

PROGETTO

# MULTIMODAL MIST THE MUSICOLINGUISTIC LANDSCAPES OF VAPORWAVE

DATA

11.23.19 // AAA

NOME

MORGAN SLEEPER

# intro: language in genre

- \* Sung language and musical genre

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  - \* Variation from spoken language (Turpin 2007, Nancarrow 2010)

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- \* Visual language?

# intro: language in genre

- \* Visual language
  - \* Importance in internet-mediated musics (Born & Haworth 2017)

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  - \* Digital linguistic landscapes (Landry & Bourhis 1997)

# intro: language in genre

- \* Visual language
  - \* Importance in internet-mediated musics (Born & Haworth 2017)
  - \* Digital linguistic landscapes (Landry & Bourhis 1997)
- \* Vaporwave

# vaporwave

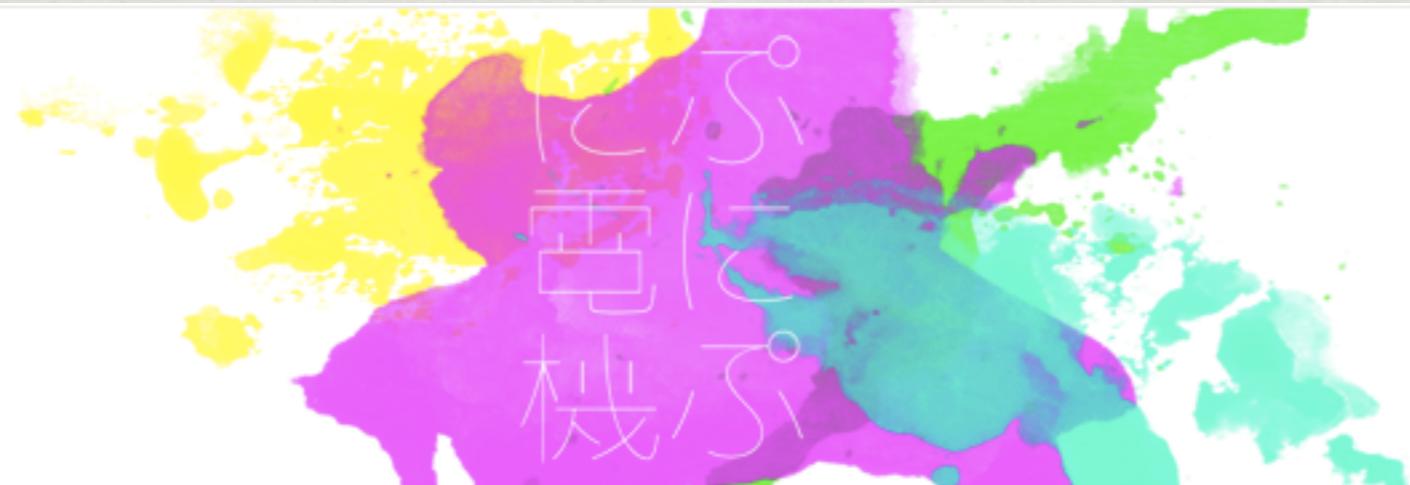
- \* Vaporwave: new internet-mediated musical genre
- \* Themes:
  - \* “Alienating reinterpretations of familiar sounds” (Koc 2017:61), like 1980s pop & elevator music
  - \* ‘Distorted nostalgia’, ‘fuzzy memories’
- \* Constructed through music and spoken, sung, and visual language across multiple modalities

# bandcamp

- \* Popular platform for internet-mediated musics like vaporwave
- \* Pay-what-you-want model
- \* Sample-friendly
- \* Page-based streaming



# bandcamp



[music](#) [merch](#)

## Wonder Underground

by [punipunidenki](#)



life is SUPER DOPE 00:00 / 02:53



### Digital Album

Streaming + Download

Includes unlimited streaming via the free Bandcamp app, plus high-quality download in MP3, FLAC and more.

You own this

[Send as Gift](#)

[Limited SUPER DOPE Cassette Tape](#)



**punipunidenki**  
Tokyo, Japan

[Following](#)

Making groovin'  
music :)  
jazz,funk,Electro,pop  
more&more!  
plz check my SNS  
too~<3

# bandcamp

Cassette + Digital Album



SUPER DOPE cassette tape with 3 lyrics cards. art by Yunico Uchiyama, designed by Fumina Nishino.

Includes unlimited streaming of *Wonder Underground* via the free Bandcamp app, plus high-quality download in MP3, FLAC and more. ships out within 5 days

You own this [Buy again](#)

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- 1. [MAN-MADE](#) 03:21
- 2. [empty castle](#) 02:48
- 3. [your skin](#) 02:50
- 4. [life is SUPER DOPE](#) 02:53

2019/05/20 Limited SUPER DOPE cassette tape out!  
Don't miss it :)

punipunidenki's 2nd Private EP :)  
This world is beautiful. We are lonely, too small, warm and connected.  
love

released April 28, 2019

music & lyrics by punipunidenki  
art by Yunico Uchiyama  
design by Fumina Nishino



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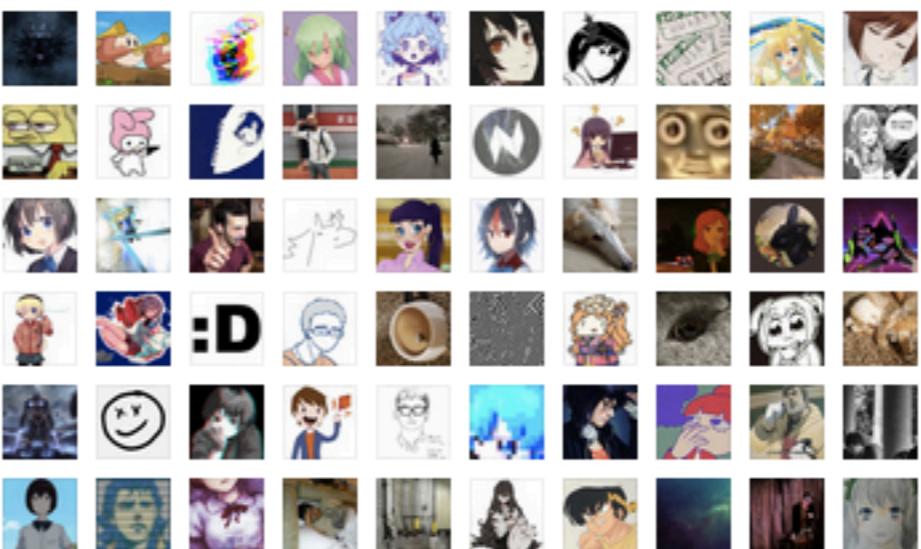
**xhAKASE** 「wau」 I have taken a liking for Puniden's soft voice against the jazz; I ended up getting the cassette.  
Favorite track: life is SUPER DOPE.



**Andrew\_z** The voice with the jazz combination sounds incredible I loved it Favorite track: empty castle.



**merumeru** Her whispery voice in combination with those easy to listen, yet interesting, jazzy tunes make this CD a perfect pop release for me. Favorite track: MAN-MADE.



[more...](#)

[SoundCloud](#)

[Twitter](#)

[Instagram](#)

[discography](#)



[a drop](#)

Oct 2019

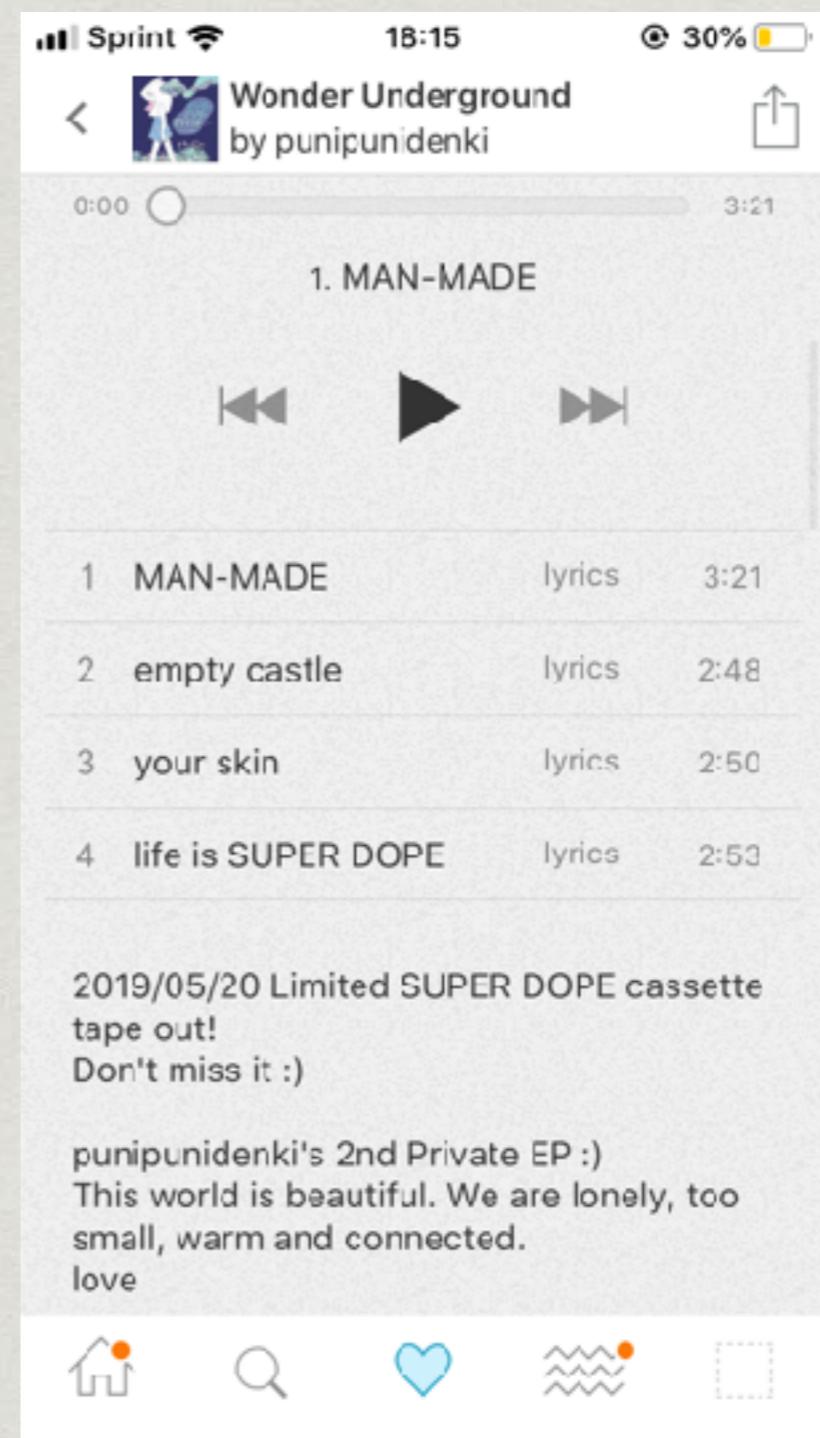


[Wonder Underground](#)

Apr 2019



# bandcamp



# vaporwave ling landscapes

- \* Digital linguistic landscape central to how vaporwave is consumed

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  - \* Use of Japanese text

# vaporwave ling landscapes

- \* Digital linguistic landscape central to how vaporwave is consumed
  - \* Use of Japanese text
  - \* First vaporwave release:
    - \* ‘Floral Shoppe’ by Macプラス

# vaporwave ling landscapes

- \* Floral Shoppe (2011)
- \* Macプラス (Ramona Langley, USA)
- \* Music: slowed, chopped, screwed 1980s pop
- \* Linguistic landscape: Japanese track titles



# vaporwave ling landscapes

- \* ‘リサフランク420 / 現代のコンピュー’  
('Lisa Frank 420/Modern Computing')
- \* Sample: Diana Ross ‘It's Your Move’ (1984)



# vaporwave ling landscapes

- \* The use of Japanese by non-Japanese-speaking Vaporwave artists is not to be understood linguistically

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# vaporwave ling landscapes

- \* The use of Japanese by non-Japanese-speaking Vaporwave artists is not to be understood linguistically
- \* Orientalist marker of otherness central to the genre's themes of alienation and distortion (Chandler 2016)
- \* Evidence: ‘Vaporwave text generator’

# vaporwave ling landscapes

- \* ‘Vaporwave text generator’

The screenshot shows a web browser window with the URL <https://lingojam.com/VaporwaveTextGenerator>. The page has a purple gradient background. At the top, it says "Vaporwave Text Generator". On the left, there's a white box containing the text "Hello AAA.". On the right, there are three lines of vaporwave-style text: "Hello AAA. 八ヨ河", "Hello AAA. (八ヨ河)", and "[Hello AAA.]". The LingoJam logo is at the top center, and a "CREATE A TRANSLATOR" button is on the right.

Hello AAA.

Hello AAA. 八ヨ河

Hello AAA. (八ヨ河)

[Hello AAA.]

# vaporwave ling landscapes

- \* ‘Vaporwave text generator’

The screenshot shows a web browser window with the URL <https://lingojam.com/VaporwaveTextGenerator>. The page has a pink-to-blue gradient background. At the top, there's a black header bar with the LINGOJAM logo and a 'CREATE A TRANSLATOR' button. The main title 'Vaporwave Text Generator' is displayed in large, bold, white letters. On the left, a white box contains the text 'Hello AAA.'. On the right, another white box contains three lines of vaporwave-style text: 'Hello AAA. 維ごソ', 'Hello AAA. (維ごソ)', and '[Hello AAA.]'. The browser interface includes standard navigation buttons, a search bar, and a download icon.

Hello AAA.

Hello AAA. 維ごソ  
Hello AAA. (維ごソ)  
[Hello AAA.]

# vaporwave ling landscapes

- \* ‘Vaporwave text generator’

The screenshot shows a web browser window with the URL <https://lingojam.com/VaporwaveTextGenerator>. The page has a pink-to-blue gradient background. At the top, there's a navigation bar with icons for back, forward, search, and refresh, followed by the URL and a download icon. Below the bar, the LINGOJAM logo is on the left and a 'CREATE A TRANSLATOR' button is on the right. The main title 'Vaporwave Text Generator' is displayed in large, bold, black letters. On the left, a white box contains the text 'Hello AAA.'. On the right, another white box contains three generated vaporwave-style variations of the text: 'Hello AAA. 沿ざ', 'Hello AAA. (沿ざ)', and '[Hello AAA.]'. The vaporwave style is characterized by distorted, rounded, and slightly illegible characters.

Hello AAA.

Hello AAA. 沿ざ

Hello AAA. (沿ざ)

[Hello AAA.]

# vaporwave ling landscapes

- \* Digital linguistic landscape (arbitrary Japanese) combines with music (distorted English) to create ‘distorted nostalgia’, ‘fuzzy memories’
- \* Vaporwave as a genre constructed through these multimodal bundlings of music and language
- \* This happens in more than one modality at once!

# musicolinguistic landscapes

- \* In addition to digital linguistic landscapes,

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- \* Vaporwave uses **specific musical production techniques** to create **soundscapes** in which listeners can imagine visual language situated:  
**imagined musicolinguistic landscapes**

# musicolinguistic landscapes

- \* In addition to digital linguistic landscapes,
- \* Vaporwave uses **specific musical production techniques** to create **soundscapes** in which listeners can imagine visual language situated: **imagined musicolinguistic landscapes**
- \* These **imagined musicolinguistic landscapes** are integral to the genre's themes of alienation, distortion, and fuzzy memories.

# this talk

- \* Imagined musicolinguistic landscapes in three subgeneres, representative artists:
  - \* Mallsoft
  - \* Future Funk
  - \* Signalwave

# mallsoft: 猫シCorp.



\* 猫シCorp. (Jornt  
Elzinga, Netherlands)

# mallsoft: 猫シCorp.



- \* 猫シCorp. (Jornt Elzinga, Netherlands)
- \* ‘Palm Mall’

# mallsoft: 猫シCorp.



- \* 猫シCorp. (Jornt Elzinga, Netherlands)
- \* ‘Palm Mall’
- \* Music:
  - \* Muzak/elevator jazz
  - \* Announcements/commercials (English/Japanese)

# mallsoft: 猫シCorp.



## Palm Mall

by 猫シ Corp.

Palm Mall 00:00 / 22:22

### Digital Album

Streaming + Download

Includes high-quality download in MP3, FLAC and more. Paying supporters also get unlimited streaming via the free Bandcamp app.

You own this

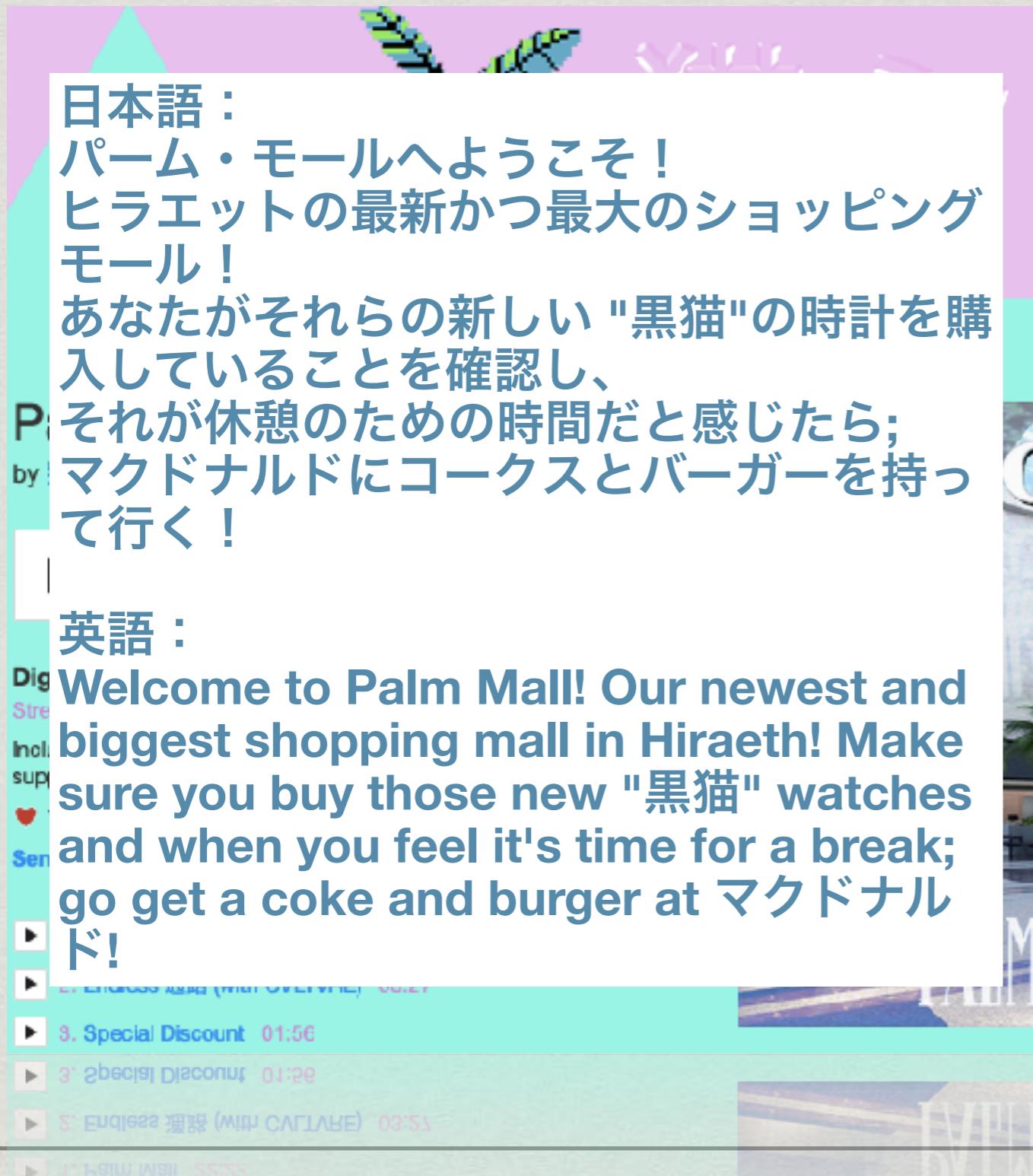
[Send as Gift](#)

- 1. Palm Mall 22:22
- 2. Endless 通路 (with CVLTVRE) 03:27
- 3. Special Discount 01:56
- 3. Special Discount 01:29
- 5. Endless 通路 (with CVLTVRE) 03:51
- 5. Endless 通路 (with CVLTVRE) 03:51



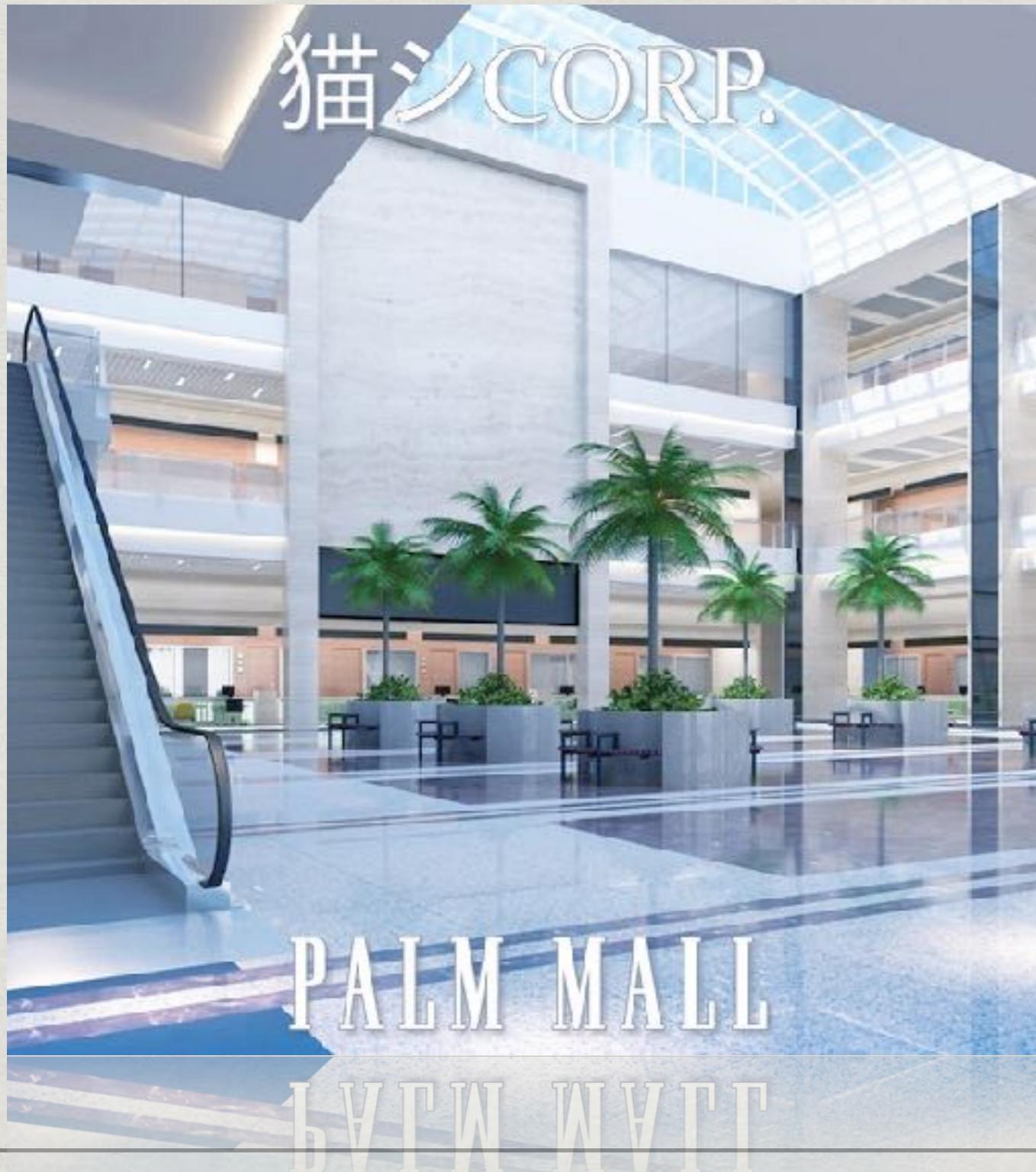
- \* Digital linguistic landscape:
- \* Eng/Jpn titles

# mallsoft: 猫シCorp.



- \* Digital linguistic landscape:
  - \* Eng/Jpn titles
  - \* Eng/Jpn description

# mallsoft: 猫シCorp.



- \* Musical production:
  - \* Hi-cut/low-cut filters
  - \* Emphasise mid-range frequencies
  - \* ‘PA system’ sound
- \* Ambient noise/conversation
- \* Cathedral reverb

# mallsoft: 猫シCorp.

- \* Musical production creates imagined musicolinguistic landscape:



**Zygmunt Zygler** *I feel like I am walking through a shopping mall that i've always went to, but at the same time, never visited. This album takes you to a place where you can purchase Marble statues, Google Poesies, and Colorful Cassece tapes 10/10 Favorite track: Palm Mall.*



**Joe Soul** *I've never listened to vaporwave until late in the game (a couple of months ago), and I gotta admit that this album took me back to a place that I forgot all about ... Thank you. Favorite track: Palm Mall.*



**chekrdnickrs** *Lost in a mall that never existed*  
*Favorite track: Endless 通路 (with CVLTVRE).*

# future funk: マクロス82-99

- \* マクロス82-99 (Gerald 'Mookie', Mexico)



# future funk: マクロス82-99

- \* マクロス82-99 (Gerald 'Mookie', Mexico)
- \* 'Sailorwave'



# future funk: マクロス82-99

- \* マクロス82-99 (Gerald 'Mookie', Mexico)
- \* 'Sailorwave'
- \* Music:
  - \* English-1g disco
  - \* Japanese City Pop



# future funk: マクロス82-99

- \* Digital linguistic landscape:
- \* Jpn/Eng titles

▶	1. NEW DAWN	02:36
▶	2. 戦場	02:02
▶	3. 木野 まこと	02:02
▶	4. 火野 レイ	02:23
▶	5. 水TEMPLES	01:36
▶	6. 水野 亜美AMY	02:44
▶	7. ABOUT U (Feat. オウムのジャングル PARROT JUNGLE 95)	01:42
▶	8. STREET ROMANCE 2049	02:28
▶	9. 月乃 うさぎSERENA	01:56
▶	10. 新宿区 JAZZ POINT J	02:15

# future funk: マクロス82-99

- \* Musical production:
- \* Dynamic EQ and filter sweeps
- \* Sense of motion towards/away from music



# future funk: マクロス82-99

- \* Musical production:
- \* ‘火野 レイ’
  - \* Low-pass -> high-pass filter
  - \* Movement towards music
  - \* Ambient sounds -> fade out



# future funk: マクロス82-99

- \* Musical production:
- \* ‘STREET ROMANCE 2049’
  - \* 1. Extreme low-pass & ambient noise
    - \* Outside of music; passing by



# future funk: マクロス82-99

- \* Musical production:
- \* ‘STREET ROMANCE 2049’
  - \* 2. Compressed levels, gated drums & tiled reverb
  - \* Inside narrow passage with music



# future funk: マクロス82-99

- \* Musical production:
- \* ‘STREET ROMANCE 2049’
- \* 3. Extreme low-pass & ambient noise
  - \* Outside of music; passing by

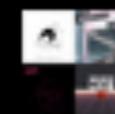


# future funk: マクロス82-99

- \* Musical production creates imagined musicolinguistic landscape:



vsa *this was the first future funk album I ever listened to. It changed me. It introduced me to a whole new world of music and MACROSS 82-99 remains one of my biggest/favourite artists of the genre. Every track feels like a new vibe and experience and a new section of a fictional city that you cruise through at night.*



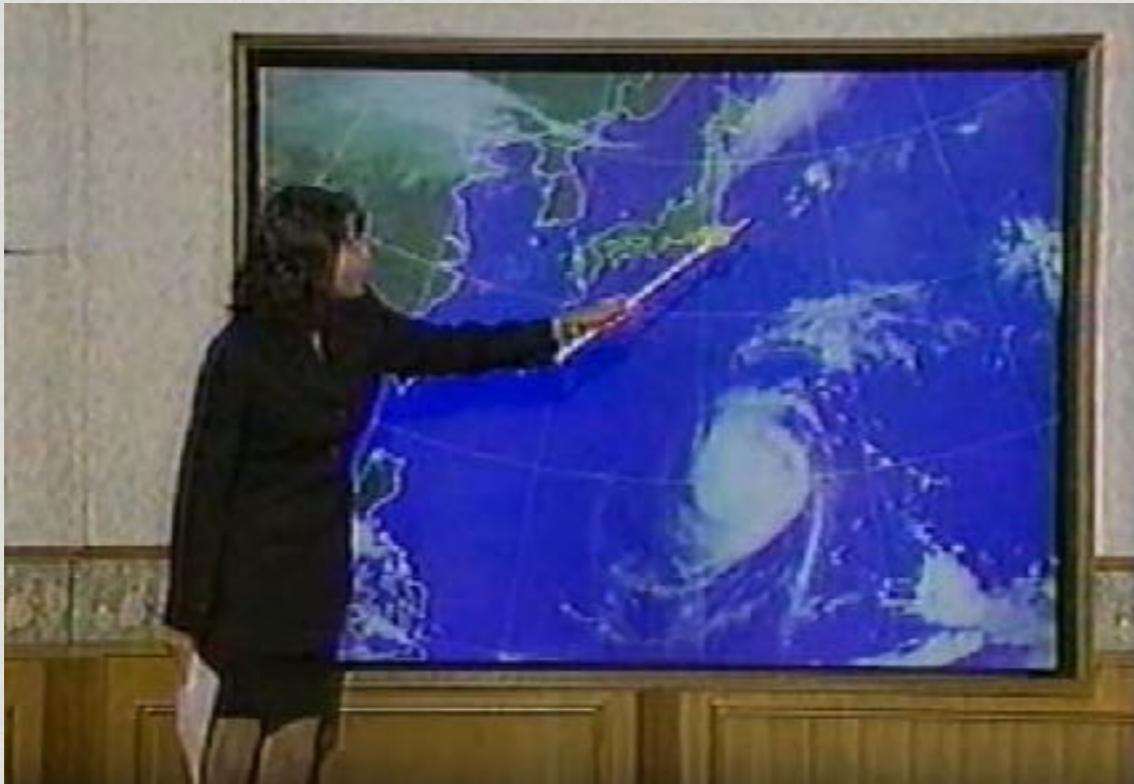
Rex Leung *That nice, bubbly feeling when you walk down the crowded streets of Tokyo.  
Favorite track: Horsey (feat. Sarah Bonito).*



Michael DeConcini *Really captures the kinda ambivalent but upbeat feeling I get from a city at night. Euphoric and wonderful, great to put on while busy or even just when bored.*

# signalwave: 天氣予報

- \* 天氣予報 ('Asu Tenki',  
'Osaka, Japan')



# signalwave: 天氣予報



- \* 天氣予報 ('Asu Tenki', 'Osaka, Japan')
- \* Digital discography

# signalwave: 天気予報



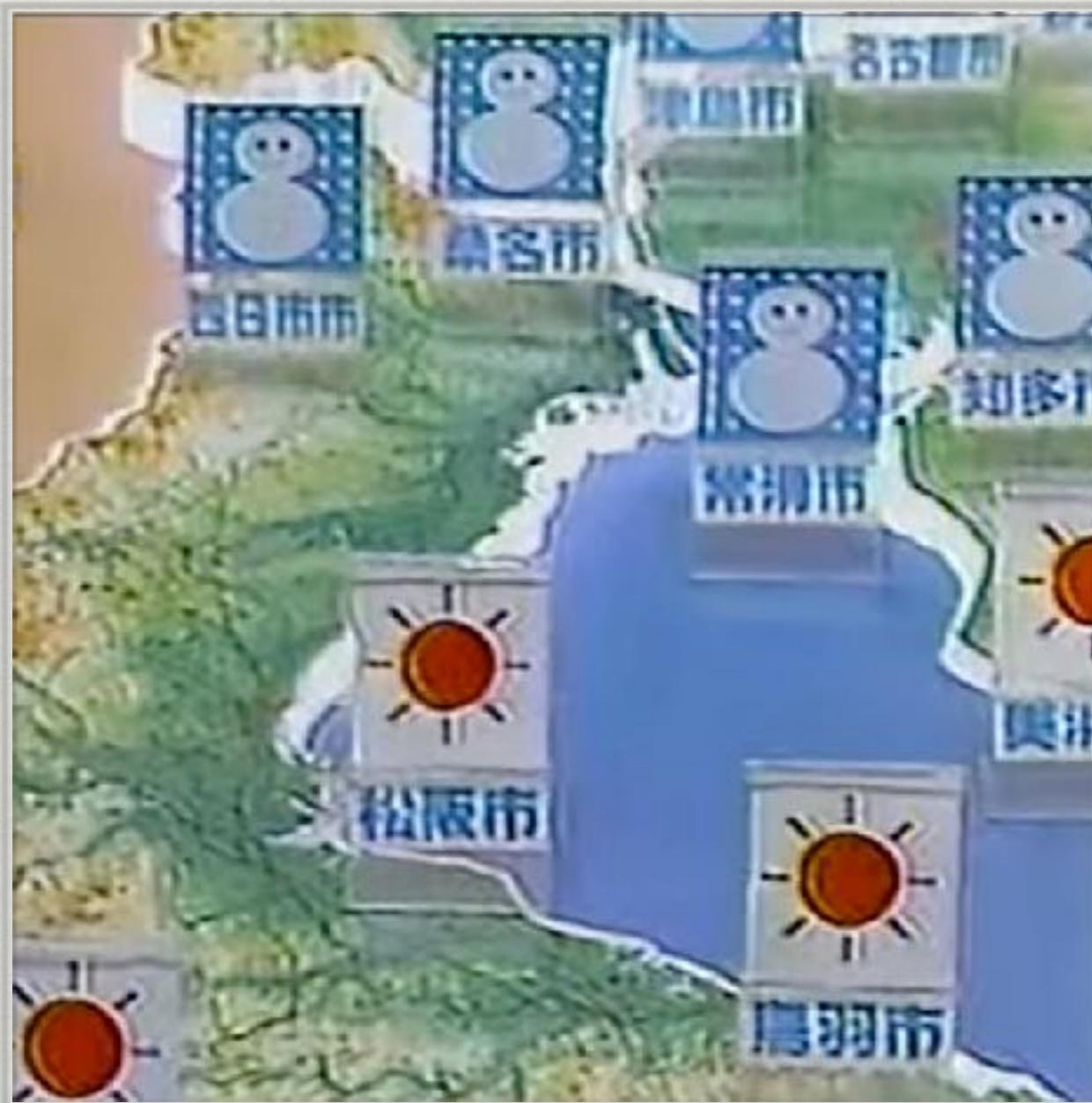
- \* 天気予報 ('Asu Tenki', 'Osaka, Japan')
- \* Digital discography
- \* Music:
  - \* Japanese weather reports
  - \* Japanese commercials

# signalwave: 天気予報

- ▶ 17. あすの天気 04:24
- ▶ 18. 風・夢・天使 00:55
- ▶ 19. 旧式 01:48
- ▶ 20. CMブレーク 「Vol. XXIV」 02:12
- ▶ 21. 1:30 02:33
- ▶ 22. Announcements! 02:00
- ▶ 23. Broadcast Concluded 01:12
- ▶ 24. サインオフ 01:05

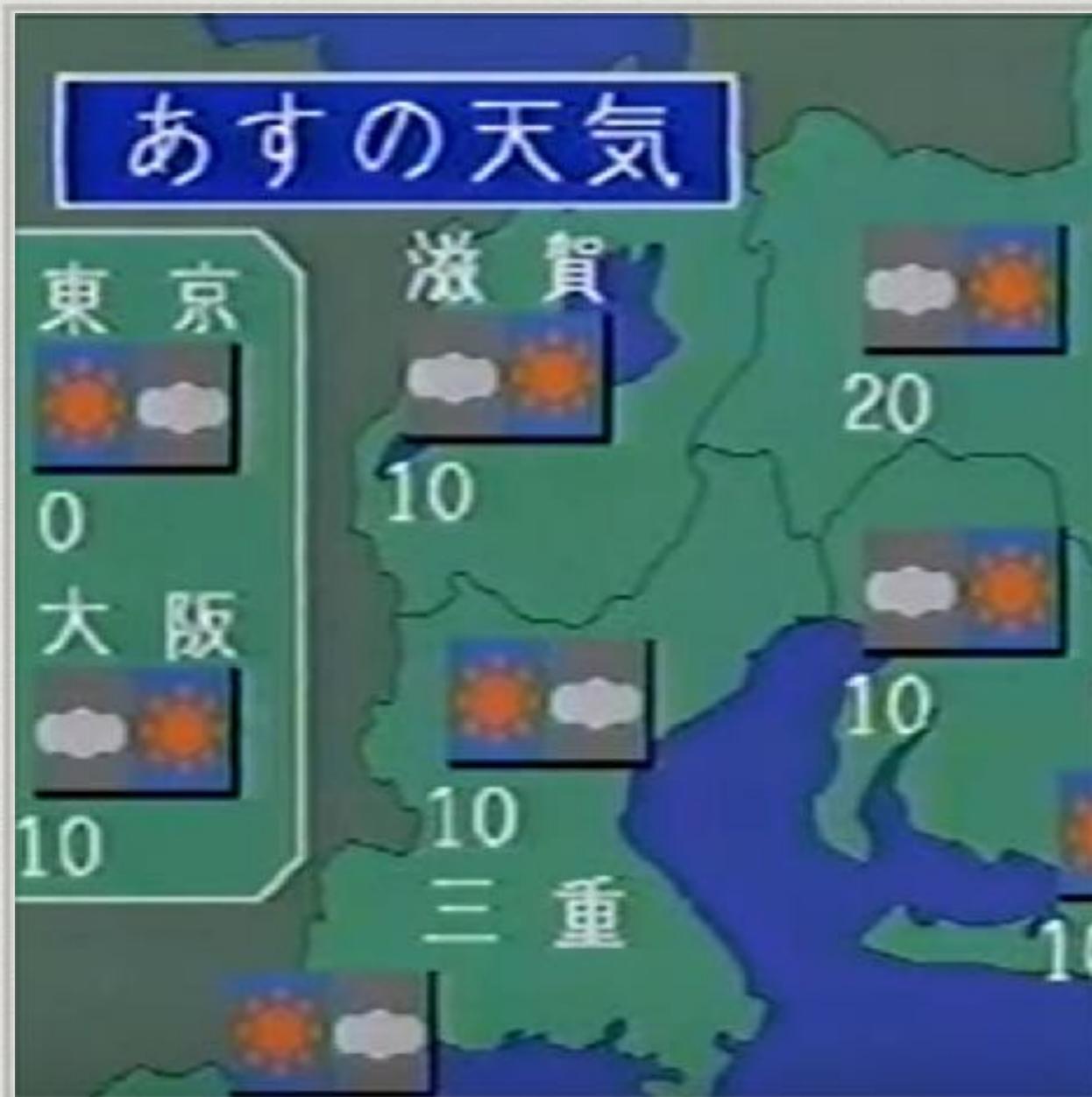
- \* Digital linguistic landscape:
- \* Jpn/Eng titles

# signalwave: 天気予報



- \* Musical production:
- \* あなたの世界を探検  
'Explore your world'
- \* Tape hiss,  
compression,  
static
- \* Worn VHS sound

# signalwave: 天気予報



- \* Musical production:
- \* CMブレーク 「Vol. XXIII」
- \* RF static, warble, compression, source-switching
- \* Analogue TV changing channels

# signalwave: 天氣予報

- \* Musical production creates imagined musicolinguistic landscape:



**Pled Paper** *this masterpiece is definitely asutenki's magnum opus and a huge contribution to broken transmission lore (both in quantity and quality). feels like you're a kid in a japanese family and it's a sunday when you can watch TV from the early morning to the late night*



**D S C P L** *A monumental release!*

*It makes me feel like a kid watching the news with my mom. Favorite track: Good Morning!.*



**electronic\_sheep** *Amazing Broken Transmission album, puts you right in front of the TV watching the morning weather. Favorite track: 特別な地域条件.*

# conclusions

- \* Vaporwave (and subgenres) constructed through music and (sung, spoken, visual) language
- \* Digital linguistic landscapes

# conclusions

- \* Beyond that, vaporwave production licenses **imagined musicolinguistic landscapes** in which listeners situate these elements

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- \* Underspecified mall; city streets; in front of a television
- \* These imagined musicolinguistic landscapes are crucial to the genre's 'distorted nostalgia'

# conclusions

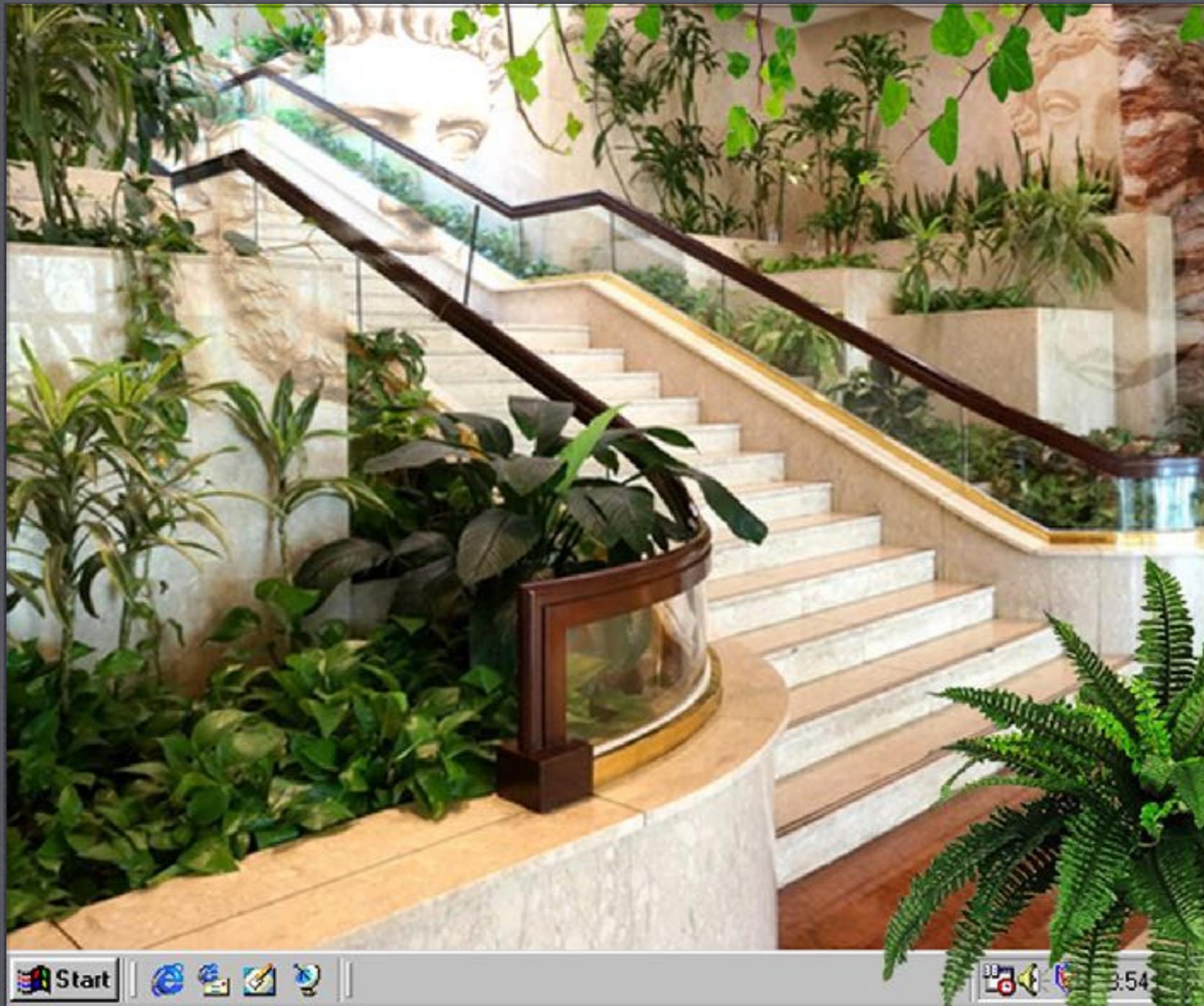
- \* Beyond that, vaporwave production licenses **imagined musicolinguistic landscapes** in which listeners situate these elements
- \* Underspecified mall; city streets; in front of a television
- \* These imagined musicolinguistic landscapes are crucial to the genre's 'distorted nostalgia'
- \* Not 'just music', not 'just language'; elements joined and distorted through musical production

# conclusions

- \* Vaporwave shows how language can shape musical genre across multiple concurrent modalities
- \* Linguistic landscapes extended to a musicolinguistic framework
- \* Embodiment (and out-of-bodyness) in musicolinguistic experience
- \* Importance of musical production in musicolinguistic analysis

# sampled works

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