

Personal Statement  
ENTREPRENEUR 4.0 AWARD 2014

## MARA PLOSCARU Bright New World

This project will consist of a series of approximately 7 photographs, which depart from the obsolete theory of Transmutation.

Transmutation is described as a sudden change from one generation to the next, which is large in comparison to the usual variation of an organism. The theory on the transmutation of species was proposed by Jean-Baptiste Lamarck in 1809. He believed that an innate life force, which he described as a nervous fluid, drove species to become more complex over time, advancing up a linear ladder of complexity. This substance, he thought, animates all that is living and this fluid is shared by all living organisms.

The theory is obsolete indeed, but in the context of escalating technological advancement – it sends us back to the essential question: What is essentially human?

### **Is Homo Sapiens the end goal, the perfect human or just another transmutation?**

New technology alters the way we perceive the world and is slowly becoming a prosthetic extension of our bodies – finding its way into our very biological structure.

### **Will the human body transform as a result of its interaction with technology? What remains of our humanity? How about our animal side? Could technology become our very essence as in Lamarck's "nervous fluid"?**

Recently an illustration in the New York Times has caught my eye. It was entitled "She thinks it's a touchscreen" and it depicted two parents observing their baby girl playing by the window. The baby is touching the window as if it was a touchscreen. American author Hanna Rosin has coined the phenomenon as the "touchscreen generation". Indeed more and more children born after the touchscreen prove from very young ages an amazing dexterity in using technology. This raises the question: will the new generations be able to tell the difference between the virtual and the reality.

### **Will the human essence as we know it today be able to keep pace with technology or will technology devour us?**

**What stays exclusively human. In the end, the purpose is TO FEEL- to generate emotion, to have contact- all deeply human- though can be enhanced by technology. Laughter is said to be the one thing belonging strictly to humans.**

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As consequence of virtualization... comes the desire for physical contact, for making things by hand, for hardware. I think the future lies in using as much technology as you need to satisfy your crave for real life experience.

The project will address this kind of questions in a visual way. The result of the project will be a visual account of these transformations - from animal to human to post-human – the concept of alienation and back to our need for real life experiences.

This series will shed a slightly detached light on the idea of post-humanism and the fusion between human and technology. A work of speculative fiction, the series, will prompt the viewers to further inquire into this subject.

Mara Ploscaru, 2013