom apartment that houses five people, once 10pm rolls around there are few places to go, but even fewer you can light up once you're there. This is why the bathroom is a temple, a vacation spot, and a survival kit for my overnights. There are surfaces for eating, rugs, toilets, and bathtubs for sitting, toilets again for simply toileting, and faucets for water. That last one is most important (unless you've got to piss). To quote the Canadian Wildlife Federation, "Water is life." Though in this case, water is time.

It started out by turning the faucet on high to join in a chorus with the ceiling fan (on its own a rattling bastard), flushing the area with multidimensional noise. A total waste of water, but for nearby sleepers, this masks the drama of both speech and score of whatever else is going on in there.

I often found myself kneeling on the floor (and then later the cat pad that keeps litter from going everywhere), hands in the sink, simply stimulating the frozen time all around me. It's amazing to me that there's even a thing called pressure, let alone the fact that we've found a way to use it to deliver this vital resource. The great isolation that comes with sleeplessness made it easier to singularly focus on this thought, as well as the rush of bubbled water, it's variable temperature and speed, and its willingness to travel any which way it can. Interacting with this provides a connection to something alive and in motion -- noise for the skin. And thanks to the dexterity of the many bones under that skin, myriad options for tuning the performance through different gestures with the fingers and palms.

I feel that whatever I'm getting out of this is akin to the origins of mudra; ritualistic gestures that sometimes involve the entire body, but mostly relate to the hands. These are found throughout classical Indian dance, Buddhism, yoga, and various Asian martial arts practices. You'll see them having been carried over from the Hindus into Catholic imagery (the "a okay"-like symbol Christian figures are often depicted with, among so many others), and also into modern adaptations of traditional practices, such as the use of the Japanese Kuji In in the animated series *Naruto*. (Brittanica)(Misra)("Kuji In")

This is something I'd like to research further in the future, but have thus far found it difficult to find affordable historical or anthropological texts that are also cross-cultural. For example, the web is awash with nonsense on this topic. When I searched "Kuji In book," one of the first links was to a self-help site

These cables constantly get caught on each other, flinging the phone off of the table, pulling the headphone out, or subtly disconnecting the power from the computer so I'm left rising from whatever proto-slumber I've achieved when greeted by the Low Battery warning, searching for the end of the cable in the nether reaches of the bedside rat's nest. Half the mornings of the week I wake up being choked out by my headphones. For this reason I've found it beneficial to use some that have a nylon wrapped cord rather than rubber (it doesn't stick, stretch, or get ripped apart). It also helps if the earphone itself has a rubber stopper that holds it in place. It not only keeps it from falling out, but blocks out external noise. I'm then free to take the ear that's pressed against my pillow and tilt my head to open its reservoir to the surrounding environment, much like a volume control for the ambient noise in the room.

Because my end table is currently in use for my exhibition, it has been replaced with a full laundry hamper. I've placed an open pack of computer paper on top so the laptop has a flat surface. I won't be making any new *SLLEEDotnet* work until the exhibition is closed (retrospect: this was a lie).

ZONING

According to the non-profit National Sleep Foundation, if you "cannot fall asleep after 20 minutes [in bed], get up and return to another space in the house to do a relaxing activity, such as reading or listening to music. Lying in bed awake can create an unhealthy link between your sleeping environment and wakefulness." ("What to Do") This is pretty good advice for a group that also said "People with insomnia tend to have trouble falling asleep," which, *no shit you dingdongs*. Only I've found that the activity needs to generate peace of mind, rather than relaxation. This is at the heart of *SLLEEDotnet's* purpose, and to me the distinction between these two things is palpable. No amount of relaxation is going to help if you can't get permission from yourself to relax in the first place -- and in order to do so you've got to engage in something that scratches those itches I've mentioned. It doesn't matter if it's anxiety, trauma, or curiosity.

Something top lists always miss though, is that getting up and simply laying down somewhere different sans activity can also help. I've talked to a number of insomniacs over the years, and most report some sort of relief from changing locales.

In true Internet fashion, here are the Top Ten Places I've Tried to Sleep Besides the Bed:

1. The floor next to the bed. This space is a little bit too tight, but sometimes that can be helpful. Between the air conditioner, the bed, the bookshelf, and the nightstand, it's a bit like being hugged by the contents of someone's storage locker.

2. The floor at the end of the bed. Not unlike the first entry, only more space. This is my preferred spot, though it was better before I rolled over hard one night and broke the track for the closet doors. Kills your back, but as Jane Fonda put it, "no pain, no gain."

3. The couch in the living room. Used to work in a pinch, but there's too much light in the morning, and I got used to it being a non-option because there was one Ian J. Lechowicz that slept there. He has since left, deployed overseas in the National Guard, and I'm not happy about it. I haven't thrown his stale bag of Ruffles out yet, and I'm not able to sleep where he is supposed to be. I've known him for 22 years and am responsible for him moving out here, and therefore responsible for him landing in a unit that was about to deploy.

4. In the closet. This spot is about as small as the first one, but the ability to close the door on myself makes me feel like I'm in a deep space pod, the laptop on my stomach being the controls. I haven't taken it to this level yet, but one day I'd like to really set it up for functionality and ambiance. Get a laptop stand installed, hang some glowing stars from the ceiling, etc. There's nothing to stress out about. All you're doing is taking a light speed trip to Neptune and back. Hunker down. No seat belt necessary.

5. The bathtub. It provides some isolation, but it's incredibly uncomfortable. They do not make these for

people my size, though the incline in the back is helpful for sleep apnea. Being semi-arachnophobic, I'm currently working on convincing myself that the itchy bitsy spider was, in fact, in the kitchen sink this whole time, or maybe outside near a barn. There's no evidence in the rhyme to say otherwise, so logic is on my side. Why the hell we do all think it's in the tub...

5. (Part II)The car. I've never been successful with this one, but it does seem to occasionally help deal with my bed in terms of experiencing something that's actually worse. **Side note:** This entry has nothing to do with the tub, I just couldn't get the bullet point to change to a 6.

6. Trailers, boats, other peoples' beds. Any sort of camping or house-sitting situation seems to help as long as the sleeping surface isn't abnormally high off the ground. Not really sure why, but it's a fact.

This is where you'd expect some kind of popup ad, and then the website crashes so you don't get the extra four items of the list.

ATLAS II

Throughout my life I've always been deeply unsettled by putting other people out, paying an unhealthy amount of attention to how things affect those around me. I'm not all that conscientious, just paranoid, and prefer to not be at the center of anyone's attention. But when it comes to operating my body and other light machinery late at night, the extra care I spend could also just be the traumatic echoing of an important early life lesson from my father:

"Don't wake me up. But if you have to, do it by shaking my feet."

I shook those crusty feet as infrequently as possible, for fear of what I inferred to be some kind of PTSD fight or flight response. It was never explicitly stated, but at eight years old I simply imagined him in his army uniform, waking up to hallucinations of Viet Cong gunfire and flinging karate chops. I think he was deployed once to a non-combat zone, I don't even know. He doesn't know how to karate chop. I watched too many movies (*House* comes to mind). *He* watched too many movies.

But now I'm 37 or 38 (first final draft era) and I tiptoe around like a weirdo, so psychoanalysis still seems to have a place in the world. Here's my contribution to society:

Basic Creeping 101:

1. Don't breathe near sleeping people if the ambient noise in the room allows you to readily hear your own breath. If they hear you breathing, they'll know who it is even if they can't see you. You've also got to keep in mind that if you hold your breath for too long it'll likely be louder for a bit once you start up again.

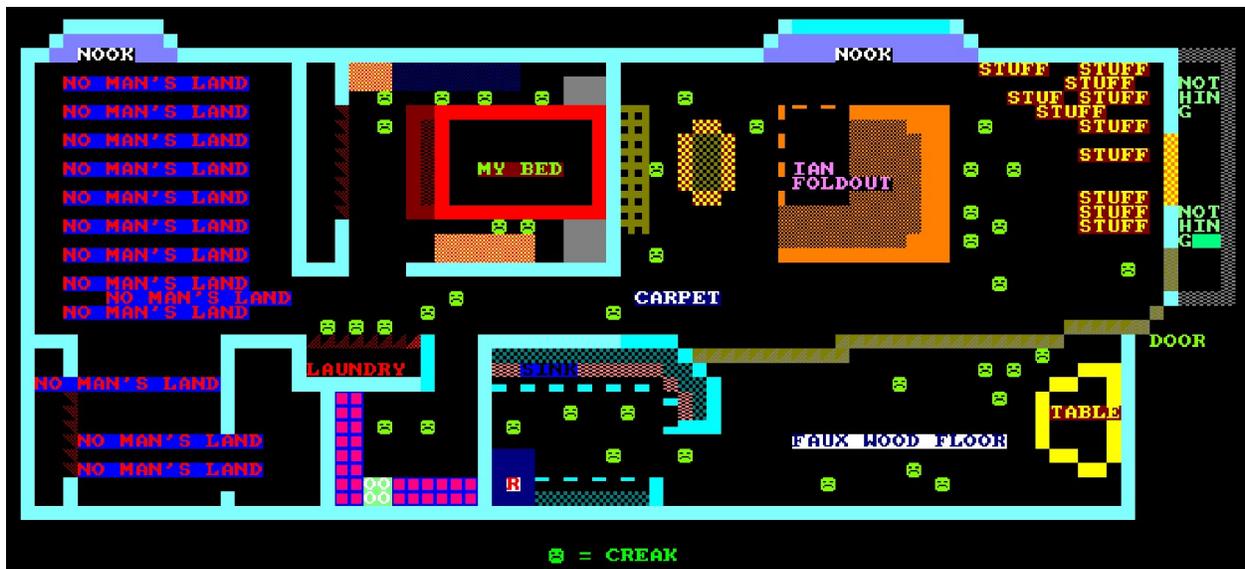
1b. Holding your breath while moving objects, like glass cups, seems to help with control so they don't land on their intended surface with as much of a clang. Despite the fact that Donald Trump ruined this for everyone, I also recommend using two hands even when just one is needed.

2. If you have to turn on a light, you can use your shirt or a blanket to mask as much of the direct beam as possible. Orient between the source and the sleeping human. Depending on their position, pillows can make a really good barrier. I used to pile up three or so of them to block the glow of my laptop screen from my ex-wife -- even if she doesn't give a shit and frequently just turned the main light on whenever she felt like it. Do unto others.

2b. The dimmer the light the better, so I use these in the following order, only going to the next as is necessary: no light, dimmed cellphone screen, regular brightness cellphone screen, cellphone flashlight, lamp, main light. Before stepping up your light source, make sure you can't use something reflective to redirect the light you do have to where you want it to be. For example, my dimmed cellphone screen can't help me read prescription bottle labels, but if I cup my hand around it the light focuses on the target and makes it legible.

3. Just about everywhere I've lived has had the kind of cupboard doors that snap shut when a piece of metal or plastic on the door itself is pushed into a clip on the cupboard housing. These can be opened and closed more silently by bracing your thumb against the wall of the cupboard itself for stability and slowly pulling the door open or pushing it closed. Being able to alternate between pushing or pulling with your thumb allows you to better control the speed of the door as it crosses the clip's threshold, therefore it is much less likely to slam shut, and will reduce noise upon opening.

4. Advanced methodology forces you to confront the elephant in the room: you. Or more specifically, the imperfections in the carpentry that go *CREAK* when you step on them. When I was a small child, I was obsessed with ninjas (as noted), and so I crept around silently on my tippy-toes... only as it turns out, I was just really light. Now, not so much. Not dropping my heels like tiny anchors helps, but my tippy-toes do nothing but concentrate my weight on a single point, possibly making things worse if I can't avoid the creaky spots -- and there are *a lot* of them. To solve this problem, I've mapped the accessible spaces of my apartment's floor plan to point out these spots, and though some are unavoidable, it has aided me in moving more silently through the space.



NOTES ON INFLUENCE AND INCLUSION AND LANDINGS

They say that art can't exist in a vacuum, and while that is relatively true, it doesn't stop *SLLEEPdotnet* from trying – at least while it is *happening*. The nature of what the site is for subjects it to a barrage of media, but rarely any scenario calls for or desires an overt intellectualization of what it is in an art context; totally the opposite experience of when I'm working in the studio, and that's part of the point. This isn't to say that artists working in similar areas, like Mark Amerika, Porpentine Charity Heartscape, or Tatu Gustafsson, aren't important or influential to what I'm doing. I see Amerika as a godfather of my "this is what the web can and / is for" philosophy (as it relates to the mechanisms of the Internet itself, such as the nature of HTML), while Porpentine's brilliant Twine games take advantage of basic Internet browsing functions to weave beautiful, interactive narratives that have brought together both fine art and gaming cultures. *Rat Shrine* in particular has interested me, in that it only functions between midnight and noon. Users are invited to "gaze in longing" and are treated to a space where you can't interact, but can assume

you're not alone. This was not an uncommon feeling to get when browsing popular websites back before they even had chatrooms on them.

Moving from Internet to post-Internet work, Gustafsson's *Wheelie* is one of my favorite pieces of Internet-related art. Gustafsson has a pretty succinct quote about the piece I'll share:

"Motorcycles are time machines that take the riders to the future. Wheelie is a[a] ultimate form of that ride. A wheelie is imminent, when the acceleration is sufficient to reduce the load borne by the front axle to zero. Wheelie combines pieces that were never meant together. Pieces are words and words are pieces. It tries to describe something that is impossible to describe. Entity is what ever you want. I'm interested about language and how it defines our every day life. It's not that we use language only to describe things, language also defines how we see things."

To boil it down to the part I find interesting I've got to toss 99% of that statement, but that's how it goes. The content itself consists of a series of obnoxious wheelie videos shot by some jerks on the freeway, slowed way down, the sort you commonly see in your YouTube suggestions (or mine, anyway). Speaking from a purely mechanical standpoint, Gustafsson reached out and snagged a recognizable bit of media from the canon of Internet culture and used it as a piece of language. The Internet is canvas, but also paint, as it is reflected both in concepts of Internet art and post-Internet art; such as in the way that the former looks to the mechanisms and mechanical capabilities of the Internet, while the latter looks to it conceptually, the way in which the coattails of our culture have been dragged through it, or as a pool from which to source language, visual and otherwise. I definitely also see this as evidence of a general breaking down of the walls between culture and net culture. The other day I saw an emoji icon in a marquee and it's like oh, so that's happening. I suppose I didn't really expect to see a digital tool in a physical space like that, but it was only a matter of time, really. The vast majority of people on this planet are now online. As Donald Trump might say, that's billions and billions and billions and billions and billions and billions and billions of people.

Speech is another Gustafsson work that caught my attention – a video displaying the natural trail of a search for "speech" on YouTube, with a large number of the top results opened in different tabs and played all at once. This mechanism is indirectly present in Polarandroid as well, considering the importance of open tabs in the narrative of each screen capture – an element of each image that lays bare the contemporary history of my browsing. I'm currently working on a few conceptual pieces that blend influence from *Speech* and random Sol Lewitt instruction installations. Multiple tabs being opened to create a chaotic system of disparate media; only the same-ish twice. Through researching this project I've become more and more interested in doing standalone Internet based works like this, though I'm also opening to this sort of approach contributing more to *SLLEEPdotnet* in the future.

Clearly *SLLEEPdotnet* is a part of the ongoing lineage of Internet-related arts, and I see elements of both Internet and post-Internet in it, such as its use of HTML as a practical architecture, but also in the way it looks back at how the function of that architecture has evolved and settled into a conceptual form that uses the platform directly, also heavily referencing it from a future standpoint. But I do not only, or even primarily consider it under those terms. For me I see this project's role as more related to new genre, or multidisciplinarianism. Many of my contemporaries, at least those artists I personally know, gravitate towards working that way because it allows them to contend with problems from many angles, based on what they have, in the face of a practice that may be more dependent on finances or space that just isn't available. "I'm going to make *something*, one way or another."

SID Is simply making something the point, though? That's a really good question. I think to
EN start, it is. When I look at the joy or healing art as brought to the lives around me, you can
OT distill those practices down to a place where it seems important to just simply make, to
E whatever end. To have that opportunity.

I believe that this, in combination with a drastic increase of access (thanks in no small part to the internet, conveniently), and the beginnings of mega-mergers of art and science in education,(Irani 2018) has laid out the current scenario – and I think it is important to acknowledge. I don't think there's an artist living on

Earth who hasn't been bombarded by the phrase "anything can be art now," and yes, yes it can. And it should, in my opinion. And I say this to the end that I believe nobody should be without at least a half dozen means of creatively expressing themselves. I also believe that most everyone not making art is exercising themselves in other successful ways. It's human nature to do this, and perhaps to some kind of extent for those with mental and emotional disorders to contend with. When it comes down to it, I sincerely believe that without a phone or a computer, *SLLEEPdotnet* would still exist in another form. As an artist, that means something to me. Also as an artist, the thought makes me want to abandon my tools to see what it looks like without them. To test that faith, or through that process find a new faith.

It's not that sorting out niche as it relates to material / medium isn't a worthwhile act, as it's vital to understanding the history of how the idea of internet art even came about, let alone the contemporary discourse and where I fit into the grand scheme. I think about this a lot as an artist working in many different mediums, interacting with art in a lot of different creative spaces. Concept doesn't supercede medium, in the way that what you're making is going to have an audience, to some degree based on it, and that audience will interact with it in certain ways. With this work I had a lot of trouble skirting that line because there's definitely a bias for the multidisciplinary ethos I'm pushing right now as a maker, but I also want to acknowledge my medium. I'm looking forward to the way this line of inquiry matures, especially as I go on to teach.

ON A TOTALLY DIFFERENT NOTE///// I'd be lying if I said that Internet art history has had a heavier boot on the throat of this project than Gene Roddenberry, or Tim Berners-Lee (inventor of HTML and the web browser), or Pewdiepie, or just being broke. It's important to me on some level to keep reminding myself of this, so that I don't wind up in the trap of only making art about other art. I want my priority to always be trying to serve a population with mental health issues by saying "Hey, you can find a way to get some control back, and you can do it by looking at whatever you've got at your disposal and making something of it" vs. "This is what internet-related art can do, you should use *that*." In saying this I look forward to the future of my work, as this thread will definitely be woven throughout it.

All things said, I'd like to take a brief moment to give a different kind of credit where said credit is also due:

Eric Kripke, Steevio, Shinco, whoever is in charge of Hulu's advertising systems, Google, Davie504, Mozilla, AKG, Belkin, Elaine Radigue, Holmes, Hewlett-Packard, Oral B, Forest Green Apartments, Ultimate Fighting Championship, Sonicare, Crest, Mylarmelodies, Mountain Dew, Tillamook, Buakaw Banchamek, Samsung, Silk, Lithium carbonate, Fluoxetine, Risperidone, Zolpidem, IKEA, Muffwiggler, Raul's World of Synths, Larry Carlson, Danielle Bean, Shitpostbot5000, Ian J. Lechowicz, Facebook, Cost Plus World Market, Molten Music, Fight Commentary Breakdowns, my sister's childhood blanket, Serta, a nearby street lamp, sliding windows, early morning trash trucks, Totino's, Morning Star, Neocities, La Croix, dirty socks, laundry hamper, city of Beaverton water utility, cheap blanket that was marketed as a quilt and smelled like curry when it arrived, Audrey Bell, Fourloko, a pumpkin, sloppy roommates, Jonathan Frakes, the air

SORRY TO SEE YOU SO SOON

(at this Exhibition)



SLLEEPdotnet was neither designed for nor intended to be on display in a traditional space (or really any space that wasn't my night stand or my phone), and so I found myself at a crossroads when trying to plan an exhibition. How exactly do you portray a web-based project without resorting to just slapping it up on a screen? What function could the work of this project have in a public space if it was only meant for me? Is this only an internet-based artwork?

Divergence

When seeking input, most of those I asked suggested some version of "put a bed in the gallery and let people lay in it and interact with the site." This in and of itself feels like kind of a thoughtless solution (sorry), and between works like Rachel Hines' *will you spoon with me?*, Tilda Swinton's *The Maybe*, Tracy Emin's *My Bed*, and a thousand others, sticking a bed in a gallery seems pretty well spent. Still, when asked to include *SLLEEPdotnet* along with a number of paintings in a group exhibition dedicated to mental health (*help me...* at the Bush Barn Center in Salem, OR; 2019), I thought I'd use the opportunity to try it out. I felt a little apprehensive about using an exhibition as a testing ground for something I thought would fail – especially since it took the curator a year to plan and execute it -- but I couldn't have asked for a better opportunity.

The photo above and to the left is a poor documentation of what was an otherwise gorgeous installation of many kinds of different work; a bedroll laid out underneath a painting whose subject included that bedroll. The small pedestal next to it had a tablet computer on it, locked into *SLLEEPdotnet*. Nearby one could find a statement that opened up the narrative of the project and invited people in. What I learned from the opening, as well as the inevitable trickle of visitors that would follow, is that while people were willing to break taboo and rub their fingers all over paintings and sculptures on display, they weren't willing to engage this project in that environment. Speaking with a number of visitors on opening night, they either didn't feel comfortable interacting with the installation in public, or stated that they enjoyed messing with it and wanted to see more, but thought it'd make more sense to do so in their own private space. *Me, too.*

That affirmation put the final nail in the coffin of any iteration of this project winding up in the gallery as a direct translation of the site, or consisting largely of just the site (at least for the foreseeable future). There's nothing new being offered by doing that, besides ripping the work from its intended context. Fortunately, as the Addenda has laid out, all of these other related actions had been going on, most of which were either producing or could be represented by reflective work that wasn't really suited for the web, but could perhaps exist rather naturally in a gallery space.

The Best Laid Plans

Instead of the website work itself becoming the entirety of this exhibition, *SLLEEPdotnet* exists as just a component; a presence, a source of inspiration, and something to be inspired by. *Sorry to See You So Soon* is an installation born of *SLLEEPdotnet*'s ancillary work – something that could be much more readily translated into a three dimensional environment. I initially envisioned the objects of the installation coming about through several different avenues:

1. **Exploded or abstracted content from the site.** This could be any number of things, from printed

material, to recreations of digital works in physical media, or strategic links to supplementary content, through QR codes or some other system.

2. Non-web, insomnia-related work that either inspired or was inspired by the web project, such as paintings and video.

3. Objects from home that are vital to my sleep ritual, or abstractions of them, such as my end table and the primordial soup of cords and devices that it houses.

4. And then also work that will be more focused on ancillary experiences and actions that co-exist with use of the website, but don't necessarily directly include it.

As the work developed, I became more and more convinced that there was little point in recreating or fabricating anything directly from the site at all – **so scratch the idea of “exploding” or “abstracting” content** from the site. Just as it was with the concept of providing direct access to *SLLEEPdotnet*, what exactly would the point be of printing something up that was already accessible? I couldn't think of anything either functional or tantalizing. I redoubled my efforts in terms of looking at what was going on in and around this culture of sleeplessness I mention; specifically what wasn't immediately suited to the website from the start, and how these things could be represented in a way that both identifies their individualities, as well as how they each contribute to an exhibited whole -- an exhibited whole that provides context for the website in the same way the website provides context for it.

As said functioning whole, its mode of representation takes a form inspired by diorama-style displays found in natural history museums, colored by the text-heavy work of Jean-michelle Basquiat – an artist that I've always felt was forging records of his own natural history, by way of rendering the dominant forces of his thoughts very directly by way of poetic literalisms. A large part of what I want this exhibition to do is provide people a place of access to the nuanced parts of my experience that are difficult to communicate in words alone, but can certainly still be aided by them. By organizing components of the installation as “stations” that can be traveled between, and referencing some of the direct poetry Basquiat was so adept at wielding, I hoped to provide some points of access to what might be an otherwise highly abstract collection of objects. Leading up to and including the opening reception for *Sorry to See You So Soon*, I talked to a number of people that offered up this interaction without prompt, which was nice because this (ie. direct) isn't my normal mode of communication in art. This element in particular has me feeling better prepared as to how I can couple web-based work and non-web-based work in the future so that it might reach a wider audience. In my limited experience, audiences seem often bisected by the barriers associated with physical art vs. technology-dependent art.

Actuality

I selected the AB Lobby Gallery in the PSU art building as soon as I knew it was an option. It has everything I enjoy about exhibition spaces: a dark box with one way in and out; plenty of power, a built-in projector (that I already knew I needed), an outside window, inside windows, a diverse ceiling, projection capabilities, a strange little alcove, a slightly asymmetrical layout of windows, walls, and doors. Like my favorite gallery space in all of existence, Woodshop Projects in Corvallis OR, there are a lot of quirks that create a distinct personality for the environment; a lot to play with. Not a blank canvas, but a guided starting point, I feel invited to coax my work into spaces like this because it plants my feet more firmly in a workspace that furnishes opportunities for adaptive reasoning. Like *SLLEEPdotnet* slotting itself into the pre-existing condition of my insomniac environment, AB provides an interesting physical algorithm from which to base an installation. Absolutely related to my struggles with OCD, this is something that I find myself craving in both the process and end result of my work, even when it doesn't necessarily feed the concept (though in this case, I believe it does).

One advantage I had towards this end was having a ton of material to work with; a long list of possible content from the website and otherwise, largely narrowed down by a desire for people to move around and through the space in a way that gives them something new wherever they go. When I made a large scale installation with Shawn Creeden in 2018 (*Sidebottom*, OSU Woodshop Projects, Corvallis), this was the approach. We rolled up with a large cargo van of material and curated from there. There was a plan,

but a lot of space was left to engage in the sort of making we both enjoy and excel at. We found a place and purpose for every last scrap.

With this work I feel a lot of pressure to make sure people get a good cross section of its totality in order for the whole thing to make sense. No one piece of the puzzle of this exhibition could ever hope to communicate its theme, and so allowing for and expecting an adaptive process has served it well. As I'll detail below, a lot of thought went into creating unification between the works as they co-exist in the space.

Works Not in Progress

Before we get to how they function as a group, I want to detail a little bit about the primary works in the show. You can find images at the end of this document.

The first piece I made, **an untitled work (like most of these) that represents a large laptop computer**, was built from "found" cardboard that just so happened to fit perfectly into the alcove found just inside the door. The screen, plastered with iterations of an obituary I wrote for my sister back in 2003, is complete with redactions of personal information and other lines of text that I regret ever writing – embarrassing words that were literally always there, just waiting to be read. Even if I didn't have the website open, I always knew I could get to it, and that's not the kind of thing I find easy to resist. Part of the misery *SLLEEPdotnet* was intended to reduce involves a repeated focusing on death, and in this case we have evidence of its failure to do so. I kept going back, over and over.

Behind the sculpture, the alcove window is wallpapered with nearly completely redacted copies of the obituary, largely stating "<<CLICK TO GO BACK" on the front, and "Shhhhhhhh..." on the reverse side. Embedded within the sculpture itself is a silly bit of circuitry that amounts to a fake "on" light as a way to keep things light (pun intended). I'm trying to fend off what's miserable, and making really dark work isn't how I feel I can best do that.

Immediately to its right is **a painting I made** a while back called *The Cannibal*, which recalls a time when I was having to sleep on the floor near my bed for a month or two in order to get any sleep at all. I was severely depressed at the time and felt like my body was eating itself – the metaphor stuck, as the character is cradled on its back, devouring its own arm. This is the most traditional work in the show, which to me gives it an interesting presence that it wouldn't have if the exhibition were wall to wall paintings. Since the summer before starting PSU, I have been working my way through a crisis regarding where to fit my painting into my practice, as my work had evolved beyond its dependency on it. Painting had been such a dominant force in my creative output for 15 years, that redefining it has been very difficult. Maybe this is where it fits in, though. All of my feelings of frustration with the medium melted away when I saw it in the context of the show. Maybe painting, for me, is no longer about creating standalone works.

The next piece along that wall is a reflection of the MOTION I entry in the Addenda. This is also constructed of a corrugated material, but plastic rather than paper, text labels instead of renderings, and protrudes from the wall instead of shrinking into it. **A mock-up of my sink and counter top**, an important altar of my late nights, this is a reflection on the *SLLEEPdotnet* modus operandi, which includes trying to reduce the amount of effort required in order to free expressions from more traditional studio annoyances, such as documentation or forced revision (remember that old chestnut?). Part of why I've gravitated towards digital art is that it strips away the mess, archival difficulties, tool management, and so on. That mode of working has now affected my physical creations. This piece is capped off with a very old mirror that I found in the trash a few months ago, and imagine has seen a lot in its life. I've been really enamored with the design, needed a mirror to complete the display, and enjoyed the visual attributes it contributes to the overall installation: barely big enough to see your face, huge ornate frame, cheesy gold paint. There's a little bit of claustrophobia in there, which I believe exists as a minor current throughout my insomnia. **Cora Freyer revision note: This mirror ended up being donated to Corvallis artist Will O. Cope for a different project.**

Randy Gardner, the current record holder for the most days awake (eleven), spoke on NPR the other night and described sleeplessness as a trapped space, where literally nobody can help you. This is accurate.

Next to the piece is a chunk of that same corrugated plastic, nailed to the wall. It reads “A temple, a well, a space free to light & to be lit; surrounded by noise.” This is mostly a literalism (on the bathroom), and something I wanted to be sure visitors understood.

Something I didn’t expect would be the number of interesting reflections that could be spotted in the mirror from different viewing angles. This is a matter of happenstance, but has me thinking about how something like this could be used with more intention in the future. This project plays a lot with concepts of intervention and reflection, so could this be an important tool? Maybe for putting the viewer in my role to some degree? Maybe not.

As we get to the back of the room there is *Black Lake*, a **thirty minute video of me going through my sleep routine**; laying in bed, tossing and turning, messing with my phone). This was shot on accident, and I feel incredibly grateful because I don’t think any of the other work comes nearly as close to capturing my actual experience of insomnia. It’s the largest piece in the room surface area wise, and takes center stage, so I’m again a little amused here. This entire exhibit is an exercise in self-observation, and to a degree self-worship, so it is only reinforced by blowing up a big video of myself as the visual centerpiece of the entire ordeal. At the same time, I can recognize *Black Lake* as a vulnerable moment. There’s a duality in my work, in the sense that I try to be transparent about some really horrible things, but also feel the need to laugh at them. Perhaps as a nervous tick, perhaps as an alleviation. This comes out far more in the physical work in the exhibition than the digital material on the website, and I believe this is because the physical work is made as a reflection, rather than a reaction, so there’s more room for ruminations on the subject matter. Mechanics aside, this is really just about remaining hopeful. No matter how bad things get, I still look to the future. Somehow.

Black Lake was recorded right around the genesis of *SLLEEPdotnet*. It’s visual presence in the show has been toned down just a little by the use of minimal lighting, which highlights other work, and in a minor way washes *Black Lake* out.

To the right of the video is **a small piece involving a strip of carpet, a pair of scissors, and some mason jars**. One contains a few threads and labeled 4-27-19, taken from my first outing with the ATLAS I activity from the Addenda, and another is empty, representing the ongoing nature of this practice. The carpet provided is an actual sample from my carpet, found in the sub floor under my closet. There are no explicit instructions for people to interact with this piece, and I don’t personally feel like it is inviting for that sort of thing. I feel that it distinctly represents itself as a display, rather than a toy. More so than any of the other work, I think this one requires the most effort from the audience, as it is an admittedly bizarre activity and won’t be an easy piece to read into or understand. The accompanying text, on another piece of that corrugated plastic nailed to the wall near it, “SELECTIONS FROM AN ENDLESS SEA OF INDIVIDUALS,” which is a modified line of text from the associated Addenda section.

Punctuating the piece are some vertical lines painted directly on the wall, reinforcing the carpet threads, and a wall mounted black light used to illuminate the carpet itself. Like the mirror from the sink sculpture, the black light here is primarily present to serve my neurotic need to create a holistic visual balance among the works as they function in a group. Also, like the video, the black light is yet another material that stands out and isn’t furnished with any other piece in the room. And then there’s that whole CSI thing. :P

To the right of that, people will find **a painting on unstretched canvas**, suspended a short bit away from the wall to mimic the raised surfaces of the two previous texts on corrugated plastic. The piece itself is a first attempt at listing all of the objects and processes involved in getting to sleep, which has been successful to the extent that I am still studying it before continuing on to create more nuanced or complex pieces. Due to the painting largely consisting of text, rather than getting the same accompanying text the other works in the space have, this has an accompanying visual gesture that echoes formal aspects of the piece, painted directly onto the wall. A spinal shape, this visual gesture ties the piece to the floor, echoes the shape of the lamp, and I think contributes alongside some other elements in terms of making the space a part of the show, rather than just a box it goes in.

Again to the right is my statement, integrating itself as a contributing artwork, but mostly towards the

utilitarian end of providing vital contexts for the other works. For a long while I had intended to just print it and call it a day, but the more I started to include my hand in the work present in this show (which was physical and therefore called for it), the more I realized the statement wanted that touch as well, and subsequently belonged in the space as opposed to being something just tacked up outside or printed on a card. The text details the relationship between myself and *SLLEEPdotnet*, as well as the relationship between *SLLEEPdotnet* and the exhibition. In my mind, this direct approach eliminates a lot of the struggle to understand the other works. I chose to scrawl it on a large sheet of instructions for Olanzapine, a benzodiazapine I was given for sleep that not only didn't work, but caused a severe uptick in my condition that kept me awake for days. I've held onto it for a few years, and have come to see it as some sort of bizarre holy insomnia scripture. It's a truly excessive amount of text for something you're supposed to just swallow and drift off; such is the nature of pharmacology for the mentally ill. At one point I had considered just hanging this as its own piece, but I don't think that this drug in particular was very representative of my experience as a whole. I had also questioned whether or not people needed to read the text, and how much of it, if it was being obscured by a statement. In the end, looking at it as an artifact that can serve a purpose that's more meaningful to the topic where there would otherwise just be a piece of paper, or some other manufactured substrate, is how I chose to go. If people want to know what it is, it's not all that hidden. At the time of writing this, I've already been really taken aback with how far people actually have been willing to look deeper at this work. I'm very thankful for that.

Grand-ish Unifying Theory

There's no escaping OCD, and the manifestation I deal with often seeks varying degrees of symmetry and asymmetry in order to be satisfied. Sameness and diversity, coupled, to create a whole made stronger by these interwoven elements. The first time I thought to myself "yes, that!" was when I learned about mixing a little bit of each color into differently colored areas of a painting so as to create congruency. If you look back at the history of my painted work (which is available in chronological order at revaebynnhoj.com), you'll see evolving, shared textures and visual themes that span years. In a macro sense, even, I have a hard time seeing any given work as not a part of all the others. Actually identifying this mechanism is somewhat new for me, and the more I press forward to address it, the more I can see new things in my previous work. However, it's not so new that I can't wield it with some purpose.

In the case of *Sorry to See You So Soon*, the works are attempting to call upon unity as a way for each piece to be able to address its own subtopic without needing to explain the whole exhibit, or even necessarily completely explain itself. I don't intend for this exhibition to be wholly immersive, but definitely something inching towards a singularity. More so than any other exhibition I've done, these works truly rely on each other. They were composed (or chosen) in complete concern for their conjoined contributions. There is a strong conceptual linkage – a mockup of a laptop, a video recorded by that laptop, the video of a scene that a painting represents, etc.).

In order to keep them planted firmly in conversation, though, I voluntarily reached into my bag of OCD tricks and indulged in its logic. Specifically looking at the materials being used, I've also taken elements of each one and incorporated them into at least one other work. Additionally, each work uses a material that none of the others do. I believe this reinforces the conversation between the works through the reinforcement of their material connections, both in positive and negative respects. If the sink piece is the only one with the mirror, that mirror is then lent to the whole of the space unimpeded by repetition, and so on. Does this have the effect on others that it does on me? Good question. This is who I am, and the driving force behind my actions are often somewhat abstractly connected, so how do I communicate that? Do I need to? Right now, I'd answer this in this way: not sure. Maybe that's enough.

As noted in descriptions of the work above, many pieces either include or are accompanied by some poetic language that serves as an additional clue as to the nature of the piece in question. There is also a tertiary element found in a number of stars cut out from empty food and beverage boxes my roommates leave all over the place; something I always notice when I'm awake and traversing the apartment. Like those glowing plastic stars, I've spread them throughout the space along the upper part of the wall (skipping the ceiling for logistical reasons, as well as to keep peoples' focus down on the work – I'm not trying to hide the fact that this is a gallery), and as such they form a physical connection between all of the

works, further placing them in the same environment and giving them another element to share in their visual and conceptual spaces. I've had it mentioned to me that the haphazard method of cutting, in conjunction with the materials used, lend themselves to some light-heartedness and comedy, among some other things that are a lot more grim. This is definitely a positive outcome as I see it.

The center of the room consists of my end table, lamp, power strip, and CPAP machine – all powerful objects present for the creation of everything on *SLLEEPdotnet*. On top are handmade cards with URLs to the website, cut from a YooHoo box. The top of the table has been painted with a gallery map, only instead of labels there are QR codes, each providing access to some sort of *SLLEEPdotnet*-hosted material. The codes lead to various external media, such as sound, graphics, or text, the likes of which reinforce what I intend the work to do (such as copies of Addenda sections as related to the physical work that represents them). While I won't elaborate on them fully here, one that I'm really happy with is the link associated with the laptop piece. Over the course of creating this exhibition I was finally able to get the obituary removed, after much discussion with family and contact with the site administrators. I no longer have to go back and see that again. As it turns out, *SLLEEPdotnet* didn't fail here, after all. I consider this pretty strong evidence of this work's goal to let people know that they can design their own positive outcomes.

The table's placement is designed to keep people moving around the room, and to prevent there from being a void in the center of what is an otherwise busy installation. This placement also stands to reason based on its central location in the design of this entire project. I was uneasy about including any contact information (website, email, etc.) for myself because I felt like it'd be a distraction – maybe not for anyone visiting, but for me, insofar as how I feel about the work existing in the space. This project has been doing what it has been doing for over a year without any stickers on the window, so to speak, and I wanted to let the physical half of it experience a little bit of that as well. Maybe just for experimentation's sake. I did put some cards out anyway, but haven't replaced them after they were scooped up. I've actually been a bit shocked at how many cards have been taken, namely the ones linking to the website. They're essentially made out of garbage, but there's a little bit of mass to them, and some care and intention. I like that much better than what I've done in the past (ie. just get printed postcards). Every detail counts, it seems.

It's also worth mentioning an unintended consequence of the space – one that I frankly should have seen coming – is the sort of creepy / surreal atmosphere. It doesn't read like that to me – to me this atmosphere has been rewritten by my experience. But after spending some time with the show, I am well aware that it could read that way to others. I wonder if that's a barrier that can be broken down in future work?



To elaborate, Ralph Pugay mentioned that it had a David Lynch thing going on, and I whole-heartedly agree. I'm very into the recognizable, specialized mood that Lynch is successful in portraying, and it definitely is present in the space. Installation, especially in a multimedia sense, is very new for me, and conjuring Lynch feels important because that's a big influence that just hasn't come into play with any other media I've worked with. I believe this effect is largely being created from a combination of the video, the drone, and the lighting. Not to be too redundant here, but the atmosphere of the space, along the lines of the natural history museum thing, is very much saying "I might be a real space, but I'm most definitely just a set." As noted, the intent here is to recreate the surreal feeling of the environment I experience through abstraction, but I really wonder what else this can do.

synthesizers and internet platforms. Corvallis' Interzone is the home for west coast noise / experimental music, and I have some ties to that community I want to cultivate as well.

I also would like to engage in a long term residency at CEI Artworks or somewhere similar, which I'm in the process of designing a pitch for, as I believe in the artists working from that space and want to contribute to their success. This seems to be even more critical now that I've learned Bruce Burris will be moving to Cornerstone Associates. Bruce has made Artworks what it is, and his departure will leave an enormous hole that a lot of people depend on being filled. I could never dream of filling even a toe of his shoes, but I am inspired to help. Both of these projects aid artists with intellectual disabilities, and I've cultivated a very strong affinity for what they seek to accomplish, as well as what the artists there can do.

And then there is teaching. I love teaching at least as much as making art. I wouldn't be here and I wouldn't have accomplished any of this if it weren't for my experience as a student. It's not just a degree, it's my life, my future. There is no single greater thing I can do with myself but give back that which I've most benefited from, and I absolutely adore it. I went into this knowing the job market is tough, but also knew full well that this was what I going to do -- even if it took a decade to happen, or even if it never did. This is the space in which I am most successful as a human being. It's where I am the best version of myself. There is no compromise, no matter how long it takes.

Thanks to opportunities at PSU (instructor), Chemeketa (resident, juror), and OSU (instructor, RA, muralist), I have already taken some great first steps. I've begun applications to teaching pools between Eugene and Portland (Corvallis being in the middle), and am in the process of designing multi-disciplinary courses that mix traditional mediums with technology-related ones. There is an oft-cited worry about students leaving graduate school without hitting the ground running, but I started this marathon a long time ago; *SLLLEEPdotnet* and *Sorry to See You So Soon* being a very important leg of a long race.

Cora Freyer revision update: I have since done that residency and gotten hired as a full time instructor of drawing and painting at OSU, specializing in intermediate and advanced painting.

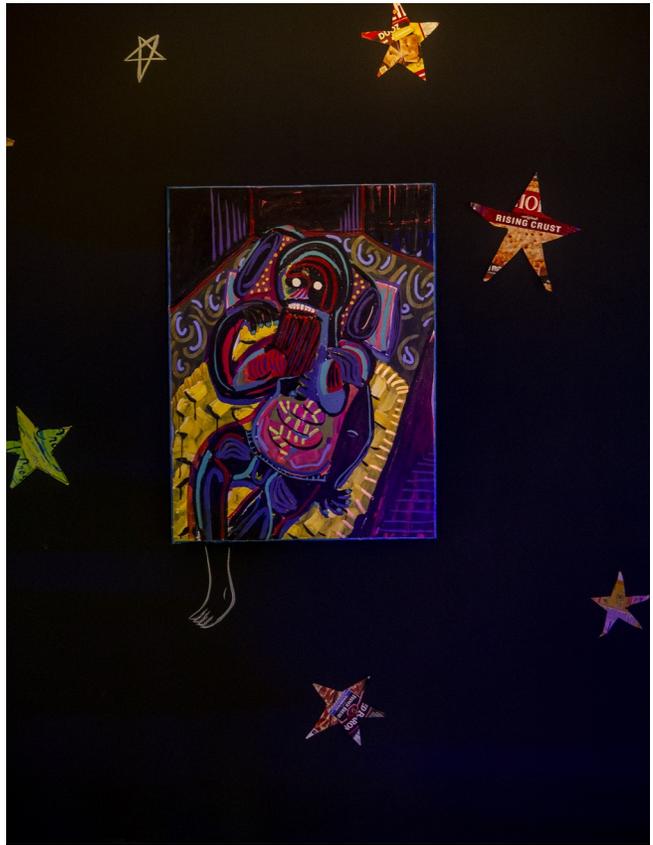
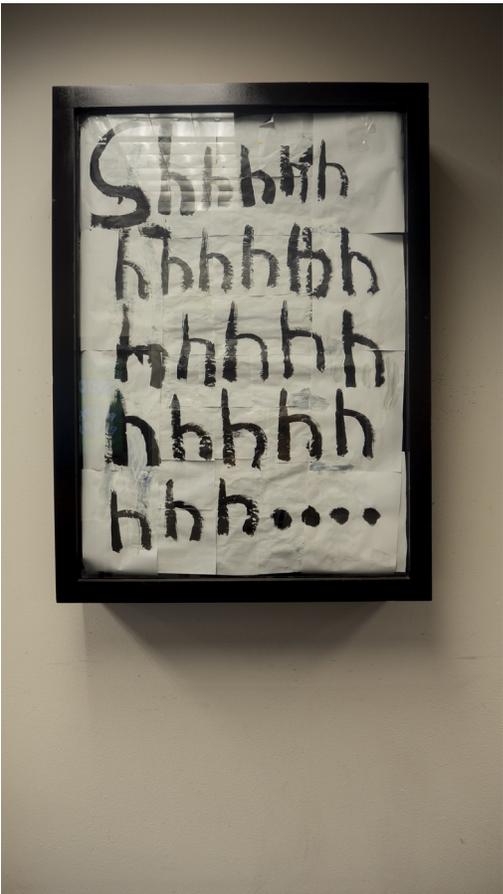
Sorry to See You So Soon documentation by Samantha Ollstein, as seen during open hours; December 2019











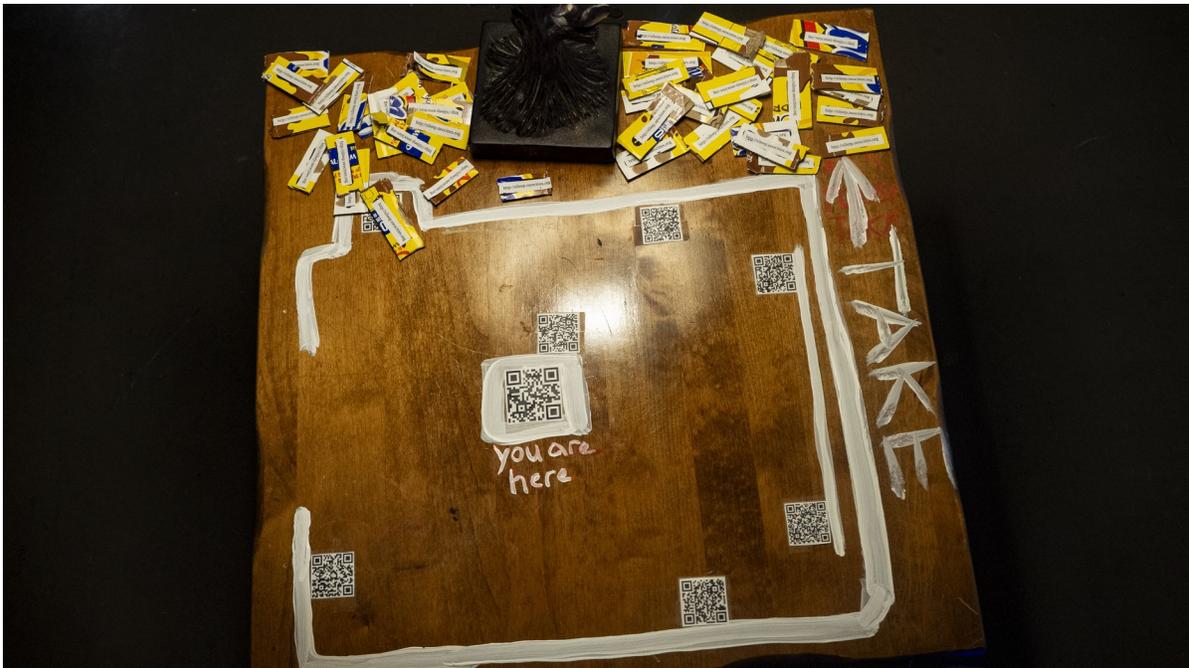
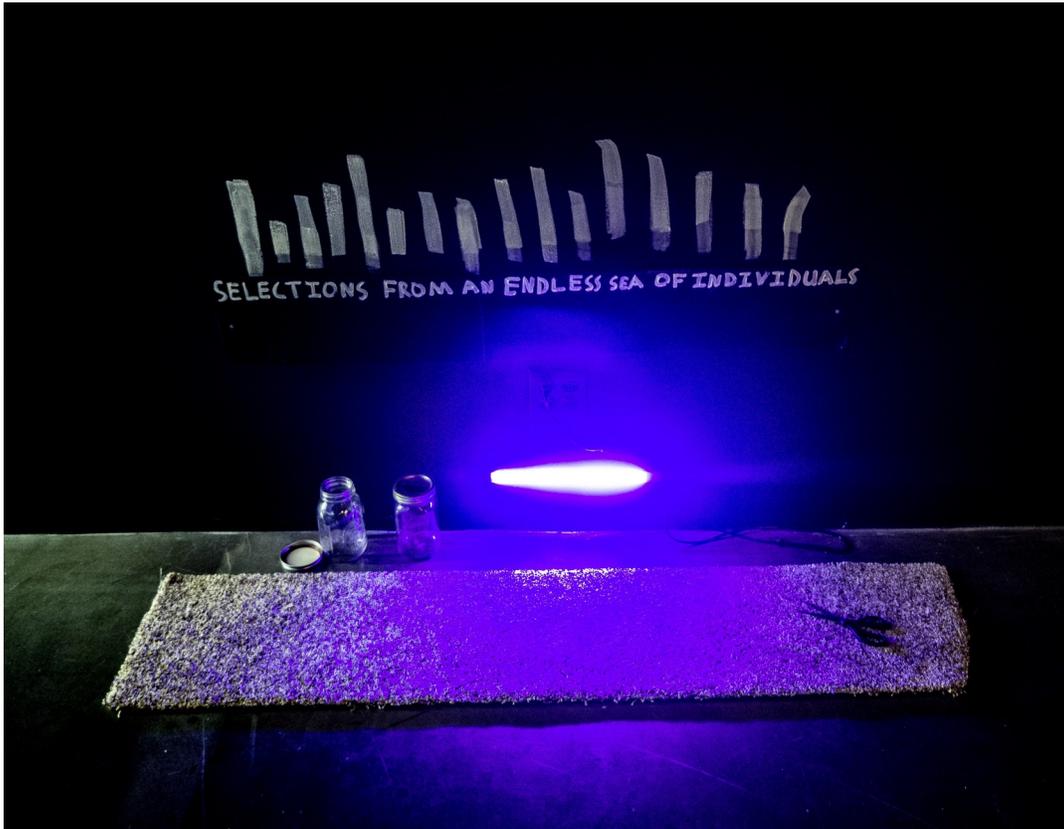




TABLE
 FILTER
 COMPUTER
 CELLPHONE
 CABLES
 ON/OFF
 SCRATCH
 BEVERAGES
 HEADPHONE
 HATE
 POUND
 HYPNOTIC
 BLANKET
 ROTATION
 BLANKET
 MEDIA
 PILLOW
 MOTION
 PILLOW
 SALIVA
 PILLOW
 NOISE
 PILLOW
 SCUM
 PILLOW
 CLIP
 SPACE



This is an exhibition about mental health, as viewed through the lens of Sleep. An insomniac for 20 years, I've experienced memory loss, diminished cognitive function, emotional disturbances, depression, and exhaustion. This taught me to hate the rituals and objects of the night; teeth brushing, shutting off the lights, my bed. Where traditional therapies and pharmacology have failed, I've been attempting to curate my sleeplessness by reconfiguring focus from the futility of the suggested cold, distraction free, dark room, to highly distracted creative pursuits that scratch the itches of anxiety, rather than fostering them.

A concentration of these efforts, [Sleepdotnet\(sleep.noaction.org\)](http://Sleepdotnet(sleep.noaction.org)), is a Web platform I created for myself with the intention of archiving, manipulating, and revising different series of artworks, logs, and other miscellany made in the space between trying to fall asleep and succeeding in doing so. Over the last year it has become the beating heart of my late nights; a constant digital companion from which I can freely exercise myself during what I consider to ~~be~~ be an inevitably recurring phrase of time.

It's not meant to fix anything but positively rewrite the context of my experience.

Driven by and in support of the artwork is this physical installation, comprised of extensions of Sleepdotnet and other activities related to my personal culture of sleep. These are the processes, hauntings, and temples of my sleeplessness.

As you traverse the space, feel free to access the website at your own leisure, and/or use the QR Codes to access supplemental materials that can help unlock the narratives in front of you.



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