

Bob Bicknell-Knight  
Everything Bad Is Good For You, 2016  
HD digital video  
5 min 52 sec



Everything Bad Is Good For You is a video that considers the highs and lows of escapism within various video games, using water as a continuously evolving metaphor. The video has three layers, with the first showing a looping series of images, featuring both real and stock photography of people who have either passed away or passed out whilst playing video games. The images have been compiled from various news stories around the world, where players have spent several days playing the same video game in gaming and internet cafes.

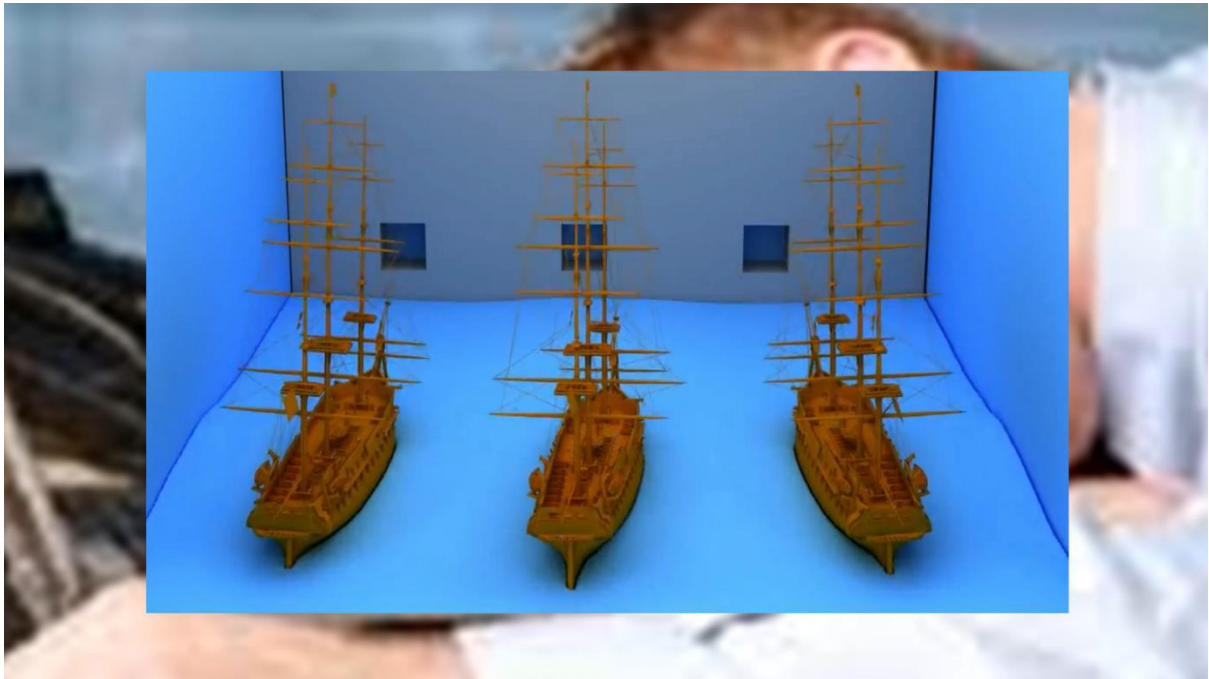
The second layer is a short, looping animation of three sailing boats, slowly being engulfed by a series of artificial waves, representing how video games can be a pleasurable experience, although, when taken to an excess like any drug, can be incredibly dangerous and life threatening.

The third and final layer of the artwork is a compilation of moments within video games where players encounter, and are able to swim in, virtual water. The piece charts the evolution of water within 3D video games, from Mario to Uncharted 4, and, using water as a metaphor for escapism, considers how the gaming industry has improved its graphical capabilities but in doing so has not considered the additive nature of creating hyper realistic worlds that we can effectively live a second life within.

Taking the title of Steven Johnson's book of the same name which argues that popular culture is actually making us smarter, the work questions why video games have been continually demonised within the mainstream media as being highly addictive and harmful, when in reality there are plenty of other, far worse activities to be addicted to. Being addicted to playing video games is a very real, ongoing problem. Everything Bad is Good for You recognises this, whilst

simultaneously questioning if, like most things taken in moderation, video games do have positive effects.

Watch the film by going to <https://youtu.be/gekNrDbxCTU>



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