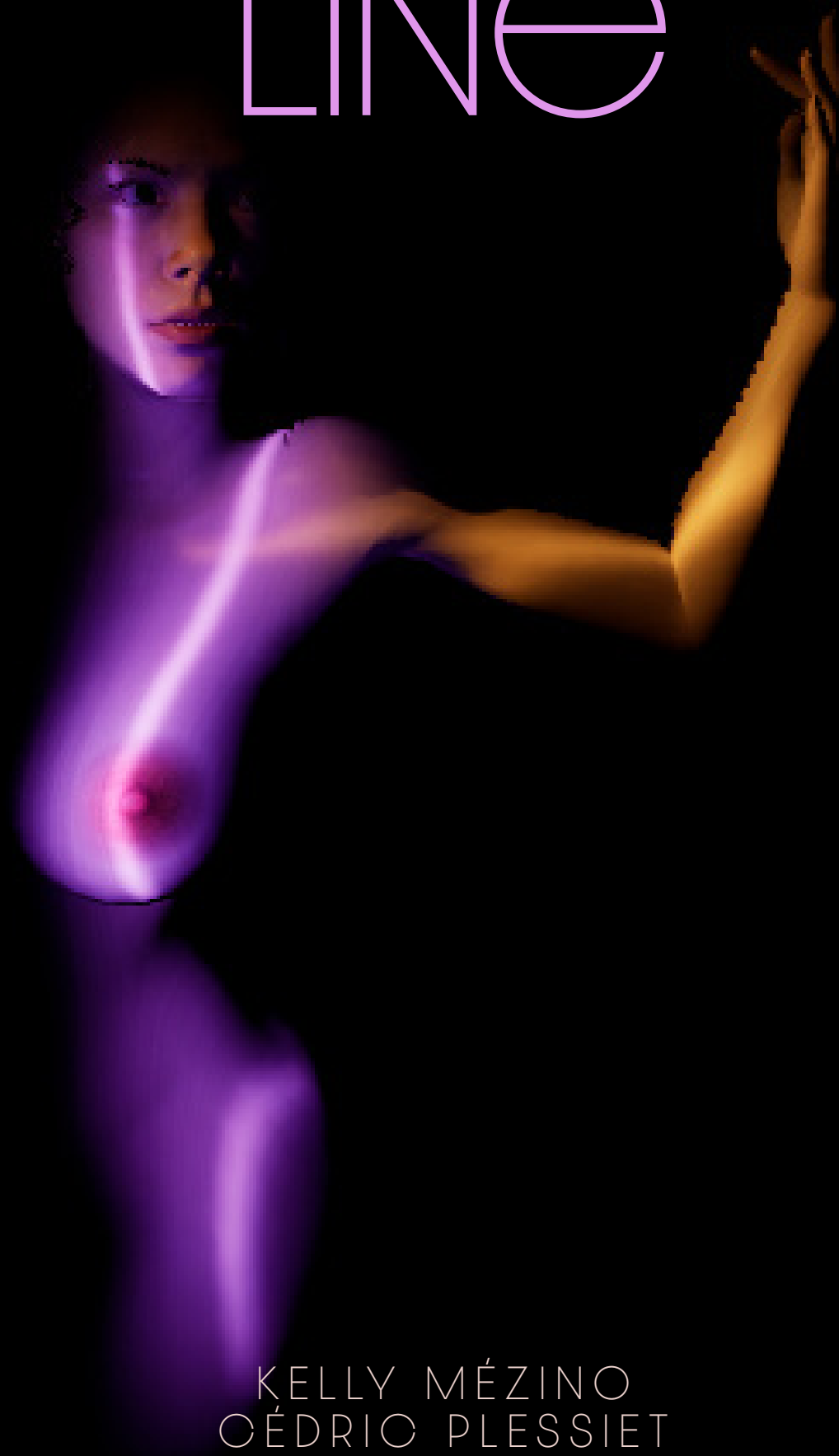# LINE

KELLY MÉZINO
CÉDRIC PLESSIET

PRESENTATION OF THE ARTISTS

KELLY MÉZINO

A multifaceted artist with a background in live performance, Kelly Mézino collaborates with Cédric Plessiet in her role as a model. Since their meeting in 2016, the artist-researcher duo has been exploring the many dimensions of the avatar. Through both technical and sensitive approaches, they delve into notions of "extimacy" and representation. Offering a more organic and realistic perspective, Kelly brings to their joint works a palette of bodily expressions that questions the relationship to the double-other and the virtual.

Driven by a strong sense of aesthetics, she co-constructs a sensory relationship with the image, where the spectator's interactive role is to create a dialogue with the digital entity: the Kellynoide. This work, rooted in deep identification, is approached through the lens of the real—collecting traces, voices, textures, and gestures of the model—to enable recreation. This process allows for an analysis of the real/virtual and reality/imaginary relationships across various media. Thanks to the tools developed through their collaboration, Kelly Mézino expands her practice, pushing the boundaries of representation on a stage where the avatar fully belongs.

CÉDRIC PLESSIET

Cédric Plessiet is a university professor and head of the Digital Images and Virtual Reality team (INREV, EA410 AIAC) at Université Paris 8. Both a digital artist and a researcher, he has exhibited his work at numerous digital art festivals (Ars Electronica Linz, Recto Verso, Laval Virtual...) and presented his research at major conferences (Eurographics, Visigrapp...). His current research focuses on semi-autonomous virtual actors and digital doubles, involving fields such as motion capture, real-time engines, and virtual reality.

As both an artist and a programmer, he develops his own tools, which he uses in digital artworks exhibited in France and abroad. He is the author of numerous articles and book chapters in the fields of digital art and computer science.

Since 2016, he has been collaborating with Kelly Mézino on the Kellynoïde project — the creation of an autonomous double used for research, performances, conferences, and digital artworks. Together, they have co-authored several articles and book chapters, and presented their work at international scientific conferences and major digital art festivals.

THAT INTIMATE MOMENT BETWEEN THE ARTIST AND THE MUSE

Line is an intimate virtual reality installation that invites the viewer into a dimly lit space to encounter the Kellynoïde, the autonomous digital double of artist and performer Kelly Mézino. Wearing a VR headset and using their hands to guide beams of colored light, the spectator explores the presence of this elusive virtual being. The Kellynoïde responds to the light projected onto her body: if the gesture is gentle and respectful, she may offer herself to the gaze; if it feels invasive or abrupt, she may retreat, hide, or turn away. A bond of trust must be formed (or not) between this virtual muse and the one who seeks to look at her.

This work reimagines the fragile first moment between an artist and their model: the peering that seeks, the body that offers itself to it, the tension of a trust not yet earned. Through light, motion, and speech, a silent negotiation unfolds. The virtual model is not passive: she judges, responds, and evolves. Her behavior is shaped by a neural network that learns from each interaction, creating the illusion of sensitivity, even of desire.

More than a simulation, Line is a simulacrum , a poetic fiction grounded in technological precision. It explores the boundaries of intimacy, autonomy, and illusion. The encounter is not only visual but emotional: the spectator's movements and voice trigger the Kellynoïde's reactions, making each session a unique choreography between human and digital presence. The installation does not attempt to recreate reality, but to question its fabric through a sensitive and affective exchange

Emerging from years of artistic collaboration and technological research, Line is also a reflection on authorship and embodiment. It blurs the boundaries between the creator, the model, and the artificial double. Inspired by Pygmalion, informed by AI research and performance studies, it brings to life a new kind of muse: one that observes us as much as we observe her.

FROM MODEL TO VIRTUAL DOUBLE

The Kellynoïde is not a reconstruction, but a transformation. She carries the gestures, the voice, and the appearance of Kelly Mézino; yet she is something else entirely. Born from scans, code, motion-capture and memory, she stands at the threshold between presence and projection. No longer simply a model, she becomes a counterpart, a digital muse who resists as much as she reveals, who learns from those who seek her, and who sometimes quietly disappears

The creation of the Kellynoïde is the result of Cédric Plessiet's long-standing research on the concept of the «double-other»: a body of work that has been the subject of several academic publications. Kelly Mézino, as both collaborator and performer, has been the privileged subject of these experiments, lending her image, gestures, and voice to the exploration of what it means to digitize presence. Through this ongoing artistic and scientific process, she became not only the model, but also the muse and the mirror: the one from whom the virtual other emerges.
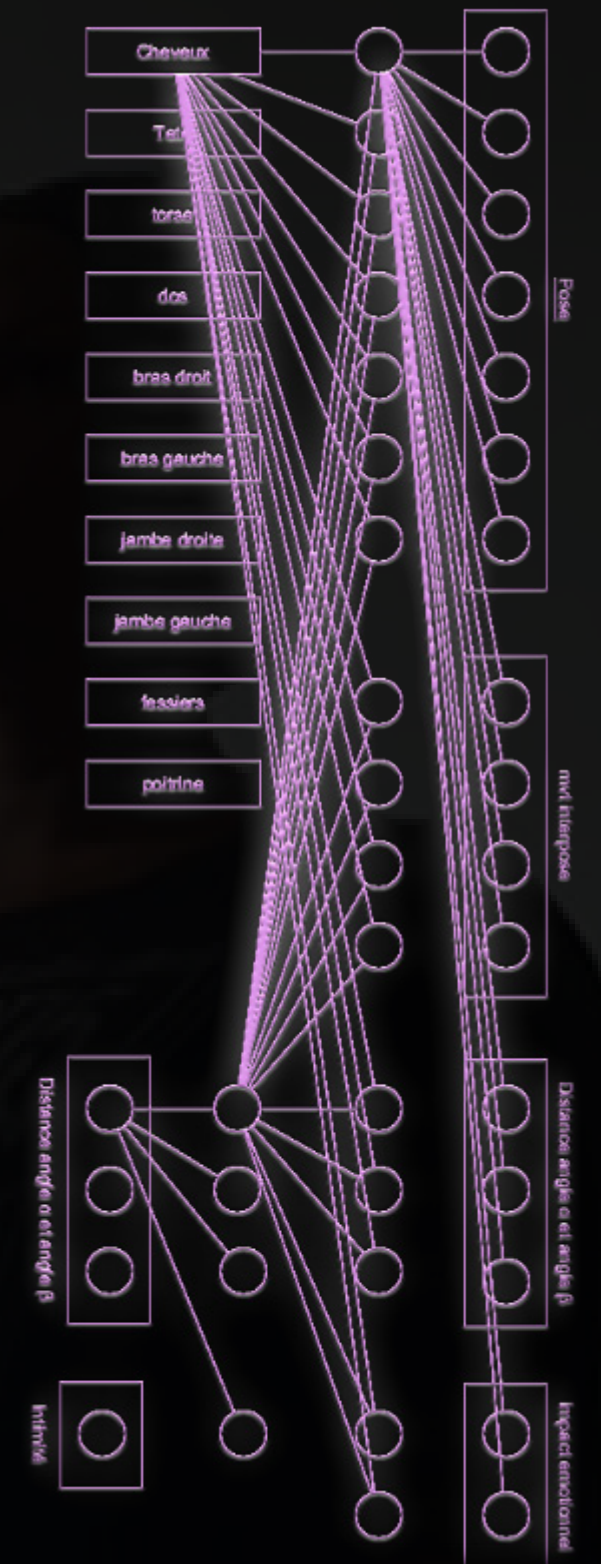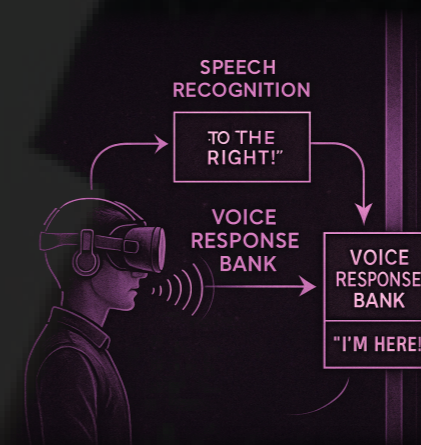
A PERCEPTIVE PRESENCE

The Kellynoïde's behavior is driven by a custom neural network trained to interpret the viewer's gestures in real time. It analyzes where and how the projected light touches her body, how fast or how close the interaction is, and adjusts her posture accordingly. If the movement is soft and respectful, she may offer herself to the peering. If it feels intrusive, she might withdraw, turn away, or disappear. A feedback mechanism allows her to adapt slightly over time, creating the illusion of mood or memory.

The neural architecture includes a feedback loop, allowing the Kellynoïde to adapt in real time. The model adjusts its synaptic weights slightly with each interaction, preserving traces of past encounters. This enables the entity to develop a quasi-memory, not of individuals, but of patterns, leading to behaviors that suggest mood, preference, and hesitation. Though the learning remains shallow (non-destructive to core behaviors), it gives the illusion of a deepening personality, inviting the viewer to interpret her reactions emotionally.

Her voice, composed of short pre-recorded phrases spoken by Kelly Mézino, is triggered through a simple speech recognition system. When the viewer speaks, specific keywords activate matching responses such as "I'm here" or "To the right," reinforcing the sense of presence and co-presence in this shared virtual space.

INSTALLATION

Floor Dimensions:
Interaction area: 2.5 m × 2.5 m

Participants:

- The spectator: equipped with an HTC Vive headset, a Leap Motion sensor (for gesture tracking), and a microphone (for real-time voice input).
- The hidden performer (Kelly Mézino): concealed behind an opaque curtain or screen, she embodies Line within the virtual space and modulates its behavior.
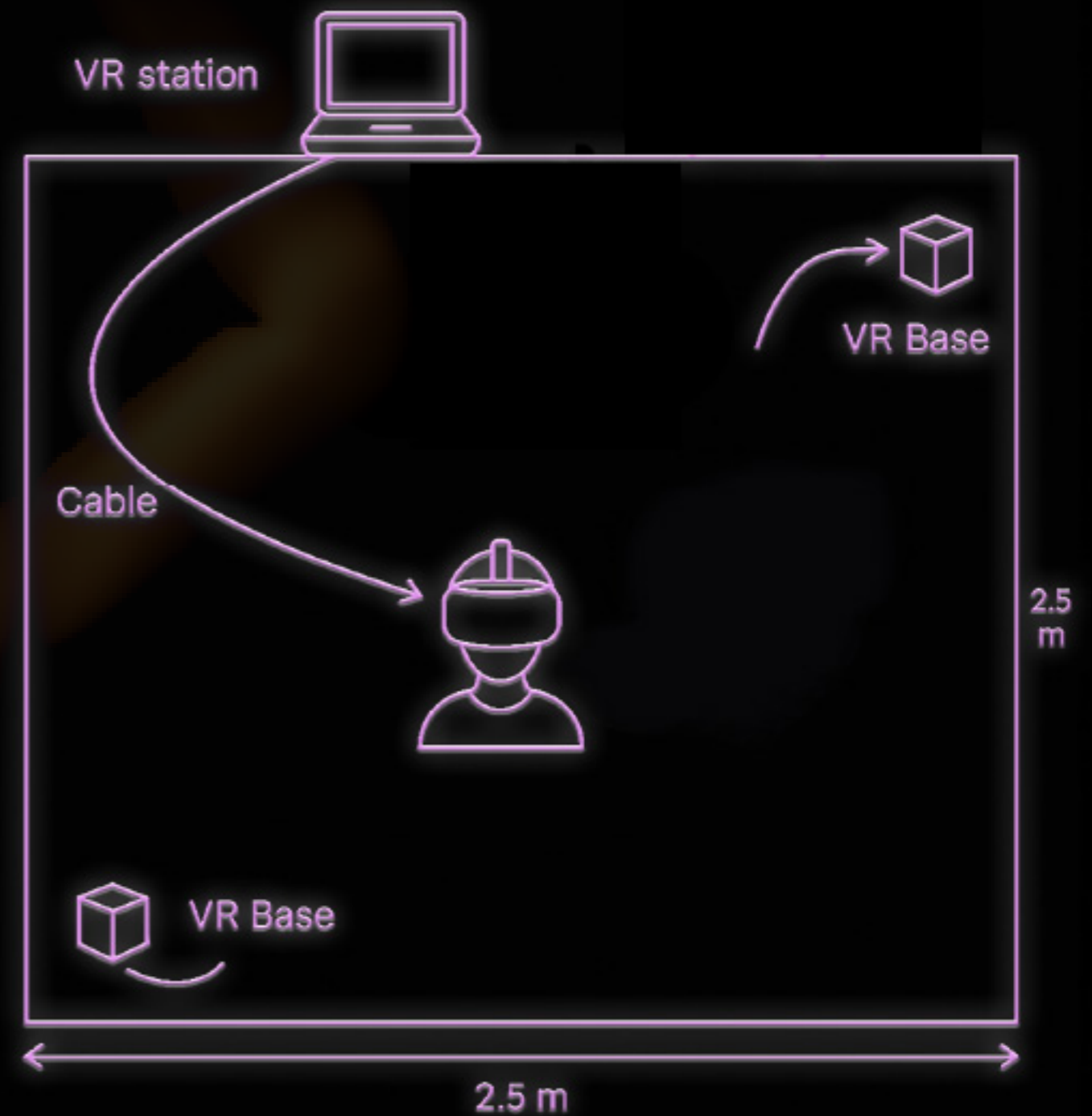
Technical Setup:

- VR station: a high-performance VR computer located at the rear, connected to the headset.
- VR base stations: two tracking units positioned in the corners of the space to enable precise spatial tracking.
- Wired connection between the station and the headset (via an overhead or floor cable).

Installation Time:

- Setup: approximately half a day
- Teardown: approximately one hour

Installation Plan

VR station

VR Base

Cable

VR Base

2.5 m

2.5 m

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