DISMANTLING
REASSEMBLING
tools for
alternative futures

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Tactility and Care

MAHMOOD Aliza

Freelance Industrial Designer
alizadotm@gmail.com

This project critiques and reimagines the materiality of technological objects in western culture. We repeatedly swipe, hold, tilt, press and tap these screen-based cuboids, consuming masses of information. We rapidly replace them with newer versions that are more convenient, faster, sleeker, and slimmer, feeding the relentless culture of technological production. This estranges us from the objects and detaches us from the physical materials they are made of, since they have no texture or irregularities, appearing to exist effortlessly, seemingly without labor and infrastructure. The more our interactions with the world are mediated by technological objects that intentionally obscure complexities and skim over the tactility and friction by which we learn, make, engage, and acquire meaning for each other, the more we drift towards commodification. This culture reduces the human and their everyday experience to the level of the object. With each advancement, more of the human body is absent from the interaction, reduced from bodies to hands to fingers, to activation through voice and non-tactile gestures only. We are constantly creating animate technological objects, consequently de-animating ourselves. Through dismantling, making, and videography, I arrive at a series of speculative technological artifacts. They foster an alternative set of values rooted in tactility, care, and maintenance, re-animating our bodies.

technological objects; speculative artifacts; tactility; materiality

About the Author

Aliza Mahmood I'm a Pakistani Multidisciplinary Designer with a focus on Industrial Design and Experience Design. I hold an MFA in Design and Technology from Parsons School of Design and a Bachelor of Industrial Design from NUST. My work includes industrial design, experience design, interactive installations, critical and speculative design projects. I'm deeply interested in researching and exploring tactile technology, slow design, play, normativity in industrial design objects, and technological material culture. Previously, I have designed educational products for underprivileged children and interventions for women's healthcare in Pakistan. At

Parsons School of Design, I explored the human experience more deeply and critically, at the intersection of design and technology. Recently, I have been designing a new wearable technology product and consulting on multiple industrial design projects. I've grown up in different cities in Pakistan. I'm bilingual and always excited to learn new languages. Other than design and art, I love history, philosophy, math, music, and astrophysics. I recently relocated to Dubai, UAE from Maryland, USA. Dubai is simultaneously international yet culturally familiar to me, exposed to the western world yet rooted in the east. I'm excited to explore how this positionality will influence my design practice.