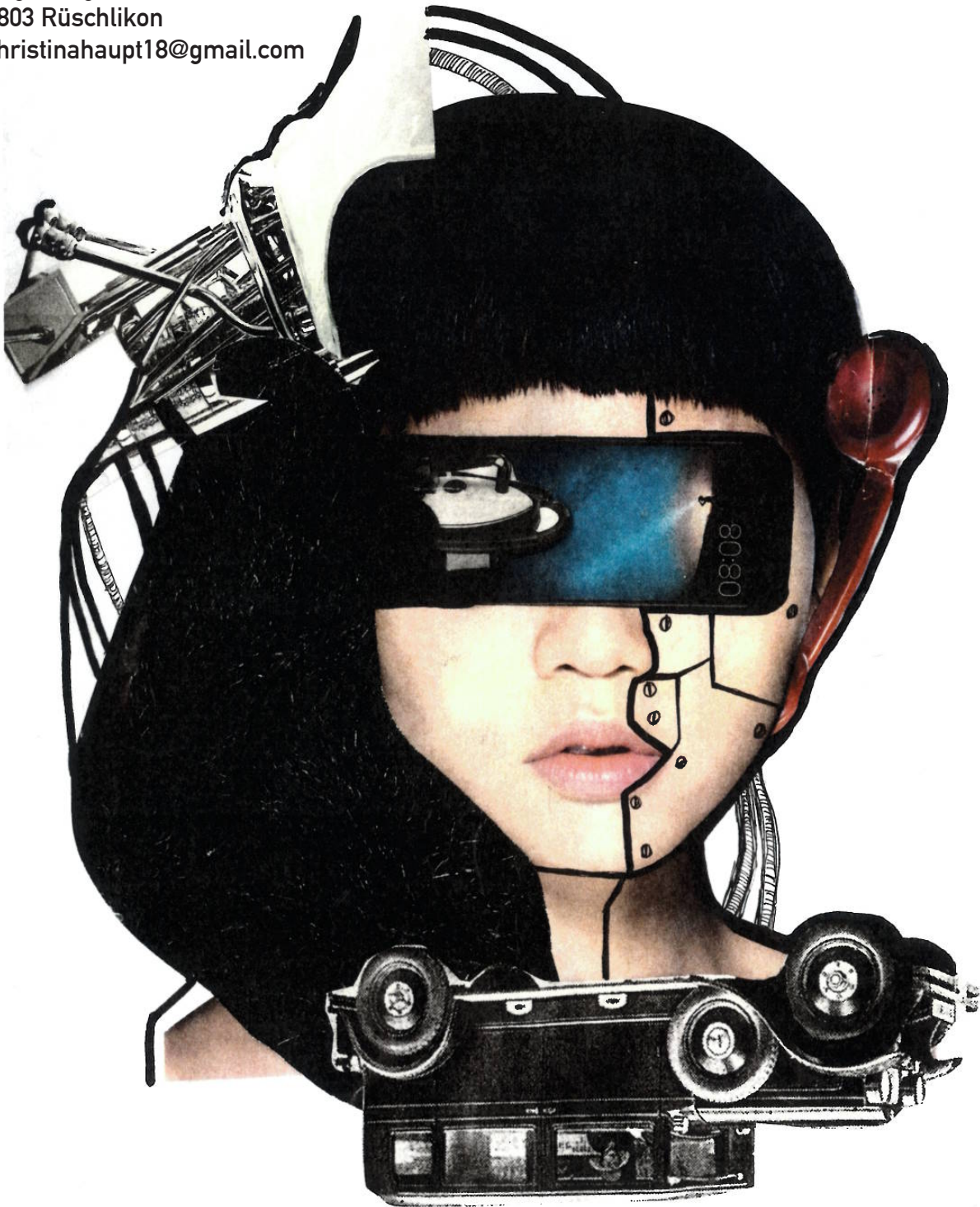


"Strange Systems"

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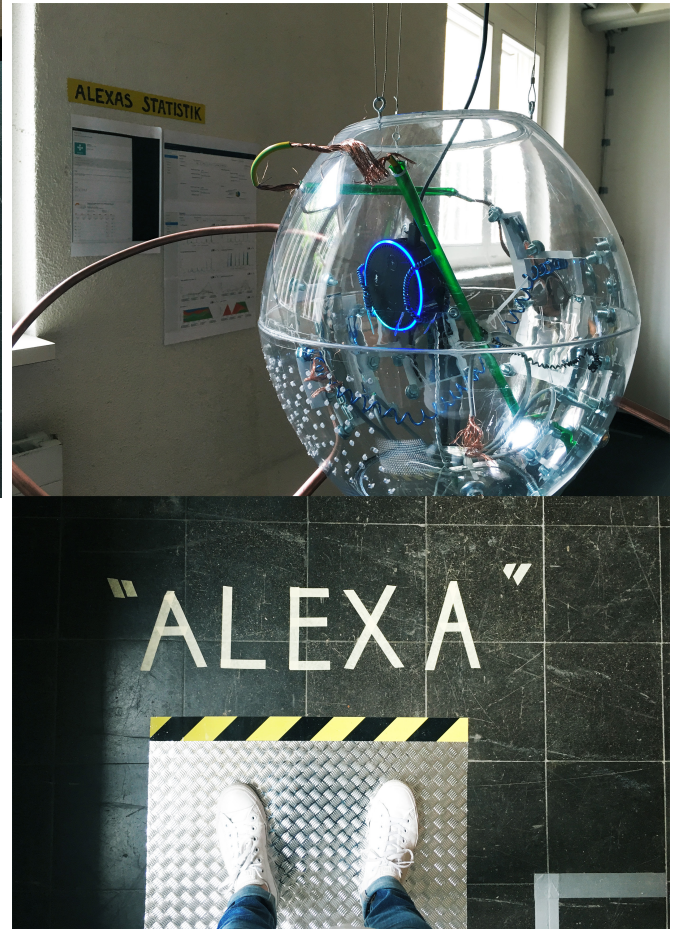
Practical Work

The artistic project titled “Strange Systems” involves Amazon’s Alexa, and investigates our physical interaction with voice assistants (VAs) and their impact on our being in and experiencing the world. Through the use of space in the installation, the viewer is requested to take place in the career counseling office’s waiting room before their interaction with the voice assistants – posing as career counselors. While waiting, the viewer is asked to fill out a questionnaire so that the office assistant may obtain vital information about the viewer’s previous interactions with VAs. The viewer is then lead over to one of the two devices hanging suspended from the ceiling and introduced to the device – aka career counselor. The interaction with the device takes place in a natural way at eye level, while the lack of body through the device’s suspension in mid-air may be slightly unsettling. The device leads the viewer through a programmed dialogue which encourages women to seek careers generally held by men, while men are encouraged to pursue positions generally held by women (based on the statistics by the state of Nidwalden). This decision to invert roles references the influence of cyberfeminism in the work, and the notion that technological space is one in which identities can be redefined and reclaimed. During the course of the exhibition as viewers interact with the devices statistics are gathered about their interactions which begin to populate the walls, drawing attention to the fact that these devices we encourage to engage with us in a more naturalistic way are also always listening, recording and collecting information about us autonomously.



Picture of the installation

Picture of Cyborg "Echo"



Picture of Cyborg "Alexa"

Theoretical Work

The written work, a magazine periodical "@?TECH.SPECS", chooses to highlight The Cyborg Century. Its first issue is concerned with the current state of human and machine interaction, while observing the vital importance of our ability to hack the systems that surround our cyborg state of being. The magazine's main story deals with Donna Haraway's Cyborg Manifesto, acknowledging and encouraging the reopening of technological space through hacking in order to reclaim and reprogram our identity. Interviews with experts on the topic of security in a technological space, and what it means to interact with voice assistants are included as the foundation of a social based research which gave most of the articles in the magazine their factual content.