The Tech You've Been Trying To **Ignore**

by Rebecca Saw

The Tech You've Been Trying To Ignore is about how we interact with technology, how we are manipulated in the ways we act and feel, and how this influences our sense of self, both digitally and physically.

Why do we click to accept cookies, apart from to make an annoying pop-up go away? Why do we accept our personalities being tracked, evaluated, changed and commodified? How did we become conditioned to quieten our objections?

This proposed exhibition asks visitors to confront the way they use technology, to examine the uncomfortable feelings they perhaps push to one side.

Visitors explore a series of works that explore these questions, using sound, apps, websites, physical set pieces and more.
At each work, the visitor is given the opportunity to reflect on how the artwork makes them feel, and any other response.

About the artist|

Rebecca Saw is a digital artist and Creative Technologist. Her work often involves stripping down a concept to its most basic pieces, and putting them together in a way that invites a totally different perspective. She invites the audience to reevaluate what they take for granted, and see things from her point of view.

Rebecca is an technology expert and coder, and creates across a range of technologies, including Virtual Reality, Augmented Reality, interactive film, games, apps and more.

She has worked with BBC Research and Development and was a Sky Women in Tech Scholar, receiving funding and support to create Perspective, an interactive film. She has led a number of successful projects and understands the challenges involved in creating large scale creative projects.

Some of Rebecca's previous work:
rebeccasawprojects.blogspot.com
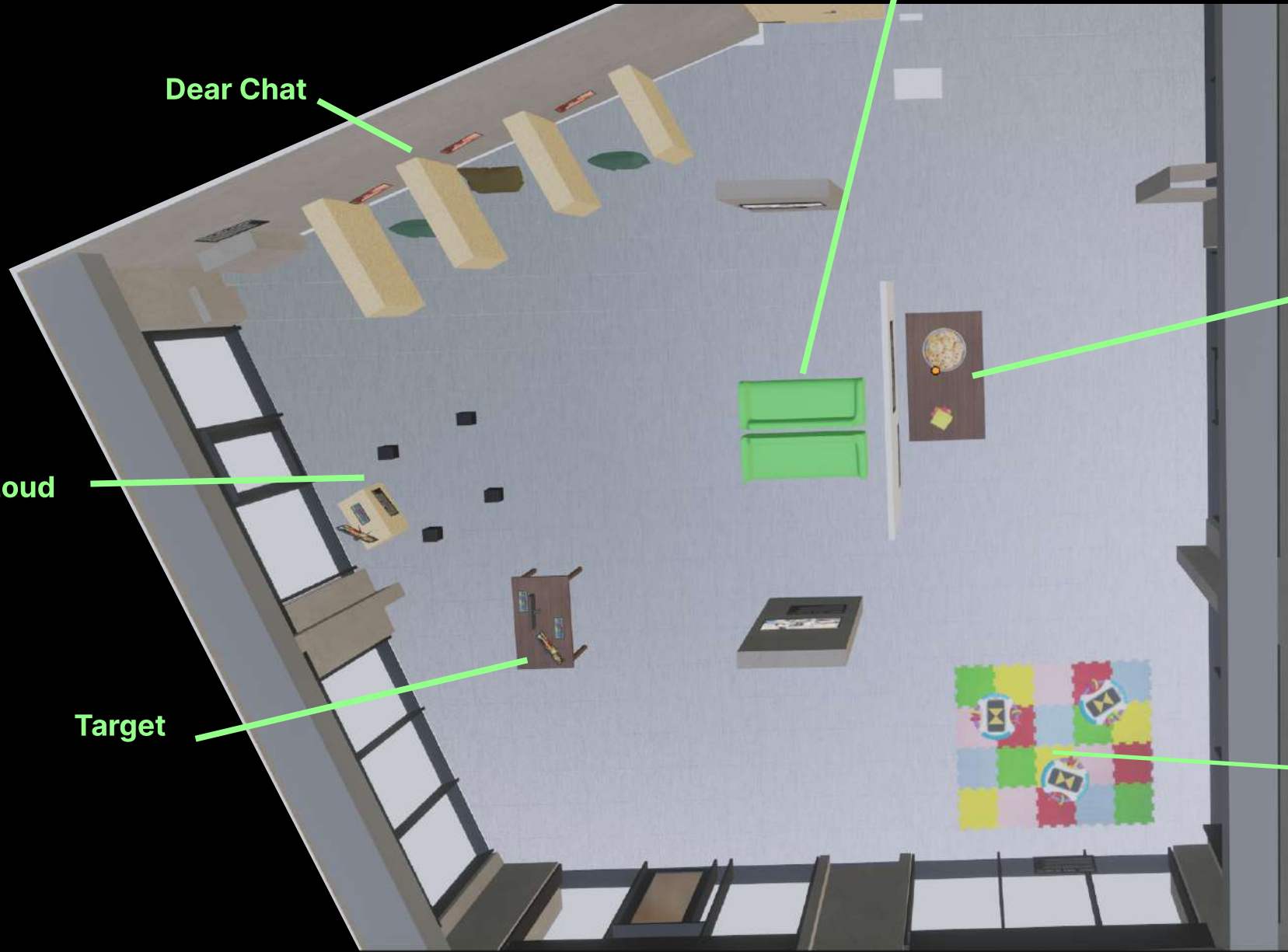
Gallery top down view|

Perspective

Dear Chat

Cookies?

Loud

Target

TikTok Nicotine Patch

Artwork: Cookies?|

When visitors enter the exhibition space, they are greeted by a plate of cookies. A sign reads:

'Would you like a cookie? Please take a post it note, and write the name of the last shop you visited, and what you bought. Stick the post it note to yourself, and take a cookie.'

This piece presents the transaction we undertake when we visit almost every single website. When we accept cookies, we don't see what happens. We click **'Accept'** to make the pop up go away, and put it to the back of our mind. Cookies? forces visitors to confront the process of wearing information about themselves, for anyone to see.

This piece invites visitors to reflect on what they gain when they accept cookies, and what they give up. How much of accepting cookies is a conscious choice? How does it feel to have to confront that transaction?

Tesco

Frozen Peas

Visitors will feel {

// Self-Conscious
// Conflicted

}

Artwork:TikTok Nicotine Patch|

Four baby rattles containing phones (see image) lie on a playmat on the floor. The visitor picks one up, and flicks through the moving images. The images are soothing and hypnotic, but occasionally a shocking, violent image is shown.

TikTok Nicotine Patch reframes the experience of mindlessly scrolling through TikTok and invites the visitor to examine their use of social media to soothe themselves and numb their thoughts.

Visitors are invited to reflect on the experience of flicking through videos on TikTok, how it can numb and soothe emotions, while deliberately manipulating the user's emotions to make sure they continue to scroll. It asks visitors to consider how this affects their mood and decisions even after they stop scrolling.

The baby rattles suggest to the visitor that TikTok views its users as babies; easily manipulated and needing short term dopamine hits.

Inspired by this article about TikTok:

https://uxdesign.cc/i-was-on-tiktok-for-30-days-it-is-manipulative-addictive-and-harmful-to-privacy-9e25445a9122

Visitors will feel {

// Infantilised
// Defensive
// Amused

}

Images move
gently, shapes
growing bigger
and smaller

User **flicks up**
to move between
images ———————→

A sudden
SHOCKING image
interrupts the
flow of images

Soothing music
and rhythmic
sound
accompanies the
images

The user continues to
flick up through the
images, soothing
their emotions after
the violent image

Artwork: Perspective|

Visitors sit on a sofa, facing a television that shows nine 'channels' at once. Only one channel plays audio, and visitors can flick between them using a remote control.

The interactive film is 14 minutes longs and is presented as security footage. The visitors flick between simultaneously playing videos that are all taking place at the same time. Characters move across video streams as they move around the house. Viewers make choices about which characters to follow and scenes to watch, and can hear and see various clues to solve a murder.

This piece invites visitors to become hyper aware of their own viewing habits. It examines how we form relationships with people we don't know through a screen, how we construct our own narratives with limited information.

Perspective is an existing work and can be viewed at:
https://perspective-interactive.com/watch

Visitors will feel {

// Engaged
// Reflective
// Curious

}

Artwork: Loud|

Visitors enter a circle of speakers pointing at a laptop. They sit at the laptop and scroll through a website that looks like Facebook. After they have interacted with the site for 30 seconds, sudden loud voices all around them start reporting on their behaviour; ie

 'Age range is young adult. Gender likely is female. Mood is low. Would be susceptible to advertisements about makeup. '

This information changes for each visitor, but is deliberately not accurate. The visitor should feel frustrated that assumed information about them is false, while being unable to ignore that their online movements provide a massive amount of information they would perhaps prefer to keep private.

This piece forces the visitor to confront what it means to be profiled, and for that information to be shared publicly.

Artwork: Target|

Visitors sit down at a table with an open laptop. On the laptop screen is a game; the visitor is invited to choose between two sets of fictional data about individuals from their social media habits, and an advert.

The visitor chooses which person the advert should be targeted at. After a few choices, the adverts and data sets become slightly alarming, the data shown becomes very personal and feels invasive to view.

Target puts the visitor in the shoes of a site that sells personal data for advertising purposes, and asks them to examine if this changes their attitude towards personalised advertising.

Artwork: Dear Chat|

Visitors enter a small booth, and notice a prayer cushion on the floor, in front of a small screen. The visitor starts the video, which is a YouTuber who delivers a monologue to camera.
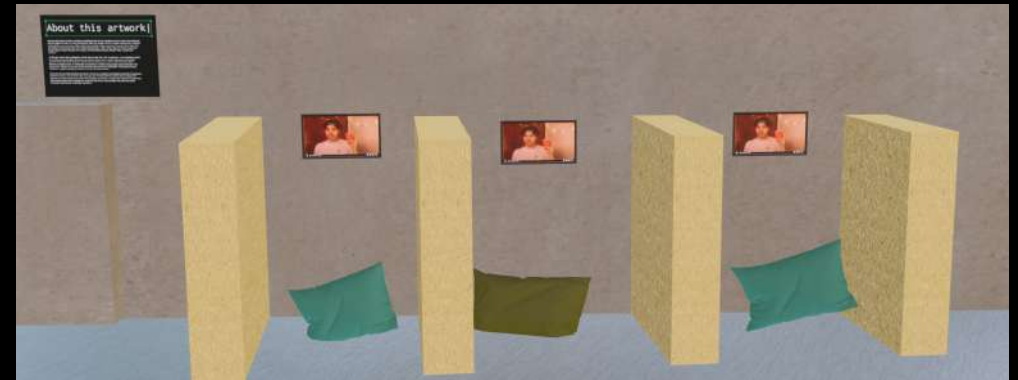
This monologue explores the fictional YouTuber's feelings towards his audience, both positive and negative, and include sentiments real streamers couldn't, for fear of losing their audience.

‘It really helps me out when you hit that like button! It’s actually been quite a hard time for me at the moment, as you guys know. I’ll tell you more about it tomorrow. So yeah, please help me out with boosting those stats!’
                                                        -Quote from the monologue the YouTuber delivers

Dear Chat examines the sacred relationship between streamers and their audience, and how they communicate. It compares this communication to praying, examining the concept of one person talking to a hive mind that can both unconditionally support them, and judge them incredibly harshly.

It also explores how streamers can manipulate their audience, encouraging a parasocial relationship for the purpose of money or fame.

Visitors will feel {

// Uncomfortable
// Alone with the
   character
// Challenged

}

Notes |

This pitch contains a description of works as the artists imagines them at the moment, but it's possible that the ideas would grow and change throughout the creation process.

The artist would work with the gallery on the best ways of presenting these works in the space, and work with a sound and visual designer to create a cohesive theme, that fits the gallery space.