

## Body Connected to the Internet

Artist: Shikun Wang

Format: Installation with Performance

Duration: Variable

### Statement

In the artwork "Body Connected to the Internet", the artist connects their body as a "device" to the Internet, opening up the control of their body to be accessed and "invaded" by users. Through this, they explore the vulnerability and challenged subjectivity of individuals in today's complex technological environment. The artwork primarily utilizes TENS/EMS devices and sets up a remote control system on the Internet, allowing anonymous remote access to the artist's body for observation and control.

"Morning arrives, and the vibration of my smartwatch wakes me up. Reluctantly, I open my eyes, facing the glaring square screen on my wrist. While dismissing the alarm, I take a moment to check last night's sleep quality, finding 21 unread messages." This scene reveals our constant and tight connection to the Internet, as cyberspace gradually sheds its sci-fi aura and becomes our reality. With the legalization of invasive wearable devices, the boundaries between humans and machines will further blur, and the human body is undergoing digitalization.

In the realm of network communication, the phrase "Device connected to the internet" is commonly used to convey that a device has successfully connected to the Internet. In that moment of "Device connected to the internet," a single device obtains authentication and seemingly acquires a purpose, injecting it with a digital life. Countless interconnected devices constitute today's vast Internet ecosystem, transcending hierarchical relationships and possessing significant real-world power. In turn, it reshapes human society, forms new signaling pathways, alters our perception of time and space, influences our production relations, controls the operation and development of human society, and even affects human existence itself.

In this artwork, the artist's body acts as a device connected to the Internet, transmitting physiological signals while simultaneously receiving control commands. By utilizing TENS/EMS devices, the artwork demonstrates the phenomenon of technology controlling human muscles. TENS/EMS devices directly apply pulse currents to muscles, causing them to contract, bypassing the central nervous system and rendering the body beyond the direct control of human consciousness. This phenomenon is akin to the network hijacking observed in cyber-attacks. By exerting direct control over muscles, technology raises important discussions on power, control, and autonomy.

Through this artwork, the audience is prompted to engage in profound reflections on the relationship between technology and humanity. Exploring theories of control, the artwork serves as a reminder to critically examine the impact of technology on the body and society, as well as the ethical questions it may raise. The interconnectedness of our bodies and the Internet propels the interaction between humans and technology to new frontiers, highlighting the importance of individual autonomy and power balance, especially in the presence of TENS/EMS devices and invasive wearable technologies. It stimulates contemplation among the audience regarding power dynamics, privacy concerns, and individual sovereignty in the relationship between humans and technology.



( The photograph was taken at Goldsmiths.)

