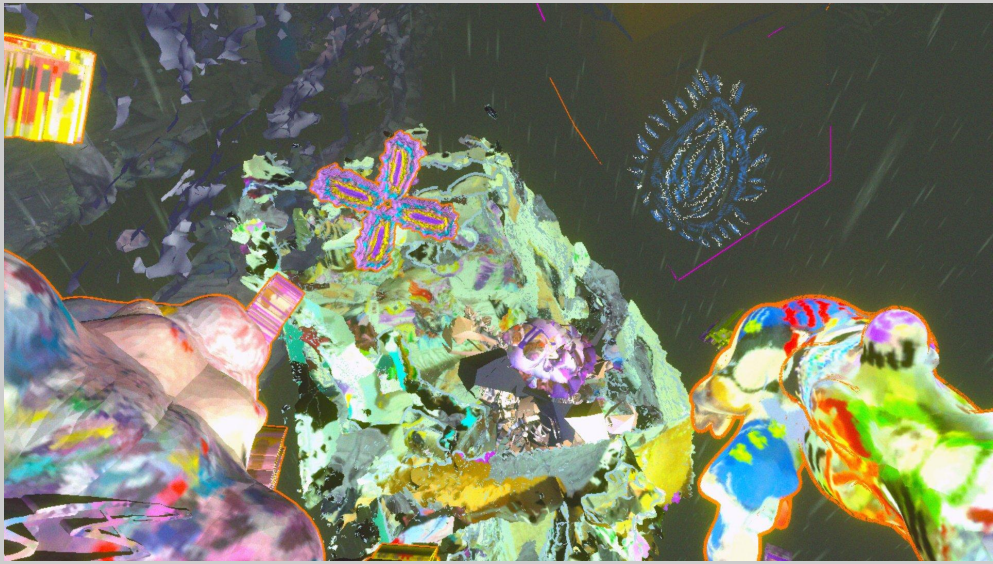
HyperBody Practice

Jiadong Qiang
2019-2023

Introduction
1. VR Play Instructions
2. Game Level: Pinkray
3. Game Level: Seventeen/Sixty-One
4. Game Level: Vampire Squid
5. Game Level: Stratholme.GoStop
6. Game Level: Typhoon Lionrock
7. Game Level: Garden Portal
8. Sound Samples
9. Related Exhibitions
10. Related Residencies
11. Related Workshops
12. Related Events and Conferences
13. Related Publications





VR game level Pinkray screenshot: Pinkray community 3D scan

Introduction

Maximalism HyperBody (referred to as HyperBody) is a VR game [1] that features a series of game levels designed in the Unity game engine and the Wwise sound engine, alongside non-VR online spaces based on Mozilla Hubs. [2] These game levels comprise the HyperBody VR game, which showcases the process of creating, describing, and evaluating the cosmotechnics of game-fandom. Through practices such as modding, crossover, shipping, non-collision physics, and bills of quantities, as well as digital ethnography, and exhaustive evaluation methods, an audio-visual cosmotechnics of game-fandom is established.

1 The HyperBody VR game consists of six game levels, including Pinkray, Seventeen/Sixty-One, Vampire Squid, Stratholme.GoStop, Typhoon Lionrock, and Garden Portal. To play the VR game, you will need an HTC VIVE pro, Oculus Rift S, or Oculus Quest 2 with a Link Cable connected to a PC or laptop running on Windows. The recommended graphic card is the GeForce 30 series.

2 Mozilla Hubs is a platform for creating and sharing virtual spaces where people can meet and interact with others in real-time.

The game levels in HyperBody include *Pinkray*, *Seventeen/Sixty-One*, *Vampire Squid*, *Stratholme.GoStop*, *Typhoon Lionrock*, and *Garden Portal*. These can be played with a PC-powered VR headset, such as the Oculus Quest 2 with Oculus Link cable and VR gaming earphones.

*It is also possible to watch the VR gameplays from YouTube links without a VR headset.

Online space game levels on Mozilla Hubs also include *Pinkray*, *Seventeen/Sixty-One*, *Vampire Squid*, *Stratholme.GoStop*, *Typhoon Lionrock*, *and Garden Portal*. These multiplayer HyperBody spaces are accessible from a desktop web browser or any HMD device.

HyperBody sound samples in the game levels can be listened to on Soundcloud and Bandcamp. Samples include *White Cat Monitor*, *Addiction 1990*, *Cambridger Str. 17*, *Double Nuclear Fat 01*, *Double Nuclear Fat 02*, *Stratholme*, *The City Plan of Nanking*, *Dirty Fingers, Auto Chess And The Ghost Catcher*, *S.O.L.*, *D.Y.D.X.*, *Ivry-sur-Seine*, *Miraculous Traces of Immortals*, *Huang Huo-tu*, *Sik Sik Yuen*, *Feiqiu*, *Heavenly Tribulation of Liqing*, *Wishful Thinking*, *and Xianyin*.

Research and practice-related exhibitions, residencies, workshops, conferences, and publications from 2019 to 2023 are archived.

Specifically, the instructions for playing the VR game of HyperBody are provided, introducing game levels such as *Pinkray*, *Seventeen/Sixty-One*, *Vampire Squid*, *Stratholme.GoStop*, *Typhoon Lionrock*, and *Garden Portal*, as well as their sound samples.

Additionally, related exhibitions, residencies, workshops, conferences, and publications are discussed to clarify their relation and contribution to the thesis.

1. VR Gameplay Instructions

To play the VR game, first make sure you have an HTC VIVE pro, Oculus Rift S, or Oculus Quest 2 with a Link Cable connected to a Windows PC or laptop with a recommended GeForce 30 series graphics card.

When the "Maximalism HyperBody Garden Portal 0.3 Configuration" window pops up, select at least "Very High" (select "Ultra" for optimal experience) for graphics quality and click "Play".

The default VR game level is *Garden Portal*. To access other game levels, press the following numbers on your keyboard: 0 for *Pinkray*, 1 for *Seventeen/Sixty-One*, 2 for *Vampire Squid*, 3 or 4 for *Stratholme.GoStop*, 5, 6, 7, or 8 for *Typhoon Lionrock*, and 9 for *Garden Portal*.

It is recommended to start from the VR game level *Pinkray*.

Once the VR game is ready, put on the VR headset and hold both VR controllers.

Use the thumbsticks (for Oculus controllers) or trackpads (for VIVE controllers) to move in the direction you face, and rotate your head to control the direction.

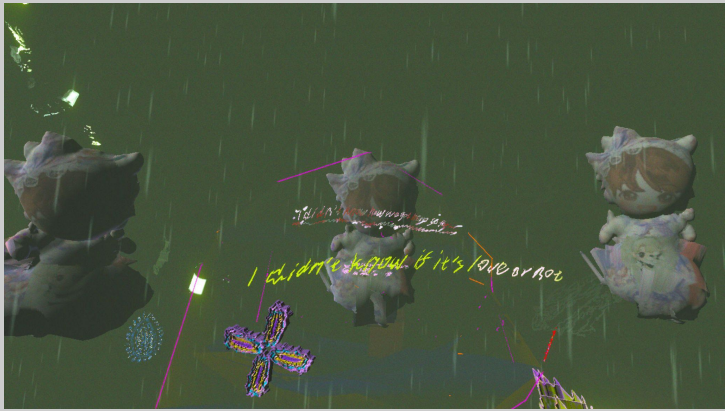
It is recommended to sit on a swivel chair and have full body movement. To avoid motion sickness, press the thumbsticks or trackpads slightly, move slowly, and adjust your speed as needed.

Navigating the VR gamespace is like a walking simulator; approach the portal (which looks like an "eye") to enter another game level.


VR game level Pinkray screenshot: entering Jingzhi's architectural mod Parallel Neo Home

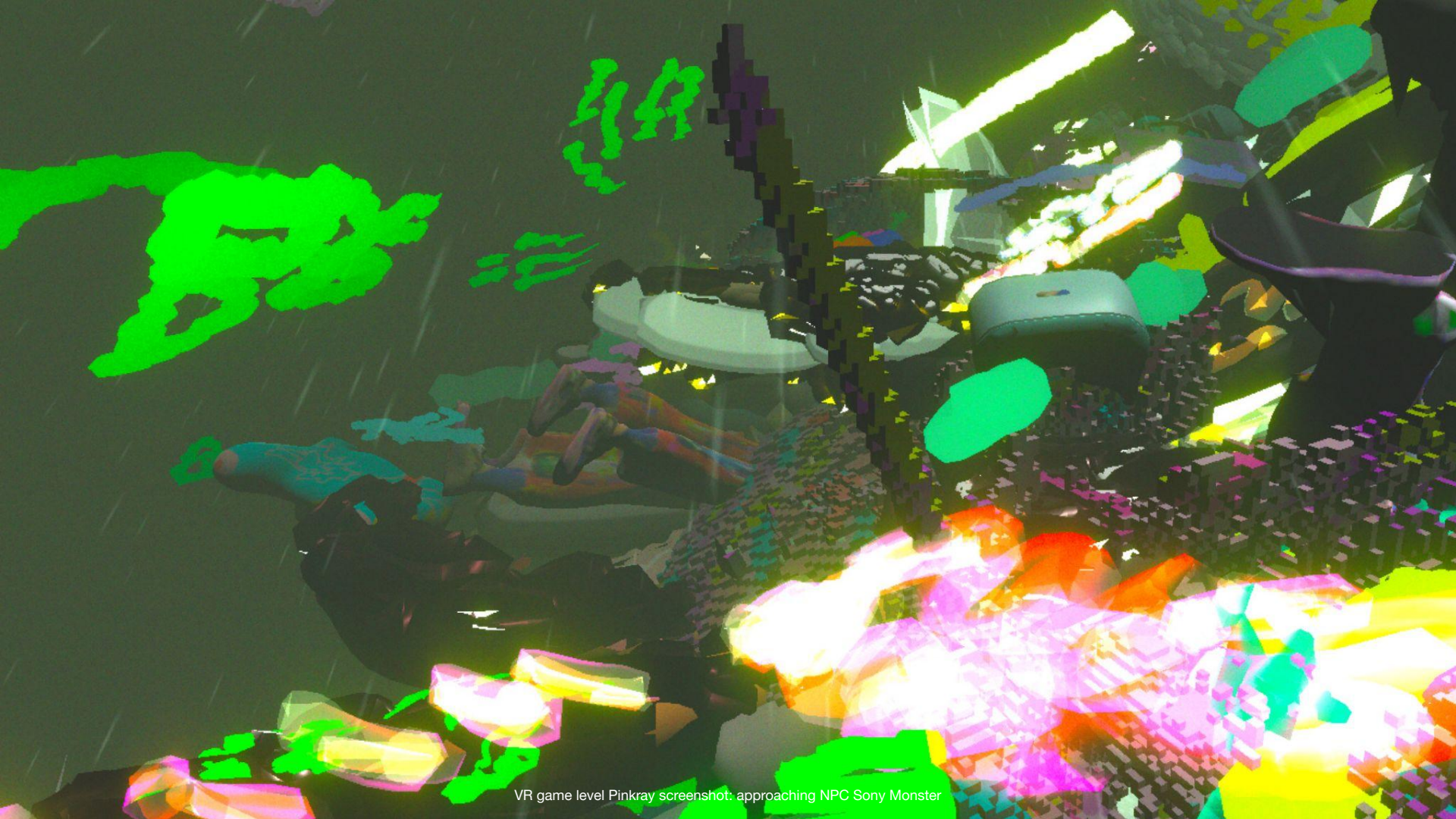
2. *Pinkray*

The Pinkray game level results from a collaborative effort that draws upon research from various shipping, modding, and crossover practices in mainland China's fandoms. It is the result of Emma's shipping video practices on pop-star Pinkray, Tianqi and Linn's interviews on Chinese Boys' Love (BL) fandom and fiction (C language and Cultivation), as well as Aristo and Jingzhi's architectural mods and CheeseTalk's shipping fanworks in the Three-Body Problem fandom. These practices showcase a game-fandom that celebrates queer tuning through vidding, shipping, interviews, and collaboration, constantly emerging as intra-actions.



VR game screenshot: Pinkray community's fanfiction English translation and fan made plush dolls modification

Watch VR gameplay video:
https://youtu.be/Y0OJtAjrNjI
Explore online space:
https://hubs.mozilla.com/45QBQQL



VR game level Pinkray screenshot: approaching NPC Sony Monster

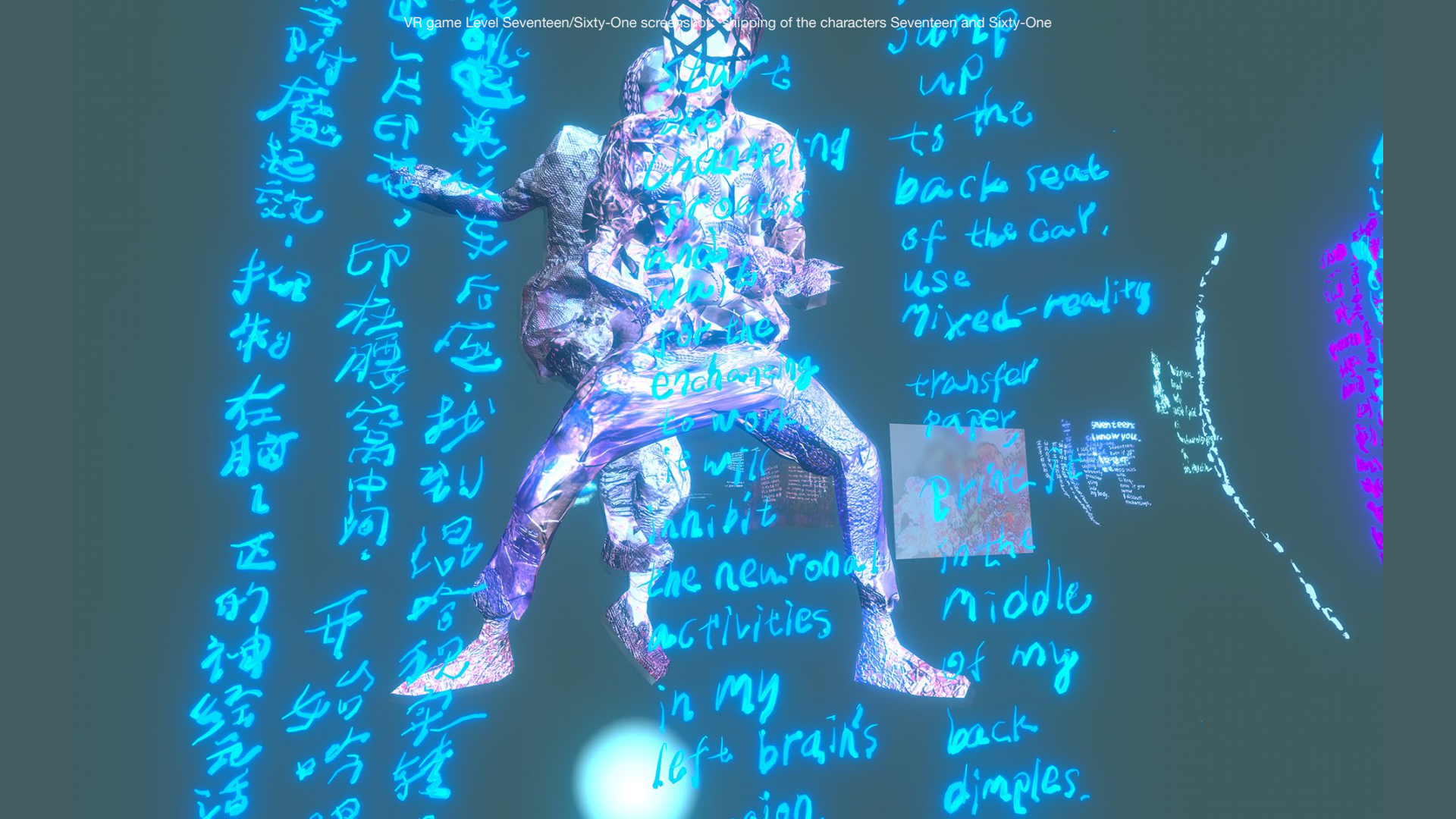
3. *Seventeen/Sixty-One*

The Seventeen/Sixty-One game level is co-created through research and interviews with Chinese female science fiction writer Tang Fei. It offers an alternative vision of queer, feminine, and technology in the Chinese science fiction world.



VR game screenshot: navigating the narrative of the characters Seventeen and Sixty-One based on the adapted and translated Chinese science fiction Seventeen and Sixty-One by Tang Fei

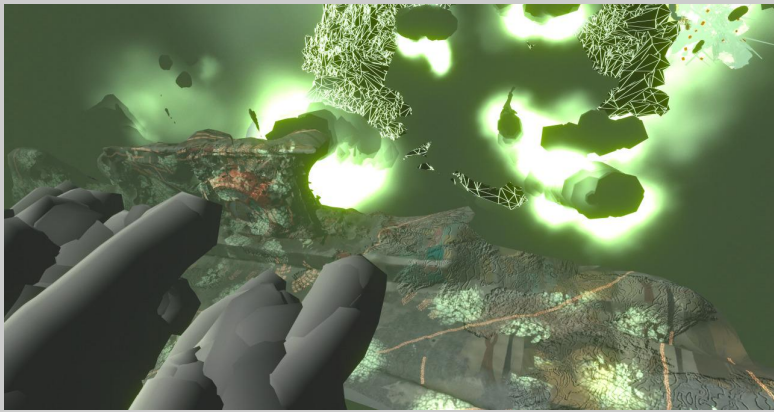
Watch VR gameplay video:
https://youtu.be/s2-Xo8_bg9M
Explore online space:
https://hubs.mozilla.com/WVsXxJh/boq-17-61
Read game script:
https://archiveofourown.org/works/29351337



VR game Level Seventeen/Sixty-One screenshot: Slipping of the characters Seventeen and Sixty-One

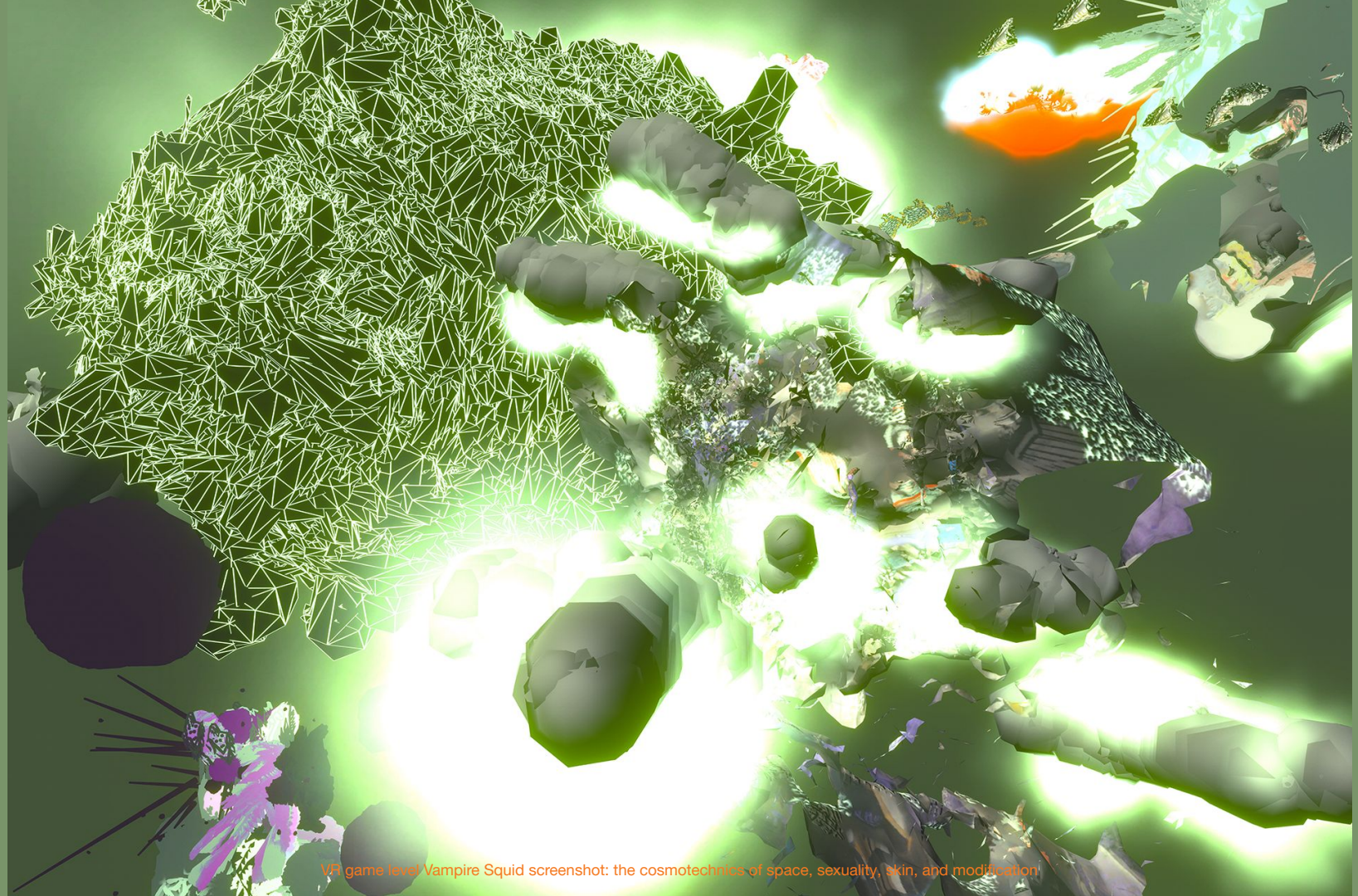
4. *Vampire Squid*

The Vampire Squid game level is inspired by Vilem Flusser's book of the same name, which explores fictional concepts of space, sexuality, skin, and modification. It creates an abstract cosmos of fragmented bodies and materials, remixing 3D scans of spaces, cartographies, and surfaces from London and Berlin into multiple worlds. The game level showcases a complex spatial autoethnographic archive, reflecting Flusser's ideas on skin, space, and sexuality.



VR game screenshot: exploring the ship (character pair) of the construction holes in Deptford Creek, London and Torstraße, Berlin

Watch VR gameplay video:
https://youtu.be/RIc4vrKILLM
Explore online space:
https://hubs.mozilla.com/KPLE2zS/

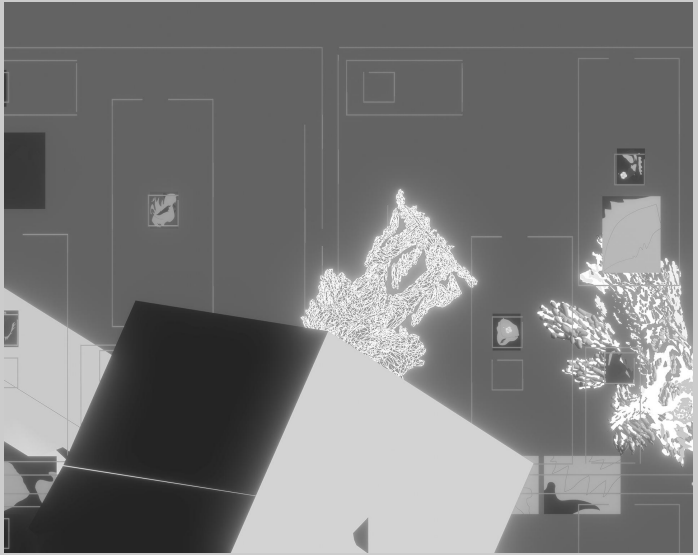


VR game level Vampire Squid screenshot: the cosmotechnics of space, sexuality, skin, and modification

5. *Stratholme.GoStop*

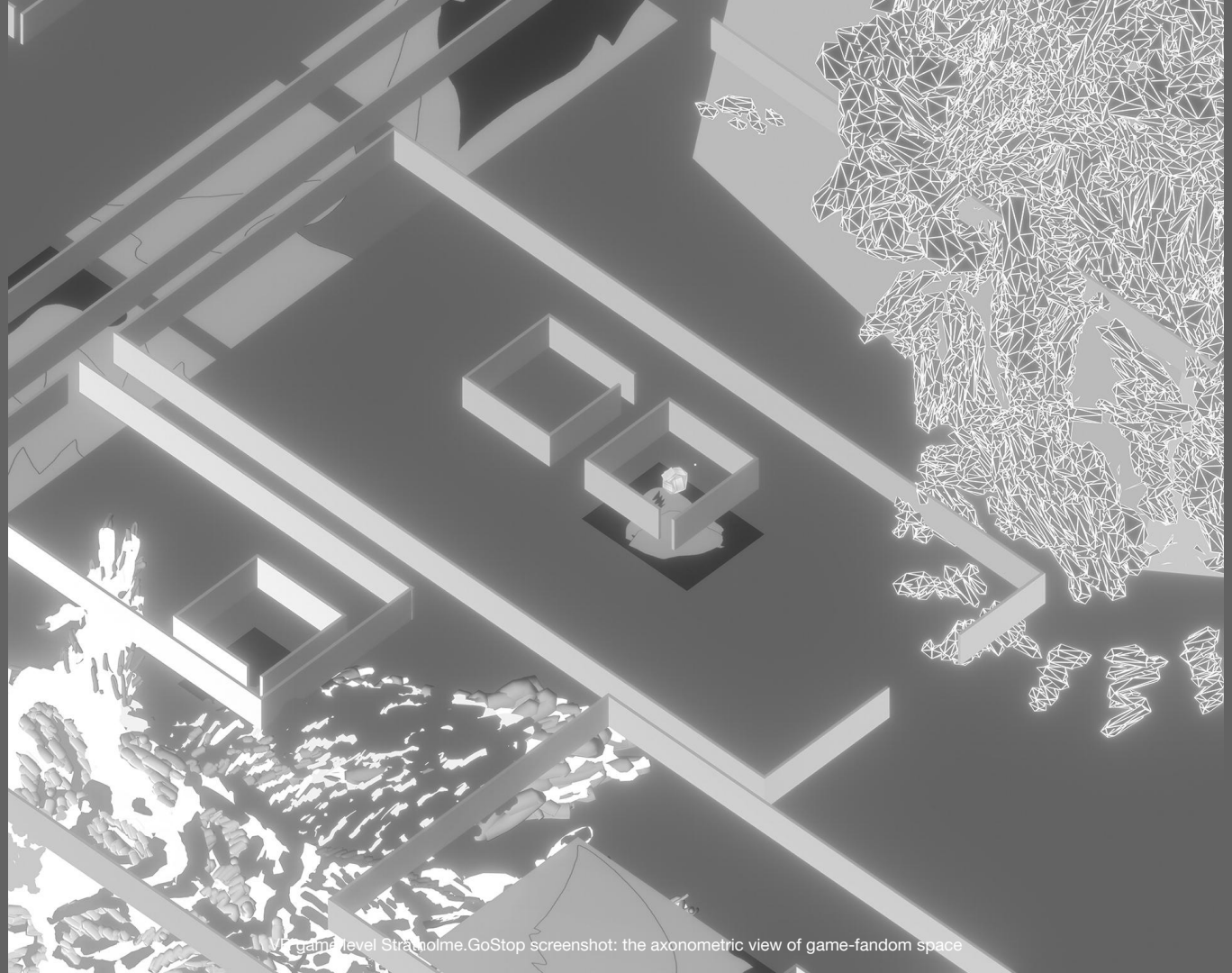
The Stratholme.GoStop game level is co-created by me based on research and interviews with Jingzhi. It showcases a physical-virtual crossover and modding between a Chinese post-industrial ordnance factory welfare zone and the Warcraft 3: The Frozen Throne universe. The game-fandom embodies intra-actions through the agents of modding, crossover, interviews, and collaborations.

Stratholme.GoStop is a hidden Easter egg level not mentioned in the thesis.



VR game screenshot: the process of exploring the visual novel space based on the adapted and translated Chinese fan fiction Stratholme.Gostop by Jingzhi

Watch VR gameplay video:
https://youtu.be/dAxQVfkWXzk
Explore online space:
https://hubs.mozilla.com/mjvso3E
Read game script:
https://archiveofourown.org/works/32806924

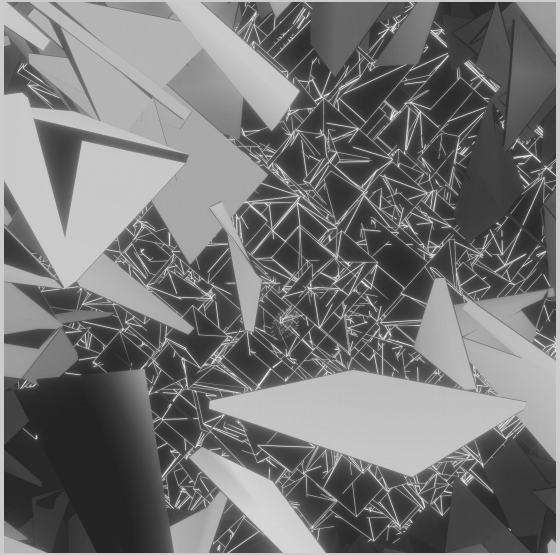


VR game level Stratholme.GoStop screenshot: the axonometric view of game-fandom space

6. *Typhoon Lionrock*

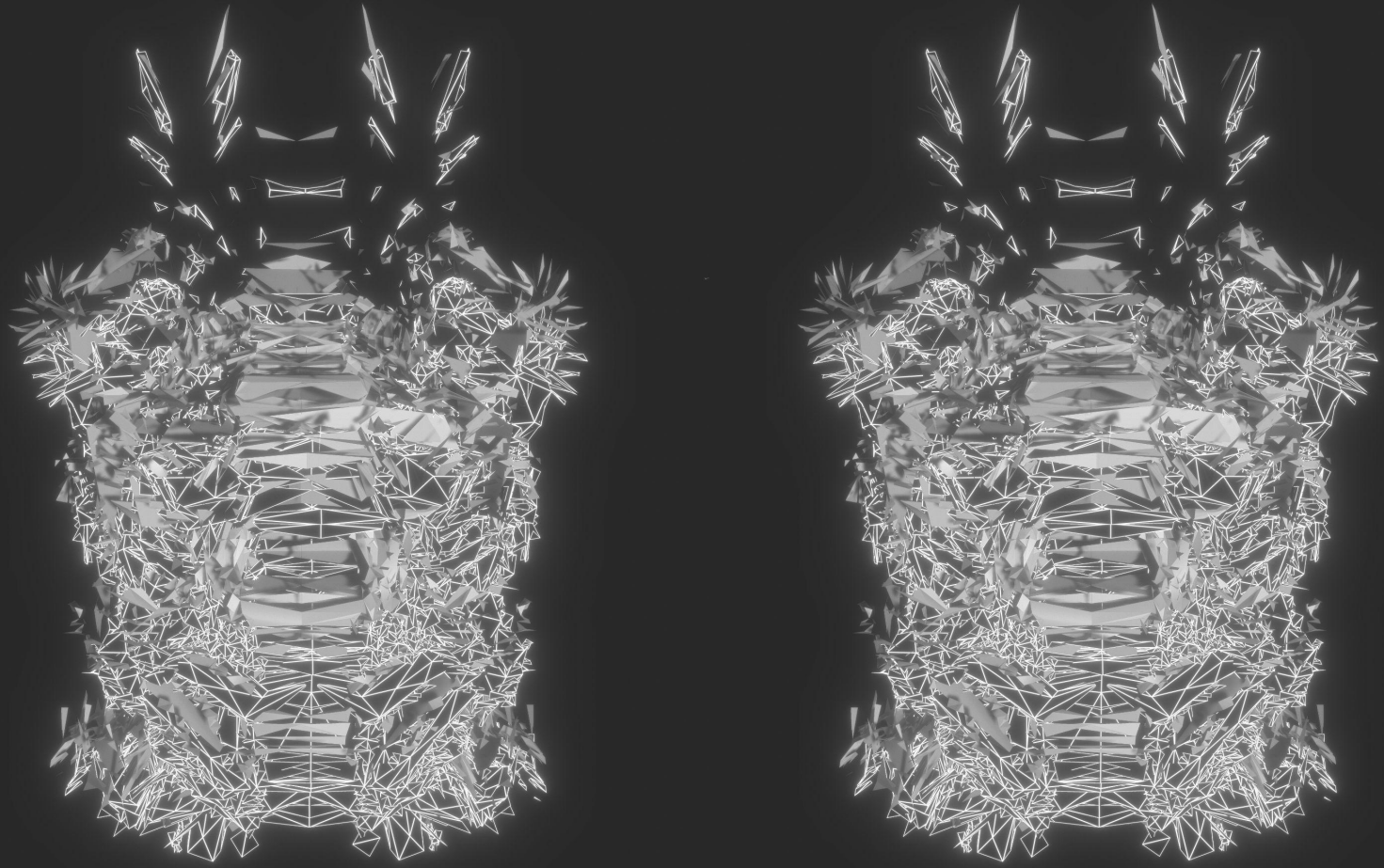
The Typhoon Lionrock game level in HyperBody is highly conceptual and complex, reflecting on Chinese cultivation novels and cosmotechnics. It was created during my auditing of Yuk Hui's philosophy course at City University of Hong Kong in 2021. The game level is designed purely for speculative thinking of movement, direction, body-space scale, and soundscape in the VR gamespace.

Typhoon Lionrock is a hidden Easter egg level only briefly mentioned in the thesis.



VR game screenshot: the process of exploring the cosmotechnics

Watch VR gameplay video:
https://youtu.be/N36LqSez1gw
Explore online space:
https://hubs.mozilla.com/eF4iF2k



VR game level Typhoon Lironrock screenshot: the grotto-heavens

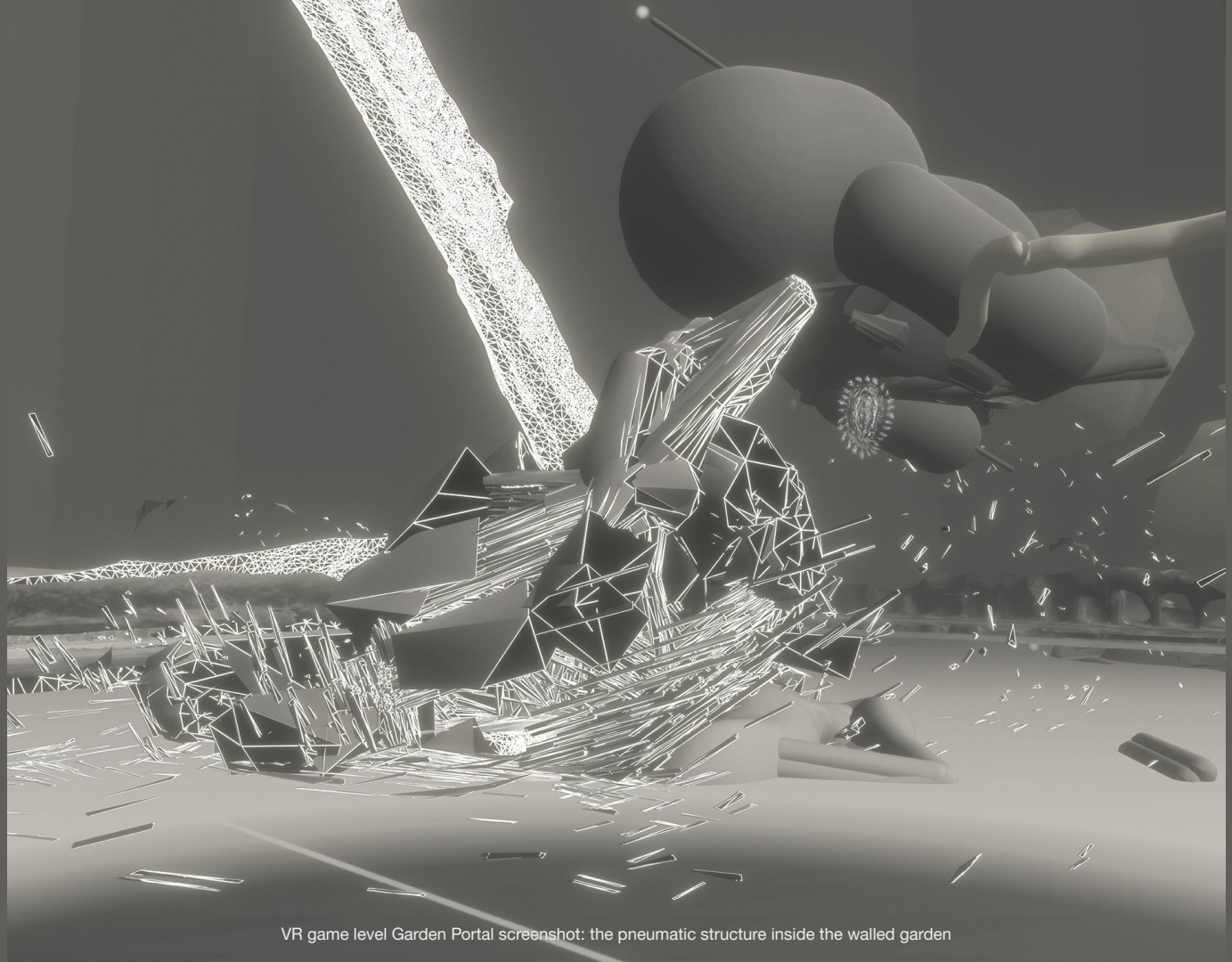
7. *Garden Portal*

The Garden Portal is a game level commissioned by UCCA Edge, an independent institution of contemporary art in Shanghai, China, which I transform from the institution's outdoor terrace into a 3D scan game environment. Players can navigate through a primary VR experience of the 3D scanned architectural space, while the sound design remains intentionally incomplete and imperfect.



VR game screenshot: entering the walled garden

Watch VR gameplay video:
https://youtu.be/yaQbnocGx48
Explore online space:
https://hubs.mozilla.com/CGeKCxE



VR game level Garden Portal screenshot: the pneumatic structure inside the walled garden

8. Sound Samples

The sound quality (including character voices, remixes, and voidscape effects) is intentionally glitchy, speculative, flawed, and imperfect. The audio design, which integrates Wwise and Unity, aims to explore, affirm, and celebrate the relationships that contribute to the worlding of cosmotechnics in multi-fandom.

White Cat Monitor and *Addiction 1990* are used as sound samples in *Pinkray*.

Cambridger Str. 17. is used as a sound sample in *Vampire Squid*.

Double Nuclear Fat 01, *Stratholme*, *The City Plan of Nanking* and *Dirty Fingers, Auto Chess And The Ghost Catcher* are used as sound samples in *Stratholme.GoStop*.

S.O.L., *D.Y.D.X.*, *Ivry-sur-Seine*, *Miraculous Traces of Immortals*, *Huang Huo-tu*, *Sik Sik Yuen*, *Feiqiu*, *Heavenly Tribulation of Liqing*, and *Wishful Thinking* are used as sound samples in *Typhoon Lionrock*.

Xianyin are used as a sound sample in *Garden Portal*.

Listen sound samples:
https://soundcloud.com/pete333333/sets/hyperbody-pinkray-sound-remixes
https://soundcloud.com/pete333333/cambridger-str-17
https://soundcloud.com/pete333333/sets/stratholme
https://soundcloud.com/pete333333/sets/typhoon-lionrock
https://fschool.bandcamp.com/track/--7

9. Related Exhibitions

The Pieces I Am, UCCA Edge, Shanghai, CN, 2022

The HyperBody Dungeon: UCCA Edge is a mixed-reality architectural project located in the Sculpture Garden. It featured the inflatable structure "MULE (Mobile Utility Lunar Excavator)'s Drop Pod Mod" and three game levels: Garden Portal, Stratholme.GoStop, and Typhoon Lionrock. The architecture embodied gamespaces and in-game items that bridge physical and virtual boundaries. Players were invited to engage in an immersive audio-visual experience of multi-fandom cosmotechnics.



HyperBody Dungeon: UCCA Edge
Mixed media installation: pneumatic membrane, cloth flag, dodecahedron plaster mold, VR equipment and computer
Dimension variable
Shanghai, China, 2022

Exhibition Info:
https://ucca.org.cn/en/exhibition/the-pieces-i-am//



HyperBody Dungeon: UCCA Edge installation view

The International Festival of Arts, Technology and Science
KIBLIX, KIBLA PORTAL, Maribor, SI, 2021

HyperBody Portal: Stratholme.GoStop is a mixed-reality installation that questions players' understanding of game-fandoms, subcultures that arise around narrative media like anime, comics, games, and novels. It examined how such fandoms can cross into the real world by forming hybrid realities that blend virtual technologies with physical experiences. Using digital ethnography and autoethnography, HyperBody Portal: Stratholme.GoStop produced a virtual-physical space that reflects the entanglement of physical participation and digital modification in an independent universe.



HyperBody Portal: Stratholme.GoStop
Mixed media installation: printed papers, cloths, plastic sheets, VR equipment and computer
Dimension variable
Maribor, Slovenia, 2021

Exhibition Info:
https://www.202122.kiblix.org/en/exhibition/pete-jiadong-qiang/



HyperBody Portal: Stratholme.GoStop installation view

World on a Wire, Hyundai Motor Studio & Rhizome/New Museum, Beijing, CN, 2021

Dungeon: Maximalism HyperBody is a mixed-reality architecture comprising a physical space called a Portal and virtual environments experienced through a VR headset. Both interactive games and 360° video, these VR works placed the participants into digital fluid spaces of what I term intra-actions in cosmotechnics of multi-fandoms.



Dungeon: Maximalism HyperBody
Mixed media installation: 3D-printed materials, plastic sheets, carpet, spray foam, paint, VR device and computer
Dimension variable
Beijing, China, 2021

Exhibition Info:
https://worldonawire.net/#6
Watch installation video:
https://vimeo.com/832728383



Dungeon: Maximalism HyperBody installation view

X Museum Triennial, X Museum, Beijing, CN, 2020

The Maximalism HyperBody VR game was showcased in the X Museum Triennial, where players and audience members from various ACGN fandoms participated in the virtual space of Pinkray. The feedback from the gameplay supported the development of my cosmotechnic and intra-action methodology of game-fandom via modding, crossover, and shipping.



Maximalism HyperBody: Pinkray
VR experience installation: VR device and carpet
Dimension variable
Beijing, China, 2020

Exhibition Info:
https://www.us.xmuseum.org/pjq.html



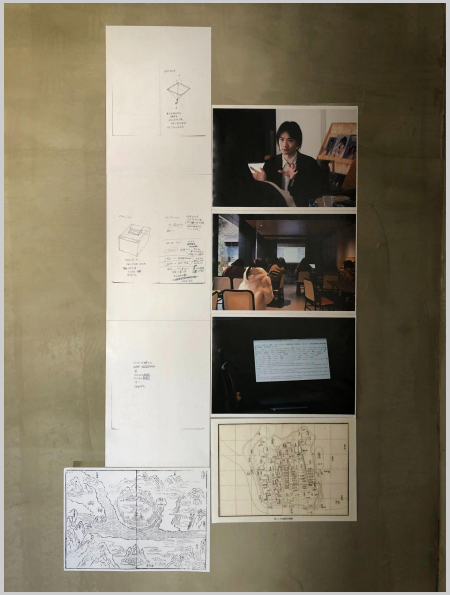
Maximalism HyperBody: Pinkray installation view

10. Related Residencies

With in/out Linhai Art Resident 2022

Project Search

I created Project Search, an online multiplayer visual novel game using Mozilla Hubs, based in Linhai, China during an art residency initiated by With in/out Linhai, a cultural group supported by the local government and China Academy of Art. To create the game, I conducted site analysis, wrote cultivation novels, performed 3D scans, and designed 3D objects. The game presented a cultivation gamespace that encourages locals, tourists, students, and researchers to reconsider the Daoist culture of cultivation and the potential for re-materialisations of physical and virtual space. Cultivation is a fantasy genre in Chinese web novels that involves studying, repairing, and cultivating to achieve immortality and supernatural powers.



Site analysis and design process

Residency Info:
https://mirror.xyz/jiangdaweidefuchou.eth/Cqx7X7I4PP4gKxVH4YNhvR-ijIG4uODCFH1gYjw2dbY



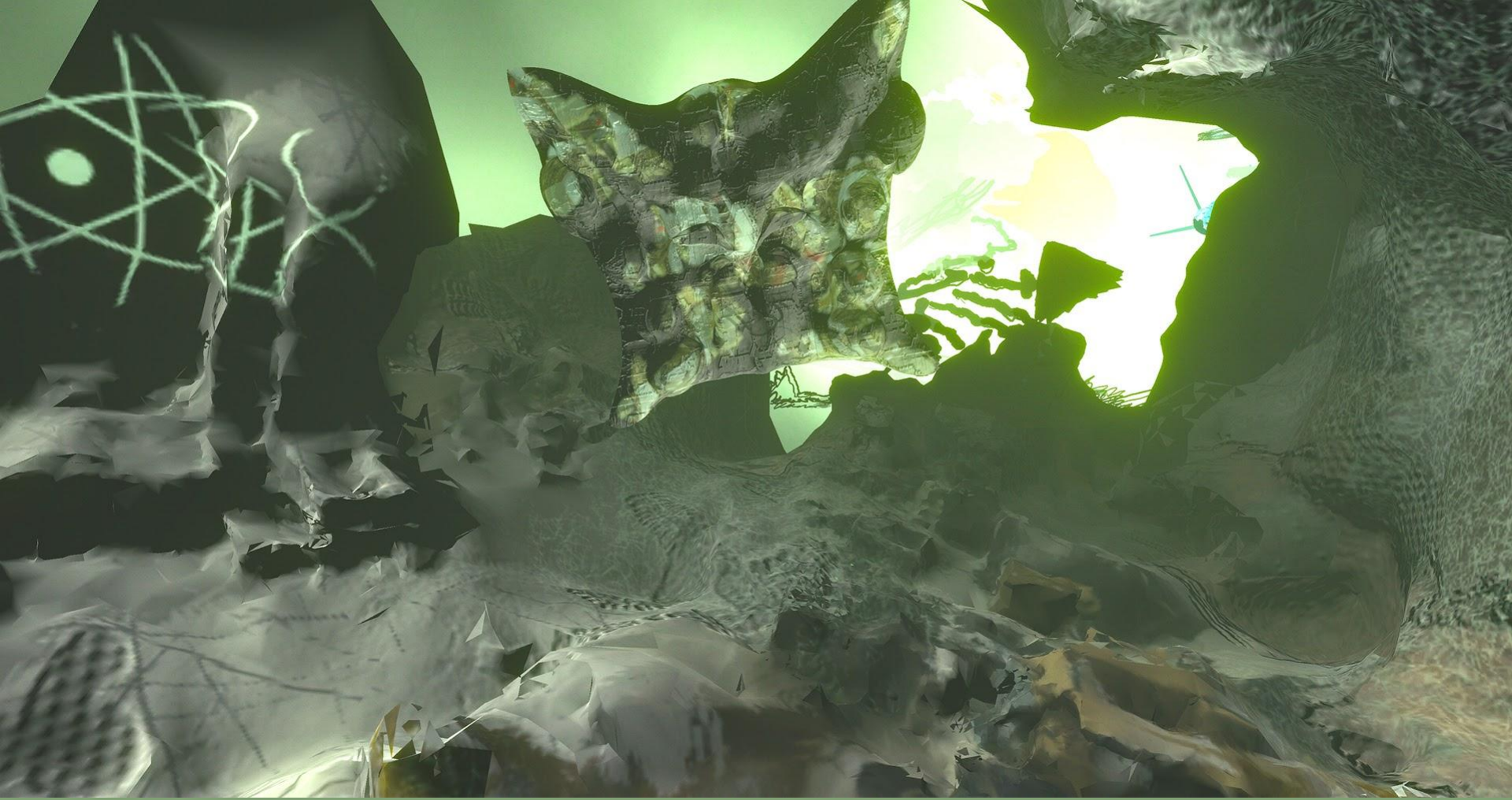
Project Search visual novel game screenshot: cultivator’s tearoom

Vilém Flusser Resident 2020

HyperBody: Vampire Squid

In October 2020, I had the privilege of being the Vilém Flusser Resident for Artistic Research, hosted by the Vilém Flusser Archive (UdK) and transmediale. The residency was a hybrid form, consisting of a month of virtual residency in September and further development upon my arrival in Berlin in October. During my time there, I focused on exploring the cultures within VR, fandom, and ACGN (Anime, Comic, Game, and Novel) communities to discuss and exchange ideas, and experiment with transformative queer practices. As part of this exploration, I created the virtual space of Vampire Squid.

Residency Info:
https://transmediale.de/projects/vrf-2020

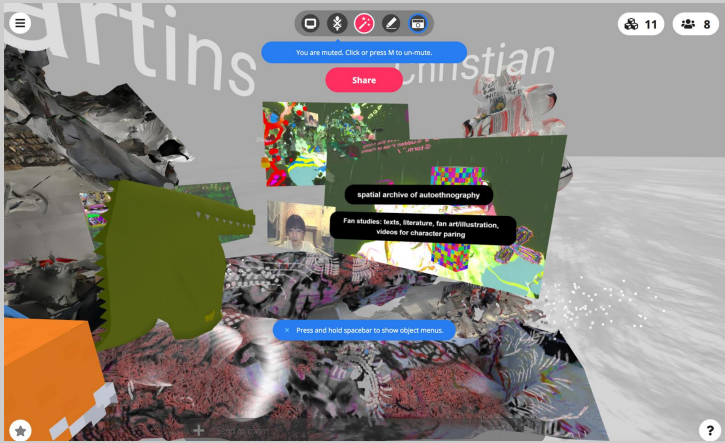


VR game level Vampire Squid screenshot: the modification of transmediale studio space

11. Related Workshops

HyperBody: Vampire Squid, transmediale, Berlin, DE, 2020

During the workshop, I shared my research on VR, fandom, and ACGN communities, and engaged in discussions and idea exchange with students from different departments of the Berlin University of the Arts. We also experimented with transformative queer practices.



Workshop screenshot from the online virtual space Vampire Squid based on Mozilla Hubs, courtesy of Adel Akram Alameddine

Workshop Info:
https://transmediale.de/news/virtual-studio-visit-live-gaming-session-with-pete-jiadong-qiang

Immersive Improvisation and Conversation via Twitch Livestream, Bielefeld University of Applied Sciences, Bielefeld, DE, 2020

I collaborated with Denise Albrecht, Katharina Lübeck, Dennis Jegel, Lovis Knechtel, and Florian Kühnle to create an Immersive Improvisation during an artist talk. We connected via video conference in May 2020, with students from the course Digital Media and Experiment at the FH Bielefeld and the artist participating. Together, we live-streamed and layered the contents of our individual screens to create a collective image that developed through dialogue and interactivity. The collage and conversation influenced each other, constantly referencing and building upon one another.

Workshop Info:
https://www.kunstverein-bielefeld.online/in-this-layered-world-all-perception-is-real#PeteJiadongQiang

12. Related Events and Conferences

YouXi Dimsum, LIKELIKE, Pittsburgh, PA, US 2023

Chinese Games

LIKELIKE, a neo-arcade and gallery for playful arts, is dedicated to fostering experimental and independent game culture. In one of the recent exhibits, it delved into the world of "Chinese Games", which focuses on games crafted by Chinese designers that seamlessly blend cultural and aesthetic nuances. The exhibit, aptly named YouXi Dimsum, offered an array of six distinct games, providing a rich, yet not all-encompassing, glimpse into the multifaceted realm of Chinese game design. The selection is akin to a dim sum banquet, celebrated for its diverse offerings. Among the games highlighted, the HyperBody VR game held a notable presence.



Event screenshot, exploring the Vampire Squid game level, courtesy of LIKELIKE

Event info:
https://likelike.org/2023/04/27/youxi-dimsum/

2023 DiGRA International Conference, The University of Seville, Seville, ES, 2023

Chinese Cultivation Games and the Cosmotechnics

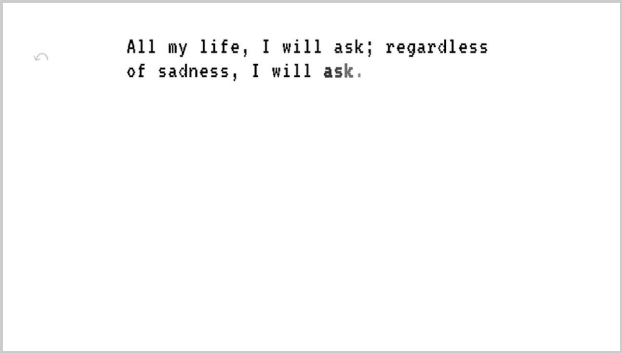
This paper investigated the historical context of Chinese cultivation games. It examined their cosmotechnics through the independent game Project Search case study. The paper initiated a dialogue on the historical, cultural, and cosmotechnical dimensions of Chinese cultivation games through an analysis of the history of these games and an exploration of the concept of cosmotechnics.

Event info:
https://easychair.org/smart-program/DiGRA2023/2023-06-20.html

Games & Literature. On the Literaricity, Research, Collection, and Archiving of Computer Games, German Literature Archive Marbach (DLA), Marbach am Neckar, DE, 2023

Intertextuality, Intermediality, and Intermateriality: A Sketch of the Interrelations between Chinese Cultivation Games and Novels through Theoretical and Practical Interrogations

Based on the previous conference in Dublin, this paper proposed an updated theoretical and practical framework for analysing the interrelations between cultivation games and novels by investigating typical Chinese cultivation games and novels and reflecting on indie cultivation game-making practices.



Event screenshot, watching the trailer of Project Search visual novel game

Event info:
https://www.dla-marbach.de/fileadmin/redaktion/Forschung/Tagungsprogramme/CfP_Games_DLA_2023_EN.pdf

6th International Society for Intermedial Studies Conference, In Between and Across: New Directions, Mappings and Contact Zones, Trinity College Dublin, Dublin, IE, 2022

Intertextuality, Intermediality, and Intermateriality: A Sketch of the Interrelations between Chinese Cultivation Games and Novels through Theoretical and Practical Interrogations

This paper proposed a theoretical and practical framework for analysing the interrelations between cultivation games and novels by investigating typical Chinese cultivation games and novels and reflecting on indie cultivation game-making practices. Cultivation is a genre of Chinese fantasy that draws from Chinese mythology, Daoism, alchemy, and other traditional Chinese elements. With the popularity of online cultivation novels, cultivation games have also become prevalent in the Chinese mobile and online game market. The paper provided a loose definition of the cultivation game as a fantasy game genre that allows players to experience the process of immortality cultivation.

Event info:
https://www.tcd.ie/Italian/assets/pdf/2022-6thInternational-intermedial-studies-conference.pdf

World on a Wire: Pete Jiadong Qiang Play-through, Rhizome, New Museum, New York, US, 2021

I participated in a screening/play-through and discussion with Michael Connor, the artistic director of New Museum affiliate Rhizome, about the mixed-reality installation Dungeon: Maximalism HyperBody. The event focused on the idea of the HyperBody, a dynamic and collaborative identity that emerges from material shared among gaming, comics, anime, and other fandom communities, crossing boundaries between physical and virtual spaces.



Event screenshot, exploring the online virtual space Pinkray based on Mozilla Hubs, courtesy of New Museum and Rhizome

Event info:
https://www.newmuseum.org/calendar/view/1710/world-on-a-wire-pete-jiadong-qiang-playthrough
Watch event video:
https://www.newmuseum.tv/world-on-a-wire-pete-jiadong-qiang-play-through

EASST/4S conference, Prague, CZ, 2020

Queer Maximalism HyperBody

In this paper, I presented the practice-based research project Queer Maximalism Hyperbody, which is based on the VR spaces of "Hyper-religious Body, Hyper-sexual Body and HyperGastronomical Body". The research argues for the redefinition of queering practices and Maximalist methods to form an inventive methodology of spatial autoethnography for queer feminist techno-scientific, artistic, architectural, and computing practices. I discussed this methodology in the paper, drawing on Barad's material-discourse to develop what I call Maximalism for the inquiry into VR spaces and game engines.

Conference info:
https://www.easst4s2020prague.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/08/print-program-abstracts-200825.pdf
Watch presentation video:
https://youtu.be/dytaP8nimQU

13. Related Publications

CURA. 40 Manifesto, 2023

HyperBody: Typhoon Lionrock

CURA., an esteemed contemporary art magazine, celebrates its 40th issue with CURA. Manifesto, a unique collector's edition. This special edition, a collaborative effort from artists, writers, and philosophers since 2009, encapsulates a diverse range of contributions, illuminating the key themes in contemporary art discourse. It's overseen by an editorial board that includes Adriana Blidaru, Michael Connor, Martha Kirszenbaum, and Anthony Huberman, marking a significant milestone in the magazine's history. The Visual materials from the HyperBody VR game have been featured.



CURA. 40 Manifesto cover, courtesy of CURA.

Publication Info:
https://curamagazine.com/product/cura-40/

Engines of Difference: Otherwise Practices With/In Computing, 2021

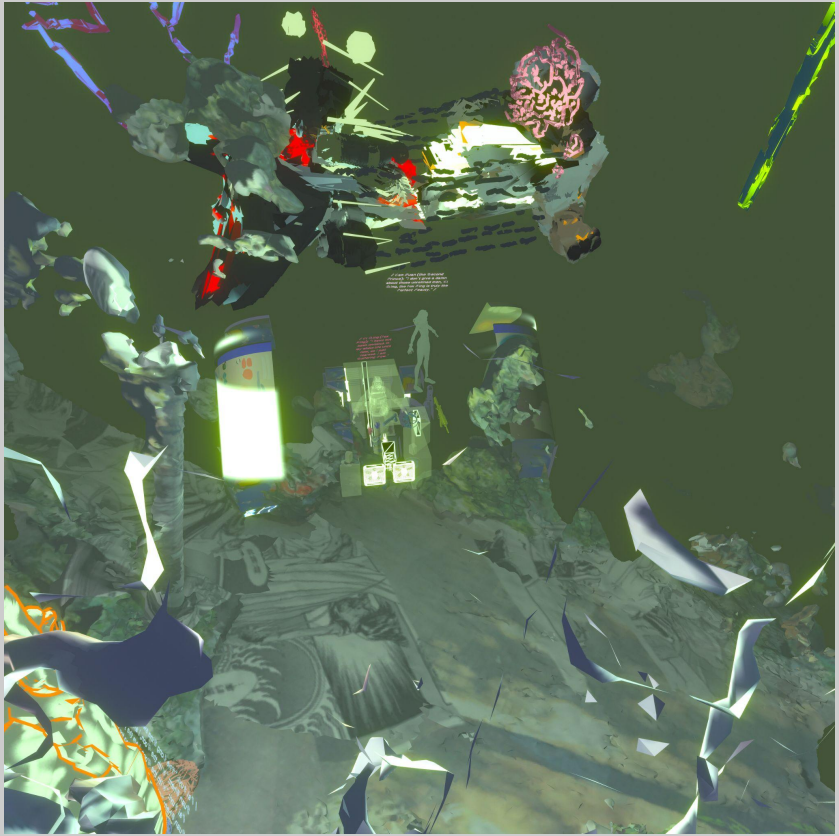
HyperBody: Vampire Squid

Flusser's Vampyroteuthis Infernalis explores fictional concepts of space, sexuality, skin, and modification through a character pair of a vampire squid and "I", emphasising modding and shipping within fan and game studies. During my artistic residency in London and Berlin, I created the audio-visual VR spaces of Hyperbody: Vampyroteuthis Infernalis as a transformative computational practice. Additionally, I reflected on the spatial sensitivity of the Flusserian vampire squid through the practice of speedrunning in the Half-Life video game community. This cross-disciplinary research shows how Flusserian aca-fans modify and intra-act physical and virtual space, creating affective ships in VR.

Publication Info:
https://enginesofdifference.org/2021/02/16/hyperbody-vampyroteuthis-infernalis

HyperBody Practice

Jiadong Qiang
2019-2023



/ Ean Yuan (the Second Prince): "I don't give a damn about those unrefined men, Ci Ling, the Fox Fing is truly the Perfect Peauty." /

/ Ci Ling (Fox Fing): "I have not been lovesick in my whole life until now, so I just learned. I am Suffering Fow. /