East Wind Lullaby

Thesis for the Degree of Master of Fine Arts with specialization in Digital Media

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Даже сказка спать ложится,

Чтобы ночью нам присниться.

Ты ей пожелай: "Баю-бай!"

Even a tale falls to sleep,

To meet in our dreams tonight,

Wish it: "Good Night!"

Popular Russian lullaby

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ABSTRACT

My final project at C:Art:Media, Valand School of Fine Arts in Gothenburg, Sweden, is based on my personal dream experience. This thesis examines the topic of dreams from both cultural and psychological perspectives. In addition the aim has been to create a visually communicative art piece based on such subjective individual experiences as dreams.

KEYWORDS: Dreams, Dreams in Art, Dream Research, Dream Symbolism, Hypnagogic Imagery, Soviet Union, Immigration, Israel, Installation.

INTRODUCTION

We spend about one third of our lives in the world created by our own mind. This world is full of symbols and unusual experiences which we can see only with our eyes closed. This is the world of dreams.

When I started working on the project, I had a very general idea about my final art project. My main focus was on different aspects of dream interpretation and how their symbolic context was presented in art, literature and films. The journey provided me with a deeper understanding of the topic and, consequently, I felt much more confident in analyzing my own dream and extracting valuable symbols from it. The knowledge of various artistic methods used for dream representation helped me a lot in reproducing a half dreamy half hallucinatory atmosphere of a hot Israeli night and altering our perception of time in the final installation. The structure of this thesis is based on the same flow of inspirational materials and represents the working process on my project.

DREAM ART AND RESEARCH

People have always been interested in understanding their dreams, although in different epochs and cultures the concepts of their origin and significance have varied. In this chapter I will go briefly through a history of research in and artistic representation of dreams. I will present various examples in chronological order with the purpose of evincing the connection between progress in scientific analysis of dreams and a development of the more broad approach in artistic representation.

In the ancient texts, dreams are of heavenly origin and are interpreted as prophecies. They mostly serve to announce the plans of the Gods for the people.

The first documented dream we find in the oldest poem that exists, the Mesopotamian "Epic of Gilgamesh". The main character has two dreams in the beginning of the poem. In the first one he can't prevent a meteor from falling to Earth and in the second one it is an axe he can't move. The explanation given by Gilgamesh's mother, the goddess Rimat-Ninsun, is that a great man (Enkidu) will come to Uruk and her son will have to embrace him. [1]

Another dream with prophetic interpretation belongs to Thutmosis IV (8th Pharaoh of the 18th dynasty of Egypt). He fell asleep covered to the neck in sand next to the Sphinx and dreamt that the Sphinx spoke to him and promised that Thutmosis was destined to become the king of Egypt if he would clear the Sphinx. Thutmosis fulfilled the Sphinx's wishes, became a king and built a stela. [2]

Illustration 1: The Dream Stela

Also in the Bible dreams are usually used as a communication channel between man and God or man's higher self.

Joseph, the 11th son of Jacob, is described as able to interpret his own and other people's dreams. In one of his first dreams he was working in the fields with his brothers when suddenly his sheaf rose and stood in the center of the field as the sheaves of his brothers gathered around it. His brothers felt bitter by the symbols of arrogance in his dream and sold young Joseph into slavery. Later he advanced to the position of overseer in the house of Potiphar. As Pharaoh learned about Joseph's accurate predictions, he was called to deal with the recurring dream Pharaoh was experiencing.

In the Old Testament, Gideon and Daniel also had to interpret dreams and nightmares. Further on in the text we find Solomon's dreams. When God invited him to select his own reward for his service, Solomon asked only for wisdom to rule his people. As a result of this high moral choice, he was also awarded power and wealth.

In the New Testament, five dreams of guidance for the holy family are found in Matthew. In most of them angels appear to explain or to warn of future events.

Attempts to explain dreams scientifically were made as early as in Ancient Greece.

Still believing in the heavenly origin of the dreams, Pythagoras stated that many night-mares could be the result of eating bad food. The interpretation of dreams made by Aristotle is probably the most sophisticated one in the ancient Greece. He considered dreams to be a psychological phenomenon, "life of the soul during sleep". [3]

Later in history, artists started to perceive dreams more as a source with high creative potential than a medium of heavenly communication. The emphasis of this irrational inspiration can be seen in the Romantic Movement of the 18th century.

British poet and painter William Blake is widely recognized as a seminal figure in visual art and poetry of this period. The following text is taken from his poem "The Land of Dreams":

> "Father, O father, what do we here,
> in this land of unbelief and fear?
> The land of dreams is better far --
> above the light of the morning star." [4]

In 1797, another romantic poet - Samuel Taylor Coleridge - wrote the poem "Kubla Khan, or a Vision in a Dream". According to his claims the poem was inspired by an opium-induced dream. The title of the poem came from the Mongol and Chinese emperor Kubla Khan of the Yuan dynasty.

In his "Compendium of Chronicles", Rashid al-Din mentioned that the inspiration for Kubla Khan's palace was given to Chinese emperor in a dream and later Jorge Luis Borges gave a very romantic comment about these two dreams in his essay "Coleridge's Dream":

> "The first dream added a palace to reality; the second, which occurred five centuries later, a poem (or the beginning of a poem) suggested by the palace" [5]

Symptomatic formulation of the problem and high complexity of the object of investigation were the main reasons for the comparatively late start of experimental dream research. The first attempts were carried out by French scholar Louis Alfred Maury in the middle of the 19th century. He observed his own self-induced dreams.

For example, one of his nightmares about an awful torture with a mask was triggered when someone tickled him with a feather on the lips and on the tip of the nose. [6]

In 1899 "The Interpretation of Dreams" by German psychologist Sigmund Freud was published. The book represented a tremendous progress in dream psychology research, and was to become one of the most significant books of the 20th century. Freud called the analysis of dreams the "royal road" to the discovery of the unconscious.

> "Dreams are not comparable to the spontaneous sounds made by a musical instrument struck rather by some external force than by the hand of a performer; they are not meaningless, not absurd, they do not imply that one portion of our stockpile of ideas sleeps while another begins to awaken. They are a completely valid psychological phenomenon, specifically the fulfillment of wishes; they can be classified in the continuity of comprehensible waking mental states; they are constructed through highly complicated intellectual activity. " [7]

According to Freud there are various stimuli or sources of dreams: "external sensor stimuli, internal (subjective) sensory, subjective excitations of the retina and internal organic somatic stimuli". [8] Freud believed that the daytime stimuli received by the human organism mainly have unconscious effects on our mood. At night, when our mind is not busy dealing with the different impressions of the day and our organs together with subjective stimuli start to captivate attention, our intellect remodels these signals into various forms in space and time and provides a source for the dreams.

Another important scientist Carl Jung continued with psychoanalysis of dreams initiated by Freud although their theories diverged. He rejected Freud's hypothesis that dreams intentionally camouflage their meaning. For him the real nature of dreams was to present "a spontaneous self-portrayal, in symbolic form, of the actual situation in the unconscious". [9] His ideas about symbols and archetypes shared by groups of people are very relevant to my project and its emphasized more in the project related parts of my essay.

In the forties American psychologist Calvin S.Hall started his three decades of systematic research on the nature of dreams. He believed that dreams reveal our thoughts about ourselves. It is a cognitive activity and a dream is a visual representation of the dreamer's ideas. Hall classified these concepts into the following categories: self-concep-

tion, conceptions of other people, conception of the world, conceptions of impulses, prohibitions, and penalties, conceptions of conflicts. [10] Hall mentioned that the same person can have multiple conceptions "which suggests that the average person has a network of conceptions regarding his mother, father, siblings, and various other individuals and classes with whom he interacts during waking life." [11] The attributes and setting of the dream world depend on the mood of the dreamer.

Clearly inspired by the significant progress in dream research, the French poet and writer André Breton, who was one of the founders of the Surrealist movement, composed his "First Surrealist Manifesto" in the early twenties:

> "...When the time comes, when we can submit the dream to a methodical examination, when by methods yet to be determined we succeed in realizing the dream in its entirety (and that implies a memory discipline measurable in generations, but we can still begin by recording salient facts), when the dream's curve is developed with an unequalled breadth and regularity, then we can hope that mysteries which are not really mysteries will give way to the great Mystery. I believe in the future resolution of these two states -- outwardly so contradictory -- which are dream and reality, into a sort of absolute reality, a surreality, so to speak, I am aiming for its conquest, certain that I myself shall not attain it, but too indifferent to my death not to calculate the joys of such possession..." [12]

The invention of cinema and animation opened new horizons for the depiction of non-realistic events. This new very accessible mass media provided viewers with quite accurate portrayal of dreams.

One of the first and most significant surrealist works is a short movie of Maya Deren called "Meshes of the Afternoon" which was based on the author's personal experience. The main character of the film comes home and falls to sleep. In her dream she observes herself returning home where she suffers from difficult emotions and commits suicide. To trigger a memory Deren constantly repeats different symbolic images: a flower on the road, a falling key, a mysterious figure dressed in black with a mirror instead of a face.

Illustration 2: Stills from Meshes of the Afternoon

In this movie she also developed a very special way to work with the subjective and objective cameras. For example, many times she cuts from her point of view (objective camera) to the shot when she observes herself performing the same action (subjective camera) in order to emphasize her inner conflict and duality.

Strong influences of Maya Deren's movie are quite recognizable in films made by another American film director: David Lynch. In his case we are not talking about low cost short avant-garde films, but feature movies that attract a wide audience. His movie Mulholland Drive (2001) represents one of the most explicit and detailed analysis of various dream symbols ever filmed. The most common interpretation of the movie is that two-thirds of the film is a dream of the real Diane Selwyn (Naomi Watts), in which she sees herself as a promising young actress who just arrived to Hollywood. Lynch uses panoramic shots with very soft lighting and transitions in this first portion of the movie. Later he shifts to choppy editing, dirty lighting and disturbing sounds for representation of the reality in which Diane is unsuccessful both in her personal and professional lives.

Illustration 3: Stills from Lynch's film Mulholland Drive (2001)

Michel Gondry's "The Science of Sleep" (2008) is a very romantic and aesthetically appealing fantasy. The main character in this film, Stephane, is a young man who lives in the world of dreams and imagination that interferes with reality. He moves to his childhood home because of a new job. Accidentally Stephane meets his new neighbor Stephanie (Charlote Gainbourg) and shares his inventions with her. His waking and dreaming become even more intermixed. The viewer can never be sure which events are real - even the most realistic ones can be dreams. Relatively to Gondry's previous movie "Eternal Sunshine of the Spotless Mind" (2004), which he made together with Charlie Kaufman, "The Science of Sleep" has a low-key plot. Actually it is not a bad starting point, since Gondry's intention to fill this space with relevance feeds his creativity in editing and set design.

Illustration 4: Stills from Gondry's film The Science of Sleep (2008)

If Gondry's film can be classified as neo-surrealism, Akira Kurosawa's movie *Dreams* (1990) represents magical realism. In this genre dreamy and illogical scenarios take place in realistic settings. This film is based on Kurosawa's actual dreams and consists of eight separate segments in the following order: "Sunshine through the Rain, The Peach Orchard, The Blizzard, The Tunnel, Crows, Mount Fuji in Red, The Weeping Demon, and Village of the Watermills". In the first story a young boy is told not to go out on the day when the sun is shining and its rainy at the same time. At that day the foxes hold their wedding procession, which can be fatal for witnesses. In the "Peach Orchard" the same boy encounters the spirits of the peach trees that have been cut down. In "The Blizzard" spiritual intervention protects climbers from a blizzard. In "The Tunnel" a man meets the ghosts of an army unit, whose deaths he was responsible for. Vincent Van Gogh enters the world of his painting in "Crows". In "Mount Fuji in Red" nuclear meltdown threatens to demolish Japan. Human mutations in a post-nuclear world are the personages in "The Weeping Demon. Village of the Watermills" presents a sunny portrait of a village

whose population is entirely lives in perfect harmony with the nature with nature. The movie is based mostly on imagery and metaphors, influenced by Japanese legends dreams, which reflect impressions from Kurosawa's own life.

Illustration 5: Stills from Kurosawa's film Dreams (1990)

Soviet film director Andrey Tarkovsky used dreams or dreamlike conditions to represent an inner journey of his heroes. Ingmar Bergman was quoted saying of him: "Tarkovsky for me is the greatest, the one who invented a new language, true to the nature of film, as it captures life as a reflection, life as a dream". Tarkovsky uses extremely long takes and panning movements of the camera in order to alter our perception of time. According to his theory, unedited movie footage transfers cinema time in real time. In his movies color is used very carefully and meaningfully to emphasize certain moments. The movie "Mirror" (1975) is Tarkovsky's self-reflective journey through loneliness and emotional isolation presented as achronological montage of personal memories, dreams and historical footage.

Illustration 6: Stills from Tarkosky's Mirror (1975)

In addition to literature and cinema we can see very interesting experiments with the dream theme in other art forms as well.

For example, Bill Viola's video installations "Sleep of Reason" (1988) refers to Goya's etching "The Sleep of Reason produces Monsters". In contrast to Goya's fear of uncontrolled dreadful monsters, and well informed about Freudian and Jungian psychology theories, Viola accepts nightmares as agents of unconscious and presents them on the TV screen.

Later cyberspace offered an even more democratic stage for displaying and editing dreamscapes. Dr. Hugo's Fuzzy Dreams Web project started in 1996. Visitors navigate through dreams' "fuzzy logic"by clicking on stars. Each click opens a vignette which consists of six identical boxes arranged in two rows. Every vignette presents a short loop of different events with disjointed audio tracks. It sets up a journey for us to discover whom we are while dreaming.

Illustration 7: Screenshot of Dr. Hugo's Fuzzy Dreams Web project

The experience of an installation or piece of Net art is still very different from that of a dream, because of the built-in interactivity. Film watching is essentially a passive process seen from someone else's fixed point of view. Both literature and film force us to follow events through the emotions of a character. This lack of control is very similar to the sensation often experienced in dreams (only lucid ones are quite different). That was my reason for making an accent mainly on literature and cinema.

In this chapter I have gone through the most established dream theories with examples taken from literature, film and visual arts, which provided me with a solid foundation for conceptualization and design of my project.

"EAST WIND LULLABY" PROJECT BACKGROUND

My final project derives from my personal experience in Israel. I grew up in Soviet Union and immigrated with my family to Israel at the age of nineteen. As someone who grew up in Russia and had never experienced the Mediterranean climate before, I had a hard time adjusting to the hot Israeli summers. Especially difficult were nights with the hot Arabian Desert wind. This wind usually brings a huge amount of sand and makes the temperature rise extremely fast. This weather is known as "khamsin" in Arab countries. It means "50" in Arabic and refers to the 50-day period during which the wind occurs. [13] In Hebrew it is called "sharav" and it also has a biblical name: "ruah quadim" or "east wind". These sandstorms typically occur in spring or in the beginning of summer and last for a couple of days. During daytime the air is calm and everything gets a monochromatic look. The sun dissolves in the yellow sky and high quantities of sand in the air make everything look as if it was on Mars.

Illustration 8: Sharav (khamsin) in Israel

It is preferable to stay indoors with an air-conditioner during this period, but as a new-comer, I was not aware of that and made every possible mistake. I remember myself using just a regular fan and keeping windows open hoping that night would bring a chilly breeze. It was a really bad idea: my room got full of sand and mosquitoes. Trying to fall asleep I had to get up very often to fight them. Confused by the combination of thick air, the unfamiliar place and a constantly interrupted sleep my "overheated" brain became very productive in creating different "hallucinations". Now, working on this paper and getting familiar with various materials about dreaming, I know that repeatedly interrupting the sleeping process can make "hypnagogic imagery" appear:

> "Hypnagogic images, according to some, are the result of the visual system "attempting to make sense" of the visual input still available to the eyes when the mind is drifting toward sleep. Even in very low ambient light levels, light penetrates the eyelids, making the patterns of blood flow through them visible. This is the basis for an "interpretation" by the visual system. The visual system may attempt to "force" the input to correspond to, say, a geometrical pattern, or the semblance of some object. Dream images or memory images may intrude into such images." [14]

Some of my dreams and "hallucinations" during those "khamsin" nights were very symbolic and I find it interesting to make a piece based on analyses and interpretations of these memories especially now, in another phase of my life when I live in yet another different place. Actually, in contradiction to my big passion for traveling, the topic of the home or a place I can relate to has always been very important to me. In my childhood I had an experience that reminds me of Carter's story from Lovercraft's novel "The dream - quest of Unknown Kadath". I also dreamed about traveling in exotic countries, meeting different people and surrealistic creatures. The feelings of joy and freedom experienced during this dream was replaced by a great relief and extraordinary happiness after waking up in my room, when I saw familiar trees from the window. The following day I spent in complete harmony with my environment. Since then I had many different variations of this dream and it is not so surprising that the exhausting "khamsin" nights in Israel triggered many thoughts about my relation to this new place.

Despite the fact that this process of Jewish Immigration to Israel is called repatriation in the official language, all psychological aspects of immigration are applicable to this situ-

ation. Soviet Union and Israel were very different in many aspects: mentality of the people, climate, landscapes, architecture etc... Former Soviet Union used to be very big and safe (at least in terms of external aggression). Israel is very tiny, officially in a state of war with almost all neighboring countries. I think it is amusing and also symbolic, that people in Israel called us Russians, while in Russia we had been called Jews for generations. Many of us had different reasons for moving: purely idealistic, economical or just an idea to start a new life in a different place, but we experienced many similar emotions and concerns during the first years of immigration. Even though it is not my intention to dive further into a big and complex topic of immigration with all the sociopsychological aspects that follow from this process in my paper which is more focused on dream interpretations, but its also a motif in my project. Although the project is based on my personal experience, I believe that it represents feelings and thoughts that were quite common among people in my age group that came from the Soviet Union to Israel in 1991.

In the next chapter I am going to write more about the phenomenon called "hypnagogic imagery" and connection between symbol-forming processes and mythological aspects of collective symbols which are very applicable to my project.

HYPNAGOGIC IMAGERY

As previously mentioned, my experience falls into the category of "hypnogogic imaginary"- the condition between wakefulness and sleep. This very gradual and rather complex transition consists of different stages. Our full wakefulness is characterized by rapid eye movements and irregular brain waves of high frequency. Becoming drowsy we are entering another stage, when the brain's alpha activity increases and eye movements become slower and less frequent. The slow eye movements indicate that there is hypnagogic dreamlike activity going on in the brain. Confusion between reality and imagination, decreasing awareness of the environment, loss of control over the mind and inaccurate time perception all trigger vivid imaginary or sensory sensations.

Here is an interesting example of hypnagogic imagery described in detail by André Breton in his "First Surrealist Manifesto":

> "One evening, therefore, before I fell asleep, I perceived, so clearly articulated that it was impossible to change a word, but nonetheless removed from the sound of any voice, a rather strange phrase which came to me without any apparent relationship to the events in which, my consciousness agrees, I was then involved, a phrase which seemed to me insistent, a phrase, if I may be so bold, which was knocking at the window. I took cursory note of it and prepared to move on when its organic character caught my attention. Actually, this phrase astonished me: unfortunately I cannot remember it exactly, but it was something like: "There is a man cut in two by the window," but there could be no question of ambiguity, accompanied as it was by the faint visual image* (Were I a painter, this visual depiction would doubtless have become more important for me than the other. It was most certainly my previous predispositions which decided the matter. Since that day, I have had occasion to concentrate my attention voluntarily on similar apparitions, and I know they are fully as clear as auditory phenomena. With a pencil and white sheet of paper to hand, I could easily trace their outlines. Here again it is not a matter of drawing, but simply of tracing. I could thus depict a tree, a wave, a musical instrument, all manner of things of which I am presently incapable of providing even the roughest sketch. I would plunge into it, convinced that I would find my way again, in a maze of lines which at first glance would seem to be going nowhere. And, upon opening my eyes, I would get the

very strong impression of something "never seen." The proof of what I am saying has been provided many times by Robert Desnos: to be convinced, one has only to leaf through the pages of issue number 36 of Feuilles libres which contains several of his drawings (Romeo and Juliet, A Man Died This Morning, etc.) which were taken by this magazine as the drawings of a madman and published as such.) of a man walking cut half way up by a window perpendicular to the axis of his body. Beyond the slightest shadow of a doubt, what I saw was the simple reconstruction in space of a man leaning out a window. But this window having shifted with the man, I realized that I was dealing with an image of a fairly rare sort, and all I could think of was to incorporate it into my material for poetic construction. No sooner had I granted it this capacity than it was in fact succeeded by a whole series of phrases, with only brief pauses between them, which surprised me only slightly less and left me with the impression of their being so gratuitous that the control I had then exercised upon myself seemed to me illusory and all I could think of was putting an end to the interminable quarrel raging within me." [15]

Simon J.Sherwood mentions timing and various sensory modalities as characteristics of hypnagogic imaginary in his article "Relationship between the hypnagogic/hypnopompic states and reports of anomalous experiences". Events occur sporadically and images are usually very brief and dynamic. They can appear as very small, gigantic or strangely illuminated. They may also quickly change their appearance and develop into more complex forms. Sometimes we experience several repetitions of the same image. Sherwood quotes Mavromatis's classification of themes:

> "(1) Formless, e.g. waves, clouds of colour, (2) Designs, e.g. geometric and symmetrical patterns and shapes, (3) Faces, figures, animals, objects, (4) Nature scenes, e.g. landscapes, seascapes, gardens, (5) Scenes with people, (6) Print and writing, e.g. in real or imaginary languages." [16]

Although the most common forms of hypnopompic imagery include visuals and sounds, they also can be represented by smell, taste, or tactile, thermal, bodily or mixed sensations. One of the commonly reported movement sensations is that of falling accompanied with body jerk.

Very often our hypnagogic imagery is not meaningless but translations of our thoughts

and feelings into a symbolic imagery form. This phenomenon was called "autosymbolism" by Herbert Silberer, the Austrian academic psychologist and Freud follower. He developed an experimental technique for reduction of hypnagogic hallucinations. When drifting towards sleep he intentionally kept his mind preoccupied with verbal ideas. When falling asleep he experienced hypnagogic hallucinations. After being forced to wake and leave the hypnagogic state he found the symbolic meaning of the imagery he experienced to be very explicit. The same verbal ideas which he entertained before getting into the hypnagogic state were represented in symbolic visual form in his hypnagogic hallucinations. "However, the autosymbolic symbolism did not involve the additional symbol-forming processes of condensation and displacement". [17]

Jung reversed Freud's vision of a symbol as a general manifestation of a particular symbol into generalized universal concept:

> "Symbols are of two kinds: from the personal unconscious, particular to the individual's life; and from the collective unconscious, significant to everyone, which can be interpreted through mythological analogies." [18]

This idea of collective symbols in our dreams is pertinent to the specific dream experience on which my project is based. I think that a new place and stressful situation could potentially trigger symbolic images and thoughts like mine in somebody's mind with similar cultural background. This connection between individual's issues represented by collective symbols in dreams and a situation of the larger group of people is described by Jung:

> "As individuals we are not completely unique, but like all other man. Hence a dream with a collective meaning is valid in the first place for the dreamer, but it expresses at the same time the fact that his momentary problem is also the problem of other people. This is often of great practical importance; for there are countless people who are inwardly cut off from humanity and oppressed by the thought that nobody else has their problems. Or else they are those all-too-modest souls who, feeling themselves nonentities, have kept their claim to social recognition on too low a level. Moreover, every individual problem is somehow connected with the problem of the age, so that practically every subjective difficulty has to be viewed from the standpoint of the human situation as a whole. But this is

permissible only when the dream really is a mythological one and makes use of collective symbols." [19]

SETUP 1

Now I would like to introduce my thoughts about the installation's setup. My first challenge will be to recreate the atmosphere of a very hot "khamsin" night. It would feel right to have warm air in the installation. A hidden heating fan could achieve that, blowing a stream of hot air on everyone entering the space. The dark room will have three main elements inside: a shadow from the window, a bed and a fan.
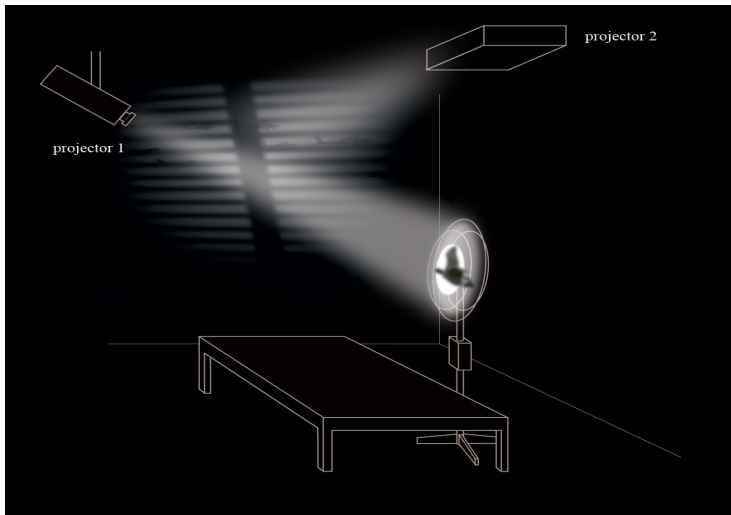

Illustration 9: Installation setup 1

Let's start with the window. To emphasize the mixed nature of real and imaginary worlds I will use a projector to cast imagery in the window shadows that creates a sense of falling. Almost all windows in Israel are equipped with shutters for sun protection. During my first time in the country, I found the shadows created by the light coming in from a street during night very unfamiliar and frightening. I will use various elements in the window projection: shadows falling from trees and silhouettes of flying mosquitoes mixed with sounds of helicopters to stress the feeling of insecurity. When I came to Israel I lived in the northern part of the country. My town, called Nahariya, is very close to the border with Lebanon. At that time this border was not so quiet and many times during night we heard helicopters flying from military bases in central Israel towards Lebanon.

Another element in the room will be a fan with a flying goose projected on its blades. The goose probably appeared in my dream because I had a goose down feather pillow, which we talked about before I went to sleep. It also acts well as a symbol for returning home. In many traditions it symbolizes the importance of home, because geese return to

the same place every spring. They usually make a short stop in Israel during their season-al migration between northern Europe and Africa.

In the middle of the room I will place a bed, which symbolizes my current whereabouts. I will cover the top of the bed with sand (it's everywhere during the "khamsin" periods). This disappearing sand also represents the passing of time. A projector placed in the ceiling will cast various projections on the bed's surface, including an airstrip and ruins of an ancient Israeli town.

I have explained earlier the straightforward symbolic context of my imagery by its "hypnagogic imagery" nature. An additional challenge for me will be to represent the time-based process of symbol formation and at the same time convey the attempts of a brain - which is about to fall asleep - to build a logical connection between the images. This can be achieved by displaying a loop of events, with one image triggering the appearance of another sometimes in logical order and sometimes totally random.

SETUP 2

Now, when the project has gotten some shape, it seems to be too illustrative and over-loaded by various personal visual motifs. My interest is still in universal collective symbols and not on the kind of intimated monologues presented in works such as "My Bed" (1988) by Tracey Emin. In this piece she used her messy bed and personal stuff to represent her emotional state, when she stayed in bed for several days suffering from depression.

Illustration 10: My Bed by Tracey Emin (1988)

Absence of any of personal belongings in my bed will help me to make an accent on the feeling of detachment between me and my current environment.

Another step on my way to achieve laconism in my installation with the intention of emphasizing the symbolic meaning of my dream, will probably be taking away unnecessary details. The shadow from the window is the first candidate. Although this element definitely enriches the atmosphere of the installation, it may also distract the viewer.

I have previously mentioned the importance of time in my piece but I realize now, that instead of stressing it into a loop of connected or random events, I would prefer to create the opposite: a feeling of a stretched but still linear timeline. By slowing down the wing movements of the goose projected on the fan I will create the impression that it is struggling with the heavy air.

I will also skip the use of different projections and focus more on creating a desert- looking landscape. The fan will blow sand around in the room to recreate the sensation of "khamsin's" dusty air. Streams of wind generated by the fan will push away sand from the desert-like landscape and reveal an airstrip with blinking lights underneath it. This is very symbolic since Israel can basically be accessed by air only; there is no railway and limited civil sea transportations because of the security situation.

I was on a plane with Russian Jews. For most of them it was their first visit to Israel. For some, it was also the first trip abroad. As the plane descended, many passengers were amazed by the coast line with its luxury hotels, highways and skyscrapers. When we touched down it suddenly became very quiet. I still remember the words of an old man talking to himself: "It is a one-way ticket. What is waiting for me here?". I had a feeling that I would not really land yet for many years in Israel. This makes it relevant to include an unclear yet closely located runway in the project.

Now, it's time to think about the physical dimensions of the set. Shall I change them to give the project more "epic" proportions, like Will Ryman's piece "The bed" ?

Illustration 11: The Bed by Will Ryman (2007)

In his project oversized objects act as performers in an anti-drama. Another alternative is to recreate the objects in other materials in order to put an accent on the dreamlike atmosphere, like Michel Gondry did in his movie "The Science of Sleep" mentioned earlier.

Illustration 12: Cardboard city from Michel Gondry's The Science of Sleep (2008)

In order to provide the sense of confused perception - the blend of reality and dream typical for hypnagogic imagery - I prefer to use objects of natural size and materials to the largest extent possible. Distorted objects would risk turning the piece into nothing but a grotesque spectacle.
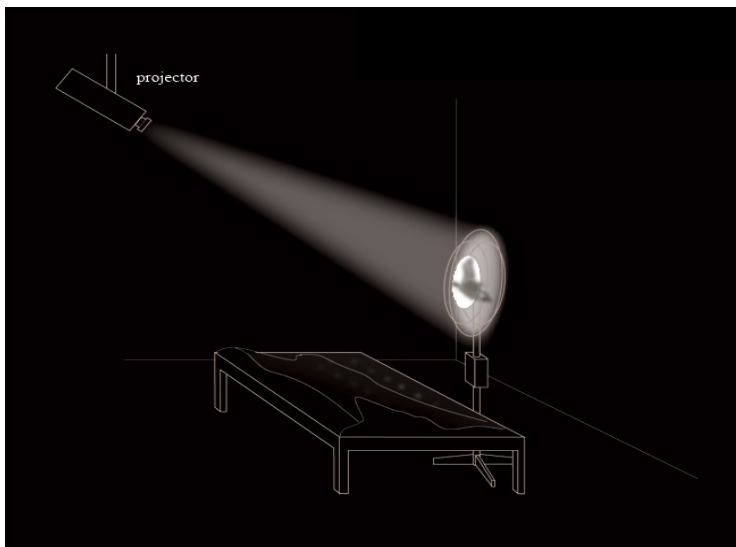

Illustration 13: Installation final setup

Illustration 14: Picture from the exhibition

SUMMARY

As a visual communication and graphic design professional I am used to work with various symbols and clichés. The design process often includes transforming commonly used symbols so that they enhance the communication of key messages. The messages are supported by modified or "twisted" symbols which create an immediate association, hence make the communication faster and help to reach a larger audience.

In my final project I had to expand the boundaries of this approach searching for mythological collective symbols and restating my personal dream imagery. This process required me to deal with a variety of additional semiotic layers.

The starting point of my project was very "raw"; dreams and memories which I have analyzed and developed through the process of writing this thesis. To demonstrate my working method, the evolution of my idea is reflected by the thesis structure.

At the beginning, my main attention was to understand various approaches in dream interpretation and examine of different artistic methods which can transform very personal experiences into socially recognizable art - literature, visual arts and film. I began this excurse from the oldest documented dream "The Epic of Gilgamesh" to emphasize the fact that dreams have always been a topic of interest to us, although our concepts of their origin and tools for interpretation have developed with time. I went briefly through most established theories of dream interpretation and continued with an analysis of different examples from literature and cinema, because of their similarity to the passive nature and lack of control in dreams. Equipped with this knowledge, I started to conceptualize my project, based on the personal dream experience with very symbolic "hypnagogic imagery" triggered by very hot Israeli night. By extracting universal symbols with mythological characteristics from this dream imagery I aimed to design a communicative piece. My previous study of various artistic methods used for dream representation provided me with techniques for reproducing a hallucinatory atmosphere and altering our perception of time in the installation.

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