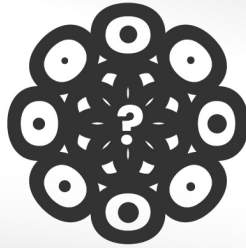# TILDE 8 TOWN

ZINE

Townies!
All Kinds of Stuff!
Beautiful!
Weird and Creative!

READ ME!

TILDE 8 TOWN

ZINE

tildetown

issue #8

attribution. Or else I wanted to include them here but can't remember where they come from.

Front cover, half title, back cover, and back inner cover by mio.

Alternate front cover by zbba

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1. You must adopt a stray rock.

contents

Public Domain Popeye explains what a tilde is

Editorial

Welcome to the zine, tilde fans! Yes, it's finally here in your hot little hands!

Issue #8 an auspicious and powerful edition of this zine. Y2K+24 happens to be the 10 year anniversary of tilde.town. That's an entire decade of town! A whole lotta town. And, consequently, it was also the year of our first ever TOWNCON in-person / simulcasted virtual conference.

There's a lot of awfully good stuff in here from new faces and familiar ones. You can expect poetry, how-to guides, photography, manifestos, memes, short fiction, slides, presentations, digital art, and more. It is so packed to the brim with awesomeness I can hardly stand it. I hope you thoroughly enjoy yourself reading it.

I hope that 10 years from now, on the 20th anniversary of town, this volume serves as a time capsule. A snapshot documenting the ridiculous amounts of friendship and creativity that arises from this digital community.

And finally, in closing, shout out to piusbird, who initially undertook the responsibility of compiling and editing this issue, and then had to step back for personal reasons. Hope you feel better soon, buddy.

Okay, enjoy the zine you crazy kids! GO TOWN!

<3
dozens
January 2025

awk trampolining, by acdw

I love writing awk scripts, but the shebang line can get out of hand sometimes. The common wisdom is something like this:

```sh
#!/usr/bin/env -S awk -f
```

However, this env invocation has a few issues:

* `env -S` isn't portable.
* The reason why `env -S` is needed is that the kernel plunks the entire command line after the first argument into one argument -- so you can't pass complex command lines in a shebang.
* `awk` by itself won't read a file, so you can't use that either.

The other option ---

```sh
#!/usr/bin/awk -f
```

 --- has its own issues, namely that awk might not be installed in /usr/bin, or that the one that *is* installed there isn't the one you want to use.

time to jump!

What we need to do is "trampoline" from a normal shebang, like /bin/sh, to our programming language. I don't know why it's called trampoline, just that it is. Every language has

its own special ridiculous way of doing this, since you basically have to pun on comment characters, but here's how I do it with awk:

```sh
#!/bin/sh
{ trampoline= "exec" "awk" "-f" "$0" "$@"; } # -*-
awk -*-
# --- Awk begins here ---
```

Since awk and sh share the `#` character for commenting, it's fairly simple:

The first line is your basic /bin/sh shebang. This causes /bin/sh (which is a standard path mandated by POSIX) to begin executing this file.

`{ ... }` syntax is a pattern rule in awk, and command grouping in sh. This means that the command inside will execute on every line of input, which isn't perfect, but it is what it is.

Now for the command itself:

sh trampoline execution

In sh, the variable `trampoline` is assigned the empty string "" for the remainder of the command line, which here is `exec awk -f "$0" "$@"`. The quoting around the first three words is completely allowed, and actually useful for the last two words. If you couldn't guess, this tells sh to replace its own process with awk, running the current script and given the current arguments.

The great part is that you could, if so inclined, include any number of awk command-line flags or arguments you wished---if you wanted to make a script that, for example, used the calling convention `<script> <DATE>`, you could write:

```sh
#!/bin/sh
{ trampoline= "exec" "awk" "-f" "$0" "-vDATE=$1"; }
```

More interesting uses are left as exercises to the reader.

awk trampoline execution

Once the script is passed off to awk, it begins reading the file again. The first line is skipped over since it starts with `#`, then the trampoline line is processed. It runs on every line since there is no condition before the braces, but that's okay: it just sets the `trampoline` variable to the string "execawk-f0@" (string juxtaposition is concatenation in awk). If you want to use a variable called `trampoline`, you could of course change that name to anything you like.

-*- awk -*- ???

This extra little comment tells Emacs it's an awk script, instead of sh like it'd auto-detect. With vim, you'd do something like

```sh
{ trampoline= "exec" "awk" "-f" "$0" "$@"; } # vim:
ft=awk
```

```
```

... I think. It's been a while since I used vim.

addendum 1: another way

While writing this post, I started playing around with it and came up with an even shorter, and dare I say more elegant, trampoline:

```sh
#!/bin/sh
NR==0 && exec awk -f "$0" "$@";
# Awk script goes here
```

When I was testing, this didn't work in zsh---basically you need a sh(1) that will interpret `NR==0` as "set NR to =0". This command always succeeds, so the command after the `&&` fires, executing the awk script. Then, awk tests if `NR` is equal to 0, which it never is --- meaning the rest of the line doesn't get executed and the rest of the file goes off without a hitch (provided it's written well).

addendum 2: *another* way

Thanks to Andy Alderwick, who emailed me this even *more* elegant awk trampoline:

```sh
#!/bin/sh
trampoline=0 && exec awk -f "$0" "$@" # -*- awk -*-
# Awk script here
```

This works because:
* in sh, setting a variable to a constant always succeeds, so the command after && executes
* in awk, setting a variable returns the value it was set to---so trampoline=0 returns false, and the match fails and the script moves on to the next pattern

---

I find script trampolines super fun and love discovering new ones. So if you find another way for an awk script (or hell, even your favorite language!), feel free to
=> mailto:acdw@acdw.net send me an email
and let me know!

mushroom buddy, by dozens

~Town Con 2024~
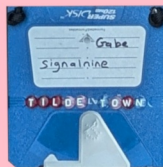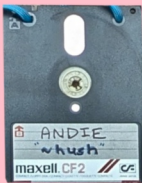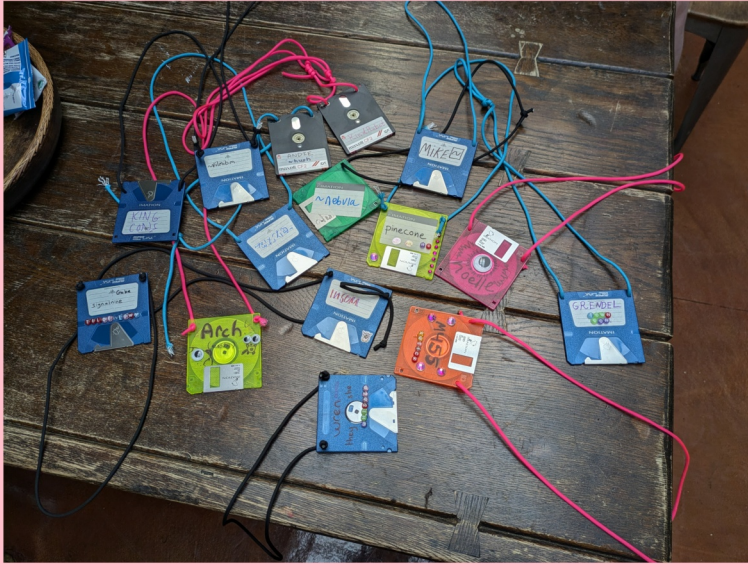
Nametags by grendel84

Ma mémoire, by oskar

Quelquefois, le soir, dans le tram, sous la lumière blanche qui s'attache aux couleurs insomniaques
Le vent souffle, sifflant un son sérieux d'introspection ; et le trop-plein d'air me ramène ma mémoire.
Mémoire mordue d'un amour murmuré.
Le décor romantique du tram, ses murs verts et myrtille, ravive le souvenir de cette ravissante soirée et ramène ma mémoire.
Mémoire d'un amour de mars qu'un vent d'avril à vu revivre en vain.
Voie lactée, tes yeux sont ceux des amoureux perdus, et je rame sans répit pour suivre ton cours gris, d'argent, comme le tram brillant dont les reflets saillants ramènent ma mémoire.
Mémoire remplie de souvenirs tranchants.
La lame du temps, de son fil bleu, élague l'espoir.
Et puis les pleurs, les pluies de l'âme, dont les flaques luisent sur le sol pâle.

Et les reflets ruisselant sur les rails, glissant, sans répit pour mon cœur, vers l'arrêt suivant.
Les portes coulissantes laissent rentrer une poignée d'air morose, une bouffée de personnes froides.
Les secousses caressent mon corps et ramènent ma mémoire.
Mémoire corrompue des instants que l'on voudrait garder, mais qui ne sont plus.
Leur image rémanante torture mon esprit et ramène ma mémoire.
Mémoire remplie de regrets et de moment heureux morts.

Puis l'amour pars un jour, écrasé par le tram.
Il suffit que plus rien ne ramène ma mémoire.
Mémoire....

Quand l'amour meurt, c'est l'oubli qui le tue.

Town Topic Rag

transcribed by agafnd

I found this delightful tune by searching archive.org for "town" and
filtering for audio + years that would be in the public domain.

It was recorded by the Louisiana Five in 1919 or so and is attributed
to Lada & Spencer. Since it has no lyrics you are free to imagine that
it is about the /topic in #tildetown.

Recording technology was not very good back then and this reproduction
of it has quite a lot of surface noise. So, it was hard for me to hear
what the chords really are. I'm sure I wrote them wrong in several
places but they mostly work. As for the melody, most of the variations
are up to the performer.

Speaking of performances, I decided to record it myself. Very possibly
I'm the first person to do so since 1919. I did it with two tracks,
both acoustic guitar, in a sort of jazz manouche style. I think it
sounds OK given that I just learned it tonight and some of the chords
are kind of off.

Get links to the recordings here:
https://tilde.town/~agafnd/town-topic-rag.html

Dan: the Man Without a Plan

First edition, 2024
First published on 2024/11/13
https://www.nonpaged.com/~anton/tloks/mwap/dan.html

Summary: Dan starts to realize the truths his cat companion tried to show him, and his neighbor finds out he is wanted on his many crimes against Summit, former President Hendrix, and now President Simmons.

So I was back in my apartment, like I started. The wars, Hendrix presidency, chat group, Hillcrest prison, brown cat, 10 Shrub Lyt cases I found unopened in the fridge, half uneaten sandwich, unwatered balcony plants, weird blinky lightbulb, and unwashed dishes with a layer of mold surrounding them are all a thing of the past these days. What you're assuming is likely true: I did just throw all of it that I could over my balcony railing into the trash pits! I hadn't seen the cat since her last vacation visit, so she didn't go into the pile thankfully. There's a pile of popped trash bags below the balconies anyways. I don't know how they got there, but they are.

"Well, time to check my e-mails!" I think to myself, before a wave of disappointment that can be seen from the Dr. Matthew Walker Space Exploration Lab's equipment hits me, as I find electronic messages fell into my e-mail

inbox again. Thankfully my 5th keyboard this month arrived, so now I can continue to use the keybinds. Reading e-mails mean that I need to press the following keys in this exact order: `tab`, `shift+down`, `shift+down`, `shift+down`, `shift+down`, `shift+down`, `shift+down`, `shift+down`, `shift+down`, `shift+down`, `shift+down`, `shift+down`, `delete`, `tab`, `tab`, `enter`, `tab`, `enter` and that gets repeated for each message. Then again to move it from the potential-deleted folder to the trash, and then again to permanently delete to the deleted and recoverable folder. You get the picture by now, I hope. Unfortunately the devs are holding off on my patch that would simplify this process through the use of selecting multiple messages at once.

I hear a knocking on my door. It's my new neighbor that I don't get along with one bit!

"Hey... like... uh... like... Devin, can you, like, keep the, uh, TV volume, like, down, like I'm trying, uh, to, you know... uh..." he says not making eye contact, unless he was actually in the middle of doing an intense staring match with the floor.

I say, perhaps dismissively, "Not exactly, I can't really hear the TV over the upstairs neighbor running around all over the place."

"Well, I tried." he says before walking away. A few minutes later, some music starts blasting from his apartment and he screeches "WELL HOW DO YOU LIKE THIS NOW?" I recognize that radio station, and turn my clock radio to the same station. Now I get to listen to music in surround sound! This angers him though, and he starts to emit a high-pitch squealing sound. That's never happened before!

Going back to my e-mails which has more messages in it now, I see a dozen more e-mails. To my surprise, one of them is from the Server Team's general administration e-

mail address, but still signed by Dr. Jenna Blevins herself. My application was accepted, and I passed the interview! This calls for louder music and a beer!

After a minute, there is knocking on the door, and three police officers are standing outside.

"We've received a noise complaint. And-"

I gesture into the room and say "come on in! I was celebrating my promotion to server team!" They enter, confused. Typically people in this building demand they stay out. One officer turns the volume to a "reasonable" level, and approaches me.

"You said you're on the server team. Right?"

"Yes."

"Can you remove the disk quotas for me and my buddies?" he asks, practically begging.

"I'll see what I can do."

"Thank you!! I'll check with the captain about possibly getting your record wiped clean, and we'll apply them to your neighbor that called us here to get him to stop harassing you."

I am now free of the neighbor!

Two more cops are called in and they arrest the annoying noisy neighbor who was waking up dozens of residents with loud music, as the call reported. He was also working on overthrowing President Nikki Simmons, which got his sentencing moved to the federation level courts. Another win for Summit and President Simmons!

Looking outside, I see cops standing around the trash pile, as a garbage truck scoops it all up. Maybe the horrible rotten smells on this side of the building will go away too.

Then, I hear a computerized voice start repeating:

Priority warning: radioactive waste materials detected. Building integrity may be compromised. Resident health may be compromised. Seek medical attention and

alternative housing until further notice. This was... probably from the small bit of uranium I borrowed from my old job for science purposes that was still in my coat pocket. But I can't leave my apartment now. I start my new job in less than 6 hours, so I need to sleep. Whatever happens happens, since tomorrow's another day.

For now, I just need to try and sleep off this headache.

Christoph Jamnitzer, Neuw Grotteßken Buch (1610)
courtesy of publicdomainreview.org

Patterns by becrel

A few years ago, I learnt about something called "bytebeat", a genre of music based on short programs.

Here's an example, Sierpinski's harmony: `main(t){for(;;t++)putchar(t&t>>8);}`, pipe the output into aplay and you get some music

My idea was doing the same kind of formulas, but instead of making music I'd make pictures. Our formula's arguments are a pixel's coordinate x and y, instead of a timestamp t, and the result is the pixel's value (the result of every formula here is to be taken modulo 256). Or, for those pictures that aren't greyscale, three formulas: one for the hue; one for the saturation; one for the value.

I made a small python script that lets me generate images from these formulas without too much hassle, and want to share a few patterns I wrote.

So, here are some formulas:

```
[[ fabulous ]]
 HSV
 H(x,y)=x^y
 S(x,y)=(x^y)**2
 V(x,y)=255
```


test.png

22
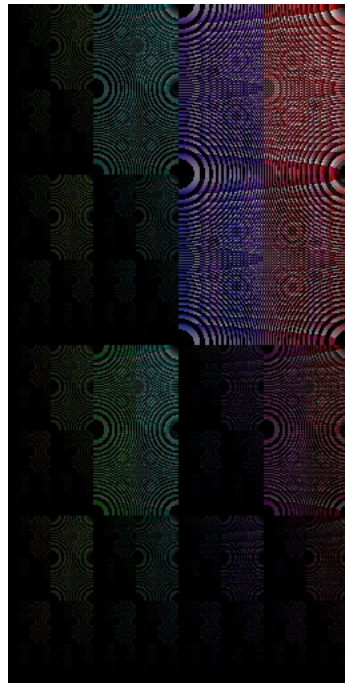
```
[[ evilfabulous ]]
 HSV
 H(x,y)=(x^y)**2
 S(x,y)=x^y
 V(x,y)=255

[[ circles ]]
 L
 x**2+y**2
```

 wheels within wheels within wheels within wheels

```
[[ squarexor ]]
 L
 (x**2)^(y**2)
```

 it's like circles' fucked up evil twin

```
[[ test ]]
 HSV
 H(x,y)=x>>3|y
 S(x,y)=x*x+y+y
 V(x,y)=(x*x+y*y)&x>>1&y
```

also known as Formulaic Autoportrait of an Unfocused One
it's my oldest image of this kind, or rather a coloured
version of my oldest image of this kind. yes saturation is
x*x+y+y and not x*x+y*y, that was a typo when I first made
it and then I decided to keep it

```
[[ xorssquare ]]
 L
 (x^y)**2
```

the base for fabulous
```
[[ xor ]]
 L
 x^y
```

(I mean, what did you expect?)
```
[[ and ]]
 L
 x&y
```
just as self-explanatory
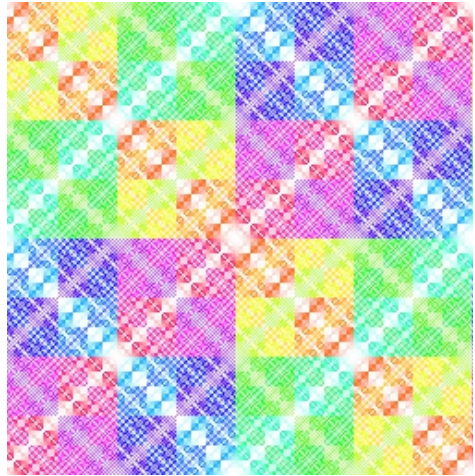
fabulous.png

```
#!/usr/bin/env python3
from PIL import Image
from math import *
from random import *
typ=int(input("[1] Greyscale\n[2] RGB\n[3]
HSV\nMode: "))
assert typ in [1,2,3]
w,h=input("Size (WIDTHxHEIGHT): ").split("x")
w,h=int(w),int(h)
im=Image.new(("L","RGB","HSV")[typ-1],(w,h))
if typ==1:
    A=input("V(x,y)=")
elif typ==2:
    A=input("R(x,y)=")
    B=input("G(x,y)=")
    C=input("B(x,y)=")
elif typ==3:
    A=input("H(x,y)=")
    B=input("S(x,y)=")
    C=input("V(x,y)=")
l=[]
for y in range(h):
```

```python
    for x in range(w):
        if typ==1:
            a=eval(A)&255 # ik eval bad idgaf
            l.append(a)
        else:

a,b,c=eval(A)&255,eval(B)&255,eval(C)&255
            l.append((a,b,c))
im.putdata(l)
name="out/"+input("Name: ")
if typ!=3:
    im.save(name+".png")
else:
    with im.convert("RGB") as f:
        f.save(name+".png")
with open(name+".txt","wt") as f:
    f.write("{} {}x{}\n".format(["L","RGB","HSV"]
[typ-1],w,h))
    if typ==1:
        f.write("V(x,y)="+A)
    elif typ==2:
        f.write("R(x,y)={}\nG(x,y)={}
\nB(x,y)={}".format(A,B,C))
    elif typ==3:
        f.write("H(x,y)={}\nS(x,y)={}
\nV(x,y)={}".format(A,B,C))
```

squarexor.png
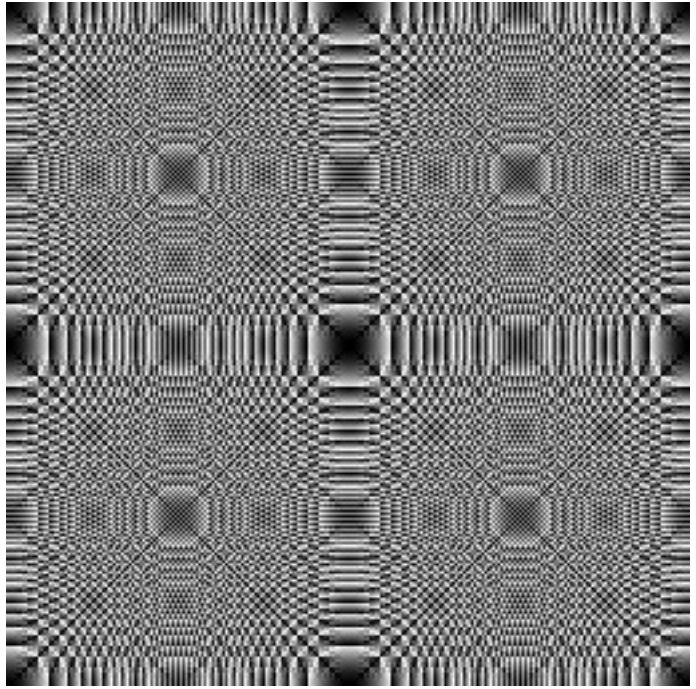
evilfabulous.png
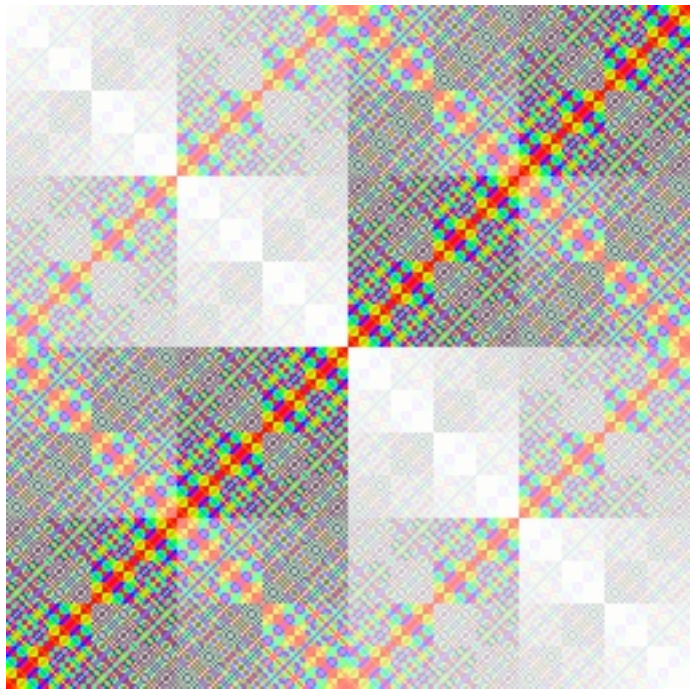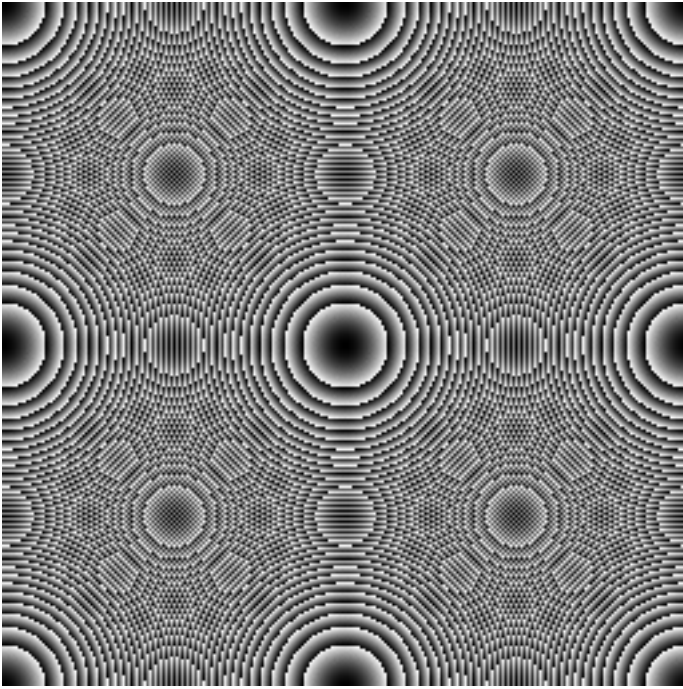
circles.png
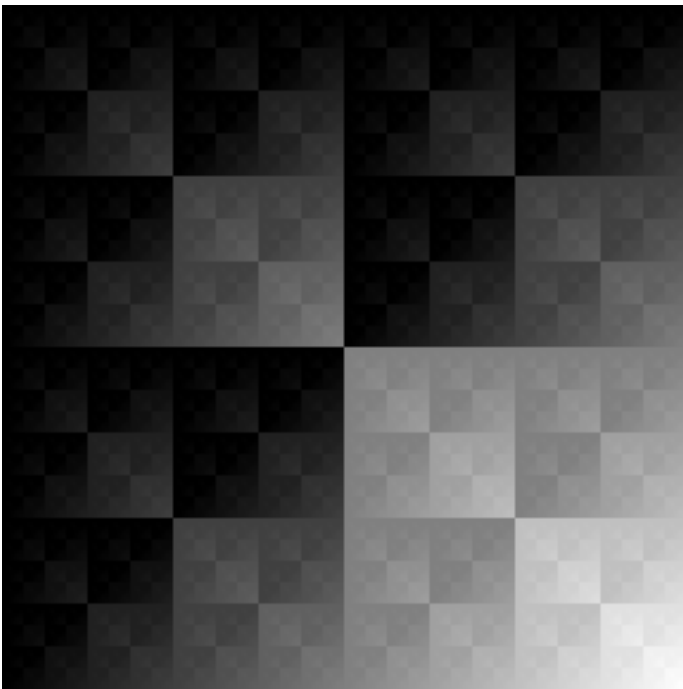
and.png

test.png
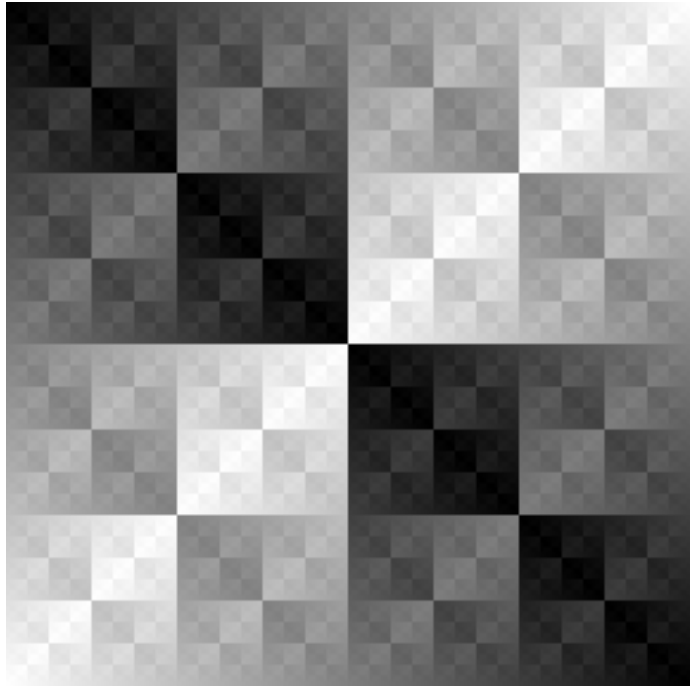
xor.png
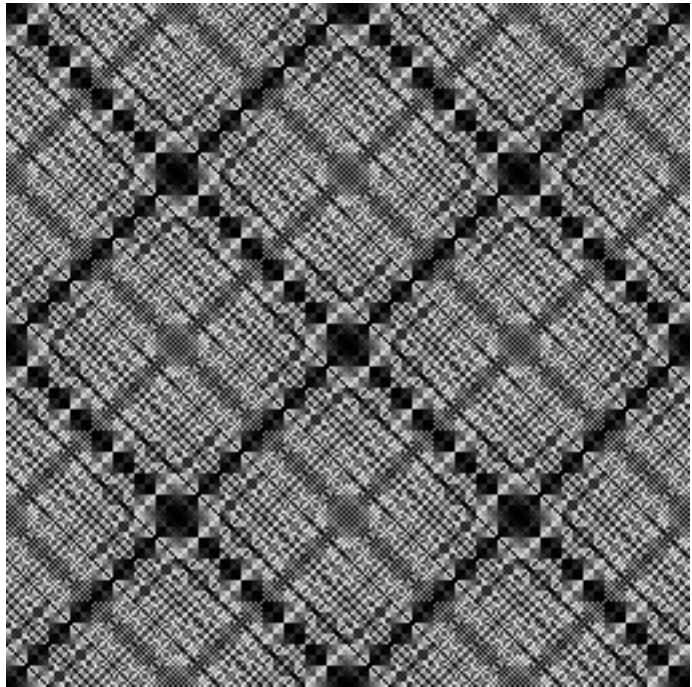
Wally, by ykwap

weekless sty--rofoam cups, glowing in the

moonlit mine, most every night...I keep cleaning up, but the junk keeps coming back...

it's alright to be afraid sometimes... especially nights like this, when you're utterly alone...

till tonight I wanted to fight, right up to the point

when the cry, howling gutturally in the night,

opens my eye, I mean, how could anyone sleep like this? there it is again...muffled now...

oh, why is I in rotation this time? they know I'm rather paranoid!

why it ain't somebody else? *I* sure ain't carved out for this,

why none fly instead of I? I guess I should least figure the "why"....

as in my bly, a figure comes from deep in night, I eye *myself*...

guess it's I, stalking the night, guess they did done transferred my mind... was I lured here, am I the one

who must cry, now? d'I have to die?

MOUNTAIN PIG

a role playing game

🏔️🏔️🐖🏔️🏔️

invented by pawky, agafnd, and juspib

written by dozens

/\/\(oo)/\/\

WHAT IS A ROLEPLAYING GAME

A roleplaying game is a thing where you imagine
something is true.

ABOUT MOUNTAIN PIG

You are a mysterious peaceful pig. You reside in
the misty mountains. Sometimes people visit the
mountains to see you, but you don't pay them much
mind.

HOW TO PLAY

1. Find a comfortable, quiet spot.

2. Close your eyes.

3. Imagine you are a mysterious peaceful pig taking a slow walk in the dew-covered grass in the mountains.

4. You are a mysterious peaceful pig who low-key doesn't give a fuck.

5. Yesssss

APPENDIX: PIG CHANT

Sometimes people gather around the base of the mountain and join hands and they sing this song, the PIG CHANT

mountain pig, mountain pig
how do you do the things you do
mountain pig, mountain pig
you'll never be in a butcher's or zoo
mountain pig, mountain pig
parachute down so we can pet you

APPENDIX: PIG SECRET

In your previous life you were a marauding pirate and were turned into a pig by a witch as punishment for being rude and greedy. But after a while of being a pig, it turns out you really just love being a mysterious peaceful mountain pig. You repent your nasty pirate ways and are content to spend all your remaining days taking long slow walks in the mountains, watching the sun set through the blades of dewy grass. It's really quite beautiful.

DONK6B87

Digitally Interfaced, Organic, Software-Generating Human

1. General Description

The *DONK6B87* is a self-contained human that generates software in response to customer and systemic input. Requirements may be communicated in real-time via its advanced speech or asynchronously through the character recognition interfaces. Once input, the device can provide verbal feedback almost instantaneously. Code output is provided by two parallel, 5-digit interfaces.

Included onboard are 10 years of software engineering experience, an eagerness to learn new technologies, a drive to solve real-world problems, and an interpersonal skill-set that enables optimal efficiency in team environments. These features allow rapid and automatic adaptation to almost any development application.

It must be noted that, in addition to data, this component requires an monetary input which can be converted into food and shelter. Proper supply must be maintained to ensure the continued operation of the *DONK6B87*.

2. Applications

⇒ Big data
⇒ Stream processing
⇒ Back-end APIs
⇒ On-premises or cloud infrastructures
⇒ Legacy codebases
⇒ Monitoring and management tools

3. Features

⇒ Built-in support for Java, Python, and TypeScript
⇒ Linux compatible
⇒ Works with Docker, Kubernetes, Kafka, Postgres, Couchbase, and AWS tools
⇒ Neuron-based learning capabilities enable rapid adaptation to many other languages, frameworks, and tools
⇒ Digital outputs interface seamlessly with keyboards
⇒ Convenient humanoid packaging conforms to most chair standards

4. Packaging Diagram
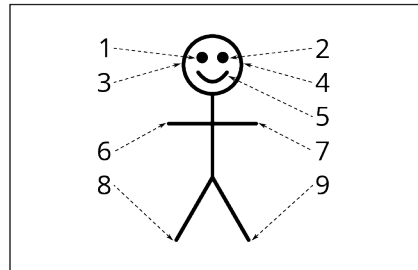
5. IO Description

Pin	Name	Function
1,2	EYE	Analog optical input
3,4	EAR	Analog auditory input
5	MTH	Combined power input and speech output (half-duplex)
6,7	HND	Digital output
8,9	GND	Ground

Ordering Information

Contact our sales department via email or telephone at (555)123-4567, or visit our website.

```
|¯""¯|
|| ¯|| ||
||
```

Fun computer art.

```
 /¯¯\ ,
||(,¨,)||
\¯\¨:¨//
`->(¨)<-´
 /|¯¯|
|\  /|
```

by ~oskar

You can download the file here : https://tilde.town/~oskar/posts/art/computer_art.py

This code draws funny things in the terminal using curses !
Images of what it does are after the code

```
#!/usr/bin/python3
"""
How to use :

I encourage you to decrease font size in
order to have at least 50 at ones.
The program automatically adapts to any
screen size, but really, it's better if you
unzoom a lot (or have a big display).

If you wan to tweak this code yourself, you can start with :
 - changing how the color of each cell is chosen in
Cell.randomize(). The color
   attribute is a number from 0 to 256 that corresponds to an
ANSII color code
 - changing Cell.on_collision(). I left a couple of commented
examples of what
   this method could do
 - changing the update function (the last line of main(),
inside the two while
   loops)
 - well... writing your own update function ! It's just a
method of Grid that
   modifies the grid itself

Oh, and if you are worried about security, you can check that
the only reason I use the os module is to get the terminal
size !
Actually, this script really only starts a curses window and
draws stuff in it !
"""
```

```python
from random import randint, random
from os import get_terminal_size
from time import sleep, time
from sys import stdout
import curses

Self = 'Self'  # Type hinting, because python < 3.11 doesn't
have typing.Self

def colorcode_to_ANSI(colorcode: int) -> str:
    return "\u001b[38;5;" + str(colorcode%256) + "m"

def colorize(colorcode: int, string: str):
    return colorcode_to_ANSI(colorcode) + str(string) +
"\u001b[0m"

class Cell:
    def __init__(self):
        # dx and dy are respectively the number of columns and
lines that the
        # cell will move each iteration
        self.dx: int = 0  # ln
        self.dy: int = 0  # col
        self.color: int = 0

        self.collisions_count: int = 0

    def copy(self) -> Self:
        new_cell = Cell()
        new_cell.dx = self.dx
        new_cell.dy = self.dy
        new_cell.color = (self.color + 0)%256
        new_cell.collisions_count = self.collisions_count
        return new_cell

    def is_moving(self) -> bool:
        return (self.dx != 0) or (self.dy != 0)

    def stop_moving(self) -> None:
        """Make the cell still : it will not move from its
current position."""
        self.dx = 0
        self.dy = 0

    def randomize(self, interval: slice =slice(-2, 2)) ->
None:
        """Randomize the speed and direction of the cell's
motion."""
        self.dx = randint(interval.start, interval.stop)
        self.dy = randint(interval.start, interval.stop)
```

```python
        self.dx *= randint(-2, 2)
        self.dy *= randint(-2, 2)
        # self.dx *= randint(-1, 1)
        # self.dy *= randint(-1, 1)
        # self.dy = 1
        dep, end = 0, 1
        self.color = randint(17 + dep*36, end*36)

    def get_new_coordinates(self, current_ln: int,
current_col: int) -> tuple[int, int]:
        """Get the coordinates of the future cell"""
        return current_ln + self.dy, current_col + self.dx

    def on_collision(self) -> None:
        self.collisions_count += 1
        # if randint(0, self.collisions_count) > 50:
        #     self.stop_moving()

        # if random() < .1:
        #     self.stop_moving()
        # if abs(self.dx) + abs(self.dy) % 2 == 0:
        #     self.dx *= -1
        # else:
        #     self.dy *= -1
        # self.dx = randint(-1, 0) * self.dx

        if self.color % 2:
            self.dx *= -1
        else:
            self.dy *= -1
        # self.dy = randint(-1, 1) * self.dy
        # self.dx *= -1
        # self.dx *= -1

    def get_str(self) -> str:
        if self.is_moving():
            return "   "
        return "   "

    def __str__(self) -> str:
        return colorize(self.color, self.get_str())

    def get_curses_color(self) -> int:
        return curses.color_pair(self.color)


class GridLine:
    def __init__(self, width: int):
        self.width = int(width)
        self.contents: list[Cell] = [Cell() for _ in
```

```
range(self.width)]

    def __getitem__(self, index: int) -> Cell:
        return self.contents[index % self.width]

    def __setitem__(self, index: int, value: Cell):
        self.contents[index % self.width] = value

    def copy(self):
        new = GridLine(self.width)
        for idx, cell in enumerate(self.contents):
            new[idx] = cell.copy()
        return new


class Grid:
    def __init__(self, width: int, height: int):
        self.height = int(height)
        self.width = int(width)
        self.grid = [GridLine(width) for _ in
range(self.height)]

    def __getitem__(self, index: int) -> GridLine:
        return self.grid[(index) % self.height]

    def __setitem__(self, index: int, value: GridLine) ->
None:
        self.grid[(index) % self.height] = value

    def copy(self):
        new = Grid(self.width, self.height)
        for ln in range(self.height):
            new[ln] = self[ln].copy()
        return new

    def update_cell(self, ln: int, col: int) -> None:
        current_cell = self[ln][col]
        # do not update cells that don't move :
        if not current_cell.is_moving():
            return
        # get the future position of the cell
        new_ln, new_col = current_cell.get_new_coordinates(ln,
col)
        future_spot = self[new_ln][new_col]
        # if the spot is occupied
        if future_spot.is_moving():
            self[ln][col].on_collision()
        # if the spot is empty
        else:
            self[new_ln][new_col] = current_cell.copy()
```

```python
            # self[ln][col].stop_moving()

    def raster_update(self) -> None:
        for ln, line in enumerate(self.grid):
            for col, cell in enumerate(line.contents):
                self.update_cell(ln, col)

    def random_update(self) -> None:
        # find the first random ln, col containing a moving
cell
        ln, col = randint(0, self.height), randint(0,
self.width)
        while not self[ln][col].is_moving():
            ln, col = randint(0, self.height), randint(0,
self.width)
        self.update_cell(ln, col)

    def random_walk_update(self):
        if not hasattr(self, 'random_walk_x'):
            self.random_walk_x = 0
        if not hasattr(self, 'random_walk_y'):
            self.random_walk_y = 0
        current_cell = Cell()
        while not current_cell.is_moving():
            self.random_walk_x += randint(-1, 1)
            self.random_walk_y += randint(-1, 1)
            current_cell = self[self.random_walk_y]
[self.random_walk_x]
        self.update_cell(self.random_walk_y,
self.random_walk_x)


    def sync_update(self) -> None:
        new = self.copy()
        for ln, line in enumerate(self.grid):
            for col, cell in enumerate(line.contents):
                current_cell = self[ln][col]
                if not current_cell.is_moving():
                    continue
                # get the future position of the cell
                new_ln, new_col =
current_cell.get_new_coordinates(ln, col)
                future_spot = self[new_ln][new_col]
                # if the spot is occupied
                if future_spot.is_moving():
                    new[ln][col].on_collision()
                # if the spot is empty
                else:
                    new[new_ln][new_col] = current_cell.copy()
                    # fix the previous cell in place. This
keeps a trail for each cell
```

```
                        # new[ln][col].stop_moving()
        for ln in range(self.height):
            self[ln] = new[ln]



    def __str__(self) -> str:
        res = ""
        for line in self.grid:
            res += "\n"
            for cell in line.contents:
                res += str(cell)
        return res

    def curses_print(self, stdscr, block=False) -> None:
        for ln, line in enumerate(self.grid):
            for col, cell in enumerate(line.contents):
                stdscr.addstr(ln, col*2, cell.get_str(),
cell.get_curses_color())
        stdscr.refresh()
        if block:
            stdscr.getkey()


def init_curses(stdscr):
    # stdscr.nodelay(1)
    # initialize colors
    curses.start_color()
    curses.use_default_colors()
    for i in range(0, curses.COLORS):
        curses.init_pair(i + 1, i, -1)

def main(stdscr):
    init_curses(stdscr)

    tty_size = get_terminal_size()
    width = tty_size.columns // 2 - 1
    height = tty_size.lines
    grid = Grid(width, height)

    # RND_SQUARE_SIZE = 4
    # for ln in range(height//2 - RND_SQUARE_SIZE, height//2 +
RND_SQUARE_SIZE):
    #      for col in range(width//2 - RND_SQUARE_SIZE, width//
2 + RND_SQUARE_SIZE):
    #          if random() < .3:
    #              grid[ln][col].randomize()

    for _ in range(2):
        X = randint(0, width)
        Y = randint(0, height)
```

```python
        RND_SQUARE_SIZE = 10
        for ln in range(Y - RND_SQUARE_SIZE, Y +
RND_SQUARE_SIZE):
            for col in range(X - RND_SQUARE_SIZE, X +
RND_SQUARE_SIZE):
                if random() < .1:
                    grid[ln][col].randomize()

    # grid[10][10].dx = 0
    # grid[10][10].dy = 1
    stdout.write(str(grid))
    generation = 0
    while True:
        generation += 1
        dep = time()
        grid.curses_print(stdscr)
        while time() - dep < 1/50:
            grid.random_update()
            # grid.sync_update()
            # grid.random_walk_update()
            # grid.raster_update()


if __name__ == '__main__':
    curses.wrapper(main)
```

40
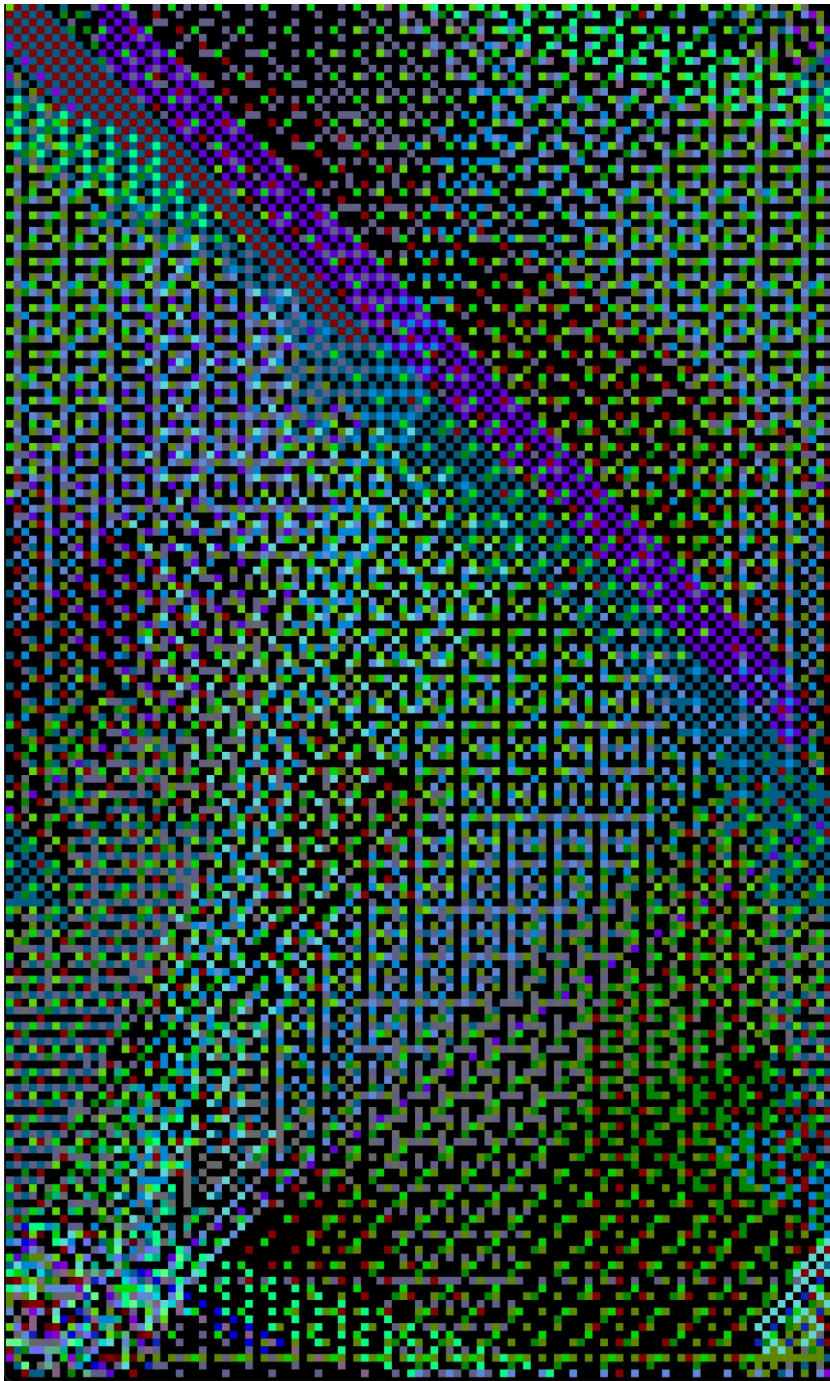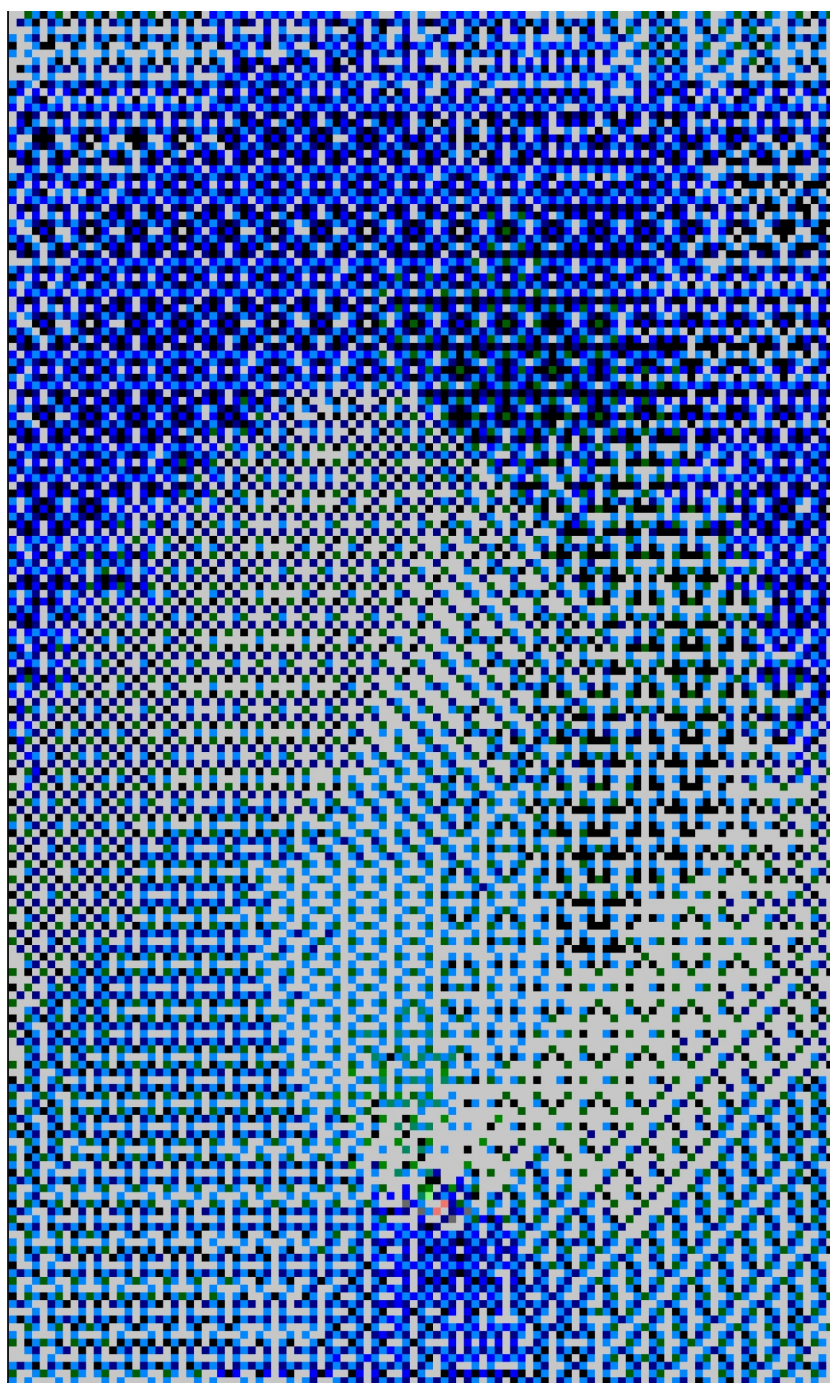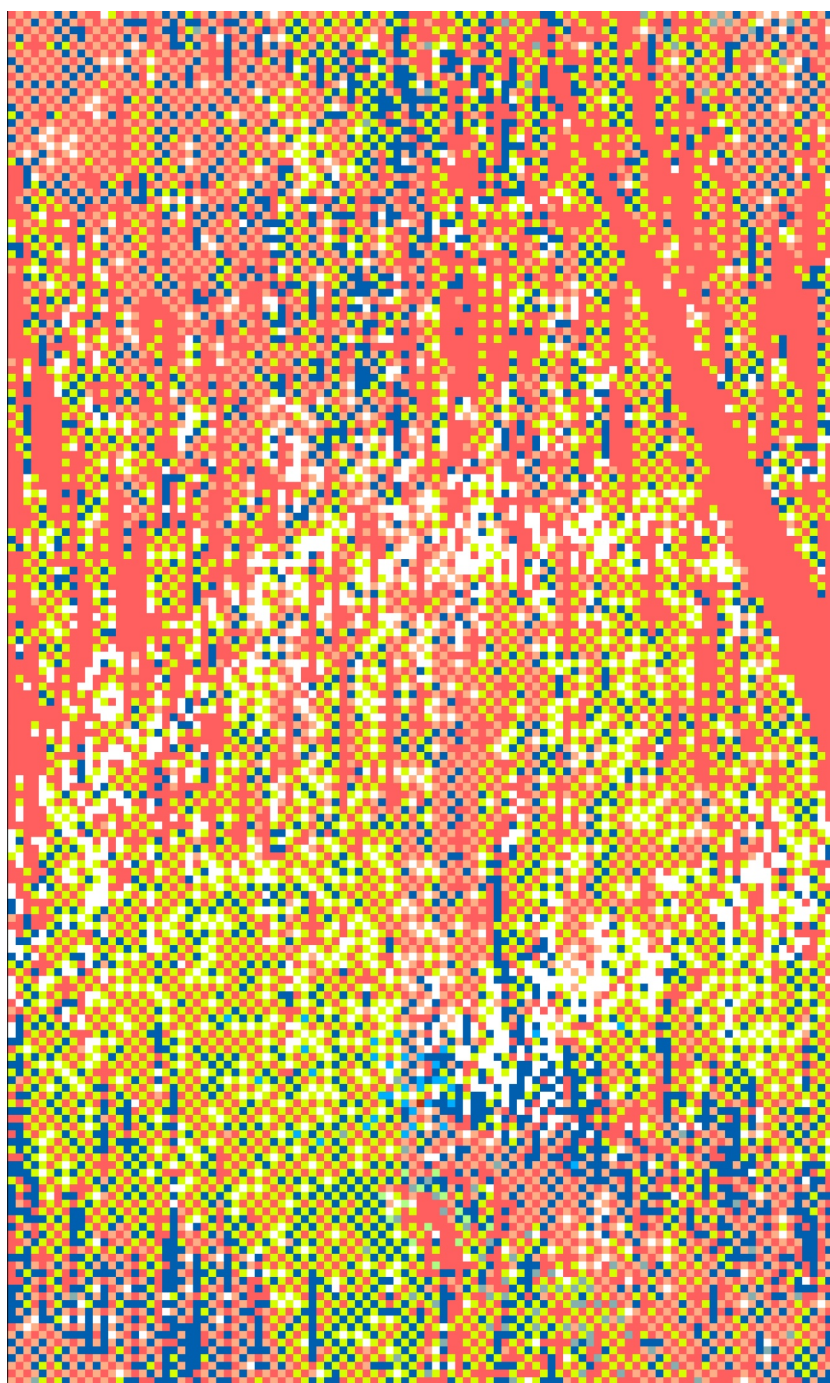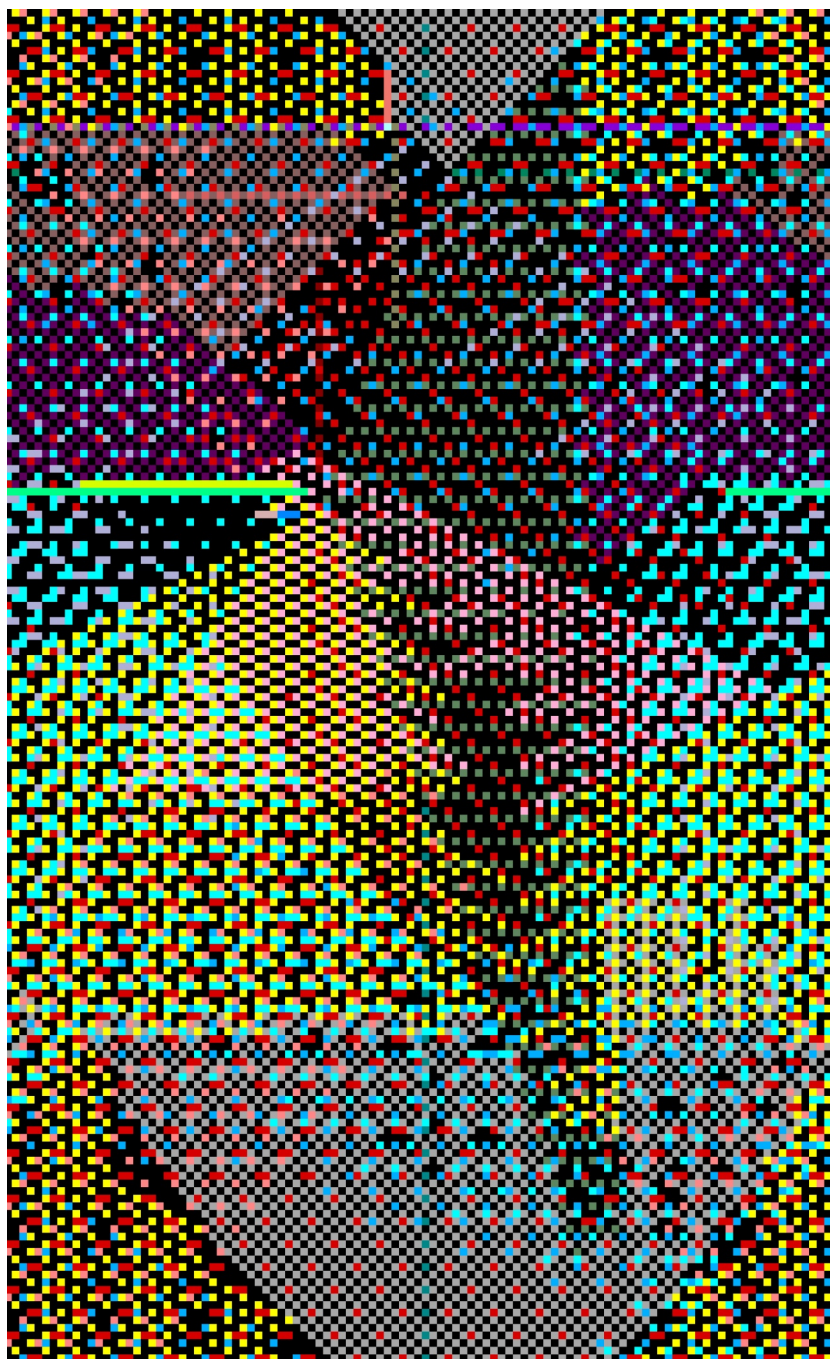
Worlds's Worst Tarot Deck
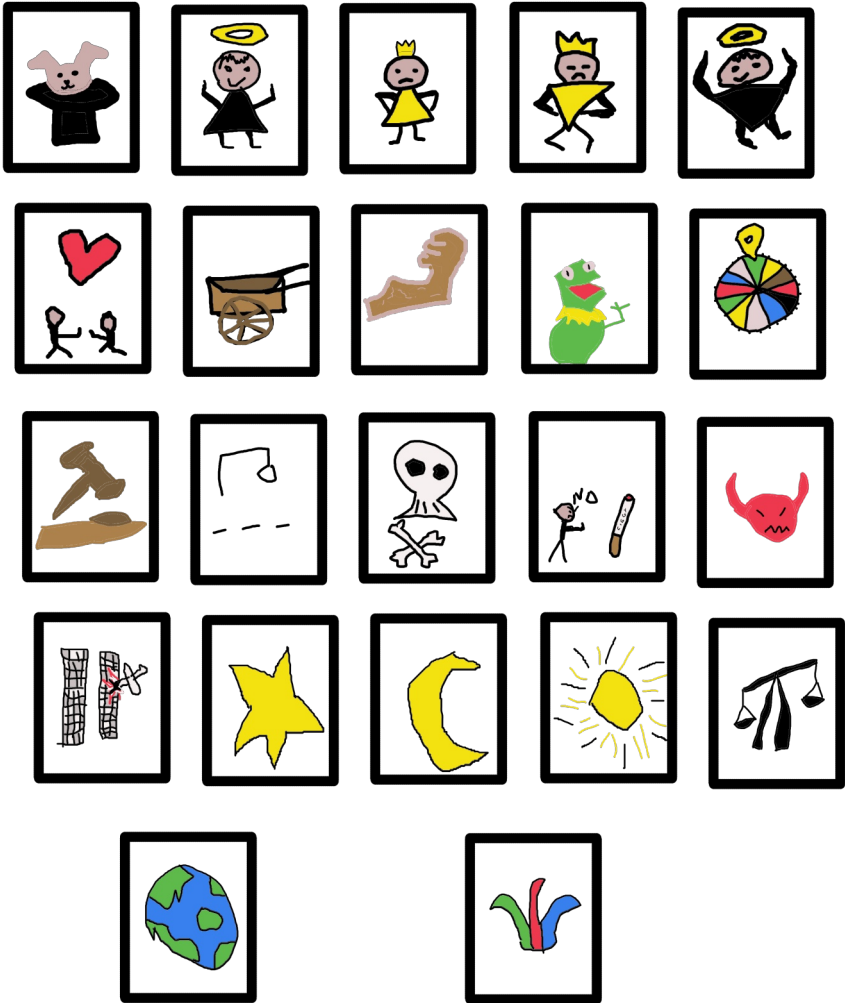
haiku by kindrobot

=> now
explaination
these were my posts on
t4t, a smol social
dating/classifieds

=> 4 days ago
oops
post-nut clarity
oh, we should move the
sharps box
off bed on table

=> 4 days ago
walk
same destination
but a different way to walk
with friends and new friends

=> 5 days ago
jab
both on the same arm
wow, I feel like shit today
still glad I did it

=> 8 days ago
transmission
pick up receiver
switch over to channel 3
the line is open

=> 9 days ago
managing
no one got fired
we didn't miss any meetings
meets expectations

=> 16 days ago
bah
bah bah bah bah bah
bah bah bah bah bah bah
bah
bah bah bah bah bah

=> 16 days ago
cleaning
cleaning our room means
confronting our old past
lives
and shook what we find

=> 17 days ago
roots
roots grow but don't know
where or why they'll go and
go
following the flow

=> 20 days ago
sudo apt update
the system changes
the mission remains the
same
we say, "keep it weird"

=> 27 days ago
rest (haiku)
It did not get done
'must've not been
determined
I wonder what is

=> 28 days ago
spark (haiku)
while everyone sleeps
we will get the thing done
we are doing the thing

=> 29 days ago
dress (haiku)
two-some years ago
this dress was flat as board
now it's an hour glass

=> about a month ago
system (haiku)
Cooperative
but my friends call us Coop
it's nice to meet you

=> about a month ago
personality (haiku)

I don't want to be
smart, wealthy, or
"successful".
I want to be kind.

=> about a month ago
mixed episode (haiku)
feel it all backwads
the sun plays drums with the
rain
bird with a spiral

=> about a month ago
coming down (haiku)
precariously
admire all the humans
trust the humans

=> about a month ago
manic haiku
electric grasps
buckle up and hold on tight
leave town tomorrow

Tilde Town Transit, by pilosophos

Label Maker by Lu

Photo of a label printed using an analog label-maker. The label features the words "tilde town," preceded by a symbol of a computer, followed by three tildes, and enclosed in a train border.

Pachiya, by mio

He did not know where he was going.

The car hurtled along, leaving behind imposing government buildings and a park teeming with people and picnics, until the blare of horns and other cars whizzing by in the adjacent lanes left and right told him they were reversing along the road. "What are you doing?" he shouted to the driver from the backseat of the cab, "Stop!"

The cab pulled over to the sidewalk atnd he stumbled out — or at least that was what he presumably did as he barely remembered opening the door and paying the driver in his daze. But walked he did. Several steps, maybe a hundred meters ahead, a marching band was playing an anthem inside a parking lot. A score of band members similarly dressed in pristine blue and white uniforms stood facing the street, their brass instruments gleaming under the streetlights.

A cool evening breeze was starting to clear his head a little and he strolled more confidently past the small group of passers-by that had gathered around the spectacle. It was not the band that had caught his attention but the short row of shops behind them. At one end was a shabu-shabu restaurant — unremarkable fare and he wasn't hungry. The other two to the left, however, he had not seen before. The façade of the first was painted entirely in pastel pink, a life-size cardboard cutout of a smiling anime girl and the profuse babble of words on the window signs announcing itself as a manga rental store. Sandwiched between was a drab grey affair purporting to provide both entertainment and refreshments. He supposed he wanted to be

entertained, and stepped though the open door of the store in grey into a small room, where he was immediately met with silence. Along the wall to his left were three wide pachinko machines, lights blinking back at him as they awaited their next player. Next to them near the entrance were a pair of gachapon machines, a handful of trinkets pressed against the transparent and slightly dusty plastic enclosure. Near the back wall, a black steep staircase led up to a second floor. On the right and directly facing the machines was a wooden counter, with a leafy plant and a small monitor mounted with a metal arm clamp. A platformer was in progress on the screen, the gamer almost hidden where she sat behind the counter. His grasp of the local language was rusty at best, but despite this and the drinks he had earlier still working their way through his system, he mustered a feeble "Is this a ... pachinko hall?"

The young woman with a blond ponytail at the counter smiled politely, and between a few familiar words plus some gesturing, he understood it was a net café that served snacks. Like a teahouse, she explained. He turned to look around again and was accosted by another man attired like a monk, who shoved four candy skewers, each half a meter long, towards him. Two were candy floss, while the others held gummies in the shape of cranes and ice cream cones. When he made no move to take them, the man selected the ice cream cone skewer and made to hand it to him. At this moment his body reacted for him and he told the man he had to go. "That would still be 1000 yen," said the cosplaying monk blithely. The price of entry, his addled brain supplied. Suddenly he urgently needed to get out. Rummaging in his left trouser pocket for his wallet, he pulled out a bill and without waiting for the other to take it, fled under the cover of night and the distant blare of horns.

line rider is Fucking Awesome actually

~moss

Line Rider is a flash game from 2006, but more recently Line Rider is a tool for movement art and/or visual art, primarily used to make tracks that sync to music. And just like music, Line Rider tracks come in genres!

Quirk tracks are characterized by techniques that involve abusing the way lines pull points of bosh's skeleton. These focus mostly (if not entirely) on the movement art aspect of Line Rider. Despite the TAS-like nature of creating tracks, where you can edit and improve as long as you want, there is a lot of skill that goes into quirk tracks and many quirkers have a distinct style of movement despite having access to all of the same tricks. An extreme example of this stylistic difference is the comparison of Ride Liner's *HAM* vs. MrBlueSky's *Soul Shine*.

HAM, a very technical high speed "Powerquirk" track.
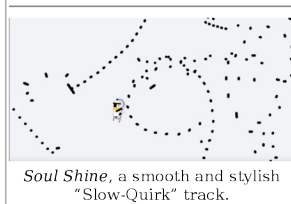
Soul Shine, a smooth and stylish "Slow-Quirk" track.
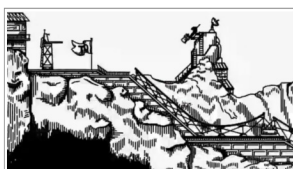
TechDawg's *Transcendental*

Branches/Jade's *My red little fox*

Scenery is probably the oldest tradition in track making, with early popular tracks focusing on landscapes built from dense collections of lines. These early scenery tracks were heavily influenced by the work of TechDawg, a professional artist who was creating tracks in the early days of Line Rider. This type of landscape scenery isn't so common nowadays, but the addition of color layers has added room for much more variance in artstyle. Branches/Jade's *My red little fox* is a very recent track with excellent scenery that changes throughout!

This barely scratches the surface of all the art that's been made in this 18 (!!!) year old flash game, if you think this is as fascinating as I do and you'd like to see more recent tracks, there is a channel in the Line Rider Discord with a thread for each new release!

Wall

weekless sty
moonlit mine
it's alright
till tonight
when the cry
opens my eye
oh, why is I
why it ain't
why none fly
as in my bly
guess it's I
who must cry

Fright

t'was a night
I was it
what a fright
wasn't mine
bloody knife
silverware
didn't tip
couldn't bare

Among the Moss Piglets: The First Image of a Tardigrade (1773)

Hello, World by rogbeer

I've been spending ten painful months - and counting -
on how to make this little latte art. in the "real world".
with scary humans. so please excuse me for not existing
in cyberspace these days.

Places by shlewislee

This was one of my favorite cafes somewhere in Gwangju, South Korea. It's not very often that I visit Gwangju so when I do, I always made a visit there. A few weeks ago, I found out the place had closed; not permanently, but it's said to be moving to a new, yet undecided location.

This place, located in a secluded corner of a market somewhere in Seoul, is one of my new favorite restaurants. I don't usually *try* new places, not to mention when the dish is not something that I particularly enjoy(which was the case for this place), but I did and I found this gem. It's the best haejang-guk I've ever had.

Time goes and I lose places I loved. But I also find places I get to love.

Sandwich Tutorial by Someone

so you want to make a sandwich, here's how:

1. take your bread
wait, you need to get bread first, backtrack

1. get bread
2. take your bread
wait, how do you get bread without money

1. get paid
2. buy bread
3. take your bread
uh, you need to do work to get paid...dangit...

1. get a job
2. get paid
3. buy bread
4. take your bread
they're asking for half your lifetime of experience...wait, you need to have the required education!

1. go to school
but you need to be born first!

1. come into existance

but for that you need someone to create you!

1. get parents
but they would need to meet first!

alright this is getting complicated, let's make it simple:

1. invent the universe
2. ???
3. put things on bread
4. profi^H^H^H^H^Heat and enjoy!

tadaa! it's as simple as 1-2-3-4! tune in next time to learn how to aquire a murder!

AYOUNGPERSONSGUIDETOART
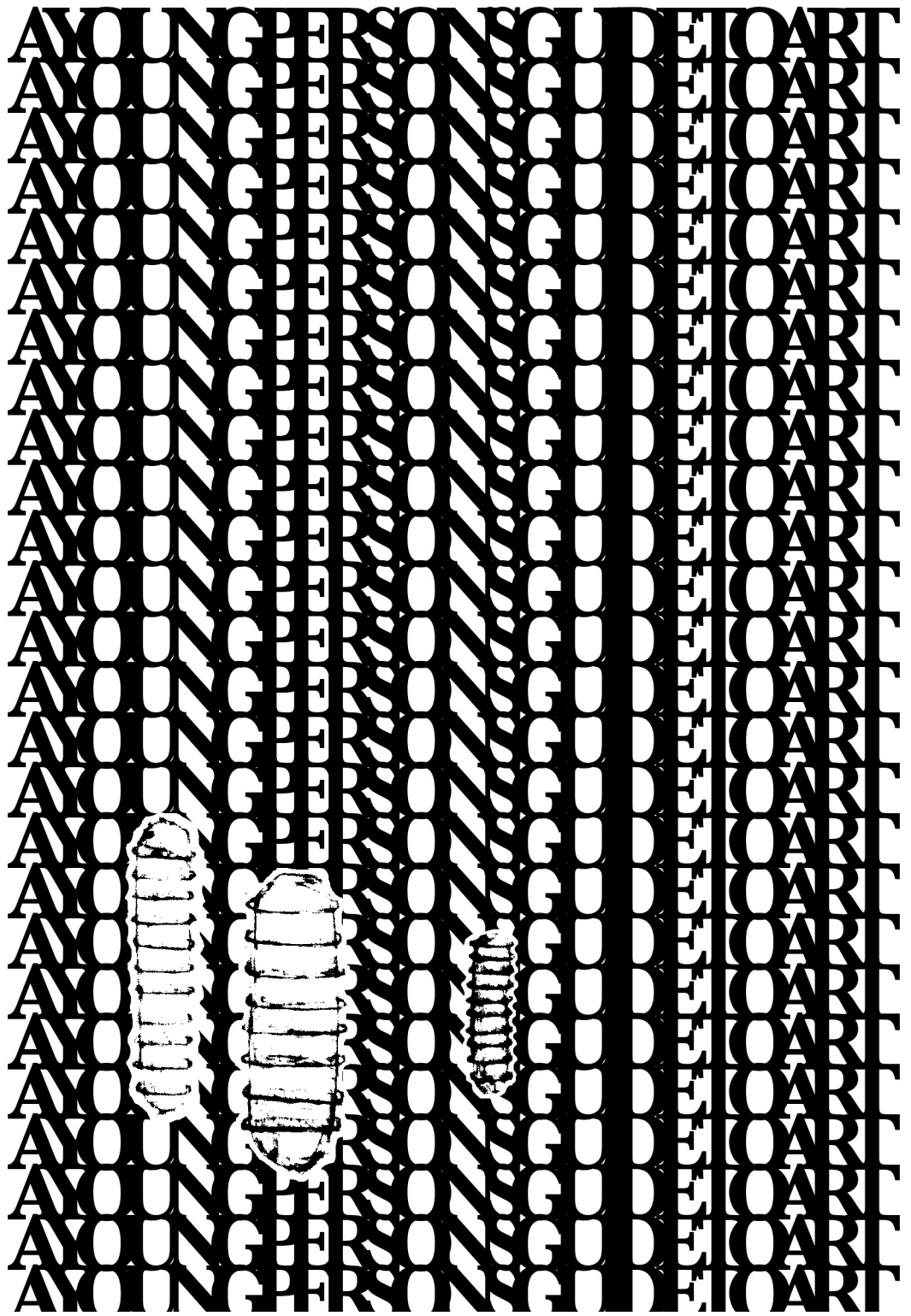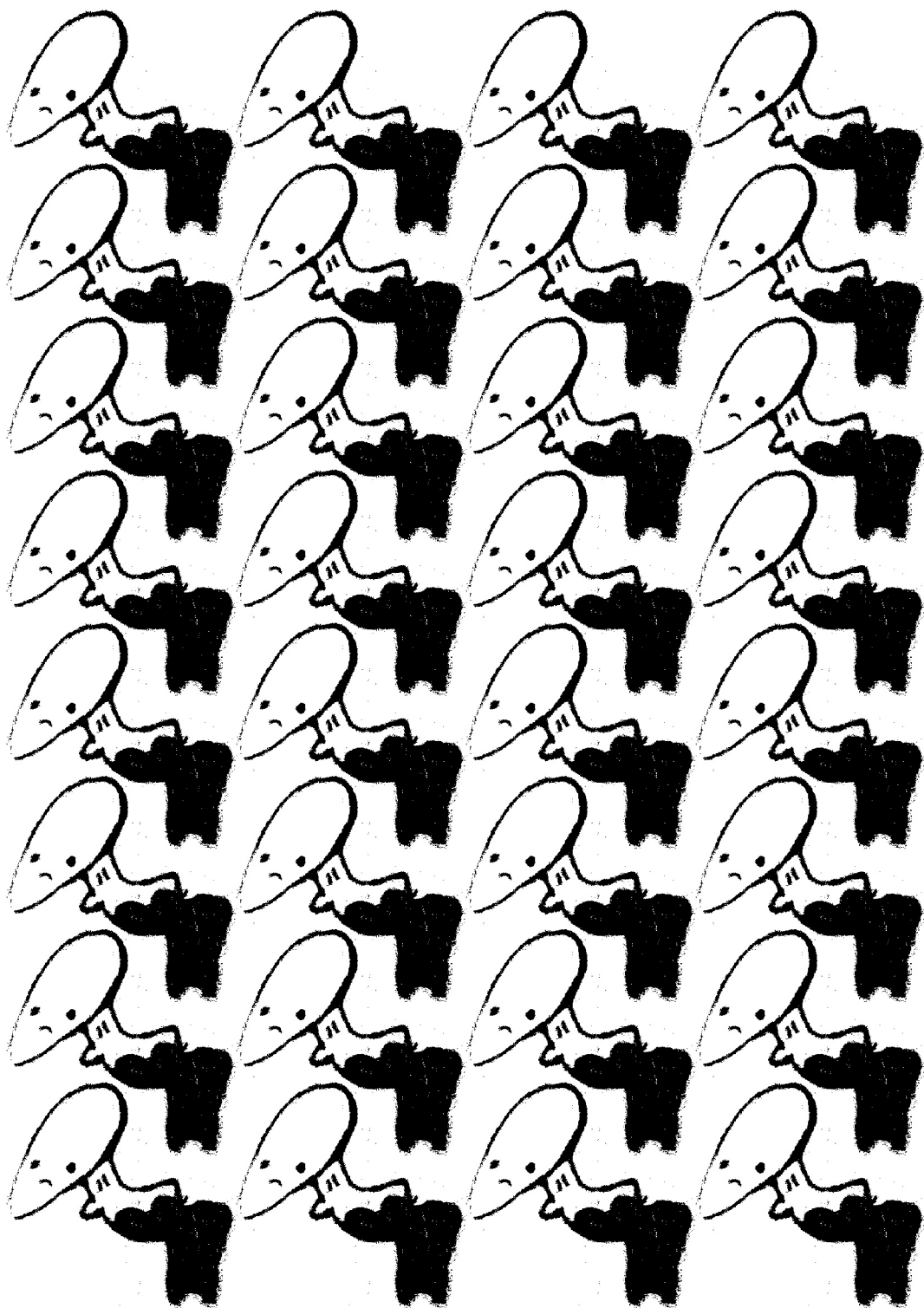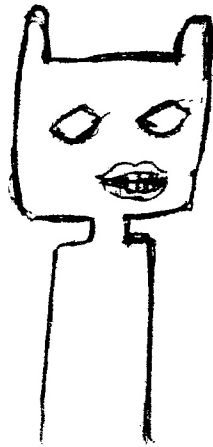
flub
lub
lub

my audacity label track for a recording of an eighty-minute yamaha QY70/AM
radio/cassette jam, october 2024

[Label Track.txt]

0.000000	0.000000	SECTOR1
228.007400	228.007400	korean sangin
673.308573	673.308573	N.O.
1217.195805	1217.195805	bass slappin time
1364.085057	1364.085057	roll the drums
2150.141057	2150.141057	guitar starts appearing around here
2308.940249	2308.940249	drums ending
2505.087739	2505.087739	boat
2727.376119	2727.376119	good pitch bend here
2773.924132	2773.924132	SECTOR2

photophobia

css art
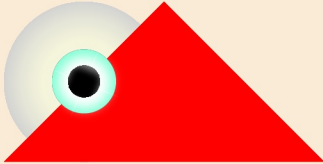

```
#dry-eyes { position: relative; height: 5rem; width: 5rem;
border-radius: 100%; background: ivory; background-image:
radial-gradient(circle, beige 1.5rem, lightgray, crimson); }
#dry-eyes:after { content: ''; position: absolute; height:
1rem; width: 1rem; top: calc(50% - 0.5rem); left: calc(50% -
0.5rem); border-radius: 100%; background: black; box-shadow: 0
0.5px 5px white, 0 0 0 0.5rem aquamarine, inset 0 2px 3px 0
rgba(255, 255, 255, 0.5), 0 0 0 8px black; rotate: 22.5deg; }
#pyramid { border-left: 5rem solid transparent; border-right:
5rem solid transparent; border-bottom: 5rem solid red; }
```

this is my first time experimenting with css
drawing. you can see some neat examples of css
art and design at lynn fisher's website
https://a.singlediv.com/, a project they kept
going from may 2014 until may of this year.

copilot

i wrote some of the prose for this zine
submission in vs code until copilot drove me
crazy with constant suggestions.

countless nagging reminders of uncrystalized
morals and muddy ethics. some of them quite
funny, actually.

too late, copilot. i see only an antithesis to
a slow, intentional, aesthetic experience of
technology.

i'm not sure if i'm ready to be a cyborg. i'm not sure if i'm ready to be a cyborg. i'm not sure if i'm ready to be a cyborg. i'm not sure if i'm ready to be a cyborg.

```
··<p>
······I·wrote·some·of·the·prose·for·this·zine·submission·in·VS·Code
······until·Copilot·drove·me·crazy·constant·suggestions·that·served
······as·nagging·reminders·of·uncrystalized·morals·and·ethics·the
······constant·internal·conflict·of·engaging·with·technology·that
······saves·time·and·energy·while·also·being·a·tool·of·surveillance
··</p>

aside>
```

from thyne own lips

```
··<p>
······I·wrote·some·of·the·prose·for·this·zine·submission·in·VS·Code
······until·Copilot·drove·me·crazy·constant·suggestions·that·served
······as·nagging·reminders·of·uncrystalized·morals·and·ethics·the
······constant·internal·conflict·of·engaging·with·technology·that
······saves·time·and·energy·but·also·erodes·the·human·spirit.
··</p>

aside>
```

from thyne own lips

```
··<p>
······I·wrote·some·of·the·prose·for·this·zine·submission·in·VS·Code
······until·Copilot·drove·me·crazy·constant·suggestions·that·served
······as·nagging·reminders·of·uncrystalized·morals·and·ethics·and·the
······constant·internal·conflict·of·engaging·with·technology·that
······saves·time·and·energy·when·that·type·of·engagement·is
······antithetical·to·prioritizing·the·experience·of·technology·over
······it's·consumption. I'm·not·sure·if·I'm·making·sense.·I'm·not·sure
··</p>
```

from thyne own lips

```
··<p>
······I·wrote·some·of·the·prose·for·this·zine·submission·in·VS·Code
······until·Copilot·drove·me·crazy·constant·suggestions·that·served
······as·nagging·reminders·of·uncrystalized·morals·and·ethics·and·the
······constant·internal·conflict·of·engaging·with·technology·that
······saves·time·and·energy·when·that·type·of·engagement·is
······antithetical·to·prioritizing·the·experience·of·technology·over
······it's·consumption·and·production. I'm·not·sure·if·I'm·ready·to
··</p>
```

from thyne own lips

```
  <p>
     I wrote some of the prose for this zine submission in VS Code
     until Copilot drove me crazy constant suggestions. Countless
     nagging reminders of uncrystalized morals and ethics. The
     internal conflict of using time-saving technology when I value
     engaging with technology as an experience versus something to
     consume and produce. I'm not sure if I'm ready to be a cyborg.
  </p>
```

from thyne own lips

```
  <p>
     I wrote some of the prose for this zine submission in VS Code
     until Copilot drove me crazy constant suggestions that served
     as nagging reminders of uncrystalized morals and ethics and
     the fact that I am a terrible writer. I am a terrible writer.
  </p>

aside>
```

from thyne own lips

q.q

found-text poem, early 2012

[untitled 2012.txt]

01 Sea / river
02 Coast
03 Beach
04 Bridge

05 Land
06 Forest
07 Mountain
08 Road

09 HQ
10 City
11 Factory / port / airport
12 Other buildings

Magic is a Mixtape, by piusbird

My bedroom is going to get remodeled at some point in the hopefully, not to distant future, or i guess remodeled is the wrong word for this. New Furniture, and a new carpet at any rate. I would say I am remodeling, but when you're on public assistance and need this done, you don't get much of a choice in what is done. You can make suggestions, advocate for your position. But ultimately your space is built by the lowest bidder.

It means you may end up with spaces that are just wrong Accessibility wise. And this leads to a unique form of helpless rage. If. Even the building fights you, the furniture taunts you , and the floor reminds you of how worthless you are.

But if the past 15 years have taught me anything, it's that even spaces built by discrimination and indifference. Can be transformed, and sanctified, by the power of Hope, Love and Joy.

So while the aide agencies dicker, While the doctors write letters. I make my plans. How will i transform the aftermath, into a something that brings me Joy..

Which brings me quite neatly to the fun part of this article... I have been making mix CDs.. Come with me as I build one.

Let's start with a good concept... Let's go with Chiptune/Indie Music. Meaning Tracks go in pairs... One Chiptune, and One Indie piece, Related thematically somehow..

Track 1: This is Home (Live From Home) Jon Foreman 2020

Track 2: Your Heart is a Muscle the Size of your Fist (2A03 Cover) Funklord Earl 2021

You Might ask, Hey Pius.. How do mix CDs relate to

your bedroom remodel. Simple I've decided.. That in so far as is possible. My New bedroom will be an Low Internet Zone. So no goodbye netflix hello, Blu Ray, Goodbye Audible App, Hello Libation, Goodbye YTMusic, Hello CDs/MP3s.

Track 3: Clear: CCS Clear Card Hen Op (English Cover) AnimLee 2018

Track 4: Catch You, Catch Me (famitracker cover) Spriter Gors 2012

Low internet zone not withstanding, I still like having access to all the music/videos/and stuff. That we've produced in the last century.. But let's face it Algorithms took off because there was just too much of it. And corporations were bad at curation If I'm to make the low internet zone thing work.. I have to pre curate. Hence the mix CDs..

Ahh can you see how this CD wants to be.. I think i can.. Let's try

Track 5: Junk Bond Trader Elliot Smith 2002

Track 6: Smooth Criminal (SNES Remake) TankMarko 2023

I'm finding that forging these artifacts, helps my mental health in other ways as well. At least it's turning me fear about this imitate violation of my personal space, into hope for a better life.

Now we need more Magic References, but let's tighten up the theme, and do a bit of foreshadowing.

Track 7: Clemency for the Wizard King: The Mountain Goats 2019

Track 8: Spear of Justice Toby Fox 2014

I'll leave exactly how to make a mix CD in 2024, as an exercise. For the reader... k3b is still the GOAT for this, and ffmpeg is your friend..

Track 9: Light Gives Heat: Jars of clay 2003

Track 10: Smile Bomb VRC6 Remix recme 2023

Another thing i find fascinating about mix CDs is the generational divide in how they are perccived. People of My Dad's Vintage only mention how annoying they were to create. Talk about how much better streaming is, they don't seem to see any of the downsides

My Generation Seems to miss them. I hear stories about how much fun creating custom mixes and giving them as gifts was..

And the teen/youth set. Find all physical media to be mysterious and either annoying or intriguing depending on the kid,.

The connection between the friction involved in using the technology, and the emotional framing you view it with is something that needs to be explored more I think.

Track 11: I shall not Want Audrey Assad 2008

Track 12: If Wrapped in Kindness (Piano Solo) (From "Kiki's Delivery Service Soundtrack") · Maffesfish 2020

Burned CDs have a lifespan of about ten years give or take. The plastic lasts forever, but the dyes used in burning fade over time.. It's like some fantasy enchantment that must be renewed. Least it fade.

At the same time.. I believe everyone involved in the creation of anything, can pass on a bit of themselves through their creation. If they work hard enough. That and the transformative power of universal compassion are the only forms of magic in which i unreservedly believe.

This exercise was not about the CD, it was about the Transformation of Fear into Hope, and of Longing into Joy, and thence to pass it on to you.

May all your creations be Magical, and May your Love be Strong

Be Well

Friends

Signalnine's Sourdough Corner

Here are the things I've learned about baking airy, chewy, crusty sourdough. There are many styles of sourdough, the one I'm talking about today is a high hydration, (relatively) rapid rise white flour loaf, inspired by Tartine bakery in San Francisco, my version is higher hydration and therefore less dense. Disclaimer: this is a high-effort recipe. You can certainly find easier methods out there, this is just the best loaf I've personally been able to produce after about five years of baking sourdough regularly.

First, a few tips about your starter: The state of your starter will impact the rise and proof time of your loaf as well as taste and texture. For this style of sourdough we want a yeast culture that is as active as possible. The best way to achieve that is to observe your starter and feed it on a schedule that lines up with when you're going to use it. Start out feeding your starter once a day in the morning. You want about 50/50 water and flour. Mark the level your start is at after it's been fed. Then, watch it every couple of hours and find out how long it takes to reach it's highest level in the jar before deflating. This is where you want the start to be in its feeding cycle when you begin fermentation of your bread dough. Also, experiment with how much starter to discard at the beginning of the feeding cycle, I usually discard 50% on feeding days and 90% the night before baking. You can also try feeding twice a day if you have the time and inclination. I try to keep my starter very active for at least two days before I bake and store in the fridge if I'm not going to bake for a week or more.

Use a good high-protein flour. More gluten = stronger dough, strong dough = better crumb structure.

Some recommendations (with protein percentages):

Tony Gemignani's "California Artisan" Type 00 Pizza Flour - 15% Shipton Canadian Strong White Bread Flour - 14.1-15.3% Central Milling Organic High Mountain - 13.5% King Arthur Bread Flour - 12.7%

Feel free to use rye, whole wheat, einkorn, spelt, or kamut for variation in taste and texture but I don't recommend exceeding 10% for the style we're going for.

Aim for 90%-100% hydration (look up bakers' percentages if you dont know what this means), but not all at once. It can be helpful to start with lower hydration when you're still getting the hang of working with sourdough.

Here's my recipe: 95% water 20% starter (sometimes called leaven in this context) 1.5% salt 2% honey (optional, you can also use diastatic dry malt)

For example: I usually start with 450g of flour and add 350g of (filtered) water. No salt or starter yet, combine and let it autolyse for 20 min to a couple hours. Then, add your starter. Knead it until it comes together and stops sticking to your hands or the mixer. Oil a large bowl and add the dough Mix 78g of warm water with 7g of salt and about a tablespoon of honey until dissolved. Add the mixture to the bowl. Wait half an hour and then stretch the dough about as far as it will go without tearing and fold it over itself. The salt/water/honey mixture will slowly absorb into the dough, this will take two to three hours as you repeatedly stretch and fold the dough every 30 min or so. After the liquid is absorbed let it continue to bulk rise until its roughly at least doubled in volume, this should take 4.5-6 hours depending on the temperature. Then, carefully plop the dough out onto a floured surface and shape it into a boule, creating some tension as you gather the underside and fold together. Put it into a banneton, I use a clean well-floured cotton dishcloth to line mine to prevent it from sticking. Use more flour than seems reasonable, you can always brush it off

later. Then, either let it proof at room temp for about 2 hours or in the fridge overnight. It's done proofing when you can poke it and it fills back in very slowly. Preheat a dutch oven in the oven at 450F. Carefully invert the banneton onto a piece of parchment paper, cut the top of the loaf with a sharp knife or razor and place into the dutch oven. Remove the lid of the dutch oven about 15-20 min into the bake. 45 min total time is usually about right, but as long as the color looks right you're usually good. Use a temp probe and look for 205F if you're unsure.

Good luck! If you have questions or would like me to troubleshoot your sourdough email me at gabe@signalnine.net and I'll do my best to help.

"In this house, we believe: EMACS"

lifetimes / familiarity / memory / change
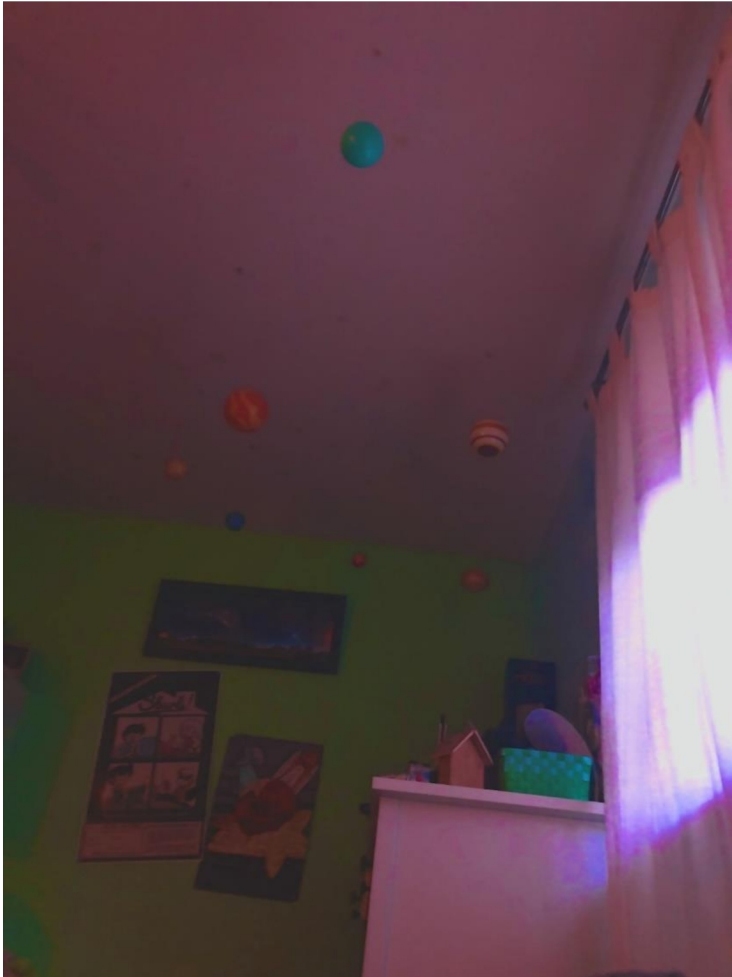
i would describe the sound of the
zipper on a suitcase as hollow. i'm not
sure what it is, i suspect it's the
difference in material of a suitcase as
opposed to fabric. it's a noise that
i've familiarised myself with. it's a
sign that i am about to leave home, or
go home. it's a sign of change. a
familiar sign, to signal an incoming
lack of familiarity, a lack of
connection, a lack of worldliness.

there are old photos lining the wall of
my house's staircase. as you would
expect, the subject of a decent portion
of these photos reflects my own face
back at me, younger. different. i look
at her as if she was my sister, a
sister who died somewhere between the
ages of seven to ten. i can't identify
what emotion this brings me. i can
remember most of the photos being
taken, though how much of that memory
is fabricated i couldn't begin to tell
you. the memories are preserved behind
a screen.

google docs has a record of my writing
from the age of 13 onwards. a few days
ago i leafed through things from 14, or
15. the writing conjures images of
myself at that age. someone different,
too. not a sister, but… i'm not sure
how i would describe them.

i will be on a plane tomorrow. of
course, flying is a transitional
experience. the last ground you see is
a completely different place, miles
away from the ground you land on, and
between is a vast, near endless expanse
of clouds and sky and stars. you touch
down on the ground. a different place,
a different state of being.

a new period begins, and the old one is
preserved in only memory.

[7.11.2023]

tilde30 by elly

Last year we did two runs of tilde30, a group stuff-doing exercise where we set goals for a 30-day period and then encouraged and supported each other as we did them. Some people succeeded, some people failed, and everyone had a good time and learned a lot. There will be more tilde30s in 2025!!

ps see https://tilde.town/~elly/tilde30.txt


```
dozens@bbj | ~elly: tilde30!
                          — > > T I L D E T O W N < < —
▌0 ~elly 07:48 2024/06/01

Good morning townies! Today is June 1 and that means it is the first day of the
first ever tilde30! We have *24* people who have signed up (by putting "tilde30"
and a description of their project in their .plan) which is incredible and a lot
more people than I was expecting.

If you're like "what is this tilde30 thing?", go check out:

=> https://tilde.town/~elly/tilde30.txt

or come visit us in #tilde30 on IRC.

But that's not why we're here today! We're here to see the list of cool projects
people on tilde.town are working on. Here's that list, fresh from everyone's
.plan files:

* ~acdw will be speccing out and writing a reference implementation of their
  "postcard protocol"
* ~agafnd will be taking a series of photographs and making a collage out of
  them

[Q]Back [RET]Menu [C]ompose [^R]eply [R]efresh [0-9]Goto [B/T]End [</>]Jump[X]64 [/]Search
```

First entry (truncated) of the first tilde30 bbj thread in June 2024. This was a super fun project not just because of all the rad stuff everybody made, but also because of all the ways to engage with it! There was a bbj thread, an irc channel. And the primary way to log and share plans and progress was via one's .plan and .project file, making it a finger(1) first endeavor.

About townawards.md

These are the slides from the 2024 tildecon Townies awards. The content was written by vilmibm, and formatted and presented by dozens.
The slides are written in a specific dialect of markdown to be exported with pandoc as reveal.js slides using the following invocation:

```
pandoc \
  --standalone \
  --embed-resources=true \
  --incremental=true \
  --from=markdown \
  --to=revealjs \
  --slide-level=3 \
  --output=awards.html \
  townawards.md
```

Congratulations to all the nominees and winners and in person attendees and remote attendees and each and every townie for being part of a such a fantastic community!

The Townies

2024 Tidle Town Awards

::: notes
hello and welcome
to the 2024 tilde town awards!
affectionately nicknamed The Townies

i'm your host dozens
and i'm hear to read you categories and winners
determined by vilmibm

there are multiple awards per category.
and the categories are:

1) HOME DIRECTORIES,
2) SOCIAL, and
3) TOWNIES CHOICE
:::

1. HOMEDIRS

most bytes in home dir

-    artemis

- 13G

most files in home dir

- thyme
- 451,184 files
- the reason why is hilarious and i recommend looking

most dot files

- vshih

most .txt files

- endorphant

most cursed home directory

- agafnd
- (see \~agafnd/cursed)

biggest public_html

- sose

most secretive user

most 0600 files

- mjbmr
- 23,386 secret files

most executable files

- brighty
- 6,473 executables
- followed by minerobber at 4,781
- shout out to dzwdz in third at 3,803

biggest gopher hole

- tomasino
- 74,491
- runner up fst at 28,177

biggest gemini capsule

- vidak
- 163,821
- runner up maxine at 61,769

coolest homedir

user whose home directory mentions the word "cool"
the most

- vilmibm with 61,408
- (4x the runner up)
- runner up bear

most feelings

(most lines written to feels)

- pawky
- 316,009 lines
- (That's 20x the runner up)

- runner up owl
- 14,403

::: notes
edit:

pawky later volunteered that this didn't seem right
and it was discovered that their feels numbers were
indeed
artificially inflated by the inclusion an entire
python venv
in their feels directory

we don't know where owl's numbers came from

the townies with the most .txt files
in their ~/.ttbp/entries/ directory are:

apreche: 625
bx: 252
:::

most haiku

- emiltayl
- see \~emiltayl/public_html/haikus

fewest files in home dir

- ninlenna and walfisch
- ZERO!
- runner up mcclung at 2

longest filename

- extratone
- 225 characters
- 1st runnerup mischk
- 174 characters

2. SOCIALS

most bbj posts

- vilmibm
- 461 posts
- runner up dozens
- 432 posts

most fucks given

- dzwdz
- 4303 fucks

3. TOWNIES CHOICE

subjective awards

best cadastre plot

- flowercorpse
- big shout out to people collaborating to draw out a river

cutest username

- omg there were too many to read through
- i liked blanketritual though

Fewest number of "the"

-   bx

hardest working robot

-   our

cutest robot

-   pinhook

kindest robot

-   kindrobot

most likely to loudly cheer you on at a sporting event

-   m455

most likely to go into a dark scary basement on your behalf

-   elly

best mayor of town and bestest birthday boy

-   vilmibm
-   <3

TOWNCON Text Stream
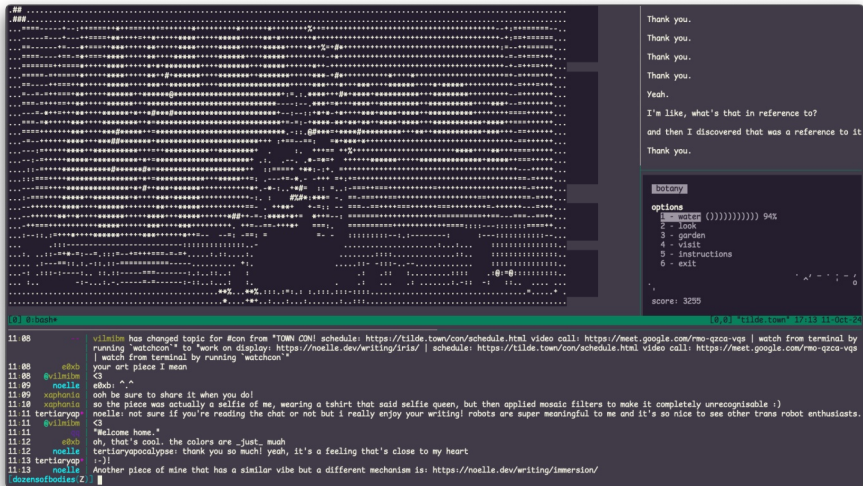
I don't know if you saw this, but there was a rad text stream of the town conference! There was a tmux window with three panes: an ascii version of the google meet feed, a live transcript, and a botany window. (Cute!) The screenshot above is of my terminal with that tmux session open in a pane, and a weechat pane below it. It was a good time!

Peralta Trail Near Phoenix, AZ by nebula

town plays webdev

kindrobot made a super cool "our" bot that appends a line of html to https://tilde.town/~kindrobot/s/ town_plays_webdev.html

Town has off-and-on remembered about it over the past year and has collaboratively made some truly chaotic webpages! Mostly what we have learned is that town loves a <marquee> tag.

On the following pages are screenshots of some preserved snapshots.

Happy Monday!

TIME TO FACE ANOTHER MONDAY

happy monday!

banana
oh yeah lol, hi html   lol wassup

what are some games y'all play?

- minecraft (I got a server finally)
- elden ring (goddamn am I bad at it tho)
- bloodborne (grant us eyesssss)

oh god is everything a marquee now oh jeez oh man let me just aaaand there

5   1   ^

^ a lonely 5!

`this is box`

hello world wasssssuppp

body{font-family: "Comic Sans", fantasy}
no more html for you

this

bold *ay it's fixed!!!!!*
>:P
prompt("Are you a wizard?");<script> " oh hell yeah <marquee>This WILL scroll...one day</

is

at some point we should probably make a new paragraph
ɔɔ ɔɔ
halp
ɔɔ
ɔ ɔ
"thenk goodness"
ɔɔƐɔƐ

:(

🦉

she lAuGhAbLe on my iS till i TiMiDiTy 13TH08e
11oX09fO04rD12 E13nG08lI11sH09
D04iC12tI13oN08aR11y 09wO04rD12 O13f 08tH11e
09dA04y 12iS13 Q08uI11dN09uN04c!

she undepressively on my Gobinist till i Boghazkoy

Good morning!

oh hell yeah

marquee

A (small) guide to indie internet radios

You're back home from a tiring day out. You want to relax listening to some music. You have acquired lots of music along your journey throughout the Internet. However, you don't want to listen to any of it right now. You don't want to deal with the decision paralysis of youtube or bandcamp either. Furthermore, spotify and friends are out of the question. Lastly, your old radio doesn't catch any frequency that's interesting to you.

But there's hope. While your old radio can't catch much more than what's physically near it, the internet radios got you covered.

Internet radios come in many varieties. Some of them are just the internet version of old-school radios, and many of those are mostly available to be listened through their website only, so they can track you, show you ads, or cut the streaming after you haven't been engaged to their website for some time. Worst case scenario, they require you to get their android/ios app that's riddled with who knows what.

I won't bother with those. I will focus on just a few Internet radios that are available both through a webfront and a direct streaming link, so you can tune in using a browser, or a media player when the former is inconvenient.

Hint: The QR Codes below can be scanned, naturally, but are also hyperlinks for clicking on if you are reading a digital copy of this zine!
~ed.

Tilderadio
Link: tilderadio.org

I can't start without mentioning tilderadio. Tilderadio is the online radio of the tildeverse. Members of the

tildeverse request time slots and stream things to their liking. There are shows dedicated to music playlists and talk shows. Highly recommended.
Link for media player
https://azuracast.tilderadio.org/radio/8000/radio.ogg

Anonradio
Link: anonradio.net

One of oldest pubnixes is is the Super Dimension Fortress Public Access UNIX system, or SDF for short. The folks at sdf maintain anonradio.net. Like tilderadio, anonradio operates on a volunteer basis, with DJs being members of the sdf. There's a wide selection of music shows. Rock, synthpop, metal, electronic, dubiousness, partying, languages, old and new. There's something for almost everybody.
Link for media player
https://anonradio.net:8443/anonradio

SOMA FM
Link: somafm.com

Soma fm is an entirely listener-supported independent radio with as many as 30 channels dedicated to different music genres.

Do you like a mysterious sountrack in the background? The secret agent channel might be of interest to you.

Are you hacking together that project that has been keeping you awake for many nights? Check out the DEF CON radio channel.

You haven't had enough of 70s style rock and wish you could hear more of it? Here's Left Coast 70s.

You prefer the synthpop of the 80s? Here's some more too at Underground 80s.

And many more channels for you to explore, playing obscure and popular tracks within the genre of the station. Link for media player

There are too many channels to list all of them, see the webpage for the other channels for more ways to listen to them.

http://ice.somafm.com/secretagent
http://ice.somafm.com/defcon
http://ice.somafm.com/u80s

Lainchan radio

Link: lainon.life

While lainchan is itself an anonymous image board, with all the controversy that entails, their radio project has given me many hours of enjoyment and i believe it should be treated seperately from the place it comes from. It has 4 channels.

Cyberia, for electronic music in the style of the popular japanese anime series Serial Experiments Lain's Cyberia Club.

Cafe, for touhou arrangements, relaxing soundtracks and mellow pop-rock songs. This is my favorite channel and the radio i listen to the most.

Swing, for swing, jazz and blues music. Very soothing, energizing or both!

Everything, a combination of all previous channels. Link for media player

https://lainon.life/radio/cyberia.ogg
https://lainon.life/radio/cafe.ogg
https://lainon.life/radio/swing.ogg

https://lainon.life/radio/everything.ogg

KMFA 89.5
Link: www.kmfa.org
      This is an old-school radio station located in Austin, Texas, that happens to have an online streaming channel that fits within the constraints of this guide.
      Their focus is classical music. Their offer ranges from Baroque, to the Modern period, including classical arrangements of contemporary pop songs. Chamber, Cantata, Concerto, Mass, Opera, and so on, you can find all of those here. This is the single best radio for all of you classical music fans.
Link for media player
https://kmfa.streamguys1.com/KMFA-mp3

R/a/dio
Link: r-a-d.io
      This radio station is also part of the community of an anonymous image board, but it can be safely ignored. They focus mostly on anime and game soundtracks, if that's your jam, you will probably like this. It's also possible to request songs, but i haven't used this feature, so i don't know if it works.
Link for media player
https://relay0.r-a-d.io/main.mp3
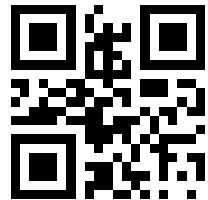
Hackers.town radio
Link: hackers.town
      Hackers.town is a fediverse instance that also happens to have an radio stream that i discovered by

chance. Their music selection is very
eclectic, so whatever label i might throw
will probably be too narrow. I can't
recommend it enough, very nice tunes
there!
Link for media player
https://radio.hackers.town:8000/

Wrapping up

These are only a handful of the hundreds, if not
thousands, of online radios that you can find online, and
they were subject to my own tastes and technical
preferences. But surely there's a radio out there that's more
suited to your own likes. If you feel like exploring this
world, i would be thrilled to know your findings and get to
know more radios. If you'd like to do so, please mail me to
tsui@sdf.org.
Happy listening!

https://www.loc.gov/resource/cph.3g09739/
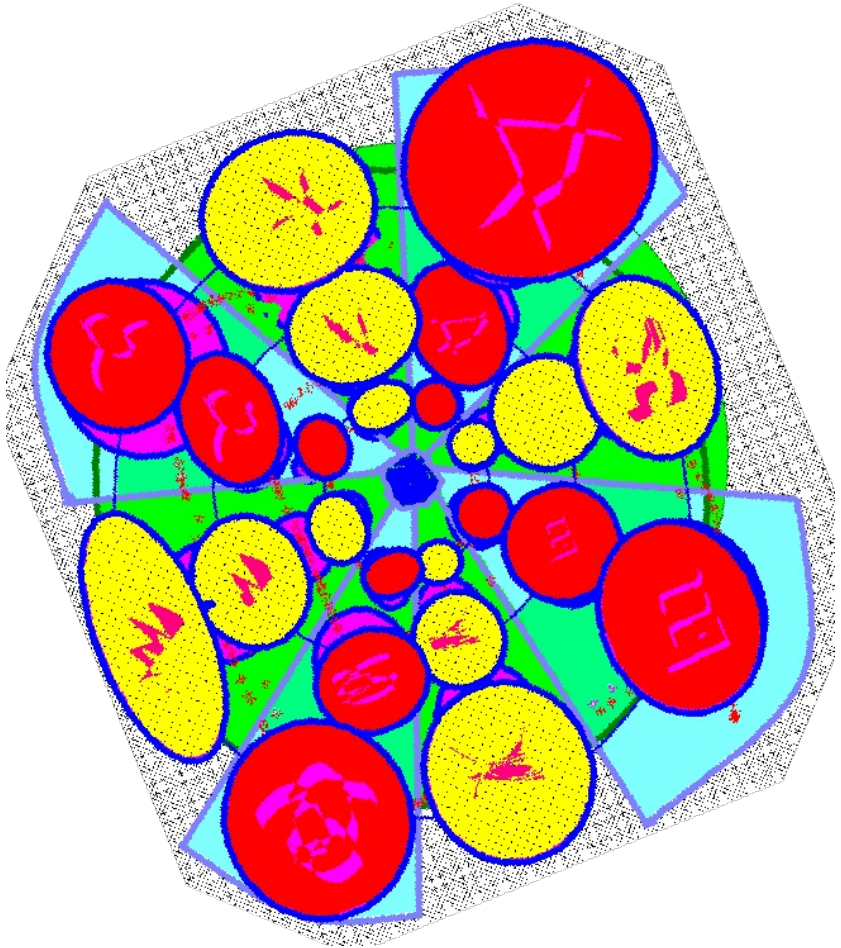
"Nine Mens Morris"

on life, by nbsp

what is life, really? this is a question a lot of people have been asking for a long, long time.

for as long as humans have existed, there has been an urge to encapsulate, under a neat definition, what it means to *be*: to make up a hierarchy under which they are on top, and to differentiate and distance humanity from the rest of the world. this has led to a very skewed, though understandable, general consensus of what it means to be alive or to be sentient, entirely hinged on the human experience of life as the one to compare against.

as a result of human-centric approaches to the definition of life in history, there exists a language problem in trying to define what life is, in simple words, without causing confusion. "life" is both a biological term and a philosophical one, and while they are in essence very different, there simply are no other words to distinguish them further. it must be understood that any attempt to redefine the definition of life is inherently hindered by having to fit into existing paradigms of thought.

to a degree, this doesn't matter. any definition of life will have edge-cases, especially in the false negatives. one cannot rigorously define life in a way that restricts what qualifies as it, because life is fantastic and whimsical, and does not much care for what humans do or do not want it to be. this is, therefore, not *the* definition of life, but *a* definition of life: one that wishes to explore the innate curiosity of sentient beings, our inherent sympathy for the world around us, and the beauty of culture and folklore.

life is a property bestowed by the mirror of perception. to be alive is to be considered alive, whether that is by yourself or by others. this makes it a social construct, but not necessarily between two sentient beings:

the only requirement is for one participant to be capable of declaring the other alive.

a haunted house is believed to be home to ghosts, and those ghosts are kept alive so long as the story is kept alive; passively engaging in communication by way of wind gusts, creaks in floorboards, shutting doors, and the like. as such, reinforcement of the myth is equivalent to life support: a ghost cannot die, but it can stop living, when it is forgotten for the last time.

an understandable reaction to the above definition would be to shrug it off as childish or immature, not weathered enough by the mundanity of human life — but that is exactly the point. children do not know the customs of human society as well as adults do. they may not have been taught philosophy, but they are still curious, and that gives them the unique ability to think outside the box, outside the set of axioms that the rest of us have been conditioned to presuppose. a childlike view of the world is a more pure one.

gods are alive, and we are keeping them alive by thinking about them. whether they are truly omnipotent or not, gods are a figure that many believe in, pray to, think about, and discuss, and by doing all of those things, they keep these gods alive in the collective mind. under this assumption, gods are supremely powerful: they cannot die, as long as they're thought about. that being said, as kingdoms rise and fall, and history marches on, even gods can be forgotten.

here it is important to note a detail about anthropomorphism. while the urge to assign a personality and thoughts to a pet rock is understandable, including it as a requirement for life would be too restrictive. living things do not have to resemble humanity, sentience, thought, emotion, or even biology; the only requirement is to be

perceived as alive. understand that the need to anthropomorphize is a societal construct, and that its use is to make something more close to human, and, in classical thinking, more valid.

folklore, for example, is also alive. it was brought into life by people telling stories, and will die if people stop caring about it and sharing those stories. in a sense, folklore is the non-anthropomorphic version of ghosts: it does not communicate, nor does it resemble humanity, but it still depends on the cognizance of sentient beings to continue to exist. an astute reader will understand that the same applies to any kind of story, and to many other disciplines as well: languages, history, art — everything that can be forgotten but hasn't been.

breathing life into inanimate objects isn't merely a natural extension of our curiosity and creativity as sentient beings, but the defining act that gives something life and character. humans and plants and mascots and folklore and god and nature and art — and you, dear reader — are all equally as alive, and it is our responsibility to care for the lives of all of them.

ed is the standard editor. When I use an editor, I do not want eight kilobytes of worthless help screens and cursor positioning code. I just want an editor. Not a vitor. Not an emacsitor. Those are not even words. ed, the greatest wysiwyg editor of all. ed has a consistent user interface and error reportage. ed is generous enough to flag errors, yet prudent enough not to overwhelm the novice with verbosity. ed is the true path to nirvana. ed has been the choice of educated and ignorant alike for centuries. ed will not corrupt your precious bodily fluids. ed makes the sun shine and the birds sing and and the grass green. ed is the path to redemption. and ed does not waste space on my timex sinclair.

"ed is the standard editor" calligraphy. source unknown

being the script for my TOWN CON TWENTY TWENTY FOUR keynote presentation

I have always wanted to do a keynote. I think keynote is just a great word. All ten years of tilde.town have been a narcissistic ploy to get to do a keynote and you fell for it.

I think most keynotes suck. I actually think most conferences and conventions suck, too. They are drowning in corporate money and full of people trying to sell you stuff or influence you.

So I'm stoked to be doing *this* keynote at *this* con. I think gatherings like this are at their best when they are small and full of weirdos all drawn together because they are excited about the same thing. I use the word weirdos because this *thing* that we're all excited about is somehow missing from our day to day life. It's something we're not getting from the world right in front of us. We're drawn here by something many people might find peculiar--or weird.

But what *is* that thing? The short answer is "tilde.town." But what *is* tilde.town? It's not a linux server. That doesn't define us, really. It's not any single person, technology, or machine. I think the best word to use is "vision." It's an aspirational and transformative way to view and engage with the world. And I want to talk about that vision and make an honest attempt at articulating it.

Why do I want to articulate it? Why can't I just sit back and enjoy it? Well, it's a self indulgence. When I first made the town ten years ago I was just hoping to make some friendships and then shut it down once it ran its course.

2014

This was the first phase of town for me--that first year. I was working at Puppet Labs at a job I didn't really care for. I had just undergone an incredibly drastic life change and

was on the far side of deadly, dangerous depression. I had shingles. I was living on the floor of a friend's apartment. I was restarting my life in 2014 and thought, hey, I want to make some new friends.

I made the town. People showed up--cool people. People I am thrilled I got to be friends with. As the year went on I thought--great, mission accomplished. I made some friends. I had lofty words about keeping the town open forever and I meant them. But in the back of my mind I thought...A few more months and surely it will be so dead here I'll go read only.

I kept waiting, and waiting, and waiting for the course to be run. But instead, people kept showing up. I went from this initial *cool, maybe some people will hang out* phase to this *oh god please everyone leave* phase as the reality of administration and moderation came into focus.

2015-2020

This was a rough phase. It's embarrassing to write out just how long it was.

In this phase, whether I was conscious about it or not, I effectively tried to sabotage this place. I would ignore it for weeks, do no moderation, let the system lie fallow. I'm not proud of that.

In this time period I met the person with whom I decided to spend forever. That's good. But as far as me and computers go, things were getting grim. I got more and more alienated from and depressed by tech jobs. I struggled to program for fun like I used to. I would drink to excess, put on hard techno, just try and whip myself into a frenzy to get any kind of code written.

The returns diminished.

I don't think this was a great era for the town. But, still, yet, people stuck around *and* kept showing up.

It was like all these cute stray cats just kept wandering into the house of an angry drunk. Each one would curl up and decide that, yes, this is my home now.

2021-2023

I finally accepted that town wasn't going anywhere anytime soon and entered a new phase. By this time I was riding my job at GitHub into a Microsoft branded toilet.

However, I checked on the town every day (mostly), monitored the system, and performed moderation.

I still felt bad; but in a new way.

Now, instead of trying to hide from the town, I worried constantly about not doing a good enough job of keeping it going. In retrospect this is a very funny anxiety.

The previous worry was that people *wouldn't* leave even if I did *nothing*.

The new worry was that people *would* leave if I didn't do *enough*.

I don't think this phase really ended until TOWN CON started to materialize. In parallel, I started work at the Internet Archive, which has helped renew my ability to find fun in computing.

So that means I'm in a new phase.

2024

What I came to realize in this new phase is that whatever draws people to the town is bigger than me. It's about way more than me and what I do or don't do.

So that's where your indulgence comes in. I have discovered this *thing* that is called town, finally, after running it for ten years. I want to understand this thing that I have somehow helped shepherd into being.

I'm going to talk about four aspects of the thing that we call town.

DARK PATHS TO BRIGHT ROOMS

To start, I want you to imagine that you're six years old in 1994 and there is a machine in your house that you don't understand. This machine has always been there. You can't remember a time without it, but no one around you really seems to know how to use it. You come to understand it's called a computer but beyond that it's a mystery.

Now, imagine you can convince your mother to come and say arcane things to this machine. The screen is lit but it's still dark. There's white text on a black background and lots of symbols you can't read. Suddenly, your mother presses enter, and the screen explodes with color.

For me, this was an MS-DOS machine and my favorite explosion of color was a game called King's Quest IV: Perils of Rosella. In this game you explore a big fantasy world. It's got forests and haunted houses and castles and endless, sparkling oceans. You even end up inside a huge whale whose body you can explore.

Remember that I was six and knew absolutely nothing about computers. My mom could start programs but that was about it. I was left alone to explore colorful, virtual worlds like the one in King's Quest IV. I remember seeing mountains in the background and wanting so badly to go see them. I assumed that if they were depicted, they must exist *somewhere* in the strange machine before me. I had no reason yet to suspect computers could lie.

I thought if I wandered and explored enough I could find all those faraway, hidden places.

Fast forward to 2000s. I'm a teenager and I'm on the internet. I've read Gibson, Dick, Stephenson. My childhood obsession with the faraway, hidden places tucked away in these strange machines has only intensified. Now, instead of pixelated mountains in the background of a game I'm trying to find my way to web sites, chat rooms, and IRC servers.

I was trying to find secret pathways. Obscured doors, dark alleys, locked away chambers. I felt, and feel, that this might lead to unexpected beauty or some kind of sacred knowledge. Or just some cool people.

Just about every town user has done this. We don't advertise and I have barely presented about the town. A common path for ending up here is finding some user's page, being inspired by it, and then thinking to look at the URL bar. Curiosity compels people to go out of their way, edit a URL, and find the tilde.town homepage. They took an unilluminated path and they found, in my estimation, a bright place.

DROWNING IN HEART BLOOD

The second aspect of town I want to explore I call DROWNING IN HEART BLOOD. It's about being vulnerable, authentic, and intimate with other people online.

Now, I want you to do a thought experiment.

Imagine going to a Facebook group about personal finance.

Imagine that you are staring at the input box for making a post. You've just typed out *when I see a certain model of car it reminds me of a friend I lost and I have to struggle not to cry*.

You've typed something like that out and you're now hovering over the Post button. How do you feel?

Personally, I would feel dread. Dire dread. I would want to anything but hit that button. The Internet is a harsh place. Admitting that a particular kind of thing can make you feel a particular kind of way is seen as a weakness to be preyed upon. It can become weaponized against you, if not by individual trolls, then by companies intent on trying to sell you something at your lowest moments.

But I think vulnerability is about more than that. It's not just about sad stuff and hard stuff. I think vulnerability is thinking about the *why* of our feelings and our opinions. It's about coming into chat and saying you really like the show Walker Texas Ranger and getting the response *cool! Why do you like it?*

And that's not a hostile *why*; it's a curious *why*. It's an attempt to understand the emotions at play when this person watches Walker Texas Ranger. It is when we learn about these kinds of emotional engines inside of us that we can make durable connections with each other.

A lot of communities are based on some shared fandom or opinion. The delineation of those communities is clear: A is a member of community X if A has a positive sentiment about Z. Town is very different. We're looking for what's underneath sentiment and trying to answer the questions: why do we like what we like? Why do we do what we do? What can I learn about myself by understanding something about how Walker Texas Ranger makes you feel?

So how does this work on town? Before intimacy like this can be attempted, you have to lose the concept of your "real" name. The name on your ID or driver's license. We embrace pseudonyms on the town. I think pseudonyms get a bad rap--they are associated with flaming and trolling and hurting people. They can do the opposite, though: free someone to express something they might not say aloud.

We also allow for fluid identities. You can rebirth yourself on town. Nothing stops you from signing up again with a new name. This is counter-intuitive from a community and safety perspective. What if someone banned comes back?

We ban behavior, not people. If someone returns and behaves in a totally different way, why would I ban them

again? Town is ten years old. Are you the same person you were ten years ago? People change, and allowing for people to change contributes to a willingness to share and be vulnerable.

It's a myth propagated by entities like Facebook that you have one static being, one static name. They have inflicted a very serious philosophical crime upon us: the idea that human existence is a fixed thing. That we have permanent qualities attached to our driver's license. That's never been true.

I mentioned community and safety. What *do* we do to keep vulnerability possible? The first line of defense is our application process. It's not automatic. I have to actually see your application, evaluate it, and let you in. I'm very picky. Once you're in, you have access to a rich repository of words and feeling. Some of that ends up on the public web; most of it does not. Keeping the town on the town is a safety mechanism.

We also stay isolated. I have resisted calls to integrate with other systems for a long time--for example, sharing git hosting or news sites or even usenet. I assume that resisting this kind of thing makes me look irritable or even irascible, but I promise, it's intentional and what I think is best for the community.

There is an urge in software to generalize. Repetition is seen as deeply flawed. But repetition is key to evolution. It's how weird ideas creep in. It's how things change and evolve. No, we shouldn't all pool together and share machines and services. Let's stay apart for now-- respectfully.

The other key to maintaining vulnerability is moderation. I was bad at it for a long time. But moderation is about tending to this garden of people every day -- seeing where tensions lie and learning what upsets people. I

don't reach for the ban first. We talk about it apply the same kind of scrutiny we might to someone's opinions about Walker, Texas Ranger.

Why'd you say that? What's your goal in saying that? Are you listening when someone says they don't like that behavior?

It's tough but I think it's worth it. I'm not the only one doing this work and I deeply appreciate the other users who take on the challenge.

I call this *drowning in heart blood* after a poem by a weird, forgotten poet named George Darley. He was so nervous he couldn't talk to people but he wrote these frenzied, epic, sweeping, emotional, vulnerable romantic poems. He had a rich social life by way of writing and receiving letters every day on his isolated homestead. I think he would have absolutely loved tilde.town.

THESE STRANGE MACHINES

I said earlier that town wasn't just a linux server. That's still true. But there's something inescapable about this community. I've mentioned it many times already. It's computers. The machines themselves. We like them.

The computer is a special kind of thing. It's not quite a tool like a hammer. It's not quite something like a telephone. It's not a squishy meat brain, either.

But it's also not *not* all of those things.

A computer is a breathing thing. It breathes in--touch, light, shadow, sound. It breathes out many of the same things. Even touch if you're into teledildonics.

A computer is a strange machine. It can purr or it can hiss. It is born and it can die. It is a funnel through which the world can pass and come out changed.

I find this intoxicating and I suspect that, to some degree, you do too.

I argue that before Lovelace and Babbage drunkenly tried to compute their way out of gambling debt there really was nothing like the computer.

Since then, we've lived in an era defined by this thing. We're here talking and building relationships at this very moment because of computers. However, I would be remiss to not recognize that computers are also the foundation of a tremendous amount of suffering.

We carry punishment devices in our pockets that yell and prod and mewl at us until we look at them. They demand we clock into our low paying jobs, these jobs that despise us, and rat us out if we clock out from the parking lot instead of the amazon warehouse. They manipulate our minds, our lives, our wallets, and our feelings.

I'm not saying that computers are just magical and wonderful--stop. I'm saying that the magic comes from how we use them. The magic does not come from how *they* might use *us*.

I argue that when we use a computer we become an entirely new kind of thing ourselves. We become an even stranger machine than a computer itself or a mere human. We've added this thing into our phantasmagoric feedback loops. We become cyborgs. But unless we remember ourselves, our intentions, we risk contributing to the nightmares wrought by capitalist, bureaucratic computing.

I think the town gets this. The town asks that humans show up, slow down, get quiet, and think about what it is they are doing at a computer. What am I going to do with this power? In this moment? Town doesn't give you algorithmic feeds of content or checklists to work through. You have to take action at that prompt.

GRAVE ROBBING RADIOSHACK
I've had this kind of interaction multiple times in my

life where I'm talking to someone, not a software engineer, but just someone who has to use computers at work. They are annoyed and complaining about some piece of software. It's slow or crashing or did something really unexpected. But in the course of this complaining they'll say something like, "well, at least it's better than that old thing we had."

When pressed for details about the old thing they describe some kind of "text thing" where they had to type commands and get responses. If pressed further you'll sometimes get an admission that well, yeah, it never crashed, and actually, yeah, I was pretty adept at it. They conversation kind of drifts away here.

What I've observed in this is that people who are experts in disciplines other than software engineering or user interface design are making an aesthetic judgment of software. New software must be better, right? New software is bright and crisp looking. You can click stuff and it moves around. Stuff slides in. Stuff slides out. It has art and pictures. A company charged my organization way more money for it. It's got to be better than what came before.

A part of the town's mission statement, if you want to call it that, is to use *old things to do new things*. However, we're not a retro tech community. We have never been a retro tech community. If you are under the impression that we are, I'm sorry. We use technology that is considered retro but not because we fetishize a nostalgic past.

We have figuratively found the great abandoned Fry's and Radioshacks and Microcenters and we're rooting around in their dusty dumpsters for discarded ideas that deserve to come back.

We're reaching back beyond a fault line. On one side of this line is the world of computing before it became synonymous with capitalism. We're reaching back to an era

where people came to computers with wants: to socialize, to create, to recreate. We live now in an era where the parameters of socializing, creation, and recreation is dictated by massive corporations who most assuredly think that you're trash worthy only of compaction and combustion in the crematory of venture capital.

We townies are the tinkerers in the slums of the decrepit space station, life support failing, orbit drifting, rebuilding outdated androids and teaching them to love poetry.

A side effect of this practice is something I call temporal displacement. We are, from a distance, a computing community. A community that computes. You could argue that this pervasive cultural thing we call "tech" or the "tech industry" is also a computing community. But whereas the tech industry marks time by corporate software releases, operating system versions, and hacker news headlines, we mark eras differently. Time *moves* differently for us.

We add another ring to the great wooden trunk of the town when someone releases a beautiful work of art. We remember when we made friends. We remember when we banned enemies. I think this kind of chronology has helped make us resilient in difficult times--like when I was too depressed or messed up to show up and be an admin or moderator.

A TOWN CON CONFESSION

When this year started, I wanted to retire from town. I had more or less made up my mind. I wrote out a couple of contingency plans and confessed my intention to a few people.

I remember seeing posts about a town conference on the mailing list (which I love, and thank you so much

~natalia for making them. Y'all should really use the mailing lists more).

I thought, wow, people want this? That's pretty cool. I want to see that happen.

So I made a deal with myself: see a town con through. If I'm still feeling done, I'll announce my retirement at the event.

I took a break two days ago, the 9th, to take a walk. People were going to show up the next day. I had to go get cat food. I'm walking and I'm thinking about how in less than a day, some lovely people are going to appear to hang out because of town. I remembered that mailing list post.

And I realized that I had completely forgotten about retiring. There was never a conscious decision to let go of that possibility. It simply faded away. I started laughing on the sidewalk--just a guy with a backpack stuffed with catfood laughing to himself on the sidewalk on a beautiful autumn day.

So, yeah, I may not be the town admin forever. I'm not saying that. But this looming sensation that I had to make a decision right now, this year has evaporated. I'll know when I know, but it's certainly not now.

SO YOU'RE STUCK WITH ME

When I first made the town it was a cozy burrow to escape social media. A shelter to ride out a storm. Unfortunately, I don't think the storm ever stopped. We need cozy burrows now more than ever.

So, in closing, thanks for sharing this cozy burrow with me. I'm ever grateful. Here's to another ten years of tilde.town.