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I. We called it Earth

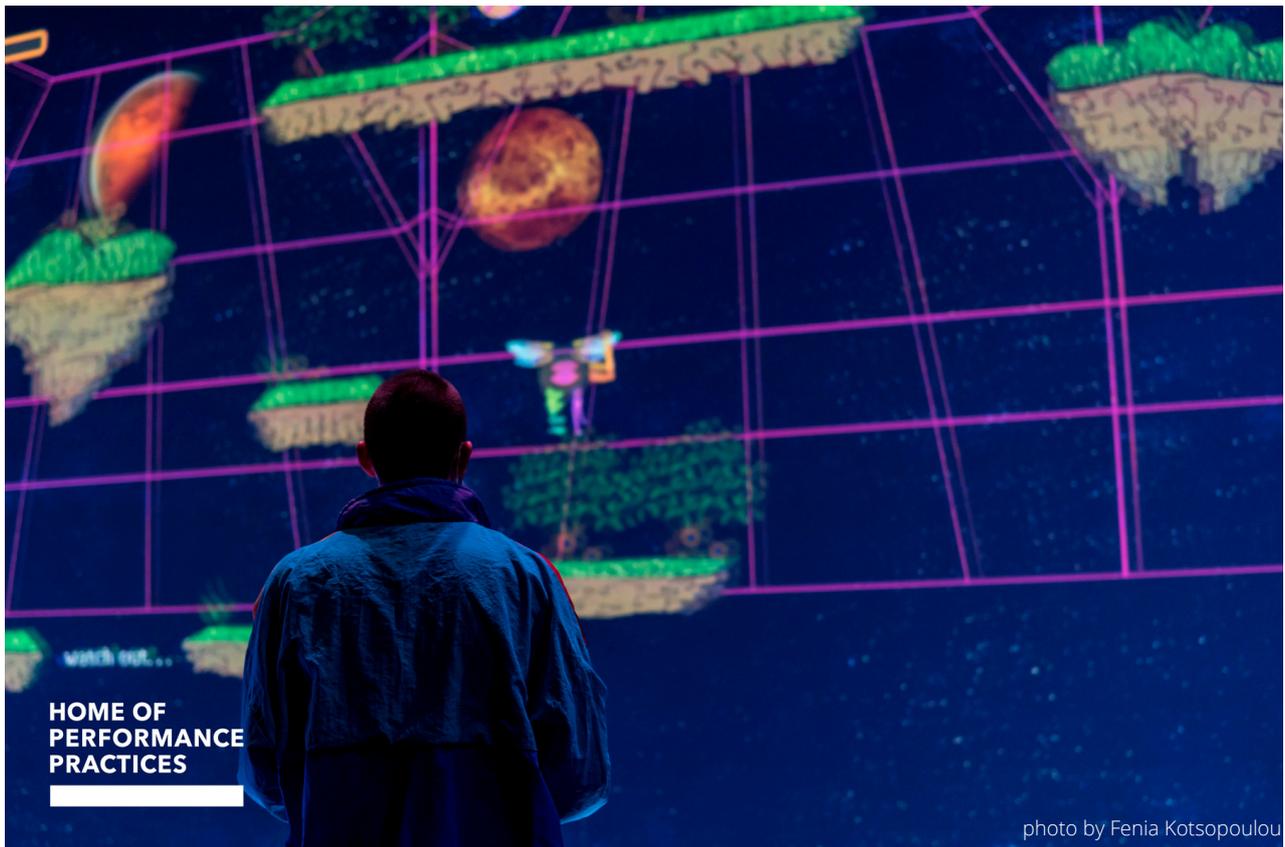
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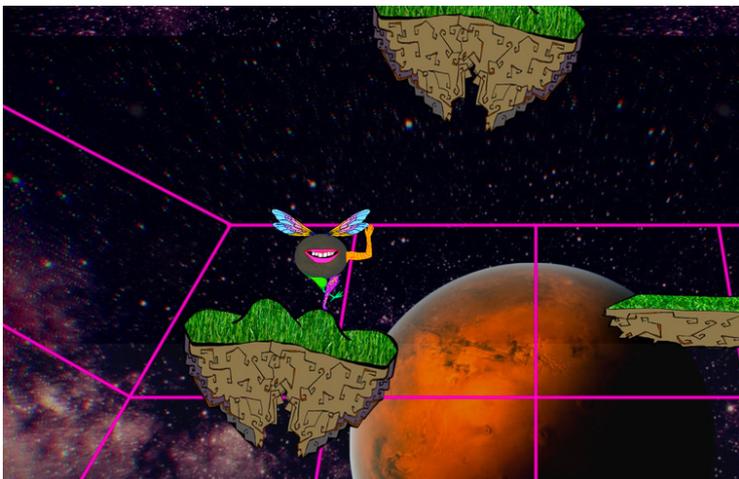
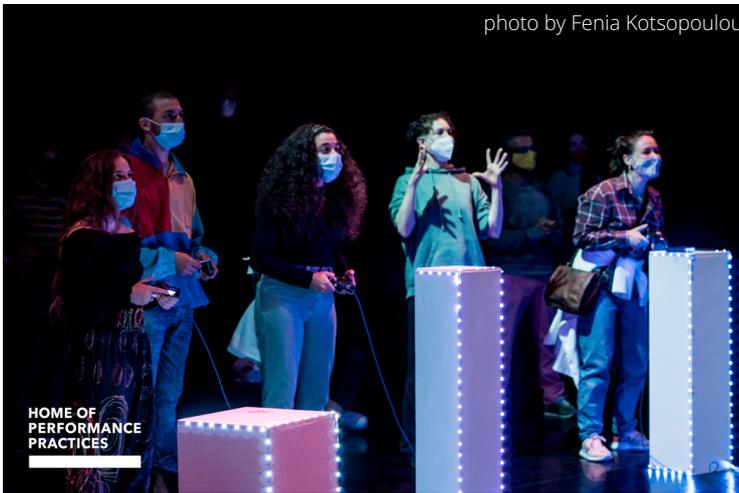
We called it Earth (2021)

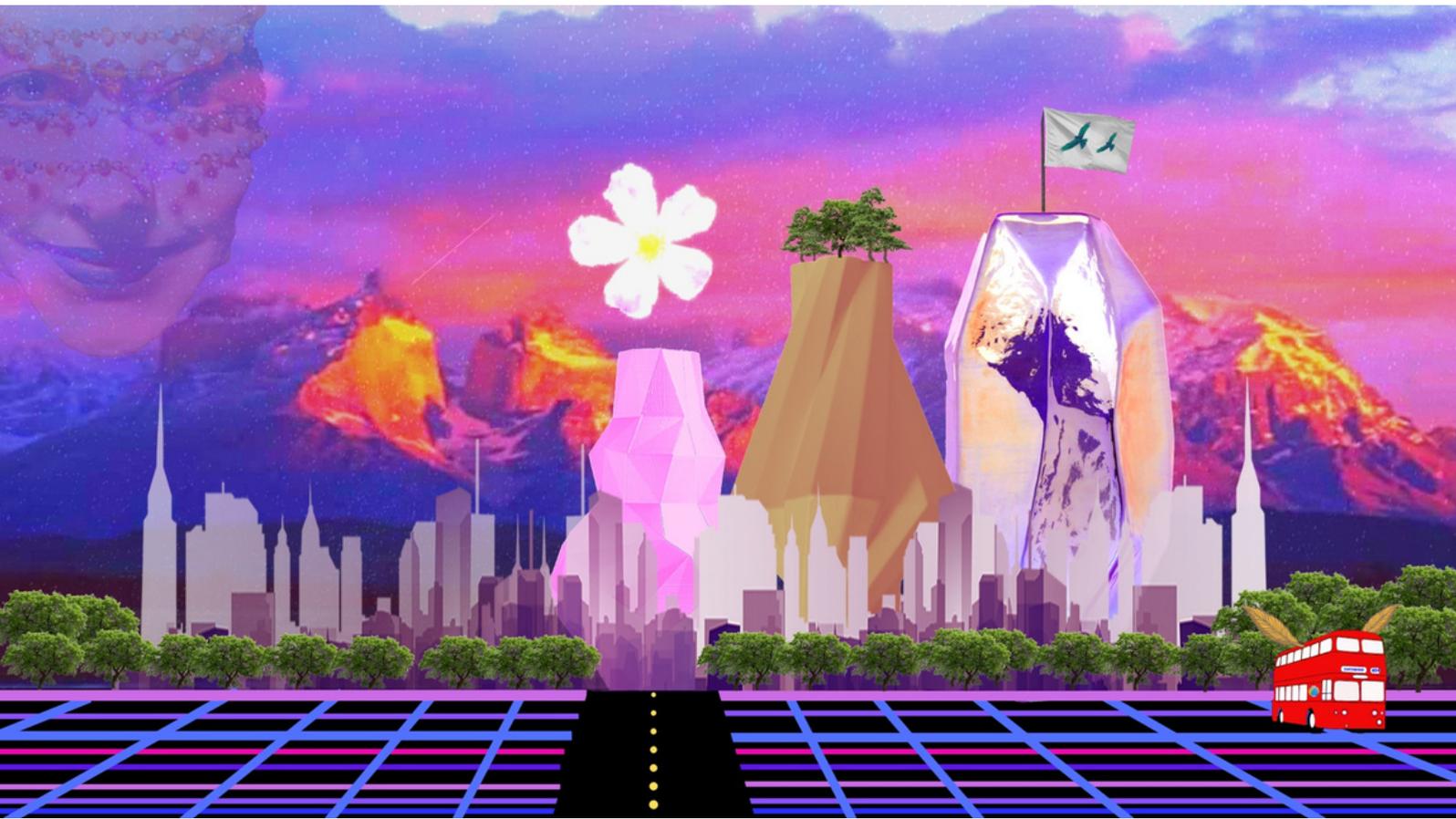
The protective measures proposed to address the climate crisis will inevitably create winners and losers, and society must weigh the cost of proposed solutions against the value of what and who needs protection. This makes climate change not just an issue of infrastructure and economy, but of what human beings mean to each other in a world facing crisis. *We Called It Earth* was designed to explore a collective path to progress by designing mechanics for collective victory and authorship.

Built in collaboration with programmer Hadi Asghari, *We called it Earth* is a participatory digital platformer game built using the Godot game engine, HTML 5, the Heroku platform, and Django web framework. Rejecting the myth of self-authorship, the avatar of this game is a black hole with a profusion of unruly limbs controlled by multiple players via game controllers. Participation also occurs online, where a new planetary mythology is co-authored, and appears on a projected screen to fill in the barren landscape and help the avatar on its way.

Prototypes of this piece have been exhibited at ArtEZ University and the 404 Festival in Amsterdam. The research into participatory art design that generated this game was recently presented at the Politics of the Machines conference in Berlin and IMPACT21 symposium in Essen.

We called it Earth





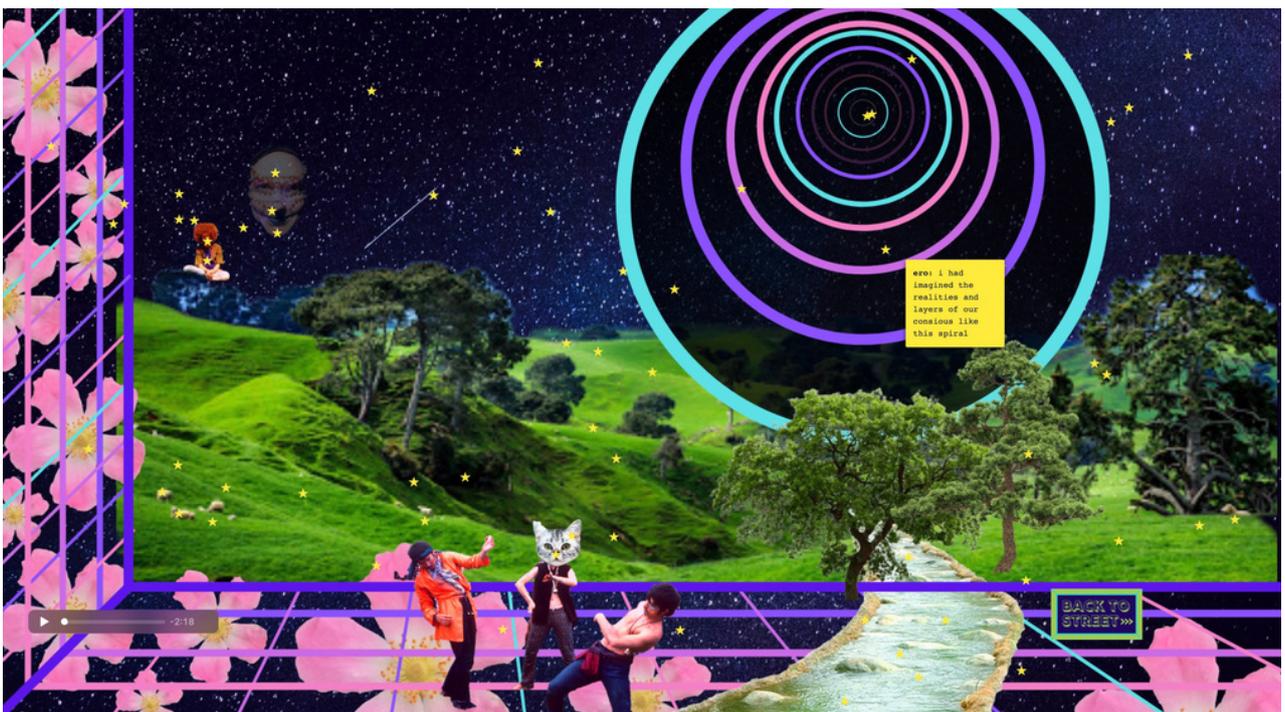
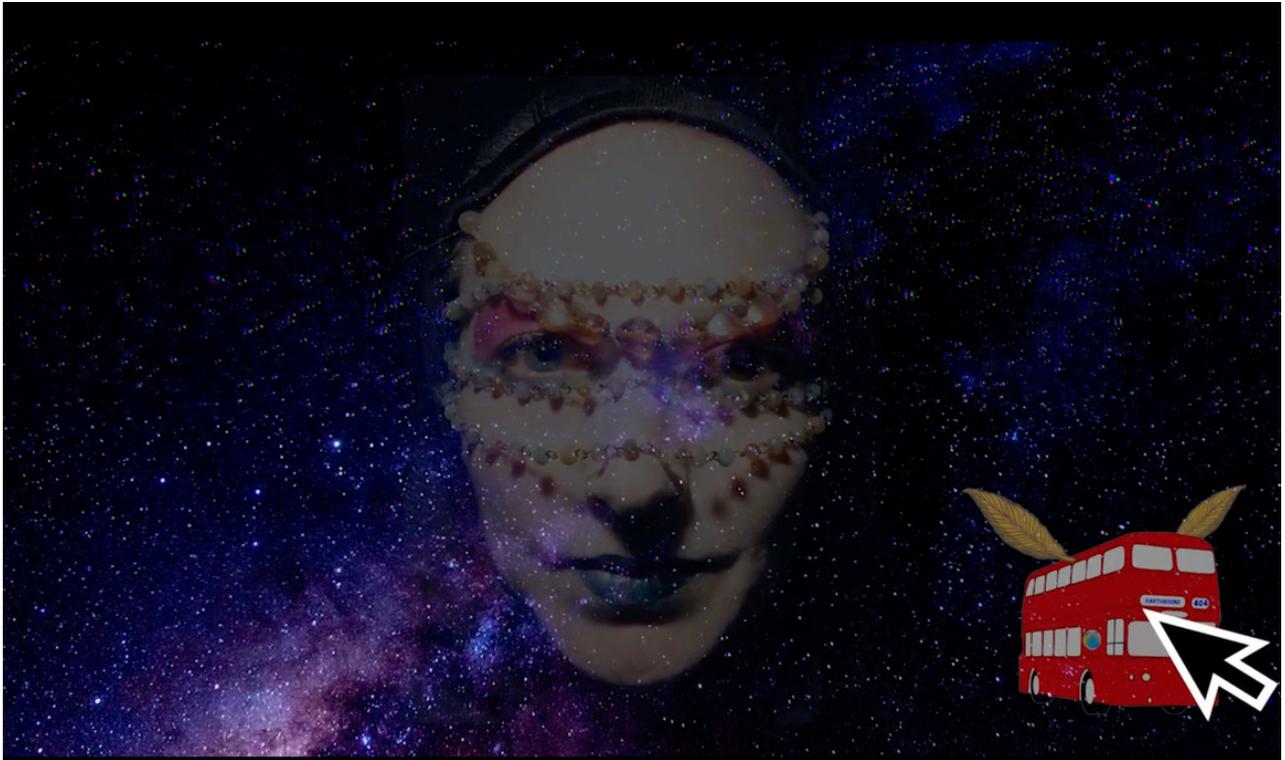
Dream City (2020)

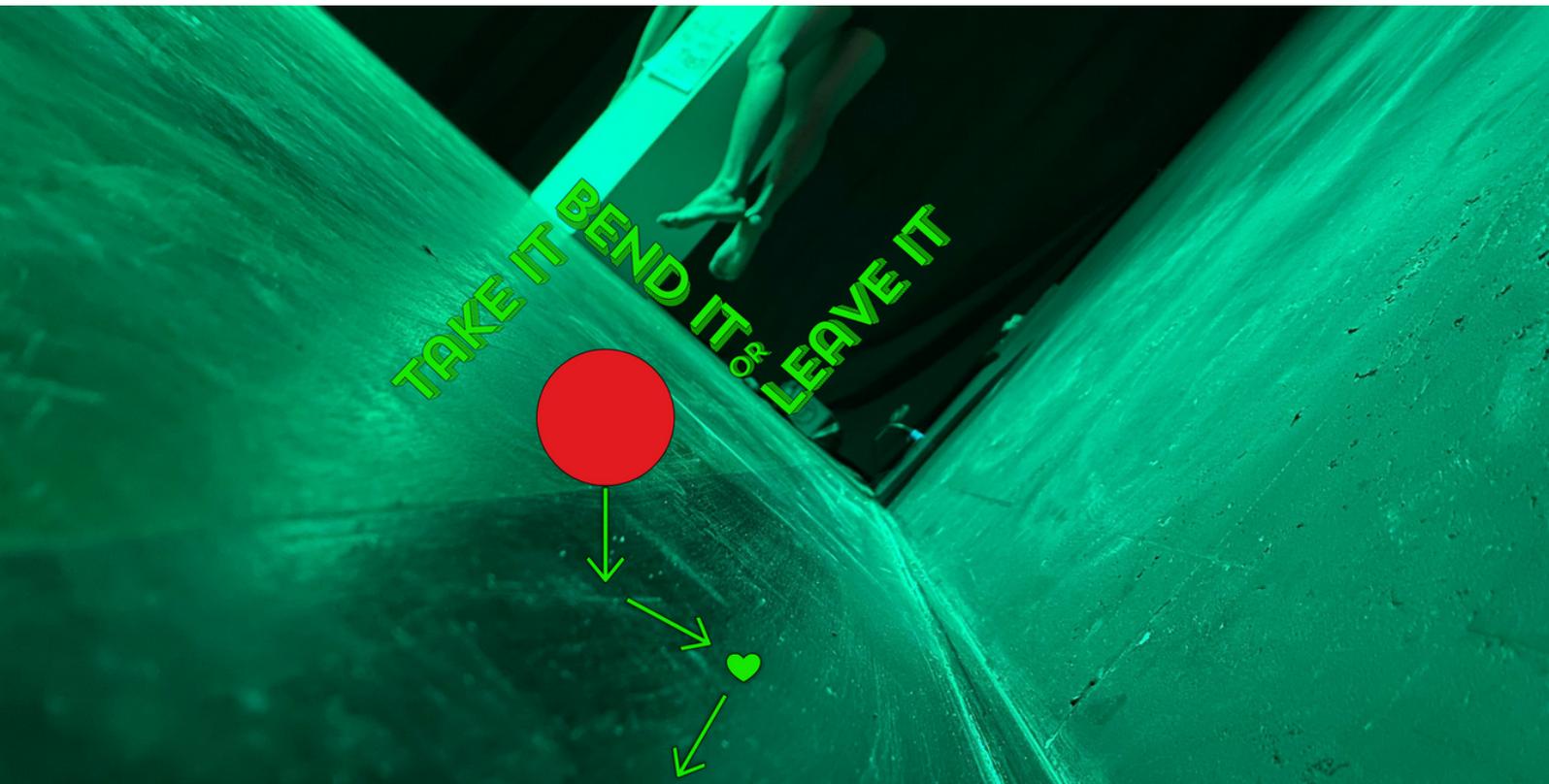
Participatory art is often created in response to a need for collectivity. Its great hope lies in activating the spectator in a way that causes them to challenge their current paradigm and find empowerment in the artwork's unfolding, finding new paths to progress through intersubjective engagement. In *Dream City*, I experimented with the use of immersive game elements to encourage a beginner's mindset and disidentification from public identity in search of an emergent form of storytelling.

Dream City is an online platform designed to harness collective creativity by combining visual media, music, and the gamified daydreams of visitors. In an introductory tutorial video, a mysterious being introduces a city that might exist far in the future. Visitors then enter surreal buildings and record their daydreams. At the same time, daydreams of other visitors appear on screen as shooting stars, co-authoring the mythology of this strange new city.

This piece was created in collaboration with programmer Hadi Asghari using Vimeo, Django web framework, and Heroku platform.

Dream City



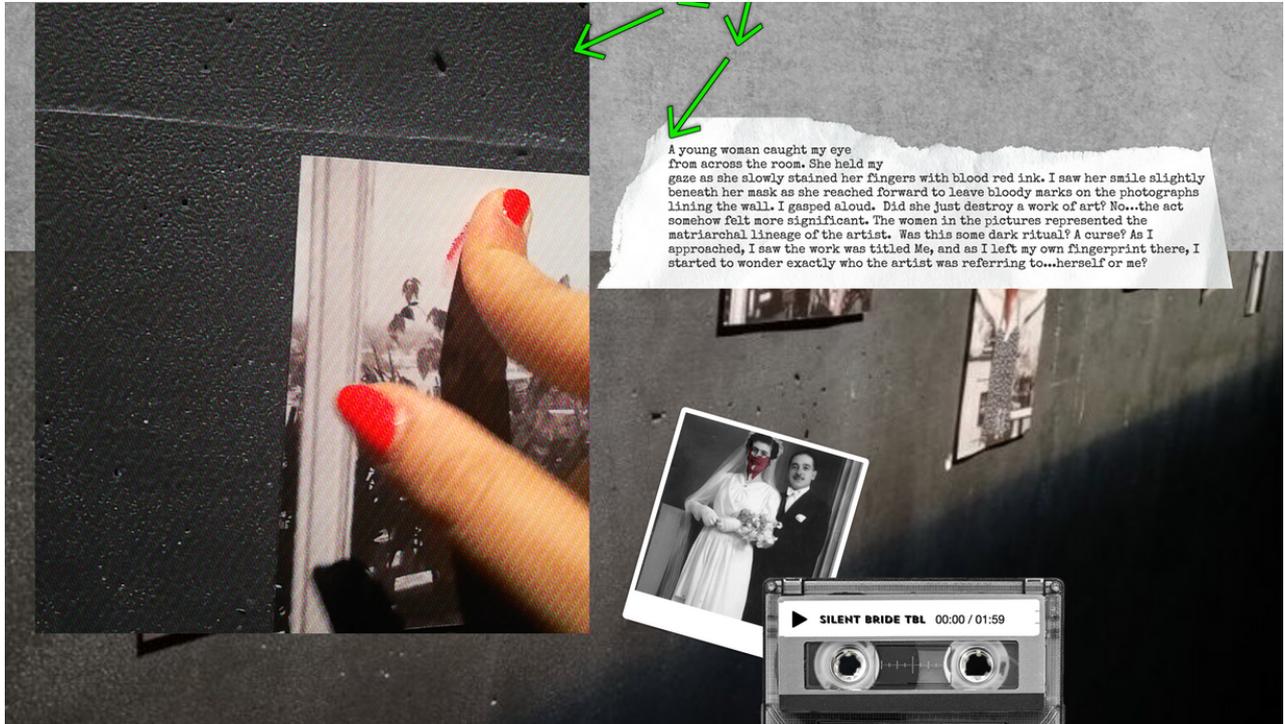


Take it, bend it, or leave it (festival documentation 2020)

2020 was a perfect time to take a close look at not just the rules, but their function. Engaging with performance, video art, installations, and more, this festival welcomed artists from around the globe to reflect on social rules, performance rules, unsaid rules, and on what rules could be.

In its documentation, I attempted to capture the free, wild energy of the evening by creating an account of a visitor slowly descending into madness. I also incorporated live audio descriptions/hallucinations, photographs by Fenia Kotsopoulou and daz disley, and drawings made by visitors after the performances.

Take it, bend it, or leave it



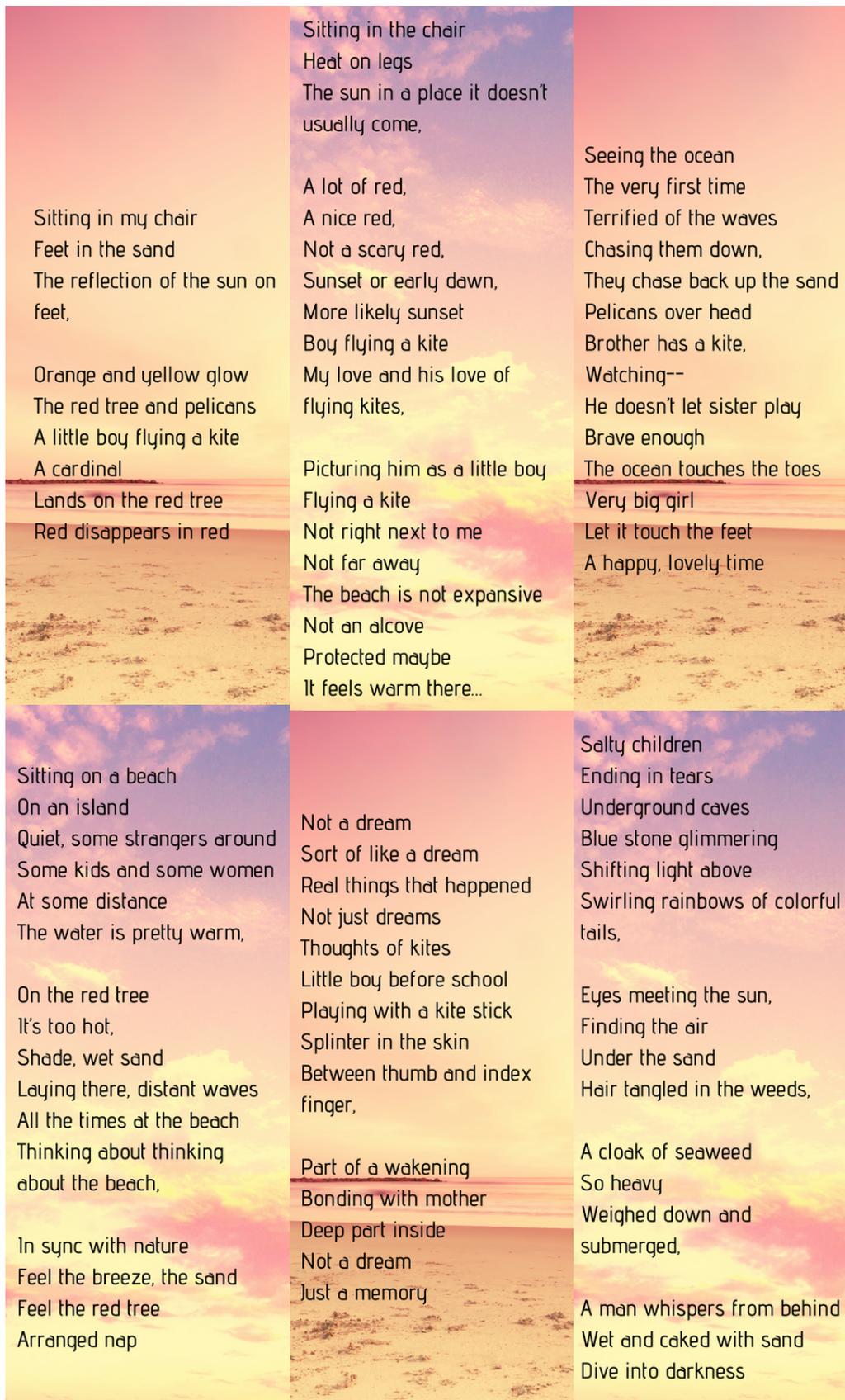


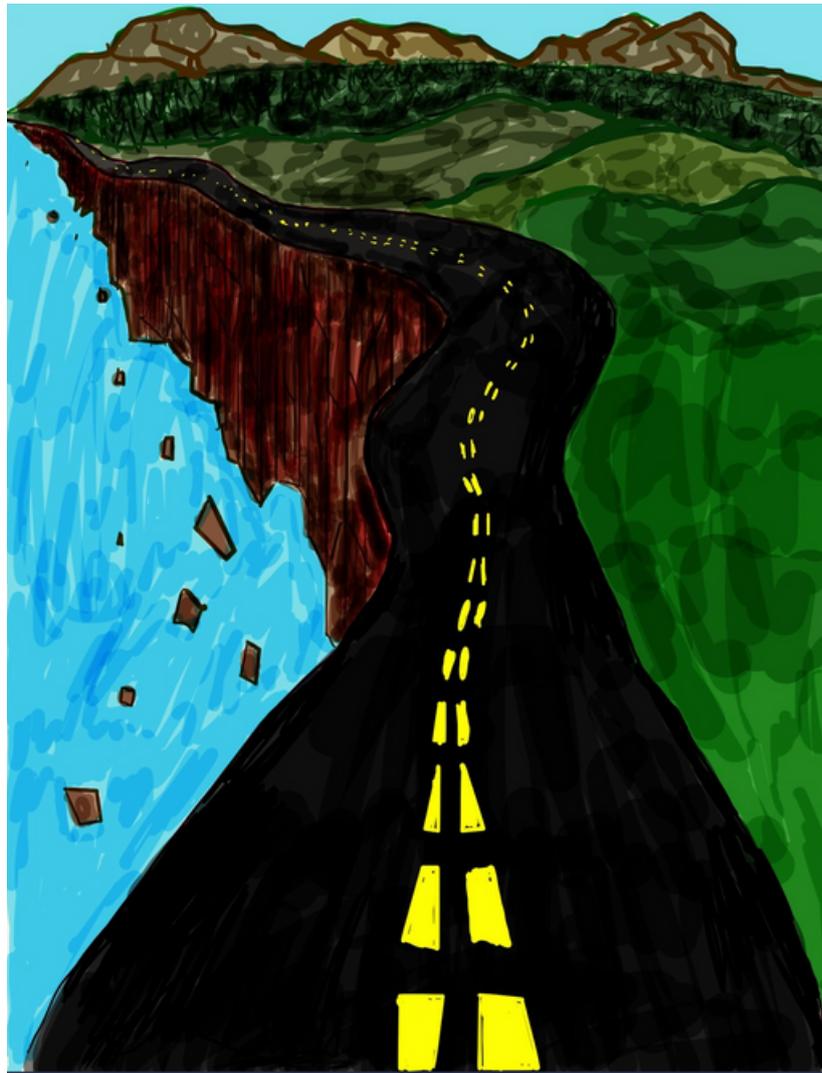
Social isolation beach vacation (2020)

Social Isolation Beach Vacation fuses participation and co-authorship with the memories of anthropomorphized objects in order to stimulate the imagination and dreams of participants. In an effort to reach deeper than a flat and choppy video conference call, this performance relies on three actions, related through an aural score, that access a collective consciousness beach dimension. The first action is kinesthetic; this helps to create a multi-sensorial environment. The participant is asked to gather a container of salt and a container of water, as well as any items (e.g. sunscreen, beach towels, shells) that remind them of going to the beach. Next, they are asked to watch a video while interacting with these materials—pinching the salt, running fingers through the water, combining the two ingredients, if they like. They may watch the video or close their eyes as they listen. This is presented as “contact with the beach entity”, the first step towards traveling to the beach dimension. Participants are instructed to leave the video playing after the entity departs, listening to the sound of the waves and awaiting further instructions.

Lastly, after being guided to lay in a comfortable position and breathe deeply, participants are asked to picture themselves at the beach. They are given verbal prompts, during which they allow their minds to wander and dream. The prompts are presented in a slow and non-linear manner, distilled from the dream of the previous participant. I cut each dream text back to what I interpreted as its essential elements, using present tense and emphasizing actions and descriptive words. This resulted in vivid poetry, and creates a co-authored landscape.

Social isolation beach vacation

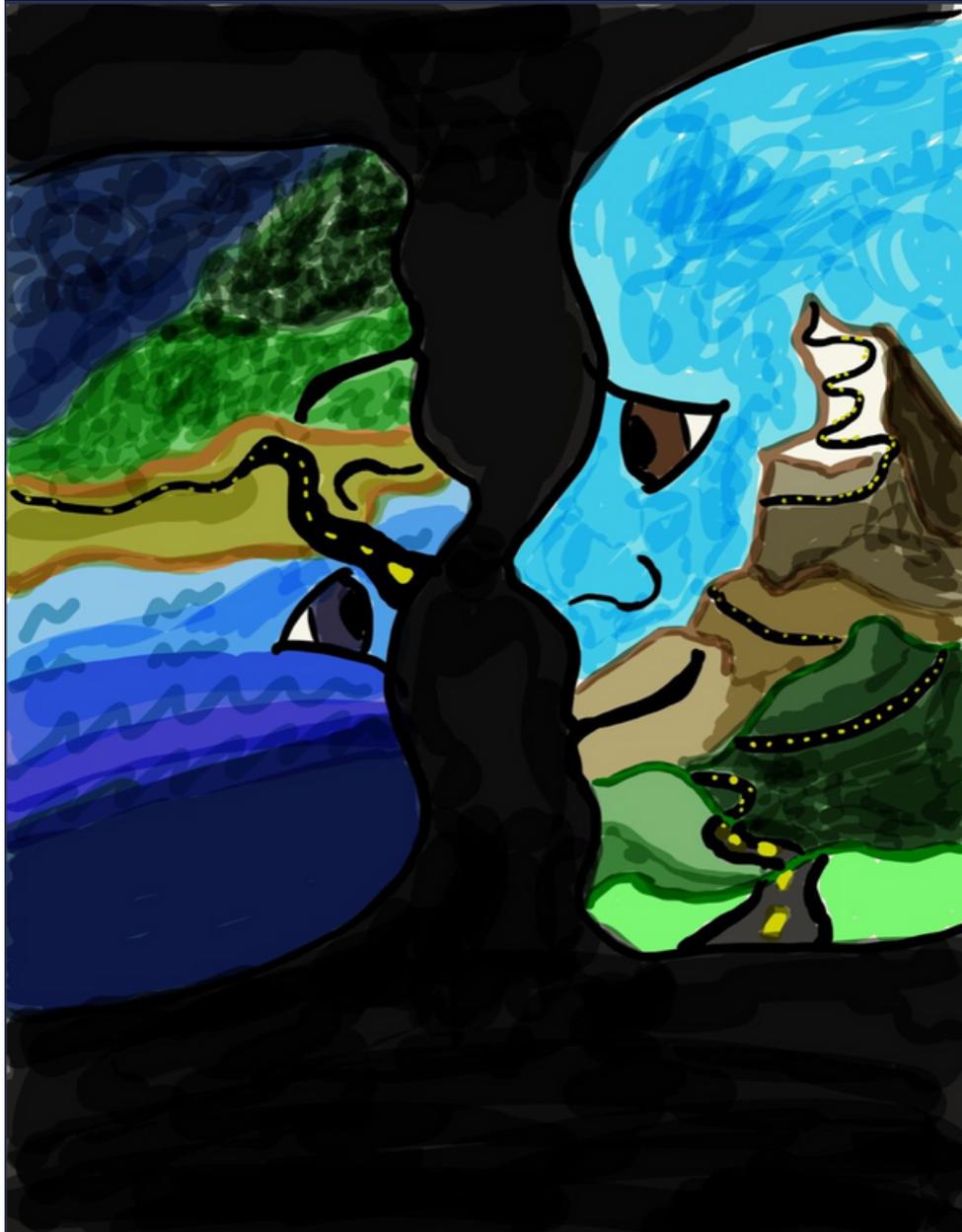




Stories from the road (2019)

Framed by the metaphor of a road trip, *Stories from the Road* explores the use of participatory performance in building cultural discourse about decision-making during the climate crisis. Using Rancière's concept of the emancipated spectator, common human experiences such as childhood development of subjectivity (acquired through Lacan's mirror phase and symbolic order) and image schemas (as discussed in Mark Turner's *The Literary Mind*) are explored as possible strategies for co-authoring an artistic landscape alongside spectators. An audio narration accompanies the written work, attempting to explore these theories in the form of a correspondence between the author and her elusive self-awareness. Each track reflects on these individual-but-common experiences as a method for creation. The author concludes that a co-authored artistic landscape may only be accessible to participants who are enticed to set aside limiting social norms in order to explore it. This is the challenge of the artist.

Stories from the road



Links to works

We called it Earth

<https://www.jessicarenfro.com/we-called-it-earth>

Dream City

<https://www.jessicarenfro.com/dream-city>

Take it, bend it, or leave it

<https://www.takeitbenditorleaveit.com/new-home>

**site not available for mobile devices*

Social isolation beach vacation

<http://voicetellsastory.com/blog/2020/4/5/social-isolation-beach-vacation>

Stories from the road

<http://voicetellsastory.com/blog/2019/10/27/stories-from-the-road>

**an audio essay version of this piece was also published in APRIA journal:*

https://apria.artez.nl/co-authoring-the-future/?fbclid=IwAR0xI9_J4rdS2CFR83Tq0o2gf_1d-zOgiAoWi3fUGa0yoNBcCPly-qH8XKk