# Ecstatic [X]Reality

A Thesis

Presented in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for the

Degree of Master of Science

with a

Major in Integrated Architecture and Design

in the

College of Graduate Studies

University of Idaho

by

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May, 2020

# Authorization to Submit Thesis

This thesis of Zeth duBois, submitted for the degree of Master of Science with a Major in Integrated Architecture and Design and titled "Ecstatic [X]Reality," has been reviewed in final form. Permission, as indicated by the signatures and dates below is now granted to submit final copies for the College of Graduate Studies for approval.

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# Abstract

For tens of thousands of years, cultures have practiced ecstatic rituals. With the rise of organized religion and the rational scientific revolutions, knowledge of practices and techniques faded into myth. Ecstasy can be described as a highly charged emotional state, that is both volatile and short-lived, presenting the conscious mind with inexplicable mental visions. Contemporary western culture eschews the value of ecstatic ritual, in favor of rational problem-solving. The ecstatic experience is personal, unfathomable, and the only outward signs of its features are in the accounts of subjects relating their experiences. The ephemeral subjectivity of ecstasy presents numerous barriers for the formal investigation of the transformation of ecstasy, in both scientific credo and societal acceptance. A person may use non-invasive mental techniques of meditation, prayer, trance, and the like, to achieve an ecstatic state of mind. Ingesting psychoactive compounds can also lead to ecstasy. Until the 20th century, these processes have been primarily held to be the domain of spiritual exploration. With parallel advances of both inorganic and organic chemistry, scientists discovered psychoactive chemicals inherent in plants reacted in the brain in unforeseen ways. Further exploration of natural compounds and fully human-made laboratory chemicals revealed the existence of neurotransmitters, demonstrating that the experience of consciousness can be directed by temporarily altering brain neurochemistry. The ecstatic experience relates to a state of perception of self in a world of sensation. It is conceivable that that deviation from ordinary frames of reference, as shown by the recordings in the stories of shamans, religious practitioners, yogis, and scientific experimentation, is central to the benefits inherited from an altered state of mind. Evidence has shown that ecstatic ritual well-conceived can have lasting therapeutic effects for mood disorders, assist in overcoming chemical addictions, and enhance overall peace of mind. Accepting that ecstasy is a personal voyage wherein the individual reimagines itself in an altered world, is it also possible to direct the development of strictly external sensations to elicit similar outcomes? This paper will explore the use of cross reality (XR) to craft

uniquely adapted multi-sensory experiences. Cross reality is a technique that makes use of technologies of virtualization?sensory simulation of a believable world?and interaction with adaptive data processing, to include any accessible global data and real-time characteristics of the user. Ecstatic XR offers hitherto unreachable features of altered state consciousness. Chief among them is the opportunity to be observed by third parties?which is to say, empirical, and to some degree, reproducible. Ecstatic XR can be simultaneously a door to spiritual discovery, and a research tool into the workings of the conscious mind [1].

# Acknowledgements

Your acknowledgements.

# Table of Contents

# List of Acronyms

**CoGS** College of Graduate Studies

**VM** Virtual Machine

# Chapter 1: Introduction

Throughout human social development, people have cultivated techniques for achieving ecstatic states of mind. For tens of thousands of years, cultures have practiced ecstatic rituals by temporarily altering the state of perception. Methods range between physically limiting/shaping access to external stimulation to internally altering neurochemical activity. Characteristics of the first pole resolve to practices of prayer, trance, or meditation, utilizing disciplines or techniques to achieve hard to reach brainwave states that minimize occlusion of extra-sensory perception. In the case of neurochemical alterations, states can be achieved via direct regulations in biochemistry. The most effective of these techniques, in terms of accessibility, intensity, and duration, are those induced by the use of powerful exogenous chemicals that radically alter sensory and cognitive processing in the mind. The effects of the methods across this spectrum have been measured in clinical studies, supporting the claim that neurochemistry, brainwave states, and the resulting neurological data visible in cognitive processing can be temporarily altered [**?**].

## 1.1 Example Section

Section text.

### 1.1.1 Example Subsection

Subsection text.

## 1.2 Examples of acronyms

Example of acronym: College of Graduate Studies (CoGS) Using it again: CoGS Plural one: Virtual Machines (VMs)

# Chapter 2: Summary and Conclusions

Example summary and conclusions. You can refer to chapters and sections using their label, e.g Chapter 1.

# References

[1] Robin L. Carhart-Harris, David Erritzoe, Tim Williams, James M. Stone, Laurence J. Reed, Alessandro Colasanti, Robin J. Tyacke, Robert Leech, Andrea L. Malizia, Kevin Murphy, Peter Hobden, John Evans, Amanda Feilding, Richard G. Wise, and David J. Nutt. Neural correlates of the psychedelic state as determined by fMRI studies with psilocybin. *Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences*, 109(6):2138, February 2012.

# Appendix A: Your fist appendix

First appendix content