

# Algorithmic Art

Nina Lutz, MIT

Prepared for Clubes de Ciencias ASU

# Welcome!

Please go to [yellkey.com/occur](https://yellkey.com/occur) to  
fill out a pre-survey :)

# Introductions

So who am I?

# Nina Lutz

BSc. Computer Science and  
Engineering with Design  
(Architectural) MIT

Grad student at the MIT Media Lab

Numerical Simulation  
Urban Planning  
Algorithms  
Optics  
Colloidal Scattering in Architectural  
Lighting  
Architecture  
Data Visualization  
Projection Mapping  
Computer Vision and Geometry

# Math stuff

# Glitter science

# Algorithms for cities

# Algorithms for story telling

Making computers  
make things better

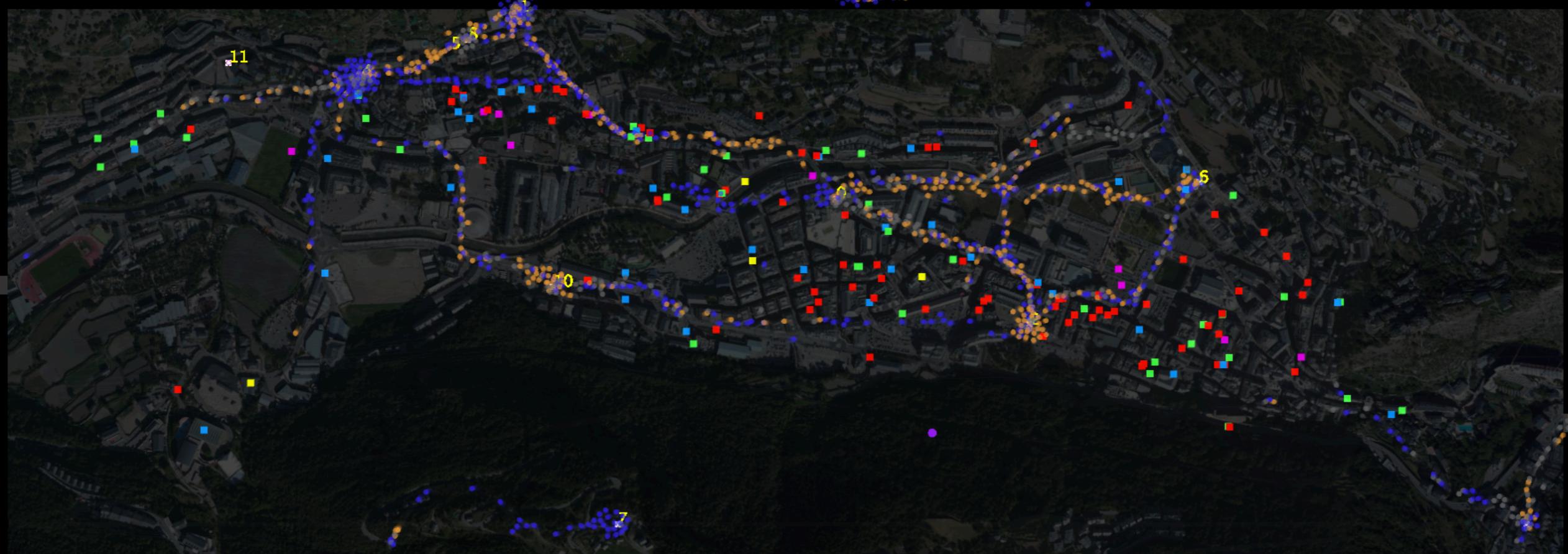
And more.

People  
Architectural Space  
Math  
Computers  
Art

Make physical reality more  
digital.

Total Agents Rendered: 2000

rateScaler: 34



Andorra La Vella circa Hour: 23:00 - 0:00

Tourists | French Spanish Other

El Pas de la Casa

Canillo

Encamp

23:00 - 24:00  
2015.07.23

Hour 3 6 9 12 15 18 21 0 3 6 9 12 15 18 21 0 3 6 9 12 15 18 21 0 3 6 9 12 15 18 21

Total Agents Rendered: 1978

rateScaler: 41

- Spanish Speaking Amenity
- French Speaking Amenity
- Hotels
- Restaurants
- Attractions



Andorra La Vella    circ, Hour: 23:00 – 0:00

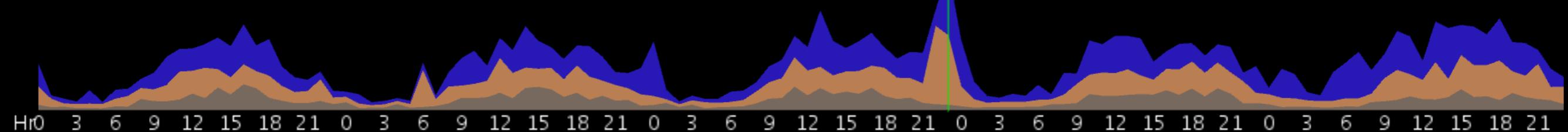
Tourists | French Spanish Other

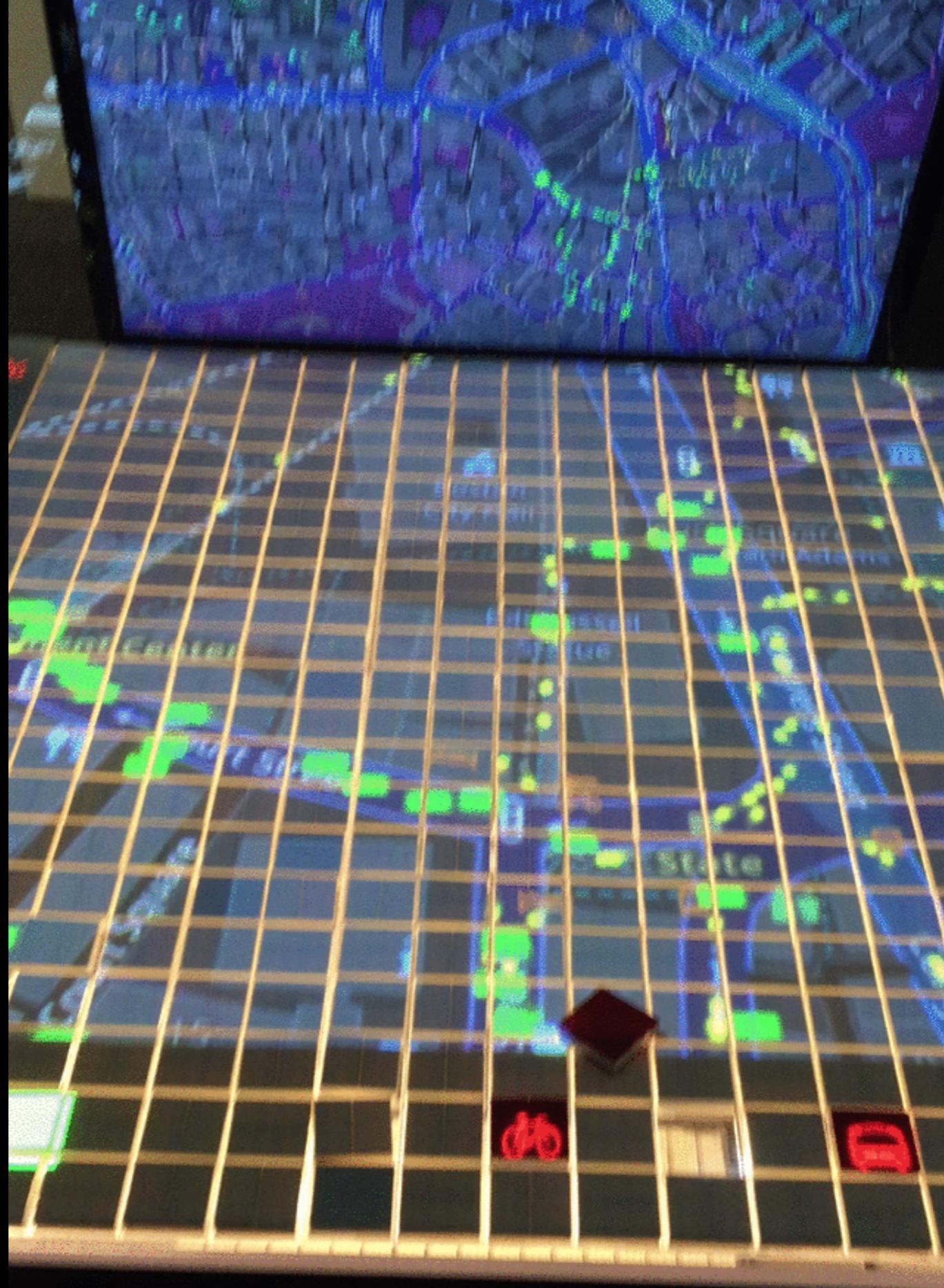
El Pas de la Casa

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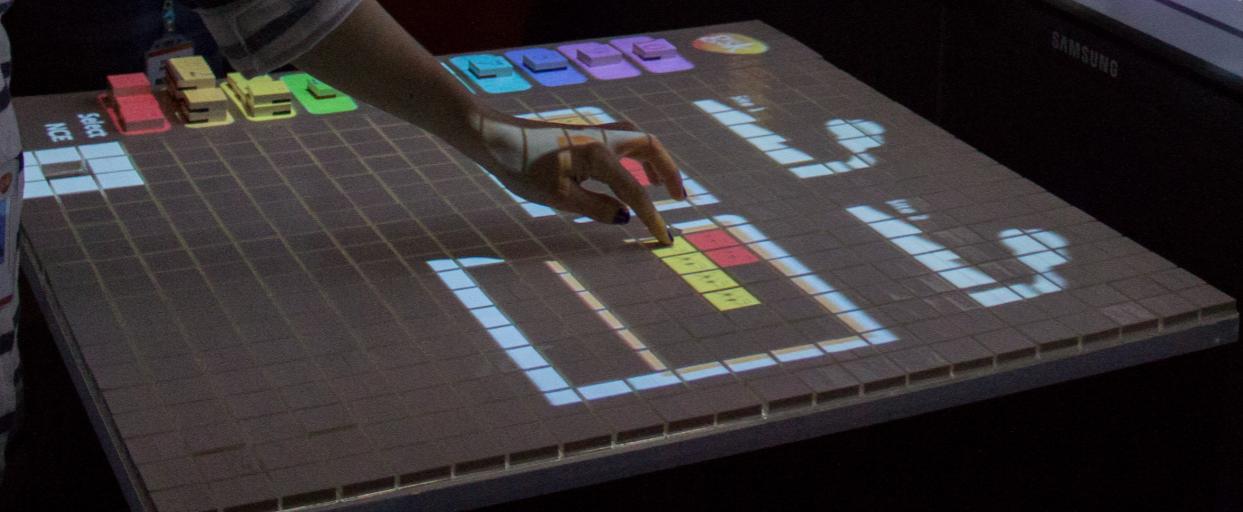




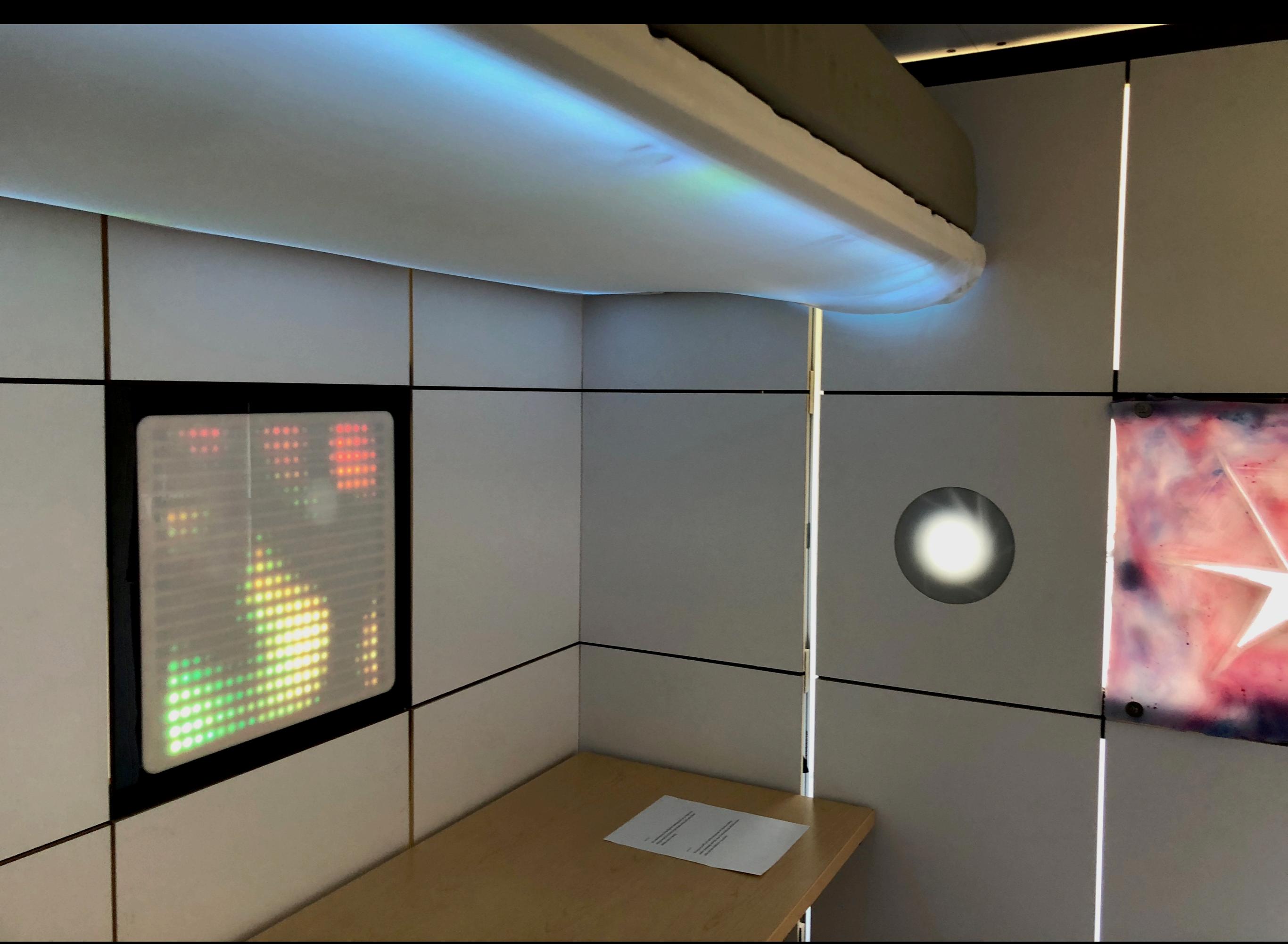


PharmaDSS BETA V1.0  
MIT Media Lab + GlaxoSmithKline

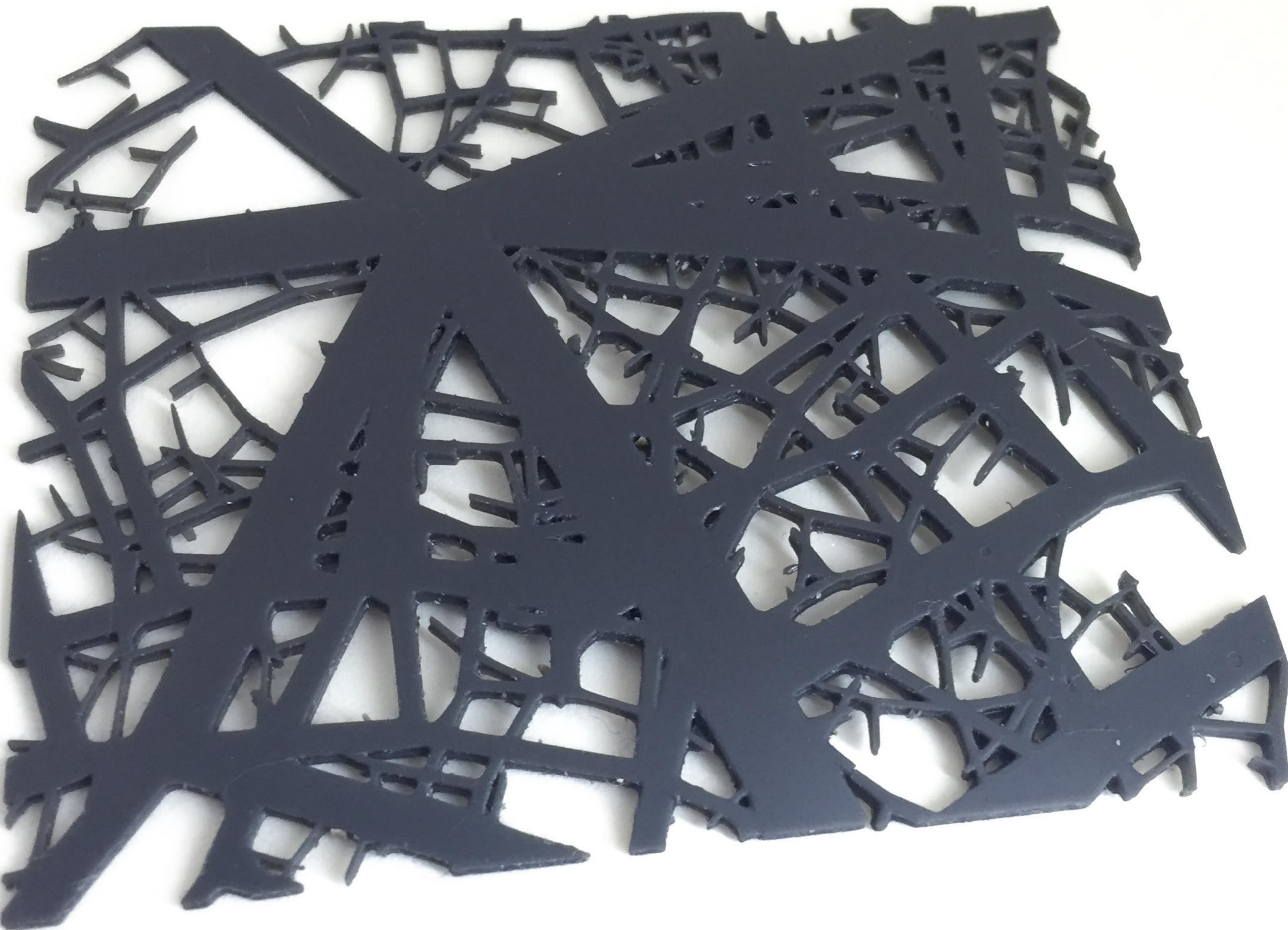
Ira Winder, Nna Lutz, Giovanni Giorgio, Mason Briner, Joana Gomes







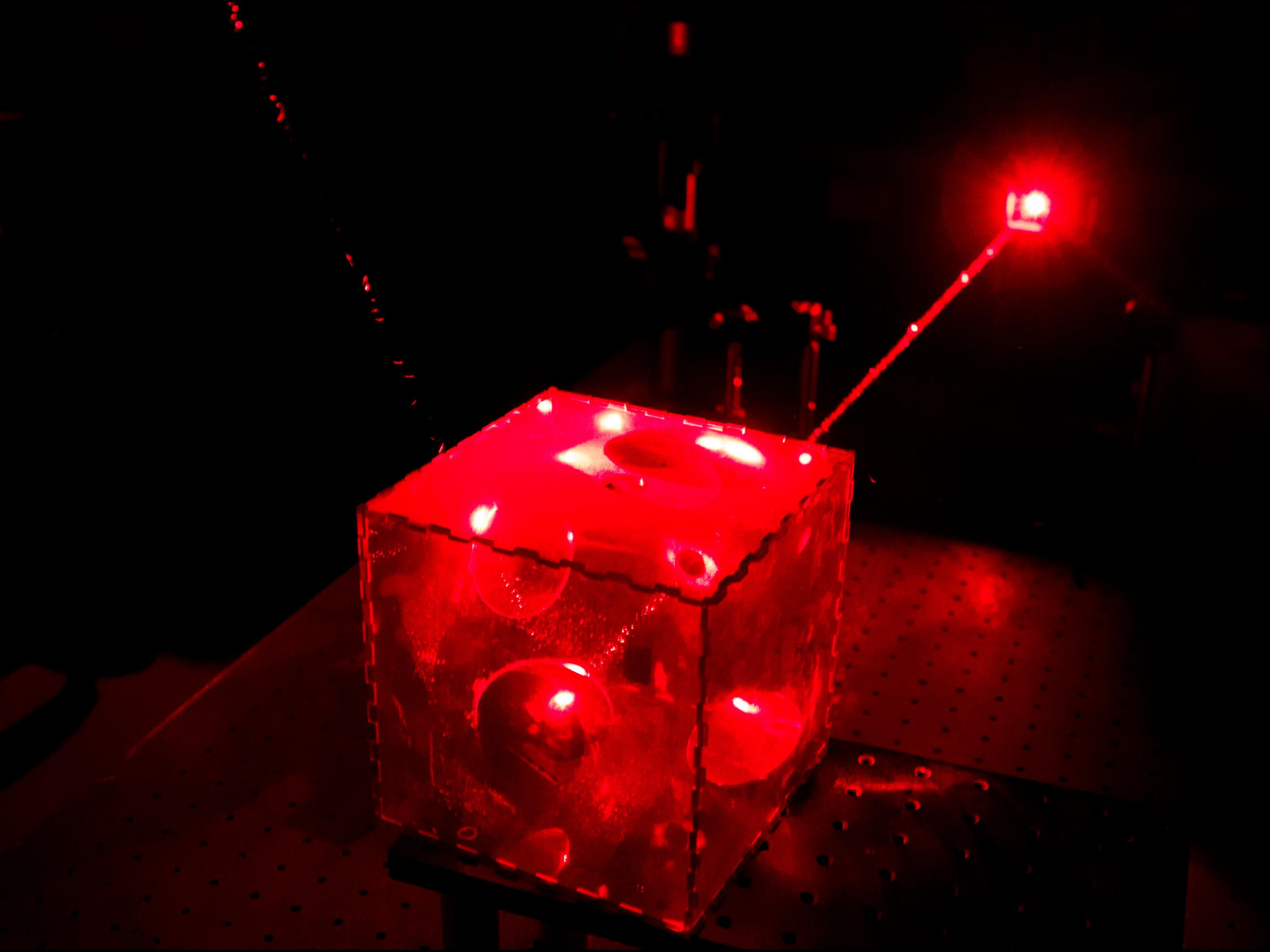


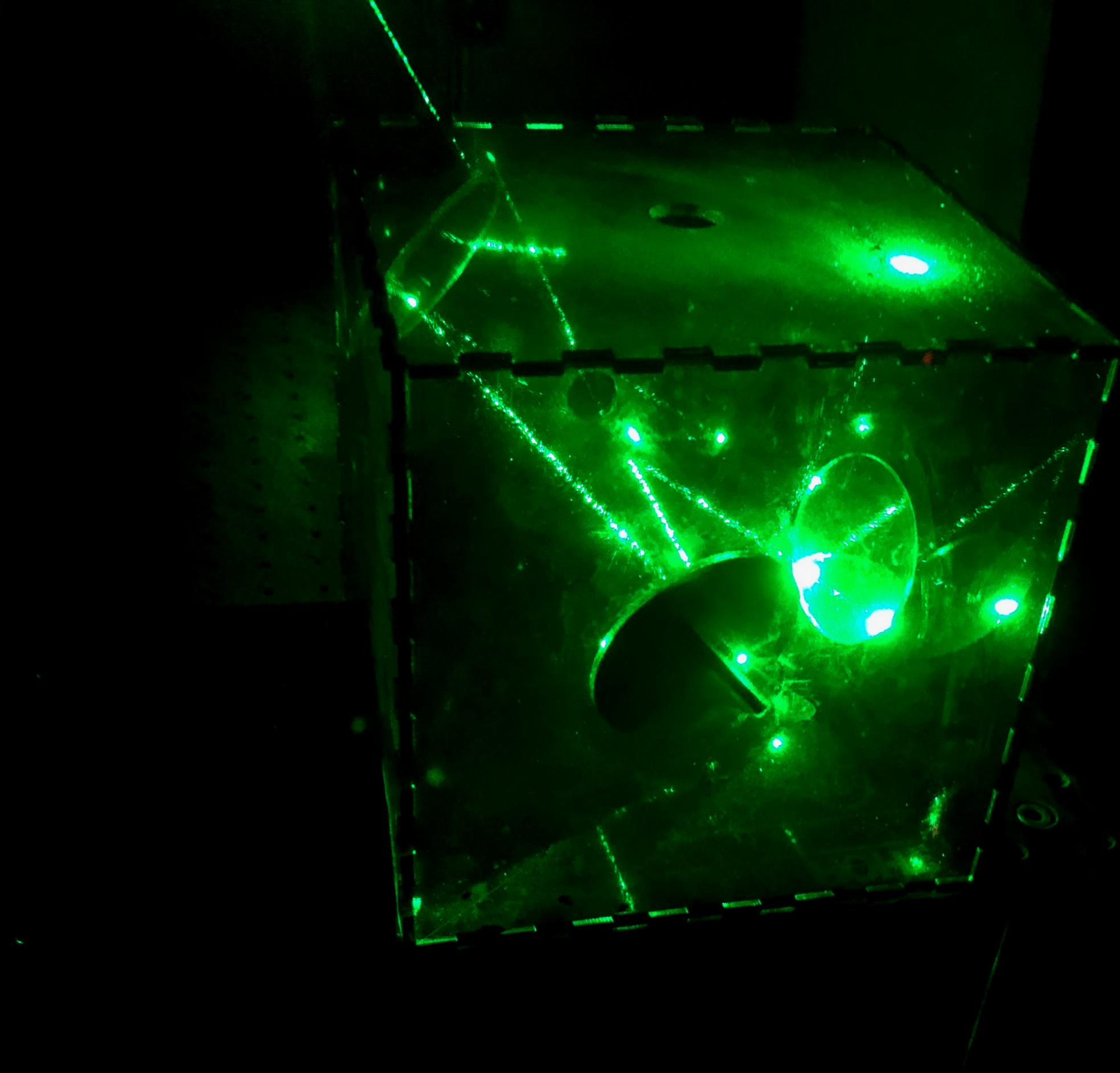




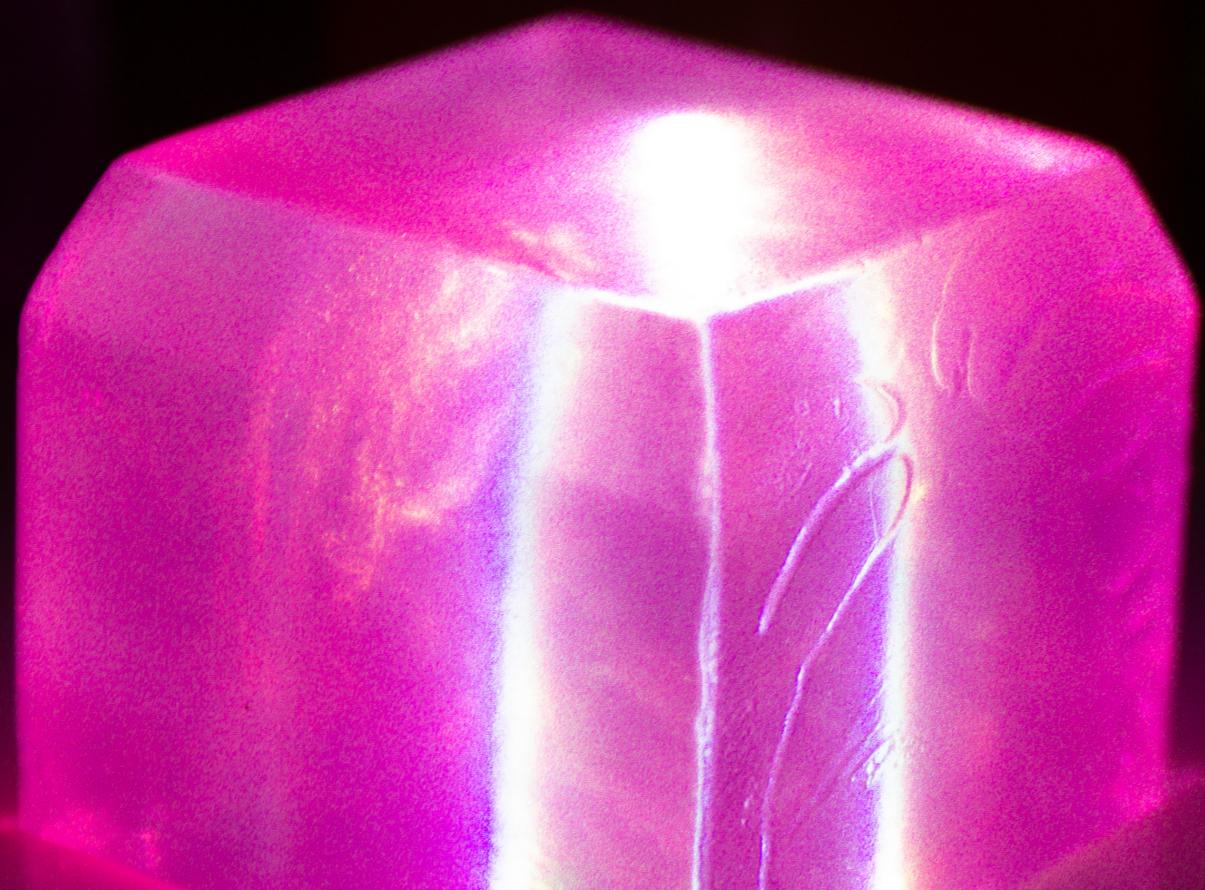




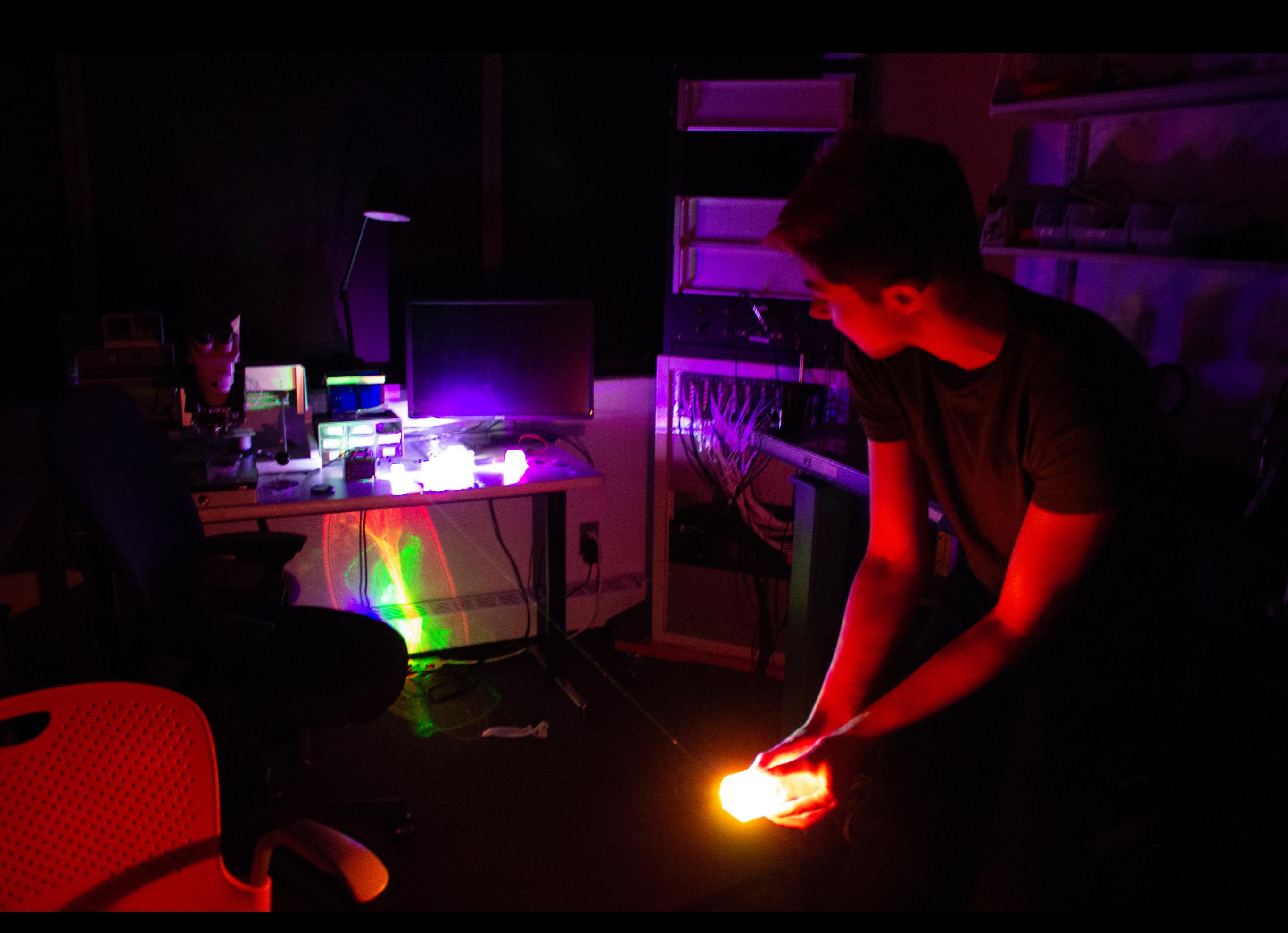












# What will you learn this week?

Algorithmic thought

How to visualize algorithms

How to use algorithms in art with code and electronics

# What is an algorithm?

# What is an algorithm

A process or set of rules to be followed in calculations or other problem-solving operations, especially by a computer.

Essentially, how does a computer do xyz.

# What an algorithm is NOT

**Code** - The algorithm is the instructions, not the software. However, some are often implemented in code and all can be written in **pseudocode**.

**Math** - some algorithmic paths can be considered a branch of mathematics but in reality they are **logic**.

Restricted to Computer Science – many disciplines have them.

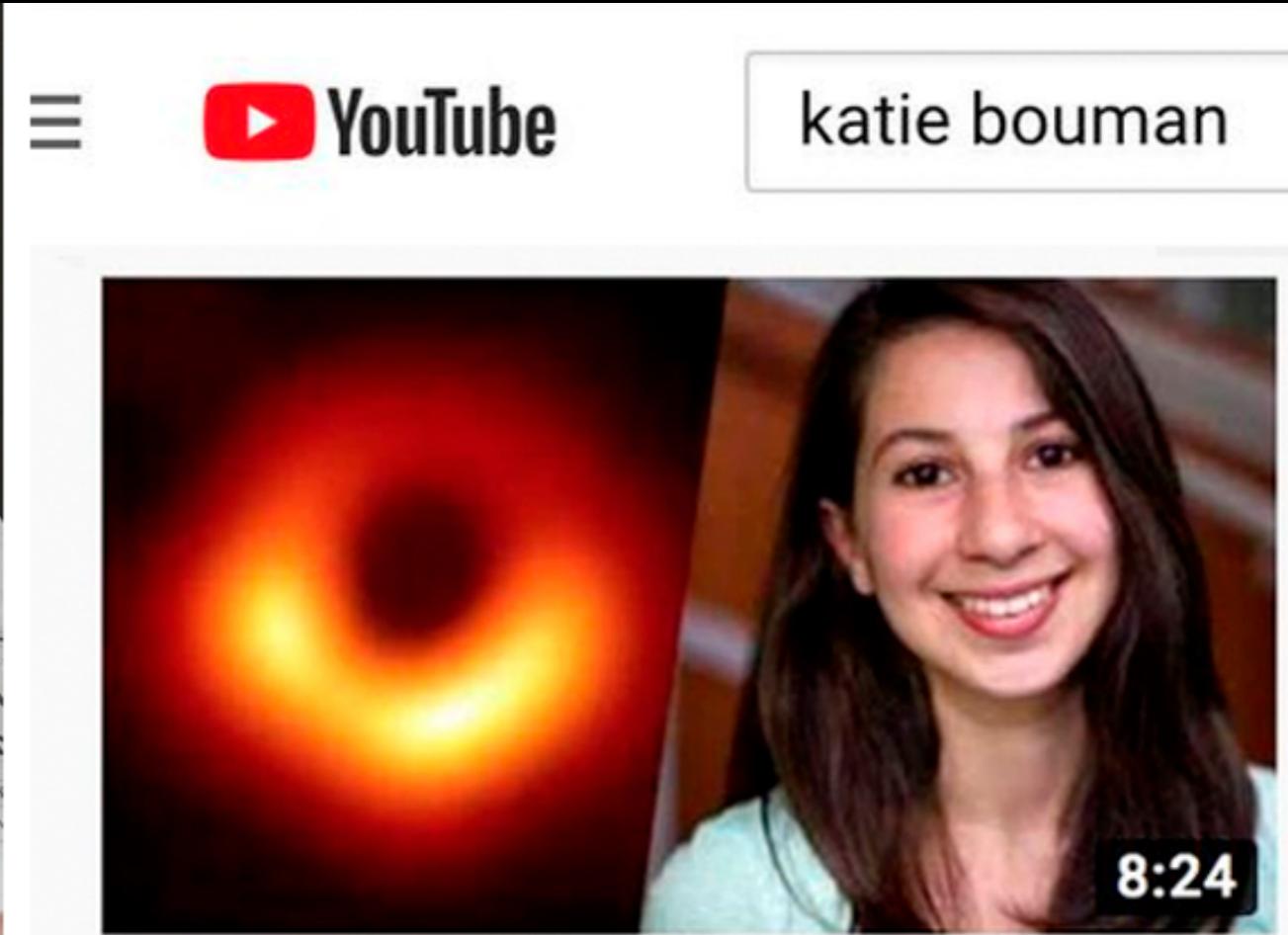
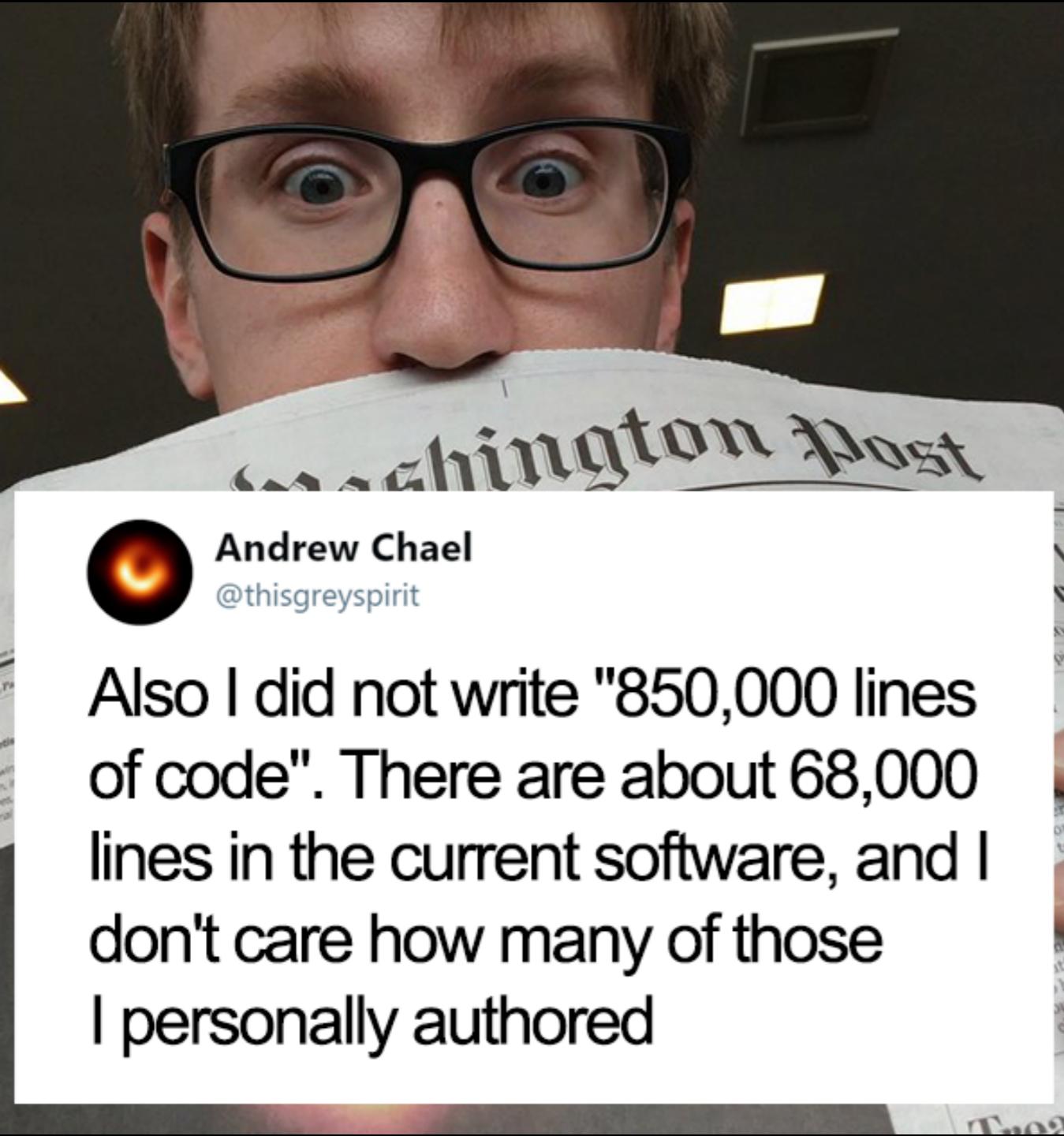
# Computer Science vs Software Engineering

**Software engineering** – building working software for a variety of devices and purposes.

**Computer science** – the study of how data interacts in digital form.

Software engineering is part of computer science skillsets, but algorithms are not necessarily software engineering – but they help!

Thus, algorithms are not super verbose.  
And in computer science line count is not  
a good way to count anything.



Woman Does 6% of the Work  
but Gets 100% of the  
Credit: Black Hole Photo  
MR. OBVIOUS • 27K views • 15 hours ago

# Pseudocode

**A way to write instructions that looks like code,  
but that probably wouldn't be understood by a  
computer as code.**

# Example

- I have 12 cupcakes, I want to frost all of them.
- I want to alternate the colors of two frostings: red and blue.
- I can only frost one cupcake at a time and I have to wait 5 seconds between each frosting.

# Pseudocode for cupcakes

```
count
for each cupcake:
    if count even: frost red
    if count odd: frost blue
    return cupcake
    delay 5 seconds
```

# Example pseudocode:

```
dist[s] ← 0
for all  $v \in V - \{s\}$ 
    do dist[v] ←  $\infty$ 

S ←  $\emptyset$ 
Q ← V
while Q ≠  $\emptyset$ 
do u ← mindistance(Q,dist)
    S ← S ∪ {u}
    for all  $v \in \text{neighbors}[u]$ 
        do if dist[v] > dist[u] + w(u, v)
            then d[v] ← d[u] + w(u, v)

return dist
```

# Some Algorithm Families

Often divided by data structure or by  
method of the algorithm

There are so many algorithms go crazy!

[https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/  
List\\_of\\_algorithms](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/List_of_algorithms)

# Types of Algorithms We'll Think About

Sorting

Searching

Pathfinding

# Efficiency

Algorithms are great at instructions  
— but they also need to be efficient  
in timing and often in space.

# Algorithmic Time

Big O notation  
Time complexity  
Runtime analysis

The computational complexity to run  
a process.

# Big O Notation

- $O(n)$  is a linear time algorithm that takes  $n$  bits of logic.  $n$  is usually the number of items and other constants have to do with the operations within it.
- For example, our frosting algorithm takes  $n$  cupcakes with one process. Technically with our 5 second delay its  $O(5n)$  but it is still linear.

# Ranking of Big O Notation

$O(1)$

$O(\lg n)$

$O(n)$

$O(n \lg n)$

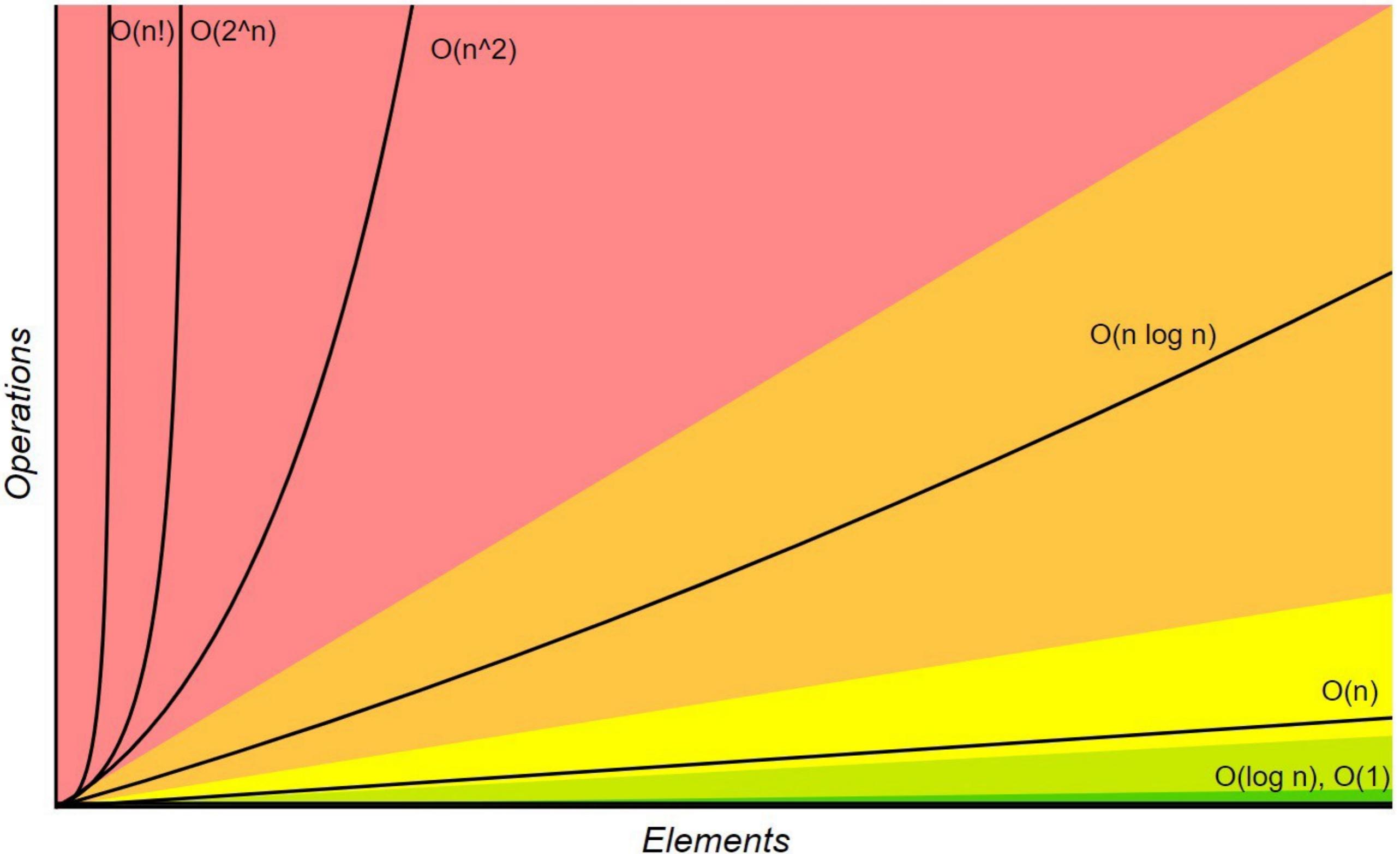
$O(n^2)$

$O(2^n)$

$O(n!)$

# Big-O Complexity Chart

Horrible    Bad    Fair    Good    Excellent



# Good rule of thumb

- You can usually denote how long an algorithm will take with its pseudo code based on:
  - How many elements you're performing operations on
  - How long those operations take
  - Any comparisons or duplicities of these operations

# Example of $O(n^2)$

- You have  $n$  cupcakes, each is frosted red or blue and has a label on the bottom.
- You want to frost all of them, this is  $O(n)$
- Now you have to go through each cupcake and see if there are duplicates. A naive way of doing this is  $O(n^2)$  – for each cupcake's label you check it against every other cupcakes. You do  $n$  checks per cupcake, which is  $n * n$  or  $n^2$ .

# Our Toolkit This Week

Processing

Arduino

Github