

Artist statement for *Electronic void illusion*, exhibited as part of *Metaverse*, ACE Open, Adelaide, 2022

In considering *Metaverse's* curatorial premise, and in particular, the notion of one's identity or experience being mediated by the internet, I found myself inexorably drawn to the plethora of online personality quizzes that permeate the world wide web. Seduced by the promise of answers to such vexing questions as 'which pop tart are you?' and 'are you more Steve Irwin or Joe Exotic?', I set myself the task of undertaking precisely one thousand such quizzes, with a view to corralling the resulting data into an artwork. This misguided journey of pseudo-self-discovery spanned various corners of the internet, from facile clickbait to earnest fan-created content, to quasi-scientific psychometric testing. The quantity of one thousand was ultimately an arbitrary choice, but one that hopefully speaks to obsession and overload, as well as perhaps aligning the activity with other repetitive, ritual practices related to self-actualisation (such as meditation mantras, positive affirmations, hail Marys and so forth).

In attempting to arrive at an appropriate visual and material expression of the data, I found that despite the advancements of the twenty-first century, the cyberspace of my visual imagination remained anchored to fictional iterations from the 1980s and 1990s, most notably William Gibson's novel *Neuromancer* (1984), Mike Pondsmith's tabletop roleplaying game *Cyberpunk 2020* (1990), and Brett Leonard's film *The Lawnmower Man* (1992). The neon-drenched geometries of these settings have in turn informed the visual language of the work. Screenshots of the results of each of the online quizzes have been digitally manipulated, printed, annotated, and collaged into an isometric pictorial space. Fluorescent lines of polyester thread criss-cross the lattices of the grid, acting as an analogue form of hyperlinking whilst perhaps also invoking the aesthetics of a conspiracy theorist's evidence wall. The collage is augmented by long scrolls of dot-matrix printouts, containing detailed data yielded by buzzfeed.com, 16personalities.com, openpsychometrics.org and their various competitors. The presence of this slightly antiquated mode of printing, along with an overall palette that nods to CRT green monochrome computer monitors, similarly alludes to an earlier era of computing, when the promise of the information superhighway seemed romantic and utopian.

As a late Gen-Xer/early Millennial, I find myself in the curious position of remembering a time before the internet but equally not being able to imagine living without it. This sense of contradiction and ambivalence inevitably creeps into the work, which seems to oscillate between being critical and celebratory of internet culture. This vacillation aside, in the event that my psyche is hacked, overwritten, deleted from the Cloud, or otherwise compromised, I can rest assured that my personality is securely backed up in a non-networked and unassailable hard copy form.