perceive()

A COMMUNITY CURATED EXHIBIT

Art Blocks

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109 W SAN ANTONIO ST | MARFA TX

perceive()

Loren Bednar, Emily Edelman, Dima Ofman, and Andrew Badr,
Jess Hewitt, Jorge Ledezma, William Mapan, Owen Moore, Sarah Ridgley, Rafaël Rozendaal, Jen Stark, Alida Sun, Jason Ting, Emily Xie, and Yazid.

November 2022–May 2023
Curated by 0xTechno, Plutonium F., and proper
Curatorial Assistant: Mad Pinney

Book design: Carolina de Bartolo

Art Blocks would like to thank all the artists, curators, and collectors for generously working to make this exhibition possible.

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BURRITOS, ALIENS AND GEN ART 53
(Who is this guy and why is he screaming
GOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOAL?)
0xTechno, proper, PlutoniumF., Mad Pinney,
and Jordan Kantor in conversation

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When Art Blocks opened its exhibition space in Marfa, Texas in October 2021, the company was not yet a year old, and, appropriately, the inaugural presentation was all about beginnings. Titled *Exhibition #0: Genesis,* the show featured eighteen projects from the quickly-expanding list of the young platform. Curated by Jeff Davis, himself a generative artist (and Art Blocks executive), the selection criteria for the show followed a deadpan, programmatic logic: only the first artworks generated on the main Ethereum network for each project—colloquially referred to as the mint zeros—would be included. While the curator chose the artists knowing what these particular artworks looked like, personal aesthetics and taste were not the primary criteria dictating what work was included in the show. Mirroring the process of generative art itself—in which an artist creates a framework, which then interacts with external inputs to create individual works—*Exhibition #0: Genesis* followed a curatorial logic in which a predetermined parameter (the self-imposed limit of including only mint zeros) dictated what work was on view. It was an aptly self-reflexive gambit.

The current exhibition proceeds from a very different premise, in which subjective choice is instead brought to the fore and celebrated. A suite of three presentations organized entirely by self-nominated community members selected through an open call application process, *perceive()* prioritizes the deeply personal responses that are integral to, and indeed inevitable in, any experience of art. The three curators chosen to organize the show—identifying themselves by their Discord usernames of 0xTechno, PlutoniumF., and proper—are not professional curators. This is significant since the show's structure explicitly foregrounds openness and accessibility over specialized knowledge and gatekeeping. *Perceive()* highlights the interpretation that each individual viewer brings to art, what is sometimes called "the beholder's share." Given

free rein to choose from the over 350 projects released on Art Blocks to date, the three curators each devised a thematic lens through which to organize their selections. 0xTechno proposed artists focusing on color and the effect it can have on one's mood; while proper explored how light can be used to create ethereal spaces; and PlutoniumF. underscored the human tendency to seek identifiable patterns in non-representational forms. After their individual proposals were selected and the curators began to think about the exhibition holistically, it became apparent that the notion of perception ran through all three of their initial ideas. Thus, the overarching rubric of the exhibition was determined: to focus on both aspects of the idea of perception. On the one hand, "perception" refers to what we see through our senses, but it also describes how we use this sensory information to organize what we know and think. With the theme in place and a floorplan to work with, 0xTechno, PlutoniumF., and proper set to work to further refine the list of specific artworks to include in their individual sections. The overarching exhibition title *perceive()* was coined as a winking nod to the command and variable syntax of the programming languages the artists selected used to make their works, and the curators adapted this to name their individual sections after their chosen sub-themes of color, light, and form.

Perceive(color) features four signal works by artists Loren Bednar, Rafaël Rozendaal, Jen Stark, and Alida Sun. As detailed in his curatorial statement, 0xTechno chose these pieces because of their dynamism and use of bright colors. Through almost hypnotic animations, these examples from the *Phase, Endless Nameless, Vortex,* and *Glitch Crystal Monsters* projects all invite their viewer to immerse themselves in shifting visual spaces. As it cycles through the spectrum of colors from cool blues and purples to hot reds and yellows, Stark's *Vortex #964,* for example, appears to radiate, drawing the viewer's eye in through an ovoid space that 0xTechno dubs its "rainbow wormhole." Rozendaal's *Endless Nameless #537* also utilizes a wide-ranging (electric) palette and animation, but to vastly different perceptual effects. Rather than inviting us into sweeping space, this piece keeps the viewer outside the image: unmoored, as we search across the blizzard of undulating rectangles for a single point for our eye to rest. Bednar's *Phase #189* has a kind of hybrid approach and effect. The relatively elemental formal organization of the image–featuring a circular shape on the image's right edge and a fundamental architecture of horizontal lines—is complicated by interference patterns and what appear to be arcs of light unfolding away from the form. As it cycles through its animation, the piece moves between varying degrees of legibility and thereby prompts its viewers to question their perceptions of what they see. *Glitch Crystal Monsters #485* also uses formal play in its animation to create a dynamic perceptual experience. Against a bright red-orange background that suggests a void, a

wireform spiral shape twists and turns, with di-color fills throbbing through its spiked forms. The constantly shifting composition alternates between appearing full and empty, and resists resolution as a simple form. As with all the works in 0xTechno's selection, Sun's use of color ultimately leaves the viewer with more questions about the form of what is seen than stable answers. As the artist herself notes in the project description, the work "highlight(s) the fluid, transformative possibilities of structures perceived as rigid and immutable."

In *perceive(light)*, proper curated projects that use light effects to "evoke particular feelings [that] can be perpetually iterated on to create new feelings." In this exhibition section, Sarah Ridgley's *Himinn #246* creates a conceptual anchor for a use of light that squares with our perception of the natural world. Her cloud forms set against a blue sky are unmistakably rosy-tinted: suggesting both dawn and dusk, those liminal moments when the earth turns relative to its ultimate source of light: the sun. Though its use of yellows, oranges, and reds, Owen Moore's animated *Flux #14* also references natural light, but much more obliquely. Indeed, its undulating, soft-focussed forms make a concrete space hard to locate precisely; we could be looking at a detail of a shiny car hood just as much as the curvature of a planet from orbit. This flip between the micro- and macro views can evoke, as proper explains, a new feeling at different moments in the animation. Jason Ting's *Light Beams,* here represented by two examples, use animated points of light that slide along a central horizontal axis to create a dynamic, flowing space. As the points move and the values fluctuate between light and dark, viewers can appreciate how dependent the perception of space is on the lighting conditions. Form and light are made totally coincident, as light and light alone creates the shapes we see and spaces we perceive. Jorge Ledezma's *Aithérios #746* and *#403,* a minimal affair in virtual monochromes, demonstrates how simple lines can create the illusion of volume through shading. The round-edged columns appear translucent, and their bases seem to disappear as the forms build. This evokes a sense of impermanence and change; indeed, one of the project's traits is called "etherealness." Jess Hewitt's *Haywire Café #131* completes proper's selections. Here, the artist pays homage to mid-century animation, like the famous hand-drawn scenes in Disney's *Fantasia* (1940), which lit up the big screen with some of the most evocative abstract light displays seen by most audiences. Computer screens are nothing if not boxes of light, and as the interface in which all these projects were natively created and most typically experienced, and *perceive(light)* shows a selection of works by artists who use that feature in knowing and innovative ways.

Perceive(form), takes a slightly different approach to perception, focussing less on projects that explicitly engage the viewer's senses, than those that challenge our minds to organize what we see. As PlutoniumF. explains in his curatorial statement, this approach was inspired by the creativity of fellow Art Blocks community members on Discord who would see patterns and meaningful images in non-representational compositions. The kind of light-hearted fun one associates with finding "cat shapes in clouds," or "the outline of a rabbit on the full moon," as the curator writes, is turned into a community building and bonding experience that literalizes the idea that what the viewer brings to an artwork can be just as important to its meaning as the artist's intention. In the sphere of generative art, in which random elements–and indeed collector collaboration (through minting) figure fundamentally into how the works are produced—this activity of collectively-shared readings of particular works seems particularly appropriate and self-aware. While PlutoniumF. does offer some of his own provisional readings of the forms in the works chosen for the show, *perceive(form)* is more an invitation for the viewer to discover, indeed perceive, for themselves, what they can in the abstract fields of works by Emily Xie, William Mapan, Yazid, and the collaborative team of Emily Edelman, Dima Ofman, Andrew Badr. To the curator's eye, *Memories of Qilin, Anticyclone, Automatism* and *Asemica* all lend themselves especially to this exercise, and by selecting multiple of outputs from each project, shown in the galleries on a rotating basis using a looping slideshow, the curator invites the viewers to explore the wide range possible within a single algorithm, one of the hallmarks of a successful long-form generative art project. While he sees a "blooming rose" here or a lion and "the naughty Simpson" there, PlutoniumF. does not proscribe his readings as exclusive but rather, like the horse you may or may not see in one of the works, invites the viewers to the trough to drink for themselves.

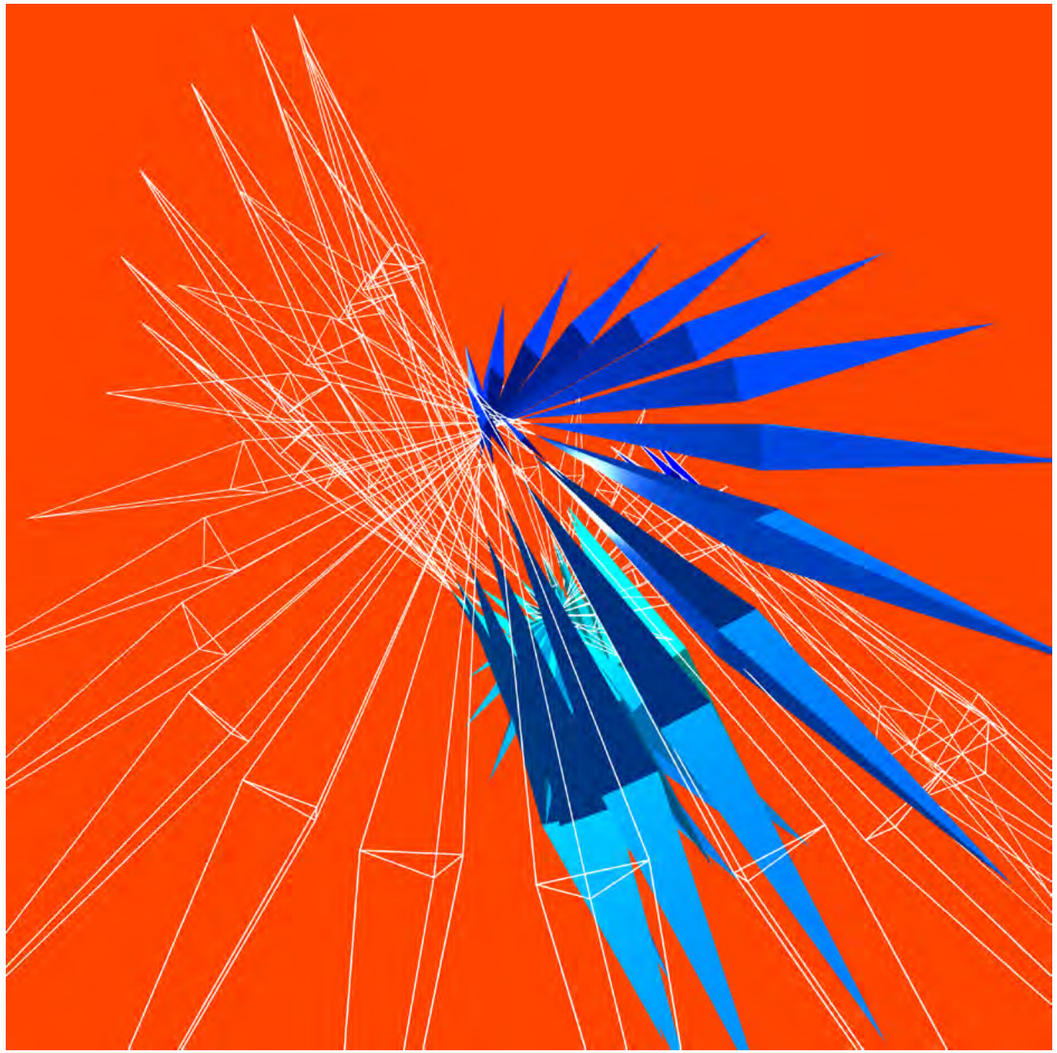
In the final assessment, as an exhibition organized through an invitation to the entire Art Blocks's community, and with three curators self-consciously inviting different viewer responses, *perceive()* pays homage to the primacy of each of our own individual perceptions. As artist Marcel Duchamp wrote in 1957—forty years after he presented a urinal in an open call art exhibition as a sculpture, unleashing new ideas about roles of an artist, an artwork, and an audience in the constitution of meaning—"the creative act is not performed by the artist alone." Indeed, as he elaborated, "the spectator brings the work in contact with the external world by deciphering and interpreting [it]." 0xTechno, PlutoniumF., and proper have done just that, offering their own speculations from the rich trove of generative art released on Art Blocks, and inviting us to offer ours as well. Even with all their work, this exploration has only just begun. ■

Not only do humans perceive color, but color can sometimes be experienced as a sensation, just like taste or smell. And like other sensations, color can evoke emotions and memories. Seeing specific colors reminds us of family, friends, and/or past life experiences. Color is a powerful force, which influences our mood and inner feelings. In generative art, there are a total of 16,777,216 different colors an artist can use to elicit those emotions and feelings.

With the digital displays, I wanted to focus on pieces that explore animation in addition to color. Animation adds another dimension, as dynamic pieces can elicit multiple feelings across one single piece. With static pieces, the viewer only has one viewpoint; whereas animated pieces are almost infinite in their motion and storytelling. The artist Jen Stark is an expert of such practice, famous for her use of vibrant rainbow colors and abstractions. Jen's piece, *Vortex #964,* welcomes the relationship between motion and color. The rainbow colors pulse and fade with subtle warping and rotation mesmerizing the viewers. This piece formally invites the viewers to enter a rainbow wormhole and travel to parts unknown. Take the leap.

Zooming out of the wormhole, viewers are faced with a large display of seventy-two colorful rectangles filled with moving gradients of Rafaël Rozendaal's *Endless Nameless #537.* The subtle motion of vibrant colors in varying directions push and pull like pistons in a machine. The seventy-two rectangles, composed of gradients and multi-directional movement, asks the viewer to decipher an unsolvable maze.

Animated pieces can tell more than one story and evoke multiple emotions in a single piece. No better example than Loren Bednar's *Phase #189.* This piece has a spe-



ALIDA SUN
Glitch Crystal Monster #485
2021
Interactive Media | Adaptive Resolution
Algorithmic edition of 1,000
Collection of Yeasty Dough
Token ID 114000485

cial feature that manipulates the color palette to be unstable called "calamitous." This piece is an emotional rollercoaster as we are taken from feelings of confusion to calmness and serenity. The colors in this piece start out as a chaotic gradient of hues, which then transforms and morphs into a spectrum of colors with dramatic changes to the motion and flow.

> "The entire palette and flow are just thrown out the window here. It's so fun to watch the collapse and restructuring that is going on, completely unexpected results and definitely one of the goals I had when I was putting the 'Calamitous' concept together. Just awesome." (Bednar, 2021)

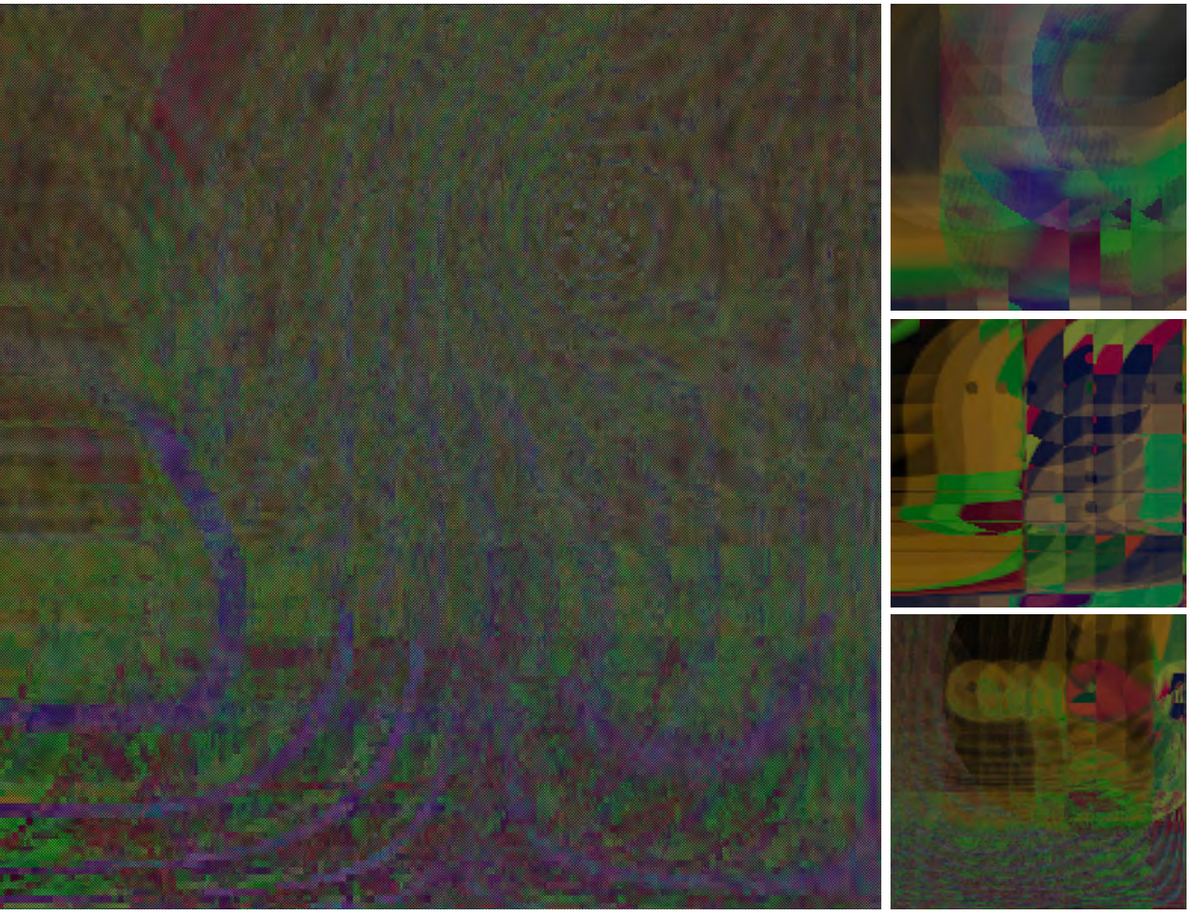
With *Phase #189,* we experience how quickly motion and color can turn into beautiful exciting chaos. The other end of the spectrum is Alida Sun's *Glitch Crystal Monsters #485.* The gentle and subtle motion of the flying geometry is complemented by the royal and icy blue hues that invite feelings of calm and relaxation. The "Fire Sky" background contrasts the calming blue tones moving within the structure. *Glitch Crystal Monsters* suspended in space, flowing and dancing, invite a curious meditation.

With display technology rapidly changing and improving, animated digital art will be more accessible to the public. Viewing these pieces on a mobile or small computer screen don't do them justice. I, for one, am looking forward to the future to experience dynamic colorful pieces on more displays in public and at home. ■

0xTechno is a collector and generative artist. Pieces from his personal collection have been exhibited in multiple events in New York, Los Angeles, and Venice.

With a degree in Computer Science, he has a diverse professional background in the gaming and commercial construction industries. He is an active member of the generative art community and also serves as the Grailers DAO treasury signer and curation board member.

Inspired by his children and a lifelong curiosity of design and technology, 0xTechno started to collect digital art in 2017 and create his own generative art in 2021. In his code-based art, he is passionate about exploring color and randomness.



LOREN BEDNAR

Phase #189

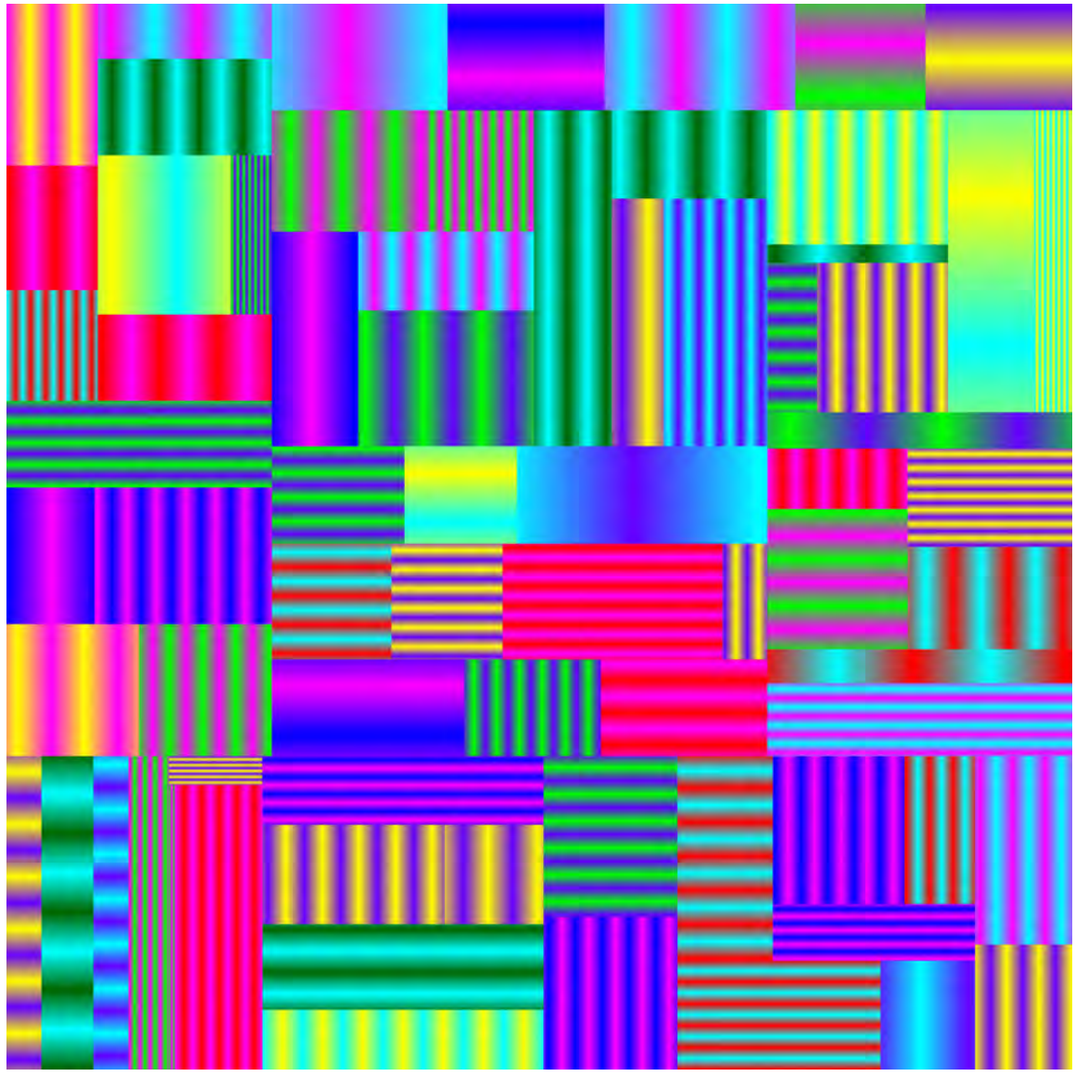
2021

Animated Media | Adaptive Resolution

Algorithmic edition of 1,024

Collection of Starry Night Capital

Token ID 114000485



RAFAËL ROZENDAAL

Endless Nameless #537

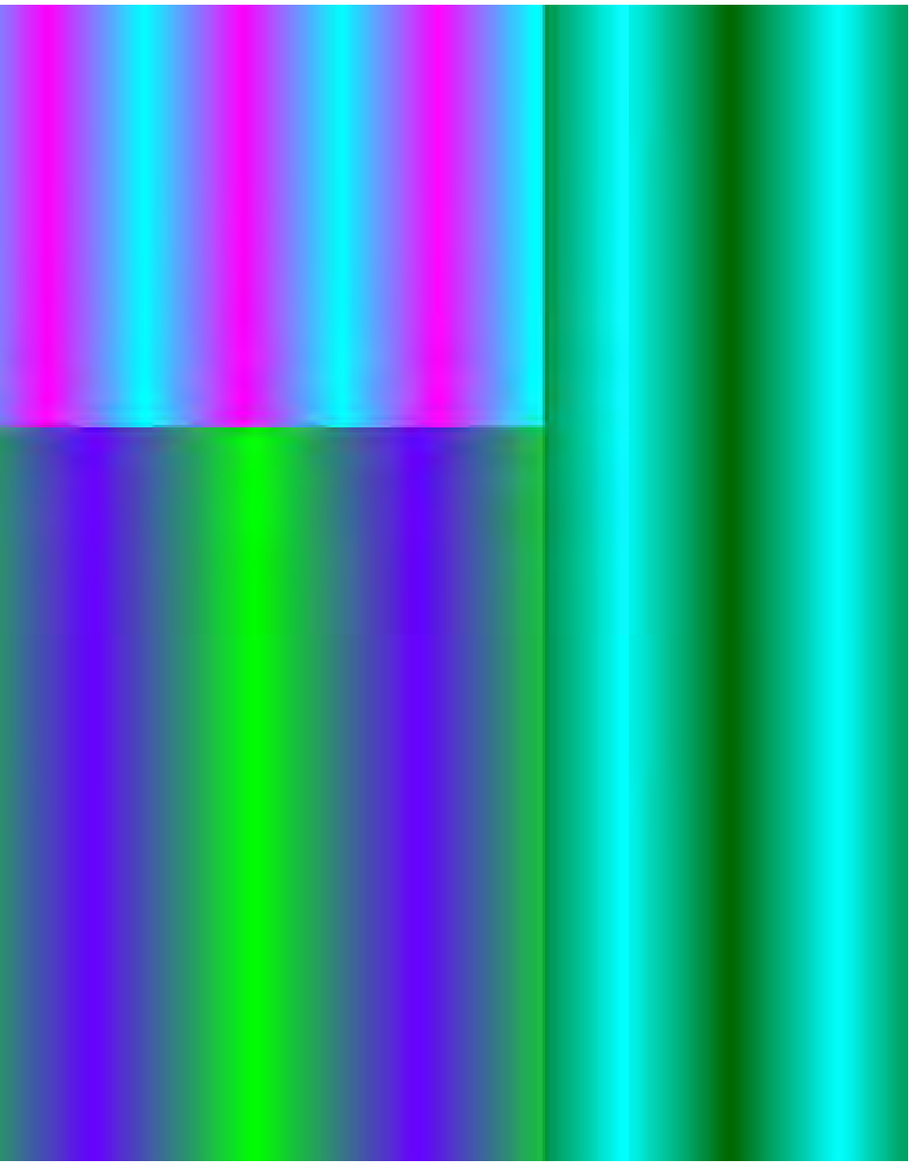
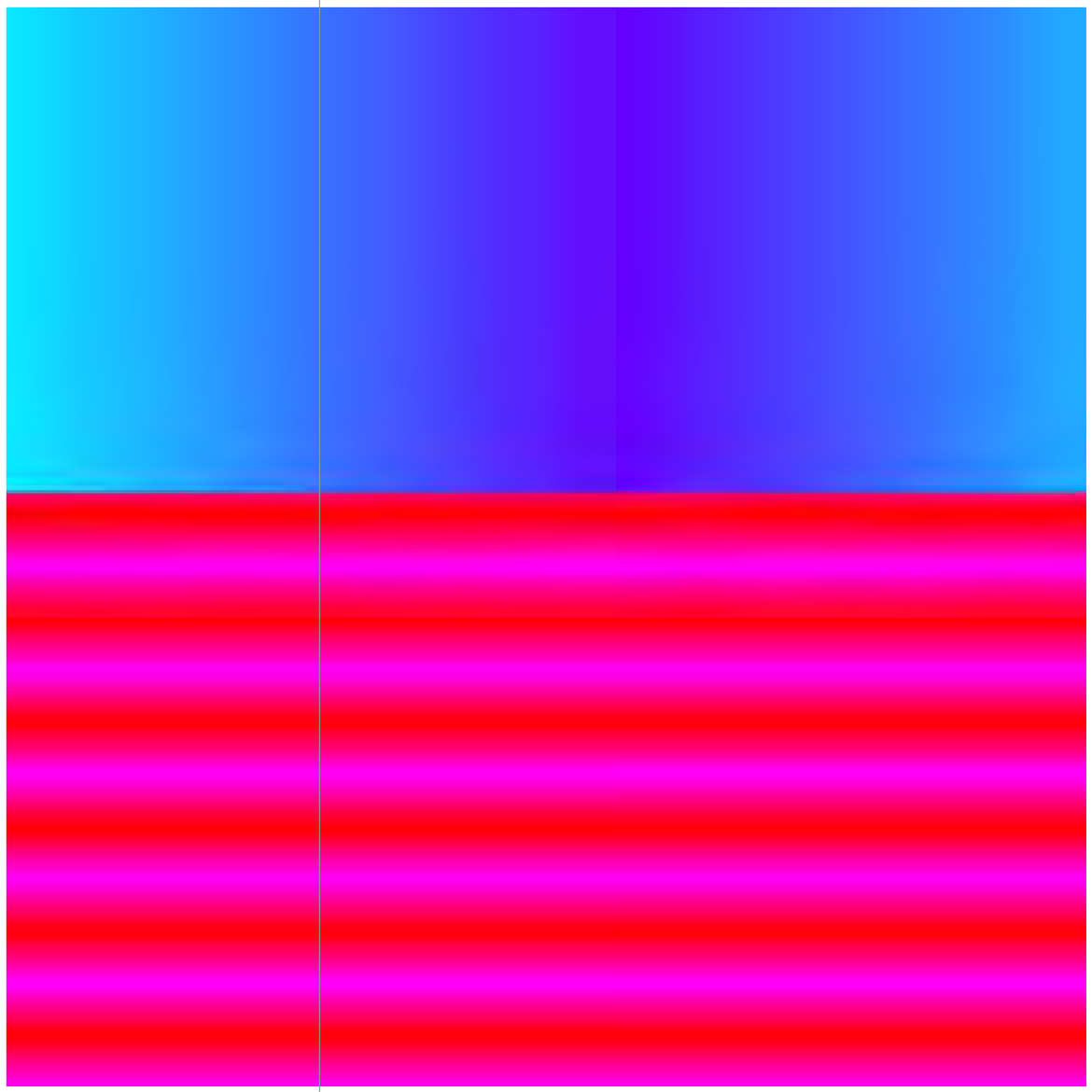
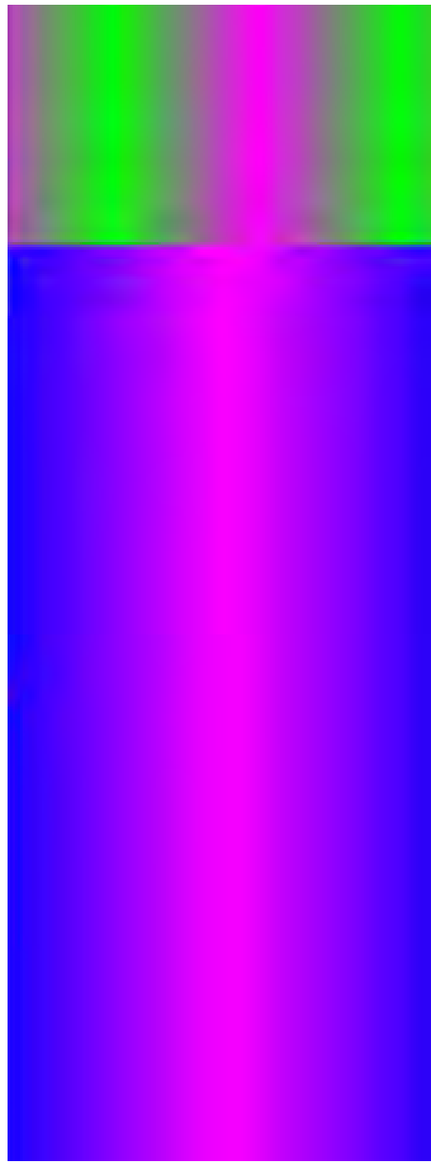
2022

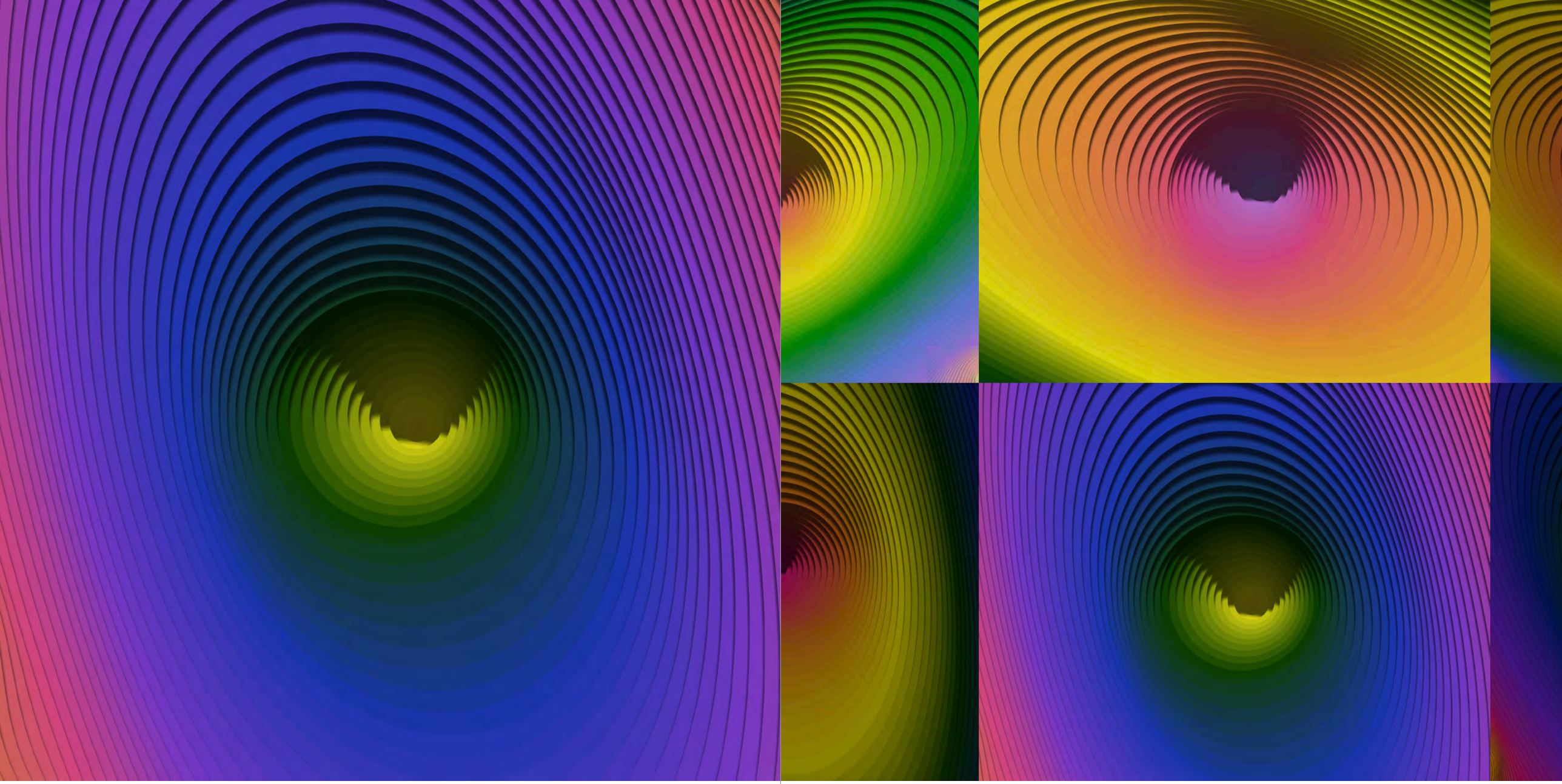
Animated media | Adaptive resolution

Algorithmic edition of 1,000

Collection of Rudy Adler

Token ID 120000537



JEN STARK

Vortex #964

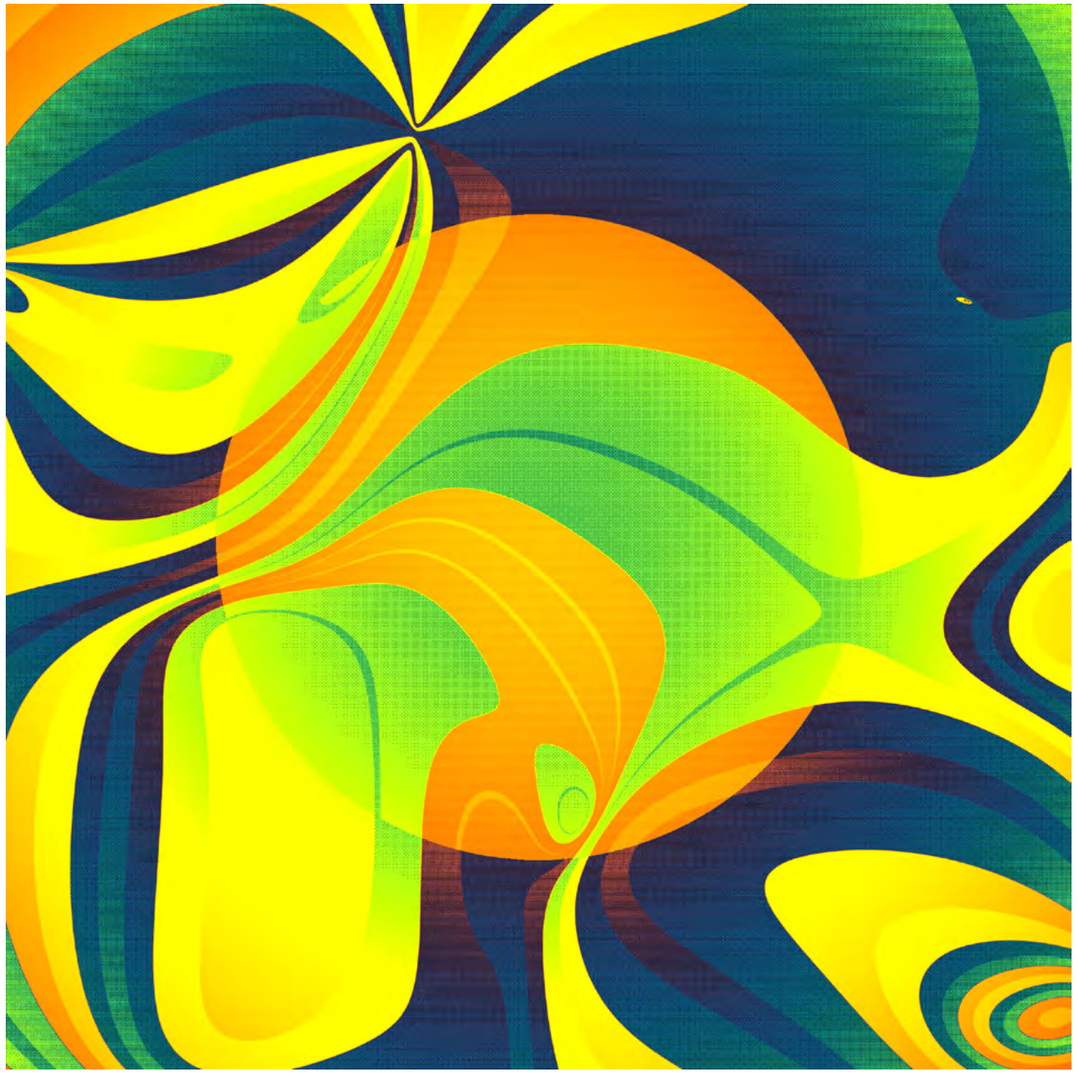
2021

Interactive Media | Adaptive Resolution

Algorithmic edition of 1,000

Collection of Jen Stark

Token ID 225000964



JESS HEWITT
Haywire Café #131
2022
Animated Media | Adaptive Resolution
Algorithmic edition of 256
Collection of Durbino.eth
Token ID 262000131

A certain fascination I've always had with code-based art is how inherently human art techniques can be replicated by a machine. What appear to be sweeping brush strokes or subtle detail work done by hand are in reality the result of a mathematical algorithm compiled and interpreted as lines of machine code. Beyond being technically impressive, this type of work can be powerful: a computer's engineered interpretation of source material tends to be imperfect and nuanced when you look at the details.

Often, the artist does not attempt to imitate human movement but rather replicate the human experience. Replicating human technique has its limits, but there are no limits to what feeling a piece of art can evoke. An algorithm whose original goal is to evoke a particular feeling can be perpetually iterated on to create new feelings, ones that end up being intrinsically digital.

Perceive(light) showcases projects that are doing just that. I selected projects that apply the concept of light in a way that evokes the ethereal. The feeling is almost indescribable, but in a sense it is as if you are.

Light Beams and *Aithérios* are the most quintessential examples of an almost indescribable feeling, one akin to being hit by that single ray of sunlight breaking through the clouds while darkness surrounds you otherwise: heavenly beings in both projects move across the screen, shrouded in an aura of light, just barely out of touch. The viewer is merely an onlooker, met with a curiosity that cannot be answered

Haywire Café pushes you forward: more dynamics come into play, the movement feels more intentional and coordinated, and answers begin to emerge from the chaos. It beckons the indeterminacy of looking for something, but not knowing what.

Himinn and *Flux* serve as the backdrop to this scene, the former being the traditional view of where heavenly bodies might reside and the latter serving as the digital counterpart to this view. ■

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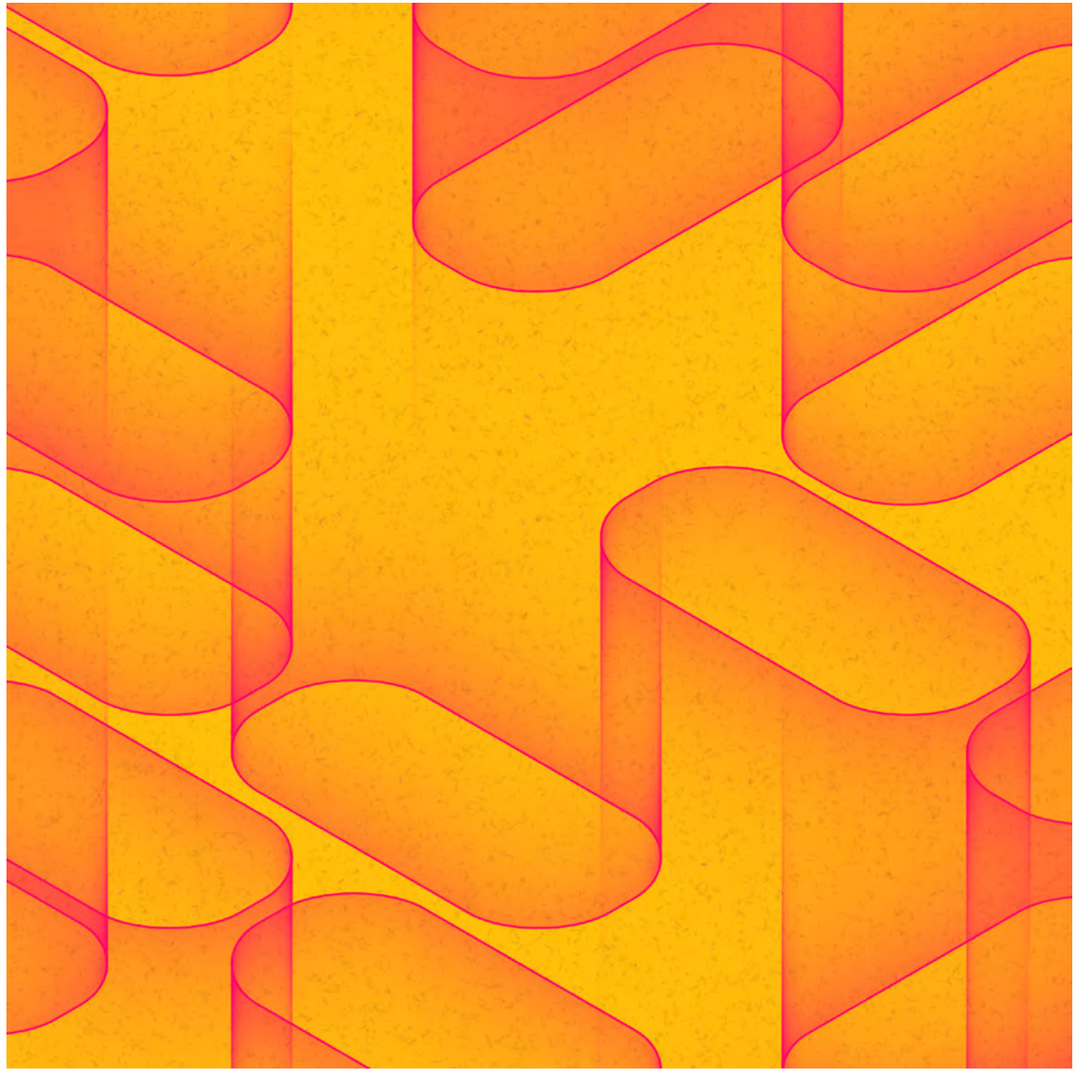
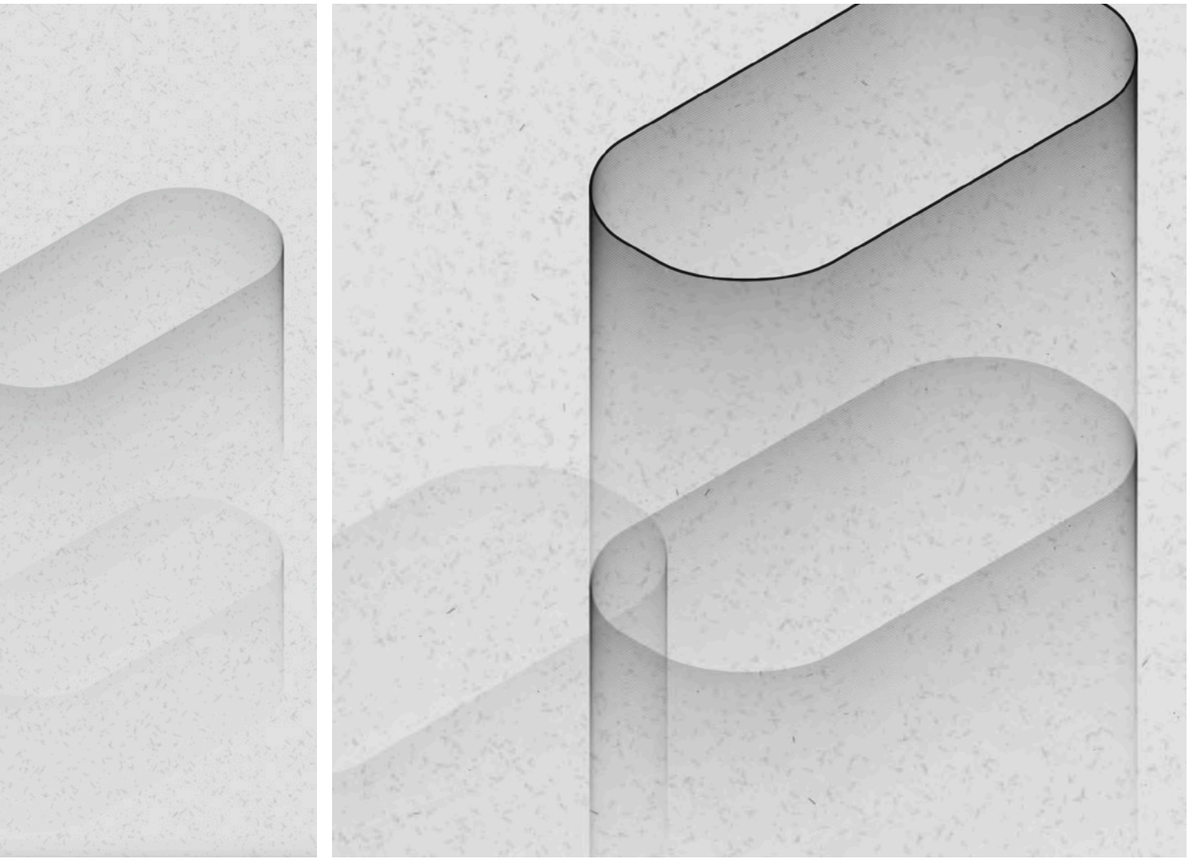
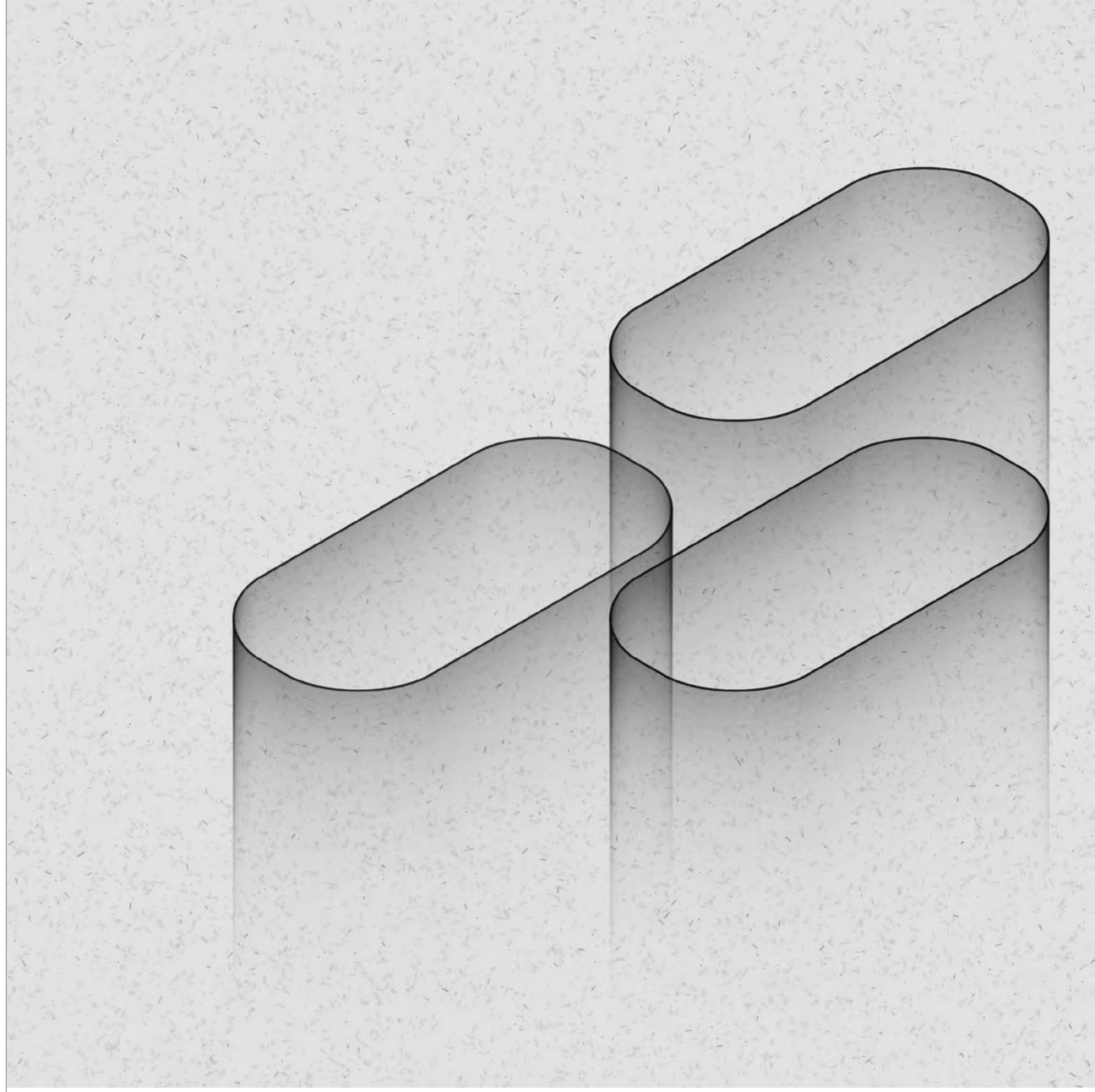
proper is a digital art collector and crypto native with a background in computer science. Exploring the digital assets space since 2013, he has spent time in various roles at multiple crypto companies and has been collecting digital art since early 2021.

proper is an active member of several groups focused on digital art, including Grailers DAO, one of the foremost generative art-focused collectives where he serves as a Community Admin and a member of the Buying Committee. His other memberships include Butterfly DAO, Fingerprints DAO, Emergence DAO, and more. proper is passionate about exploring social and cultural assets and what new dynamics are unlocked through permissionless systems.



JORGE LEDEZMA
Aithérios #403
2021
Animated Media | Adaptive Resolution
Algorithmic edition of 961
Collection of Waif
Token ID 196000403





JORGE LEDEZMA

Aithérios #746

2021

Animated Media | Adaptive Resolution

Algorithmic edition of 961

Collection of Trill

Token ID 196000746

```
·····if (R(1) > .89 && dY > iH / 3) {
·······b1 = b5
·····};
·····if (R(1) > .8 && m < lC / 1.25) {
·······b1 = b6;
·······gD1 += 2;
·······dRY *= .8
·····};
·····h6 = h5 + 20;
·····iG.fill(rN(h5, h6), rN(0, gD1), rN(b1, b8), rN(0, r5));
·····iG.e(dX - rN(-10, 10), dY, dR, dRY);
·····tD += 1
···}
·}

mage(iG, 0, 0, iW, iH);
oadPixels();
A = [], wA = [], dA = [], dA2 = [], tH = 3.1;
T = 70;
or (y = 0; y < iH; y++) {
·for (x = 0; x < iW; x++) {
···iX = (x + (y) * (iW)) * 4, r = pixels[iX + 0], g = pixels[iX + 1], b = pixels[iX
], lP = ((x - 1) + (y) * (iW)) * 4, rL = pixels[lP + 0], gL =
·····pixels[lP + 1], bL = pixels[lP + 2], tP = ((x) + (y - 1) * (iW)) * 4, rTop =
els[tP + 0], gTop = pixels[tP + 1], bTop = pixels[tP + 2], val = rN(0,
·····100);
···if (val < tH) {
·····cS1 = (1) * o(n(wF), 0, 2.5, 10, 50), tT = mF(rN(13, 21)), rR = rN(0, tT), rZ =
 + (cS1 / 0.9), r2 = rN(1, 2), r7 = R(1), aL = rN(10, 58), bA.push(
·······[x, y, r, g, b, cS1, tT, rR, r2, r7, aL]);
·····wF += rN(.1, .2);
···}
···dF = abs((r + g + b) / 3 - (rL + gL + bL) / 3);
···dF2 = abs((r + g + b) / 3 - (rTop + gTop + bTop) / 3);
···val2 = rN(0, 100);
···tT = 7;
···if ((dF > 1.3 && r > 150 && val2 < dT) || (dF2 > 1.3 && r > 150 && val2 < dT)) {
·····cS1 = o(val2, 0, 1, 1, 2), lT = o(val2, 0, 1, 50, 250), bD = o(val, 0, 100, 0,
 r2 = o(val, 1, 100, 1.4, 1.9);
·····if (sN == 3 || sN == 5) {
·······lT -= 20
·····};
·····rR = o(val2, 0, 100, 0, tT), dA.push([x, y, r, g, b, cS1, lT, rR, r2])
···}
···if ((b < b7 && val2 < dT) || (b < b7 && val2 < dT)) {
·····cS1 = o(val2, 0, 1, 1, 2), lT3 = o(val2, 0, 1, 15, 85), bD = o(val, 0, 100, 0,
 r2 = o(val, 1, 100, 1.4, 1.9), rR = o(val2, 0, 100, 0, tT), dA2
·····.push([x, y, r, g, b, cS1, lT3, rR, r2]);
···}
```

SARAH RIDGLEY

Himinn #246

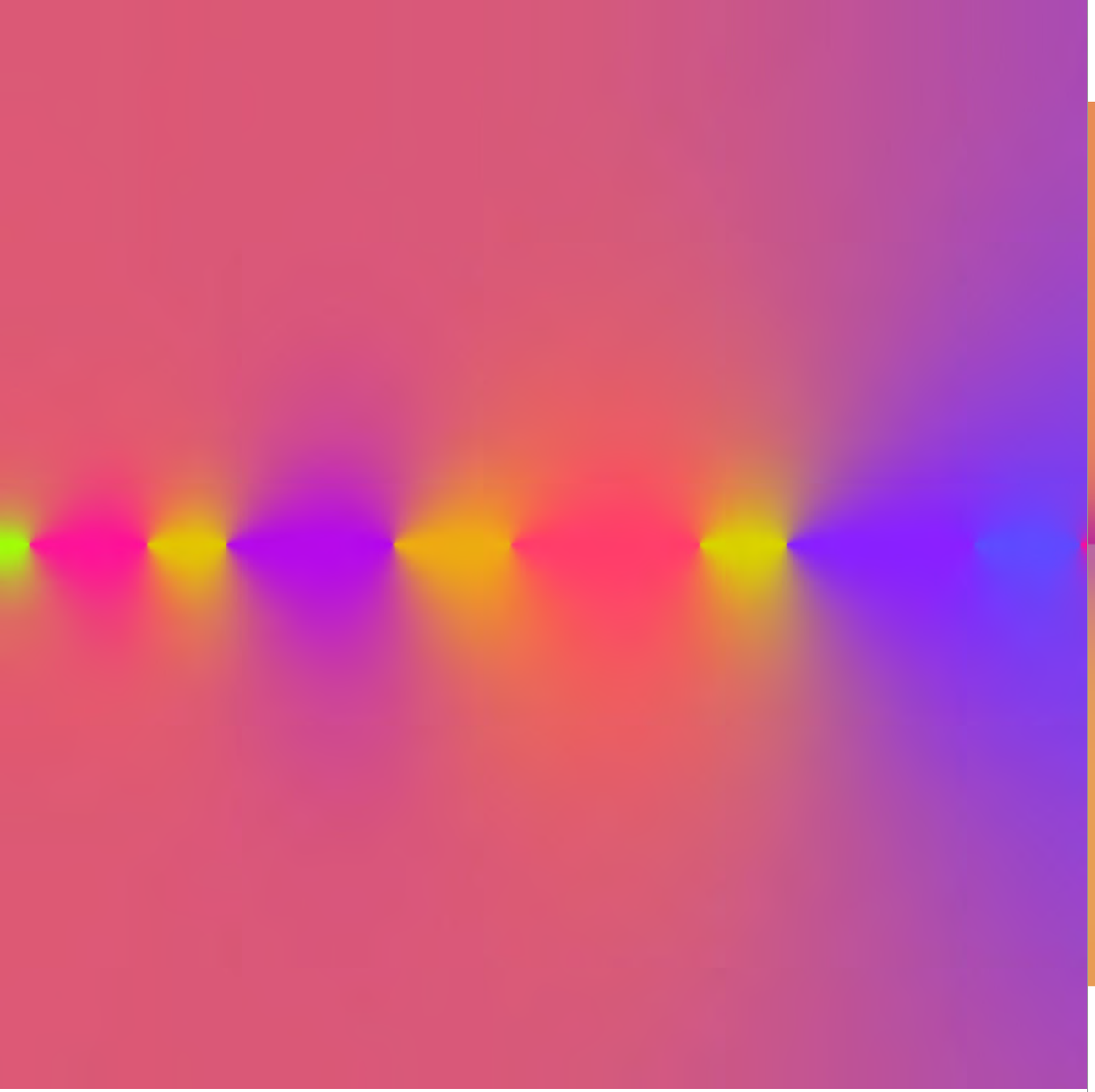
2021

Generative Image | Adaptive Resolution

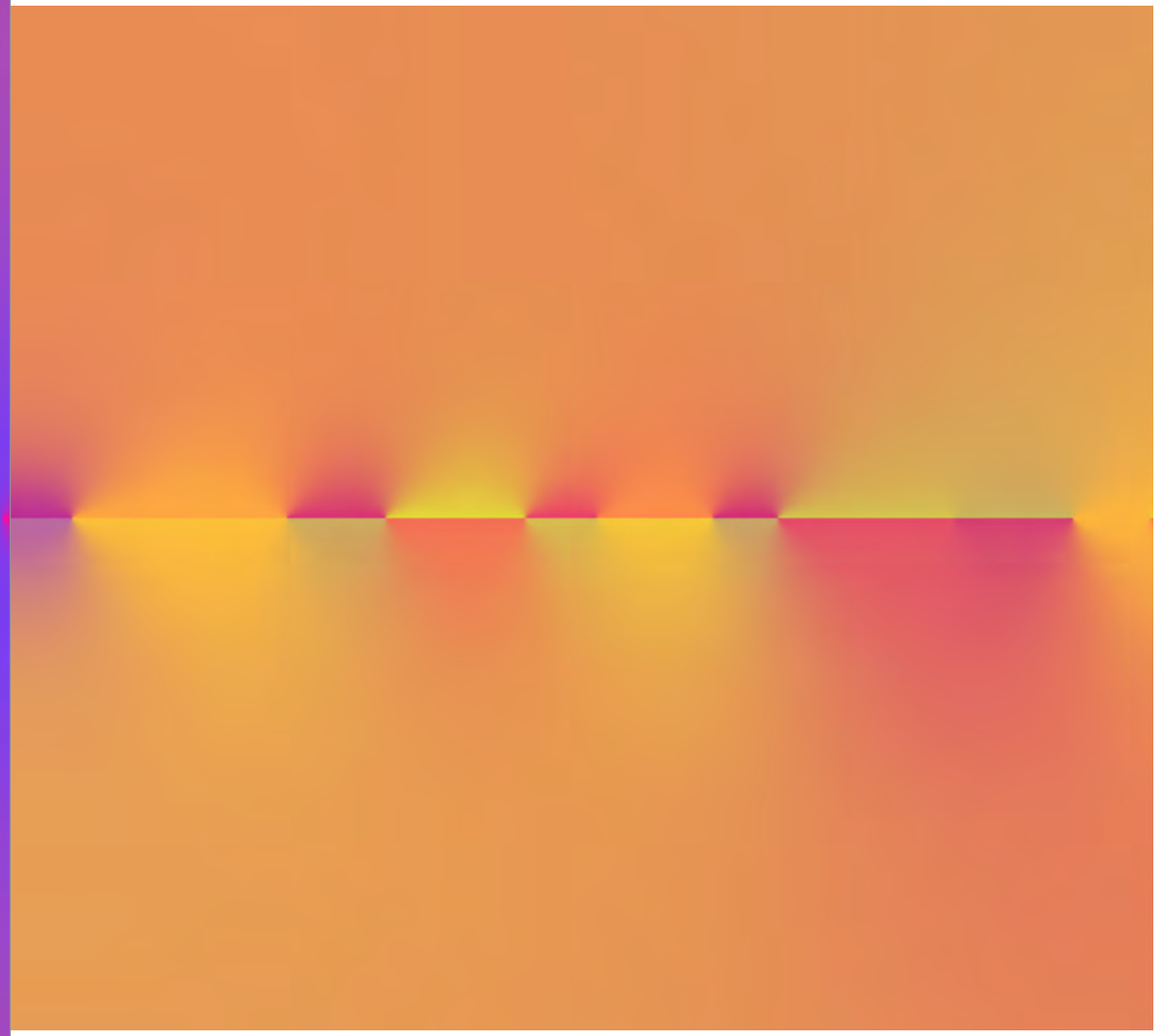
Algorithmic edition of 536

Collection of Roxas

Token ID 171000246



JASON TING
Light Beams #125
2021
Animated Media | Adaptive Resolution
Algorithmic edition of 150
Collection of CDB
Token ID 32000125



JASON TING
Light Beams #126
2021
Animated Media | Adaptive Resolution
Algorithmic edition of 150
Collection of CDB
Token ID 32000126

OWEN MOORE

Flux #14

2022

Animated Media with Audio | Adaptive Resolution

Algorithmic edition of 500

Collection of FlamingoDAO

Token ID 296000014

EMILY EDELMAN, DIMA OFMAN, ANDREW BADR
Asemica #828
2021
Generative Image | Adaptive Resolution
Algorithmic edition of 980
Collection of Punk6529
Token ID 206000828

Perceive(form) explores the concept of pareidolia: "the tendency to perceive a specific, often meaningful image in a random or ambiguous visual pattern."*

Humans see dog and cat shapes in clouds, Jesus on toast, a lion on a starry night, faces in electrical sockets, and the outline of a rabbit on the full moon.

This concept has fascinated me ever since *Ringers,* an Art Blocks Curated project, was released in February 2021. Like a Rorschach test, collectors started to spot creatures and objects in the strings and pegs of the canvas. Our ability to perceive forms in abstract art blew me away.

In my curatorial journey since, I have examined various generative art projects to find these interpretations. This has led me to select the four projects for my curation—*Anticyclone* by William Mapan, *Memories of Qilin* by Emily Xie, *Automatism* by Yazid and *Asemica* by Emily Edelman, Dima Ofman and Andrew Badr.

William Mapan's style is largely informed by drawing, painting, and sketching; this extension of art by hand into art by computer makes *Anticyclone* particularly elegant and beautiful. He is a master of generating textures via code. In my selections, you might spot one of the world's most popular memes, a glacial landscape, a silhouette of a bull, the face of a bird that goes hoot, a blooming rose and one that resembles the figure from Edvard Munch's popular painting *The Scream* (1893).

Emily Xie's techniques are inspired by east Asian art and in *Memories of Qilin* she channels the sense of movement and fluidity found in classical Chinese brushwork, drawing from the colors, patterns, and forms of ukiyo-e woodblock prints. Her organic and fluid style is a stark contrast to the geometric, precise, and sharp aesthetic often

seen in generative art. In my selections, try to spot the king of the jungle, the largest mammal, the river spirit from Miyazaki's *Spirited Away,* an immortal bird that rises from the ashes, a pensive Kong, and the face of a bear.

Yazid's work is inspired by the freestyle drawing practice of artists, filling up space with whatever comes to their minds. *Automatism* explores if an algorithm can recreate liberated spontaneity. Employing varied movements through irregular curves, straight lines, and sudden changes in direction it "invites the viewer to actively participate in the interpretation of the visual output." Can you see an arachnid, a timepiece, a school of fish, a maze, the naughty Simpson, and an athlete?

Asemica is a love letter of sorts to typography. In this project, Emily Edelman, Dima Ofman and Andrew Badr explore abstract typographic elements to create new characters without the burden of legibility or language. Can you see what I see? Leaves falling down a tree in Fall, swimmers making a dive, fireflies in the night, a bunch of hourglasses, a fish, and a flame torch.

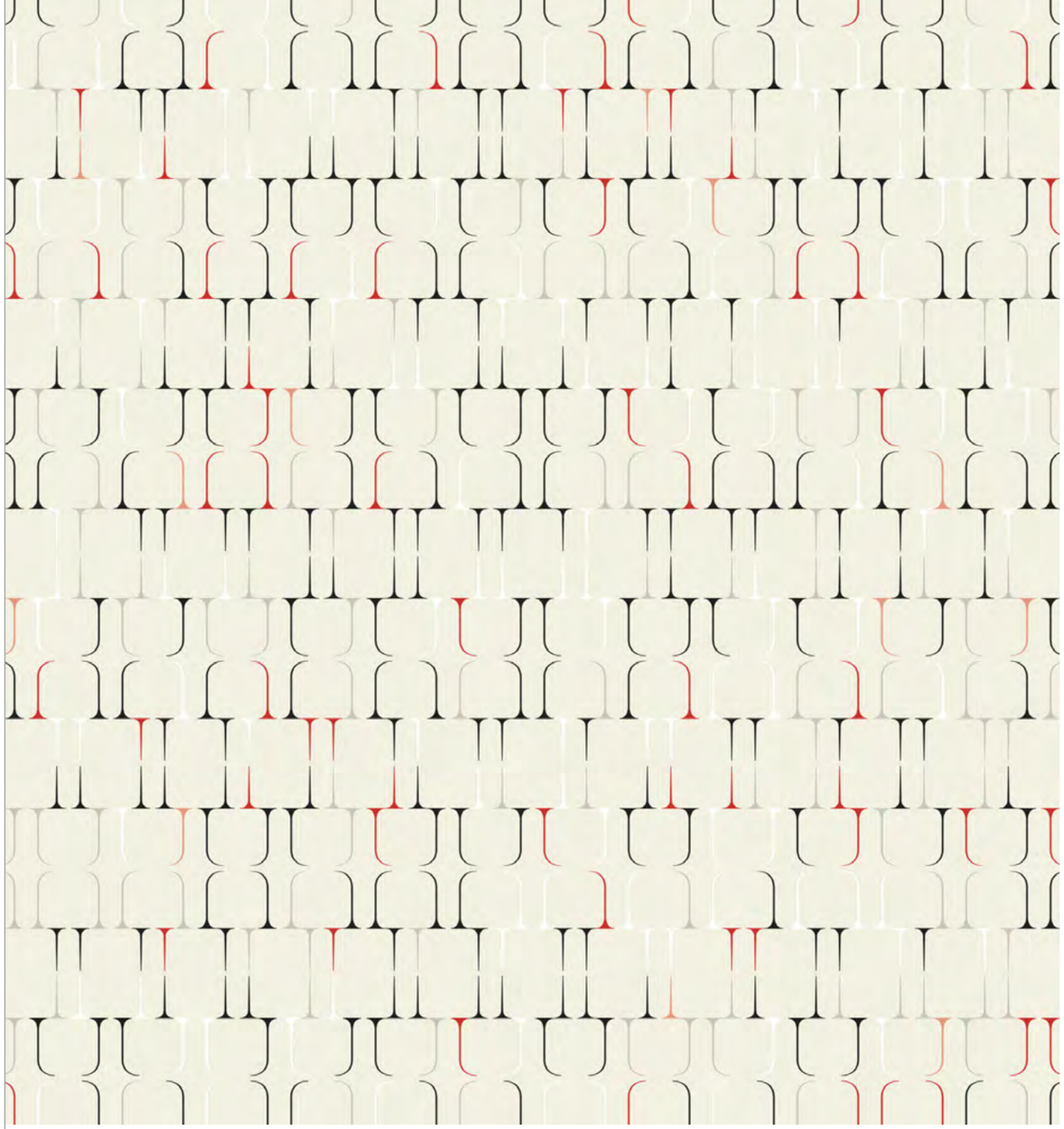
The exhibit is installed in Gallery 2 of the Art Blocks house. The trio of vertical screens house the three projects—*Automatism, Anticyclone,* and *Memories of Qilin,* while the large horizontal screen showcases *Asemica.* They are on a looping slideshow, so make sure you take your time to examine the different artworks to see if you can make the connections I did. You might see something else that my eyes and brain didn't, which is what makes this so interesting. ■

* Merriam Webster Dictionary (see: https://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/pareidolia)

Plutonium F. is a designer, entrepreneur, and digital art curator. He holds a Master's degree in Integrated Design and Media from New York University. He has been a lead designer for multiple web3, gaming, virtual and augmented reality organizations.

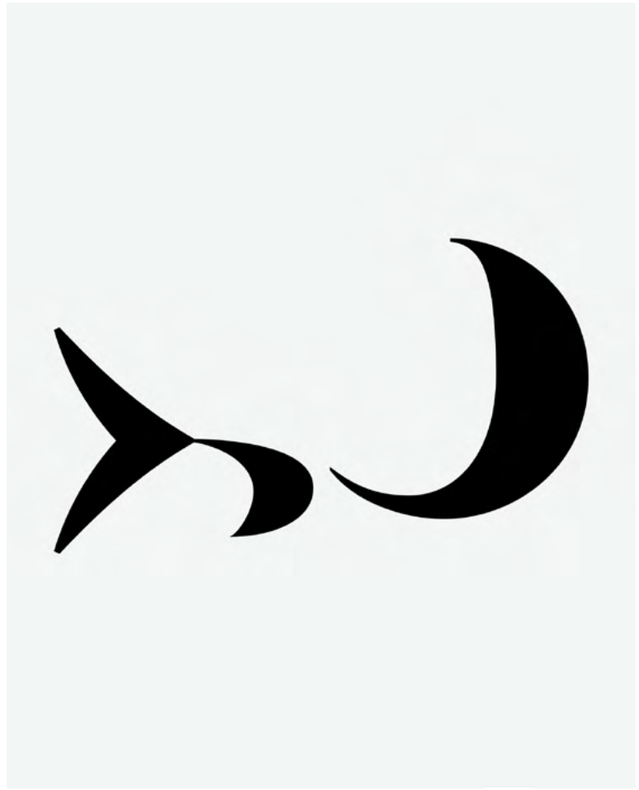
He has been in the crypto art space since 2020 and enjoys creating curated tours of NFT collections on social media.

Plutonium is passionate about generative art and the exploration of the blockchain as an artistic medium. He is currently building Extropy, a digital art platform for dynamic and data-driven artworks.



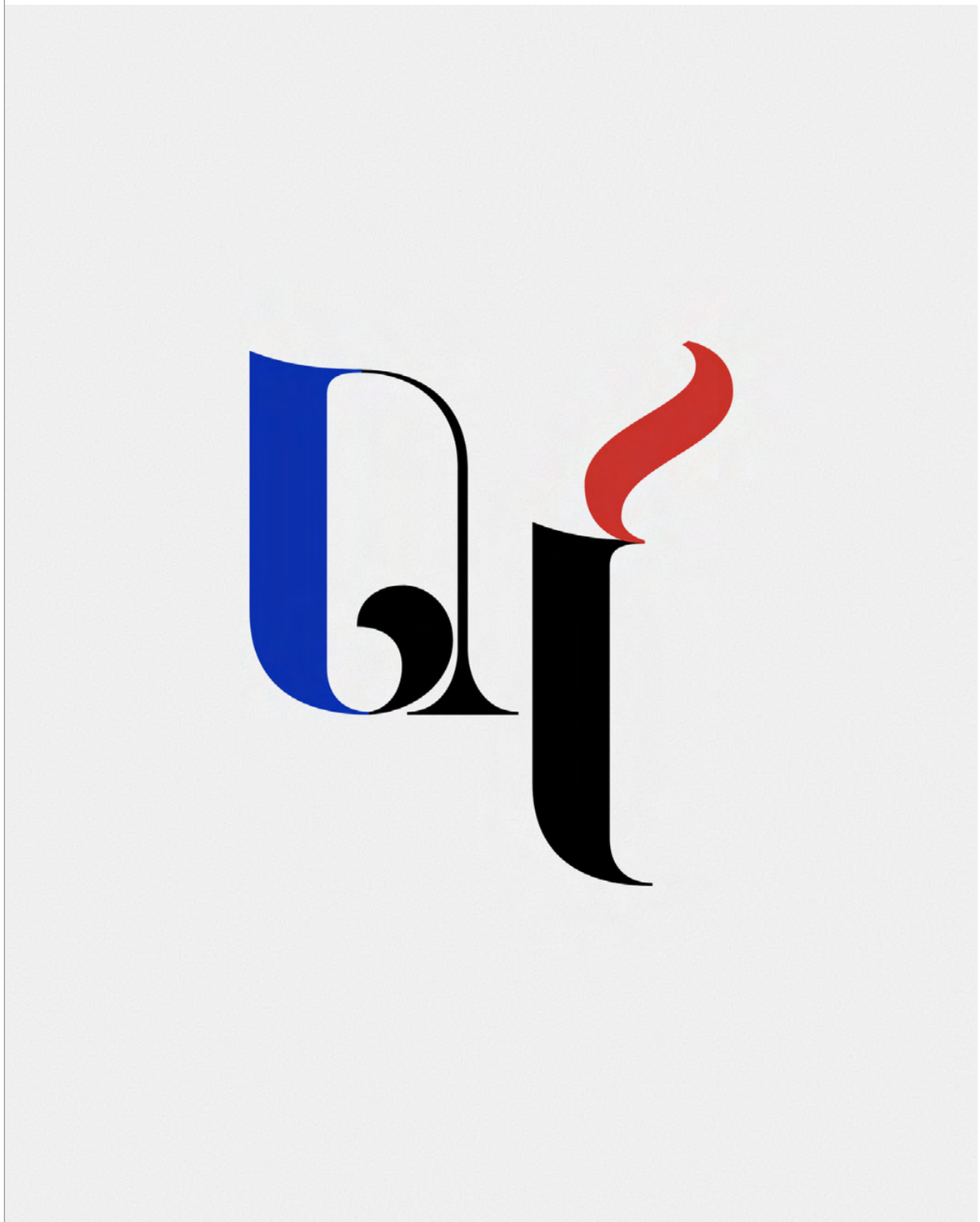
EMILY EDELMAN, DIMA OFMAN,
ANDREW BADR
Asemica #739
2021
Generative Image | Adaptive Resolution
Algorithmic edition of 980
Collection of Zeneca
Token ID 206000739

EMILY EDELMAN, DIMA OFMAN, ANDREW BADR
Asemica #340
2021
Generative Image | Adaptive Resolution
Algorithmic edition of 980
Collection of Dbochman
Token ID 206000340



facing page

EMILY EDELMAN, DIMA OFMAN, ANDREW BADR
Asemica #267
2021
Generative Image | Adaptive Resolution
Algorithmic edition of 980
Collection of Dima Ofman
Token ID 206000267

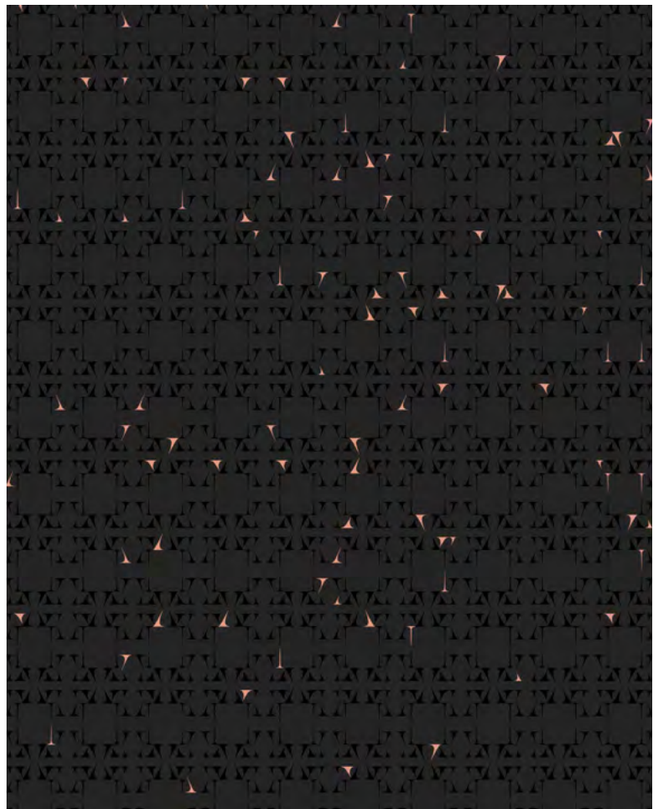


upper

EMILY EDELMAN, DIMA OFMAN, ANDREW BADR
Asemica #30
2021
Generative Image | Adaptive Resolution
Algorithmic edition of 980
Collection of Derek
Token ID 206000030

lower

EMILY EDELMAN, DIMA OFMAN, ANDREW BADR
Asemica #934
2021
Generative Image | Adaptive Resolution
Algorithmic edition of 980
Collection of Kunnath
Token ID 206000934



EMILY XIE
Memories of Qilin #808
2022
Generative Image | Adaptive Resolution
Algorithmic edition of 1,024
Collection of Thomas Lin Pedersen
Token ID 282000808

EMILY XIE

Memories of Qilin #370

2022

Generative Image | Adaptive Resolution

Algorithmic edition of 1,024

Collection of Niftynaut

Token ID 282000370

EMILY XIE

Memories of Qilin #335

2022

Generative Image | Adaptive Resolution

Algorithmic edition of 1,024

Collection of Blockbird

Token ID 282000335

EMILY XIE

Memories of Qilin #950

2022

Generative Image | Adaptive Resolution

Algorithmic edition of 1,024

Collection of Thomas Lin Pedersen

Token ID 282000950

EMILY XIE

Memories of Qilin #566

2022

Generative Image | Adaptive Resolution

Algorithmic edition of 1,024

Collection of Bob Loukas

Token ID 282000566

EMILY XIE

Memories of Qilin #134

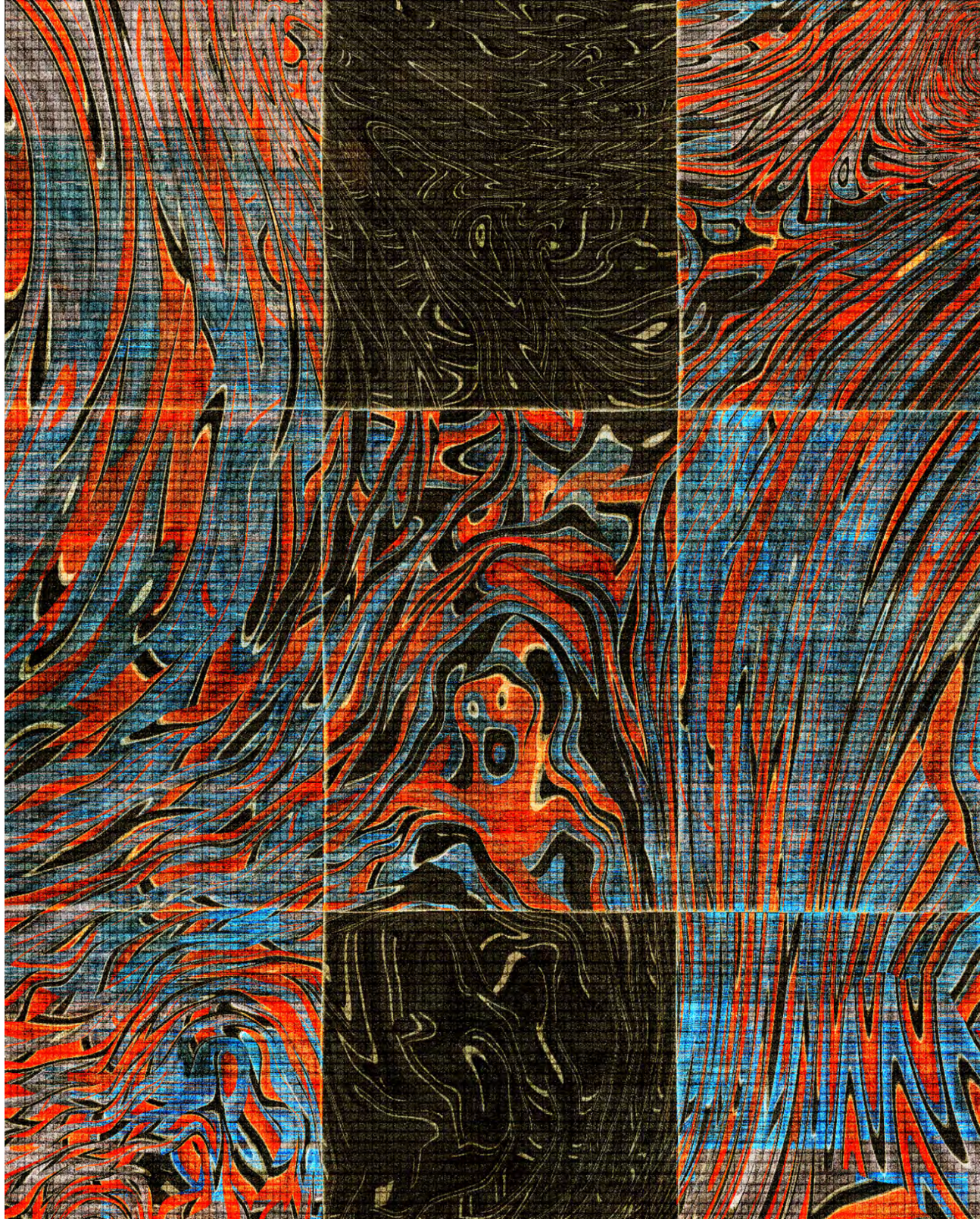
2022

Generative Image | Adaptive Resolution

Algorithmic edition of 1,024

Collection of Thomas Lin Pedersen

Token ID 282000134



overleaf

WILLIAM MAPAN

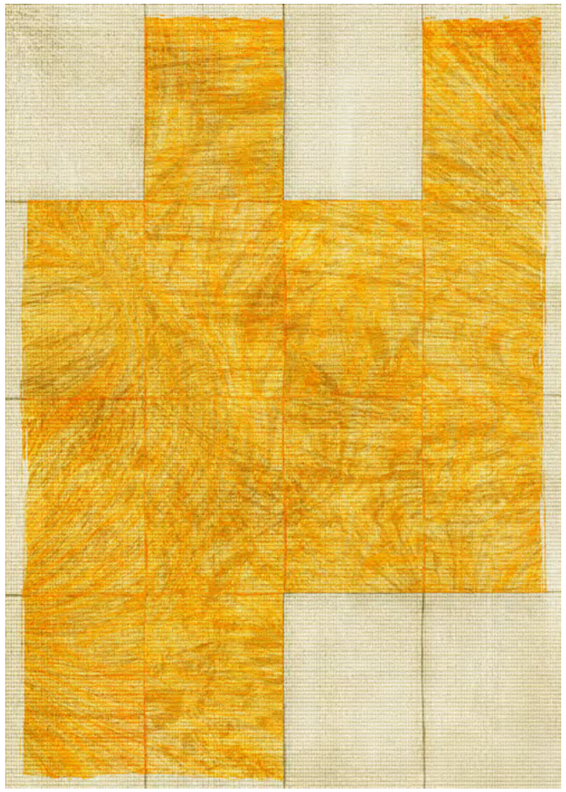
Anticyclone #297 (detail)
2022
Generative Image | Adaptive Resolution
Algorithmic edition of 800
Collection of Jstenn13
Token ID 304000297

WILLIAM MAPAN

Anticyclone #157
2022
Generative Image | Adaptive Resolution
Algorithmic edition of 800
Collection of Courtesy of The Metaversal Corporate Collection
Token ID 304000157

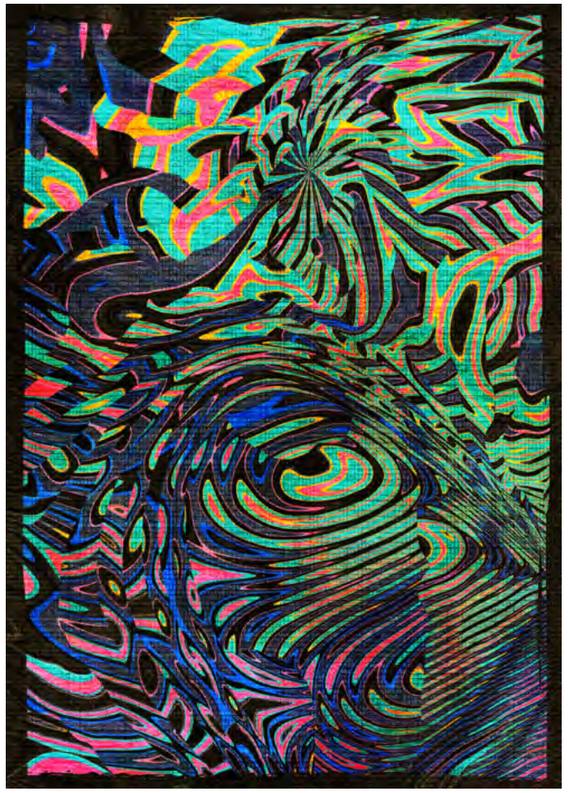
WILLIAM MAPAN

Anticyclone #660
2022
Generative Image | Adaptive Resolution
Algorithmic edition of 800
Collection of Ayybee
Token ID 304000660



WILLIAM MAPAN

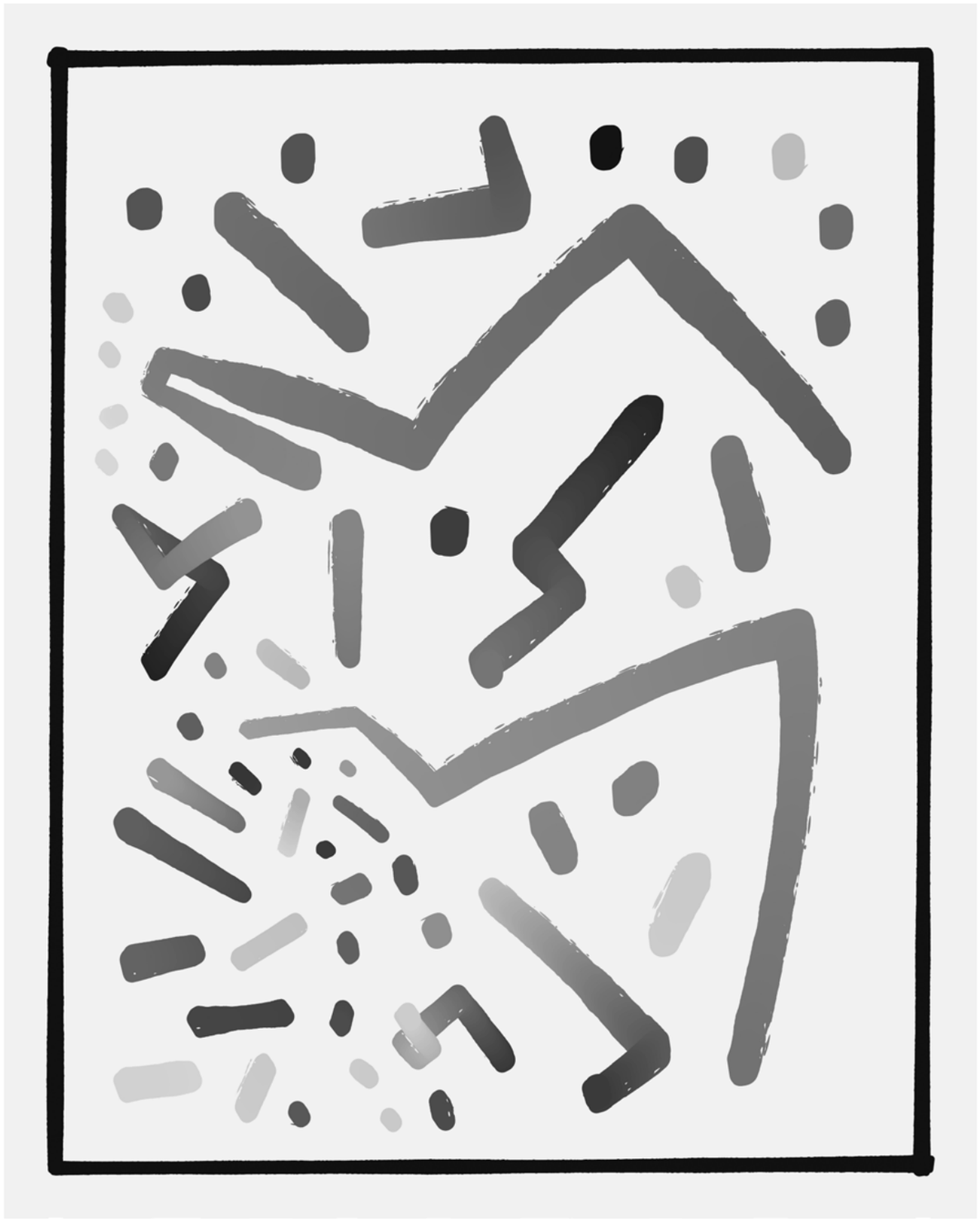
Anticyclone #400
2022
Generative Image | Adaptive Resolution
Algorithmic edition of 800
Collection of Punk Vandelay
Token ID 304000400



WILLIAM MAPAN
Anticyclone #470
2022
Generative Image | Adaptive Resolution
Algorithmic edition of 800
Collection of Trill
Token ID 304000470

WILLIAM MAPAN
Anticyclone #673
2022
Generative Image | Adaptive Resolution
Algorithmic edition of 800
Collection of Blockbird
Token ID 304000673

YAZID
Automatism #160
2022
Interactive Image | Adaptive Resolution
Algorithmic edition of 426
Collection of @artoria.eth
Token ID 281000160

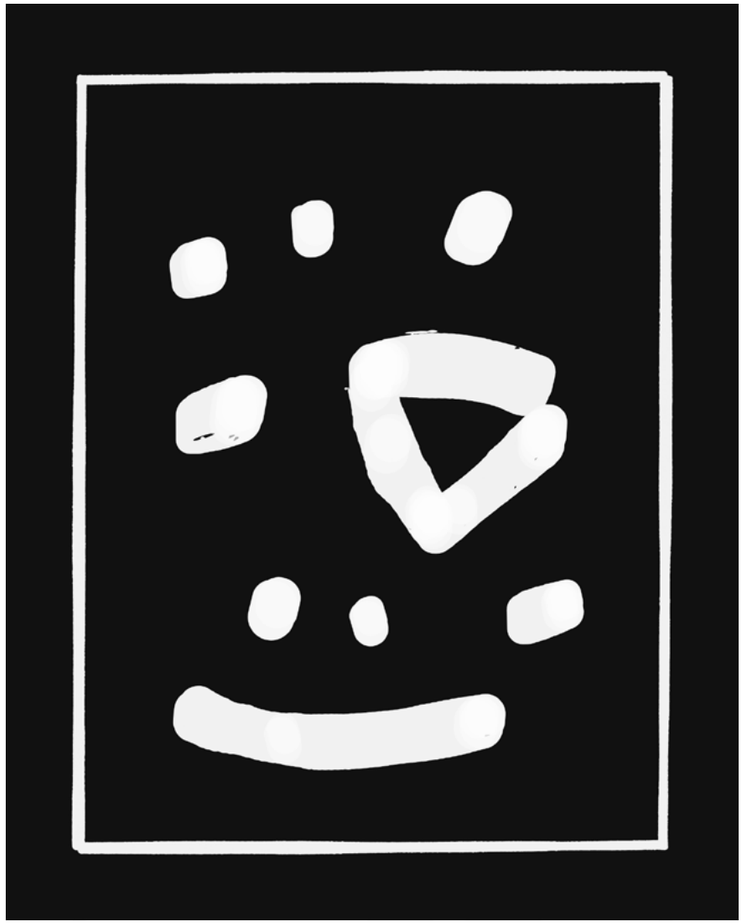


YAZID
Automatism #112
2022
Interactive Image | Adaptive Resolution
Algorithmic edition of 426
Collection of Dinosaur
Token ID 281000112

YAZID
Automatism #260
2022
Interactive Image | Adaptive Resolution
Algorithmic edition of 426
Collection of Bob Loukas
Token ID 281000260

facing page

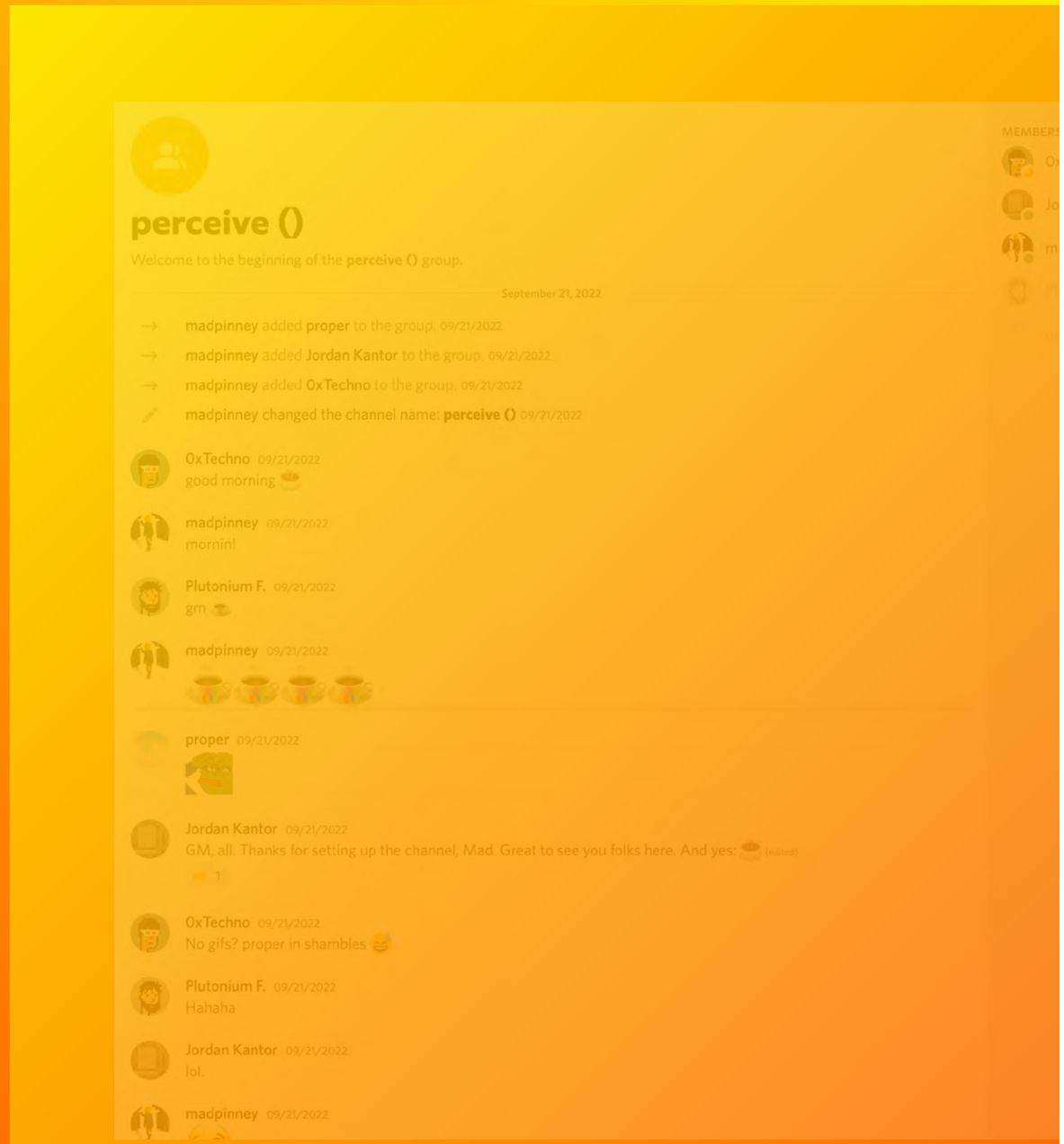
YAZID
Automatism #18
2022
Interactive Image | Adaptive Resolution
Algorithmic edition of 426
Collection of Pixelpete
Token ID 281000018



YAZID
Automatism #366
2022
Interactive Image | Adaptive Resolution
Algorithmic edition of 426
Collection of Crypto-Dubs
Token ID 281000366

facing page

YAZID
Automatism #350
2022
Interactive Image | Adaptive Resolution
Algorithmic edition of 426
Collection of Coolranch
Token ID 281000350



(Who is this guy and why is he screaming GOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOAL?)

0xTechno good morning

madpinney mornin!

Plutonium F. gm

madpinney shall we begin?

Jordan Kantor So, firstly, we wanted to thank you all so much—for stepping up and serving as our first community curators. You have done a great job assembling a range of projects that represent some of the diversity the artists releasing on Art Blocks embody, and we can't wait to see them on view in our Marfa House in November! Since Discord is where our community lives--and where we are able to share so many of our ideas about AB and art generally--we thought this would be the best format for our conversation. Mad has been working with you all on your statements, and this has led us to want to dig in a bit more about some of your thoughts going through this experience curating, and she has some questions to kick it off....Mad?

madpinney hello! to begin, i'd like you each to tell me the inspiration behind your curatorial themes: light, form, and color.

0xTechno Hey Jordan and Mad - thanks again for this opportunity to work with fellow friends and community members, proper and plutonium.

This conversation was held over Discord in September 2022 and has been edited from its original form for clarity, but the original syntax remains.

This has been a great learning experience about how I approach and think about art. For me, color has always been [a] source of emotion and feelings. Specific colors remind me of my kids, family and certain life experiences.This curation exercise has helped me explore my relationship with color - I look forward to continue that through collecting and creating art.

proper Great to be here. Over time I started to realize that a small subset of projects were giving me this unique feeling that I didn't normally get from other generative art collections. After I had compiled the projects, for my theme "light", that evoked this feeling that at the time remained a bit vague to me, I realized the projects all shared something: they utilize the idea of natural light and warmth and comfort that comes along with it. This opened me up into a broader exploration of generative work that replicate the human experience and the unique feelings that come with them

Plutonium F. Hi all! Thanks for this amazing opportunity which has been a great learning experience. The inspiration behind my theme was Ringers by Dmitri Cherniak. It's said that the viewer attaches their meaning to a particular piece of art but I had thought of that to only be true for figurative art and not generative art. Ringers was the project that changed it for me. Right after launch, the collectors and the community started spotting creatures and objects in a project that is mainly variations of a string wrapped around pegs. That changed the way I viewed and analyzed generative art.

madpinney Ah, this is a great entry point for my next question. What is your relationship to art? How has that changed since joining the Art Blocks community?

Jordan Kantor And perhaps another part of this could be: how has your (deep) engagement with the art at AB informed or changed what you think art is or can be, or, maybe more simply, affected your taste in art?

0xTechno I'm fairly new to collecting and creating art but have a lifelong relationship with art. My mother was in the art licensing business for 40 years so I grew up interacting with artists, traveling to trade shows and being exposed to the business side of the industry thru her. I have a passion for technology, software, and creating so with Art Blocks and more broadly, generative art, it is a perfect intersection of my interests and passions. Since joining the Art Blocks community and collecting pieces, I now have a greater

appreciation for art and even starting to go back and learn about art history. I've even started to create my own generative art after being inspired by the Art Blocks artists and collections.

Plutonium F. I have always been fascinated by art but never had a lot of exposure to art growing up. I only formed a deeper relationship with art when I moved to New York City. I got to interact and be around various artists and had access to art galleries, museums and events. However, it still felt out of reach to me and something that I could admire, but not collect. NFTs and the crypto art movement changed that for me and art suddenly felt accessible without all the barriers that I thought existed. I have been around since early days of Art Blocks and the community has had a huge impact on how I currently think about art. I had often focused on the visual aspects of art before without diving deep into how it was made. With AB, I got to learn and appreciate how these algorithms were created. I work in technology and creative coding as an art form on the blockchain just clicked for me. The AB community helped me shape my interests and also helped me develop a new hobby — curation.

proper Looking back on my childhood I think my dad always wanted me and my sister to have an appreciation for art. That took the expected form of many, many visits to art galleries and museums -- namely the National Gallery of Art here in DC -- but it also took the form of exposing us to other classical forms of art and style: film, architecture, fashion, and so on. I think with AB, and more generally code-based art, it was the first time digital art truly "clicked" for me which led to me becoming the so-called collector I am today. It might be a result of my background as a coder, but seeing the creative and artistic side of a skillset that is usually quite analytical and stringent in process was amazing to me. Now that I have a more definitive path to collecting art, it's been really interesting seeing both how digital art can build on those classic archetypes I grew up learning about or completely turn them on their head.

Jordan Kantor This is a really great point, proper. Perhaps that could be something we could elaborate on a bit. Does anyone want to comment on this?

0xTechno I find it fascinating that generative artists have been able to build upon and bring to life to those classic archetypes all through code. We are living in a digital world more and more, so it's amazing to see a collection or artist who has been inspired by

Kandinsky, for example, to create a software program that can produce infinite outputs that pay homage to the Russian painter.

Jordan Kantor Yes. There is a strong impulse among many of the artists we work with to connect what they are doing to existing discourses of art--and then extend/translate/dialogue with these though new technologies and the constraints that come with them, to take definitions of art in new directions. It's exciting to see this kind of homage to the past combined with reaching out to the future.

madpinney Where do you see Art Blocks, and more over on-chain generative art, in the next 5 to 10 years?

proper I have no idea and that's kind of the beauty of it. I've been in crypto for a long time now but that means nothing in the art world, while I'm sure most people coming from the art world don't know what to make of crypto/web3 quite yet

0xTechno In a large exhibit in the MoMA of course! Haha no but seriously, we are just beginning to explore the reach of generative art and the perfect marriage with blockchain technology. I'm excited to be part of it as a collector and aspiring generative artist.

Plutonium F. I see Art Blocks as one of the biggest digital art institutions spearheading the generative art movement. Even though generative art has been around since computers have existed, only now it is starting to be taken seriously as an art form. Still early days and I am excited about the possibilities of where this all goes over the next decade

madpinney What do you think is the most impactful/inspiring/exciting thing about being a collector of generative art?

proper I mean apart from just collecting art I like, generative/algorithmic art has been around for a long time but it's crazy to me how early we are into the timeline of code-based art being truly ownable and collectable. I know "we're still early" is a meme nowadays but we actually are in the grand scheme of this side of things

0xTechno I love being surprised by an algorithm. I tend to gravitate towards collections and algorithms with interesting underlying systems that can interact in fun and surprising ways. I have spent

hours running the code of various projects offline to explore the "out of bounds" region of the algorithm. Beyond the minted 1000 pieces. Gen art geek I know.

madpinney Can you share a collection that embodies this?

0xTechno My favorite example is Screens by Thomas Lin Pedersen. I even hosted a contest last year to explore the Screens algorithm and share your favorite piece. Thomas has a screen surfer on his website where you can create a new screen output (outside the main set) with a push of a button. I was so interested to find "the lost grails" and see what the public will find. We had 185 entries in the contest and [it] was a great time for the community to explore an algorithm together. The results were even surprising to Thomas.

Jordan Kantor This points to an important and special aspect of our community: the direct engagement between artists and audience. Can you talk a bit about the community aspect of AB that has attracted you to be such active and vital members?

0xTechno Having access and being able to directly communicate with some of the artists has been special for me. From asking specific questions about the implementation of a texture in JavaScript to a specific output, the artists have all been amazing and helpful.

madpinney How would you all describe the relationship between the artist, the code, the collector and the community at Art Blocks?

proper Good question, definitely something where everyone has differing opinions. To me, the artist/code have an unspoken social contract that goes beyond just dropping a collection and people minting it. As a collector I try to let artists just do their thing unless explicitly asked otherwise, but at the end of the day, you own art and that should be your sole expectation. Anything beyond that from the artist is a nice plus. That applies to community as well: it's nice if an artist is active in the community but that's not a prerequisite to owning their work for me

Plutonium F. Art Blocks has one of the best communities in the space where the conversations are not focused on the speculative aspects and folks discuss, analyze and share their appreciation over the various projects that exist on the platform. It also gives collectors access to artists to learn more about the artists and their process

madpinney #Block-talk is a vital part of the Art Blocks community. How would you describe it in five words or less?

proper the art world's most eisley cantina

Plutonium F. Perfect description

0xTechno the local animal watering hole

0xTechno There are memes, inside jokes, etiquette that have formed and evolved in #block-talk. Some of which may or may not have been created by a few of us here

madpinney oh do tell

proper "Who is this guy and why is he screaming GOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOO OOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOAL"

Jordan Kantor Do we have a title to this convo right here?

proper Ship it and mint it

Plutonium F. Looks rare

madpinney i want to leave room to discuss Marfa - or should I say when #block-talk comes to life in the desert. What are you most looking forward to?

0xTechno Finding aliens of course

proper Wholesome answer: meeting BT frens Real answer: sotol and burritos of course

0xTechno Burritos, aliens and gen art

Jordan Kantor Indeed, we are all looking forward to getting to know you a bit, and to seeing your visions realized IRL in the Marfa House. OK. lights out time? We'll see you for burritos, aliens, and gen art IRL in November, and in block-talk in the mean.

0xTechno Thanks everyone!

Plutonium F. Thank you! Looking forward to meeting everyone

proper Thanks all! Can't wait for our meeting of the art minds in Texas

madpinney see you in marfa!

Art Blocks

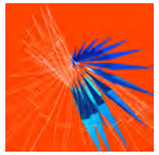
MARFA GALLERY EXHIBITION HISTORY

Exhibition #0: Genesis curated by Jeff Davis
Joshua Bagley, Chaosconstruct, Dmitri Cherniak, Michael Connolly, Stefano Contiero, DCA, Matt DesLauriers, Generative Artworks, Han x Nicolas Daniel, Tyler Hobbs, Stina Jones, luxpris, NumbersInMotion, Steve Pikelny, Casey REAS, Shvembldr, Jason Ting, and zJorge.
October 2021–April 2022

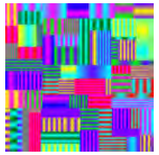
Cosmic Reef
A solo exhibition with Leo Villareal
May 2022–October 2022

perceive() curated by 0xTechno, Plutonium F., and proper
Loren Bednar, Emily Edelman, Dima Ofman, and Andrew Badr, Jess Hewitt, Jorge Ledezma, William Mapan, Owen Moore, Sarah Ridgley, Rafaël Rozendaal, Jen Stark, Alida Sun, Jason Ting, Emily Xie, and Yazid.
November 2022–May 2023

VISUAL INDEX OF PLATES


ALIDA SUN

LOREN BEDNAR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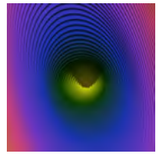
JEN STARK

JESS HEWITT

JORGE LEDEZMA

JORGE LEDEZMA

SARAH RIDGLEY

JASON TING

JASON TING

OWEN MOORE

EDELMAN, OFMAN, BADR

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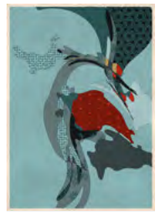
EMILY XIE

EMILY XIE


EMILY XIE

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YAZID

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English
First edition of 700
Printed in USA

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and texts by 0xTechno, Plutonium F., and proper
Edited by Jordan Kantor

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perceive()
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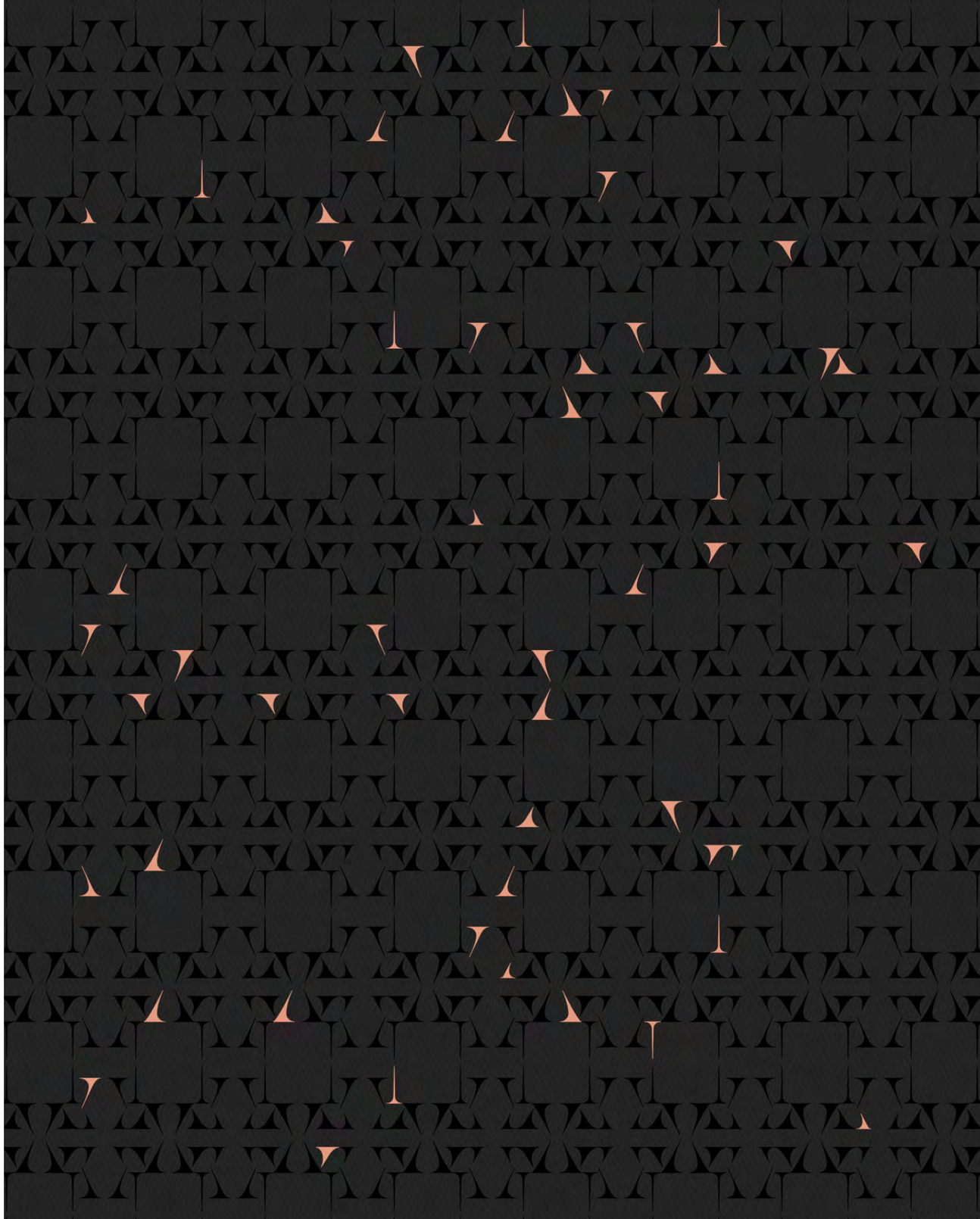
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