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Narcissus by Seol Lee

SIGGRAPH Asia 2020 : Untitled & Untied





Artist(s): [Seol Lee](#)

Title: Narcissus

Exhibition: [SIGGRAPH Asia 2020: Untitled & Untied](#)

Category:

- [Electronic/Robotic Object](#)
- [Interactive & Monitor-Based](#)

Summary



Sensing the brainwave of an appreciator, creates an interaction that the higher concentration on the reflection on the surface of water, the more blurred observation. That experience reflects the reverse of the Narcissus story and expresses that mirrored image of the participant could not exist as complete subject.




Abstract

Narcissus was a hunter in Greek mythology who fell in love with his own reflection in the water. Narcissus is the origin of the term narcissism.

This artwork, as its name suggests, is based on the myth of Narcissus. A narcissistic ego that conceals the weakness of the individual, focuses energy only on itself. Everyone has narcissism even if a little. Excessive narcissism causes lots of problems from isolation because fascinating by the perfection of oneself makes relationship with the others closed.

Sensing the brainwave of an appreciator, creates an interaction that the higher concentration on the reflection on the surface of water, the more blurred observation. Through this interaction, the viewer is interrupted from being deeply immersed in oneself.

That experience reflects the reverse of the Narcissus story and expresses that mirrored image of the participant could not exist as complete subject. Also, this artwork is referred to the 'Mirror stage' hypothesized by Jacques Lacan(1901-1981). Unlike the ego-psychologists' assertion that we should strengthen our ego, Jacques Lacan points out the narcissistic ego which is imaginary in human beings and says that we can grow up as a healthy subject through acknowledging that we are lacking ego not just strengthening the ego.



Leaves swaying in the wind, water drops in the hands, rattling buses, chattering people. The world is full of senses. Senses always tells us who we are, and we forget about it. In an increasingly fast and complex society, humans lack the time to identify self-existence. Technology – perhaps leading to alienation of human on the one hand – can serve as a means to make an individual clearer by providing an opportunity for self-reflection and objectifying individuals in various ways.

I hope to make an individual to be another sensor that can sense existence of self and the world through my interactive artworks that use sensors as mediums. Then the individual becomes a sensor and also becomes a medium of artworks again. That's what I think of as interaction between interactive artwork and participants. The appreciators will be able to reflect the self-existence by bringing out themselves to feel the things in whole senses that output through themselves.

- *by* Seol Lee -





Technical Information



The EEG headband worn by the viewer is connected to the microcontroller Arduino via Bluetooth communication. The sensors on the forehead and at the earlobe of the participant measure brainwaves and calculate concentration level.

Under the shallow acrylic tank containing water is a mirror with **PDLC film** attached. When electric current is supplied to this film, liquid crystals inside align and allow light to pass through so it become transparent. The transparency of this film is adjusted according to the voltage from 24 to 65V, and the higher the voltage, the more transparent the film becomes.

Depending on the concentration data sent by the EEG headband, the stepping motor rotate the potentiometer to regulate the voltage supplied to the film. Servo motor made some noises so I used a stepping motor. The higher the concentration, the lower the voltage supplied, making the film opaque. As such, when a viewer begins to look in, it reflects clearly, but if the appreciator stare more, the image becomes blurred.

The whole circuit was configured to first reduce the voltage of the outlet to about 60V through the AC Transformer, convert it to DC through the rectification circuit, and then supply electricity to the film via the potentiometer.

Technical Information

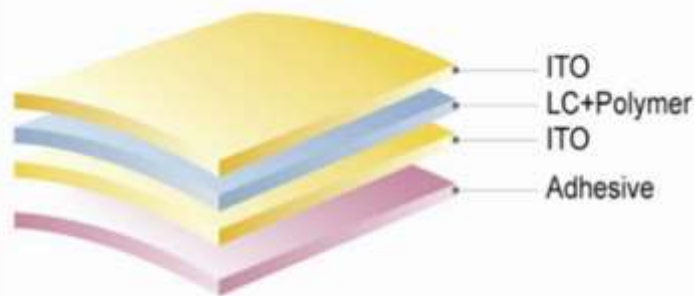
Supplementary note



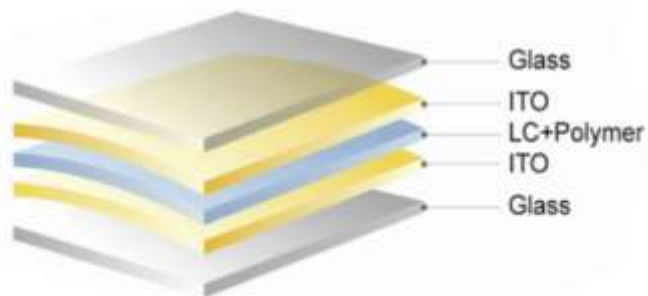
About Artwork Media

PDLC film

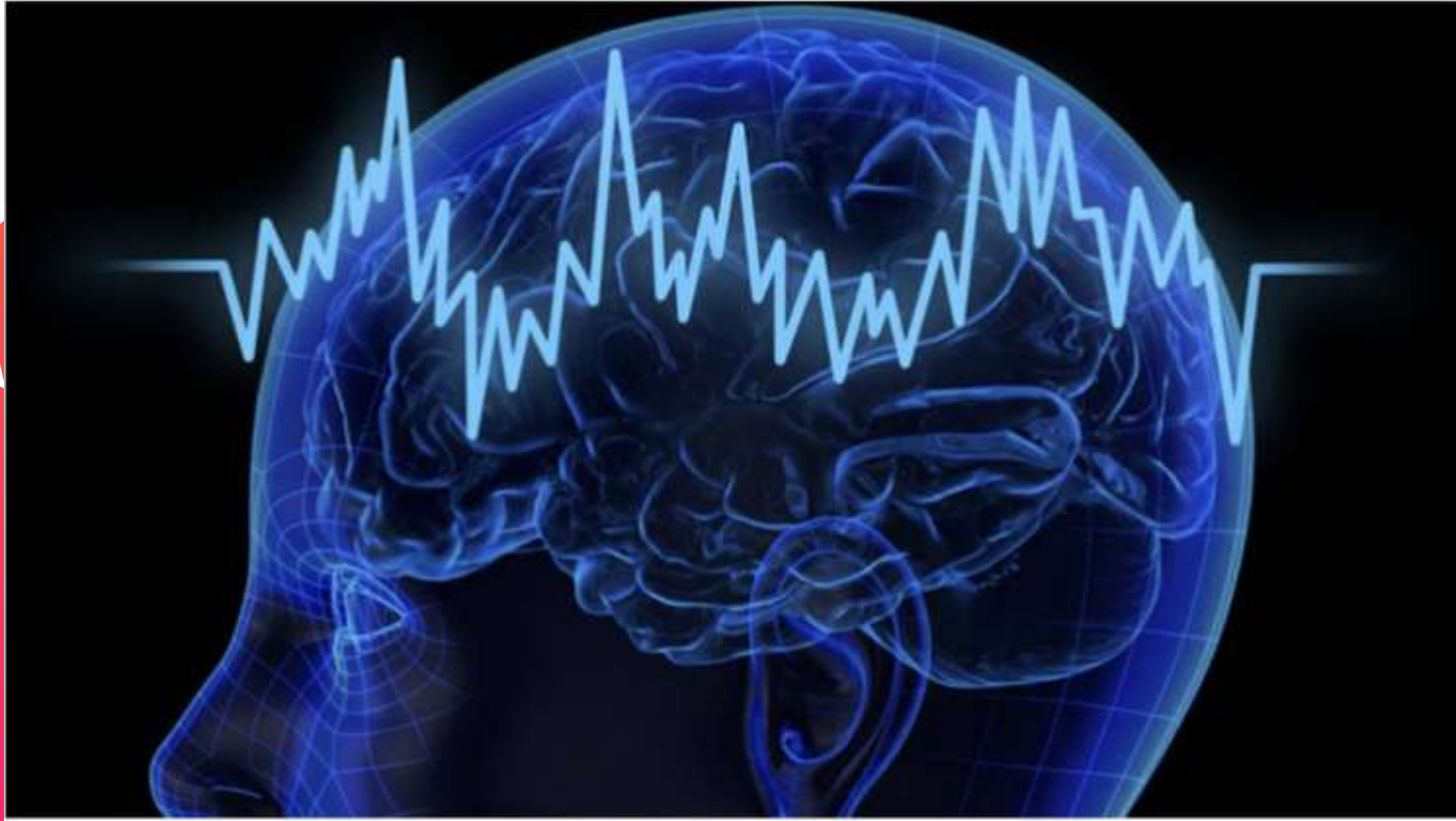
自黏式智慧調光膜



智慧調光膜膠合玻璃



BenQ Materials Corp		機能膜	先進電池材料	醫療產品	防水透氣織物	投資人專區	企業社會責任	關於明基材料
厚度	0.12/0.26 mm(膠合款/背膠款)							
控制模式	On: 透明 / Off: 霧態							
最大尺寸	1,450 x 3,000mm							
光學特性	可見光穿透率	>87%(On) / >76%(Off)						
	霧度	<4%(On) / >97%(Off)						
	視角	160°						
	紫外線遮蔽	>99%(Off)						
電器特性	驅動電壓	36~48V(AC)						
	頻率	50 ~ 60 Hz						
	耗電功率	5~10 W / M2						
	反應時間	Off to On: < 0.01s / On to Off: <0.2s						





Process Information/Story

This installation contains water. In this art project, real water only functions to increase the sense of immersion without being connected to a circuit. But when I installed this work, just because the water was in the same space with electronic circuit, I felt my life seems to be going down. Two hours before the opening of the first exhibition for releasing this work, I lifted it slightly to make a final check and spilled all the water.

Fortunately, the power was not connected at that time. Of course, I had the least design in consideration of this situation, but I was worried about a short circuit so I cleaned up the water, sat down on the floor in suits, and dried the circuit with a heater and a hair dryer for the remaining two hours. The exhibition was successful anyway.

- *by Seol Lee* -

Inspiration Behind the Project



This art project *Narcissus*, as its name suggests, is based on the myth of Narcissus. Narcissus was a hunter in Greek mythology who fell in love with his own reflection in the water.

Narcissus is the origin of the term narcissism. Appreciators look into their own reflections through the small pond like as Narcissus, and are disturbed falling in love with themselves contrary to Narcissus.

Connection



The Metamorphosis of
Narcissus ,1937

Salvador Dali , 1904-1989

Connection



Narcissus
Caravaggio, 1571-1610

Connection



Narcissus
Fabian Zolar



THANK YOU