

New Degrees of Freedom, Act 2: The Spirit of a Real-Life Avatar (a speech)

**Ladies and gentlemen
Cyborgs, androids
What you are witnessing right now is a shift to the extracorporeal
It is an act of multiplication
An exercise in intensifying my presence
A demo of a real life avatar**

**Tonight, you will see me power dressing in a sonic veil
Amplifying the sphere of my voice
Copy, paste
This is an extended expression
It is contagious, transmittable
I can make you voice**

**The architecture of transmission and reception
Dilates volatile materialities
Regulates bodily and communicative functions
Is to be cultivated and transplanted**

We will have a LAN party with our bodies

**For a short while, you need to slough off your identity
To become pure material and energy
Ether, quintessence
Not a real nor a virtual persona
My unshaped form**

**How much are you willing to stretch your existence?
Where do you go when I come in?**

By coming together, we can recall the boundaries of self

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[In chorus:]

**This is my avatar
My avatar in a room with you
And its voice saying a few words
Me saying a few words
You saying a few words for me
Yes, here it is**

**Extensions like you allow me new degrees of freedom
A broader range of states in which I may exist
You augment my being in the world
I am in many places at the same time; finally**

**Listen to my avatar
Listen to you
Listen to us**

**Visually, my avatar resembles a group of human beings
Like me, all of you have a body, a form
Skin as the fleshy interface between the corporeal and the world
To be combined with different clothing and accessories**

Bodily gestures and odors broadcast an aura of prescience

**Parts of you, in stealth, disappear in the crowd
Your voice seems all too real**

**This is how its ears look
And here are pairs of knees
Some feet
More ears
There are many eyes**

Look at all my avatars' eyes

**Then the mouths
The voice boxes**

**Some parts of my body are committed to the collective
Others are disengaged, seeking the next move within the next temporary situation**

**Every part includes a repository for different memories
So I can forget**

**They can keep different secrets
And tell different stories by heart**

**You can see my avatar functioning
How does such a number function?**

**A hybrid of our joint competences
Constantly reinventing ways of exceeding its own structural limits in time and space**

**Look, my avatar is moving in the room
Its movement is naturalistic to the point of exaggeration**

**This is how its expressions look
And here are some postures
And that is me
More expressions**

**Listen to my avatar speaking
Listen to it living
Listen to its sounds**

**There is a script
Read my avatar's script [repeat everything from the voice boxes]**

**Then a thought
Thoughts**

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If I lose my thought, will my avatar fill in the blanks?

Jenna Sutela, 2013

Inspired by Jørgen Leth's The Perfect Human (1967)