

MiLOs

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Too often we allow ourselves to advance technology without reflection on its purpose. We continue the mindless process of making computation faster, more effective, and more efficient so that we can produce more, faster. But instead of taking the time saved to relax or connect with others, we are so romanced by the technology that we use the time to produce even more. In many ways, it seems as if humankind's symbiotic relationship with technology is turning — if it has not already turned — parasitic. We continue to advance technology so that we can only advance it further ... but to what end? Some may argue, from the evolutionary perspective, that technology may some day be responsible for enabling the survival of the human gene pool. But most would agree that there is more to life than the survival of our genes.

MiLOs applies a combination of mature and rising technologies in a way that cannot be mistaken for such self-perpetuating tendencies. Here, we use technology, not to improve the speed or efficiency of any task or process, but simply to bring people closer together in a mechanized world where separation is so easy. MiLOs combines silicon, algorithms, metals, and rare-earth magnets to do a very simple but powerful thing: to break a basic law of physics, to create magic. Using haptic technology, we can create a single physical object that exists in multiple places at once. This Multi-Locational Object [MiLO] can be held, felt, and manipulated simultaneously by geographically separated people, thus creating a physical and intimate connection that transcends distance.

Such magic is enabled by the digital ether that is rapidly permeating our world. Our notion of globally accessible information spaces has created a place that is not bounded by the physics of the real world: our own "digital plane". We currently choose to keep this new plane almost entirely separate from the physical world, allowing ourselves only to peek into it through small windows that sit on our desktops, but we can begin to bridge this unnecessary gap. Now we can begin to create objects that consist of both a real and a virtual self: a body and a spirit. Now we can play God and give multiple physical objects the same soul, so that they think and act in the same way, creating the illusion that many objects are one. We can take this a step further and imagine objects all around us which are shared by other distant people or completely link two physical spaces in such a way that everything is shared. The illusion begins to shift from magical objects to spiritual beings, with each person perceiving a spirit of the other person existing in the same space and manipulating the same reality. We can go even further and imagine that the object to be shared is part of the body itself, lungs or a heart, perhaps even a mind, approaching the point where two whole bodies share the same spirit. Here, we stop blindly feeding our technology and master it to mold our own realities.