

Judit Navratil

The center of work is the essence and creation of connections: the grandmother spider spirit. My practice is multivalent, engaging performance, social practices, drawing, as well as video, augmented and virtual reality.

I have moved between several different countries and cultures, and as an immigrant, I've relied on digital means to connect to people and places in an attempt to construct "home," long before the pandemic. My projects are affective mappings of what it means to continuously oscillate between analog and digital, past and future, and being present. I develop #memoryconnectors by observing topophilia and translating these energies into the Metaverse.

I've been developing a multi-layered virtual reality project called Szívküldi Lakótelep (szívküldi= heart-sent, lakótelep=social housing neighborhood) since 2018, that considers the possibilities and dangers of 'home' in cyberspace. This form is based on my upbringing being flown on large kites and growing up in a comfort flat on the 8th floor in the late communist era of Hungary. The Neighborhood's districts build on each other. The shell of one area becomes the beginning structure for another, creating a self-recycling, rhizomatic system. The social and physical aspects of this project are just as important as the use of VR technology. The Digital Doulas Workshops, as collaborative experiments, used to function as consciousness-shaping gatherings in which we could face our anxieties, re-think our physical and psychological pre-pandemic conditions. These communal forums – the Digital Doulas Workshop, MÉTA Circles and Long Distance Somersault Group Rolling Workshop used to maintain balance between social and virtual realities, not knowing how soon #movingonline becomes our new reality.

VR Art Camp is the newest sector of the Szívküldi Lakótelep to serve our art community during the transitional and groundless period of physical distancing. Art Camp is a homesome virtual art residency and a bi-monthly gathering. Womxn and artists from underrepresented groups investigate the possibilities of creating and inhabiting a virtual communal place with care, cultivate this layer of our social fabric based on radical inclusion, cyber-intentionality and elevate the shift of our up-scaling digital existence together. It accumulates in a Show'n Tell event, when the resident artists guide visitors through their VR studios. Art Camp is a bridge for those, whose practice is not rooted in digital media and for a diverse community with different voices and approaches.

I use my body-device to keep balance through my compass-meditation: the Long Distance Somersault career. Rolling as far as I can helps me to connect with place, gaze in the Eye of the Hurricane and seek higher alternatives.