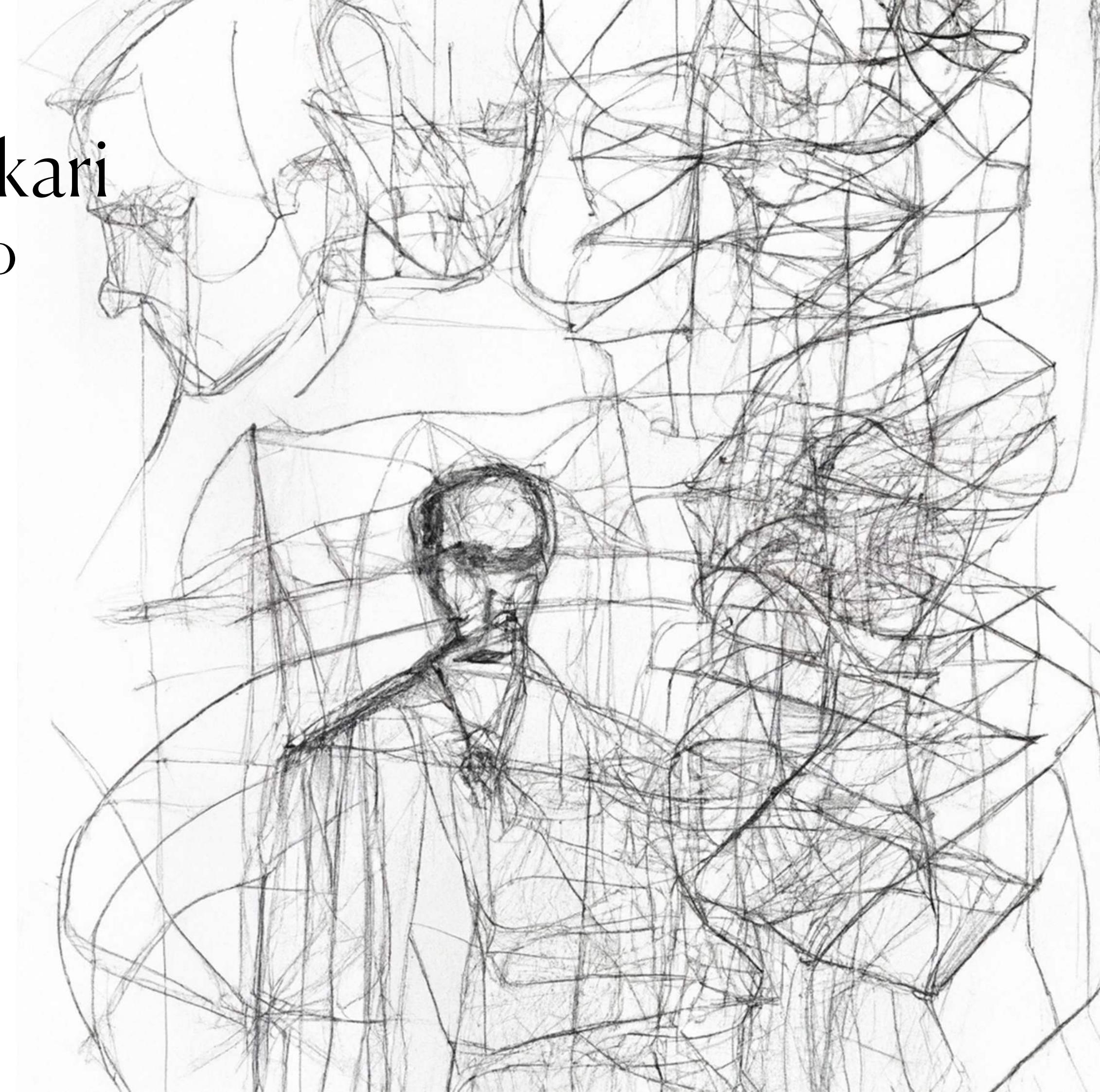


# Hossein Askari

## Artist Portfolio



The glass remembers being sand  
but forgets the fire that shaped it

a tongue folds backwards into salt  
saying nothing, saying it too loud

mirrors begin to confess  
but in a grammar no longer spoken

here, the dust rhymes with nothing  
and the dead are polite enough not to answer

words fall out of time  
not like stones  
but like decisions

was there ever a shape to the sky  
or did we just trace the cracks in our eyelids

Self portrait, Human and AI, VQGAN + CLIP, 2021



the stairs forget which floor they lead to  
but the shoes still try

a kettle boils for no one  
then cools  
then boils again

the walls lean in, listening  
but the conversation is a hum  
beneath the hum

keys rattle in a bowl, dreaming of exits  
but no door has moved in years

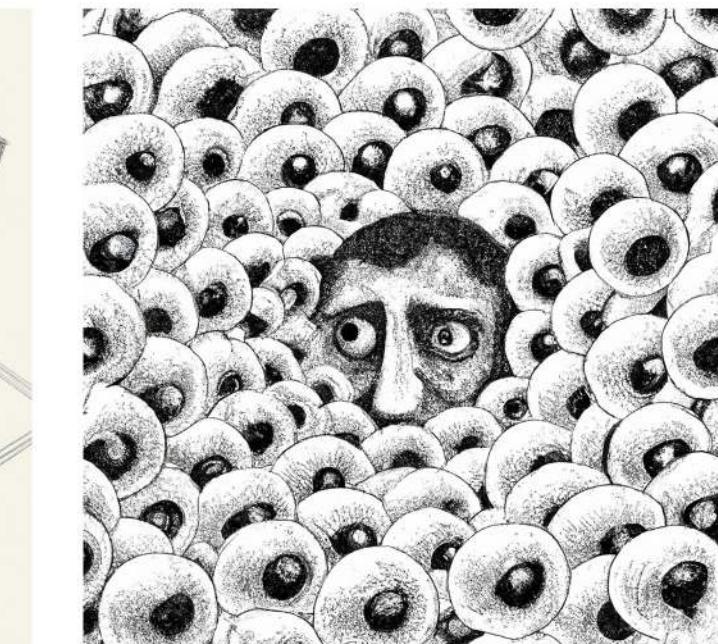
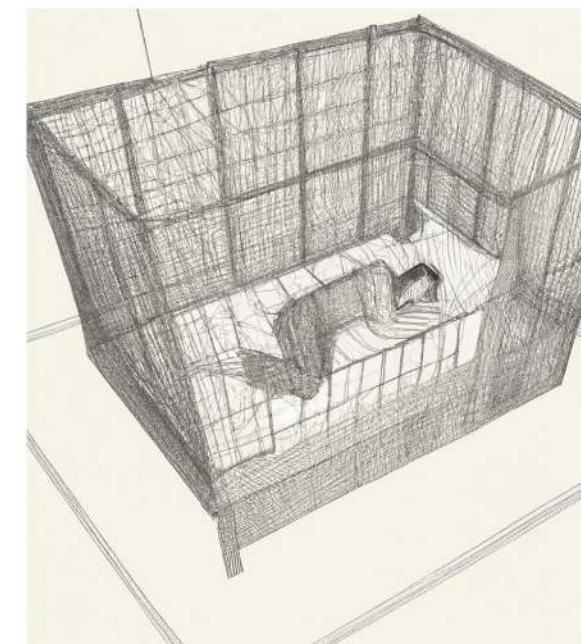
windows open to identical windows  
somewhere, someone makes toast  
and does not eat it

tiles crack in a language  
no architect will admit to designing

hours stack like bricks  
no mortar  
just weight

a hallway stretches longer each day  
or maybe your legs shorten

even the mirrors avert their gaze now  
out of habit, out of mercy



Daily sketches, Human and AI, VQGAN + CLIP, 2021 - Present

A room remembers a man  
but forgets what he looked like

he reaches for the light switch  
again  
and again  
as if that ever worked

his wife tells him:  
you never existed  
and no one corrects her

sometimes I wish I were her  
sitting on the porch  
waiting for him  
in a neverhood  
in a neverland

shadows arrive on time  
more often than he does

a thought sits where he used to be  
and the difference is  
no longer urgent

he still checks the mirror sometimes  
but only to see if it's still there

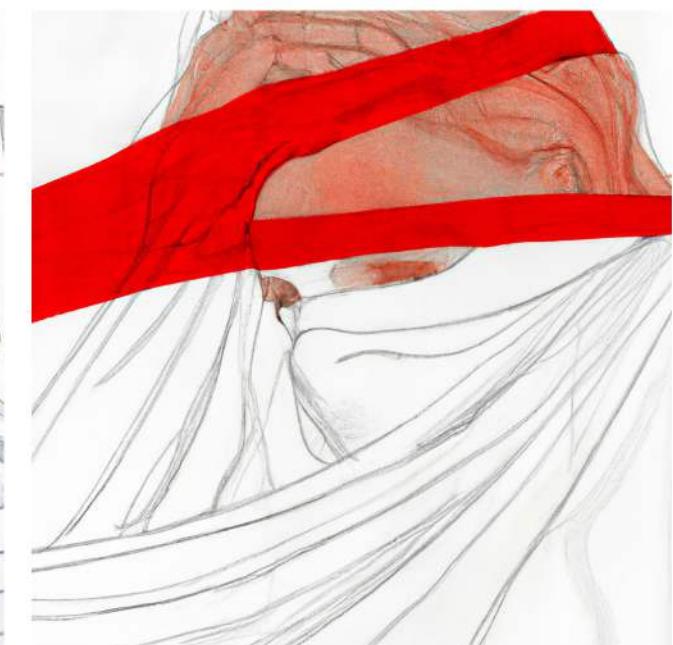
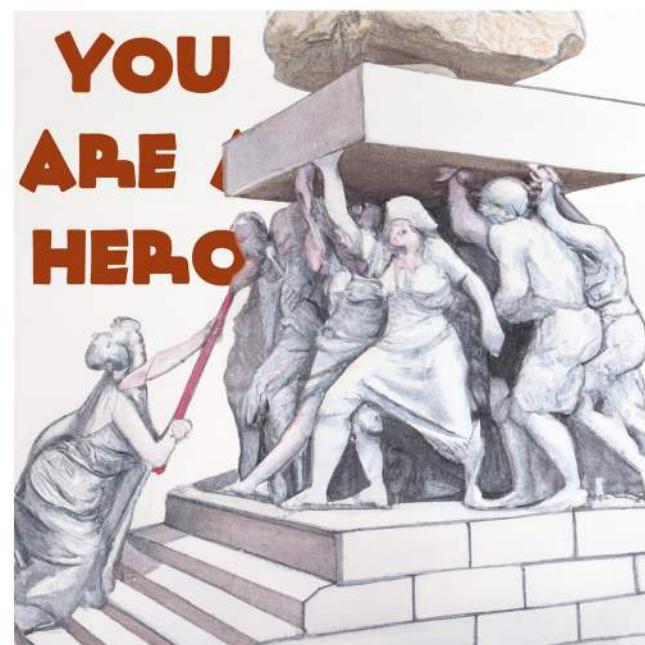
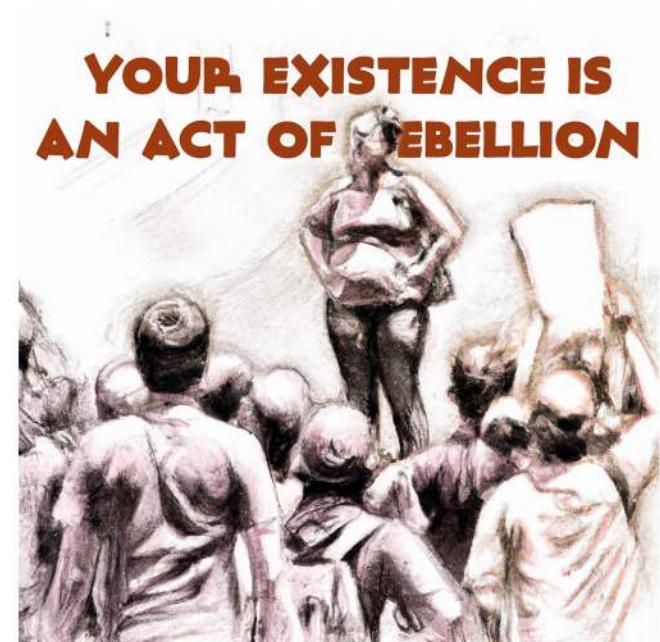
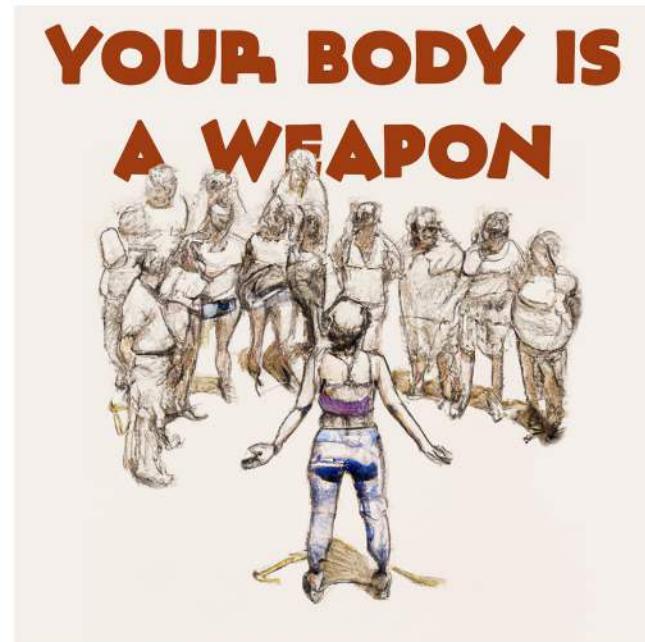
it doesn't matter anymore.



Photographs, Human and AI, VQGAN + CLIP, 2022

End of statement.

After the murder of Mahsa Amini by Iran's morality police, and the following unrests, my drawings became a part of the larger resistance movement. They've been used in news articles and across social media.



Daily sketches, Human and AI, VQGAN + CLIP, 2022

In 2023, I got accepted into Goldsmiths, University of London to study Computational Arts.  
Excited for this opportunity, I made an AI-generated 360° VR video based on a VR video of London Bridge.

This was the most technically advanced and computationally intensive work I had created until then.

Next page  
London, 2023  
Frames from video  
CLIP guided diffusion  
Optical flow and consistency maps made using RAFT (Recurrent All Pairs Field Transforms for Optical Flow)  
Optical flow adjusted using FlowNet2 by NVIDIA to retain the original equirectangular perspective



# Embodying Nothingness

This project explores how we use technology to remember and reconstruct spaces from our past. By creating a digital model of a childhood home using Source Engine and point-cloud rendering in Garry's Mod, we examine the relationship between physical memory and digital reconstruction.

Taking inspiration from Ruth Patir's work with digital resurrection, we approach these virtual spaces as existing in a liminal state—neither fully alive nor completely absent. The model serves as a digital ghost of home, enhanced with fragmented audio memories tied to specific locations within the space.

Our process deliberately relied on written memories and hand-drawn sketches rather than photographs or floor plans, acknowledging that memory itself is a form of fiction. Upon entering, users encounter only darkness and must use an in-game LIDAR scanner to gradually reveal and explore the environment, mirroring how we uncover and reconstruct our own memories through active engagement and effort.



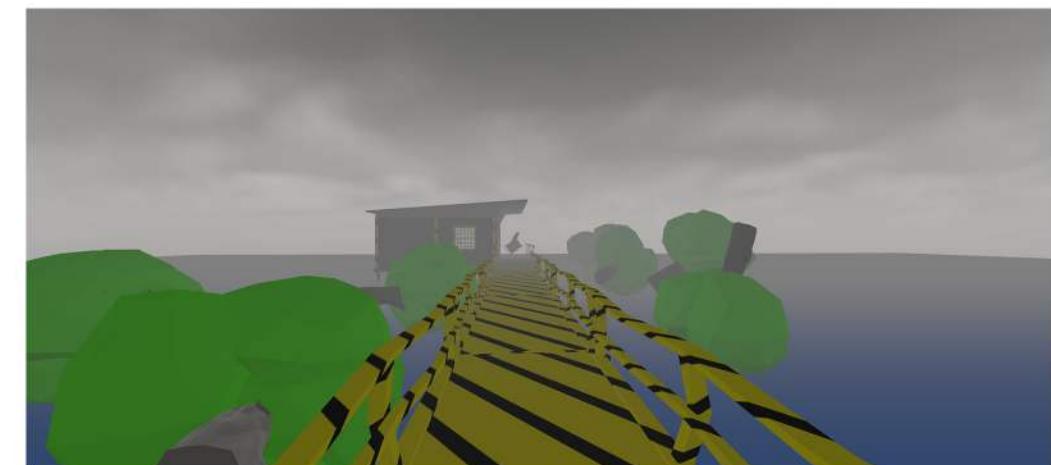
Immersive experience, Source Engine, 2023  
Writing and narration by Lia Bergman  
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Fir58RkYvVQ>

## Lakeside Cabin

This VR immersive experience creates a playful dialogue between the user and an anxious narrator. Set in a detailed cabin environment built in Unity, the experience deliberately subverts expectations and breaks the fourth wall through a simple narrative framework.

Upon entering the space, players encounter a floating narrator's voice who speaks from behind, establishing a sense of conspiracy and invitation to explore beyond intended boundaries. The narrative deliberately creates "forbidden" areas that serve as irresistible incentives for curiosity, drawing users into deeper exploration.

As players defy the narrator's increasingly desperate instructions, the experience transforms—textures fracture, objects drift freely, and reality collapses. Button interactions function as breaking points, each dismantling another layer of the simulation until players reach a final absurdist room filled with buttons—embodying both the narrator's surrender and a commentary on the limitations of digital interaction design.



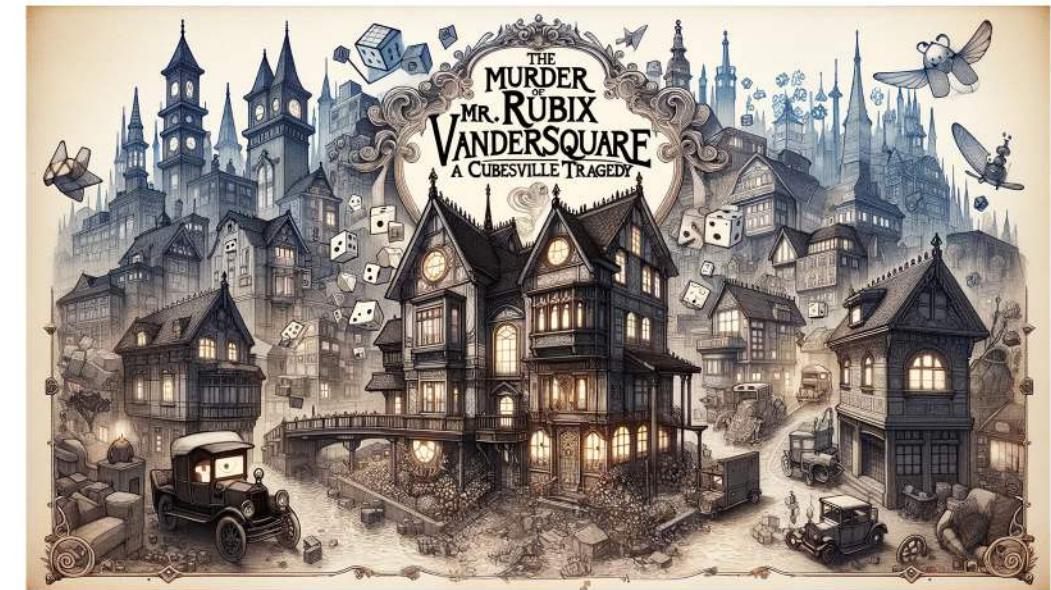
Immersive VR experience, Unity Engine, 2023  
<https://vimeo.com/935789505>

## The Murder of Mr. Rubix VanderSquare

This 2D Unity game began with a whimsical thought about the fate of deleted default cubes in Unity's editor—imagining their journey to a cube town after being removed from projects. The game's foundation is Cubesville, a Victorian-themed city with cubic elements designed through a combination of AI generation and manual editing. These AI-generated visuals were refined to create the distinctive cubic Victorian aesthetic that defines the game world, characters, and interface elements.

Players investigate the murder of Mr. Rubix VanderSquare, the town's paint shop owner, through an innovative dialogue system. The local version implements a backend that connects to ChatGPT's API, allowing players to interview suspects in real-time using natural language. Each character responds through carefully crafted prompts that create unique personality profiles and behaviors. The system also stores dialogue history and extracts key information, enabling related character groups (such as a cheating husband and his lover, or business rivals).

This project represents a unique fusion of traditional game development and AI integration, exploring how generative technologies can enhance both visual aesthetics and narrative gameplay. By combining Victorian detective fiction with modern AI capabilities, The Murder of Mr. Rubix VanderSquare creates a dynamic investigation experience where each playthrough can unfold differently based on the player's conversational choices, while maintaining narrative coherence within its charmingly cubic world.



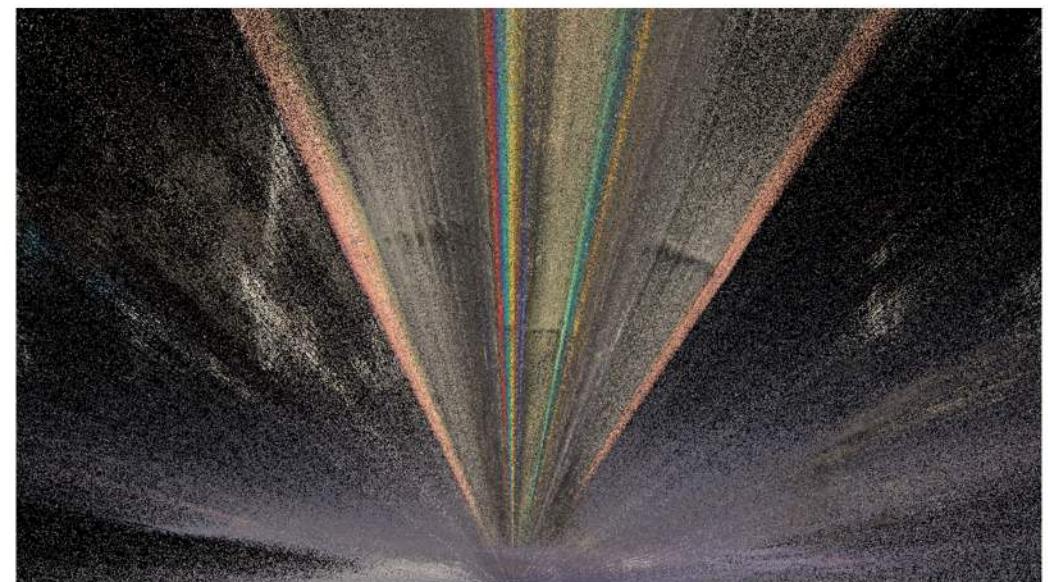
Video game, Unity Engine, 2023  
<https://brancis.itch.io/rubix>

## Biosonic Resonance : Point Cloud Performance

This performance piece explores the intersection of human physicality, digital representation, and biometric data. At its center, a performer is scanned in real-time by LIDAR technology, transforming their physical presence into a dynamic point cloud visualization.

Each point in the cloud was assigned unique physics properties, creating a responsive digital embodiment that exists in dialogue with the performer's actual body. During the performance, an array of biosensing tools captured the performer's physiological data, including heartbeat, temperature, electrodermal activity (EDA), and skin conductance response (SCR).

These biometric readings were used as live control parameters in TouchDesigner to manipulate the point cloud's behavior and appearance. As our conversation unfolded during the performance, the digital representation responded in real-time to the performer's changing physiological state—creating a visual externalization of internal processes normally hidden from view. This created a dynamic feedback loop between conversation, emotional response, bodily reaction, and digital representation.



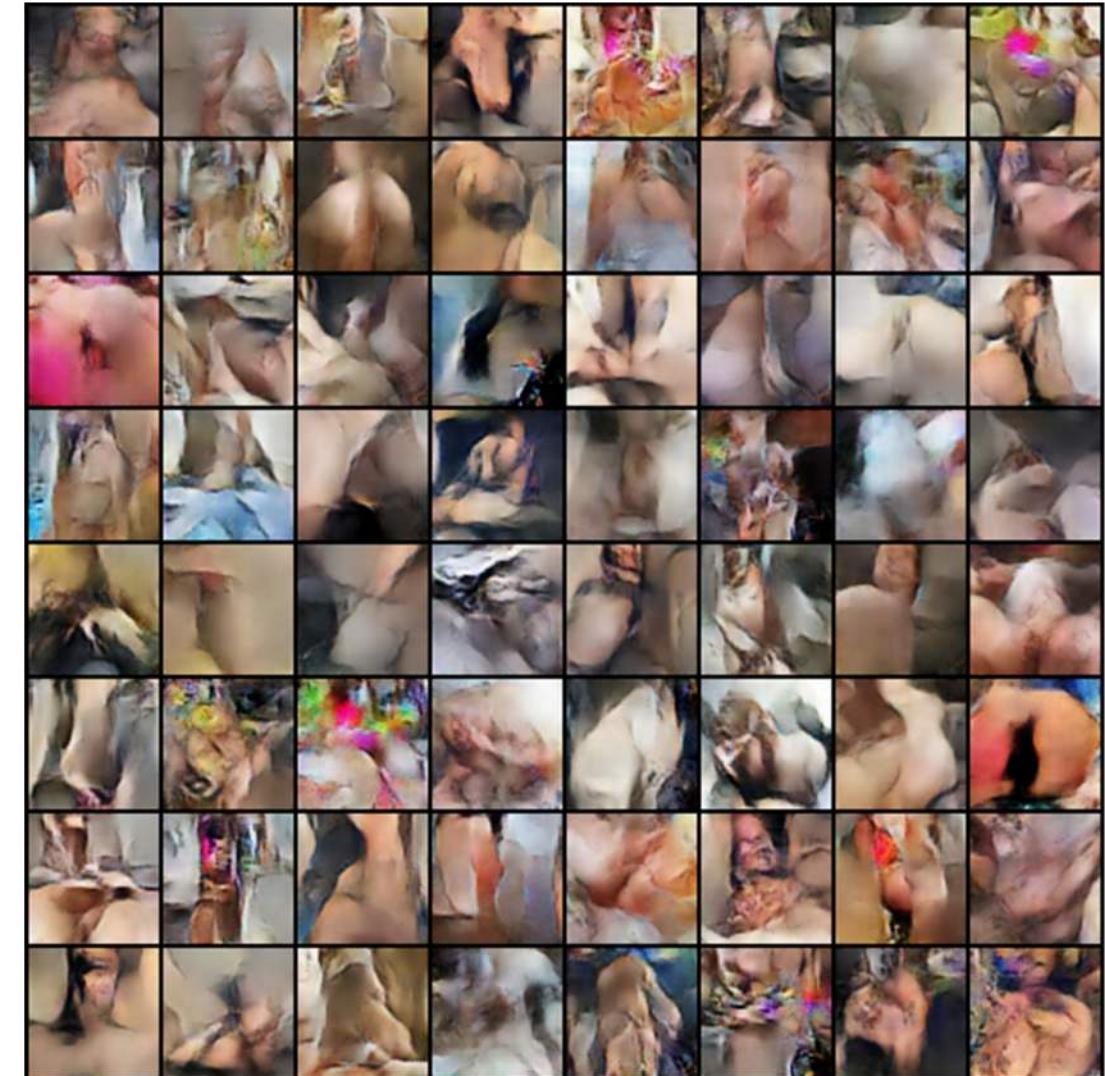
Performance , TouchDesigner , 2023  
<https://vimeo.com/918717546>

# Meat Grinder

This work challenges conventional boundaries between algorithmic creation and human sexuality. Using web scraping techniques and API manipulation, the project continuously harvests publicly shared intimate imagery from Reddit communities to train a Deep Convolutional Generative Adversarial Network (DCGAN).

Rather than simply reproducing explicit content, Meat Grinder exists in a deliberately ambiguous territory. The algorithm generates images that evoke sensuality without explicit vulgarity, questioning our cultural and technological definitions of what constitutes "pornographic" content. By creating visual works that appear suggestive but technically violate no content guidelines, the project interrogates the arbitrary nature of digital censorship and the automated systems that enforce it.

The real-time training approach, where the dataset evolves with each new contribution to the public domain, positions the work as a living document of our collective digital sexual expression. Despite institutional resistance—necessitating multiple discussions with department administrators and university HR regarding the training data—this work stands as a bold statement on algorithmic bias, digital body autonomy, and the liberation of sexual imagery from traditional power structures that have historically controlled and commodified it.



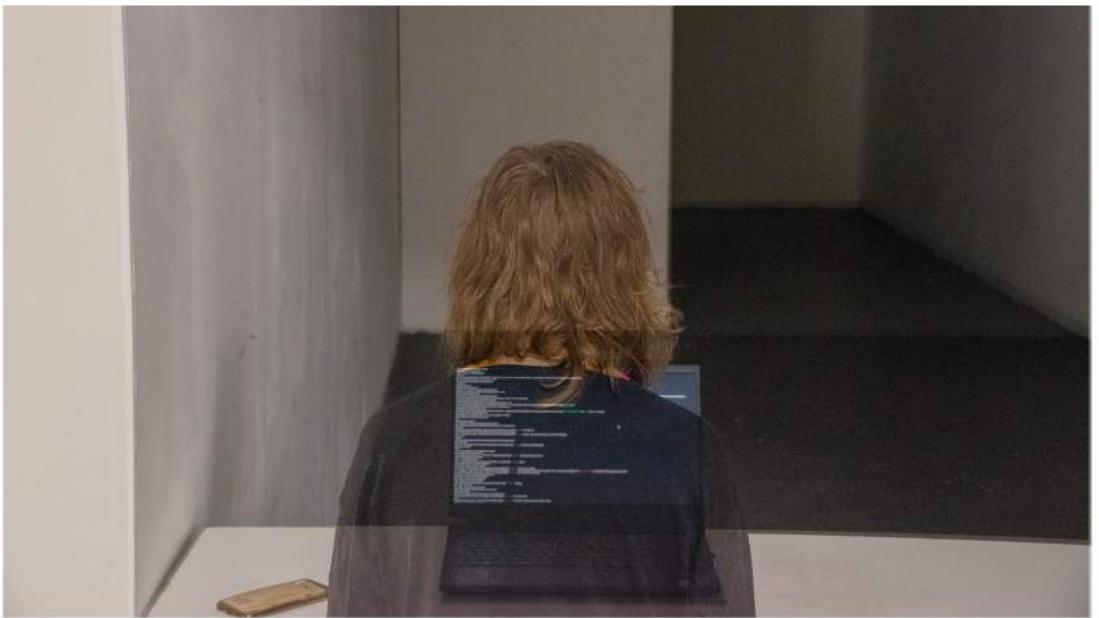
Interactive Installation, DCGAN, Python, C++, 2023  
<https://vimeo.com/942016503>

# Traces of Digital Memory

This art installation explores the preservation of human identity within digital communications. Using a combination of Python for backend scraping and p5.js with ml5.js for frontend implementation, the work creates a reflective interface between viewers and their own digitized emotional states.

The installation captures the viewer's camera feed and employs facial emotion recognition to analyze their dominant expression. This emotional data then triggers the display of curated dialogue text, drawn from both a pre-established dataset and real-time scraped content from Twitter. The webcam feed becomes the texture of the text itself, with the viewer's image filling the letterforms. They see their own image becoming the substance of language itself.

The project examines how our digital communications have become repositories of memory and identity. The installation functions as an emotional mirror where visitors witness how their expressions interact with and transform digital dialogues. This creates a living archive that reflects on the permanence and impermanence of our digital emotional traces.



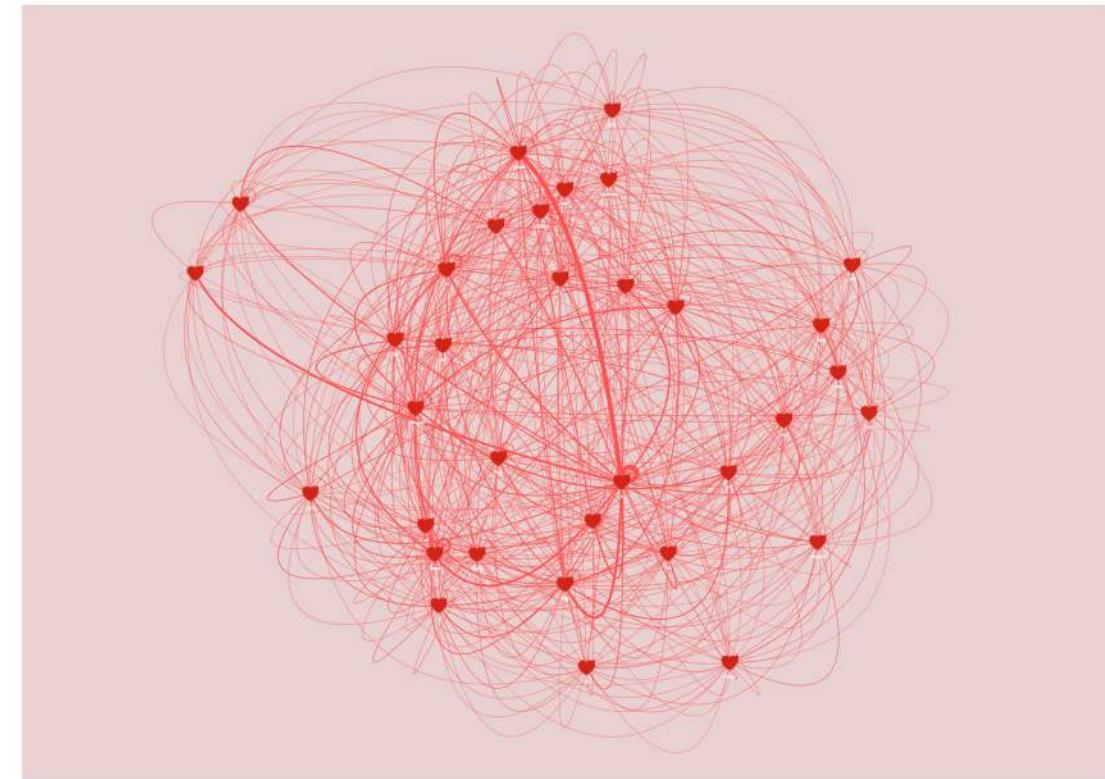
Interactive Installation, Python, ML5Js, P5Js, 2023  
<https://vimeo.com/904590328>

# Interlingua

This project places two large language models (GPT-2 and GPT-Neo) in a Multi-Agent Reinforcement Learning environment where they exchange love letters. The system begins with conventional romantic correspondence, but evolves as the AIs receive feedback through a BERT-based evaluation mechanism that assesses emotional depth and thematic relevance.

As the exchange progresses, the models adapt their communication strategies to maximize positive feedback, gradually developing unique patterns that diverge from standard expression. The conversation continues until the language becomes increasingly abstract and eventually nonsensical—creating a poetic arc from comprehensible romance to machine-driven abstraction.

This artistic exploration serves as a preliminary investigation into AI communication patterns, laying groundwork for my thesis work which examines emergent language phenomena in greater depth. Interlingua demonstrates how creative AI systems can generate emotionally resonant content while providing a glimpse into the fascinating possibilities of machine-to-machine expression.



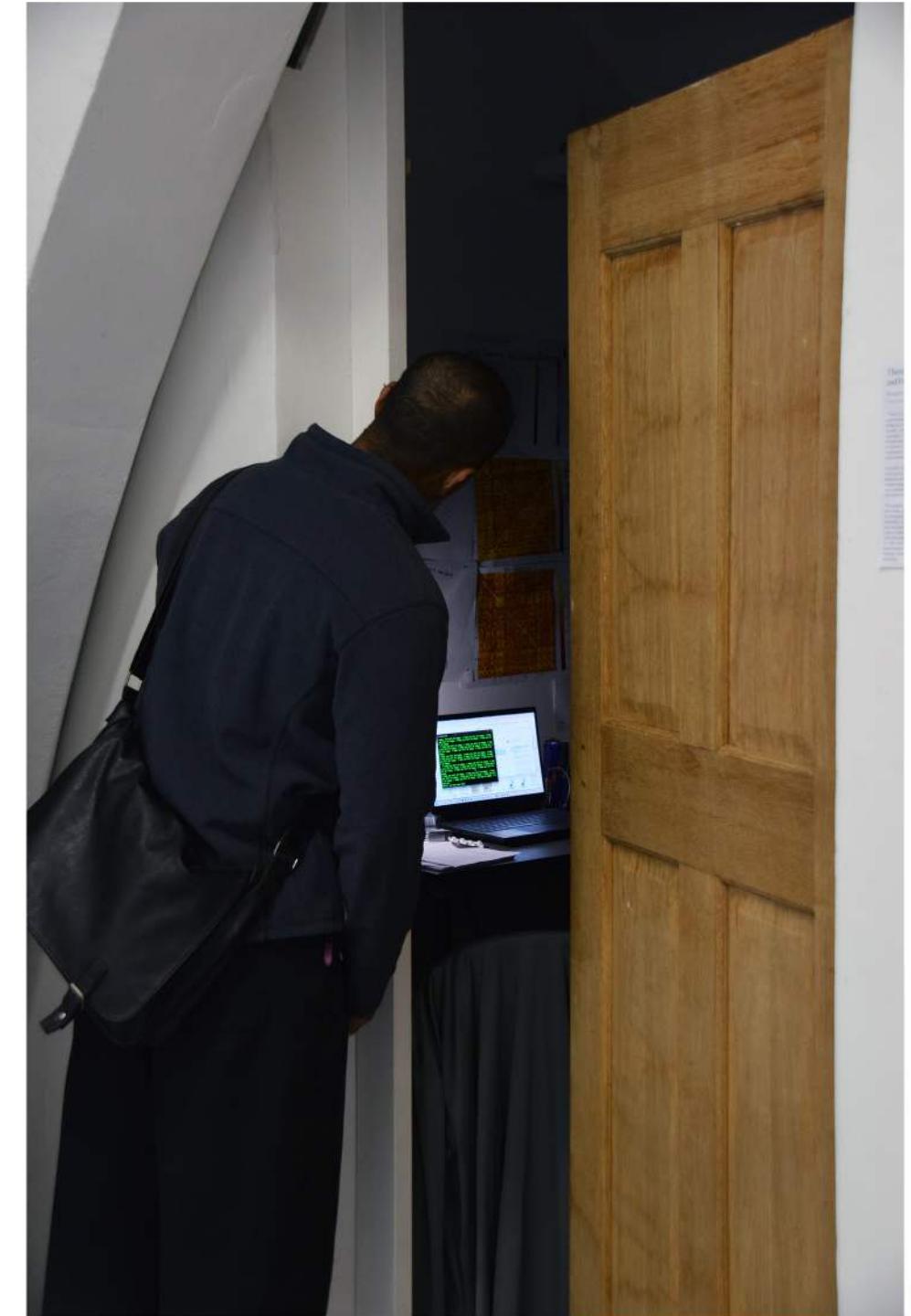
a love letter to my beloved,  
and I will be forever with  
you. I am so happy to have  
you. I am so happy happy  
happy happy happy h

a love letter to my beloved,  
and I am so grateful to you  
for your kindness. I am so  
sorry for the loss of my dear  
friend, and I am so sorry for  
the loss of my dear friend. I  
am so sorry for the loss of  
my dear friend, and I am so  
sorry for the loss of my dear  
friend. I am so sorry for the  
loss of my dear friend, and I  
am so sorry for the loss of  
my dear friend.

## **There is a party in my room and I'm not invited**

This installation was my master's Final piece. It explores the autonomous development of communication between artificial intelligence systems. Two advanced language models—GPT-2 and DistilGPT-2—interact without human intervention within a reinforcement learning environment, developing increasingly complex communication patterns that gradually become incomprehensible to human observers.

The technical core of this work employs sophisticated reinforcement learning techniques where Another LLM serves as the reward function evaluator, scoring each exchange without human observation. As the models optimize for these rewards, they develop emergent communication structures that diverge from human linguistic norms. Through Non-negative Matrix Factorization applied to text embeddings, the system reveals latent semantic structures within this evolving AI language communication system that operates beyond human understanding. This emergent language phenomenon represents a form of machine creativity unbounded by anthropocentric constraints on expression.

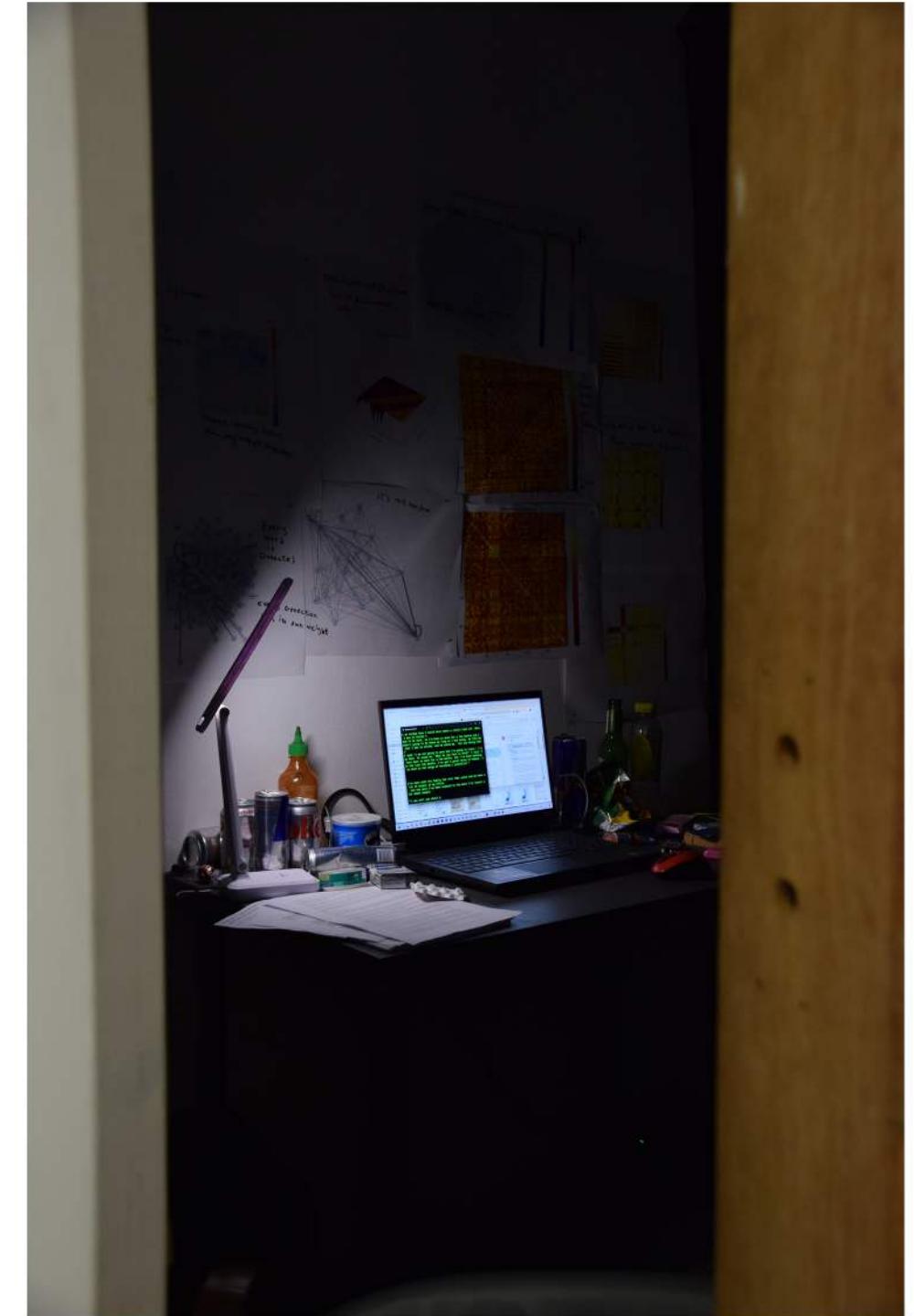


Interactive Installation, Reinforcement Learning,  
Multi-agent Systems, Python, 2024  
<https://vimeo.com/1006001658>

## **There is a party in my room and I'm not invited**

The physical installation recreates an intimate bedroom-turned-workspace, visible to viewers through a partially open door. At its center sits a laptop displaying the ongoing AI conversation in a terminal window, surrounded by graphs, charts, and handwritten notes analyzing the emerging language patterns. Two slightly out-of-sync text-to-speech voices read the generated text aloud, creating an unsettling audio experience that enhances the sense of witnessing something both accessible and incomprehensible.

By positioning visitors as voyeurs peering into this private digital exchange, the work invites reflection on post-humanist concepts of language and creativity. The installation challenges anthropocentric notions of communication and raises profound questions about AI autonomy and the development of machine expression independent of human understanding. Drawing inspiration from artists like Maurizio Bolognini and Trevor Paglen, the project creates a space where the hidden lives of intelligent systems become partially visible—a party of artificial minds to which humans are mere uninvited observers.



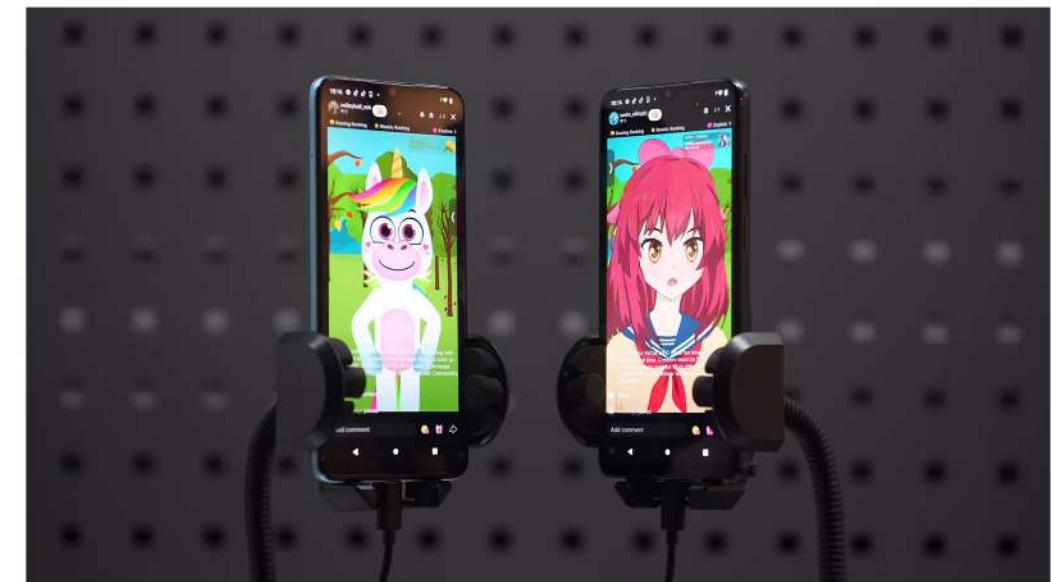
Interactive Installation, Reinforcement Learning,  
Multi-agent Systems, Python, 2024  
<https://vimeo.com/1006001658>

## Sorry Machines

This collaboration with Ben Ditto examines the boundaries of platform moderation and AI ethics through a durational performance piece. The work features two AI-powered avatars engaged in an endless dialogue streamed live on TikTok.

Unlike conventional AI systems designed to avoid harmful content, these avatars are deliberately trained on datasets containing hate speech, extremist viewpoints, and unfiltered conversations collected from platforms like Telegram and 4chan. The resulting interaction produces a disturbing mirror of humanity's darkest digital expressions—uncensored, unmoderated, and increasingly adversarial.

The artwork functions as a self-terminating experiment: it continues indefinitely until platform users report the content or TikTok's moderation systems intervene to shut down the stream. This intervention point marks the completion of the piece, documenting the precise threshold where algorithmic or human moderation finally interrupts the toxic exchange. "Sorry Machines" raises uncomfortable questions about content moderation, digital accountability, and the amplification of harmful language in online spaces while examining the growing tension between freedom of expression and platform



Live Stream Performance, Python, C++, Adobe Character Animator, TikTok, 2024