University of British Columbia / Emerging Media Lab

Procedural Poetry Fun House

Summer 2025

BACKGROUND

Inspired by the work of Vancouver poets such as Judith Copithorne and Bill Bissett, the Procedural Poetry Fun House is a project meant to help Creative Writing students explore and create poetry in a VR space, fostering a healthy relationship between students, the arts, and emerging technology.

PROJECT DETAILS

In the Procedural Poetry Fun House, players can let their creativity run wild in this engaging, Virtual Reality learning environment!

Explore: The Fun House — and its surrounding neighbourhood — are full of elements that pay homage to the project's inspirations and inject whimsy into the player experience. Explore the style of Judith Copithorne brought to a 3D world, and find words scattered across the environment for you to use!

Play: Work through the various activity rooms to find new ways to interact with poetry. Talk and interact with Judith Copithorne's very own pet cat Jasmine!

Create: Head to the Attic to let the creativity flow. Use the words you have collected on your journey to craft your own concrete poem!

AI Integrations: From AI-powered sentiment analysis to resistance text generation to a feline companion, experience how the Fun House utilizes AI to foster creativity instead of suppresses it.

BLACKOUT ROOM

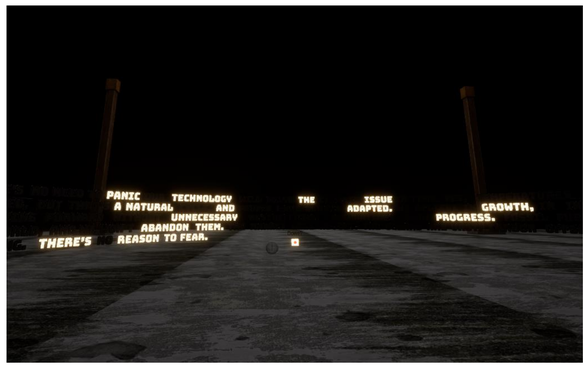
The blackout room is an activity room dedicated to creating un-blackout poetry, a new form of concrete poetry invented by the team.

Un-blackout poetry takes advantage of the unique properties of VR space to have users extract a poem from a disagreeable AI-generated text.

Blackout Room

Pictured above: a disagreeable text generated by AI in response to a user's lamentation regarding technology's negative impact on climate change.

Pictured below: a user's un-blackout poem, as extracted from the disagreeable AI-generated text above.



WORD MECHANICS

To allow for an immersive and intuitive experience, the team has developed and optimized the following mechanics:

- Word manipulation: From grabbing to pushing to scaling, word manipulation has been polished to be as intuitive as possible.
- Word collection: With the help of a handy collection basket, users can collect words by physically stowing them away.
- Word inventory: Users can view all the words they have collected at any time and retrieve them for poem creation.
- Word placement: By grabbing words in 3D space or by selecting them from their inventory, users can place their words at any desired orientation.

KEY FEATURES

- Custom 3D environment with custom stylized assets and user interfaces
- Intuitive 3D word manipulation
- AI companion cat
- Immersive motion interactions

ACCESSIBILITY

To make the project accessible to a larger audience, the team has taken extensive care to reduce cybersickness by increasing the performance. The Procedural Poetry Fun House experience consistently runs at around 90 fps while running through PCVR.

NEXT STEPS

- Conducting user tests to help polish the user flow of the blackout room
- Conducting user tests to help polish the user flow of the whole experience
- Enhanced audio integrations such as sound effects, music, etc.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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