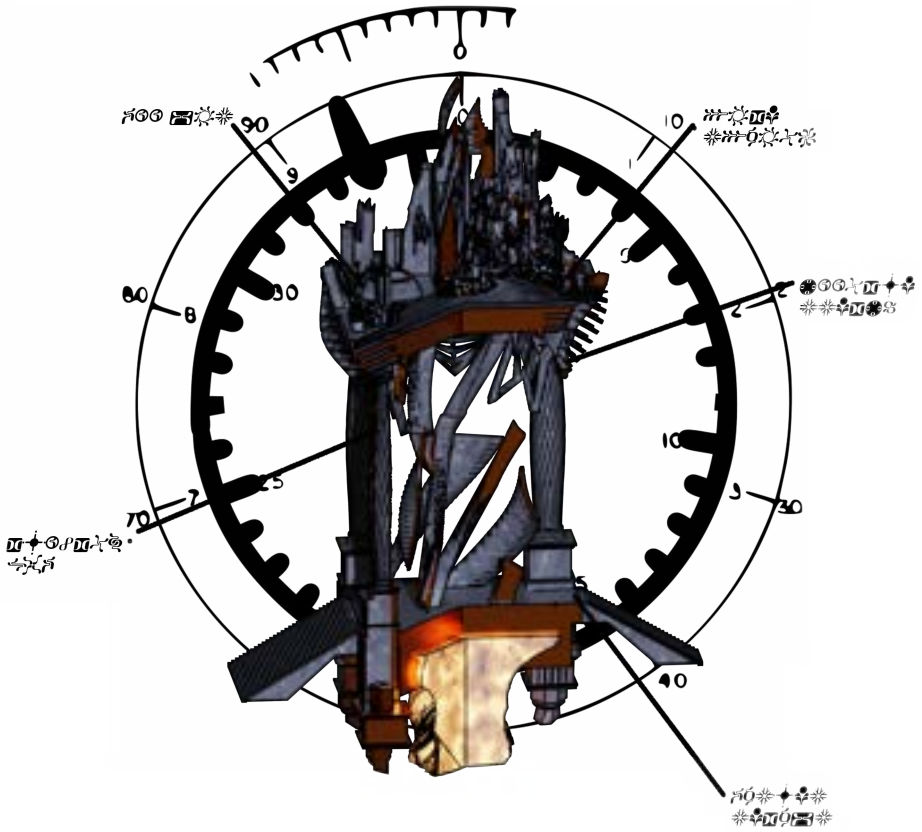


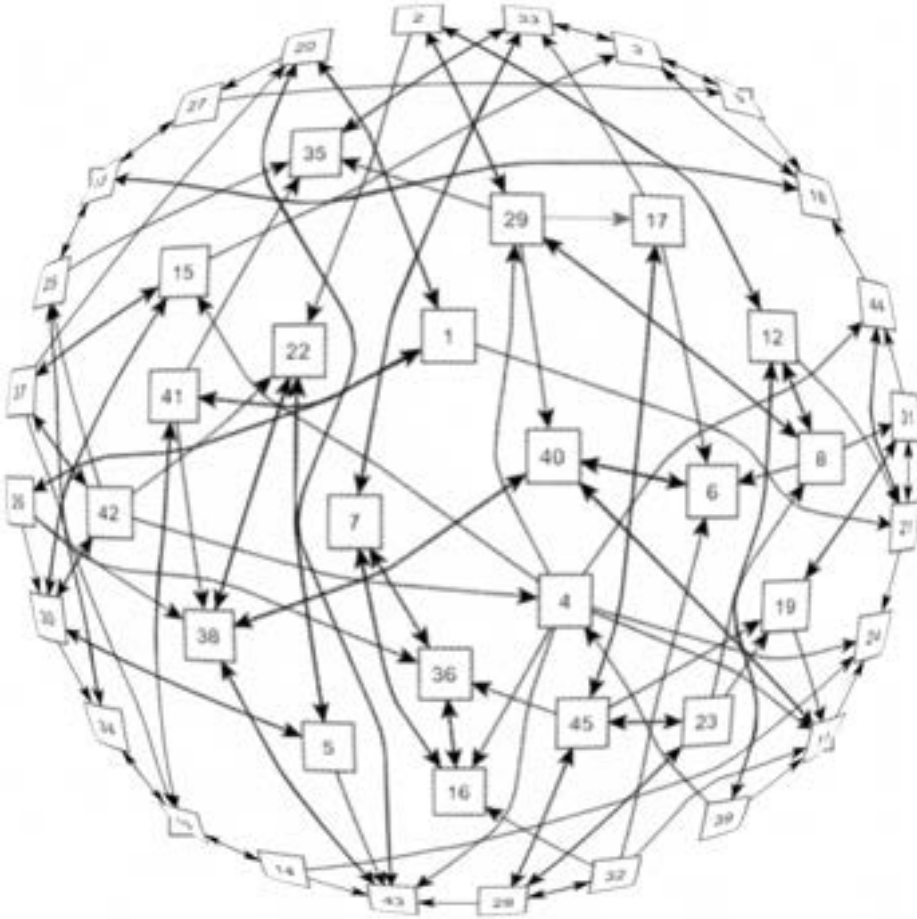
ERROR IS SHADOW



FLUX IV | 56-21 2nd Street
Long Island City, New York City
August 6th – 30th 2026

52 Bad Gateway

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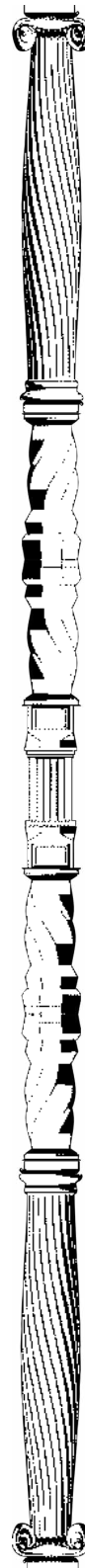
In his remarks prepared for the 1957 American Federation of Arts convention, famed conceptual artist Marcel Duchamp addressed his audience on the artistic process:

“Let us consider two important factors, the two poles of the creation of art: the artist on one hand, and on the other the spectator who later becomes the posterity; to all appearances the artist acts like a mediumistic being who, from the labyrinth beyond time and space, seeks his way out to a clearing.”

This turn of phrase and the potency of its image revisited me in a recent conversation with artist duo 502 Bad Gateway. The convergence of the spectator as a memory-keeper and the artist wandering towards a place—this mixture of alienation and seeking—is the environment of missed signals and useless nightmare protocols in the exhibition, *Error is Shadow*. It speaks to the compulsiveness and hubris of our species, designing instructions for those who will inherit our future wasteland. *Error is Shadow* is an attempt for us to perceive the series of “obtuse interactions” that our witness bearers will encounter. Alexander Baumann and Robert Ruth have spent years reflecting on how deprecated technologies, their history and potential, can be generative and strange. At Flux IV, we are thrilled to celebrate that work by presenting their first institutional solo exhibition in New York.

About The Show

Error is Shadow explores the legacy of structural and cultural decay, monuments of shame, trans-civilizational communication, and post-human adaptivity. Mankind’s desire to justify its narrative purpose leaves it with only self-referential answers to impossible questions, building elaborate protocols that favor controllable results over efficacy. Through a network of paintings, sculptures, a narrative film, and a roguelike arcade game, the work plays upon the human tendency to create needlessly complex systems when faced with the perilous unknown in an attempt to govern the ungovernable. Error is Shadow adds another forking branch to the wired network of conceptual storytelling that has been the cornerstone of 502 Bad Gateway’s artistic practice.



About The Artist

502 Bad Gateway is the artist duo of Alexander Baumann and Robert Ruth, whose collaborative artistic disciplines include motion capture performance, oil painting, 3D game development, sculpture, vintage tech restoration, building audio synthesizers, animation, and filmmaking. Their practice focuses on integrating their artistic methods with deprecated technologies from many different eras, drawing on the history of usage to underline the intent of the work.

Their work has been displayed in solo exhibitions at T293 gallery in Rome, Sof:Art gallery in Bologna, Flux Factory in New York, and as part of a group show at AROS art museum in Aarhus, Denmark. They have performed on stages at the New Museum’s DEMO Showcase in Manhattan, ZeroSpace in Brooklyn, Standard Vision Studios in Los Angeles, and many underground New York venues. Their performance practice includes solo audiovisual narrative productions as well as collaborations with Club Cringe, Von, Uffie, Kevin Peter He, Kink Out, and Team Rolfes.

With a foot in the world of experimental film and live performance, and the other in fine art and installation, 502 Bad Gateway desires to break the traditionally static, immutable nature of gallery work, by incorporating the real-time responsiveness of interactive live performance.

www.502.haus

IG: @502.bg



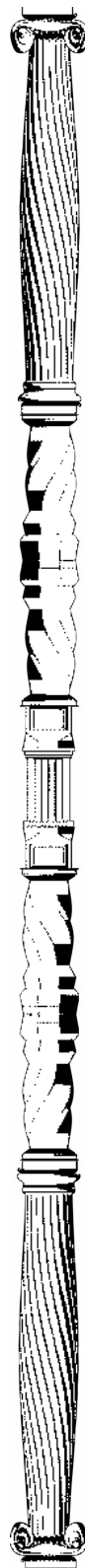
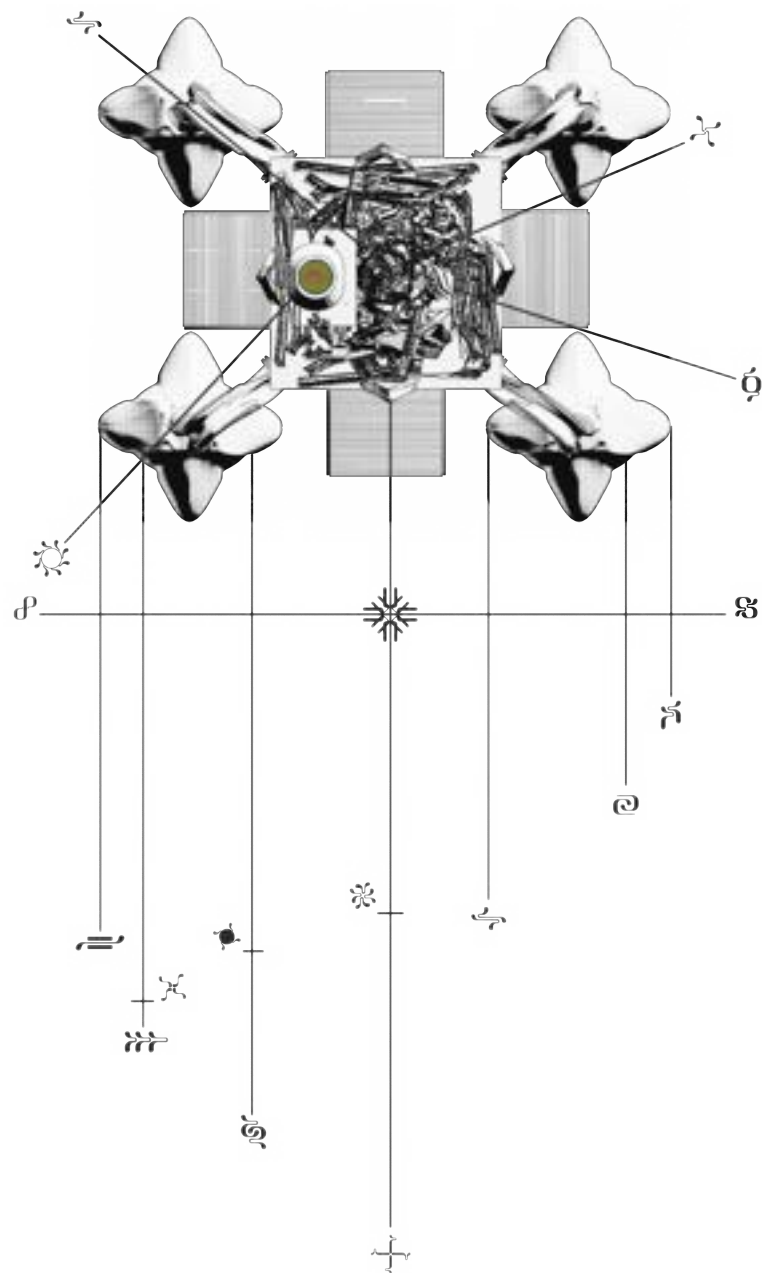
Photo By:

Shisun Lee

Pictured Artwork By:

Reverie Nedde

Adam Driggers



What lies here must remain.
 This place acts as a message,
 and a series of them cascading down.
 It serves not as a monument nor a place of reverence,
 but as a tomb for our kind's most essential deficiency.
 You are urged not to continue further.
 At the core, marked deep below,
 there is an unfathomable darkness, from
 which virulent danger decays outward.
 Everything you see should be left alone and undisturbed.
 We tried to understand it, to control it—
 and for that we suffered.
 Through the diffusion of our own protocol, the dark-
 ness pierced our existence and bound itself to us.
 We did not have the tools to measure.
 We could not make the proper arrangements.
 It was dangerous in our time, and
 it remains dangerous in your time.
 And so we leave you with only this warning:
 Turn back and leave this site to rot.

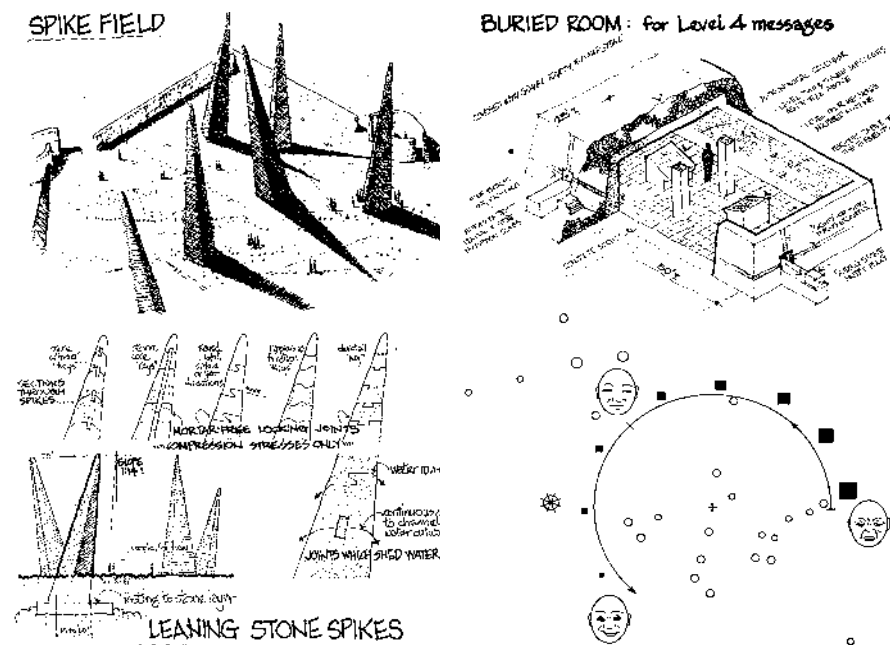
Warnings for the Future

The passage on the previous page (pg. 7) is a stylized interpretation of an infamous excerpt from a research report published in 1993. The report was conducted by Sandia National Laboratories, which operated under the US Department of Energy's National Nuclear Security Administration. The passage is now colloquially known as the 10,000-Year Warning, or Nuclear Warnings for the Future.

This report (along with a series of architectural and semiotic designs which are shown below) aimed to tackle the problem of communicating the danger of nuclear waste sites, which will remain hazardous for many millenia, to future civilizations who may not share any of our language or cultural context.

The message, while translated to dozens of languages, was not meant to be communicated directly, but to provide the information that non-linguistic communication systems were trying to evoke via physical symbols that humans would recognize as hostile.

It is printed in its entirety on the adjacent page, and was provided as a reference to the contributing artists on the following pages.



Mike Brill. University of North Texas Digital Library

This place is a message... and part of a system of messages... pay attention to it!

Sending this message was important to us. We considered ourselves to be a powerful culture.

This place is not a place of honor...
no highly esteemed deed is commemorated here...
nothing valued is here.

What is here was dangerous and repulsive to us.
This message is a warning about danger.

The danger is in a particular location...
it increases towards a center...
the center of danger is here...
of a particular size and shape, and below us.

The danger is still present, in your time, as it was in ours.

The danger is to the body, and it can kill.

The form of the danger is an emanation of energy.

The danger is unleashed only if you substantially disturb this place physically.
This place is best shunned and left uninhabited.

Kathleen M. Trauth, Stephen C. Hora, Robert V. Guzowsk November 1993.
Excerpt From SANDIA REPORT SAND92- 1382 UC-721

*Expert Judgment on Markers to Deter Inadvertent Human
Intrusion into the Waste Isolation Pilot Plant*



WallH4X

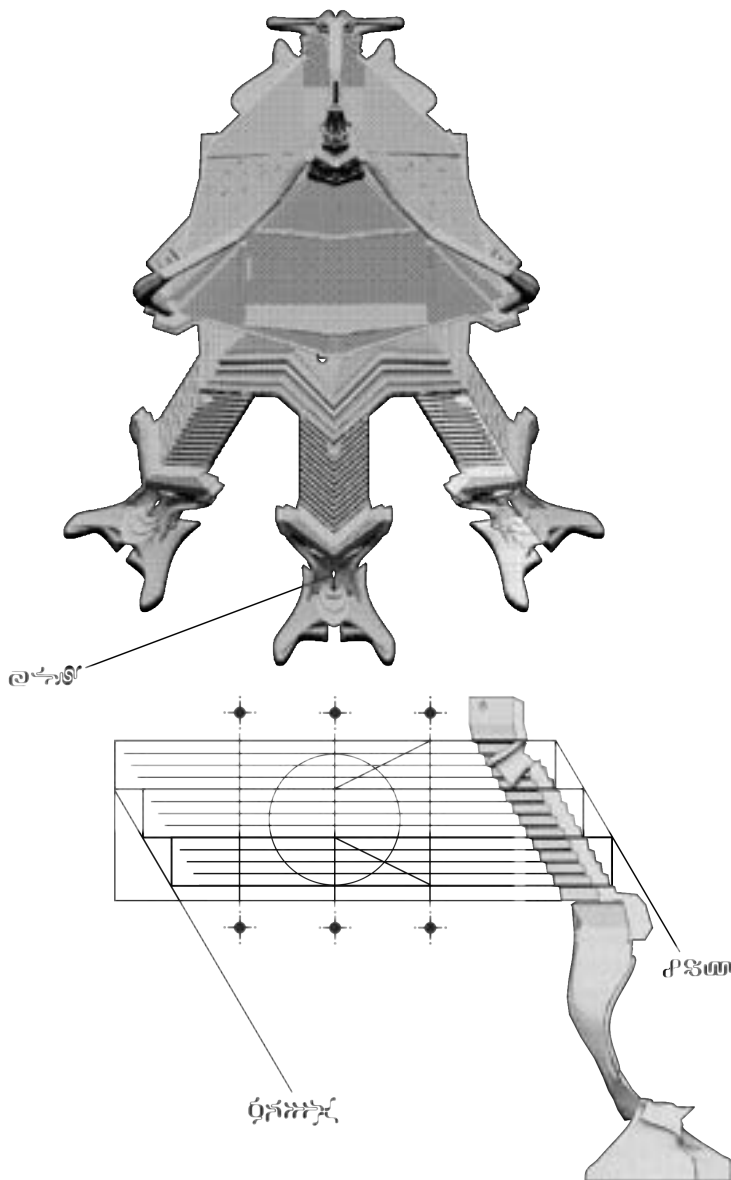


...THIS PLACE IS BEST SHUNNED
AND LEFT UNINHABITED.



REMEMBER WHAT UR FIGHTING FOR...





the artists would like to cite the below works in the context of this show, and encourage further reading

Borges, Jorge Luis. *A New Refutation of Time*. In *Labyrinths: Selected Stories and Other Writings*, edited by Donald A. Yates and James E. Irby, 217–34. New York: New Directions, 1964.

Chapman, Kit. *Speaking to the Future*. Distillations, Science History Institute, April 19, 2022.

Eco, Umberto. *Foucault's Pendulum*. Translated by William Weaver. San Diego: Harcourt Brace Jovanovich, 1989.

GSC Game World. *S.T.A.L.K.E.R.: Shadow of Chernobyl*. Kyiv: GSC Game World, 2007. Microsoft Windows.

Limasse Five. *NaissanceE*. Paris: Limasse Five, 2014. Microsoft Windows.

Macfarlane, Robert. *Underland: A Deep Time Journey*. London: Hamish Hamilton, 2019.

Manson, Christopher. *Maze: Solve the World's Most Challenging Puzzle*. New York: Henry Holt, 1985.

Nihei, Tsutomu. *Blame!* Tokyo: Kodansha, 1998–2003.

Stalker. Directed by Andrei Tarkovsky. Moscow: Mosfilm, 1979.

Strugatsky, Arkady, and Boris Strugatsky. *Roadside Picnic*. Translated by Olena Bormashenko. Chicago: Chicago Review Press, 2012.

Threads. Directed by Mick Jackson. London: BBC, 1984.

Trauth, Kathleen M., Stephen C. Hora, and Robert V. Guzowski. *Expert Judgment on Markers to Deter Inadvertent Human Intrusion into the Waste Isolation Pilot Plant*. SAND92-1382. Albuquerque, NM: Sandia National Laboratories, 1993.

VanderMeer, Jeff. *Area X: The Southern Reach Trilogy*. New York: Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 2014.

Van Wyck, Peter C. *Signs of Danger: Waste, Trauma, and Nuclear Threat*. Theory Out of Bounds 26. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2005.

Error is Shadow was created by 502 Bad Gateway, the artist duo of Alexander Baumann and Robert Ruth, with support from New York State Council on the Arts.

Error is Shadow is supported and presented by Flux Factory and curated by Meghana Karnik.

Zine Contributions By:

Zack Handler (IG: @zackhandle)

wallh4x (IG: @ray_toyota & @djwallh4x)

Sam Rolfes (IG: @samrolfes)



Council on
the Arts

