VIRTUAL WORLDS AND AVATARS



WRATH



TRANSCENDENCE





















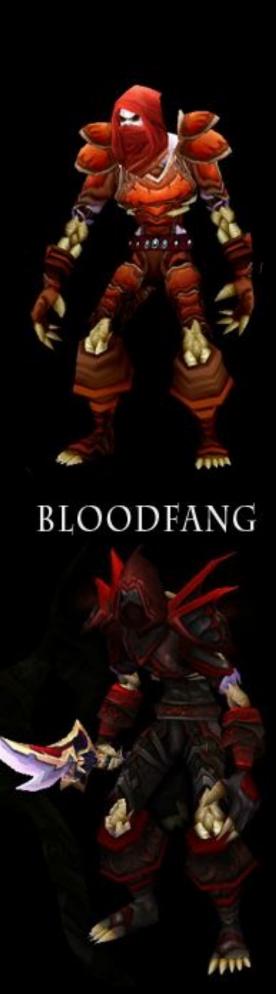




JUDGEMENT







DRAGONSTALKER

CYBERSPACE // MEDIA SPACE

The term cyberspace derives from cybernetics (Nobert Wiener, 1947): "the science of control and communications in the animal and machine."

The cyberspace is a cultural form. Both the organization of space and its use to represent or visualize things have always been a fundamental part of human culture.

Spatial constructions in new media draw on existing traditions (geography, art, architecture), but they are also fundamentally different in one key respect. For the first time, space becomes a media type, such as audio, video, text, etc.

It can be now instantly transmitted, stored and retrieved, compressed, reformatted, streamed, filtered, computed, programmed and interacted with.



EXAMPLES OF EARLY CYBER/VIRTUAL SPACES

Aspen Movie Map (1978)

- View which you could drive through the streets of Aspen, Colorado.
- ► <u>Legible City</u> (1988-91)
 - through.
- ► Osmose (1995)

> The first interactive virtual navigable space - a sort of primitive Google Street

> Virtual space not tied to the simulation of physical reality: it is an imaginary city based on a real city (Amsterdam) made from 3D letters in which you can bike

Slow and cinematic environment controlled by the user's breath (scuba diving)

CYBER SPACES / VIRTUAL ENVIRONMENTS

- MUD Multi-User Dungeons LambMOO
- IRC Internet Relay Chat mIRC/Chat rooms
- ► RPG Role-Play Game Dungeons & Dragons
- MMO Massive Multiplayer Online Second Life
- MMORPG Massive Multiplayer Online Role-Play Game World of Warcraft
- LBMG Location-based Mobile Games Foursquare
- VRG Virtual Reality Game <u>Adr1ft</u>
- ► ARG Augmented Reality Game- <u>Pokemon Go</u>
- ► 360 Video New York Times
- Social Media Facebook, Twitter, Instagram

MUD - LAMBDAMOO

🚽 Telnet british-legends.com

×π Path. You are standing on a path which leads off a road to the north, to a cottage south of you. To the west and east are separate gardens. 50. Flower garden. You are in a well-kept garden. There is an unexpectedly sweet smell here, and you notice lots of flowers. To the east across a path there is more garden. Cliff. You are standing on the edge of a cliff surrounded by forest to the north and a river to the south. A chill wind blows up the unclimbable and unscaled heights. At the base of the cliff you can just make out the shapes of jagged rocks. ÷0. As you approach the edge of the cliff the rock starts to crumble. Hurriedly, you retreat as you feel the ground begin to give way under your feet! *leap You are splattered over a very large area, or at least most of you is. The rest of your remains are, evn now, being eaten by the seagulls (especially your eyes). If you'd have looked properly before you leaped you might have decieded not to jump! Persona updated. Would you like to play again?





VIRTUAL REALITY

>

- > Why we talk about virtual as opposed to real?_
- > Is virtual reality less real than 'real?

POST-MODERN NARRATIVE - THE SECOND SELF

- These virtual worlds are authored by their players, thousands of people in all, often hundreds of people at a time, all logged on from different places.
- ➤ The self is not only decentered but multiplied without limit. There is an unparalleled opportunity to play with one's identity and to "try out" new ones.
- Engagement with computational technology facilitates a series of "second chances"
 - ► to work and rework unresolved personal issues and more generally
 - to think through questions about the nature of self, including questions about definitions of life, intentionality, and intelligence.
- The medium enables the self to explore a social context as well as to reflect on its own nature and powers.



ROLE-PLAYING GAMES

- real life. (the same argument was used for television and movies in the past.
- Turkle argues that RPG can serve as identity workshops
 - game (put herself in somebody's else shoes).
- life.

RPGs usually have a negative image being portrayed as depressing and dangerous environments. Many academics wrongly argues that games are a place for escape the

> E.g.: a 19-year-old girl that was able to resolve personal issues through the

> RPG are able to serve in this evocative capacity precisely because they are not simple escapes from the real to the unreal, but because they stand both in and not in real







ROLE-PLAYING GAMES – NOT A GAME

- to social media platforms (Facebook, Twitter, Instagram).
- > They become not so much an alternative, but a parallel life.





Virtual worlds are not just a game. They do not have a strict goal and work similarly

YOU ARE WHO YOU PRETEND TO BE

- > How many here tried to experience a different self in real life?
 - ... Change the way you dress, speak, your gender, psychological traits...
- >Virtual worlds provide environments for experiences that may be hard to come by in the real world.
- > How many here tried to experience a different self in a virtual world?

• • • •

FREE YOURSELF

- always someone to talk to or something to do.
- > <u>Anonymity</u>: The character does not need to to have its gender or share any into his real life is their choice.
- Invisibility: The character can have any physical description and will be responded to in function of that description.
- ► <u>Multiplicity</u>: Several characters, playing out and playing with different aspects of the self.

➤ <u>Ongoing</u>: It never ends. There are always people logged on to the game; there is

recognizable feature with the player. The degree to which the player brings the game



THE VIRTUAL SELF

- representations we have unlimited possibilities to be many.
- > The very notion of an inner, "true self' is called into question.

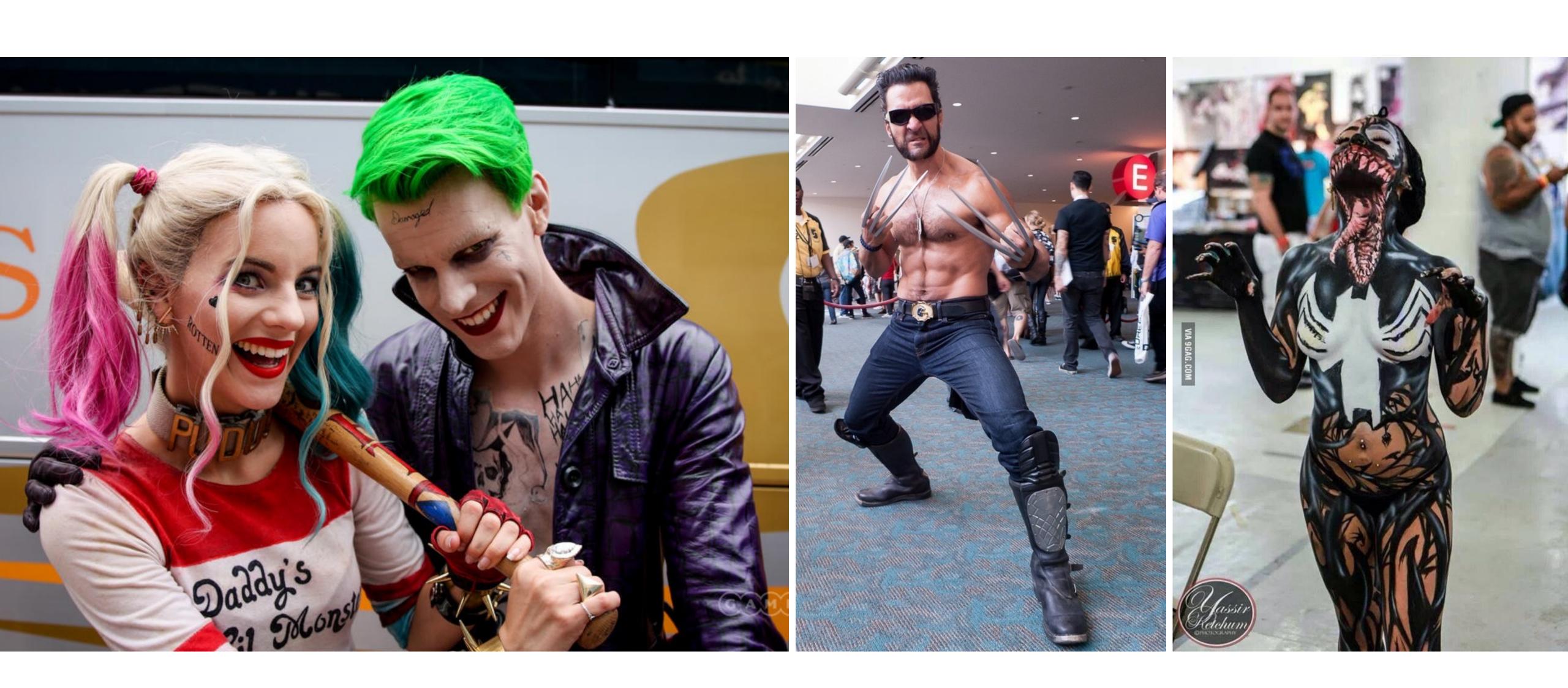


Virtual communities such as MUD and MMORPG are the most dramatic example of the way the culture of simulation challenges traditional notions of human identity.

► Identity, after all, literally means one. When we live through our electronic self-



COSPLAY – WHEN THE ALT–SELF BECOME YOURSELF.



VIRTUAL WORLDS PROVOKE SELF-REFLECTION

- reconsiderations of things taken for granted, for example, about the nature of intelligence, free will, and our notions of what is alive. Eg.:
- women the roles of men.
- ► Gun ownership
- Democratic Participation
- ► Hacking: Dibbell's "A Rape in Cyberspace"



> Turkle calls the virtual reality constructed by computers an evocative object because it provokes self-reflection and stimulates critical thinking. It led to reevaluations and

"Gender-swapping" in virtual reality, whereby men may play the roles of women and

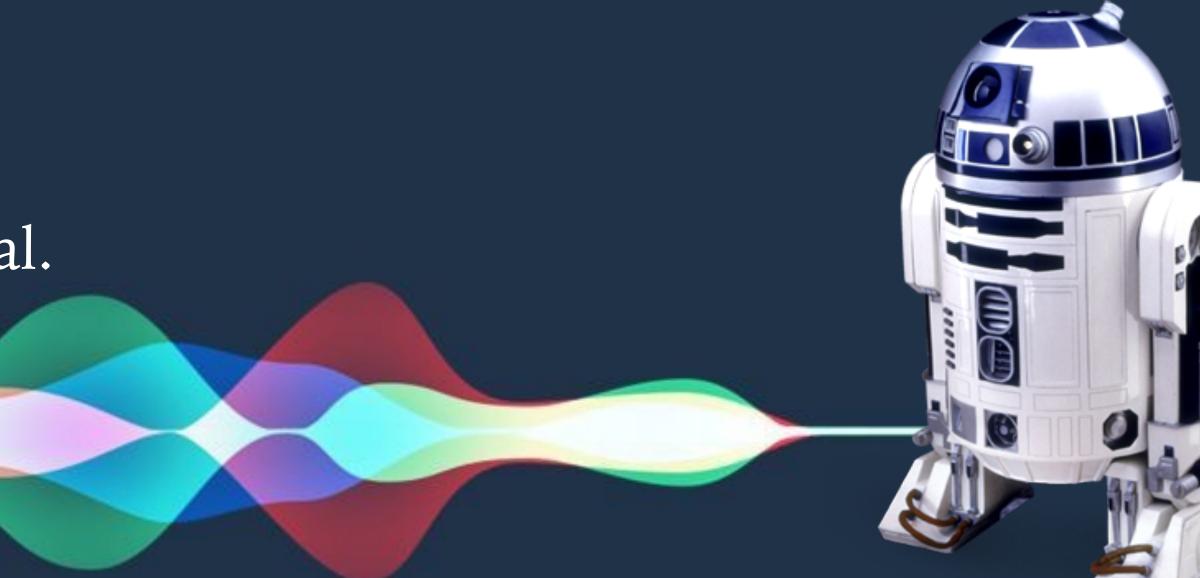


AI & BOTS

- between, it becomes a play space for thinking about the real world.
- \blacktriangleright When people meet a bot or AI they often grant them a "sort of" intelligence smartness, indeed a "sort of' life. But we insist that they lack human essence sense of an "I". We don't see them as humans.
 - Siri and Cortana are just a voice ➤ They are made of artificial material.

> Virtual reality is not "real," but it has a relationship to the real. By being betwixt and

(cognition, uniqueness, soul, etc.). Computers cannot have intentions, feelings, the



UNCANNY VALLEY

- > Examples can be found in robotics, 3D computer animations, and lifelike dolls among others.



► Tin Toy (Pixar, 1988)

> The uncanny valley is the hypothesis that human replicas which appear almost, but not exactly, like real human beings elicit feelings of strangeness and repulsion.



► Mass Effect 3 (Bioware, 2012)

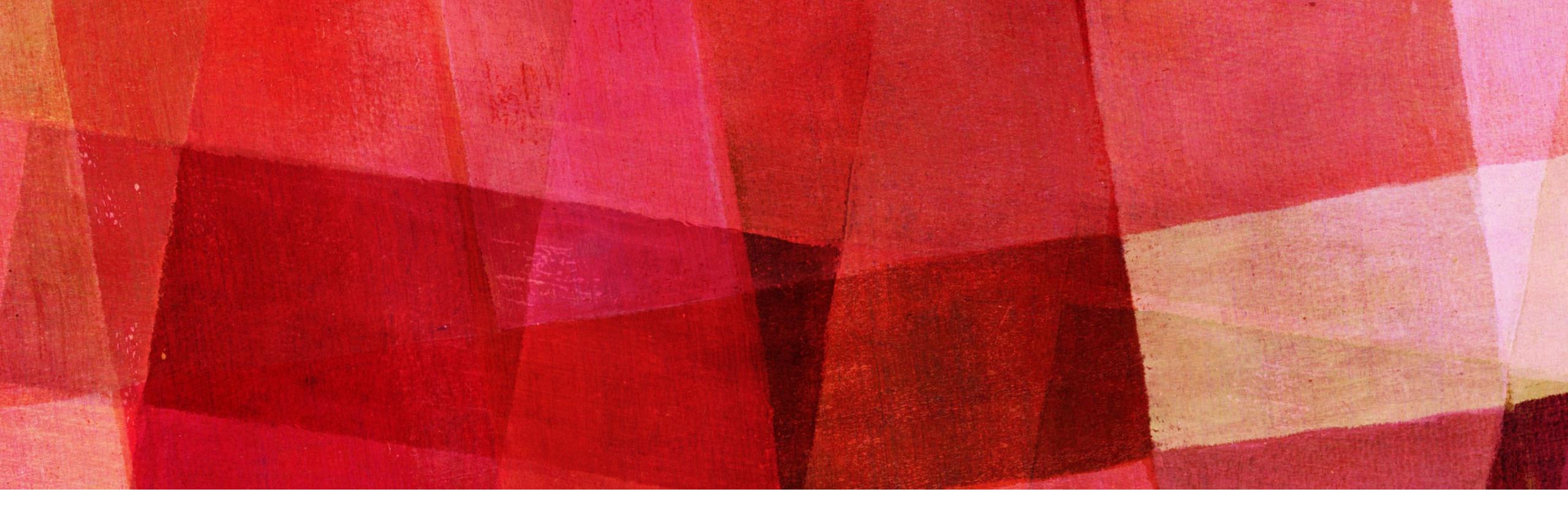
AI ENCOUNTERS

- > It is not uncommon now for us to find ourselves in conversations with AIs.
- > The "thingness" of the bots is not part of your initial encounter or the establishment of your relationship with them.
- > You have unintentionally played out a Turing test in which the program has won.
- > We can start to wondering if an AI should or should not be required to announce their artificiality. What do you think?
- > But then, with people playing robots, there is a new level of self-consciousness about the asymmetry of demanding that robots not play people.













AVATAR FASHION SHOW



