

## **Z Revival**

*The aesthetics of digital capitalism posit us as users embedded in new ever-changing realities. This talk expounds a prediction about what is essentially my generation's vaporwave—an attempt to reconnect with a lost future promised to us by the technology of our youth. I'm witnessing a return to what dominated our memory of the years 2008-2014, the futurepast of Miis, iPhone 3Gs, and Black-Eyed Peas. Nostalgia for when our interactions with technology were seemingly benign and explicable is to be expected when in the present, they lose this pretense. All around me I see artists invoking low-poly depression, a yearning for the former optimism and simpler geometries of digital childhood. The popularization of Cottage Core and Liminal Spaces introduced detachment from lived experience in favor of an aesthetic existence to a certain Gen Z user, who now constructs their political subjectivity through an aesthetic prism. The cultural weight placed on individual aesthetic choices reveals our pathetically misled search for agency in an algorithmized world. I hope to answer the questions: Why must we study internet aesthetics and history? How can nostalgia be weaponized? And what is so political about rejecting high definition?*

[Z Revival Music](#)  
[Z Revival Imagery](#)

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