

# MEEMM

**By:** Ferran Altarriba Bertran

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# INTRODUCTION

This project is an interactive visual art piece within the context of an exhibition. The central concept in the exhibition is IDENTITY, which can be approached in many different ways. Before describing the project, let's have an overview look at the research made about the concept of identity.

## Identity as linguistic area

Whatever is true in one form of words, is true in every other form of words, which conveys the same meaning. *"A rose by any other name would smell as sweet."*

-According to Cambridge English Dictionary:

***"who a person is, or the qualities of a person or group which make them different from others"***

-According to Oxford English Dictionary:

***"the fact of being who or what a person or thing is"***

***"the characteristics determining who or what a person or thing is"***

***"[as modifier] (of an object) serving to establish who the holder, owner, or wearer is by bearing their name and often other details such as a signature or photograph"***

***"a close similarity or affinity"***

***"Mathematics (also identity operation) a transformation that leaves an object unchanged"***

***"(also identity element) an element of a set which, if combined with another element by a specified binary operation, leaves that element unchanged"***

***"Mathematics the equality of two expressions for all values of the quantities expressed by letters, or an equation expressing this"***

## Identity as philosophical area

The philosophical concept of identity concerns a relation, specifically, a relation that  $x$  and  $y$  stand in just in case they are one and the same thing, or *identical* to each other.

## Identity as philosophical area

The sociological notion of identity has to do with a person's self-conception, social presentation, and more generally, the aspects of a person that make them unique, or qualitatively different from others.

### Related concepts

- Law of identity: [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Law\\_of\\_identity](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Law_of_identity)
- "Identity" as a philosophical concept: [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Identity\\_\(philosophy\)](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Identity_(philosophy))
- Personal identity: [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Personal\\_identity\\_\(philosophy\)](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Personal_identity_(philosophy))
- "Identity" according to Social Science: [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Identity\\_\(social\\_science\)](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Identity_(social_science))
- Multiple identity: [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Multiple\\_identity](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Multiple_identity)
- Philosophy of SELF: [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Self\\_\(philosophy\)](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Self_(philosophy))
- Individuality: <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Individuality>
- Human self-reflection: [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Human\\_self-reflection](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Human_self-reflection)
- Identity negotiation: [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Identity\\_negotiation](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Identity_negotiation)
- Identity formation: [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Identity\\_formation](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Identity_formation)
- Being and Time, by Heidegger: [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Being\\_and\\_Time](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Being_and_Time)
- "Subject" according to philosophy: [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Subject\\_\(philosophy\)#Nietzsche.27s\\_critique\\_of\\_the\\_subject](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Subject_(philosophy)#Nietzsche.27s_critique_of_the_subject)
- Identity according to Heraclitus: <http://en.wikiquote.org/wiki/Heraclitus>

After this research, a deep picture of the concept of identity could be done. Therefore, some interesting wonders came up.

- If x and y share all their properties, are they one and the same thing?
- If x and y are identical (are the same thing), must they always be identical?
- Are they *necessarily* identical?
- What does it mean for an object to be the same, if it changes over time?
- Is an apple the same as an apple+1?
- What has to be the case for a person x at one time and a person y at a later time to be one and the same person?
- What does it mean for an object to be the same as itself?
- If an object's parts are entirely replaced over time, as in the Ship of Theseus example, in what way is it the same?
- Can something exist identically in multiple different worlds (transworld identity)?
- What features or traits characterize a given person at one time?
- Is identity based on substance or in mind?
- If in mind, does it concern soul or consciousness?

- How a supposedly immaterial mind can influence a material body and vice-versa?
- Personal identity consists [not in the identity of substance] but in the identity of consciousness, wherein if Socrates and the present mayor of Queenborough agree, they are the same person: if the same Socrates waking and sleeping do not partake of the same consciousness, Socrates waking and sleeping is not the same person. And to punish Socrates waking for what sleeping Socrates thought, and waking Socrates was never conscious of, would be no more right, than to punish one twin for what his brother-twin did, whereof he knew nothing, because their outsides were so like, that they could not be distinguished; for such twins have been seen.
- Hume pointed out that we tend to think that we are the same person we were five years ago. Though we've changed in many respects, the same person appears present as was present then. We might start thinking about which features can be changed without changing the underlying self.
- Another view of personal identity is known as the no-self theory. According to this view the self cannot be reduced to a bundle because the concept of a self is incompatible with the idea of a bundle. This is because the idea of a bundle implies the notion of bodily or psychological relations that do not in fact exist.

# THE CONCEPT

Identity is, probably, the most important thing for a person in his or her life. We all work constantly to define our own one and, even though we sometimes do it unconsciously, we put a lot of effort on it along our whole lives.

According to this, can you imagine how interesting would be to be able to turn those identities into visual things? But, as “identity” is a very ethereal and wide concept, how can we do it? That’s the goal of this project. Making identities become visual stuff, beautiful stuff (understanding “beautiful” in the widest definition, we are not gonna discuss about it now!). Identities have many characteristics that make them highly attractive. They are...

- **Deep and complex**
- Different and **exclusive for every individual** but, at the same time, **parts of them are shared**
- A **result of real life experiences**, so they depend on what the individual has experienced
- A **constantly evolving** element, both **influenced by internal and external facts**. *From here arises an existential question: as we evolve and our identities change, are we the same and only person all our whole life?*
- The most reliable **definition** about what someone or something is

This project is going to think over the concept of personal identity in the broadest definition, especially concerning about how experiences affect it, becoming something like an **experiencity**. How do experiences modify our human condition? How do they transform us? This project’s approach to those questions is that every experience an individual has redefines his/her identity, turning it into a new one (in a variable degree of change). Heraclitus quote:

***“You could not step twice into the same river; for other waters are ever flowing on to you.”***

It is clear that it would be very interesting to turn all identity characteristics of a person into some kind of “picture” that visually represents it. To “paint” the appearance of our personality. Therefore, this project’s goal is to both give visitors a picture of their identities and make them think over who are they and why they are.

How is all this conceptual stuff going to be in the exhibition? We are going to turn a normal room into a place where visitors are going to think over all this stuff. The process is going to be the following:

- 1- When they first enter into the room, a camera is going to record them and project their image (only their body, not the surrounding elements) over a black background in the front wall of the room -> **THEIR IDENTITY ISOLATED FROM THEIR ENVIRONMENT, BEFORE HAVING**

## A NEW EXPERIENCE

2- Some seconds later, visitor's body image is going to get decomposed in small particles that are going to fall to the floor of the wall -> THEIR IDENTITY BEING CRASHED DUE TO AN EXPERIENCE

3- From here, the visitor's movements and actions within the room are going to make the particles move and create a new picture, a new shape -> VISITOR'S NEW IDENTITY AFTER A AN EXPERIENCE

## THE NAME: *MEEMM*

So now that the concept is clear, let's justify the name of the project and, as also important, the whole exhibition. We are going to start with this last.

### **ar'dentiti**

An identity is something unique for each individual. There can be some similar things between two identities, but they are never going to be identical. Languages are also different between them, and unique. But phonetic characters are the same for each language, they work the same way... They are universal. The main thing in this name proposal is the contrast between the content (something individually different) and the shape (something universal).

Now that the name of the exhibition is assumed, let's talk about the one for the concrete piece we are defining.

### **MEEMM**

This installation reshapes a human body as a metaphor of the identity changes that happen in every experience the individual has. Therefore, the name is an evolution/reshape of the pronoun ME, in a random way, not fixed.

# THE SPACE

The space where the installation is placed is going to be its actual format/support. Therefore, it has to own some characteristics and feed some needs:

## 1- Be conceptually related to the core theme: IDENTITY

The space is going to be a personal room, as it is the place where people project their identities the most. It's the most intimate space an individual can own. Moreover, the main element in the installation (the visual representation) is going to be projected over a wall, becoming something like a poster or picture (one of the most typical identitary elements in a room).

## 2- Give visitors a sensation of neutrality

The space must be as neutral as possible, both giving all the visual impact and importance to the visual representation of the identity and conceptually becoming some kind of "canvas" where visitors "paint" their identity. Therefore, the whole room (and atrezzo) is going to be painted in white color.

## 3- Provide enough atrezzo elements and potential actions to (meaningfully) track individual's key characteristics

Curiosity:

- Wardrobe, open it to find what's inside
- Movement around the room, to figure out what's happening there

Proactivity

- Sitting in the desk and acting with the objects over it
- Movement around the room, to figure out what's happening there
- The sound the user generates

Reflexion

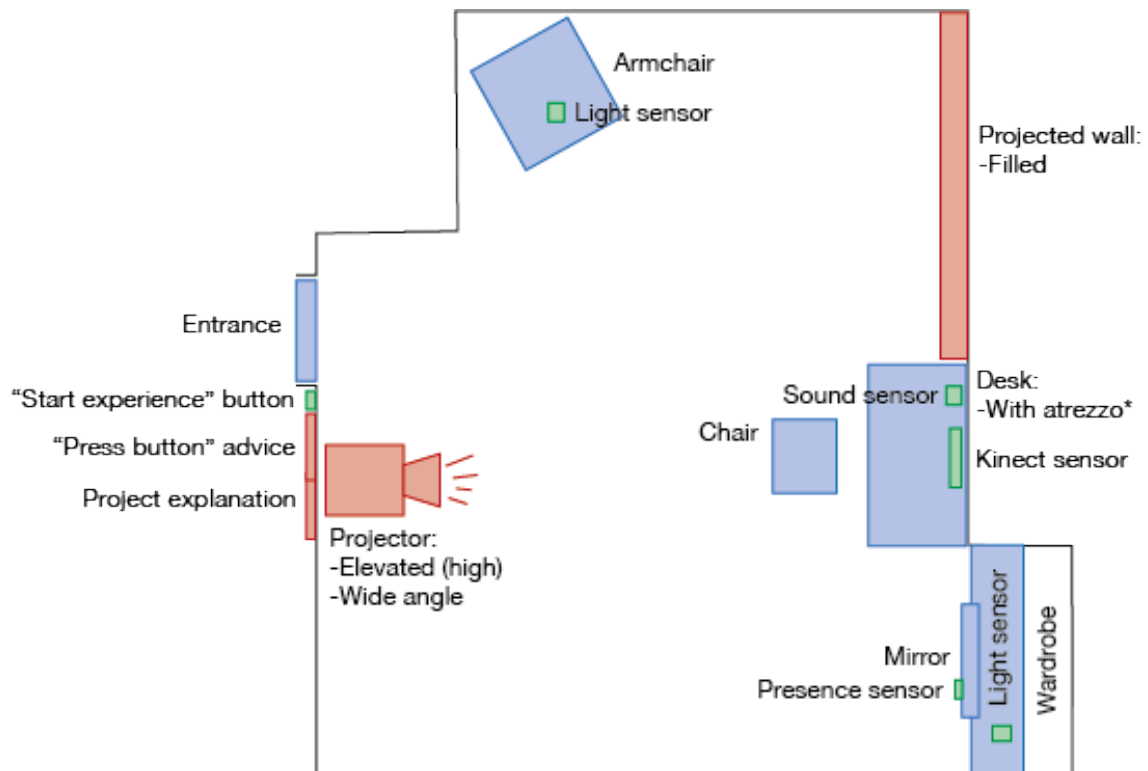
- Sitting in the armchair

Self-awareness

- Looking at him or herself through the mirror

#### 4- Give the correct value to each action in relation to characteristics

- Sit in the armchair: 100% reflexion
- Look in the mirror: 100% self awareness
- Look inside the wardrobe: 100% curiosity
- Sit and act in the desk: 100% proactivity
- Move around the room: 50% proactivity, 50% curiosity
- Talk: 70% proactivity, 30% reflexion



\*Empty photo frame, pens/pencils, paper sheets...

- INPUTS
- OUTPUTS
- ATREZZO



# VISUAL REPRESENTATION

Identity has a metaphysical slope, but also a physical one. According to the fact that a human body (even not only human body, all materia is under this rule) is made of multiple particles, it's quite interesting to base the visual representation on them. Therefore, the main element in the "Identity Picture" is going to be a group of particles, which will be small parts of the visitor's body. In this way, the project is not only going to concern about the metaphysical slope of identity but also think over the physical one.

Thus, the metaphysical slope is going to make the particles move (according to the visitor's behaviour within the room). On the other hand, the physical slope is going to be inherent in the particles, being metaphors of biological cells. As we are talking about human identity, the core physical moving element has to be the core element in a human body: a cell.

As seen, this project tries to mix both philosophy (something quite common in art) with some scientific things (such as biology...) related to the study of human being, in order to represent exactly this, human being, as deeper as possible.

## Elements to representate

### Curiosity:

- Main color: Purple
- Main action: Create growing rings

### Proactivity

- Main color: Yellow
- Main action: Move particles
- Secondary action: Drop other secondary particles

### Reflexion

- Main color: Green
- Main action: Make particles move over themselves (shake, circular movement over a close point, wander locally...)

### Self-awareness

- Main color: Blue
- Main action: Connect particles (as neurones, creating a network)

*\* Color decision influeced by: [http://blog.visual.ly/seeing-color-through-infographics-and-data-visualizations/?fb\\_action\\_ids=10151612298449365&fb\\_action\\_types=og.likes&fb\\_source=other\\_multiline&action\\_object\\_map=%7B%2210151612298449365%22%3A140977986074891%7D&action\\_type\\_map=%7B%2210151612298449365%22%3A%22og.likes%22%7D&action\\_ref\\_map=%5B%5D](http://blog.visual.ly/seeing-color-through-infographics-and-data-visualizations/?fb_action_ids=10151612298449365&fb_action_types=og.likes&fb_source=other_multiline&action_object_map=%7B%2210151612298449365%22%3A140977986074891%7D&action_type_map=%7B%2210151612298449365%22%3A%22og.likes%22%7D&action_ref_map=%5B%5D)*