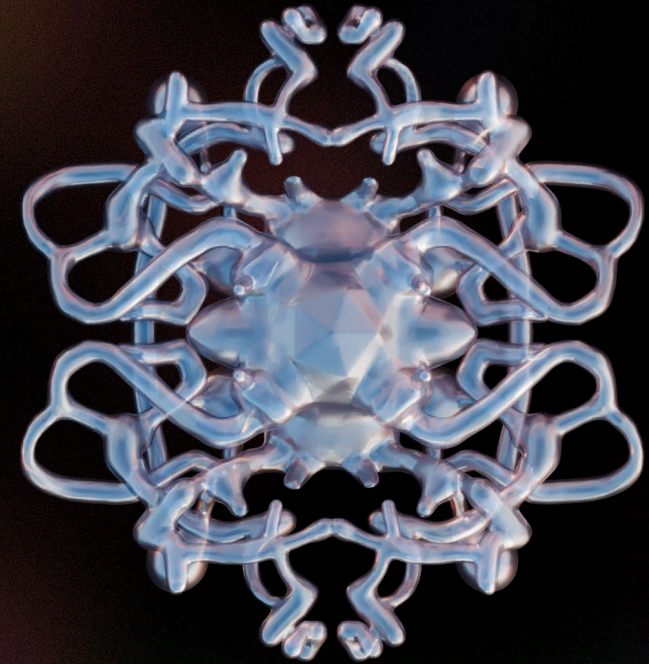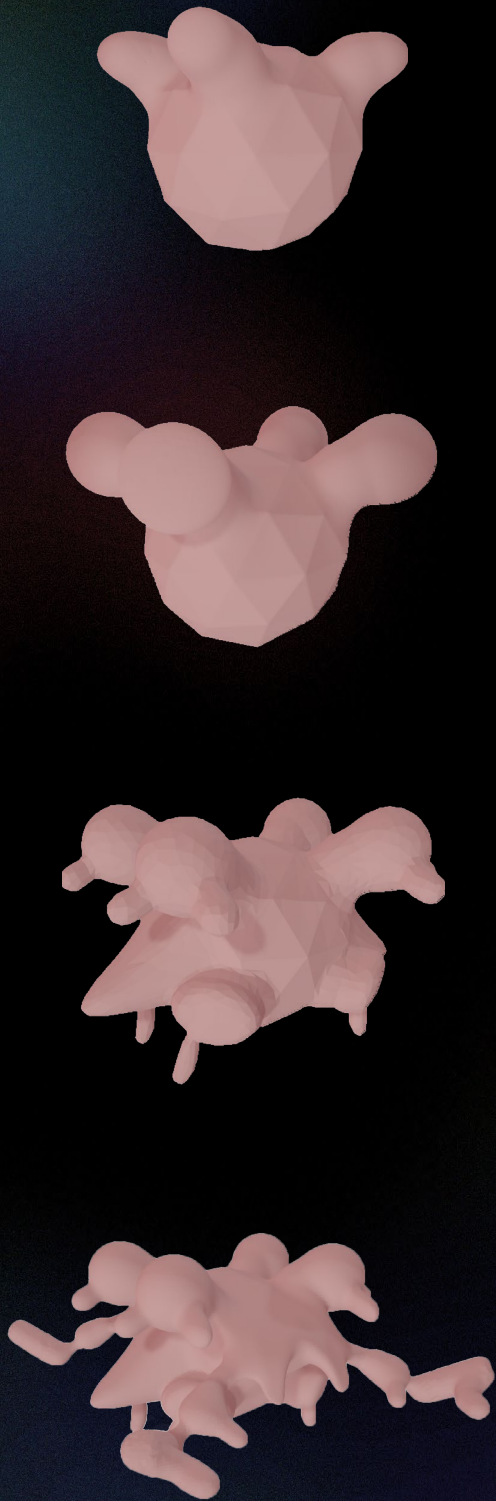# FRUITS OF THE WEB

A VR WALKING SIMULATOR GAME

Artemis Sartzetakis &
Babak Ahteshamipour

Fruits of the Web is a communal new rave rave walking simulator game in virtual reality created by Artemis Sartzetakis and Babak Ahteshamipour, where up to eight participants collectively explore and piece together a fragmented narrative about the evolution of the Internet, its past and future, and its relationship to reality and identity. It juxtaposes divergent efforts to digitally represent reality, with a particular interest in the Internet native aesthetics of the 90s and early 00s, and juxtaposes them with other contemporary content and phenomena from the recent history of the Web such as AI-generated content, conspiracy theories, e-deologies, and creepypasta.

Designed as an interactive walking simulator, the project immerses users in an introspective journey through a hub world where portals transport them to different thematic spaces. Each world reflects the multifaceted dimensions of the Web—its subcultures, eccentricities, and darker undercurrents—creating a playful yet critical thesis on the value of Internet subcultures, transnational identities, and Web diversity, capturing the whimsy of hyperlink hopping and the beauty of Internet esoterica.
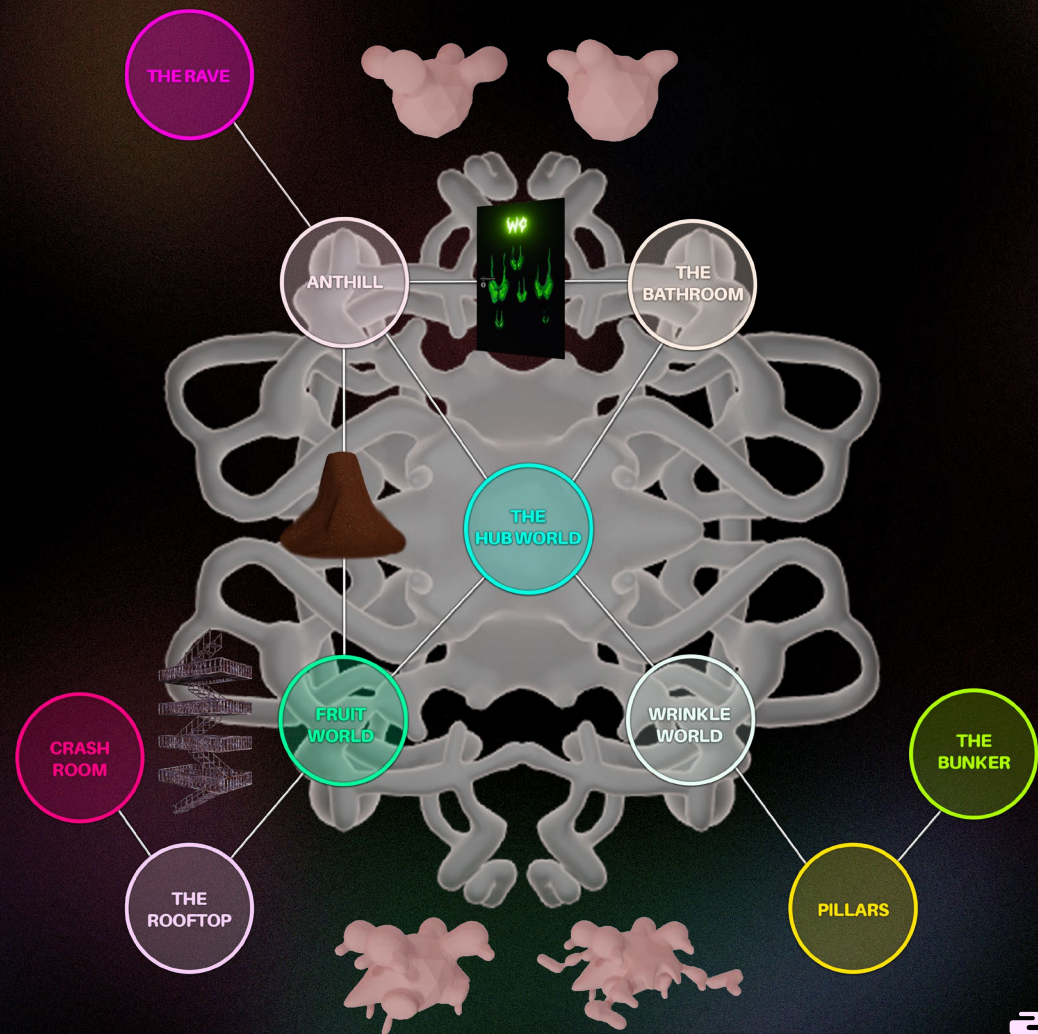
Each world encapsulates a particular aspect of the Internet: **Anthill** represents the relentless routine, automation, and hyper-consumption fostered by platform capitalism, where content is commodified and overstimulation reigns supreme. **The Bathroom** delves into doomscrolling, fatalism and liminality, evoking a world emptied by collapse and saturated with AI-generated, time-erasing content. In contrast, **Fruit World** offers a bright, artificial landscape that depicts the superficial comfort of casual web browsing while subtly suggesting its emptiness.

Other spaces delve into the current complexities of the Internet. **The Rooftop** explores retrospection and the extremist subcultures born out of isolation, while **Wrinkle World** examines the blurred boundaries between virtual and real identities, mythmaking and the rise of post-truth. Finally, **The Pillars** confronts conspiracy theories, paranoia, and extreme ideologies fostered in the depths of the Internet, highlighting dissociation and the allure of destruction.
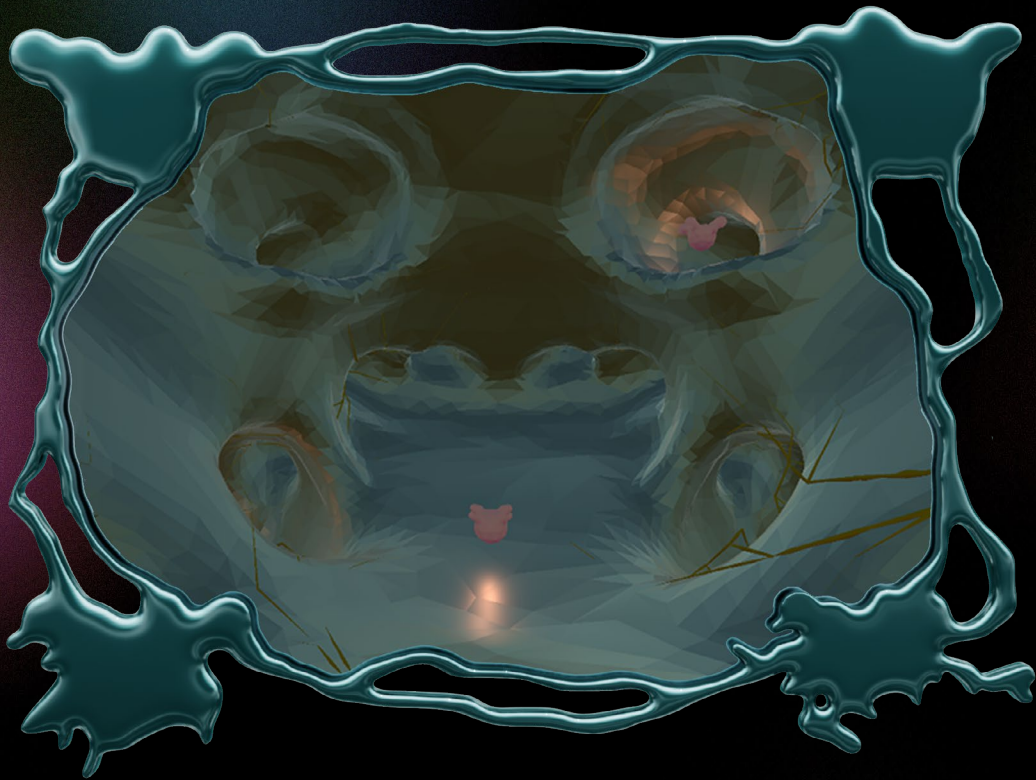
By weaving together these worlds, **Fruits of the Web** offers a whimsical yet critical reflection on the beauty, chaos, and diversity of Internet culture, inviting players to engage with its complexities.

FRUITS OF THE WEB

A VR WALKING SIMULATOR GAME

THE RAVE

ANTHILL

THE BATHROOM

THE HUB WORLD

FRUIT WORLD

WRINKLE WORLD

CRASH ROOM

THE BUNKER

THE ROOFTOP

PILLARS

THE HUB WORLD

The Hub World is a sprawling, multidimensional organically looking maze that embodies the chaotic beauty of hyperlink hopping and the fragmented nature of Internet exploration. Its organically entangled structure mirrors the non-linear, interconnected Web, with blobby objects serving as portals that teleport to different worlds, each reflecting a unique facet of the Internet. Beyond exploration, this space delves into agency through orientation and disorientation that diverging pursuits provoke as players navigate its labyrinthine patterns. The act of freely roaming mirrors the experience of Web browsing, where disorientation gives way to reorientation, allowing new meanings, connections, and perspectives to emerge. Players intuitively navigate through the space, deciding which paths to take or turn away from, reflecting the deliberate process of choice and discovery inherent in cyberspace.
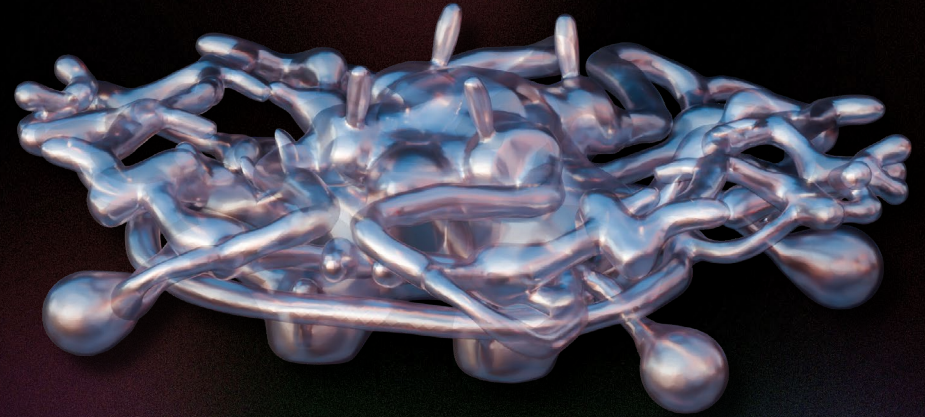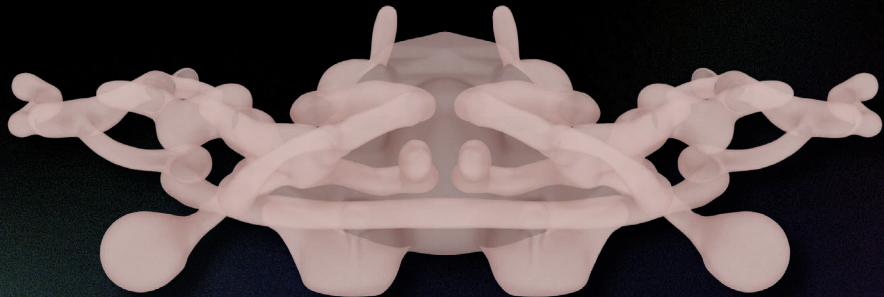
ANTHILL

Anthill is a space of relentless routine, where ants march in automated lines, driven by the rhythm of capitalism's demand to consume without thought. Anthill represents **platform capitalism** and **enshittification**, a term coined by Cory Doctorow that describes the Internet as oversaturated with low-quality and AI-generated content, clickbaits, thirst traps, and subscription-based and online services that degrade their qualities to maximize profits. A towering Monarch oversees the operation, while in one corner, a chaotic rave throbs to breakneck-speed breakcore music, populated by abstract dancers and three odd, outsider figures. **The Rave** emerges as a paradoxical refuge—an escape from the monotony of consumption yet simultaneously a commodified alternative, where desperation and trauma birthed by platform capitalism lead individuals to seek agency through countercultural rebellion. However, these countercultures, like rave culture, are absorbed back into the system, becoming escapist and commodified themselves. **Anthill** lays bare the Internet's mindless consumption cycle and the extremes of hyper-stimulation, from the mundane to the bizarrely surreal, where even rebellion is rebranded as yet another form of consumption.

Aww, don't look so scared, silly! We're just here to help you fit in. It's so much easier when you stop resisting, isn't it? Capitalism loves you, after all! You can earn your place here, buy all the useless things you didn't know you needed, and drown in the sweet, sweet chaos of headlines and dopamine hits. Why would you want to leave? Out there, it's scary and uncertain. Here, you have everything—mindless work, endless content, and me to keep you company. So don't make me pull the trigger, okay? Smile, consume, scroll, obey... or you'll be eliminated!

THE RAVE

Look around you. This rave, this pulsing music, these rhythms—what is it, really? It's the illusion of escape. We gather here under flashing lights and pounding beats, convincing ourselves that we're breaking away from the monotony of routines, pushing against the status quo. But the truth? There is no true alternative. This scene is just another cog in the machine, another tool of the system that we think we're defying.

Every beat, every surge of sound you feel is commodified, sold back to us as a product. We like to believe we're part of something countercultural, something that stands apart from the world outside. Yet what happens after the last beat fades? We return to the same structures, the same exploitative cycles. We consume music, we consume experiences, all under the guise of self-expression and freedom. But the more we consume, the more entrenched we become in the very system that we yearning for escape.

Raving, electronic music, art—they all hold promises of solidarity, of unity. We sell ourselves the illusion that by dancing together, by immersing ourselves in the beats, we're building something communal, something real. Yet even these scenes are no more than temporary sanctuaries, haunted by the logic of the marketplace. These spaces aren't free. They're permitted. They exist because they've been absorbed, domesticated, made profitable. The transcendence we feel, that brief ecstasy—it's bought and sold just like everything else.

And in the end, the dance floor becomes just another marketplace. Alternative cultures, subversive art—they may arise in opposition, but technocapitalism has a way of assimilating everything that could threaten it. Raving is rebranded as a rebellion, a profitable outlet for discontent, not a solution to it. It provides release, yes, but only enough to keep us complacent, to return to our roles in the same machine.

For it: even here, there's no true freedom. There's no alternative. We're all still inside the same cage, no matter how hard the bass drops. The cruel reality is that we try to dance our way out of technocapitalism, but in doing so, we're only spinning further into its grip. We might as well be dancing on its chains.

THE BATHROOM

The Bathroom is a maze of an empty office space turned into toilets. Above each toilet, scrolls with fragmented digital collages of ruins float, evoking a world emptied by ecological collapse, accelerating technocapitalism, warfare and societal decline. This space is the embodiment of doomscrolling and shitposting underlined via the reference to **The Backrooms** phenomenon. It represents what Mark Fisher describes as **failure of presence** in **The Weird and The Eerie**. When there is nothing present when there should be something: an empty office space, a world devoid of any living organism from the catastrophic decline predicted by online divinations. **The Bathroom** is a liminal space; a space of alienation where you doomscroll over endless AI-generated content, with no trace of spacetime, where meaning dissolves into fatalism. Players are forced to confront their own apathy in the face of collapse by scrolling endlessly while "not giving a shit when taking a shit."
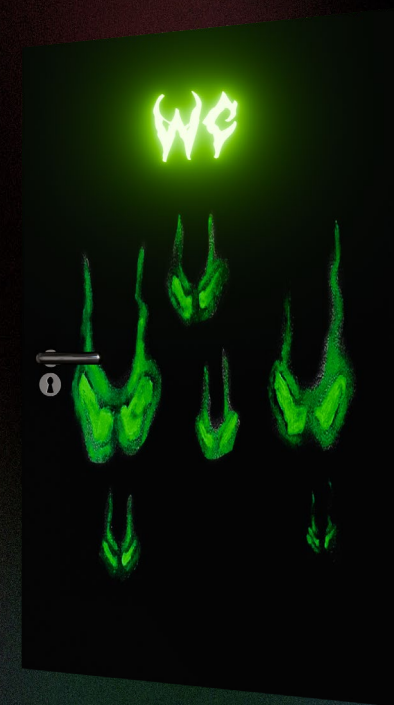
FRUIT WORLD
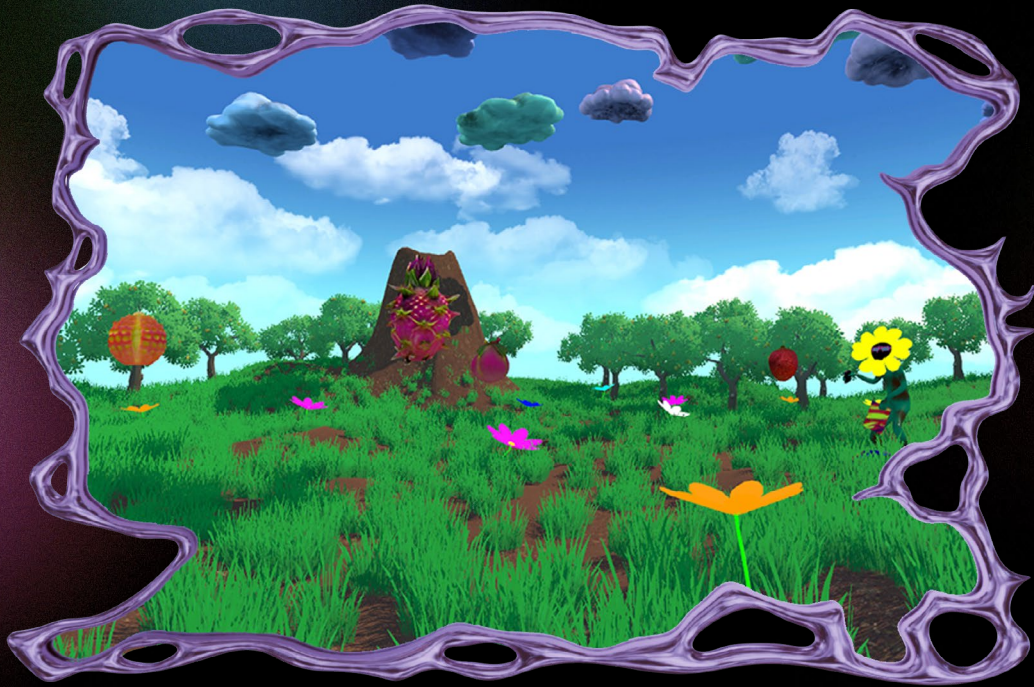
Fruit World is a lush, green landscape filled with artificial flowers, fruits, and vibrant clouds—a "positive" space representing the **Surface Web** & **Cozy Web**—a term coined by Venkatesh Rao to describe the private spaces of the Internet. Here, users casually browse, connect with friends, and indulge in private chats, links and files exchanges, shopping, and lighthearted exploration. In the middle of the landscape, a quirky flower character floats on a surfboard, casually holding a laptop and smartphone, embodying the phrase **surfing the Web**. **Fruit World** invites users to the surface-level Internet, where everything feels safe, user-friendly, and endlessly accessible, but also glossed-over and artificial, hinting at the limits of the digital "paradise" it presents.
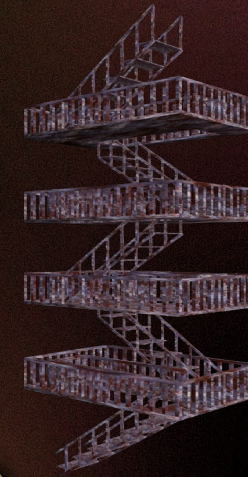
Yoooo, the internet is just amazing, isn't it? I mean, think about it—we can see what our friends are up to in real time, like right away, just by scrolling a little. Need to buy something? Boom, delivered to your door in a day. And the music, dude, you can stream basically any song that's ever existed. Ever. Live bands on YouTube, whole concerts right there whenever you want.

And it's not just about entertainment, either. Like, if I need to know something—anything—I can just look it up. Need to fix a leaky faucet? There's a tutorial. Got a burning question? Just ask on Quora or Reddit, and bam, you've got answers from people who know what they're talking about. There's free books, .PDFs, recipes, news from every corner of the world.

There's so much here already! You can learn, watch, buy, read, connect—it's all right at our fingertips. Honestly, we're so lucky. It's like having the whole world packed into one little screen! Those other spaces and their denizens are so blinded by their own extreme self-referential loops that they miss all of these possibilities! Come on, hop on this surfboard and surf the web with me!
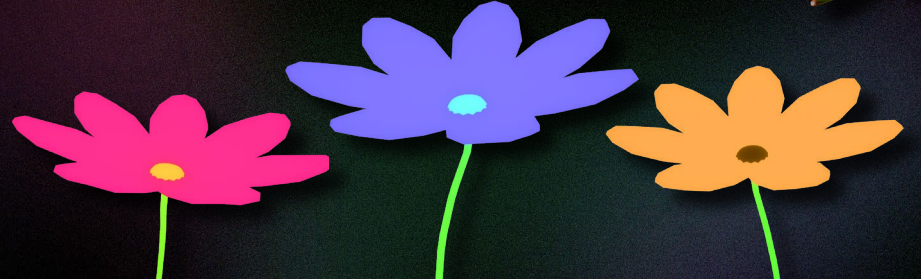
THE ROOFTOP
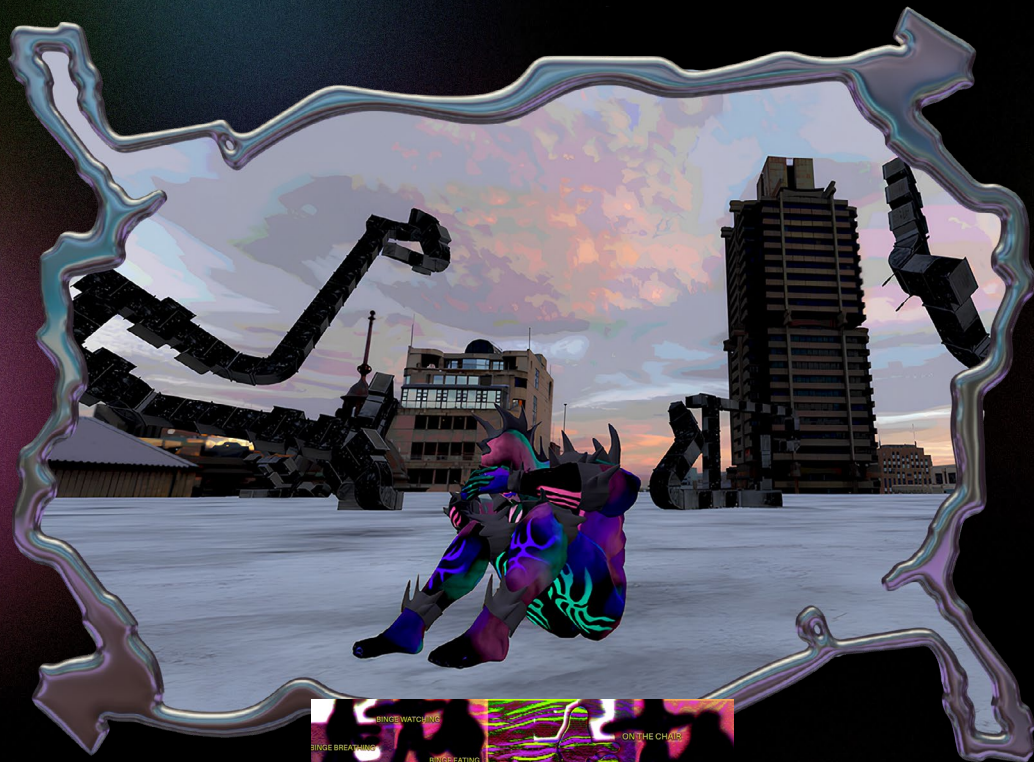
The Rooftop is a space embodying solitude within cyberspace. A rugged, hyper-masculine hero sits alone in the corner, crying, revealing the fragile masculinity hidden beneath his rough exterior. The city's ambient soundscape underscores a sense of retrospection atop the vast digital world; it serves as a palate cleanser with its muted tones. But solitude quickly turns to chaos in a nearby chamber—the ***Crash Room***. This volatile space manifests the emotional repression and alienation of real life, erupting into a harsh noise collage of industrial breakcore, glitching crashes, and screeching tires. The ***Crash Room*** reflects the festering chaos behind screens, where unresolved emotions and societal disconnection fuel the rise of toxic online communities like the manosphere, incels, and the alt-right. These extreme subcultures thrive in the Web's shadows, born from a yearning for control and warped community amidst profound isolation. ***The Rooftop*** serves as a stark reminder of the Internet's paradox—while promising connection, it often amplifies alienation, leaving individuals teetering between introspection and explosive outbursts.

Hi, my name is **Redacted**. Happy to see you. Well not really, you are one of many that visit us, this is a job for us? Me and her, we are being paid to board you into this space. You love us in real life so they paid us to be here so you can love us in virtual space too. **Redacted** over there is doing the heavy lifting for me. I'm kind of glad she is here so I can take a step back and speak my mind a bit. Like totally.

If I'm being honest, not much of this is worth it. I struggle maintaining this image for you. But you buy it, I bet she buys it too. Honestly good for her, it's a testament to how good of a salesman she is. Anyway... It's not real, at least not to me. It's a substitute, addictive to some, profitable to others. Which one are you?

Wrinkle World features twisting, parametrically designed intestine-like platforms, symbolizing the tangled relationship between the real and the virtual, and mythmaking. Above the platform, two celebrity facsimiles stand and monologue about their dual identities as both virtual and actual people, while a crude, low-poly castle stands as a hollow monument to digital distortion. **Wrinkle World** explores how online personas reshape real-life behavior, creating a liminal state where neither fully dominates. It also reflects the rise of post-truth, where unlimited information breeds confusion, and reality becomes a simulacra within an echo chamber of misinformation and opinions. **Wrinkle World** challenges players to navigate a space where truth, identity, and authenticity fold into endless loops of digital and physical ambiguity.

PILLARS

Pillars is a vast landscape of towering columns, with a hole that leads to a bunker at its center. Falling within the hole leads to a bunker filled with rusted furniture, weapons, and conspiracy-laden posters. This space embodies the Web's extreme *e-deologies* such as doomsday prepping, the back-to-the-landers or the voluntary extinction movement, and paranoid thinking that can lead to the development of online cults, creepypasta, and Internet fakelore such as *The Slender Man* or *The Mandela Catalogue*. *E-deologies*—a term coined by Joshua Citarella—are hyper-specific online ideological categories found within online politics that serve as niche personal brandings and can escalate into online political movements. The repetition of the pillars reflect the cyclical reinforcement of these escalations and paranoid beliefs that Internet users have and tend to cultivate them into mushrooming systems that spiral out hazardously in all kinds of directions. *Pillars* overall explores how digital dissociation breeds narcissistic fantasies of reshaping the world, confronting the Web's unsettling role in amplifying paranoia, the desire for controlled destruction and the collapse of meaning.

THE BUNKER
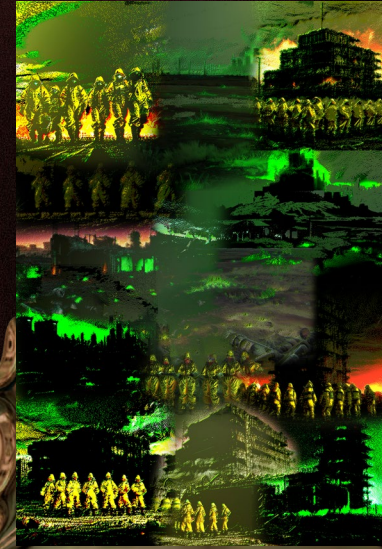
The world will witness the truth we've known all along—the illusion of peace, shattered in fire and fury. Nuclear weapons will rain from above, each missile tearing through the sky like a vengeful blade, striking down the towers of false order. As society crumbles into dust and despair, I will wait. In my bunker, deep below the carnage, I am safe—prepared.

I will emerge when the world has been cleansed, crawling out from my shelter into the wasteland that I will make my kingdom. I will be there to claim it all, to rule the shattered remnants, and to shape the world in my image. The end is not a death; it is our awakening, our ascension.

CREDITS

Producer: Artemis Sartzetakis
Coding, scripting, development & game design: Artemis Sartzetakis
Creative direction: Babak Ahteshamipour
3D assets: Artemis Sartzetakis & Babak Ahteshamipour *
2D assets: Babak Ahteshamipour *
Music/sound composition, production & mixing: Artemis Sartzetakis & Babak Ahteshamipour
Mastering: Babak Ahteshamipour
Texts: Artemis Sartzetakis & Babak Ahteshamipour **
Graphics & design: Babak Ahteshamipour

Special thanks: Stavroula Konstantinos Zoi & Georgios Tsampounaris (70% Water A/V XR Studio)

Endless love to the admin of the tumblr blog *Harvesting the Fruits of the Web* for their aesthetically based internet archiving. A now-archival blog, dedicated to cataloging images from the web. Re-uploading physics simulation GIFs, out of context internet native images & high quality PNGs.

* Several 3D & 2D assets were created in collaboration with artificial intelligence (AI)
** Several texts were written in collaboration with a large language model (LLM)

Developed in the context of the **Onassis ONX Immersive Proof-of-Concept (PoC).**

BIOGRAPHIES

Artemis Sartzetakis (b. 1999) is an interdisciplinary artist based in Athens, GR, focusing primarily on game development and costume design. Their primary focus is on human impact and agency. Either focusing on environmental interdependencies in their masters diploma Expo or creating Gamified eco activism correspondence software, their work reveals the power of collective and individual action.

Artemis has worked across multiple mediums, including sculpture, painting, performance, and interactive game art. They studied these disciplines at the **Athens School of Fine Arts** and costume design at the **Royal Academy of Fine Arts of Antwerp**.

Artemis explored tool creation as part of their 2024 artist residency at **ARE Holland** in Enschede. More specifically they data-scraped the emails, images and voting records of the Members of the European Parliament and packaged them into a hyper-casual email sending game. They view human laziness as a feature not a bug, a feature to be worked with and not against. Their solution was to experiment with streamlining and gamifying eco-activism and are currently exploring ways to transition the work to be hosted in browser in order to have greater reach. The work was featured at three exhibitions during their stay in Enschede: **The OverKill Festival** *Radical Joy Resistance*, solo show at **TetemKunst**, **ARE Expo** duo show.

Other works of theirs have been featured at the International **festival of Performance Art Drama**, **Okay Initiative Space** (**Athens, GR**), **Zuidpool Theater Belgium** and **Momus Thessaloniki**.

Instagram: @plasmo_desma
Website: sartzetakiartemi.com

BIOGRAPHIES

Babak Ahteshamipour (b. 1994) is an interdisciplinary artist, designer, writer and musician based in Athens, Greece with a background in mining and materials science engineering. His practice is based on the collision of the virtual vs the actual, aimed at correlating topics from cyberspace to ecology and politics to identity, exploring them via gaming and internet culture with a focus on themes of coexistence, affect and simultaneity.

His work has been presented at festivals, venues, galleries , museums and institutes such as **Centre Pompidou, PAF Olomouc, The OverKill Festival, The Wrong TV, Neo Shibuya TV, Biquini Wax ESP, Experimental Sound Studio** and **Milan Machinima Festival**.

He has released music on the independent cassette label **Industrial Coast** and on the cassette label **Jollies.** His music has been played on radio stations such as **LYL Radio, Radio Raheem** and **Internet Public Radio.** He has performed and shared the stage with artists such as **HELM, Zoviet France,** and **MSHR.** He has created video clips for artists such as **Fire-Toolz** and **Digi-fae**.

His work has been featured on magazines and platforms such as **CTM Festival's magazine, Bandcamp daily,** *COEVAL* **magazine** and *KIBLIND.*

He holds an Msc in **Minerals Resources Engineering** from the **Technical University of Crete.**

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