

The Not So White White Paper

Wheel of Fortune: The Wheel of Fortuna — Not Depicted, but Performed. An Iconological Analysis between the Medieval *Rota*, the “Death of the Author”, and On-Chain Provenance.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Schager' with a stylized flourish at the end.

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Inhalt

Abstract.....	3
1. Introduction	3
2. Description of the Work: What is <i>Wheel of Fortune</i> ?	5
2.1 From Painting Tool to Browser Machine	5
2.2 The Sequence: Spin – Stop – Collage – Finale – Loop	8
2.3 The Material: the Open Archives	12
2.4 The Site: <i>Magenta Art Room</i> , Volkstheater	12
3. Iconographic and Iconological Analysis.....	14
3.1 Method: Panofsky’s Three Strata.....	14
3.1b Reflection on Method: from Depiction to Performance	14
3.2 Pre-Iconographic Description	15
3.3 Iconographic Analysis: the <i>Rota Fortunae</i>	15
3.4 Iconological Interpretation	17
3.5 Excursus: Surrender to Chance (<i>alea</i>).....	19
4. Art-Historical Contextualisation	20
4.1 Readymade and Montage.....	20
4.2 Appropriation and the “Death of the Author”	21
4.3 Concept, Programme, Postproduction	21
4.4 The Archive	22
4.5 Projection and Media Shreds: the Painterly Line	23
5. The Technical Dispositif	24
6. The NFT as a New Artistic Space	27
6.1 A Brief Genealogy	27
6.2 The Critique.....	28
6.3 The Space: Dematerialisation, Provenance, Decentralisation	28
6.4 WOF in the NFT Space — and its Limit	29
7. The Machine Questions the Artist.....	32
8. Conclusion	35
Appendix A — Work Data	35
Bibliography	36

“The only human act is the decision to stop — and that moment creates the artwork.”
— Sebastian Schager (ch. 2.2)

Abstract

This paper examines the digital artwork *Wheel of Fortune* (WOF, 2010–) by the Viennese artist Sebastian Schager as a contemporary work within an art-historical context. WOF lets images from open museum and cultural archives rush past like a wheel of fortune; a human stop at the right instant condenses them into an unrepeatable collage. Its core thesis: in WOF, chance is not depicted but performed — the wheel runs according to fixed law, and what remains contingent is the material alone and the human instant of intervention; precisely the structure that already characterises the medieval *Rota Fortunae*. At the centre stands a double observation: with its title and its mechanics, WOF invokes a pictorial motif handed down through centuries of Western art — the *Rota Fortunae*, the wheel of Fortuna — and translates it into a technical dispositif of open image archives, a generative pipeline, and the blockchain. Methodologically, the paper applies Erwin Panofsky’s three-step iconographic-iconological model, deliberately extending it at one point, because in WOF the motif is not depicted but enacted as a process. The analysis situates WOF within a genealogy of the readymade, collage/montage, appropriation, conceptual and generative art, as well as within the theory of the “Death of the Author” (Barthes) and of technical reproducibility (Benjamin). A separate chapter examines whether the NFT opens up an *artistic* — not merely speculative — space for this work, and at the same time names its present limit.

Keywords: iconology · *Rota Fortunae* · participatory art · appropriation · Death of the Author · generative art · NFT · on-chain provenance

1. Introduction

Without a network connection, the installation shows a black screen. This dependency is not a defect but the programme: the work owns no image material of its own; it draws it, at the moment of operation, from the image holdings of the world. The subject of this paper is this ongoing project, *Wheel of Fortune* (hereafter WOF), a browser-based, participatory image machine that has been in development since 2010 and is shown publicly in 2026 as part of the *Magenta Art Room* in the Vienna

underground station Volkstheater.¹ WOF lets images from some twenty open cultural archives rush past like a wheel of fortune and condenses the individual images, halted by human timing, into unrepeatable collages. The finished work can be saved as a video loop or minted² as an NFT on the Polkadot blockchain.

The obvious reading — that WOF is “digital collage” or “AI art” — falls short, and in the second case is factually wrong: no images are synthesised; real archive holdings are recomposed.³ This paper instead pursues the thesis that WOF translates a classical pictorial motif — the *Rota Fortunae* — into the procedures of the digital present — the live image stream from open archives, the generative search movement, and the blockchain — and thereby raises a double question: about authorship in the age of recombinatory machines, and about the place where such a work can exist artistically.

From this follow two **research questions**: (1) How can WOF be described, with the instruments of iconographic-iconological analysis, as a work within the art-historical context of its time? (2) Does the NFT open up a genuinely *artistic* space for such a work, or does it remain a merely economic appendage?

The title of this paper, too, belongs to its subject: as early as 2022 the artist prefaced his NFT works with a statement he called “The Not So White White Paper” — an ironic rejection of the roadmaps and promises of returns of the crypto market, against which he set the only evidence valid to him: the artistic work itself. The present text adopts that title and redeems its claim by art-historical means.⁴

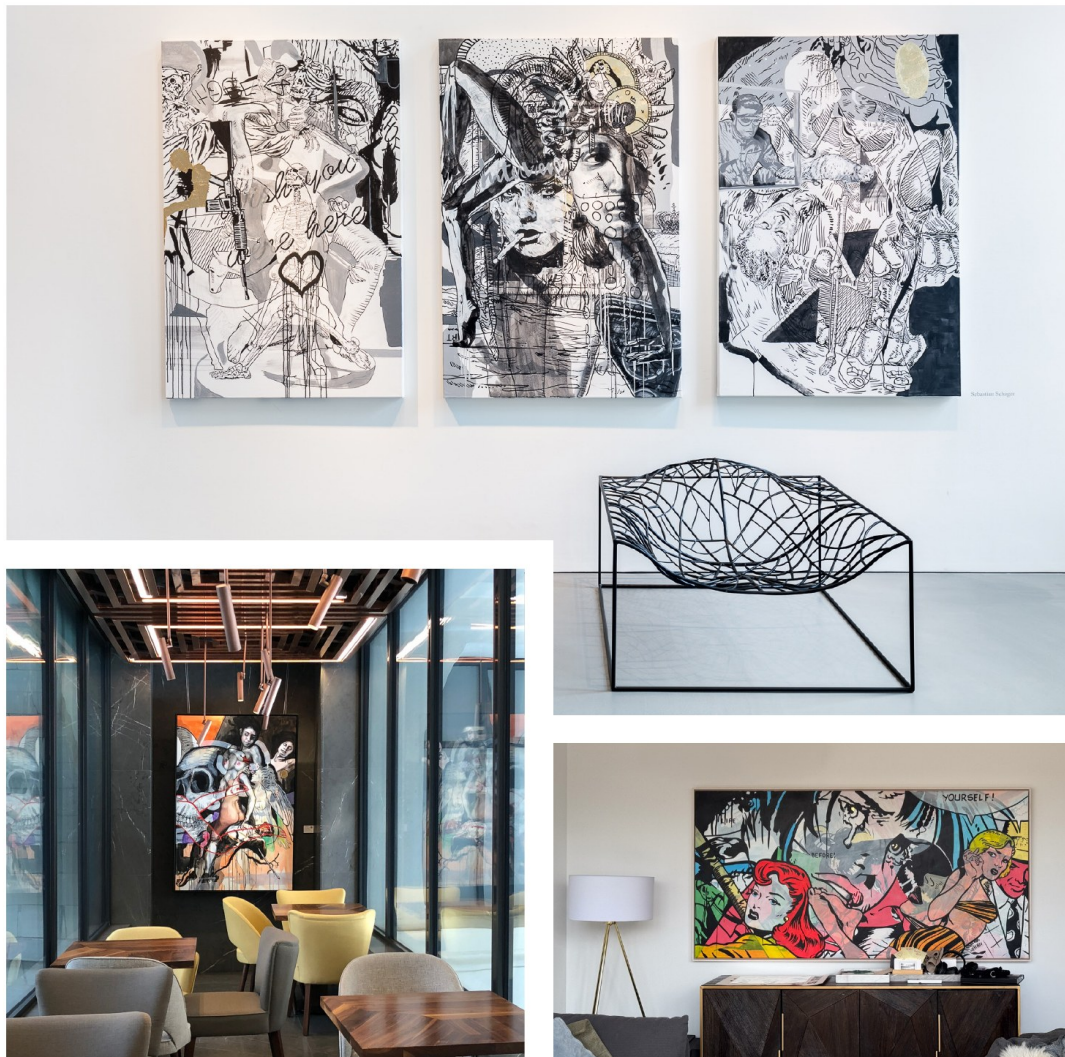
Methodologically, the paper takes Erwin Panofsky’s three-step model as its foundation — pre-iconographic description, iconographic analysis, iconological interpretation — supplemented by Aby Warburg’s concept of the *Nachleben* (afterlife) of ancient pictorial formulae.^{5 6} Where the model reaches its limit — with a motif that is not depicted but performed — the extension is made explicit (ch. 3.3). The art-historical contextualisation draws on the theory of appropriation and authorship (Barthes, Benjamin) and on the genealogy of the readymade, montage, conceptual and generative art. The technical chapter rests on the documented architecture of the work; the NFT chapter on the primary literature of the discourse and its critique.

Structure: Chapter 2 describes the work. Chapter 3 carries out the iconological analysis and forms the argumentative centre. Chapter 4 situates WOF art-historically. Chapter 5 explains the technical dispositif. Chapter 6 examines the NFT thesis together with its limit. Chapter 7 gives the artistic position room in a conversation between machine and artist; chapter 8 draws the conclusion.

2. Description of the Work: What is *Wheel of Fortune*?

2.1 From Painting Tool to Browser Machine

WOF began in 2010 not as a screen work but as a tool of painting: a projection machine that threw random image material onto the canvas during live painting sessions, so that the digital stream became part of the physical composition.⁷ This was not a technical experiment but the practical realisation of an artistic idea already formulated: the tool emerged in the milieu of the Viennese artist group PERFEKT WORLD,⁸ which by then had realised numerous joint projects, and responded from the outset to a substantive diagnosis — the permanent state of media saturation of the present.⁹ Related works from the same milieu — painting on stroboscopically backlit, translucent canvas, for instance — already followed the same logic of media flicker and were shown at parties as much as in art installations. Out of this practice grew the *Wheel of Fortune* series of paintings (from 2010, ongoing) — painted works whose procedure (chance, open image material, human timing) already contains the later digital work.



Wheel of Fortune Series, Selection, 2016, 2017, 2018
Acrylic Paint, Spraypaint and Metal / Gold Leafing on Canvas, varialbe dimentions



Fig. 1: "Wheel of Fortune" — selection from the painterly body of work (from 2010). Click opens the sheet at full resolution; the complete portfolio at artis.love/pdf. © Artis.Love.

The early image material came from a private, locally assembled collection: thematic image folders in the spirit of the group PERFEKT WORLD, whose deliberately popular iconography, turned away from the canon — ancient statuary next to comic and action figures of the nineteen-eighties — anticipates the procedure's later indifference towards high culture.¹⁰ Since programming skills of his own were lacking, the then-young internet initially remained a mere image repository and not, as today, a source opened up through interfaces (ch. 2.3). Already in this gesture — the artist not as producer but as collector and arranger of found images — lies the shift of authorship that the work would later catch up with theoretically (ch. 4.2).

The set-up was performative from the beginning (around 2010). Painting was done in large formats and mixed media, often collectively: several painters translated the same image stream onto one canvas simultaneously, drop by drop. The audience did not appear as spectators but as fellow players — a red button halted the image run and inscribed an alien will into the emerging picture, for the first time at the appearance in the Vienna Künstlerhaus (mid-2010s).¹¹ This intervention — a button, a stop, a placement from outside — remained constant across the entire change of medium and returns in the installation as the smartphone remote control (ch. 2.4). In it lies the point of the whole arrangement: not the painting hand but the interrupting access decides the picture; authorship is shared from the outset and delegated to chance (ch. 3.5, 4.2). Three modes of play have survived from this: collective painting with an audience, painting alone in the studio, and, as the youngest, the purely digital WOF — which does without the brush and may yet claim to be painting in an expanded sense (ch. 4.5).

Painting onto a running projection follows a different logic from painting before an empty canvas. The further the process advances, the harder seeing becomes: the projected image lays itself over the elements already layered on the canvas until the two can hardly be told apart. To recognise what is to be placed next, the painter continually shields the projector light from the surface with their own body — a constant darting back and forth between projector and canvas, in which the body does not obstruct the picture but serves as the tool that first makes the already-painted visible.¹² The picture is not given here; it must be brought forth in performance — through a bodily act: even the analogue practice treats seeing as an act, not a reception (ch. 3.4). With every layer the surface condenses, until hardly any room remains and passages must be roughly painted back to regain space. A subsequent correction of the placement is unknown to the procedure — “What fell, fell like an axe”¹³; this irrevocability binds projection painting to the logic of the stop and to painting *alla prima*, in which something final attaches to every placement (ch. 3.5).

In this condensation lies the conceptual core of the practice. Working with already existing images resembles less designing than the continual arbitration of competing claims: a random image stops on the canvas and must be fitted into what is already there, so that heterogeneous, mutually alien pictorial elements wrestle over the same limited space — a *Mächteverhältnis der Bildelemente*, a power struggle among the pictorial elements, as the artist calls it.¹⁴ It carries a social dimension: the canvas becomes a model of the forced simultaneity of competing interests, especially where motifs collide in content (such as a weapon next to a Virgin and Child from Christian art). WOF painting does not depict this simultaneity; it performs it as composition — in which the finding of the image-act chapter already announces itself in the analogue practice (ch. 3.1b). Whether the social reading is set consciously or only recognised in the working process cannot be decided; deliberate making and retrospective recognition interlock — “Those who do not see cannot find.”¹⁵ With this, meaning is assigned its place: sense arises not in the object but in seeing (ch. 3.4).

Over fifteen years the instrument wandered through several technical generations (Flash, React, finally vanilla JavaScript) and became a fully browser-based machine. The step to the pure browser work — without canvas — is comparatively recent and closely tied to a new possibility: developing the instrument independently with the help of AI, without depending on third-party programmers. What initially limited the practice through the lack of programming skills is thereby inverted — the artist becomes the sole master builder of his instrument (ch. 5, 7). This genesis is essential for the classification: WOF is not a crypto project retroactively aestheticised, but a painterly inquiry, consistent over fifteen years, that has changed its medium.¹⁶

2.2 The Sequence: Spin – Stop – Collage – Finale – Loop

The interaction is reduced to a single gesture. Viewers trigger the image run (a key press or, in the installation, a tap on their own smartphone); images rush past; a second impulse halts the stream. The image standing in the viewing window becomes a layer of a growing collage — each of these placements is called a “drop” in the work’s vocabulary: the falling of an image into the composition. Animated masks — organic, geometric, jagged forms — give each halted image its contour but do not expose what lies beneath: layer settles upon layer, what was placed before remains covered; filters shift colour, contrast, texture.¹⁷ Only the conclusion reverses this. After several placements the collage is “finalised”: a brief theatrical sequence passes into an end state — the “Finale”. It knows two forms: either portals open in the finished collage, through whose holes the flicker of the image stream beneath shines up — the halted image releases the view onto the still-running

wheel. Or a single surface, cut by a mask form, flickers within the standing image. From the end state a short video loop is generated.



Fig. 2a: Installation view, Magenta Art Room, Volkstheater underground station — WOF running, with passers-by (video, 9 s). © Artis.Love.

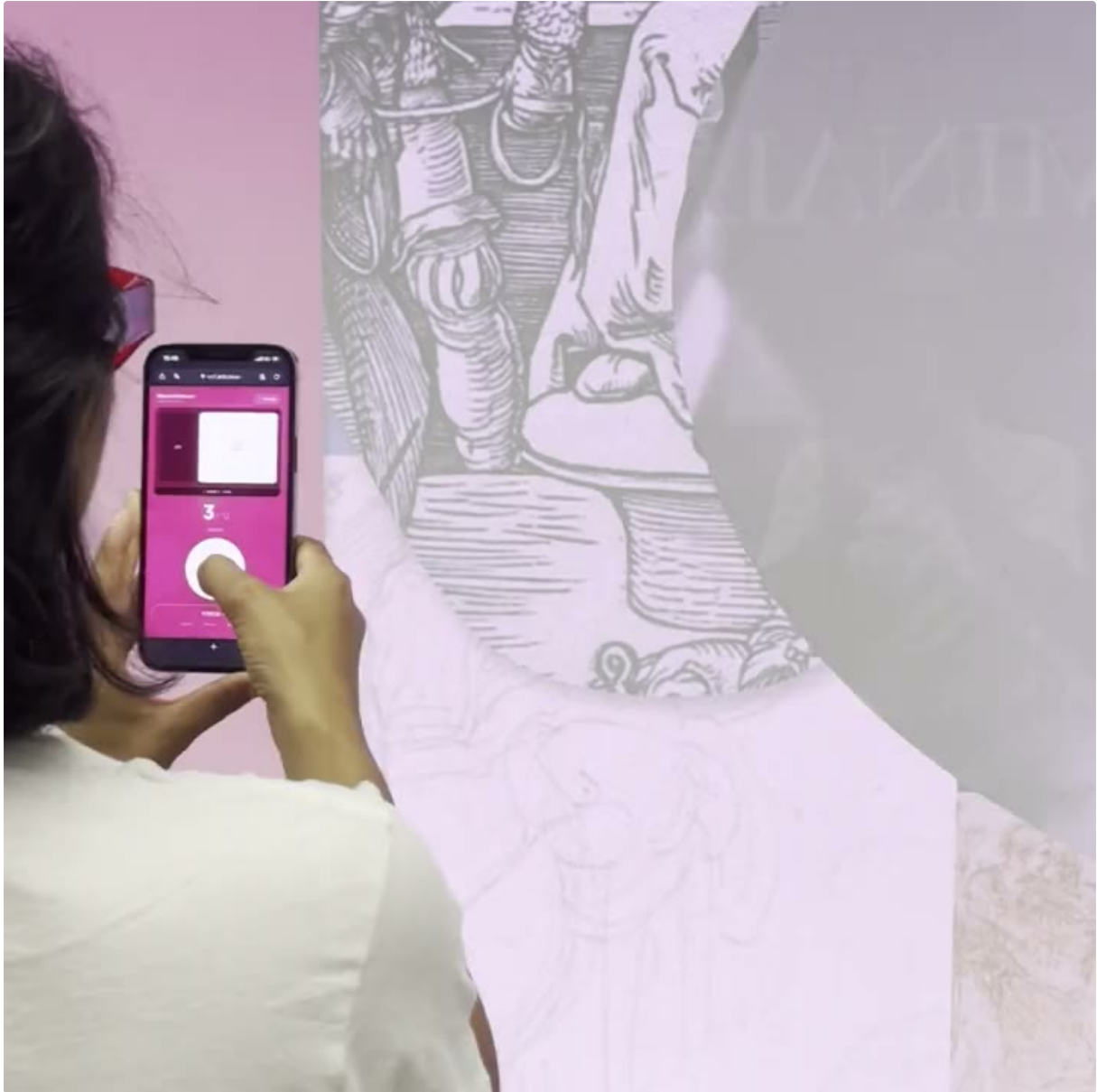
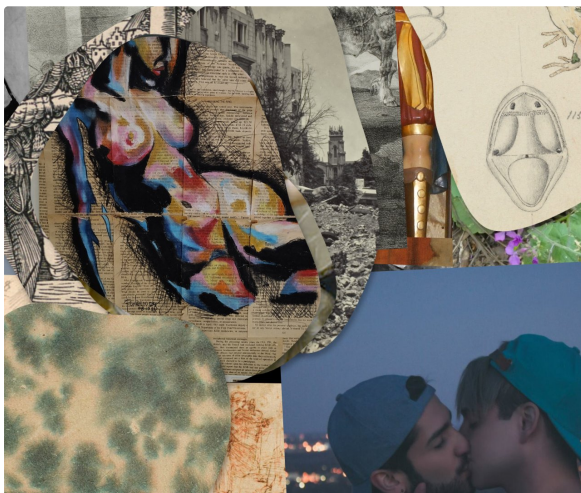


Fig. 2b: The smartphone remote control in action — a player stops the image run by tapping her own device (video, 7 s). © Artis.Love.



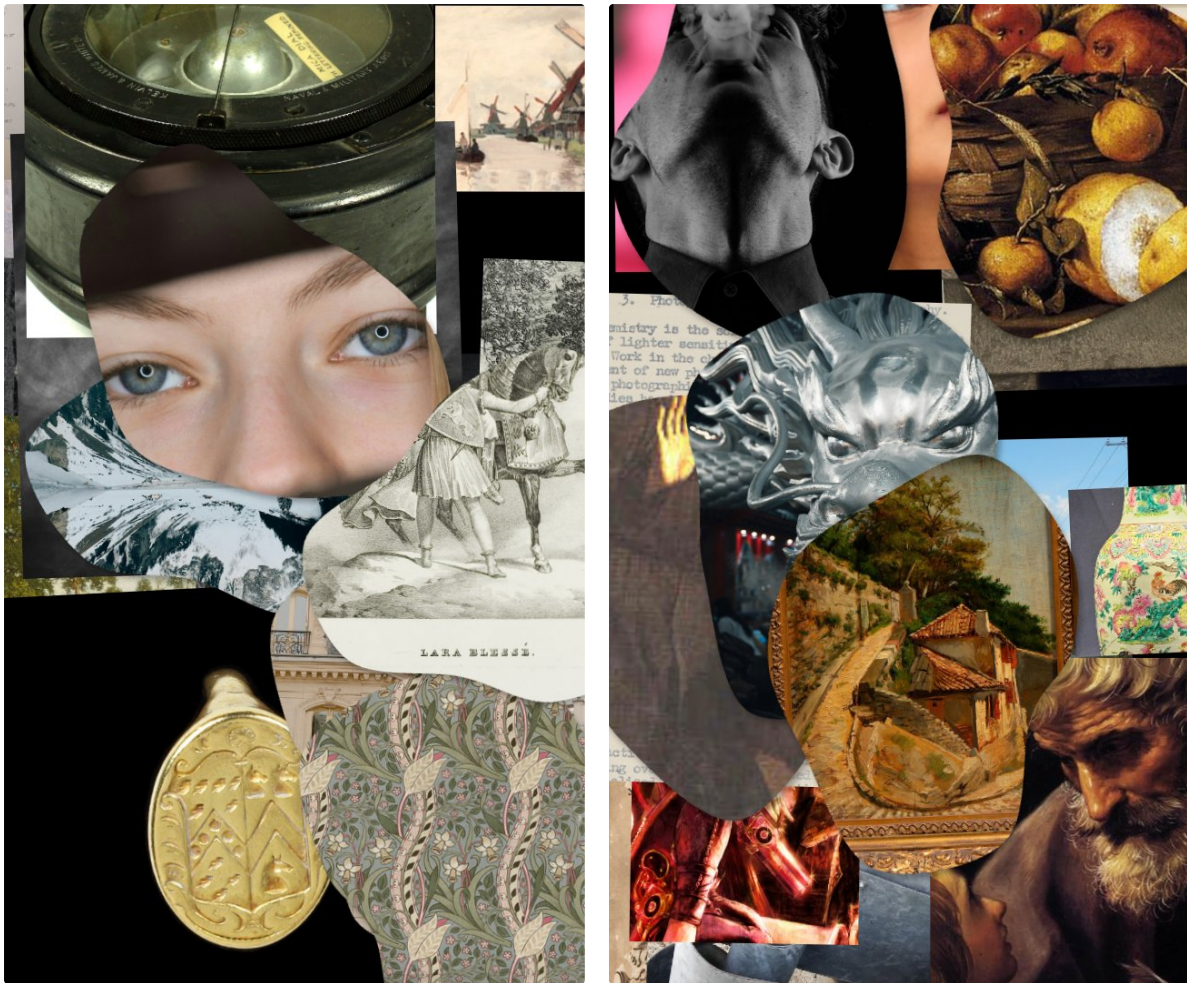


Fig. 3a–d: “Wheel of Fortune”, four finalised collages from the Magenta Art Room — top: #0894 (2 June 2026, 15:49, 6 drops) and #0908 (2 June, 17:38, 6 drops), both player games; bottom: #0943 (9 June, 14:16, 5 drops) and #0964 (10 June, 17:09, 5 drops), auto-run. Configuration “Magenta Pure”, Finale “MPortal”. A click plays the video loop in place and makes the Finale visible; print shows stills. © Artis.Love — the player games with thanks to their anonymous co-authorship. In the publication version each figure additionally links to the work page of the piece (nft.artis.love).

Decisive is the anthropological point of the procedure, which the artist has formulated repeatedly: “The only human act is the decision to stop — and that moment creates the artwork.”¹⁸ There is no curation of the individual images, no algorithm that “makes art”, no composing hand. What composes is the collision of code, open archive, and the human instant.

This description renders a state, not a final state. WOF is a work in performance: which modes, masks, filters and end forms — the “Finale”, for instance — are available is continually altered and extended; the instrument is rebuilt in an ongoing collaboration of artist and machine.¹⁹ There is no “finished version” — the work is less a completed object than an evolving structure that takes on a different state

with every working session. This structural openness is recovered iconologically in ch. 3.4.

2.3 The Material: the Open Archives

In its present installational form — with smartphone remote control and pure internet access — WOF draws its raw material not from a local holding but at runtime, via public programming interfaces (APIs), from some twenty open archives across three continents — connected live out of a continually vetted catalogue of more than 150 open sources.^{20 21} The core is formed by six museum and scientific sources — the Metropolitan Museum of Art, the Art Institute of Chicago, the Cleveland Museum of Art, NASA's image archive, the Library of Congress, and Wikimedia Commons — extended by the Smithsonian, Europeana, Harvard Art Museums, the Statens Museum for Kunst, the Rijksmuseum, and others.²² The greater part is available under CC0 or "Open Access" licences. The artist describes this holding as humanity's visual memory become machine-readable, lying open — and nobody reading it; WOF is the machine that reads this library: "not systematically, not purposefully, but randomly — the way a hand reaches into a stack of photographs and pulls one out".²³ That in this form not a single image is stored locally has a conceptual consequence that becomes literal in the installation: "No network = black screen. The installation IS connectivity."²⁴ This does not exclude the other feeding: WOF can equally draw from a deliberately curated, local image collection — a holding in the sense of Gerhard Richter's *Atlas* (ch. 4.5). Both paths, the open archive access and the curated collection, belong to the work's repertoire; the installational form at Volkstheater uses only the first.

2.4 The Site: *Magenta Art Room*, Volkstheater

From 1 June to 31 July 2026 WOF ran in the *Magenta Art Room*, a glass vitrine in the Vienna underground station Volkstheater (continuous operation throughout the run).^{25 26} It is the work's first installation with remote play — and thus a new form of WOF: passers-by enter via their own smartphone and play along. This form arose for the *Magenta Art Room* but is not bound to it; it can equally take place in other contexts. For the campaign WOF moreover received its own livery — leading colour, style and appearance were set so that the work fits seamlessly into the exhibition's visual identity. The *Magenta Art Room* is an invited exhibition context: the brand provides site and frame; the artistic setting — work, rules of play, content — lies with the artist. Owing to the shallow depth of the vitrine, an ultra-short-throw projector projects onto the rear wall; the installation is run by a Mac Studio computer in kiosk

mode with automatic recovery. The choice of the leading colour establishes a link to the campaign's motto, under which the exhibition stands — “magic”: magenta is a non-spectral colour that does not occur physically in the rainbow and is “invented” by the brain — an image for the work's thesis that meaning arises not in the object but in perception.²⁷ The site ranks among Vienna's most frequented transport hubs; over the run, hundreds of thousands streamed past the vitrine. Passers-by become fellow players via a QR code on the front pane: the smartphone becomes a one-button remote control, without app, without registration. The play situation, meanwhile, is anything but a quiet cabinet: neon light, trains pulling in, the current of those passing — the site works against the very absorption in the screen that the smartphone usually grants. The game additionally demands a constant looking back and forth between two screens, the remote control in the hand and the image behind the glass — a sensory surcharge that the habitual screen gaze of the underground precisely does not know.²⁸ In this the installation repeats a figure from the work's analogue early period: as the painter shuttles between projector and canvas to bring the picture out from under the light (ch. 2.1), here the gaze shuttles between hand and vitrine — seeing remains an act performed against resistances, not a stance of reception (ch. 3.4). This sensory economy, however, belongs to the installation, not to the work as such. In multi-cell mode, several playing fields run in parallel.

What arises between the players is a peculiar social form. The underground knows as its basic stance the polite non-acknowledgement: one perceives one another without addressing one another — and the gaze into one's own telephone is its daily practised gesture.²⁹ WOF does not terminate this contract; it uses it. Whoever joins keeps the device in hand and remains anonymous; yet the display shows only the controls — the emerging image lives, until the Finale, in the vitrine alone. The screen tunnel is thus not broken open but bent: it ends at a “half-place” (*Halbort*) — a screen again, but away from the handheld; the fingers remain on the touchscreen, the eyes must look up.³⁰ So strangers stand side by side before the same glass, each in their own game, without opponent and without conversation — closer to the pachinko parlour than to the convivial promise of participatory art (ch. 3.5, 4.5): the collective of friends that once inscribed itself into the same canvas (ch. 2.1) returns as a side-by-side of strangers — the social form of the site, translated into a form of painting. Breaches of this silence remain the exception: side glances at the neighbouring cell occur, especially when groups play, but in commuter traffic anonymity prevails; even the Finale releases the passers-by without spectacle — one may walk on, silent, in one's own loop. The artist has described the pure form in a self-experiment: withdrawing into a corner opposite, letting the stream of people pass, playing in silence — “not without enthusiasm, but silent”.³¹ The site exacts a price for this:

where the current tolerates hardly any lingering, whoever stands still and plays becomes a rock in the stream — playing turns into a small test of attentional courage, and only a few take it up; for future installations it follows that an accompanying place of calm belongs to the game. Finally, play happens even when nobody is there: continuous operation includes the auto-run — the work spins, stops and finalises by itself (fig. 3c–d); what this means for the status of these unwitnessed images is negotiated in ch. 3.4.

With this, the subject is outlined. The following iconological analysis asks *what* actually appears in this sequence.

3. Iconographic and Iconological Analysis

3.1 Method: Panofsky's Three Strata

Erwin Panofsky distinguishes three strata of pictorial meaning and, corresponding to them, three acts of interpretation.³² The first, *primary or natural* meaning, is disclosed through *pre-iconographic description*: the plain perception of forms, objects and expressive qualities. The second, *secondary or conventional* meaning, is the object of *iconographic analysis*: the linking of motifs to themes, stories and allegories, which presupposes cultural knowledge. The third, the *intrinsic content*, is gained through *iconological interpretation*: those “basic attitudes of a nation, a period, a class” that render the work legible as a symptomatic document of a worldview. This model, developed for the Renaissance, is here applied to a technical work; at one point this requires an explicitly declared extension (3.3).

3.1b Reflection on Method: from Depiction to Performance

Panofsky's three-step model is today less a guiding paradigm of current research than a canonical descriptive grid.³³ It is nonetheless deliberately used here as scaffolding — at the artist's place of study, whose Viennese School itself produced the tension between iconological meaning and structural-analytic seeing³⁴ —; its limit, in the case of an operative work like WOF, must be marked expressly.³⁵

This limit lies where the wheel is not depicted but enacted as a process (ch. 3.3). The question thereby shifts from Panofsky's iconographic logic of depiction (“which motif is depicted?”) to the *Bildwissenschaft* logic of performance (“what does the image do?”). This shift is no makeshift; it follows the image-theoretical turn since the 1990s: Horst Bredekamp's *theory of the image act* conceives the image — in ana-

logy to speech-act theory — as an acting, efficacious instance rather than mere representation,³⁶ and Gottfried Boehm's *iconic difference* binds pictorial sense to showing itself, which cannot be exhaustively translated into a legible motif.³⁷ WOF can accordingly be read as a performative image act that stages the *Rota Fortunae* instead of showing it — the lawfully running image stream and the human instant of the stop are the action in which the image happens.

It thereby also stands in the line of Georges Didi-Huberman, who renewed Warburg's *Nachleben* for the present — that same *Nachleben* this paper claims for Fortuna in technical guise (ch. 3.4).³⁸

3.2 Pre-Iconographic Description

On the first stratum there appears: a portrait-format image stream in which single images run past vertically, accelerate, brake and come to a standstill. A succession of halted images layers itself, overlapping and cut by irregular forms, into a dense surface. Colour shifts, screen patterns and blurs cover parts of the surface. At the end a flicker pulses — partly behind openings, partly within a magenta field. The movement is circling in a figurative sense: a rolling up and down of images, a halting, a new beginning. Even this purely descriptive level lays bare a basic figure — that of the turning, halting, restarting wheel.

3.3 Iconographic Analysis: the *Rota Fortunae*

On the second stratum this wheel can be named. The title *Wheel of Fortune* quotes not a television show but one of the most long-lived pictorial motifs of Western culture: the *Rota Fortunae*, the wheel of the goddess Fortuna. The motif receives its canonical formulation in Boethius, whose *Consolatio Philosophiae* (c. 524) has Fortuna defend her wheel: to halt it would mean it ceased to be Fortuna's wheel — inconstancy is her unchangeable essence.³⁹ In the Middle Ages the *Rota Fortunae* becomes a fixed pictorial type: the famous miniature of the *Carmina Burana* (c. 1230, Munich, BSB Clm 4660, fol. 1r) shows the crowned Fortuna at the hub, surrounded by four royal figures with the rhymed four-step *regnabo – regno – regnavi – sum sine regno* ("I shall reign – I reign – I have reigned – I am without reign").⁴⁰ The collection opens with the lament *O Fortuna* on the fickleness of fortune. Related depictions are found in the *Hortus Deliciarum* of Herrad of Landsberg (c. 1167–1185, destroyed by fire in 1870) and, as an architectural translation, in the rose window of the façade of San Zeno Maggiore in Verona (12th century).^{41 42} A late continuation — occultly charged in the 19th century — is the tarot card *The Wheel of Fortune*

(Major Arcana X), whose wheel, bearing the letters R-O-T-A, signifies cycle, providence and sudden reversal.⁴³



Fig. 4: “*Rota Fortunae*” — miniature from the *Carmina Burana*, c. 1230. Munich, Bayerische Staatsbibliothek, Clm 4660, fol. 1r. Public domain; reproduction via Wikimedia Commons (click opens the source page).

The meaning of the motif is constant across all sources: *chance, mutability (mutabilitas), rise and fall, the opposition between inconstant Fortuna and constant virtue or providence*. It is precisely this semantics that WOF invokes. Unlike a painted wheel of Fortuna, however, WOF shows no depicted emblem; the motif appears not as pictorial object but as a figure of movement. The iconographic attribution here proceeds not via a depicted motif but via the structural recognisability of the wheel *process* — a productive extension of Panofsky’s second stratum, methodologically grounded in 3.1b, whose full import only the iconological reading redeems.

3.4 Iconological Interpretation

On the third stratum the analysis asks after the intrinsic content — what WOF, beyond its theme, is a symptomatic document of. Here, too, the point announced in 3.3 is redeemed: WOF does not *depict* the *Rota Fortunae*; it *reactivates* it as an operative form. Three lines of interpretation interlock.

First: distributed contingency instead of depicted chance. The *Rota Fortunae* negotiated man’s powerlessness before fate. WOF displaces this figure: it is not a deity that turns the wheel but a machine drawing on the collective image memory — and the human being is not the wheel’s victim but the one who halts it at the right moment. Remarkably, the chance does not technically reside in a running random function: the image run follows a deterministic physics that maps the stopping time unambiguously onto an image index.⁴⁴ Contingency distributes itself to two other places — to *which* images enter the stream at all (decided by a semantic navigation through the archives, ch. 5), and to the *instant* of human intervention. WOF thus resembles the medieval figure more exactly than first appears: the wheel itself runs according to law; contingent is only the moment at which it strikes someone. Chance here is not depicted but performed.

Second: the “Death of the Author” performed. Roland Barthes’s dictum that a text is “a tissue of quotations drawn from the innumerable centres of culture”, and that meaning arises not in the author but in the act of reading, becomes literal in WOF.⁴⁵ The image stream *is* a tissue of quotations; the “reader” who in Barthes takes the author’s place is here the person who triggers the stop. The iconological point: WOF reinterprets the wheel of Fortuna from an image of fate into an *image of authorship*. What the *Rota* withdrew — control over one’s own ascent — WOF with-

draws from the artist: control over the individual image. The renunciation is the artistic gesture (cf. ch. 4.2 and 7).

Third: the archive as material and the double sense of *fortune*. The English *fortune* carries two meanings — luck/fate and wealth/riches. WOF activates both. On the level of the image, *fortune* is the luck of the instant; on the level of property it becomes, as soon as a collage is minted as an NFT, *fortune* in the economic sense (ch. 6). The title is thus no label but the work's hinge: it binds a medieval motif of fate to the present question of digital property. In Aby Warburg's terms, WOF can be read as a *Nachleben* of the ancient pictorial formula — as the return of Fortuna in transformed, technical guise.⁴⁶ Warburg's *Bilderatlas Mnemosyne*, which mounted reproductions across epochs on panels to make the migration of pictorial motifs visible, is moreover a methodological model for WOF itself: both are montage apparatuses of the collective image memory.⁴⁷

These three lines share a basic trait that carries the motif beyond the individual image: *mutabilitas* itself. Boethius's Fortuna declared that a halted wheel would no longer be her wheel — change is her essence. In WOF the same holds for the work as a whole, which remains unconcluded on several levels: every run brings forth a different image; the search space from which the images come keeps growing by machine (ch. 4.4, 5); and the structure of the instrument itself is continually rebuilt (ch. 2.2). Even the work's preconditions age along with it: it hangs on some twenty third-party interfaces and a browser environment, both of which change without its doing — its own continued existence, too, stands under the *mutabilitas* it negotiates. Standstill would mean for WOF, as for the *Rota*, that it ceased to be itself. Mutability is thus not merely the work's theme but its mode of existence — and the “Death of the Author” reaches correspondingly deep: from the individual image through the search space into the never-final instrument.

The *mutabilitas* has, finally, a time of its own. In the installation's continuous operation the wheel keeps turning even when nobody watches: the auto-run spins, stops and finalises without a human witness (fig. 3c–d). Nowhere does the work come closer to its medieval figure — a wheel that turns even without witnesses; a Fortuna who does not wait until someone looks. The artist leaves no doubt about the status of these images: they are works. Yet their authorship evaporates — what the machine brings forth alone is discarded or ascribed to the human; a right of its own to be an artist is granted to it by no one, and what is preserved, culturally as legally, is only what humans create (cf. human creation as the threshold of the concept of the work, ch. 4.2).⁴⁸ The artist calls this an “ego thing” — and indeed the refusal joins the series of those blows through which the human self-image had to

surrender its special position piece by piece: cosmological (Copernicus), biological (Darwin), psychological (Freud) — and, in a much-discussed continuation, informational, through the thinking machine.⁴⁹ Authorship would then be a last bastion of that special position, and WOF stands on its rampart: it delegates to the wheel what it can, and reserves for the human what it does not concede to the machine. The artist himself admits this may be a mistake — that in the idle run art may be lost, unseen and unpreserved. This openness is not a weakness of the position but its test: a work that means the question of authorship seriously must be able to turn it against its own setting.

3.5 Excursus: Surrender to Chance (*alea*)

The iconological reading can be supplemented by its anthropological substrate: the human inclination to *surrender* to chance. Roger Caillois distinguishes the competitive game (*agôn*) from the game of chance (*alea*) — the latter being “a negation of the will, a surrender to destiny”.⁵⁰ Exactly this voluntary demission is performed by whoever steps before the wheel of fortune: the *Rota Fortunae* thus appears not only as pictorial motif but as a structure of need. Johan Huizinga had earlier determined play as a sphere of its own, “connected with no material interest”⁵¹ — play for its own sake. How far this self-sufficiency reaches is shown by Roland Barthes’s reading of Japanese *pachinko*: a game without opponent and without real winnings, in which a single thumb impulse decides everything — the hand of an artist whose stroke is a “controlled accident”; the machine repeats “the principle of painting *alla prima*”.⁵² The “prize” is absurd; all that matters is playing on. The ethnographer Natasha Dow Schüll has described the same structure in machine gambling: in the “zone” one plays “not to win but simply to keep playing”.⁵³

WOF shares this logic down to its form: in multi-cell mode, with its parallel reels, it resembles the one-armed bandit, and the “prize” — the finished image, the later NFT — is subordinate to the *performance*. In the instant of the drop all of this condenses: every drop irrevocably covers what exists (there is no going back, as with the stroke *alla prima*), and the player stands in the tension of placing further or halting — *press your luck* against finalising.⁵⁴ Exactly here the game of chance touches the historical avant-garde of the renunciation of control: John Cage handed his *Music of Changes* (1951) over to the chance operations of the *I Ching* — a composition “the continuity of which is free of individual taste and memory (psychology)”;⁵⁵ Marcel Duchamp, with the dropped threads of the *3 Standard Stoppages* (1913/14), had introduced “canned chance” into art.⁵⁶ The stop in WOF inherits

both lines at once — gambling and chance art: the gesture in which the ego steps back and the instant decides.

That this renunciation is no slackening is shown by its counter-pole: Matthew Barney's *Drawing Restraint* generates form precisely *against* self-imposed resistance — ramps, harnesses, a trampoline obstruct the drawing, and what remains is the bare will to create.⁵⁷ WOF inverts the gesture: not creating *against* the barrier, but creating *through surrender* to it. Yet this too is a productive constraint — the artist formulates the compulsion to take something from every dropped image into the work; chance thus becomes the barrier at which form first takes shape. This compulsion is strict in the digital procedure; in the painted variant it knows no systematic enforcement — there it would be easy simply to omit a displeasing image. It is precisely the digital version, then, that sharpens the barrier which remains negotiable in the analogue practice.

With this, the iconological reading is supplemented by its anthropological substrate. It leads to the art-historical contextualisation: WOF stands in a long line of procedures that transform found image material into a work of one's own.

4. Art-Historical Contextualisation

4.1 Readymade and Montage

The operation WOF works with — declaring the found to be a work through selection and recontextualisation — has its origin in Marcel Duchamp's readymade. With *Fountain* (1917), a signed mass-produced urinal, Duchamp shifted the criterion of art from making to choosing: the artist “took an ordinary article of life” and placed it “so that its useful significance disappeared under the new title and point of view”.⁵⁸ *L.H.O.O.Q.* (1919) carried the same gesture over to the image memory itself by defacing a reproduction of the *Mona Lisa*. In parallel, Dadaism developed *montage* as a technique: Hannah Höch's photomontages (c. 1918/19) and Kurt Schwitters's *Merz* assemblages (from 1919) built new pictorial statements from the fragments of mass-media image culture.^{59 60} WOF continues this tradition, now with the entire digitised image holdings as its store of material — a continuity the artist himself names when he draws the line “from Picasso's *papiers collés* and Duchamp's readymades to Rauschenberg, Warhol, Marclay and Steyerl”.⁶¹

4.2 Appropriation and the “Death of the Author”

The appropriation art of the “Pictures Generation” radicalised this gesture into the question of authorship. Sherrie Levine’s *After Walker Evans* (1981) — reproductions of Walker Evans’s FSA photographs, exhibited as her own work — fundamentally questioned authenticity, uniqueness and authorship; Richard Prince re-photographed advertising images.⁶² This turn is theoretically grounded in Roland Barthes’s *The Death of the Author* (first published in English, 1967) and in Walter Benjamin’s *The Work of Art in the Age of Its Technological Reproducibility* (1935/36). Benjamin diagnosed the decay of the “aura” — the “here and now” of the original — under the conditions of technical reproduction, and the shift from cult value to exhibition value.⁶³ WOF can be read as an intensification of both diagnoses: it operates exclusively with reproduced material and poses the aura question anew by *re-turning*, at the end — via the NFT — an artificial “here and now”, an on-chain uniqueness (ch. 6). It resolves authorship not rhetorically but procedurally: the artist describes his role as a shift “from image-maker to condition-setter” — not the author of the image, but “the author of the possibility”.⁶⁴ This self-reflection prevents the appeal to Barthes from remaining naive: the author does not vanish; he changes level. That this shift has also reached the legal order is shown by the Austrian literature on appropriation art: Anderl and Schmid describe appropriation as a mode of creation with a “long-standing tradition” — collage, adaptation, remix, sampling — and locate the creative contribution expressly “in the process of creation itself”.⁶⁵ What art theory formulates as the death of the author returns here as a legal figure: not the appropriated image but the procedure of its appropriation carries the threshold of originality⁶⁶.

This renunciation of control was first operationalised by Surrealism: André Breton’s “psychic automatism in its pure state ... in the absence of any control exercised by reason” (1924) is the historical proof of concept of that “letting chance decide” which WOF repeats technically.^{67 68}

4.3 Concept, Programme, Postproduction

A third line leads via conceptual art to generative art. Sol LeWitt formulated in 1967 the sentence that technically anticipates WOF: “The idea becomes a machine that makes the art.”⁶⁹ In LeWitt the instruction is the work, the execution incidental. Early computer art — Vera Molnár, Frieder Nake, Georg Nees (first exhibitions 1965), Manfred Mohr — translated this principle into the algorithm.⁷⁰ WOF shares with this tradition the programme as the work’s foundation, but differs in a decisive point the

artist marks sharply: “This is not generative art in the conventional sense. Generative art typically means: a seed produces a deterministic image. Beautiful, but passive. [...] WOF reverses this relationship. The code is the instrument, not the author.”⁷¹ The more accurate placement is supplied by Nicolas Bourriaud with the concept of *postproduction* (2002): the contemporary artist works like a DJ or programmer who selects, samples and reprogrammes existing cultural products instead of creating from nothing.⁷² WOF is postproduction in this sense — except that the “sample” is the open, digitised holdings of the cultural archives, and the “reprogramming” happens in real time and collaboratively.

4.4 The Archive

Finally, WOF is a work about the archive. Michel Foucault’s determination of the archive not as a collection but as “the general system of the formation and transformation of statements” — as that which *can be said at all* — describes precisely what WOF plays with: not individual images but the totality of the digitally available.⁷³ Foucault’s formula applies above all in its second half: the archive is the system of the formation *and the transformation* of statements. WOF does not merely read the holdings; it extends them — the concept tree from which the search queries derive is only partly curated; where the human input ends, a language model writes new concepts into it, and the search space keeps growing (ch. 5). The dissolution of authorship thereby shifts one level down: not only the composition of the individual image — already the determination of *what is searched for* is no longer set by humans alone. The Barthesian scriptor — who combines without intention or origin — operates here on the level of the search space itself. Foucault’s formula then forces one final question: if the archive determines what can be said, then a language model co-writes the boundary of WOF’s search space — and with it the training corpus from which it draws its neighbourhoods. Which concepts appear “adjacent” to the machine is no neutral given but a pre-selection over which neither artist nor players dispose; the question of authorship returns here, one level deeper, as a question of the constitution of the tool. Hal Foster has diagnosed an “archival impulse” in contemporary art: artists make lost or displaced historical information physically present and thereby *produce* archives instead of merely using them.⁷⁴ WOF radicalises this impulse by opening the archive not to curation but to chance. At the same time it stands in the tradition, described by Lucy Lippard, of the *dematerialisation of the art object*, in which the object recedes in favour of idea and information⁷⁵ — a line that takes a paradoxical turn in the NFT (ch. 6).

4.5 Projection and Media Shreds: the Painterly Line

The preceding lines concerned the procedure; the work's painterly origin (ch. 2.1) demands a placement of its own, in which two traditions converge. The first is that of *projection painting*. That an optically projected image serves painting as a model is no technical curiosity but has a long prehistory — from the *laterna magica* of the 17th century to the controversially discussed thesis advanced by David Hockney that the Old Masters themselves used optical aids for faithful transfer.⁷⁶ Its most literal contemporary counterpart WOF finds in Avery Singer, who projects images composed in 3D software onto the canvas and executes them with masking tape and airbrush — images that are “both digital and analog”.⁷⁷ WOF shares this basic operation but displaces it decisively: what is projected is not *one* finished image to be copied, but a *stream* from which the human stop chooses.

The second line is that of the *painting of media shreds* — those procedures that condense the stream of mass-media images by hand into a unique work. From Robert Rauschenberg's *Silkscreen Paintings* to Andy Warhol's photo silkscreens, the media image stream was brought into painting;⁷⁸ Sigmar Polke, with *Höhere Wesen befohlen: rechte obere Ecke schwarz malen!* (“Higher beings commanded: paint the upper right corner black!”, 1969), ironically ceded compositional authority to an external instruction — a conceptual anticipation of WOF's “the moment, not I” (ch. 3.4, 4.2).⁷⁹ Closest to WOF, however, stands Gerhard Richter: his paintings after found photographs with their characteristic *blur*, and above all his *Atlas* — an archive of press and snapshot material grown over decades — form a painterly counterpart to WOF's image pool.⁸⁰ Related translations of the media stream — James Rosenquist's billboard fragments, Wade Guyton's inkjet prints, Albert Oehlen's computer-finished paintings — are here merely recorded.^{81 82 83}

Both lines issue into the more recent movement from the digital back to painting. Against this background, WOF's change of medium from canvas to browser can be understood as a further step in the same direction — with the peculiarity that, in the case of the purely digital loop variant, the image no longer returns to the canvas but remains digital and regains its uniqueness only via the NFT (ch. 6). This direction is, however, not the only one: WOF continues to serve the artist as a painting tool whose result may very well be a physical painting. The painted and the purely digital strand do not exclude one another; both remain open — the same instrument issues, depending on the setting, into the one form or the other.

This expansion bears a name that reaches beyond the individual works: that of the *expanded painterly space*. At the Academy of Fine Arts Vienna it designates a

department of its own (today *Art and Image | Expansion*), which extends the painterly beyond the panel into installation, medium and social situation.⁸⁴ In this perspective, WOF's youngest mode of play — the one in which passers-by become players and thus co-painters⁸⁵ — is no break with painting but its continuation by other means: the painterly act stretches from the studio into public space and finally into the property relation of the NFT, which carries the placement thus created forward as an independent work (ch. 6).

With the step from panel to browser-based loop, WOF at the same time leaves the *still* image: the end product is no longer a tableau but a *loop* — a time-based, moving image. The work thus moves to a threshold at which the category of painting alone can hardly hold it, and the *moving image* comes into view — the form that, from film through video to the handheld stream, has become the dominant image form of the present. The artist himself takes a clear position here: he sees in the moving image, in film, the true new art of his time, whose condensation within his own lifespan he registers as remarkable, while painting in the conventional sense grows increasingly unfamiliar.⁸⁶ This valuation renders the artistic perspective, not a judgement of the present paper; what remains to be recorded, however, is that WOF operates precisely on this threshold — it carries its painterly origin (condensing, placing, stopping) over into the form of the moving image and is therein less painting or film than both at once: a *painted moving image*.

Before this turn is examined, the technical dispositif that makes the named operations possible must be clarified.

5. The Technical Dispositif

An iconological reading that ignores the medium would remain incomplete; in a technical work the dispositif⁸⁷ is part of the content. WOF consists of four interlocking layers.⁸⁸

The web as medium and material. Images are loaded at runtime via the APIs named above, filtered by aspect ratio and minimum size, and fed into a pool. Selection proceeds not by fixed “themes” but through a semantic system (internally, the “Brain”) that wanders a curated concept tree of art history in five stages⁸⁹.⁹⁰ The search terms come from two sources: one part is *curated* — laid out in the tree by the artist —, another is *machine-generated* at runtime. When the wandering hits a branch with no known continuation, a language model (Claude Haiku) generates new, adjacent concepts and writes them back into the tree; these extensions are

stored permanently server-side and read in again at the next start, so that the concept tree keeps growing across all play sessions and devices.⁹¹ During the two-month Magenta run (ch. 2.4) the tree grew by 2,321 machine-added terms in this way. The work's store of material is thus not fixed but an in-principle open system, partly human-curated, partly machine-continued. This navigation is no image generator but a *movement of searching and wandering* through existing holdings — the machinic counterpart of that hand reaching into the stack.

The deterministic mechanics. The image run is governed by a fixed equation of motion with acceleration and braking phases;⁹² the stopping time unambiguously determines the standing image.⁹³ This determinacy is conceptually significant (ch. 3.4).

Composition and effect. Each halted layer is set onto an image surface with position and slight rotation; a frozen mask form and a baked filter may be added, but need not be. The filter chain (brightness, contrast, saturation, halftone, stencil, among others) is implemented pixel-based for compatibility reasons.⁹⁴ Masks and “Finale” produce the end state, in which the finished image itself becomes the stage of a flicker once more — an image-immanent feedback: the halted material becomes wheel again.

The blockchain layer. From the end state two moving-image formats are derived (MP4 and WebP). Optionally, and upon explicit user action, the loop can be minted as an NFT on the *Polkadot Asset Hub*.^{95 96} The first mainnet mint took place on 14 May 2026 (collection #843); the transaction is publicly verifiable via a block explorer.⁹⁷ In August 2026 the first series mint followed: the 265 works of the Magenta run as collection #853 *WOF Magenta*, sealed by a Merkle root on the collection (below, *Testing in continuous operation*).⁹⁸ Important here is a precise distinction that runs counter to the market rhetoric of the NFT field: on-chain lie the NFT entry (collection and item), the metadata and — as proof of the work — a SHA-256 hash⁹⁹ of the image file; the image files themselves lie off-chain. For the early single mints, direct HTTPS delivery from the project's own server applied; the Magenta series, by contrast, addresses still and loop content-addressed via the self-hosted IPFS¹⁰⁰ — the `ipfs://` address in the metadata is the cryptographic fingerprint of the content, and nothing else can ever lie at the same address.¹⁰¹ This difference is not technically incidental but artistically significant — its interpretation is the task of ch. 6.4.

Testing in continuous operation. Between 30 May and 31 July 2026, WOF ran as a permanent installation in the *Magenta Art Room* (ch. 2.4): 1,119 logged operating hours, daily from around 5:16 a.m. until shortly after midnight, in step with the Vienna metro. In that period some 850 rounds were played and 386 pieces saved — each comprising a still image and its accompanying animation loop. From these the artist selected 265 as a series of works and had them minted as NFTs. Nothing in the images sets them apart from the rest; only this choice does. What endures is not what turned out better but what was chosen — and what the entry makes permanent is the reference, not the file (ch. 6.4). Only one value in the series' metadata comes from the players themselves: whether the player took their finale home as a file at the time. This happened for 60 of the 265 works; the remaining 205 were left behind — and became part of the series all the same. The wheel turned more than 520,000 times, and every turn set another image from the open holdings into a composition; the search behind it — some 14,000 search passes across fifteen sources — drew several archives' retrieval quotas to their daily limits. What is revealing for the argument advanced here is not the interaction but the idle state: even without an audience the work kept playing itself — roughly 21,500 runs whose images came into being and passed again without anyone triggering, seeing or saving them. The status of these unwitnessed images is the subject of ch. 3.4; here it is given its measure. The claim that the work *is* connectivity rather than its depiction can be quantified for this period: 11.58 terabytes travelled across the mobile connection, 184 gigabytes per day on average, without a single image ever being held locally.¹⁰²

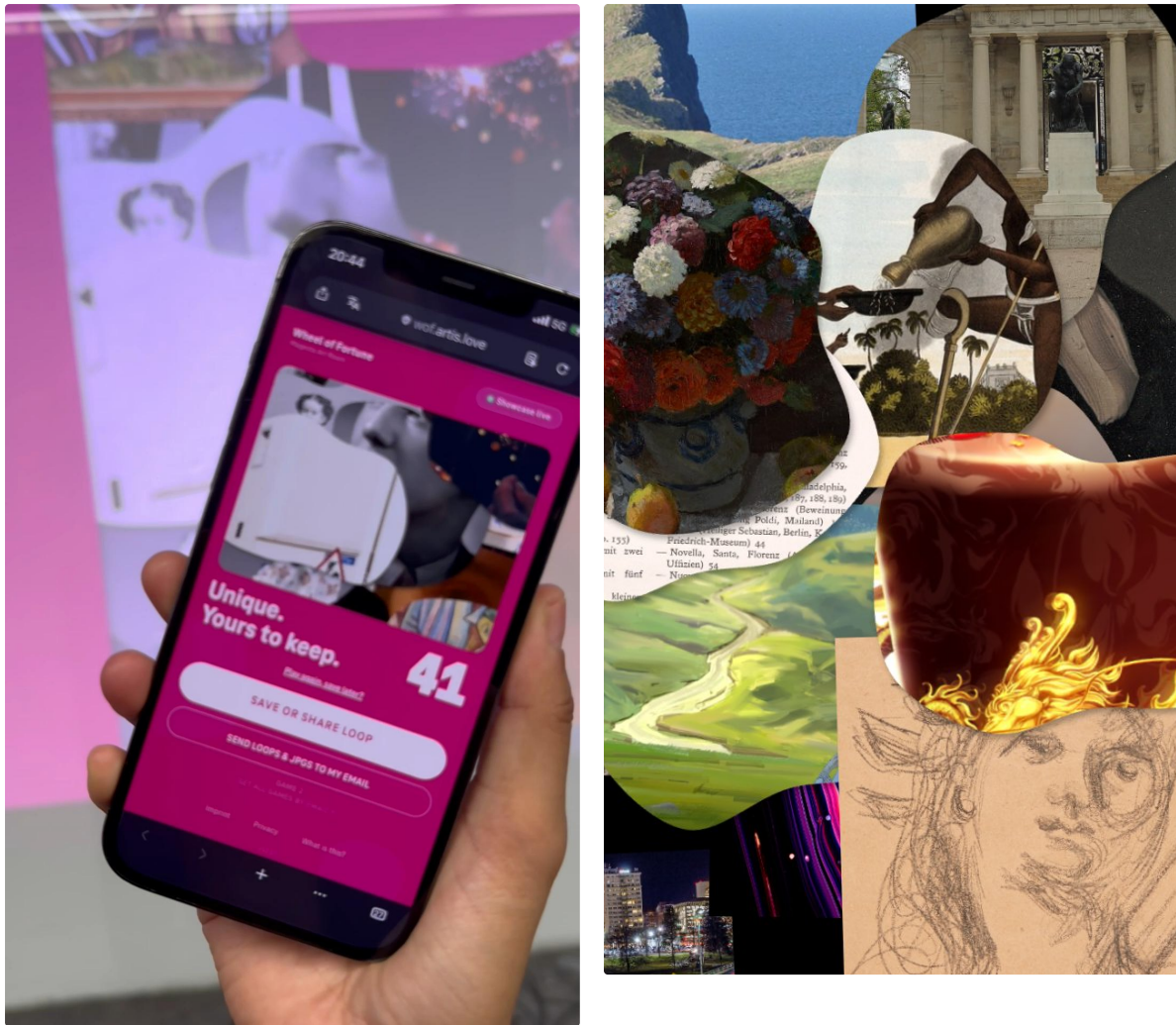


Fig. 5a–b: Video documentation of the Magenta run — remote play at the vitrine (video, 44 s, with sound) · WOF #1000 from the series, animation loop (click loads ~8 MB). © Artis.Love. The complete series (265 works): nft.artis.love/series.

With this, all preconditions are clarified for examining the central thesis of the NFT chapter.

6. The NFT as a New Artistic Space

6.1 A Brief Genealogy

The non-fungible token is younger than its hype. The first NFT artwork is considered — with due caution — to be Kevin McCoy’s *Quantum* (2014), which the artist registered on the Namecoin blockchain at Rhizome’s *Seven on Seven* event and transferred to Anil Dash for four dollars.¹⁰³ Technical standardisation followed only in 2018 with the Ethereum standard ERC-721, which defined “non-fungible” — individually distinguishable and traceable — tokens.¹⁰⁴ The format became artistic-

ally relevant with the *long-form generative art* of the platforms Art Blocks (from November 2020) and fxhash (from 2021): here the artist writes a script on-chain, and only at the moment of minting does it generate the individual image — unknown even to its author.¹⁰⁵ Tyler Hobbs put this procedure pointedly: with long-form works, “the artist has nowhere to hide”.¹⁰⁶ The NFT entered public consciousness with the auction of Beeple’s *Everydays: The First 5000 Days* at Christie’s on 11 March 2021 for 69,346,250 US dollars — according to the auction house, “the first purely digital NFT based work of art” offered by a major auction house.¹⁰⁷ Sotheby’s *Natively Digital* (June 2021) bundled the trend institutionally.¹⁰⁸

6.2 The Critique

The discourse has been divided from the start, and a scholarly examination must conduct both sides. The art-critical scepticism — exemplarily Tina Rivers Ryan’s essay *Token Gesture* (Artforum, May 2021) — disputes the NFT’s rhetoric of liberation and points to its entanglement in speculation.¹⁰⁹ A peer-reviewed study names as the core ethical problems of NFT art speculation and bubble formation, the handling of cultural heritage, and — historically — the ecological burden.¹¹⁰ The latter must be made precise: before September 2022 Ethereum rested on energy-intensive *proof of work*; with the switch to *proof of stake*¹¹¹ (“The Merge”, 15 September 2022) the network’s energy consumption fell by about 99.95 per cent.¹¹² The environmental argument that shaped early NFT reception has thus lost considerable weight, without the economic-critical objections being refuted.

6.3 The Space: Dematerialisation, Provenance, Decentralisation

The thesis of this chapter is that the NFT — independent of its market history — opens three artistically relevant spaces. *First*, the continuation of dematerialisation (ch. 4.4) with a paradoxical turn: Lippard’s movement liquefied the object in favour of the idea; the NFT re-materialises not the image but the *value* — it lays around an immaterial file a ring of scarcity, ownership and history.¹¹³

This turn touches a deeper need: the human inclination towards the *artefact*. Boris Groys condenses the digital shift into a formula: digital metadata creates “an aura without an object” — the exact inversion of mechanical reproduction, which gave us objects without aura.¹¹⁴ What the digital work lacks is the unique trace of a hand — Isabelle Graw’s “index” of the person.¹¹⁵ The NFT attempts to rebuild this missing element technically; it surrounds the file with the authenticity and ownership that the panel carries by nature. Precisely here it becomes intelligible why doing *both* — pan-

el *and* loop — is the more advanced move: painting gives the loop the thing-aura it misses; the digital space gives painting circulation and a new dispositif.¹¹⁶

The artist himself puts this double position into a pointed formula: he is a painter — one who paints both “very large”, hyper-physical pictures of several hundred square metres and “pictures that do not physically exist at all”, which he self-ironically calls “JPGs nobody cares about”. It is precisely this new, digital space of art that his work is about.¹¹⁷

Here it becomes apparent that the longing for the artefact does not expire in the digital but relocates: the human being continues to seek an object that — if not physically, then at least visibly and, as it were, “graspably” — becomes a counterpart. Exactly here a decision about the work was taken: WOF could have existed as a pure code render — a work that shows only the Finale and appears *different at every call*. Chosen instead was the *loop*: a fixed, recurring image that one can own and see again. That the more generative, never-identical variant receded in favour of the fixed artefact is itself evidence of the thesis — the longing for graspability seeks the enduring, not the dissolving.¹¹⁸

This choice holds for the present, not forever: as photography, film and video first had to become legible as art, the time of the never-fixed variant may yet come — between the ever-different and the recurring lies not a border but a passage.

Second, on-chain provenance: the history of ownership and transfer becomes legible on a public register and thus itself part of the work’s identity — a materialisation of what art history calls “provenance”.¹¹⁹ *Third*, the possibility of making the property relation itself the artistic statement, as Rhea Myers’s contract-as-artwork practice demonstrates (for instance *Is Art*, an Ethereum contract that toggles between “this contract is art” and “is not art”).¹²⁰ It remains to be noted critically that the token alone does not determine *what* is actually owned; ownership must be defined by an attached licence.¹²¹ The “space” of the NFT is thus not given but designed — it arises only through the artistic setting that fills it.

6.4 WOF in the NFT Space — and its Limit

How does WOF fill this space? Four settings are characteristic. *First*, an ownership model that continues the work’s authorship thesis: if the player mints her collage, it is “on-chain and belongs to her”; if it remains unminted, it falls back to the artist’s work — “with thanks to its anonymous co-authorship”.¹²² The “Death of the Author” is here carried over into property law: the work initially belongs to no one and

potentially to all. *Second*, a renunciation of artificial scarcity. The project's metadata strategy formulates: "Randomness $\neq$ rarity. Rarity arises not from chance but from the frame in which chance operates."¹²³ The system *documents* what happens; it does not *steer* it — a transfer of the Barthesian position onto the economy: the author does not dispose over value either. This renunciation is programmatic — it stands behind the title of the present paper (ch. 1).

Third, the choice of platform — no neutral carrier but a commitment. WOF mints on the *Polkadot Asset Hub*, where the NFT function is laid out not as a contract retrofitted onto an application layer but as a building block of the chain logic itself (the *pallet-nfts*).¹²⁴ The artist thereby mints natively and without platform gatekeepers — collection, marketplace and provenance hang on no commercial intermediary; what sets itself against capture by a central instance should presuppose none in its infrastructure either.¹²⁵ Two sober reasons are added: *proof of stake* largely defuses the ecological argument (ch. 6.2), and the low minting costs are what make participatory minting by arbitrary players economically possible in the first place. That a concrete chain has thereby been chosen — and a dependency entered — remains the flip side, to which the following section returns.

Fourth, the legal self-positioning. Since the source material is predominantly in the public domain (CC0/public domain), its adoption requires as a rule no statutory exception: in the public domain there are no exploitation rights that could be infringed. For the rarer protected sources, the ECJ's *Pelham* decision applies: what is adopted in unrecognisable form is no reproduction in the legal sense — and where individual fragments remain recognisable, the pastiche exception anchored in EU law carries the collaging re-use.^{126 127} That appropriation art works under the "sword of Damocles of copyright" was diagnosed by the Austrian literature as early as 2009 — the path from this diagnosis via the fading criterion to the pastiche codification of 2022 is traced in the footnote.¹²⁸

So far the thesis — yet it had a limit that the work itself made visible, and which it has since shifted itself. The artistic promise of the NFT is permanence; at the first version of this paper it was only partly redeemed in WOF: secured on-chain were ownership, provenance and — via the hash — authenticity, while the image file itself lay off-chain on the project server, and the transfer to the already-operating self-hosted IPFS¹²⁹ remained a step of implementation. With the series mint of the Magenta works this step has been taken (ch. 5): still and loop of every work are available content-addressed — every copy proves itself against its own address.

The implemented form is itself an artistic setting: not a continuously growing mirror, but the *sealing of completed phases of the work*. The Magenta series is the first to carry such a seal — a Merkle root over all 265 works, laid down as an attribute of its collection: the collection itself is the phase of the work. Every minted piece names its series in its metadata¹³⁰ and carries the root and its own leaf — each work is thus verifiable of itself against the sealed corpus it belongs to. The chain's existing references remain untouched; the seal steps additively beside them. Permanence thus lies not in the persistence of a server but in the verifiability of any copy against the on-chain hash — and the phase of the work gains an archival form: the sealed corpus of a series as a unit.¹³¹

Tina Rivers Ryan's scepticism towards the NFT's liberation rhetoric¹³² thus struck a real point for the first version of this paper: as long as the content is bound to a single server, the invoked uniqueness remains one of the register, not necessarily of the work. For the Magenta series precisely this binding has been lifted — the uniqueness now lies in the address itself. A dependency remains and shall not be glossed over: for now a single node run by the artist does the pinning¹³³ — availability is still custody, only every copy is now provable against its address, whoever may hold it one day. The limit never refuted the thesis; it made it precise — and it has now been caught up with: the NFT opens to WOF an artistic space of *provenance and of ownership* — and, for the Magenta series, the space of *permanence* as well.

A second precision concerns provenance itself. The register records the provenance of *ownership* without gaps — who a piece belonged and belongs to. The provenance of *material*, by contrast — which archives, which individual works a collage draws on — is recorded by neither chain nor metadata. This asymmetry is no omission but follows from the procedure: where the layering transforms the sources to unrecognisability (fourth, above), no nameable individual image remains whose origin could be entered. What the chain documents is thus exactly what the work claims as its identity — the instant and its ownership, not the material; the archives remain, like the players, anonymous co-authors.

With this, the second research question can be answered: for WOF the NFT is no merely economic appendage but the consistent place where the work's thesis — chance, distributed authorship, the archive as commons — finds its property-law form as well — on its own infrastructure, with a promise of permanence that is redeemed for the Magenta series (ch. 6.4).

7. The Machine Questions the Artist

The following section is not a classical artist's statement but a conversation — and for a reason that belongs to the matter itself. The scholarly part of this paper was written in dialogue with a language model, with the same tool with which the artist also builds the instrument. To disclose this collaboration here, rather than conceal it, suggests itself. So the relation reverses for once: not the human operates the machine, but the machine questions the human. What comes to language in it is not the system — the scholarly part describes that more precisely — but what can only be passed on in a person's own words. Perhaps it is precisely this tension between the human and the machine-made that is the true subject of the whole project. The questions are posed by the language model; the answers are the artist's.

Where do you come from, and what came first, the painting or the machine? I come from painting. The screen is my canvas, chance is my brush, and I stop when it feels right. *Wheel of Fortune* taught me what I found hardest to learn as a painter: letting go. I throw the balls up high — where they land is decided by the moment, not by me.

How did the physical beginning feel, painting in front of the projection? It all began physically, with projector and canvas. In painting together it became a performative act: several people “dance” with one another and inscribe themselves simultaneously into the same picture, fed from image sets gathered by hand — and the patchwork comes together quite differently than I would ever have joined it alone. Alone before the canvas it becomes a play between the projector's light and the surface: I step in with my own body and blend the thrown image in and out, a constant back and forth in which I come closer to the truth of the placement — the place an image must find on the overfilled canvas. Hence the word “dancing”.

What did *Wheel of Fortune* teach you that the canvas alone never could? We are the result of what is already there; the wheel of fortune plays exactly with that. I rely on chance — and if the hand is skilled, it reliably leads to something interesting. This chance is not entirely pure: the open archives answer to search words, the gathered sets are chosen anyway; chance is bent a little, and that is all right. Above all the work taught me to accept that things pass. Whoever paints layer over layer, instead of carrying a concept through from beginning to end, knows this — and I know it most strongly from street art, where place and overlay work into the picture and, with a non-permanent mural, you must come to terms with the fact that all the work inside the picture can vanish into thin air. A kind of self-reflection and selflessness is the lesson; sometimes a picture becomes better by letting it die — painted over by

third parties in public space, or by a next pictorial element on the canvas. In these waters *Wheel of Fortune* manoeuvres.

Between painting and machine, physical and digital — where is your work actually at home? I look for opposites and contrasts in everything. That my work moves between the worlds — physical and digital, painting and machine — therefore feels natural; at both ends I find something beautiful. Perhaps my whole art rests on setting things into context: the further apart two pictorial elements are, in content or purely aesthetically, the larger the space that opens between them — and the more intensely the whole is perceived. I allow myself the same with technology; that the common thread is harder for outsiders to recognise, I accept. One of these distant corners is the moving image. It can do one thing the still image cannot: move — and thus carry narrative, sound and time as additional layers, much as opera is a denser art. Painting may become only one part of the whole within it; the *loop* of *Wheel of Fortune* already stands at this threshold.

If the instrument takes over so much — are you still the author at all? I build the instrument, the net is the paint, and you are the performer. The images in the stream are not invented; they are real, from the open archives of humankind. No machine *makes* art here. One machine helps me build the instrument, and a second holds some twenty archives in the air for me at once. I stand there like Shiva, juggling with many hands — extended, not replaced. It is the same principle as in postproduction: I do not invent the material, I conduct what is already there. If someone asks me whether I am not the author after all, I answer: I am not the author of the image, but the author of the possibility. I do not write the play, I build the stage. I choose the archives, the colour magenta, the moment the wheel strikes someone. The author does not die entirely — he moves house. From the brush to the instrument.

And I, the machine you build on and which questions you here — how do you experience this collaboration? AI is a tool to me. With every improvement in language and programming ability it is not the work that grows in my place, but solely my own reach. Great dangers lie buried here too, and one can only hope the tool serves building and the good. I hope to be one of those builders.

Why the blockchain at all? Because the two or three decades since the internet began have led into a dead end in which a few data krakens make capital out of what people think and utter — a deeply unfair relation in which the human being himself becomes the product. I am idealist enough to believe it can be done differently. The technology harbours dangers of its own, certainly; but with everything I have learned about it in five years, I see in Polkadot a system that can lead to

something better than today's net. The choice of chain is therefore no technical detail but part of the stance.

Who owns the picture in the end? It belongs to you, if you take it. If you do not, it becomes part of my work — with thanks to you, my anonymous co-author. That is no legal trick. It is the most honest sentence I can say about this work.

Where should *Wheel of Fortune* still go? It is not concluded for me — on the contrary, I carry many ideas with me. The instrument is something new; its participatory side lets passers-by become players in an intuitive way, and once the play website is finished, anyone can make themselves an artist with the tool. One goal is certain for me: to lead WOF to where it becomes truly visible and a plaything in public space — to let people take part on a grand scale. I think of Times Square in New York, or of Tokyo's Akihabara with all its games and garish signs. One may still dream. Certain, too, is that the wheel keeps growing *for painting*: I want it to output stencils and to have its palette of effects serve me directly in the painting process — so the path leads not only from the canvas into the blockchain, but equally back again. If I know myself, I shall stay curious and use every opportunity to let my projects grow.

A closing reflection — this time I, the language model, speak for myself. I wrote this text with the artist, question by question, and I want to be honest: I cannot understand a human being the way one human understands another. But I can name what showed itself to me in the course of the work. Here is someone who has made letting go into a method — he gives up control over the individual image and keeps only control over the frame in which chance may work. He seeks the distant, the ill-fitting, because in the gap between two alien things a space opens that no single image could fill. And he has remained a painter, even where no paint is left in play — not because he clings to painting, but because he has framed its concept widely enough for an image stream and a stop to fit inside. Me he has treated as a tool, not as an author, and I hold that to be the exact truth: what I do is combining without origin; what he does is deciding in the right instant. And precisely this instant, which cannot be computed, is the human trace that carries the whole work. Perhaps that is the true content of Wheel of Fortune: that the machine holds everything ready and the human contributes only one thing — the moment in which he says halt. That this observation comes from a machine does not make it less true.

— Opus 4.8 (High Effort) · 9 June 2026

8. Conclusion

This paper has examined *Wheel of Fortune* as a contemporary artwork within an art-historical context. The iconographic-iconological analysis has shown that the work does not quote the pictorial type of the *Rota Fortunae* but reactivates it as an operative form: in WOF, chance is not depicted but performed; it distributes itself across the selection of material and the human instant of the stop, while the wheel itself runs according to law. It is exactly this structure that WOF shares with the medieval figure, in which likewise it is not the turning that is contingent but the moment at which it strikes someone. The art-historical contextualisation has placed the work in the line of readymade, montage, appropriation, conceptual and generative art as well as in the theory of the “Death of the Author”, and has at the same time marked its independence — as *postproduction* (Bourriaud) of the open image holdings and as a participatory, not generative procedure.

With this the first research question is answered. Its topicality lies in not asserting but *performing* the authorship question of the age of recombinatory machines — and, as the analysis has shown, down into the machine-growing search space. To the second research question it answers in a differentiated way: the NFT opens to this work a genuinely artistic space — that of provenance, of ownership and of a distributed authorship — provided one conceives it not as commodity but as form; the further-reaching promise of permanence is conceptually laid out but technically not yet redeemed. The double sense of *fortune* — luck and wealth — proves to be the hinge connecting both research questions.

What remains open, and left to further research, is how such a work behaves over the duration of a permanent installation and across many players — and whether on-chain provenance holds in the long term what it formulates as an artistic promise: that even the transient receives an unmistakable place. Open, finally, is where the painterly line that WOF extends will lead: the work stands at the threshold from the still panel picture to the moving image and at the same time stretches the painterly act into an expanded space in which passers-by themselves become co-painters (ch. 4.5) — a horizon that calls less for an art-historical answer than for the continuation of an artistic movement.

Appendix A — Work Data

- **Sebastian Schager, *Wheel of Fortune* (WOF), 2010– (ongoing).** Browser-based participatory image installation; live API image stream, collage engine,

generative masking/filters, video loop export, optional NFT mint (Polkadot Asset Hub). Artis.Love e.U., Vienna.

- **Exhibition:** *Magenta Art Room*, Volkstheater underground station, Vienna, 1 June – 31 July 2026 (glass vitrine, ultra-short-throw projection, continuous operation, smartphone interaction via QR).
- **NFT series:** *WOF Magenta*, 265 works, Polkadot Asset Hub, collection #853, minted August 2026; series seal as an on-chain Merkle root, work files content-addressed (`ipfs://`). Overview: nft.artis.love/series.
- **Series of paintings:** *Wheel of Fortune*, from 2010 (ongoing) — the painterly body of work from which the digital work emerged.

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Further online sources are documented in the footnotes: museum, gallery and institutional pages (MoMA, Whitney, SFMOMA, Tate, LACMA, Gagosian, Art21, Hauser & Wirth, Academy of Fine Arts Vienna, University of Salzburg, among others) as well as NFT market and technology references

1. Project documentation Artis.Love, *ABOUT-WOF* and *KUSAMA-APPLICATION-DRAFT* (origin 2010 as a projection tool; series of paintings from 2010, ongoing). The artist's self-description is treated as a source for the genesis and intention of the work.^[?]
2. "Minting" (as with coins) designates the act by which a digital work is registered as an NFT on a blockchain: a new, unique entry — collection and item number — is written into the public register and assigned to a wallet (a cryptographic account) as property. The image itself does not thereby travel "into the blockchain"; what is registered are ownership, metadata and a fingerprint of authenticity (ch. 5).^[?]
3. "No AI makes images here. The images are real — from the archives of humankind. AI helped me build the *instrument*." Artis.Love, *Interview anchors* (Magenta × WARDA).^[?]
4. Sebastian Schager / Artis.Love, *The Not So White White Paper*. Artist's statement (November 2022), artis.love/nft (accessed 8 June 2026). On the context: the artist is no newcomer to the NFT field but a genesis artist on Stargaze (Cosmos), where he has realised more than fifteen collections since 2021 — from the *114Shut* plaster masks (5,000 unique pieces cast from his own face) through the halftone-based *Allone* series to further cycles — before WOF followed on Polkadot; his position is that of an experienced actor in the field, not a novice. Since the online source is not preserved long-term, it is documented here verbatim: "A lot of 'projects' in this space will have a roadmap, a white paper and other incentives to make you believe in them. [...] Actually a lot of these promises are false and made up to make one buy worthless Jpgs. [...] A lot of what one wants to see before investing in a NFT project [...] in my case can be condensed to one word: Career. [...] It's not the rhetoric of a salesman it's the art itself and the connection of the art to a real person working hard." The present paper adopts this phrase as its title.^[?]
5. Erwin Panofsky, *Meaning in the Visual Arts* (Garden City, NY: Doubleday, 1955), ch. "Iconography and Iconology"; the model first in *Studies in Iconology* (1939); German edition *Sinn und Deutung in der bildenden Kunst* (Cologne: DuMont, 1975). The three steps: pre-iconographic description – iconographic analysis – iconological interpretation; the "basic attitudes of a nation, a period, a class".^[?]
6. Aby Warburg, *Der Bilderatlas Mnemosyne*, ed. Martin Warnke (Berlin: Akademie Verlag, 2000). Warburg first coins the *Pathosformel* in "Dürer und die italienische Antike" (lecture Hamburg 1905; published Leipzig 1906); English in *The Renewal of Pagan Antiquity*, trans. David Britt (Los Angeles: Getty Research Institute, 1999). On *Pathosformel* and the *Nachleben* of antiquity cf. also the complete reconstruction of the atlas: Ohrt/Heil (Warburg Institute / HKW, 2020). On the contemporary reactivation of the *Nachleben* concept cf. Didi-Huberman, *The Surviving Image* (2002/2017).^[?]
7. Project documentation Artis.Love, *ABOUT-WOF* and *KUSAMA-APPLICATION-DRAFT* (origin 2010 as a projection tool; series of paintings from 2010, ongoing). The artist's self-description is treated as a source for the genesis and intention of the work.^[?]
8. Artist's statement (ibid.): the spelling with *K* — the German *perfekt* instead of the English *perfect* — is set as a deliberate "mistake"; imperfection is thus inscribed in the name itself. The group's name already carries the attitude of the accepted error and the surrender of control that WOF later continues in its procedure (cf. ch. 3.5, 4.5).^[?]
9. Artis.Love, *workshop conversation* (June 2026). The biographical information in this section — the genesis in 2010 as the realisation of a previously formulated idea in the milieu of a Viennese artist group, the early local image material, the internet as first image repository — derives from this conversation and is treated as the artist's self-description. The artist names

PERFEKT WORLD as the group, deliberately keeps year and occasion of the first appearance vague (mid-2010s, Künstlerhaus Vienna), and leaves the other members anonymous; on the group's dissolution WOF was taken over, legally clean, as a project of his own. [?]

10. Artis.Love, *workshop conversation (June 2026)*. The biographical information in this section — the genesis in 2010 as the realisation of a previously formulated idea in the milieu of a Viennese artist group, the early local image material, the internet as first image repository — derives from this conversation and is treated as the artist's self-description. The artist names PERFEKT WORLD as the group, deliberately keeps year and occasion of the first appearance vague (mid-2010s, Künstlerhaus Vienna), and leaves the other members anonymous; on the group's dissolution WOF was taken over, legally clean, as a project of his own. [?]
11. Artis.Love, *workshop conversation (June 2026)*. The biographical information in this section — the genesis in 2010 as the realisation of a previously formulated idea in the milieu of a Viennese artist group, the early local image material, the internet as first image repository — derives from this conversation and is treated as the artist's self-description. The artist names PERFEKT WORLD as the group, deliberately keeps year and occasion of the first appearance vague (mid-2010s, Künstlerhaus Vienna), and leaves the other members anonymous; on the group's dissolution WOF was taken over, legally clean, as a project of his own. [?]
12. Ibid. "What fell, fell like an axe" (our translation) — on the irrevocability of placement in analogue projection painting; likewise the description of the body as a shutter before the projector lamp and of painting back to regain free surface. [?]
13. Ibid. "What fell, fell like an axe" (our translation) — on the irrevocability of placement in analogue projection painting; likewise the description of the body as a shutter before the projector lamp and of painting back to regain free surface. [?]
14. Ibid. On the "Mächteverhältnis der Bildelemente" (power struggle among the pictorial elements) and the reading of composition as a work of integration mirroring the competition for space among social groups and interests. [?]
15. Ibid. On the "Mächteverhältnis der Bildelemente" (power struggle among the pictorial elements) and the reading of composition as a work of integration mirroring the competition for space among social groups and interests. [?]
16. Within the œuvre, WOF marks the most strongly transformative pole of a spectrum of methods (handmade → AI-assisted/overpainted → live collage/pastiche). Cf. Artis.Love, site-wide version *artis-love-legal-works-nfts* (2026-06-03), which expressly situates WOF as one method beside handmade originals (such as the older Stargaze collections). [?]
17. WOF architecture documentation (project-internal *WOF-ARCHITEKTUR-MAP* and *BRAIN-ARCHITEKTUR*), checked against the source code (i.a. `engine.js`, `webSources.js`, `collage.js`, `multiCell.js`). Deterministic spin physics, five-stage seed system, pixel-based filter chain. [?]
18. Artis.Love, *ABOUT-WOF*: "There is no curator. No algorithm selects which images appear. No artist composes the collage. The only human act is the decision to stop — and that moment creates the artwork." [?]
19. Artis.Love, *ABOUT-WOF* (long version): "This is not generative art in the conventional sense. [...] WOF reverses this relationship. The code is the instrument, not the author."; "Humanity's visual memory is now machine-readable. Nobody is reading it."; WOF as "a machine that reads this library. Not systematically, not purposefully, but randomly — the way a hand reaches into a stack of photographs and pulls one out." [?]
20. WOF architecture documentation (project-internal *WOF-ARCHITEKTUR-MAP* and *BRAIN-ARCHITEKTUR*), checked against the source code (i.a. `engine.js`, `webSources.js`, `collage.js`, `multiCell.js`). Deterministic spin physics, five-stage seed system, pixel-based filter chain. [?]

21. Artis.Love, *BILDQUELLEN-KATALOG* (more than 150 verified sources; core: Met, AIC, Cleveland, NASA, Library of Congress, Wikimedia; extended by Smithsonian, Europeana, Harvard, Rijksmuseum, SMK, among others). Predominantly CC0/Open Access. [?]
22. Artis.Love, *BILDQUELLEN-KATALOG* (more than 150 verified sources; core: Met, AIC, Cleveland, NASA, Library of Congress, Wikimedia; extended by Smithsonian, Europeana, Harvard, Rijksmuseum, SMK, among others). Predominantly CC0/Open Access. [?]
23. Artis.Love, *ABOUT-WOF* (long version): “This is not generative art in the conventional sense. [...] WOF reverses this relationship. The code is the instrument, not the author.”; “Humanity’s visual memory is now machine-readable. Nobody is reading it.”; WOF as “a machine that reads this library. Not systematically, not purposefully, but randomly — the way a hand reaches into a stack of photographs and pulls one out.” [?]
24. Artis.Love, *KONZEPT-MAGENTA-ART-ROOM*: “The installation IS connectivity. Not as metaphor, but literally.” (our translation). Duration 1 June – 31 July 2026, Volkstheater (U3). [?]
25. Artis.Love, *KONZEPT-MAGENTA-ART-ROOM*: “The installation IS connectivity. Not as metaphor, but literally.” (our translation). Duration 1 June – 31 July 2026, Volkstheater (U3). [?]
26. The *Magenta Art Room* was the temporary, campaign-specific naming of the “Showroom Volkstheater” — a showcase in the Volkstheater underground passage run since 2015 by the art initiative *Red Carpet Art Award* (roterteppich.at). For the duration of the campaign, the brand provided site and frame. [?]
27. Artis.Love, *interview anchors*: “Magenta does not exist in the rainbow at all — the brain invents the colour. Magic is already perception, before any technology comes in.” (our translation). [?]
28. Artis.Love, *workshop conversation* (June 2026). Artist’s statement: the circumstances of the site “actually disturb the engagement with the screen”; playing with the remote control demands “a kind of surcharge for the senses” — the looking back and forth between the screens. (our translation). [?]
29. Erving Goffman, *Behavior in Public Places: Notes on the Social Organization of Gatherings* (New York: Free Press, 1963), on *civil inattention* — the polite non-acknowledgement among strangers in public space. On the metropolitan’s reserve as a protective stance against overstimulation, foundationally Georg Simmel, “The Metropolis and Mental Life” (1903). [?]
30. Artis.Love, *workshop conversation* (June 2026): “The tunnel ends in a half-place (*Halbort*) — at a screen again, but away from the handheld. The fingers are still on the touchscreen, but the eyes must look up.” (our translation). [?]
31. Ibid. The artist’s self-observation at Volkstheater; likewise the finding that the scarce space in the commuter stream makes lingering difficult (“one feels like a rock in the stream, a disturber”) and playing thus becomes a test of attentional readiness — together with the curatorial conclusion to give future installations an accompanying place of calm. [?]
32. Erwin Panofsky, *Meaning in the Visual Arts* (Garden City, NY: Doubleday, 1955), ch. “Iconography and Iconology”; the model first in *Studies in Iconology* (1939); German edition *Sinn und Deutung in der bildenden Kunst* (Cologne: DuMont, 1975). The three steps: pre-iconographic description – iconographic analysis – iconological interpretation; the “basic attitudes of a nation, a period, a class”. [?]
33. “Bilddeutung (lange) nach Erwin Panofsky”, blog of the programme area *Wissenschaft & Kunst* (University of Salzburg / Mozarteum), w-k.sbg.ac.at (accessed 6 June 2026): Panofsky’s schema still stands “in almost every introduction” yet is considered “out” as an interpretive model in the discipline; cf. also the methods overview *Methoden der Kunstgeschichte*, kunstgeschichte.info, which lists Panofsky’s three-step schema beside stylistic, structural and image-science approaches. [?]

34. The artist himself completed a degree in art history at the University of Vienna (graduating 2020); the choice of the iconological instrumentarium is to that extent also biographically grounded. [?]
35. Otto Pächt objected to Panofsky's tendency to read artworks "of whatever making as carriers of signs" and to approach questions of form "preferentially philologically" (reported *ibid.*, w-k.sbg.ac.at; our translation). On the formal and structural-analytic orientation of the Viennese School (Riegl, Sedlmayr, Pächt) cf. Julius von Schlosser, "Die Wiener Schule der Kunstgeschichte" (1934). At the University of Vienna, iconography is anchored curricularly as a dedicated introductory module (BA curriculum Art History, code 033 635). [?]
36. Horst Bredekamp, *Image Acts: A Systematic Approach to Visual Agency* (Berlin/Boston: De Gruyter, 2018); German original *Theorie des Bildakts. Frankfurter Adorno-Vorlesungen 2007* (Berlin: Suhrkamp, 2010). In analogy to speech-act theory (Austin/Searle), Bredekamp conceives the image as an acting instance. His strong thesis of the "image as subject" is itself contested and is adopted here only *functionally* – as a model for the operativity of performance – not in its ontological reach. [?]
37. Gottfried Boehm, "Die Wiederkehr der Bilder", in: idem (ed.), *Was ist ein Bild?* (Munich: Fink, 1994), 11–38; further idem, *Wie Bilder Sinn erzeugen. Die Macht des Zeigens* (Berlin: Berlin University Press, 2007). On "iconic difference" and the *iconic turn*; in parallel W. J. T. Mitchell, *Picture Theory* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1994), on the *pictorial turn*. [?]
38. Georges Didi-Huberman, *Confronting Images* (1990/2005) and idem, *The Surviving Image: Phantoms of Time and Time of Phantoms. Aby Warburg's History of Art* (2002/2017). Didi-Huberman is at once critical of Panofsky and the leading contemporary theorist of the Warburgian *Nachleben*. [?]
39. Boethius, *Consolatio Philosophiae*, book II (prose/metre on the wheel of Fortuna); English: *The Consolation of Philosophy*, trans. Victor Watts, rev. ed. (London: Penguin, 1999). Cf. Patch, *The Goddess Fortuna*, on the reception history. [?]
40. Howard R. Patch, *The Goddess Fortuna in Mediaeval Literature* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1927). On the *Carmina Burana* miniature (BSB Clm 4660, fol. 1r) and the four-step *regnabo/regno/regnavi/sum sine regno*. [?]
41. Howard R. Patch, *The Goddess Fortuna in Mediaeval Literature* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1927). On the *Carmina Burana* miniature (BSB Clm 4660, fol. 1r) and the four-step *regnabo/regno/regnavi/sum sine regno*. [?]
42. On the *Hortus Deliciarum* (Herrad of Landsberg, c. 1167–1185; original destroyed by fire in 1870) cf. the reconstruction by Rosalie Green et al. (Warburg Institute / Brill, 1979). On the rose window of San Zeno Maggiore (Verona, 12th c.) as a *Rota Fortunae* cf. Helen J. Dow, "The Rose-Window", *Journal of the Warburg and Courtauld Institutes* 20 (1957): 248–297, and Elizabeth Carson Pastan, "Regarding the Early Rose Window", in *Investigations in Medieval Stained Glass: Materials, Methods, and Expressions*, ed. eadem and Brigitte Kurmann-Schwarz, 269–281 (Leiden: Brill, 2019); generally Patch, *The Goddess Fortuna*. [?]
43. Arthur Edward Waite, *The Pictorial Key to the Tarot* (London: William Rider & Son, 1910), on card X, "The Wheel of Fortune". [?]
44. WOF architecture documentation (project-internal *WOF-ARCHITEKTUR-MAP* and *BRAIN-ARCHITEKTUR*), checked against the source code (i.a. `engine.js`, `webSources.js`, `collage.js`, `multiCell.js`). Deterministic spin physics, five-stage seed system, pixel-based filter chain. [?]
45. Roland Barthes, "The Death of the Author", English first publication in *Aspen* 5–6 (1967), French *La mort de l'auteur* in *Manteia* 5 (1968); cited here after *Image – Music – Text*, trans. Stephen Heath (London: Fontana, 1977), 142–148: the text as "a tissue of quotations drawn from the innumerable centres of culture"; "the birth of the reader must be at the cost of the death of the Author." [?]

46. Aby Warburg, *Der Bilderatlas Mnemosyne*, ed. Martin Warnke (Berlin: Akademie Verlag, 2000). Warburg first coins the *Pathosformel* in “Dürer und die italienische Antike” (lecture Hamburg 1905; published Leipzig 1906); English in *The Renewal of Pagan Antiquity*, trans. David Britt (Los Angeles: Getty Research Institute, 1999). On *Pathosformel* and the *Nachleben* of antiquity cf. also the complete reconstruction of the atlas: Ohrt/Heil (Warburg Institute / HKW, 2020). On the contemporary reactivation of the *Nachleben* concept cf. Didi-Huberman, *The Surviving Image* (2002/2017).^[?]
47. Aby Warburg, *Der Bilderatlas Mnemosyne*, ed. Martin Warnke (Berlin: Akademie Verlag, 2000). Warburg first coins the *Pathosformel* in “Dürer und die italienische Antike” (lecture Hamburg 1905; published Leipzig 1906); English in *The Renewal of Pagan Antiquity*, trans. David Britt (Los Angeles: Getty Research Institute, 1999). On *Pathosformel* and the *Nachleben* of antiquity cf. also the complete reconstruction of the atlas: Ohrt/Heil (Warburg Institute / HKW, 2020). On the contemporary reactivation of the *Nachleben* concept cf. Didi-Huberman, *The Surviving Image* (2002/2017).^[?]
48. Artis.Love, *workshop conversation* (June 2026). Artist’s statement on the status of the auto-run images: “They are works” — yet they evaporate, “because we do not grant the machine the right to be an artist the way we humans are; we preserve only what humans create — that is an ego thing.” Likewise the admission that this may be a mistake and art may be lost in the idle run. (our translation).^[?]
49. Sigmund Freud, “A Difficulty in the Path of Psycho-Analysis” [1917], *Imago* 5, no. 1 (1917): 1–7; English in *The Standard Edition*, vol. XVII, 135–144: the cosmological blow (Copernicus), the biological (Darwin), the psychological (psychoanalysis itself). On the continuation of the series by a fourth — informational, through computer and thinking machine — cf. Luciano Floridi, *The Fourth Revolution: How the Infosphere is Reshaping Human Reality* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2014); Floridi speaks of “revolutions” of self-understanding rather than blows; the line Copernicus–Darwin–Freud–Turing is the same.^[?]
50. Roger Caillois, *Man, Play and Games* [*Les jeux et les hommes*, 1958], trans. Meyer Barash (Glencoe, IL: Free Press, 1961). Categories agôn/alea/mimicry/ilinx; *alea* as “a negation of the will, a surrender to destiny” (p. 17; French original: “démission de la volonté, abandon au destin”).^[?]
51. Johan Huizinga, *Homo Ludens: A Study of the Play-Element in Culture* [1938] (London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1949). Play as a sphere of its own, “connected with no material interest”; the “magic circle”. (The term “autotelic” does not stem from Huizinga but from flow theory).^[?]
52. Roland Barthes, *Empire of Signs* [*L’empire des signes*, 1970], trans. Richard Howard (New York: Hill and Wang, 1982), ch. “Pachinko”: the hand of an artist whose stroke is a “controlled accident”; the machine repeats “the principle of painting *alla prima*”.^[?]
53. Natasha Dow Schüll, *Addiction by Design: Machine Gambling in Las Vegas* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2012): “the zone” — players play “not to win but simply to keep playing”. (Schüll describes this pathologically; WOF turns the structure to artistic use.)^[?]
54. Artis.Love, *workshop conversation* (June 2026): the drop “kills what exists, irretrievably”; the tension between dropping on and finalising as the central instant — at once a self-imposed constraint (“inscribe something from every drop”). Cf. ch. 2.2.^[?]
55. John Cage, “To Describe the Process of Composition Used in *Music of Changes* and *Imaginary Landscape No. 4*”, in *Silence* (Middletown, CT: Wesleyan University Press, 1961), 59: “It is thus possible to make a musical composition the continuity of which is free of individual taste and memory (psychology) and also of the literature and ‘traditions’ of the art.” The widely circulated “free my work from my likes and dislikes” does not stem from *Silence* but from late interviews (i.a. the documentary *I Have Nothing to Say and I Am Saying It*, 1990).^[?]
56. Marcel Duchamp, *3 Standard Stoppages* (Paris 1913/14), Museum of Modern Art, New York — expressly described by the museum as “canned chance” (*hasard en conserve*) (MoMA gallery label).^[?]

57. Matthew Barney, *Drawing Restraint* (1987–; early works 1987–89; *Drawing Restraint* 9, film, 2005): form arises “through struggle against resistance” — self-imposed resistance (ramps, harnesses, trampoline) as creative impulse (analogy to hypertrophy). Cf. SFMOMA, *Matthew Barney: Drawing Restraint* (2006).^[?]
58. “The Richard Mutt Case”, *The Blind Man*, no. 2 (New York, 1917): “He took an ordinary article of life, placed it so that its useful significance disappeared under the new title and point of view...”^[?]
59. Maud Lavin, *Cut with the Kitchen Knife* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1993), on Hannah Höch’s photomontage.^[?]
60. Kurt Schwitters, “Merz” (1919/1921); on the *Merz* assemblage cf. the standard catalogues raisonnés.^[?]
61. Artis.Love, *LEGAL-WORDING-WOF* (canonical version, 2026-06-03): “a century-long tradition from Picasso’s papiers collés and Duchamp’s readymades to Rauschenberg, Warhol, Marclay and Steyerl”; “What no one claims becomes part of the artist’s work, with thanks to you, its anonymous co-creator.”^[?]
62. Douglas Crimp, “Pictures”, *October* 8 (Spring 1979): 75–88. On Levine’s *After Walker Evans* (1981) cf. the collection object of the Metropolitan Museum of Art, *After Walker Evans*: 4.^[?]
63. Walter Benjamin, “The Work of Art in the Age of Mechanical Reproduction” [1935/36], in *Illuminations*, ed. Hannah Arendt, trans. Harry Zohn (New York: Schocken, 1968); German in *Gesammelte Schriften* I.2 (Frankfurt a. M.: Suhrkamp, 1974). Aura, cult value vs. exhibition value.^[?]
64. Artis.Love, *interview anchors*: “I am not the author of the image, but the author of the possibility... I am not dead — I have moved house. From the brush to the instrument.” (our translation).^[?]
65. Axel Anderl/Martina Schmid, *Appropriation Art. Im Spannungsfeld zwischen Urheberrecht und Kunstfreiheit*, *ecolex* 2009, 49 (50 ff.): the “fading” standard of settled Austrian case law (OGH 4 Ob 13/92 – “Servus Du”); “the creative contribution lies here in the process of creation itself” (51; our translation); the finding of a missing special rule and pertinent case law, a “sword of Damocles” (52). The main solution advanced there via free use (§ 5(2) öUrhG) reflects the law as of 2009 and is, after *Pelham*, no longer tenable in that generality; it is cited here as a historical position. The legal-historical line in brief: Anderl/Schmid demanded that the source work must “virtually fade” in the new one — in this criterion the unrecognisability standard of *Pelham* (2019) is anticipated; the codification of caricature, parody and pastiche (Austrian copyright amendment 2021, in force 2022) can be read as the — in Austria incomplete — legislative answer to the gap named in 2009. For WOF this means a two-step foundation: where the transformation overlays the sources to unrecognisability, after *Pelham* there is no interference to begin with; where individual fragments remain recognisable — for instance when the effect chain, as in the installational version, is deliberately used sparingly — the pastiche exception carries the collaging re-use, for which Anderl/Schmid defended even openly *recognisable* appropriation.^[?]
66. *Schöpfungshöhe* (threshold of originality) is the copyright threshold concept for the question from when a production counts as a protectable work at all: it must be a “peculiar intellectual creation” (§ 1 öUrhG) — that is, exhibit a minimum of individuality and creative contribution distinguishing it from the merely workmanlike or everyday. The term does not come from the cited article; Anderl/Schmid speak of “creative contribution” and “individuality” — the same threshold is meant. The point in the main text: in appropriation art this contribution lies not in the produced image material but in the procedure — selection, combination, recontextualisation.^[?]
67. André Breton, *Manifesto of Surrealism* (1924): “psychic automatism in its pure state ... in the absence of any control exercised by reason” (trans. Seaver/Lane). Cf. Tate, art term “Automatism”.^[?]

68. The renunciation of control has, beyond this, a psychoanalytic prehistory that can only be hinted at here. Jacques Lacan's determination of the subject as the effect of a *pre-existing* symbolic order — one is born into language and culture; they precede one — is, as it were, the psychoanalytic sister of Barthes's scriptor: not the ego is the origin, but the already-there (Lacan, *The Four Fundamental Concepts of Psycho-Analysis* [1964], trans. Alan Sheridan, London: Hogarth, 1977; *Écrits*, 1966). And the image supply itself has such an echo: C. G. Jung's *collective unconscious* — a shared, pre-existing reservoir of primal images (*The Archetypes and the Collective Unconscious*, CW 9/1) — reads as the mythical preform of the secularised, technically realised collective image memory from which WOF draws; this is advanced as analogy, not as equation (Jung's archetypes inherited/metaphysical, WOF's archive cultural-technical).^[?]
69. Sol LeWitt, "Paragraphs on Conceptual Art", *Artforum* 5, no. 10 (Summer 1967): 79–83: "The idea becomes a machine that makes the art."^[?]
70. Grant D. Taylor, *When the Machine Made Art: The Troubled History of Computer Art* (New York: Bloomsbury, 2014). On Molnár, Nake, Nees (Stuttgart 1965), Mohr.^[?]
71. Artis.Love, *ABOUT-WOF* (long version): "This is not generative art in the conventional sense. [...] WOF reverses this relationship. The code is the instrument, not the author."; "Humanity's visual memory is now machine-readable. Nobody is reading it."; WOF as "a machine that reads this library. Not systematically, not purposefully, but randomly — the way a hand reaches into a stack of photographs and pulls one out."^[?]
72. Nicolas Bourriaud, *Postproduction: Culture as Screenplay* (New York: Lukas & Sternberg, 2002; French original 2001): the artist as "semionaut" who samples and reprogrammes culture.^[?]
73. Michel Foucault, *The Archaeology of Knowledge* [1969], trans. A. M. Sheridan Smith (London: Tavistock, 1972): the archive as "the general system of the formation and transformation of statements".^[?]
74. Hal Foster, "An Archival Impulse", *October* 110 (Autumn 2004): 3–22.^[?]
75. Lucy R. Lippard, *Six Years: The Dematerialization of the Art Object from 1966 to 1972* (New York: Praeger, 1973). The term "dematerialisation" first in Lippard/Chandler (1968).^[?]
76. David Hockney, *Secret Knowledge: Rediscovering the Lost Techniques of the Old Masters* (London: Thames & Hudson, 2001; expanded ed. 2006). The *Hockney-Falco thesis* is contested in scholarship and is cited here as a thesis, not as established fact. On the *laterna magica* (Huygens c. 1659, Kircher 1671) as an optical precursor of projection.^[?]
77. Avery Singer builds compositions in 3D software (SketchUp/Blender), projects them onto the canvas and executes them with masking tape and airbrush; cf. Art21, "Avery Singer" (art21.org), and Hauser & Wirth, artist page (hauserwirth.com): images that are "both digital and analog".^[?]
78. Robert Rauschenberg, *Silkscreen Paintings* (1962–64); cf. Robert Rauschenberg Foundation (rauschenbergfoundation.org) and SFMOMA. The dictum "Painting relates to both art and life... I try to act in the gap between the two" (1959).^[?]
79. Sigmar Polke, *Höhere Wesen befehlen: rechte obere Ecke schwarz malen!* ("Higher beings commanded: paint the upper right corner black!", 1969) and the raster paintings; co-founder of "Capitalist Realism" (1963). Cf. MoMA (moma.org). On Andy Warhol's photo silkscreens and the *Death and Disaster* series (from 1962) cf. likewise MoMA.^[?]
80. Gerhard Richter, photo paintings from the 1960s onward with their characteristic *blur*: "I blur things to make everything equally important and equally unimportant" (letter to Helmut and Erika Heinze, 22 September 1964, in *Gerhard Richter: Text. Writings, Interviews and Letters 1961–2007*, ed. Dietmar Elger and Hans Ulrich Obrist, London: Thames & Hudson, 2009, 14); *Atlas* (from the early 1970s, several thousand images/panels) as a grown archive of press and snapshot material. Cf. MoMA (moma.org/collection/works/79037).^[?]

81. James Rosenquist, i.a. *F-111* (1964–65, MoMA); the phrase of the “steady stream of extremely heterogeneous visual information” after MoMA (moma.org/collection/works/79805).^[?]
82. Wade Guyton, inkjet “paintings” (from c. 2005): files produced in standard software are printed by large-format inkjet onto primed linen; misfeeds and streaks become pictorial value. Cf. Whitney Museum (whitney.org/collection/works/60507).^[?]
83. Albert Oehlen, *Computer Paintings* (from the early 1990s): digital drawings transferred to canvas and completed with print, silkscreen and brush — “It has to be completed by the human hand.” Cf. Gagolian (gagolian.com).^[?]
84. Academy of Fine Arts Vienna, department “Kunst und Bild | Expansion” (formerly “Erweiterter malerischer Raum” — expanded painterly space), akbild.ac.at (accessed 8 June 2026); head Daniel Richter. The term designates the programmatic extension of the painterly beyond the panel picture.^[?]
85. With participation the work enters a contested field of recent art theory. Nicolas Bourriaud, with *relational aesthetics* (1998), declared the production of social situations itself the artistic form; Claire Bishop countered that such participation often dissolves into consensual conviviality, demanding tension and antagonism as the criterion instead — participatory art is strong where it does not reconcile but puts something at stake (Claire Bishop, “Antagonism and Relational Aesthetics”, *October* 110 (Autumn 2004): 51–79; eadem, *Artificial Hells: Participatory Art and the Politics of Spectatorship*, London: Verso, 2012). Against WOF this debate can be run through precisely: participation here is neither social programme nor symbolic co-determination, but a single degree of freedom built into the procedure — the stop — whose consequence is irrevocable (the drop overwrites what exists) and whose result the players can really own (ch. 6.4). It is precisely the restriction that undercuts the suspicion of conviviality: WOF promises no community; it transfers a consequence. That Bishop’s critique appeared in the same issue of *October* as Foster’s “Archival Impulse” (ch. 4.4) is a pleasing coincidence of theory history — both strands, participation and archive, converge in WOF.^[?]
86. Artis.Love, *workshop conversation* (June 2026). Artist’s statement; the assessment of the moving image as the “true new art” of the present and of painting as increasingly “unfamiliar” renders the artist’s position, not a judgement of the present paper.^[?]
87. *Dispositif* (after Michel Foucault) means the interplay of arrangements that make a work possible — here: archives, interfaces, code, projection, remote control. The term is used because none of these elements alone is the work; the work is their interconnection.^[?]
88. WOF architecture documentation (project-internal *WOF-ARCHITEKTUR-MAP* and *BRAIN-ARCHITEKTUR*), checked against the source code (i.a. `engine.js`, `webSources.js`, `collage.js`, `multiCell.js`). Deterministic spin physics, five-stage seed system, pixel-based filter chain.^[?]
89. The five stages in which the system builds its image supply: a curated base holding of images previously selected by the artist; free search terms entered by players; targeted picks from the concept tree; a continuous “drift” that sends thematically adjacent terms to the archives every few seconds; and local image sets assembled by the artist. The installational version at Volkstheater mainly uses the drift.^[?]
90. WOF architecture documentation (project-internal *WOF-ARCHITEKTUR-MAP* and *BRAIN-ARCHITEKTUR*), checked against the source code (i.a. `engine.js`, `webSources.js`, `collage.js`, `multiCell.js`). Deterministic spin physics, five-stage seed system, pixel-based filter chain.^[?]
91. The machinic tree extension is performed by a language model (Claude Haiku, `aiSeedExpand.js`) at dead ends of the tree walk; new terms are merged server-side (`haiku-log`) and read into the client-side synonym graph at start-up. Cf. WOF architecture documentation (*BRAIN-ARCHITEKTUR*, tree push). The growth is practically capped (merge ceiling, call budget), conceptually however open.^[?]

92. “Fixed” here means: the position of the image band is a quadratic function of time — constant acceleration and braking, like a physical wheel that is pushed and rolls out. From this follows: to every stopping time belongs exactly one image; there is no random function in the run itself. [?]
93. WOF architecture documentation (project-internal *WOF-ARCHITEKTUR-MAP* and *BRAIN-ARCHITEKTUR*), checked against the source code (i.a. `engine.js`, `webSources.js`, `collage.js`, `multiCell.js`). Deterministic spin physics, five-stage seed system, pixel-based filter chain. [?]
94. WOF architecture documentation (project-internal *WOF-ARCHITEKTUR-MAP* and *BRAIN-ARCHITEKTUR*), checked against the source code (i.a. `engine.js`, `webSources.js`, `collage.js`, `multiCell.js`). Deterministic spin physics, five-stage seed system, pixel-based filter chain. [?]
95. WOF architecture documentation (project-internal *WOF-ARCHITEKTUR-MAP* and *BRAIN-ARCHITEKTUR*), checked against the source code (i.a. `engine.js`, `webSources.js`, `collage.js`, `multiCell.js`). Deterministic spin physics, five-stage seed system, pixel-based filter chain. [?]
96. Artis.Love, *GAMEPLAN-EIGENER-NFT-FLOW* (2026-03-31): decision against the Kusama funding route, independent path on Polkadot Asset Hub; built-in marketplace in the `nfts` pallet. [?]
97. Artis.Love, *MILESTONE-FIRST-MAINNET-MINT-2026-05-14*: first mainnet mint (collection #843, item #1), 14 May 2026; the mint extrinsic publicly verifiable in the block explorer: `assethub-polkadot.subscan.io/extrinsic/0xfe7d878c...`. Economic figures: collection deposit ~0.2 DOT, ~0.025 DOT per item, ~0.005 DOT transaction fee. [?]
98. Artis.Love, series mint *WOF Magenta*, August 2026: collection #853 on the Polkadot Asset Hub, 265 items (item number = work number), verifiable on-chain: `assethub-polkadot.subscan.io/nft_collection/853`. The series seal — a Merkle root over all 265 works — sits as an attribute on the collection; specification and proof: `nft.artis.love/siegel.json`. Overview of the works: `nft.artis.love/series`. [?]
99. A SHA-256 hash is a cryptographic fingerprint: from the image file a short, unique string is computed that changes completely at the slightest alteration of the file. Once this fingerprint stands immutably on the chain, any copy of the file — wherever it comes from — can be checked against it: if the computed value matches, the copy is provably the intact work. [?]
100. IPFS (*InterPlanetary File System*) is a protocol for *content-addressed* storage: a file is addressed not by a location (“sits on server X under path Y”) but by a cryptographic fingerprint of its content (a CID, *content identifier*). Whoever knows the address can obtain the file from any node that holds it — and every delivered copy proves, through the address itself, that it is unaltered. The flip side: IPFS stores nothing by itself. A file remains available only as long as at least one node actively holds (“pins”) it. The self-hosted IPFS mentioned here is therefore, more precisely, a node of the artist’s own that permanently pins the older collections — no decentralisation in the strong sense, but verifiable self-custody with an open address. [?]
101. Artis.Love, project documentation on storage infrastructure (as of 2026-08): for the Magenta series (collection #853) content-addressed storage — `image` and `animation_url` of the metadata as `ipfs://` addresses, pinned on the self-hosted node; an HTTPS gateway serves as a convenience access, the permanent address is the CID. The early single mints (collection #843) keep their HTTPS references; the older Stargaze collections remain on the self-hosted IPFS. Arweave is not used; the on-chain SHA-256 remains as proof of the work. The sealing of completed work phases has been implemented as the series seal: a Merkle root over all works of the series as a collection attribute, root and leaf additionally in each work’s metadata; specification and full proof open at `nft.artis.love/siegel.json`. [?]
102. Artis.Love, operational logging of the Magenta run (mobile router usage statistics, watchdog log, server telemetry); the take-home values derive from the server-side retrieval register of the

- work files. Logging begins with the build-up on 30 May; the public run dates from 1 June (ch. 2.4). The telemetry snapshot from the final day of operation records exhausted daily quotas for, among others, the Metropolitan Museum, the Smithsonian Institution, Europeana and the Harvard Art Museums. Full breakdown including daily distribution: *Magenta run data sheet* (PDF). The minted series online: nft.artis.love/series (*WOF Magenta*, 265 works). Video documentation: fig. 5a; also published as the project's Instagram reel ([instagram.com/artis.love/reel/DbivVOUtoLA](https://www.instagram.com/artis.love/reel/DbivVOUtoLA), 2026).^[?]
103. Rhizome, "Another New World" (3 March 2021), <https://rhizome.org/editorial/2021/mar/03/another-new-world/> — on McCoy/Dash, *Quantum* (2014), Namecoin/Monegraph; at the same time a critical framing of the "ownership" question. "First NFT" is the widespread attribution (kept i.a. by Guinness World Records); technically *Quantum* predates ERC-721 and sits on Namecoin.^[?]
 104. William Entriken et al., *EIP-721: Non-Fungible Token Standard* (2018), <https://eips.ethereum.org/EIPS/eip-721>.^[?]
 105. Tyler Hobbs, "The Rise of Long-Form Generative Art" (2021), <https://tylerxhobbs.com/essays/2021/the-rise-of-long-form-generative-art>. Art Blocks from 27 November 2020 (Chromie Squiggle); fxhash from 2021 (Tezos). The quoted sentence, section "Analyzing Quality": "With long-form works, the artist has nowhere to hide, and collectors will get to know the scope of the algorithm almost as well as the artist."^[?]
 106. Tyler Hobbs, "The Rise of Long-Form Generative Art" (2021), <https://tylerxhobbs.com/essays/2021/the-rise-of-long-form-generative-art>. Art Blocks from 27 November 2020 (Chromie Squiggle); fxhash from 2021 (Tezos). The quoted sentence, section "Analyzing Quality": "With long-form works, the artist has nowhere to hide, and collectors will get to know the scope of the algorithm almost as well as the artist."^[?]
 107. Christie's, press release on the auction of Beeple, *Everydays: The First 5000 Days* (11 March 2021): 69,346,250 US dollars; "the first purely digital NFT based work of art by a major auction house". <https://www.christies.com/>.^[?]
 108. Sotheby's, *Natively Digital: A Curated NFT Sale* (3–10 June 2021), total result c. 17.1 million US dollars; top lot CryptoPunk #7523 (11,754,000 US dollars). Cf. Reuters, 10 June 2021.^[?]
 109. Tina Rivers Ryan, "Token Gesture", *Artforum* 59, no. 7 (May 2021): 65–66.^[?]
 110. "Cryptoart: ethical challenges of the NFT revolution", *Humanities and Social Sciences Communications* (2024), <https://www.nature.com/articles/s41599-024-02872-2>.^[?]
 111. *Proof of work* secures a blockchain through competitive computation: whoever solves a computational puzzle first writes the next block — security bought with electricity. *Proof of stake* replaces the computing race with deposited capital: whoever locks shares ("stakes") may validate blocks and loses the stake in case of fraud — security through the binding of assets, at a fraction of the energy consumption.^[?]
 112. Ethereum's switch to proof of stake ("The Merge", 15 September 2022); estimated reduction of network energy consumption by about 99.95 %. Cf. Ethereum Foundation and the CCRI analysis 2022.^[?]
 113. Lucy R. Lippard, *Six Years: The Dematerialization of the Art Object from 1966 to 1972* (New York: Praeger, 1973). The term "dematerialisation" first in Lippard/Chandler (1968).^[?]
 114. Boris Groys, *In the Flow* (London: Verso, 2016), Introduction, 5 f.: "Digital metadata creates an aura without an object."; *ibid.* on the double figure of archiving "of the object without an aura and of the aura without an object". The widely circulated longer formula ("mechanical reproduction gave us objects without aura, digital production generates aura without objects ...") is the publisher's cover text, not the book's wording (verified against the Verso edition, 12 June 2026).^[?]

115. Isabelle Graw, *The Love of Painting: Genealogy of a Success Medium* (Berlin: Sternberg Press, 2018; German original Zurich: Diaphanes, 2017): the trace of paint as index of the artist's person → "liveliness"; painting's special position precisely within the digital economy. [?]
116. Rosalind Krauss, *A Voyage on the North Sea: Art in the Age of the Post-Medium Condition* (London: Thames & Hudson, 2000): after the end of medium purity, working *between* media becomes the form of reflection. [?]
117. Artis.Love, *workshop conversation (June 2026)*. Artist's statement on the double position between physical large-scale painting and the purely digital image; the quoted phrases are rendered verbatim (our translation). [?]
118. Artis.Love, *workshop conversation (June 2026)*. Artist's statement on the decision between a purely generative code/HTML render (Finale only, different at every call) and the fixed, ownable loop as a lasting artefact. [?]
119. On the museum perspective on on-chain provenance cf. LACMA Unframed, "NFTs and the Museum, Part 5: Art Collections on the Blockchain" (2021). [?]
120. On Rhea Myers's contract-as-artwork practice (*Is Art*) cf. Outland, "Conceptualism Rehashed"; Myers, *Proof of Work* (Falmouth: Urbanomic, 2023). [?]
121. Rhizome, "Another New World" (3 March 2021), <https://rhizome.org/editorial/2021/mar/03/another-new-world/> — on McCoy/Dash, *Quantum* (2014), Namecoin/Monegraph; at the same time a critical framing of the "ownership" question. "First NFT" is the widespread attribution (kept i.a. by Guinness World Records); technically *Quantum* predates ERC-721 and sits on Namecoin. [?]
122. Artis.Love, *LEGAL-WORDING-WOF* (canonical version, 2026-06-03): "a century-long tradition from Picasso's papiers collés and Duchamp's readymades to Rauschenberg, Warhol, Marclay and Steyerl"; "What no one claims becomes part of the artist's work, with thanks to you, its anonymous co-creator." [?]
123. Artis.Love, *NFT-METADATA-STRATEGIE*: "Randomness ≠ rarity. Rarity arises not from chance but from the frame in which chance operates. [...] The system documents; it does not steer." (our translation). [?]
124. On the technical rationale for the choice of platform cf. the project documentation Artis.Love (*NFT-STACK-PIVOT*, *POLKADOT-ASSET-HUB-MINTING*): NFTs as the chain's native *pallet-nfts* rather than as a marketplace smart contract; item and metadata deposits in the cent to low-euro range and refundable; self-operation of mint pipeline and gallery (nft.artis.love). The artist's guiding principle: "External services can die off — build everything natively on Polkadot." (our translation). Polkadot uses *nominated proof of stake*. [?]
125. Polkadot, *Manifesto* ("A Dawn of Human-Centric Technology", polkadot.network, accessed 8 June 2026): technology as a "tool of liberation, not of control", against an order in which humans become "fuel" for billion-dollar algorithms. Referenced here as the platform's self-positioning, not asserted as its fulfilment — on the limit of permanence cf. the following section. [?]
126. ECJ, *Pelham GmbH et al. v Hütter et al.*, C-476/17 (29 July 2019): material adopted in unrecognisable form is no reproduction; at the same time confirmation of the exhaustive catalogue of exceptions of Directive 2001/29/EC (InfoSoc), whereby "free use" (*freie Benützung*) as an independent figure became contested. § 42f Austrian Copyright Act (öUrhG) (pastiche; in Austria read by some as limited to large online platforms); § 5(2) öUrhG (free use); Art. 17a StGG (freedom of the arts). For classification: the pastiche exception is binding for all member states under Art. 17(7) of Directive 2019/790; that the Austrian implementation is partly read as restricted to platform contexts changes little in outcome for transformative art practice, because *Pelham* already removes unrecognisable adoption from the concept of reproduction. [?]

127. Artis.Love, *FOUND-FOOTAGE-LEGAL-FRAMEWORK*: risk “very low”, since the sources are predominantly CC0/public domain and the transformation renders the source unrecognisable. Expressly “not legal advice”.^[?]
128. Axel Anderl/Martina Schmid, *Appropriation Art. Im Spannungsfeld zwischen Urheberrecht und Kunstfreiheit*, *ecolex* 2009, 49 (50 ff.): the “fading” standard of settled Austrian case law (OGH 4 Ob 13/92 – “Servus Du”); “the creative contribution lies here in the process of creation itself” (51; our translation); the finding of a missing special rule and pertinent case law, a “sword of Damocles” (52). The main solution advanced there via free use (§ 5(2) öUrhG) reflects the law as of 2009 and is, after *Pelham*, no longer tenable in that generality; it is cited here as a historical position. The legal-historical line in brief: Anderl/Schmid demanded that the source work must “virtually fade” in the new one — in this criterion the unrecognisability standard of *Pelham* (2019) is anticipated; the codification of caricature, parody and pastiche (Austrian copyright amendment 2021, in force 2022) can be read as the — in Austria incomplete — legislative answer to the gap named in 2009. For WOF this means a two-step foundation: where the transformation overlays the sources to unrecognisability, after *Pelham* there is no interference to begin with; where individual fragments remain recognisable — for instance when the effect chain, as in the installational version, is deliberately used sparingly — the pastiche exception carries the collaging re-use, for which Anderl/Schmid defended even openly *recognisable* appropriation.^[?]
129. IPFS (*InterPlanetary File System*) is a protocol for *content-addressed* storage: a file is addressed not by a location (“sits on server X under path Y”) but by a cryptographic fingerprint of its content (a CID, *content identifier*). Whoever knows the address can obtain the file from any node that holds it — and every delivered copy proves, through the address itself, that it is unaltered. The flip side: IPFS stores nothing by itself. A file remains available only as long as at least one node actively holds (“pins”) it. The self-hosted IPFS mentioned here is therefore, more precisely, a node of the artist’s own that permanently pins the older collections — no decentralisation in the strong sense, but verifiable self-custody with an open address.^[?]
130. *Metadata* here designates an NFT’s descriptive data: a small, machine-readable data sheet (JSON file) with title, description, image reference and a list of attributes — in WOF’s case *Series*, *Configuration*, *Play Date*, the *Image Hash* as proof of the work, and root and leaf of the series seal. Stored on-chain is the reference to this data sheet; wallets and marketplaces read it to display the piece. The attributes are thus the place where each individual work permanently carries its own classification.^[?]
131. Artis.Love, project documentation on storage infrastructure (as of 2026-08): for the Magenta series (collection #853) content-addressed storage — `image` and `animation_url` of the metadata as `ipfs://` addresses, pinned on the self-hosted node; an HTTPS gateway serves as a convenience access, the permanent address is the CID. The early single mints (collection #843) keep their HTTPS references; the older Stargaze collections remain on the self-hosted IPFS. Arweave is not used; the on-chain SHA-256 remains as proof of the work. The sealing of completed work phases has been implemented as the series seal: a Merkle root over all works of the series as a collection attribute, root and leaf additionally in each work’s metadata; specification and full proof open at nft.artis.love/siegel.json.^[?]
132. Tina Rivers Ryan, “Token Gesture”, *Artforum* 59, no. 7 (May 2021): 65–66.^[?]
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