

Abstract

This work is an in-depth exploration of the sense of touch, using it as a dynamic tool to produce participatory and performative artworks. The central aim of my artistic work is to revive positive memories from the past and effectively bring them back to the present. Through an exploration of theoretical underpinnings and a comprehensive series of artistic examples, this work takes you through a multi-dimensional landscape that brings together and explains theories and applications of sensory perception, consciousness and memory, on behalf of artistic practices and disciplines. The work illustrates how artistic methods and practice expand our understanding across disciplines and create space for new epistemological research.

The first chapter looks at the complex interplay between touch and sensation, explaining their distinctive definitions and leading into an analysis of how artistic practice enables sensory perception. The subsequent segments explore pathways from the present moment to a past memory, and its interwoven connection to attention, neuroplasticity, mindfulness and mind wandering. This includes research on the imagination's transformative potential and its connection to envisioning future scenarios, and perspective on creating of agency within participatory practices.

The second chapter underscores the symbiotic relationship between theoretical exploration and artistic realization, ultimately expanding the depth and richness of the research. It questions how touch can evoke or form memories and alter perceptions of presence and one's experience of time. It examines artistic, collaborative or participatory works, which embed the sense of touch and emphasize time, change, continuity and the archival nature through video, drawing, writing, installation or performance. The last part delves into the artistic exploration of touch's impact on memory, emotions, and the human experience.

In conclusion, this thesis navigates a thorough exploration of theoretical concepts and artistic expressions that intersect touch, memory and mindfulness. It examines and establishes connections among instances, illustrating strategies and applicable methods capable of training the mind through artistic, performative practices.