# The things we share

A Project plan

My dream project would take the form of an art installation that draws on the Danish advert highlighted above. It shows how people from all walks of life have more in common with one another than they believe to be the case – in essence, disrupting the notion of US and THEM.

This installation will make use of Augmented Reality to reveal hidden truths that may at first not be evident. It will take place in the real world, as an art installation that audiences can participate in.

It will feature a whole spectrum of different individuals – diverse in race, gender, age, socio-economic background, language, sexual orientation, etc. A photograph of each individual (head and shoulders) will be placed at the same height around a room. From each of these photographs a chain of similar photographs will flow of that individual, snaking around the room, eventually intersecting and de-connecting with other chains – forming a very complex lattice of interaction.

Every single photograph will be an AR enabled video and when seen through an AR device will reveal a small video depicting the individual sharing an aspect of their own identities – starting with the very first picture in which each individual will say who they are (I am Sam, I am Nereshie, I am Lerato, I am Dewalk, etc) in the pictures that follow they will divulge another aspect of their identity (I am a man, I am black, I am Afrikaans, I am an immigrant, I am a doctor, etc). The places where the chains intersect will reveal an aspect that people have in common.

So, in essence each photograph will be the first frame of the video insert, creating the illusion that the picture has come to life. The videography would need to be done beautifully, and artistically, highlighting the humanity in each face.
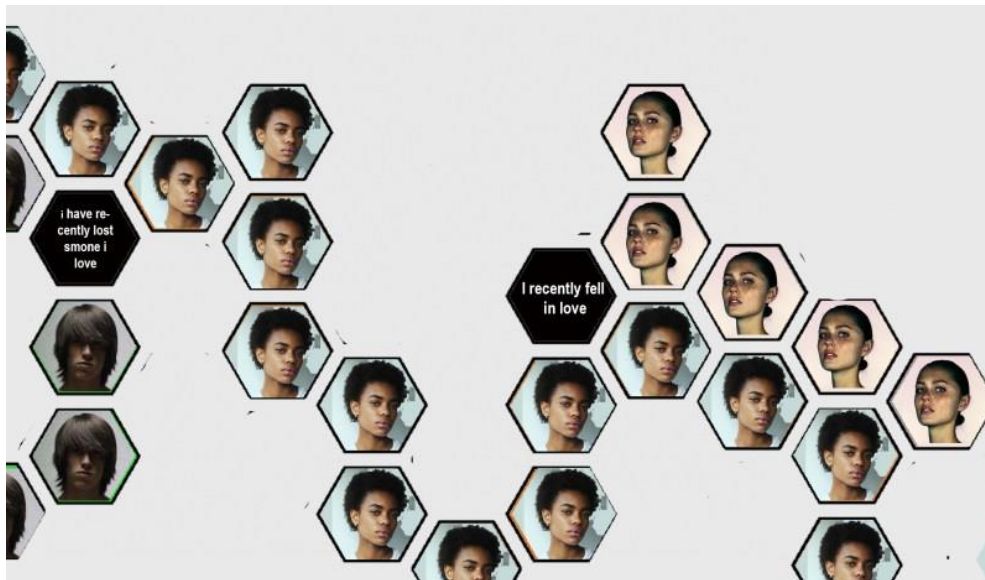
The actual 'image chains' would look something like this.

Why it should elicit participation

The issue of **identity** is at the centre of the story. Not only issues of national identity but also issues of individual identity. Hopefully the players will be able to identify the nodes they themselves share with some of the characters. Although following the stories will be a profoundly personal one (works best with 1 person per device, following which ever narrative/s they want to follow) but because there are other participants following their own paths (**coexisting at different levels)** there is also a sense of **collaboration** (participants will need to work together not to collide, give way, accommodate, etc)- and ultimately a sense of nation building (**collective identity).** This shared experience has the potential to generate a sense of togetherness and be a bonding experience – especially if we add the following aspect: **Thousands of coloured strings are hung, in a row, from**

above the character photos. Participants have the option to choose a string, tie paper with their names around it and trace the string to the node that resonates with them personally.

This way they become active in influencing the work, they have the opportunity to express themselves and actively contribute to the act of nation building.

The experience invites participants into the space. They will find themselves standing in this intricate web that should elicit curiosity. The novelty of the 'talking photo' should motivate them to participate. The fact that the photo itself (seen without the AR device) does not really tell you much about the person **simulates true life** as by looking at a person one cannot truly know what that person is about.

The **language** will be interesting as each video delivery will reveal a little more about the person, it will be their own voices, in their own accents, in their own language, with their own intonations and colloquialisms – this, of course, also speaks to issues of **identity.**

The structure of the layout is at the heart of the success that the project could achieve. Because the installation will take up physical space, the participant will feel as if they are making **visible progress.**

In a sense, even **conflict** is represented as there will be examples of extreme differences that also highlights the fact that we are also different in many ways. By changing the **weight** of the responses (from I like candyfloss to I am a MK Veteran) the conflict will shift throughout each story.

The theme is relevant and a matter of **current affairs**, as we are constantly reminded in the media of our differences and seldom realize that we have more in common than we think.