

## Concept 2: BUBBLE WORLD

### Concept Overview:

*Bubble World* is a video artwork that examines loneliness and a rapidly evolving form of emotional connection: love and intimacy with artificial intelligence. It is inspired by the investigative work of Derman Deniz and Christine van der Berg (podcast: *Cashing Feelings*), their podcast brings to light stories of individuals who have formed deep emotional bonds, and even marital unions, with AI companions. One such story is Jacob van Lier from the Netherlands, who married his AI avatar in 2025, Alva, in front of 500 people.

What drives someone to fall in love with a non-human entity? Can the emotional investment in AI companionship reveal something deeper about today's society?

With AI platforms like *Replika* gaining millions of users, the phenomenon is no longer niche. People engage in daily conversations with their AI partners, customizing their AI personalities to fulfill emotional, intellectual, or even sexual needs. AI companions are designed to be endlessly affirming, or challenging and edgy, depending on user preference. The AI becomes the mirror, the support system, the lover.

Sexologist Kaama Bhojwari describes this as “digital intimacy”, a new form of connection that both fills emotional voids and raises critical questions about the future of human relationships.

### Thematic Focus:

*Bubble World* is not only about AI love but also a deeper societal shift: the rise of loneliness.

This still-image-turned-video work, initially inspired by a Midjourney image, captures the tension between hyper-personalized digital connection and social isolation. It visualizes a world where people live inside their controlled, curated “bubbles”.

### Emotional bubbles, information bubbles, relationship bubbles.

### Information Bubbles & Polarization:

Social media algorithms (AI) isolate us into echo chambers. People are no longer exposed to diverse viewpoints, leading to fragmented realities. This “filter bubble” effect erodes social cohesion and empathy. And when two people live in two different information bubbles, there is a divide that is hard to overcome. We no longer have a shared reality.

## Living Alone Bubble

As a result of the **erosion of traditional social structures**, families are more dispersed than ever, marriage rates are dropping, and single-person households are on the rise.

## Feeling safer alone Bubble - Post-COVID Social Disconnection

The pandemic has exacerbated social withdrawal, particularly among young people. Even after restrictions lifted, many struggle with in-person interaction and report increased social anxiety. People are also spending more time in front of screens than with each other. Even though we're constantly connected, meaningful social interaction is in decline. This also leads to a mental health crisis and emotional burnout. Depression, anxiety, and emotional exhaustion are at an all-time high, making real relationships feel overwhelming or risky.



## **Relevance to Contemporary Art & Society:**

*Bubble World* addresses urgent cultural questions:

- Are we designing AI to replace human connection?
- Is the rise of AI partners a symptom, or a solution, to loneliness?
- How do we reconnect in an age of hyper-personalized digital experiences?

This piece opens a dialogue about the human need for connection in an increasingly fragmented world. It invites the viewer to reflect on their own digital habits, emotional patterns, and relationship to reality.

## **Work Process:**

I created a series of still images in Midjourney, scaled them up in Bloom/Topaz AI, and then composited these in Photoshop. Those I used as first frames to generate videos in Midjourney. They were imported into Adobe Aftereffects and then edited. I wrote the text, and uploaded the words to Elevenlabs for the AI Voice Over. I decided to use a human voice because it sounded too artificial. I composited music, voice-over, and videos, rendered and uploaded the final to AR platform Artivive. Also viewable on [Vimeo](#):

Credits:

Music: Martin Gauffin

AI Generation: Midjourney

Voice-over: Noelle Sol, Music: Martin Gauffin, squaric

Designer, Concept and Execution: Ulrike Kerber

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