
Toprak Furat

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Toprak Fırat is a digital artist, researcher, and computer engineer based in Istanbul, Türkiye. Toprak examines the fractures and contradictions inherent in contemporary human connections by analyzing social metastructures holding societal networks. With a multidisciplinary approach, their work bridges the fields of digital art, computational research, and social critique, offering unique insights into the complexities of modern existence. Through their art, Toprak employs cutting-edge technologies such as real-time data processing, mixed reality technologies and interactive media to create immersive experiences that challenge perceptions of digital and physical boundaries.

Education

BSc. Maths. [2016-2021]
@Bilkent University. Ankara,TR.

MSc. CompEng. [present]
@Kadir Has University. Istanbul,TR.

Affliations

Keter Studio [2025 - present]
Cofounder - Rize, TR based design initiative

Innovance [2021 - present]
Senior Backend Engineer - Fintech Consultancy

Afterwork [2020 - present]
Artist - Creative Agency

Converse All Star Artist [2025-2026]
Selected Artist

Istanbul Design Museum [2023-2025]
Granted a personal studio by Istanbul Metropolitan Municipality Directorate of Cultural Heritage

Khora [2024]
Augmented Reality Advisor - AI/AR/XR startup

Creepers and Conundrums [2023]
Cofounder - Webcomic series

Grants & Recognitions

CultureCIVIC, European Union [2026]
Art Production Grant for Keter Studio's Lilik Project

Ars Electronica - Expanded Conference [2025]
Selected Paper & Speaker for the Conference
SENTIMAP: Spatiotemporal Mapping of Emotions In Historical Newspapers Using LLMs
Co-author with Beste Ileri

SAHA Association [2025]
Sustainability Fund for Keter Studio

Ars Electronica - Prix Ars Electronica [2024]
Honorary Mention with Coincidence

ISTANBUL MODERN [2023]
Young Productions in the Fields of Digital Art Award / Production Grant
Selected Project: Coincidence

CultureCIVIC, European Union [2023]
Art Production Grant
na+CTRL Art Collective - Artist Home Project

Exhibitions

5TH FLOOR ~ `Liminal Apporia` [2026]
@CER MODERN, Ankara, TR

Project Lilik [2026]
@Rize, Istanbul, TR, as Keter Studio, supported by CultureCivic European Union and Saha Association

Detrimera ~ `Repack` [2026]
@Oktowallz, Istanbul, TR, as Keter Studio

Our Most Magnificent Garden and Other Myths ~ `New:Now` [2025]
@CerModern, Ankara, TR

Coincidence ~'Timeless Curiosities' [2024]
@ISTANBUL MODERN, Istanbul, TR
Supported by Goethe Institut, Kingdom of The Netherlands.
with Yasin Aribuga

Coincidence ~'In Sync' [2024]
@Palais Festetics, Vienna, AU
Supported by Noise_Vienna and Piksel Creative Solutions.
with Yasin Aribuga

5TH FLOOR ~'Home' [2024]
@Barin Han, Istanbul, TR. Supported by CultureCIVIC European Union.

OASIS ~'Sonar+D' [2023]
@Zorlu PSM, Istanbul, TR. Supported by Sonar Music Festival with Beste Ileri.

Crative Projects

WNDRLST [2026]
A digital TCG to reclaim internet by gamifying visiting websites.

Exuvia [2026]
3D avatar frontend for clawdbot assistants.

Converse Cat Filter [2025]
Tiktok Filter for CONVERSE's Istanbul Airport branch promotion.

RUNSTAR [2024]
Animation video. CONVERSE partnership.

Yanıbaşımda [2024]
AI video. Algida, Cornetto partnership.

PIXELVERZ LIVE [2023]
Animation videos. Studio Mercado and LG partnership.

Yabani [2023]
Live action and AI mixed music video for Seda Erciyes.

GQ Men of the Year [2022]
3D environments for award winners. GQ partnership.

UÇAK [2021]
Promotional Unity game for the Seda Erciyes' single.

PROJECT LILIK (2026)
@Hemsin, Rize, TR
Socially Engaged Public Installation

Taking its name from the Hemşin word for "toy," Lilik is a research and production project that transforms the endangered oral narratives and mythological creature stories of the Hemşin region into large-scale, interactive public sculptures. Supported by the CultureCIVIC Culture and Art Support Programme, funded by the European Union, and developed in collaboration with Hemşin Yaşam Derneği, the initiative operates at the intersection of cultural preservation, land art, and social practice.

The work unfolds through a multi-phase methodology: beginning with the archival collection of surviving local folklore, progressing to the strategic installation of these physical forms in ecologically significant locations, and culminating in community workshops where local children help author and design an entirely new mythological character to reflect the town's contemporary spirit. Moving away from static representation, the resulting installations are conceived as living, functional works of public art designed to be touched, planted with seeds, and inhabited as spaces of communal gathering. By combining large-scale 3D-printed structural nodes with locally sourced and recycled materials, the semi-temporary pieces integrate seamlessly into the natural landscape.

At the conceptual core of this work are the creature stories themselves, utilized for their inherent accessibility and their historical function as vessels for communal memory, social order, and ecological anxiety. The project materializes three specific liminal beings from local lore, projecting their symbolic roles directly into the physical traits and interactive functions of the sculptures.

The figure of Cazi, historically a mythic coping mechanism for the traumatic reality of exhausted, overworked mothers in a society heavily burdened by outward male migration, is reclaimed through a feminist lens, with her installation functioning as a dedicated physical space of rest and reprieve.

Karakoncolos, traditionally a symbol of winter scarcity used to keep children away from crops, is subverted into a bearer of abundance, featuring a body filled with soil for growing vegetables.

Similarly, Ubur, an embodiment of the deceased returning due to ungranted helallik (forgiveness) and broken communal communication, is turned into a site of reconciliation; fitted with a comforting hand on its back and a sharing plate in its chest, the installation transforms a symbol of punishment into an active exchange for mutual forgiveness and material sharing.

Finally, culminating this process of cultural evolution, the project introduces a newly authored figure: Lilik. Born from community workshops where local youth drew monsters based on their contemporary fears, Lilik diverges from traditional malignant spirits; instead, it emerged as a benevolent, landscape-scale guardian designed to clean the local lakes and protect both children and nature. Through these direct inversions and the collective creation of a new myth, the project revitalizes Hemşin's oral folklore into an evolving, participatory dialogue embedded within everyday civic life.



Our Most Magnificent Garden and Other Myths (2025)
@CERMODERN
ANIMATION INSTALLATION

Our Most Magnificent Garden and Other Myths maps a landscape of extraction and passive observation. The scene presents a highly ordered ecosystem fenced in by concrete blocks and construction cranes. The image uses literal visual mechanics to show a society running on its own depletion.

At the center, a large tree is sustained by an umbilical cord connected to a drained human body lying on the grass. Men in black suits occupy the branches to harvest the fruit. Down on the ground, badgers fight viciously over the discarded scraps. This central mechanism diagrams a closed loop of hoarded resources and manufactured scarcity.

The surrounding scenes focus on extreme visibility paired with total inaction. A camera operator films the chaos while a giant detached eyeball sits on an armchair, watching passively. Nearby, uniform figures march blindly in a single direction across a chessboard. The composition ends with a circle of naked figures holding hands and dancing around a burning oil drum. These isolated loops of activity depict a public detached from human connection, meticulously recording a collapse they make no effort to stop.







5th FLOOR [2024]
@BARIN HAN
Animation and installation



5th FLOOR is a poignant exploration of memory, loss, and the inexorable march of urban transformation. The artist, grappling with the demolition of his childhood home due to urban redevelopment, delves into a deeply personal narrative that resonates with broader sociological themes. By employing photogrammetry to scan his house before its demolition and juxtaposing it with scans of the ensuing emptiness and ongoing construction, he crafts a spectral narrative that oscillates between presence and absence, past and present.

This artwork is a projection of domestic rituals, embedding an animated reenactment of the artist's childhood within the void left by urbanization. The figures of the artist as a child and his mother, suspended in the air of an invisible fifth floor, engage in daily routines amidst the stark emptiness of a construction site. This surreal juxtaposition underscores the ephemeral nature of memories and the relentless encroachment of urban development.

Urbanization, particularly in its vertical manifestation, fundamentally alters the landscape of our lives and memories. High-rise buildings cluster individuals in close proximity, creating a paradox vof isolation amidst density. We inhabit our private spheres, seemingly insulated from our neighbors, yet this artwork strips away the walls, revealing the proximity and the thin veils separating our intimate lives. The artist's creation of a ghost of his house serves as a metaphor for the fragile persistence of memory in the face of physical obliteration.

The artwork also touches upon the sociology of urbanism, highlighting how urban transformation not only reshapes the physical environment but also disrupts the continuity of personal and collective memory. The demolition of the artist's home symbolizes the broader phenomenon of erasure faced by many in rapidly evolving urban landscapes. Yet, in capturing and animating his past within this void, the artist asserts the resilience of memory and the enduring significance of domestic rituals.

In this intersection of memory and urban space, the artist comments on the dichotomy of visibility and invisibility within urban settings. The invisible fifth floor, populated by animated memories, challenges the viewer to consider what is lost and what persists amid urban change. The artwork prompts reflection on the nature of home, the permanence of memories, and the socio-spatial dynamics that define contemporary urban life. Through this sophisticated blend of technology, personal narrative, and sociological inquiry, the artist creates a compelling commentary on the interplay between memory, urban transformation, and the rituals that define our daily lives.

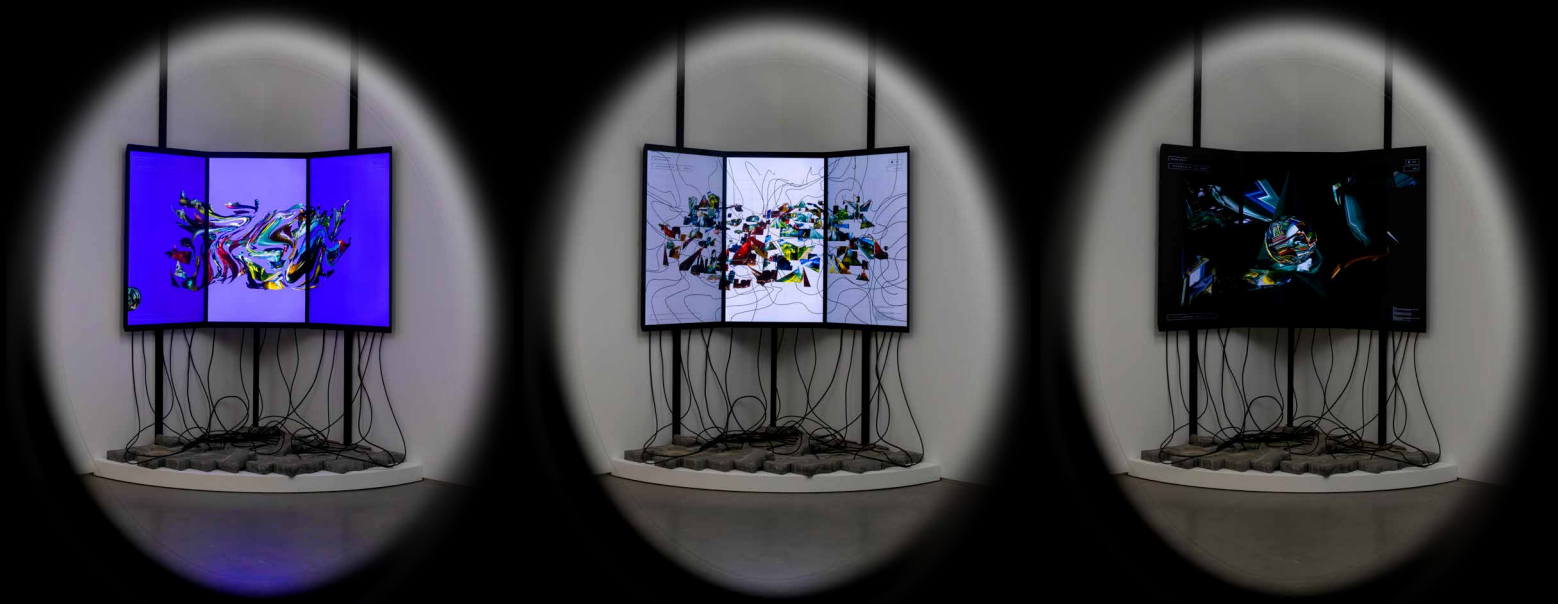


COINCIDENCE [2024]
@ISTTANBUL MODERN
LIVE VIDEO COLLAGE

Coincidence is an urban synchronization project that harnesses publicly accessible traffic and tourist live camera feeds from Istanbul, transforming them into living collages with multiple scenes that continuously evolve in real time. The project aims to re-synchronize the neighborhoods of Istanbul under an ongoing cultural separation because of political and ideological tension among different demographics, by merging seemingly unrelated urban structures from various districts into collages to create couplings for the audience to observe and witness manifest a unison. Observing the collaboration of different pieces from various camera streams is a complex phenomenon; however, since the collage is live, there is a small probability that the audience will observe subjectively higher-level harmonic instances that generate emotional seisms and perturbate the pitch of each piece toward unity.

Since the project utilizes real-time camera streams and is observed live by the audience, the artwork is prone to potential delays and errors, and hence it is crucial to make every process as efficient and computationally safe as possible by considering it to be a safety-critical system. To safeguard the artwork against such failures, the entire process is segmented and encapsulated into individual scripts. While these scripts interact and collaborate with one another, they also operate using parallel processing, making isolated cores work together, resulting in software and hardware level collages, paralleling the goal of harmony and amplifying the effect of manifestation.





INSAN SOFRASI (2024)
Post internet installation, critical design & media fiction

İnsan Sofrası (literally “The Table of People”) is a socially interventionist, post-internet artwork by Beste İleri and Toprak Firat. It originated as an experiment in AI-generated music in Turkish, and evolved into a full-scale performative fiction, a counterfeit pop-cultural phenomenon that mirrored, mocked, and provoked its own audience. We began by using text-to-music models (Suno) to produce songs in the idioms of Turkey’s most monumental genres as Arabesque, pop, fantasy/folk,rap, protest rock, even vapid “spiritual” anthems. Each song mimicked the sonic tropes of its genre while inserting strategically abject, ironic, and politically pointed lyrics, such as : a lament for corporate workers fixated on food-coupon apps; a tragicomic pop ballad about the discovery of a husband’s fetish in a society where sexual repression is endemic; a rap track exposing the fragile, dysfunctional self-image of Turkish “street” masculinity; a hymn to the hollow frenzy of NFTs; an anime-girl love song whose obsessive tone revealed the misogynist undercurrent of many mainstream lyrics.

The songs were not merely parody but functioned as cultural diagnostics, using genre as a semiotic container that exposes the class, gender, and ideological imaginaries embedded in Turkey’s pop music history. We then extended the project into a fake album release, complete with invented singers, a fictitious production company, AI-generated visuals (via Midjourney and RunwayML), a physical launch party with celebrity guests, a DJ set, designed cocktails, branded wall prints, entrance stamps, stickers, vinyls, even a faux whiskey sponsor. By midnight of the launch, the album dropped on Spotify; the partygoers posted about it in costume; real musicians and influencers reacted online. This double performance of cultural industry constitutes the core of the artwork. The project’s “truth” lay in the audience’s reactions: the mixture of confusion, and complicity revealed how deeply entrenched genre, celebrity, and authenticity myths still structure Turkish popular culture, and how AI can act as a new mirror that distorts and intensifies these myths.

By staging a plausible yet artificial cultural event, İnsan Sofrası interrogates the commodification of cultural memory and genre as class-coded entertainment, the gendered and repressive sexual scripts still prevalent in mainstream pop culture, the fetish of “authenticity” in an era where generative AI can mimic both sound and spectacle, and the participatory role of audiences in sustaining these cultural rituals.

Rather than treating AI as a neutral tool or as a threat to creativity, İnsan Sofrası uses it performatively, to expose the infrastructures of taste, aspiration, and belief that underlie both human-made and machine-made culture. As the project expanded, it revealed itself as a multi-layered organism composed of overlapping artistic modes:

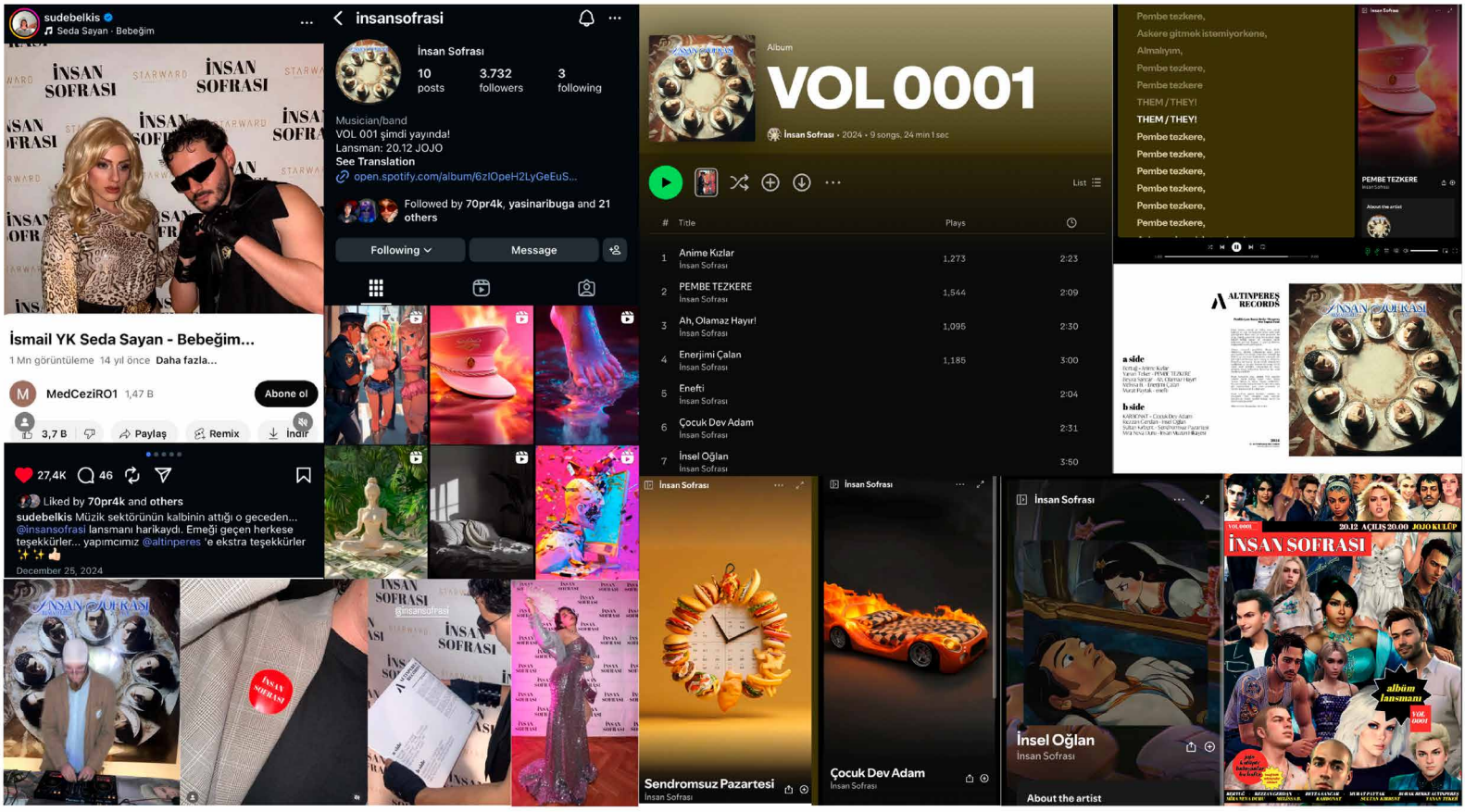
Socially engaged intervention: the project infiltrated real social media ecosystems and nightlife scenes, prompting genuine public reactions.

Performance / Live art: the launch party functioned as a durational performance with a participatory script.

Post-internet installation: the online presence (Spotify, Instagram, digital album art, fake personas) and the physical staging (costumes, props, branded ephemera) together form the installation.

Sound work / Conceptual music: the AI-generated tracks stand as autonomous pieces but only fully “activate” in the fictional context.

Critical design & media fiction: the branding, faked sponsorship, and corporate-style visuals reveal the operational aesthetics of contemporary music culture.



oasis [2023]
@SONAR+D
VR EXPERIENCE

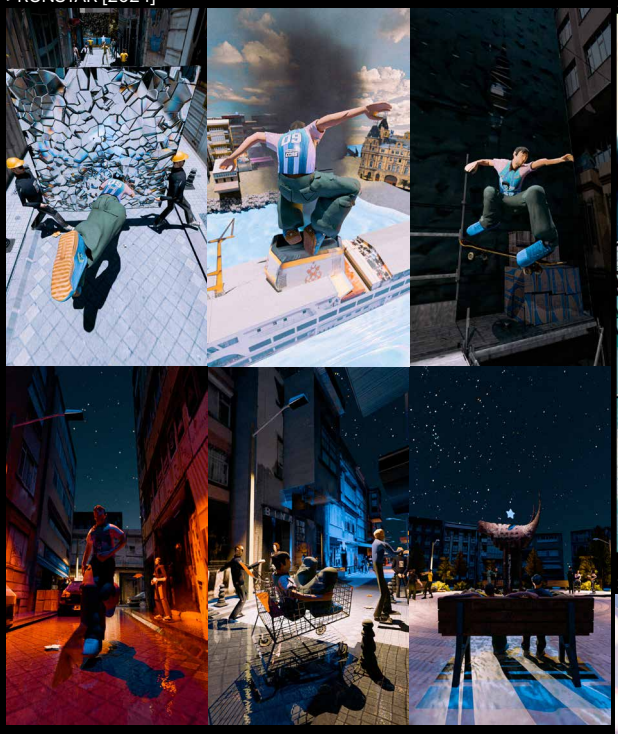
The artwork is designed to be an anti-experience as it does challenges the audience rather than inviting. It is developed as a critique of the relationship between advertising and user experience in Web2. It is introduced as a nature and meditation simulation that the participant must follow some mindfulness tasks for relaxation but in fact decorated with excessive advertisement pop-ups that challenge users' habits on virtual space. The artwork allows to observe the tendencies of users in virtual space, the cognitive capabilities that users augment in the digital realm, and understand dynamic relationship between the human participant and the technological framework.

In this period of accelerating transition to Web3, OASIS developed as an ultimate critique of the relationship between advertising and user experience, is designed as an experience where the daily virtual experiences of internet users, who are exposed to centralized, manipulative, and intrusive marketing techniques, reach absurd points. It aims to encourage internet users who have not yet fully accessed the Web3 reality, which hopes for advertising mechanisms based on more control, transparency, and secure interaction, to reconsider and exaggeratedly re-examine the problems in the current dynamics. This experience attempts to narrate, through an ironic alliance, the consistency of exposing consumers to cognitive load exploitation within a system where spirituality is commercialized, via internet philosophy.

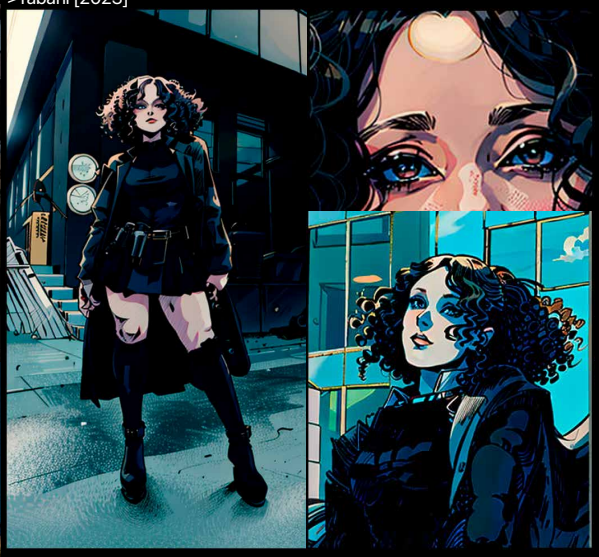


design projects

>RUNSTAR [2024]



>Yabani [2023]



>hayırlıçarşambalar [2024]



>GQ MOTY [2022]



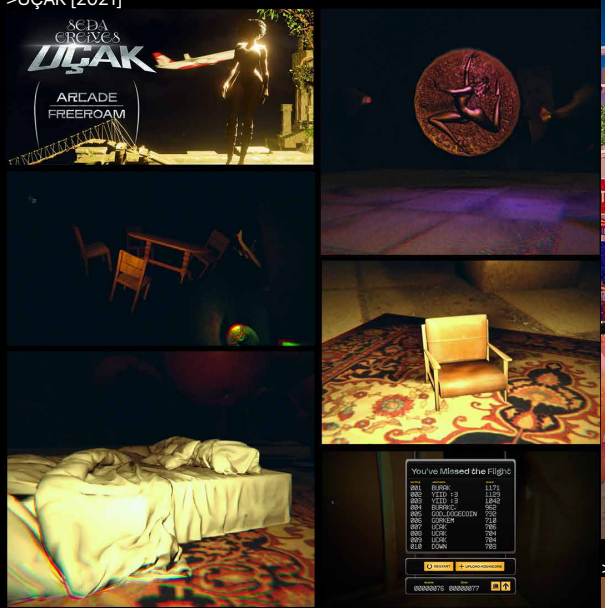
>cebinde akrep mi var? [2024]



>ertn - coma sunset [2024]



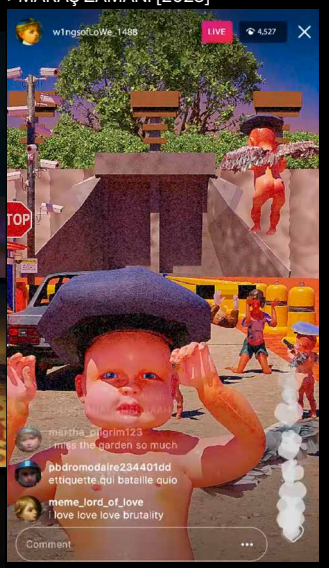
>UÇAK [2021]



>MARAŞ ZAMANI [2023]



>MARAŞ ZAMANI [2023]



>bebeğimiz ve ben [2023]

