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Contemporary Arts Practice and Outer Space: A Multi-Disciplinary Approach (3)

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COGITO IN SPACE AT THE DWINGELOO RADIO TELESCOPE

**Abstract**

‘COGITO in Space’ is an interdisciplinary art project speculating on the creative and philosophical possibilities of exploring the cosmos by means of radio waves. The project allows participants to send their brain activity into space, as a symbolic action for shifting awareness from an Earth-centered perspective to a cosmos-wide perspective. ‘COGITO in Space’ has been developed in collaboration with Frank White, author of *The Overview Effect: Space Exploration and Human Evolution*, a pivotal book that explores the shift in worldview experienced by astronauts when they see the Earth from space and in space. ‘COGITO in Space’, allows visitors to send their brain activity into outer space, using a lab grade electroencephalogram device, while experiencing a video in virtual reality.

On the 5 November 2018, COGITO in Space finally settled at the Dwingeloo radio telescope, its originally intended physical location. The project in fact was designed from the start to be presented inside the cabin of a radio telescope that would mimic the post-human outer shell of the body, its life support system in a half human-half technological system. The Dwingeloo radio telescope was inaugurated in 1956 and established as part of the Dutch heritage in 2011. The cabin still features some of the original radio equipment, together with modern amateur radio devices and its environment has become the iconic filmic set for the ongoing project’s performances since 2014. I envisioned the event at the radio telescope to be an experience for the visitors rather than a conventional exhibition opening, with several activities taking place throughout the day, in form of cinematic reality for which the extra-ordinary and ordinary mixed.

My presentation will focus on the COGITO in Space open day at the Dwingeloo radio telescope.