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Editorial

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e-flux journal #43 — march 2013 Julieta Aranda, Brian Kuan Wood, Anton Vidokle
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In last month's editorial for the February issue of *e-flux journal*, we proposed that the communication networks that now saturate our working and private lives have forced us to become cosmopolitan creatures. Our relations to place and time have been shredded to pieces, and we, as those proud pieces, circle the earth like satellites clustering in various locations simultaneously. Aliens to our homes and neighborhoods, we develop terrible posture slouching over screens while simultaneously soaring through the stratosphere at light speed, dazzling our way through galaxies, spotlights, and stars just to cover our measly rent.

This might sound like a condition restricted to information workers, but actually these same shredded proletarian data streams are the ones beaming local soap operas across the globe to cities and immigrant neighborhoods with enough satellite dishes on their rooftops to be a NASA installation on the eve of an alien invasion. But the aliens have already arrived, and they are us. And they do not come from space. In the era of humanism, the cosmic polis was something to strive toward, to capture by going to space. But now we have been there and back, and, *Solaris*-style, space turns out to be a massive mirror.

Now that we are fully stratospheric, it would seem that we are simply stuck with this mirror, if it weren't for the ghost of humanism that still nags at us with the dream of something truly other that would play against our limits, not just reflect what we look like to each other. Some kind of remnant of humanism still haunts our conception of art, like a corpse we don't know whether to bury or venerate. It sits in our throat, and when it makes us cough we think it's from smoking or the pollution, because it's probably that too. Because it still seems to promise forms of life other than those that have been completely overtaken by an economic calculus that stops at satellite broadcasts and the rapture of information.

But if we cosmopolitans now come from space, the old earthbound humanism won't work anymore. We are much more than that.