CONNECTEDMATTER

Mission Statement

connectedmatter operates as a breach by critically engaging with contemporary digital technoculture through investigative research, live events, installations, talks, and community-based artistic projects. This initiative envisions a new visual counter-culture that bridges the disconnect between the organic and the artificial, as well as scholarly discourse and embodied intuition. The goal is to cultivate political and philosophical awareness, emphasizing interconnectedness among both disparate ideas and beings.

Operating as a cross-border and itinerant collective, connectedmatter functions horizontally where members collaborate on equal footing. This curatorial and artistic initiative is committed, evolving, and multidisciplinary, reflecting its dedication to innovation and openness.

MATTER stands for Machine, Art, Technology, Transgression, Ecology, and Resistance.

Edition 02: Soften My Hardware: Agape & Eco Futurities

Flyer for Edition 03

A Banned Surveillance by Fadl Fakhouri (2018)

Screenshot from Avatar Lilith's *Open Source* (2023)

connectedmatter

Manifesto

We stand in defiance of the colonial legacy and the extractive practices that have scarred the Earth, its inhabitants, and the connections between them. Our collective is driven by a commitment to confront and dismantle the biases we have inherited, seeking pathways to a more just and equitable world.

We recognize that the internet is not a neutral space — it was forged by marginalized communities, including sex workers, BIPOC, and political dissidents, whose contributions have been systematically erased. We honor their labor and strive to amplify the voices that have been silenced.

Fair compensation for the artists we collaborate with is non-negotiable. Your support is vital in sustaining this commitment. We align with alternative art spaces and non-profits, ensuring that our events are accessible to all, regardless of income.

We reject the sanctity of the art space, providing water and, when possible, food at our events to nurture both body and spirit.

Our website is a testament to our resistance against Big Tech dominance. Hosted on a "home-built" server made from repurposed components, it embodies our dedication to permacomputing principles — a practice rooted in sustainability and resilience.

At our core, we are utopists — seeking wisdom in ancient practices to enhance our present and future. The solutions we need already exist, though they are often hidden from view. Our mission is to unearth, reclaim, and create from what is already there, rather than chasing the endless cycle of overproduction.

We embrace trial and error, and the value of failure.

We value collective learning and embrace non-traditional ways of teaching such as somatic practice.

Rooted in radical futurisms, we seek to develop tools of resistance in the present, to reclaim a sustainable and equitable future for all.

Late capitalism intensifies extractive logics, reshaping environments through the displacement of bodies and matter on a global scale.

Edition 03

We Run Together Through The Virtual Quarries

The process of extraction creates physical and metaphorical underworlds — tunnels, quarries, and labyrinths — beneath our expanding cities.

The cave, historically tied to mining, now extends into the digital realm, representing our entanglement as digital laborers and consumers within virtual spaces. This exhibition examines the cave's dual nature: a site of confinement and a potential realm for new possibilities.

By highlighting how extractivist logics manifest in both physical and digital underworlds, it encourages reflection on our complex relationship with technology.

The exhibition unfolds in three chapters — Descending into the Depths, They Unearthed Treasures From The Soil, From Shadows Emerged Forms, and A New Underworld — each exploring material and digital extraction, collective awakening, and speculative world-building, respectively. This multifaceted approach invites contemplation on the intersections of material and digital realms, and the emergence of alternative futures.

See more at we-run-together-through-the-virtual-quarries.online

Link to exhibition map here.

Participating Artists & Performers

Participating visual artists

Barly Tshibanda,
Nanna Elvin Hansen,
Niels Dawartz, Io Florentin
Rosendal, Juliet S. Raczkowski
(with support from Šarūnas Kilius
and Mischa Pavlovski Andresen),
Sascha Trier Olsen, Gabriella
Gormley, Pandora Gvraessl,
Hannah Coffey

Performers

Kupalua, Klara Lopez,
Avatar Lilith

Live Music

Gadutra, Bonne Aventure,
Neu Verbotten, Syqlone,
Ines Cherifi

Talk

Collective Against Environmental
Racism

The Dinner, a fully curated meal by Juliet S. Raczkowski

Barly Tshibanda's *People and Land* (2023)

Performance by Kupalua

Opening

The exhibition challenged Western perspectives on sustainability and technological advancement, urging a decolonial reevaluation of these concepts. By tracing the relations between earth minerals and the digital spaces, it aimed to shed light on the consequences of our current usage of technology, but also intended to craft a new visual culture.

The reliance on cobalt for wind turbines prompts a critical reassessment of the green transition, as illustrated by Congolese Copenhagen-based Barly Tshibanda's People and Land (2024), which addresses the genocide in Congo driven by exploitative cobalt mining.

Nordic countries, despite their green tech advancements, face hidden environmental and social costs, as depicted in Danish artist Nanna Elvin Hansen's film Groundings (2023), which critiques Norway's struggle with balancing economic interests, Indigenous rights, and environmental preservation. Our initiative aims to spark dialogue about technology's societal impacts and explore low-tech solutions, scrutinizing overhyped technologies like NFTs and cryptocurrencies. Danish creative technologist and connectedmatter member Niels Dawartz's interactive work, How Does It Feel to Touch a Cloud? (2024) advocates for transparency, making technology's impact tangible by hosting our participative website on a portable home-built server. Commissioned for the show, Copenhagen-based Io Florentin Rosendal's The Businesslort (2024) envisions the corporate executives behind extractivist practices while highlighting underground societies resisting this expansion.

By prioritizing physical and material dimensions, the exhibition values sensory experiences over academic analysis. Juliet S. Raczkowski's The Dinner, with its foraged food and handcrafted clay cutlery, embodies a self-sustainable ethos.

Sascha Trier Olsen's Sørgesten (Geological Memory) (2024) critiques new wave spirituality that often uses stones, threading a bridge between extractivist practices and grief via a land art and ritualistic piece. Gabriella Gormley's energeia (ii) explores the relationship between lithium extraction in the Atacama desert, water usage and mental health.

Inspired by Afro-futurism and Arab-futurism, our world-building vision harmonizes cultural specificities with technology for all beings. Despite challenges, solarpunk theories envision organic and technology cooperation. Regeneration is possible, exemplified by Pandora Graessl's "Re project". This approach underscores our dedication to a future where technology fosters a more interconnected and empathetic world. Hannah Coffey's "WorldWideWeb" celebrates the beauty and complexity of organic networks like mitochondria, drawing parallels between organic networks and human-made communication channels.

We invited new media artists, sculptors, and performers to engage with Basement, an unconventional industrial space in Copenhagen, evoking a mine's imagery and potential.

Sasha Trier Olsen's *Sørgesten (geological memory)* (2024)

Exhibition shot featuring Hannah Coffeys *useless exoskeleton* (2023) and Sascha Trier Olsen's *Sørgesten (geological memory)*

Exhibition view of *World Wide Web* (2023) by Hanna Coffey

Stills from website we-run-together-
through-the-virtual-quarries.online

Assets from our event marketing
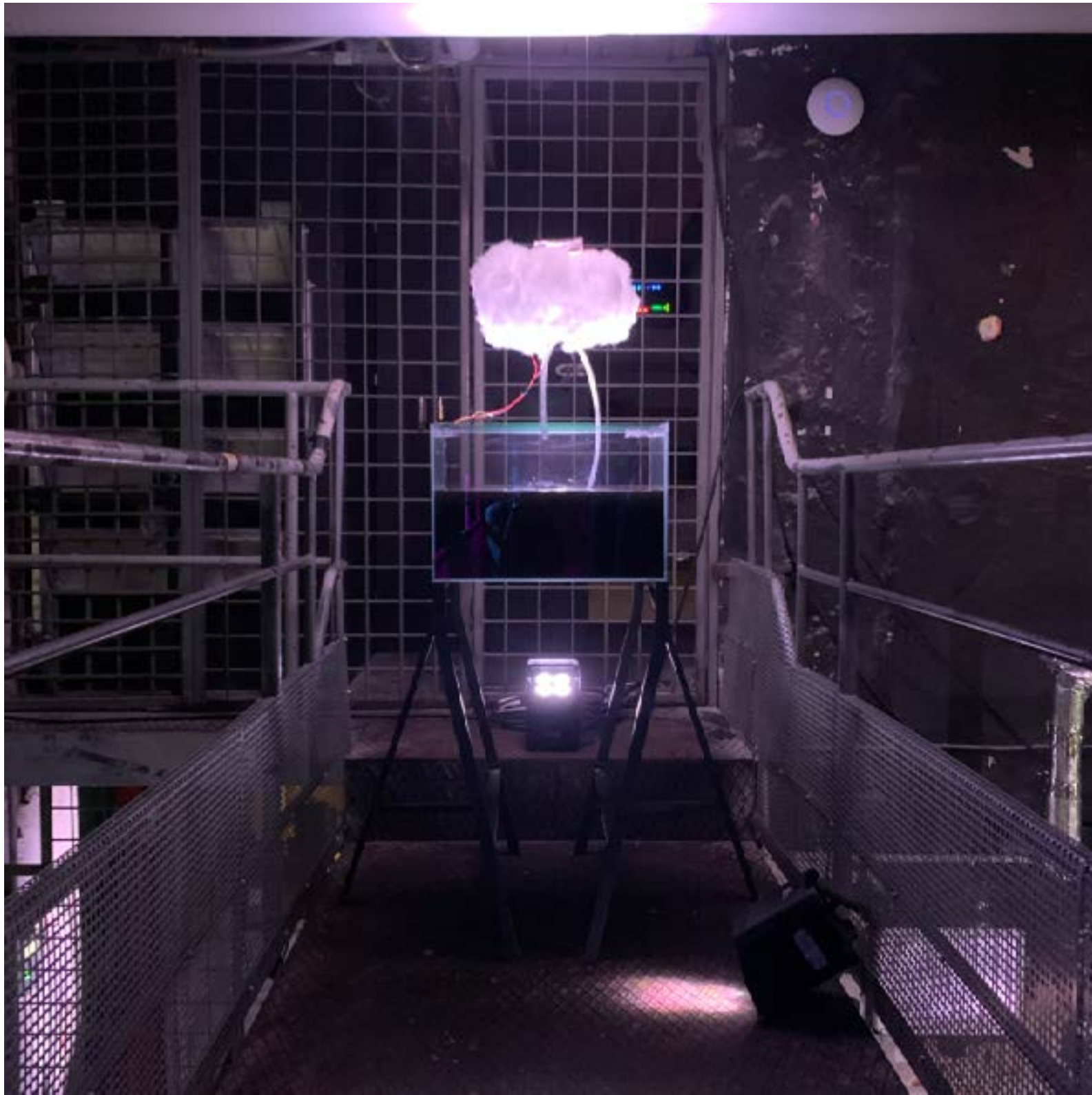
Exhibition view of The cloud 2024 by Niels Dawartz hosting our server

Exhibition view of a journey to the toilets of the worlds second largest lithium mine. and back (2023-24) and energeia (ii) (2023-24) by Gabriella Gormley

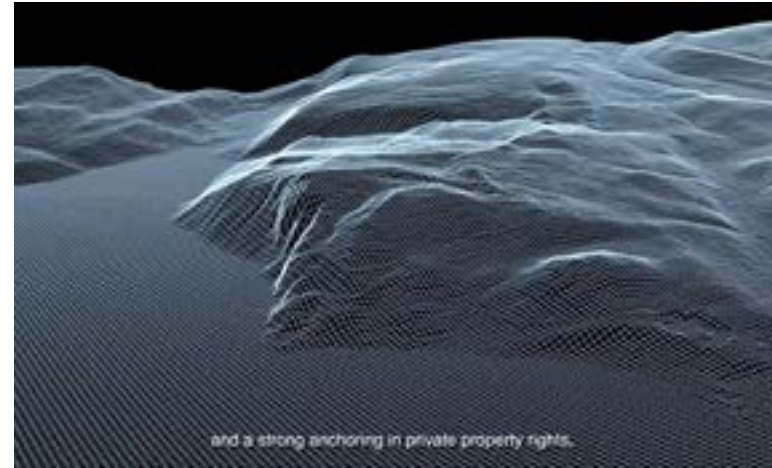Exhibition view of *The Reproject* (2019) by Pandora Graessl

Screenshots from our website, we-run-together-through-the-virtual-quarries.online

Exhibition view of *Groundings* (2024) by Nanna Elvin Hansen

Screenshot of *Groundings* (2024) by Nanna Elvin Hansen

Screenshot of *Groundings* (2024) by Nanna Elvin Hansen

Exhibition view close up of Barly Tsibanda's *People and Land* (2024)

Exhibition view of Barly Tsibanda's *People and Land* (2024)

Exhibition view of Hanna Coffey 's *WorldWideWeb* and lo Florentin Rosendal's *the businesslort*

Exhibition view of *Pandora Graessl's The Reproject* (2019)

"Organize the apocalypse.
Describe the life you want.
Fight for this life." - BDSM
Apocalypse, Roman Noel

Edition 02

Soften My Hardware: Agape & Eco Futurities

Taking as point of departure Cy X's participatory performance eros, thanatos, and the fish (2023), specially created for the show, SOFTEN MY HARDWARE: Agape & Eco-Futurities delved into notions of sustainability, cyber healing practices, and collective resistance.

Cy X's eco-erotic performance presented a bond between fishes and their Gullah Geechee heritage, embracing erotic potential as pathways to a more empathetic, sustainable, and collaborative world, weaving together water, land, humans, and other-than-human beings across various timelines.

The exhibition featured works that, from the mountainous Iceland to Jordan's gas stations, interrogated the ties between land and colonialism. Ultimately, it advocated for radical benevolence as a counter to neoliberal individualism, envisioning a future rooted in communal action. It also highlighted our approach to using repurposed urban and organic materials to create site-specific installations.

Participating Artists & Performers

Cy X
:3LON (Elon Battle)
Thit Vienberg
Mschyen
Inès Yahiaoui
Fadl Fakhouri
Philip Errico

Exhibition view of Edition 02

Installation by Philip Errico

Performance by :3LON

A Banned Surveillance (2018) by Fadl Fakhouri

SOFTEN MY HARDWARE: Agape & Eco-Futurities explores questions of sustainability, cyber healing practices, decoloniality, and collective organization/resistance in relation to technology, raising central questions: How do we collectively organize to think about our future(s)? And, can the fight for a sustainable future ever be disconnected from a decolonial practice? Recent work on the history of capitalism and fossil production has highlighted the relationship between Western hegemony in the XIXth century and carbon emissions*. Imposing steam production and coal extraction on newly occupied territories, the United Kingdom, soon followed by the United States and the rest of Western and Northern European countries, accelerated the global energetic transition from local production to mass extinction.

Nowadays, the United States is still responsible for nearly thirty percent of carbon emissions, although its population only totals 4.5 % of the world. Indigenous and BIPOC activists in the United States and abroad have been leaders in organizing against global warming and raising awareness about the destruction of our ecosystems. Cop City is a project that plans the construction of a police training facility specially designed to break down climate and social protests. Built over the South River forest in Atlanta, Georgia, a former Muscogee territory, this complex would become the largest in the USA. In February 2023, a climate activist peacefully occupying the forest named Tortugitta was murdered by the police during a raid to claim back the space. Cop City embodies the Leviatan set up against the protection of ecosystems and living beings as well as the rigorous planning of repression.

Willing to take a position against inherited colonial idiosyncrasies, artists in this edition both analyzed the past to turn towards the future, engaging in practices of collective care and healing. By questioning our relationship to the land, production, and the environment, SOFTEN MY HARDWARE: Agape & Eco-Futurities explores care and benevolence as radical modes of action against neo-liberal individualism.

Each artist is invited to explore these themes, crafting their own way to cope with the dystopian reality we evolve in.

Participatory lecture with Elia-Rosa Guirous and Carbon A. regarding Stop Cop City Everywhere

Still from Sur le lithium, les cyborgs, et ce pour quoi la vie vaut la peine d'être vécue by Inès Yahiaoui (2023)

Cy X

Performance by :3LON

Cy X

Event view of performance Cy x

3D Rendering for Philip Errico's installation

3D Rendering for Philip Errico's installation

Screening installation

Event shot with USB distribution at the door

"The glitch challenges us to consider how we can "penetrate … break … puncture … tear" the material of the institution, and, by extension, the institution of the body." - Legacy Russell

Edition 01

Suck My Code! Cyborgs & Sex

The exhibition featured a diverse array of works, including a workshop by Livia Foldes, performances by Avatar Lilith and Ava Mirage Wanbli, and a media installation comprising videos by Célin Jiang - Bisou Magique, Côme Ferrasse, and Charis. Each component of the exhibition delved into themes of gender, sexuality, and technology, reflecting a commitment to broadening the scope of cyberfeminist discourse beyond its traditional confines.

Inspired by the VNS Matrix Bitch Mutant Manifesto (1996), SUCK MY CODE! Cyborgs and Sex, marked the inaugural exhibition of the collective and positioned itself as a critical response to the often exclusionary histories of cyberfeminism. By addressing the absence of queer and BIPOC perspectives, the exhibition posed vital questions: How can we reshape narratives around technology? What does it mean to critically engage with the cyborg concept? How can we prevent restricting our work to an academic community that is discon-nected from our lived experiences and realities?

In a world where technology is often fetishized and its impact remains opaque, users are stripped of their ability to understand the deep morphological and sociological shifts it brings. This exhibition, a reactionary effort rooted in participation and community, was crafted as a glitch — a deliberate defiance of binary thinking about our future. It aimed to forge a space that was both joyful and subversive, a place to reimagine and shape our collective future.

Polysémiologie rectale (my anus is a weapon) (2023) by Côme Ferrasse

Participating Artists & Performers

Livia Foldes
Avatar Lilith
Ava Mirage Wanbli
Célin Jiang - Bisou Magique
Côme Ferrasse
Charis

Avatar Lilith performs *Open Source* (2023)

Charis's *Kinematic Viscosity* (2022)

Livia Foldes opening lecture (2023)

Ava Wanbli performs *Sertraline Dolls* (2021-22)

Célin Jiang/Bisou Magique's NIVEA, L'ÉTERNITÉ N'EXISTE PAS (2022)

Still of Avatar Lilith's *Open Source* (2023)

Installation & Exhibition Design

Referring to Gretchen Bender's (1951 -2004) multimedia installation Total Recall (1987) whose work was invisibilized for decades only to be considered after her death, the CRT TVs installation present in the exhibition speaks to the alienation and hyper-realism of (social) media nowadays. Shifting from a bulky TV to a smartphone, videos looping at all times mimic Instagram's algorithms trapping us in mesmerizing feeds in a growing logic of consumption and self-awareness.

Alongside the exhibition, we distributed twenty USBs containing academic readings, artworks, audio tracks, and an open letter by Ava Wanbli. This initiative underscored our commitment to transparency and equitable access, extending the exhibition's impact beyond its physical confines and fostering a more inclusive dialogue.

Behind
connectedmatter

Elia Rosa Guirous-Amasse (CPH)

Elia-Rosa Guirous-Amasse is an independent curator and writer who collaborates with alternative spaces known for fostering radical ideas. A committed utopian, their research delves into the complexities of colonial prejudice within technopower structures, aligning with those who view curatorial practice as both an ecological and social responsibility. Elia-Rosa holds an M.A. in Visual Arts Administration from New York University, where they were awarded the Robert and Nelly Gibson Fellowship, as well as an M.A. in International Relations and a B.A. in Political Science and Philosophy from Sorbonne University in Paris. They have curated events at venues including the Jeu de Paume museum in Paris, Haus der Statistik in Berlin, Chapitre 1 gallery in Paris, and Simian in Copenhagen. Their writings have appeared in DAMN magazine, Articulate, I Do Art, and other publications.

Niels Dawartz (CPH)

Niels Dawartz is a creative technologist and artist with a background in the humanities and computer science. They have a Bachelor of Arts in Communication and IT from the University of Copenhagen and a Master's degree in Software Development from the IT University of Copenhagen. Their work explores the relationship between humans and machines, delving into the physicality that connects them. Traversing the boundaries of technology and human experience, they create a dialogue that examines how these entities coexist and influence one another. With several years of experience as a full stack developer, they not only gained extensive knowledge in software development, but also developed a personal understanding of how the tech sector operates, which adds a nuanced perspective to their creative and research practices.

Adrienne Cassel (NYC)

Adrienne Cassel (also known by their artist name as Avatar Lilith) is an artist, creative technologist, and designer. They achieved their MFA in Design and Technology at Parsons School of Design at The New School. Masquerading as an avatar, they use voice, sound design, motion capture, & CGI to seek to indoctrinate all who listen into rejecting linearity and binary logic systems as a speculative and critical practice. Their work has been exhibited at ACUD GALERIE, Laboratory Art The Stonewall Inn, The Fuse Factory, The Miller Gallery, The Frame, Ars Electronica, Fact Magazine, Future Tenant Gallery, and PS1 Iowa City. Avatar Lilith is just as real as you.