

## Concept

<random> search is concerned with the space in the airport between passport control and the airplane terminal, a space described in Salman's Rushdie's words as "the frontier". The frontier where we are at our most vulnerable state, where we relinquish control and our bodies become tamed, fearful, abiding (*see Rushdie*).

Here is the truth: this line, at which we must stand until we are allowed to walk across [...]. At the frontier, our liberty is stripped away -we hope temporarily- and we enter the universe of control. Even the freest of free societies is unfree at the edge[...] where only the right things and people must go in and out. Here at the edge, we submit to scrutiny, to inspection, to judgment. We must be passive, docile. To be otherwise is to be suspect.

## Background

In the aftermath of September 11th, significant effort has been focused on aviation security, and screening of passengers has become a priority. As a result, individuals and minority group associations have been accusing authorities of racial profiling and discrimination in both the "random" selection for secondary screening and the actual pat-down procedure. Particularly vulnerable in this situation are minority groups, immigrants or persons from a specific ethnicity; and often, these people are reluctant to resist or file official complaints. While the TSA has tried to instill legislations and technologies to address this issue, the power imbalance between the screener and the screened seems to be the inherent problem. In fact, scientific studies such as the Milgram experiment and the Stanford Prison experiment have widely proven the correlation between potential abuse and institutionalized authority. <random> search provides a wearable tool for recording and monitoring inappropriate or unjustified searches. By allowing the traveler to log and share the invasive search experience s/he is going through, the "smart" body suit attempts to redress the power discrepancy between the inspector and the traveler, and be the mediated memory of the silent, abiding, excluded search "victim".

## Technology of inclusion

To date, the only tool a "victim" has, (if they are willing to complain at all), is a verbal or written account of their experience that authorities may or may not take seriously or act on. <random> search attempts to address this issue. It is an instrument, a witness to the screening process at a time where the traveler may choose to disregard or forget the traumatic experience. Hence, the wearable enables the wearer to become a fearless speaker (*see Foucault*) who challenges political and security powers. <random> search is a comprehensive pressure sensitive suit worn underneath the clothes when we travel. When activated, it starts recording the pat-down process the traveler is going through and saves it in digital format. The technology, acting as mediator, transports the message from the passenger who feels invaded onto a 'neutral' and 'objective' external memory device for future visualization, performance or analysis.

The smart body suit becomes an armour, one that helps restore equilibrium to an otherwise imbalanced power relationship between us and the authorities. It enables a more inclusive, agonistic form of democracy (*see Mouffe*) at a time where restrictions are imposed on our liberties and choices