





# F O G   O F   D I S S E N T

## DIGITAL MEDIA

News reports, images, videos, social media posts about issues and causes proliferate through our daily lives. While we have more access and exposure to potential possibilities for action than ever before, it is equally attractive to default to inaction when confronted with the overwhelming barrage of information.

Social media activism offers the allure of making an impact with minimal effort. One can choose to avoid the danger of being vulnerable by detaching themselves from physical world or hiding behind a veil of anonymity.

Furthermore, to engage, to act, often involves entrenching ourselves within an increasingly homogeneous feedback loop in an echo chamber of the like-minded. How do we break our self-reinforcing world-views and open ourselves up to consider other possibilities?

## SPACE OF DISCOURSE

Dissent is crucial part of social, political discourse. Traditionally, public has voiced their opinion in iconographically significant public spaces. Political action in public space allows for individuals to be seen and heard, to put faces to a cause. Yet this often leads to confrontations between opposing groups, where the 'other' is vilified beyond recognition.

On the other hand, in many parts of the world, counter public protesters must brace the risk of social backlashes for their involvement in their cause. How can we begin to break down barriers in public discourse? To discuss rather than disengage? Is it possible to hold civil discourse with those we vehemently disagree with? How can minority voices be heard?

## CLOUD OF MOVEMENT

We propose a simple intervention that provide platform for different form of demonstration. Discrete spray mist nozzles are installed into the target square to be activated during political actions. This subtle gesture of obscuring brings a new form of protest where individual identity and differences may be blurred and protected, and brings focus to their mass and voices for cause.

Our proposal is a medium to communicate physical presence through atmospheric effects. It amplifies physical presence without creating physical impediments. One that paradoxically gives a sense of identity and cohesion while breaking down boundaries between opposing groups. It provokes curiosity and creates opportunities for engagement.

The medium can be furthered through the usage of hand-held lighting devices at night. Colour or pattern associated with a cause can be effectively utilized to reinforce the spectacular dimension of the platform.

The presence of the act can be further amplified through infusing scents to the mist; use of scent also creates a lingering impression even after the demonstration has ended, following the people who have participated or witnessed the event.

Fog of Dissent manifests ephemeral and vulnerable nature of public discourse. In the end of the day, the energy of protest gradually fades out along with the mist and scent. Bringing the questions, 'Have we made a difference?' 'Were we heard?' One thing for sure, it has kindled a cloud in people's heart.

According to Nancy Fraser, we would be better off recognizing the plurality of 'publics' rather than attempting to create a homogeneous 'public'. The intervention on its own does not prescribe or dictate the actions of the public. It merely leverages the existing and provides a new ground for public discourse to take place.