

Pixel Artists

LoVid (Tali Hinkis, Kyle Lapidus) and Jon Satrom

Pioneers

Following audio synthesizer approaches of the likes of [Moog](#), artists began envisioning and creating video synthesizers in the late 1960s and early 70s. Closest to the Moog concept was [Dan Sandin's Image Processor](#), which was a “general purpose patch programmable analogue computer” used to mix and manipulate video signals. [Dave Jones](#) and [Matthew Schlanger](#) built tools in collaboration with the [Experimental Television Center](#) and [Bill Hearn](#) created the EAB Videolab as “The Personal Tool For Video Production”. The [Rutt Etra Scan Processor](#) by [Steve Rutt and Bill Etra](#) was a “raster manipulation device” that manipulated scan lines that make up a video signal on CRTs. The [Paik-Abe](#) synthesizer was a “mess of equipment chained” together in a studio at WGBH, Boston to facilitate real-time manipulation and live broadcast of video art. [Woody and Steina Vasulka](#) also were attentive to manipulating video at the signal and systems level.

Retro Game Hacking

Retro game consoles provide a wealth of potential hacks. From hacking the consoles to the cartridges, from developing custom software to remixing the controllers, artists have been playing with systems like the Atari, NES, Xbox and more as long as they've been in production. Archangle Constantini (AKA [atari-noise](#)) rewired an Atari 2600 to be an instrument and art installation piece. Jeff Donaldson (AKA [notendo](#)) has performed at a myriad of 8bit events with his patch chord bent NES. [David Musgrave](#) found the texturing brains of PS1 and 2, creating infinite glitch renditions of any game played.



Figure 1: Jeff Donaldson AKA Notendo, bent NES. Photo © Jeff Donaldson, used by permission.

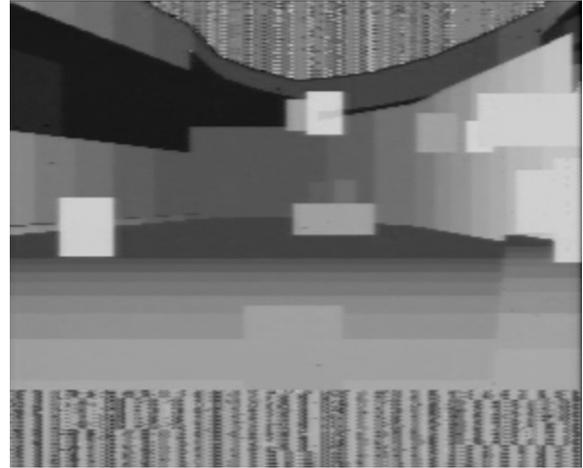


Figure 2: David Musgrave, bent Playstations. Photo © David Musgrave, used by permission.

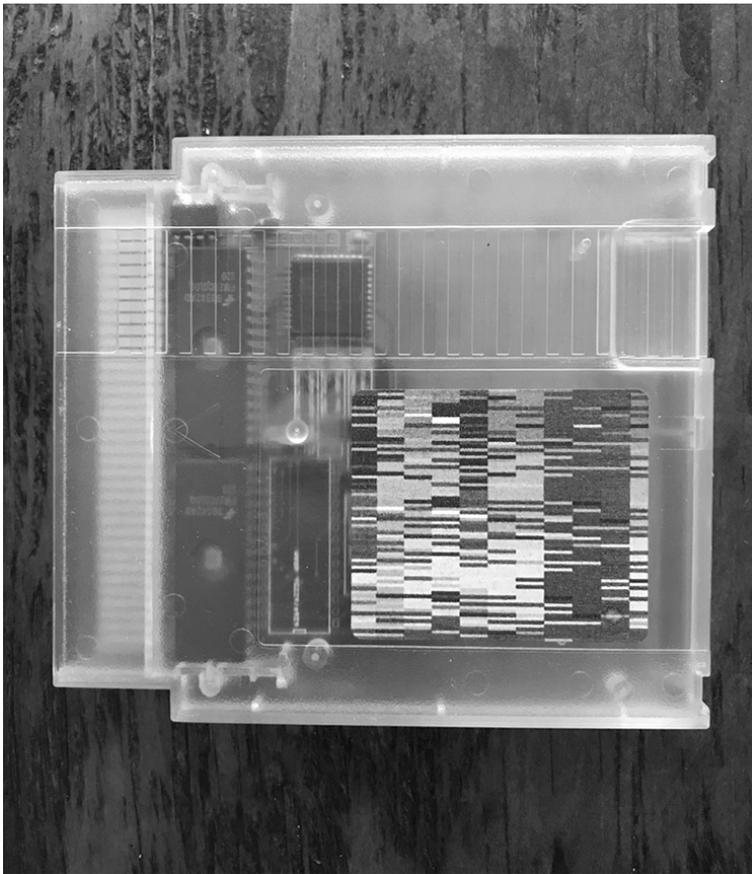


Figure 3: Don Miller, AKA no-carrier, glitchNES. Photo © Don Miller, used by permission.

Artists like Rachel Wile (AKA [partytimehexellent](#)) and Don Miller (AKA [no-carrier](#)) have written software inspired by bends to intentionally corrupt and feed the NES's RAM back into itself.

[Stephanie Boluk](#) and [Patrick Lemieux](#) have hacked the controller of an NES to split every function out to its own controller. The [OctoPad](#) splits a single player experience into an 8 player metagame.



Figure 4: Stephanie Boluk and Patrick Lemieux, OctoPad. Photo © Stephanie Boluk and Patrick Lemieux, used by permission.

Artists like [vaudio signal](#), [botborg](#), and [Billy Roisz](#) perform with elaborate systems they've developed that pass signals between the audio and video domains. Vaudio signal even went as far as to “release” a cable that goes from 1/4” to BNC (a common video format -- see figure S10.1)). Performances often utilize audio and video feedback and can feel like you're in the stomach of a unicorn who's sick from eating an expired rainbow (that's a compliment).



Figure 5: vaudio signal (Ben Baker-Smith and Evan Kühl) album release as cable, 1/4" to BNC. Photo © Ben Baker-Smith and Evan Kühl, used by permission.