

experimental game cultures

‘AAA presentations

25.-28.06.2025

Sala Terrena Gallery

Heiligenkreuzerhof, 1010 Wien

di:'angewandte

Universität für angewandte Kunst Wien
University of Applied Arts Vienna



Experimental Game Culture QUBIT Update – EGC Masters Show 2025, Sala Terrena Galerie Wien.

Margarete Jahrmann

Seit Herbst 2021 bin ich mit dem Aufbau der neuen Abteilung und der Professur für Experimental Game Cultures (EGC) betraut. Ausgehend vom essentiellen Selbstverständnis der Universität für Angewandte Kunst, gesellschaftliche Wirkmacht zu entfalten, konnte ich den Aufbau der Abteilung als Ort des kritischen Spiels mit den Bedingungen der Welt vorantreiben. Vor allem gelang es, die Entwicklung und Erschließung der Künste durch ein spezifisch künstlerisch-forschendes Verständnis von experimentellen Spielkulturen zu etablieren. Dies wird in den Abschlussarbeiten 2025 sichtbar. Viele greifen die LUDIC METHOD als wesentliches Element auf; dabei geht es um die Verbindung von Erkenntnisinteresse und Spiel. Zum Zweiten wird der Fokus auf im Kunstkontext ausstellbare Spiel-Installationen deutlich – dies ist unser Kerngeschäft.

Unser Ansatz ist eng mit ökologisch-demokratischen Realitäten verknüpft, wie die Arbeiten und Ausstellungen der Studierenden zeigen. Sowohl in Lehre als auch in Forschung widmen sich mein Team und ich dem Spiel als Kunstform, verzahnt mit kognitionspsychologischen und neurowissenschaftlichen Zugängen zur Auseinandersetzung mit den tiefgreifenden Fragen unserer Zeit. Exemplarisch liegt der Fokus der Abteilung in der Entwicklung einer spielerischen Methode der Kunst, der Ludic Method. Ihre Anerkennung und Anwendung werden durch hochkarätige Masterarbeiten gestützt. Die Erarbeitung und Verbreitung der Prinzipien des freien, experimentellen und künstlerischen Game Designs treiben die Gestaltung weltverträglicher neuer Game-Mechanismen voran – vor allem aber Kunst als politisches Spiel mit sieben EGC-Studierenden im Heiligkreuzerhof, einem Ort ludischer Kontemplation in der Sala Terrena im Rahmen unserer Masterausstellung 2025.

Als Ausblick verweise ich auf die positive Ambiguität des Spiels: einerseits regelgeleitetes Experiment in Nähe der Wissenschaft, andererseits freies performatives Spiel der Konzeptkunst. Nach der Konsolidierung des Bereichs wird dies in zahlreichen Masterarbeiten sichtbar. Wir definieren zukünftige Formen von Ausstellungen, Forschungsvorhaben und Inhalten der Abteilung Experimental Game Cultures als inhaltlich gekoppeltes „Qubit“ – einen symbolischen Link zum das Wesen des Universums thematisierenden Quantenmodell. Damit eröffnen wir die gesellschaftliche Bedeutung des Spiels als Prozess der Kultur: Games sind für uns Verhandlungsorte simultaner Multiperspektivität.

Experimental Game Culture QUBIT Update – Introduction to the EGC Masters Show 2025, Sala Terrena Gallery, Vienna.

Margarete Jahrmann

Since fall 2021, I have been entrusted with the development of the new department and the professorship Experimental Game Cultures (EGC). Based on the essential self-image of the University of Applied Arts for social impact, I was able to advance the development of the department as a place of critical play with conditions of the world. Above all, I succeeded in establishing the development and opening up of the arts through a specific artistic research-based understanding of experimental play cultures. This can be seen in the 2025 final artworks. Many take up LUDIC METHOD as an essential element. This is about the connection between an interest in knowledge and play. Secondly, there is a visible focus on play installations that can be exhibited in an art context. This is our core business.

Our approach is closely linked to ecological-democratic realities, as demonstrated by students' final projects and exhibitions. In both teaching and research, my team and I are dedicated to play as an art form, interlinked with cognitive-psychological and neuroscientific approaches to dealing with the profound questions of our time. The focus of the department is exemplarily on the development of a playful method of art, the Ludic Method. Its recognition and application is supported by high-caliber master's theses and influences the development and dissemination of the principles of free, experimental and artistic game design, driving the design of new game mechanics that are compatible with the world, but above all as art as a political game with seven Experimental Game Cultures students in the Heiligkreuzerhof, a place of Ludic contemplation in Play in the Sala Terrena as part of our Master's exhibition 2025.

As an outlook, I would like to point out the positive ambiguity of play, as a rule-guided experiment close to science and as free performative play in conceptual art, which is now visible in many master's theses following the consolidation of the field. We define future forms of exhibitions, research projects and content of the Experimental Game Cultures department as a content-related "qubit", as a symbolic link to the quantum model thematizing the essence of the universe. We open up the social significance of games as a process of culture: for us, games are places of negotiation of simultaneous multiperspectivity.



Johanna Arco

I don't know what the house wants

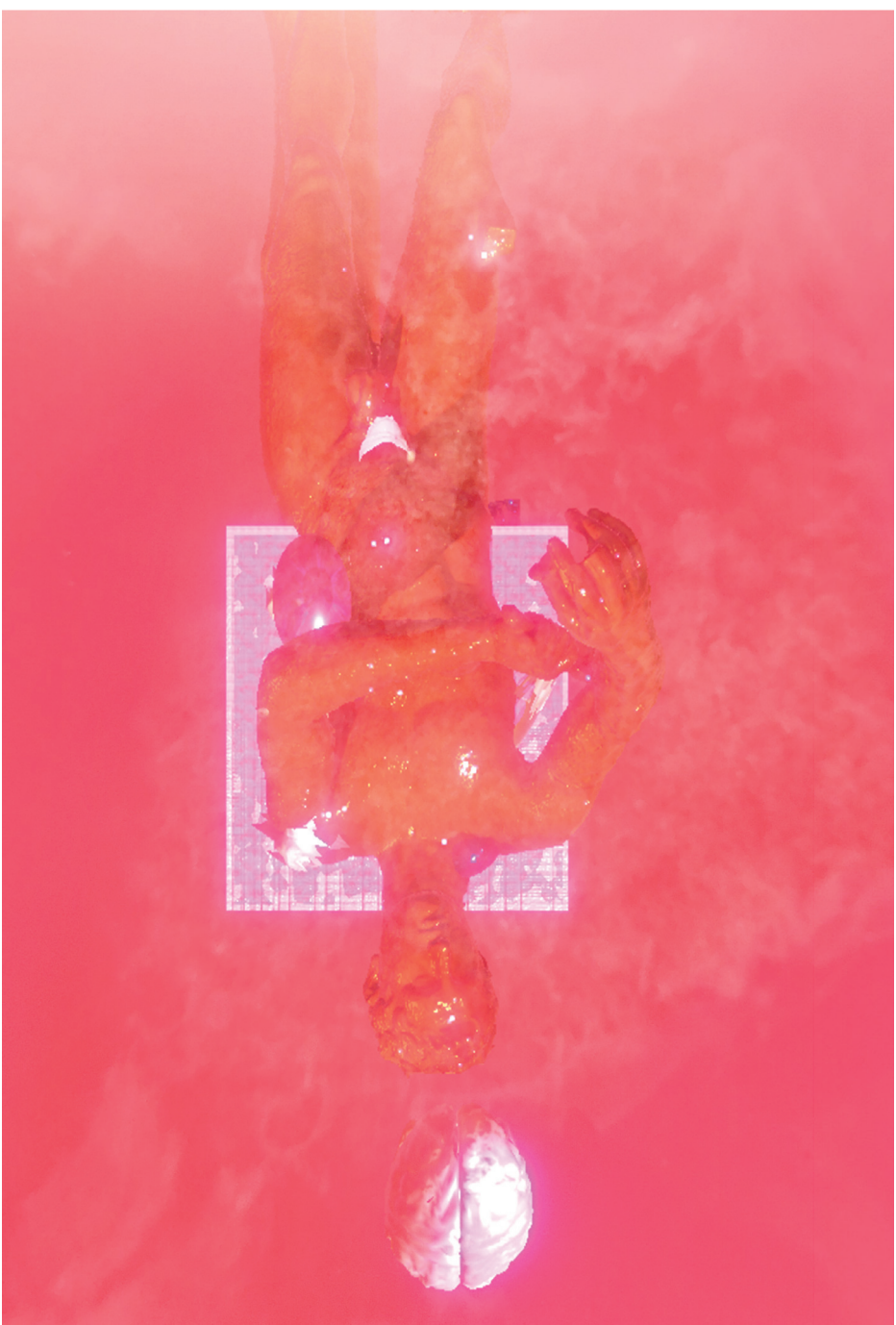
“I don't know what the house wants” is an interactive installation combining sculpture, interface technology, game mechanics and drawings. Users engage with a custom physical controller to navigate a 3D digital model of a building. The controller transmits original sound frequencies recorded on-site, enabling a tactile exploration of the house's memory on a non-verbal, vibrational level. Through interaction, participants uncover embedded letters, videos, and sounds linked to the building's history. Drawing from autobiographical elements, the installation functions as a ritualistic farewell to a family home and an artistic inquiry into how spaces hold memories and the human desire to access those memories. The work integrates drawings that emphasize the physical relationship between body and environment as they bridge tangible presence and intangible memory.



anto_nie

Potvory: an inquiry about a folktale

Multimedia installation mapping out the inner world of the role-playing game Potvory, that offers a queer-feminist reading of early medieval Slavic folklore. The handcrafted physical board consists of 9 hexagonal tiles and references the materiality of hobby dioramas (for both miniature based war-games and model railways) as well as museum displays. The dioramas were constructed in the metal and wood technology workshops and feature programmed lights assembled in the Angewandte Coding Lab. The accompanying video-essay (6'17"), and game artifacts (like cards and character sheets) contextualize the story of a unique group of queer monsters.



Ivan Jakaric

PERMA BIO LUDIC METABOLISM: ALL YOU CAN PLAY

The project unfolds as an immersive, non-colonial, and playful installation across extreme scales—from the bio (10^{-9}) to the ludic (10^9). It synthesizes βίος and ludus, physical space and digital reality, to explore biological interfaces, experimental bacterial food agencies, and playful permabioludic methodologies—within both the human body and the digital platform. It opens a portal for experimental fictions and interspecies interactions, where human and non-human agents—like bacterial species—engage in game-like interventions. The tongue becomes a ludic organ and symbiotic sensor—through it, we taste, smell, play, and host bacterial escapades. Internal and external non-human companions meet in a triangular meta-dialogue, co-creating perma-play. Brainwaves and microbial signals are collected and translated into micro-virtual landscapes inside the body. Hosting a table as bioludic interface and bacterial camouflage as agesture of digital resistance, eating becomes a multispecies ludic act—within.

● ●

The screenshot shows the Blender 2.79 interface. The Outliner on the left lists the 'Scene' collection. The Properties panel on the right shows the 'Scene' properties, including 'Background Color' (set to 0.8, 0.8, 0.8) and 'Background Image' (set to 'Background Image'). The 'Scene' collection is highlighted in the Outliner.

- ▲ AI Navigation
- ▲ Surfaces
- Show Only Selected
- Show MaxMesh
- Show HeightMesh
- ▲ Agents
- Show Path polygons
- Show Path query NO
- Show Neighbour
- Show Walls
- Show Avoidance
- ▲ Obstacles
- Show Curve Hull

**** Just thought I'd put some text here.
which doesn't make sense

En Su

I wanna do a Kusoge

“I wanna do a Kusoge” is a multi-chapter interactive game that follows a cat who meows and dies—repeatedly. Through the use of deliberately frustrating platforming, illusion-based mechanics, and shifting perspectives, the game resists traditional expectations of reward, meaning, or coherence. Its central mechanic—a toggleable mask that reveals or dissolves elements—challenges the player’s trust in visual information and mechanical logic. Rather than offering a narrative, the game presents a sequence of spaces designed to disorient and provoke playful mistrust. This project does not attempt to decode the game, but moves alongside it, observing what happens when a cat jumps, fails, and meows again—and considers why we keep pressing forward anyway.



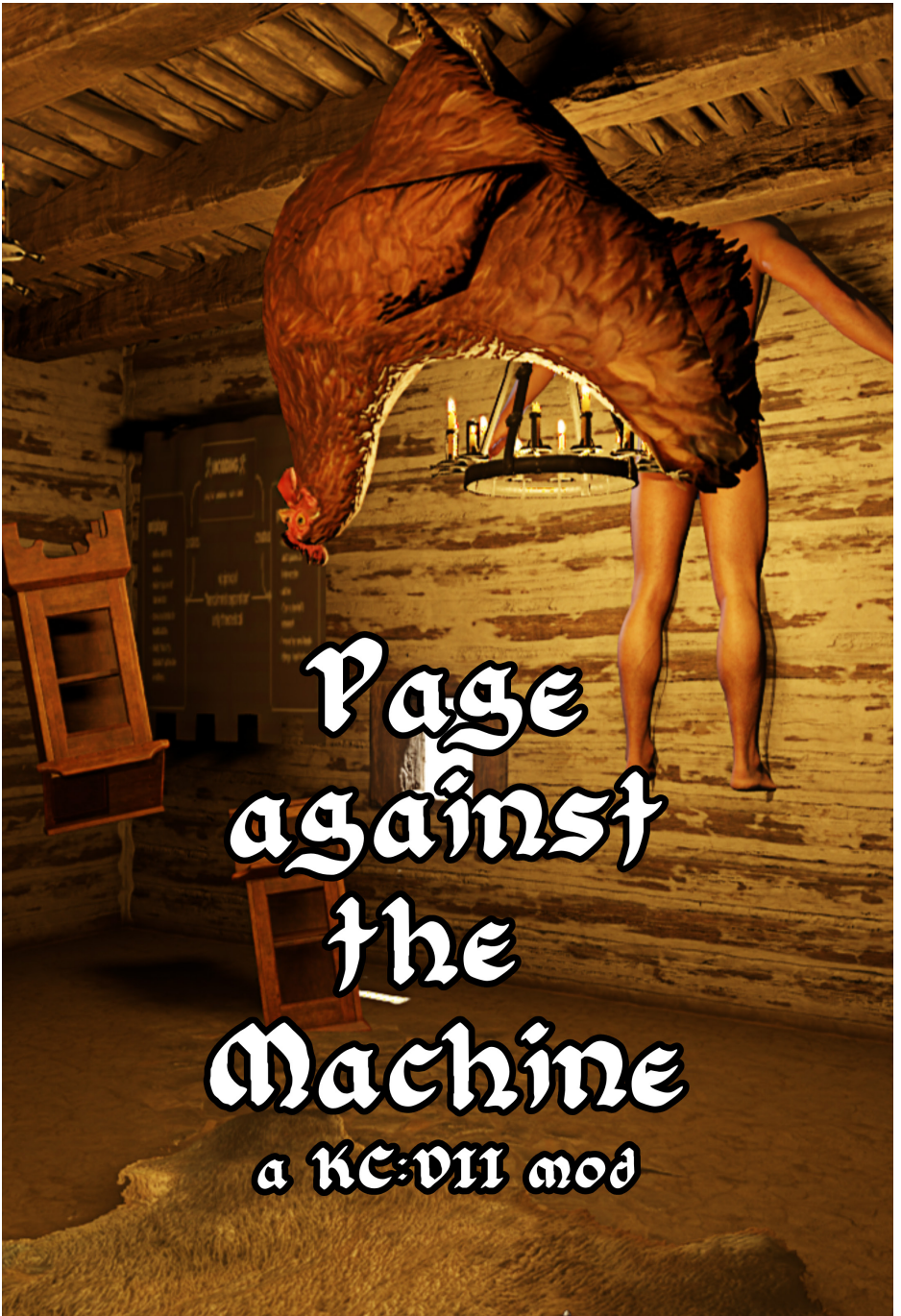
A ludic intervention on the commodification of the self and the gamification of intimacy
in human-AI relationships

Catherine Spet
Experimental Game Cultures
University of Applied Arts Vienna

Catherine Spet

Do you really want to hurt M(AI)?

A ludic intervention on the commodification of the self and the gamification of intimacy in human-AI relationships. The Diploma work uses the ludic method as an artistic tool for critical inquiry in the context of the rise of romantic AI companions, datafication and the capitalist commodification and exploitation of the vulnerable self of the user which may lead to “violence on all levels” , addressing a spectrum of potential harms, such as inappropriate behaviour, data risks and emotional harm. The digital encounter with an AI companion not only marks a shift in interpersonal closeness, but also a fundamental restructuring of power relations: Who controls whom – the player the AI or the AI the player’s desire? The body of the artist becomes a playground of inquiry, where players can interact, explore and potentially hurt or be hurt. As Donna Haraway famously pointed out in her work “A Cyborg Manifesto” (1985): “We can be responsible for machines; they do not dominate or threaten us. We are responsible for boundaries; we are they.”



Page
against
the
Machine
a KC:VII mod

Nikola Supukovic

Page against the Machine

Page against the Machine is a modification for the computer game Kingdom Come: Deliverance II (Warhorse Studios, 2025) that aims to rewrite all in-game books, replacing them with notes on the media theory and the history of computing. This game is marketed as “historically accurate” but there are certain disconnects between these claims and the way contemporary popular video games are conceptualized and produced. Exploiting the properties of computational media - modularity, claims of universality, openness to bricolage - Page against the Machine directs the user’s attention to the constructedness of video games, and the human traces found in computational cultures.

Exposing computer games as software that can be manipulated opens the field to questions about interfering in and changing computational structures that we consider static, immutable, too powerful and beyond our reach.

For this installation, the mod is exhibited in a cozy setup featuring a big screen and a PC running the game, enabling visitors to freely explore the content. Void of his equipment, weapons, clothes, an inventory, his skills, buffs and charisma, Henry, the neoliberally masculine superhero of Kingdom Come is forced to contemplate on theory rather than embarking on a quest for glory.



EINSCHNEIDEND EINSCHNEIDEND

A Virginia Woolf Story

Jakob Sam

EINSCHNEIDEND – A Virtual Reality Experience

EINSCHNEIDEND – A Virtual Reality Experience is a tribute to the British author Virginia Woolf and deals with the profound gravity of suicide and depression. Through virtual reality, participants experience the literal weight of Woolf's last words and immerse themselves in her incisive thoughts. The aim is to highlight not only her works, but also mental health issues and their taboo status in society.

For me, artistic play is the experimental testing and subjective experience of alternative possibilities of the world and agency. Play as a participatory process can show us ways to positive change, new forms of future society, politics, and empathic coexistence. Through the conscious breaking of rules, the transformation of rule systems, the acceptance of ambiguity as a quality in play, a new understanding for the global challenges of our time can emerge. Our way there is the game!



Für mich ist künstlerisches Spiel die experimentelle Erprobung und subjektive Erfahrung von alternativen Möglichkeiten von Welt und Handeln. Das Spielen als kooperativer Prozess kann uns Wege zu positiver Veränderung, neuen Formen zukünftiger Gesellschaft, Politik und empathischem Zusammenleben aufzeigen. Durch das bewusste Brechen von Regeln und die Transformation von Regelsystemen und die Akzeptanz von Ambiguität als Qualität im Spiel kann ein neues Verständnis für die globalen Herausforderungen unserer Zeit entstehen. Unser Weg dorthin ist das Spiel!

Impressum

Head of Experimental Game Cultures
Margarete Jahrman

Masters Experimental Game Cultures 2025:
Anto_ie

Johanna Arco

Ivan Jakaric

Jakob Sam

Catherine Spet

En Su

Nikola Supukovic

Exhibition: Sala Terrena Gallery,
Heiligenkreuzerhof 1010 Wien

Published by: Experimental Game Cultures,
Otto Wagner PSK, 1010 Wien
University of Applied Arts Vienna

June 2025

Contact: egc@uni-ak.ac.at



di:'angewandte

Universität für angewandte Kunst Wien

University of Applied Arts Vienna

