

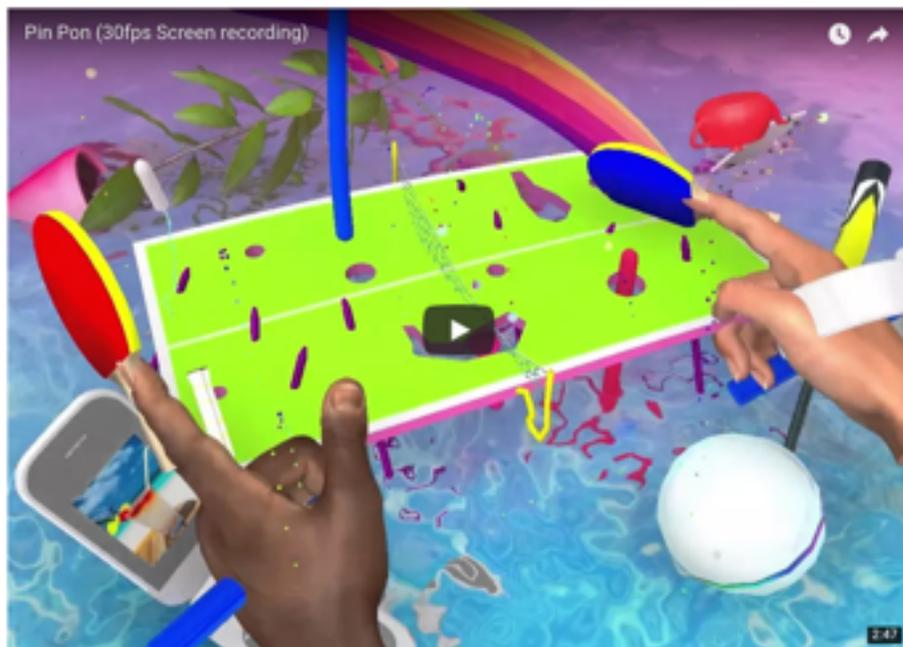
KILL SCREEN

07.08.15

SWIPE RIGHT FOR PIN-PON, THE GAME THAT TURNS TINDER INTO A PSYCHEDELIC GYMNASIUM

by DAVID RUDIN
@DavidSRudin

Dating is a slog. It's hard, tiring, and repetitive, like a workout without the guaranteed endorphin payout. One might therefore be inclined to go so far as calling dating a form of exercise.



In his new game Pin-Pon, Theo Triantafyllidis, a student in UCLA's Design Media Arts program, does just that. It is a psychedelic, glitchy, dildo-riddled version of online dating, wherein two players paddle objects back and forth until critical mass is reached and the Ping-Pong table explodes. The game renders the paddles as being extensions of animated hands, which either hold iPhones or have Apple Watches on their wrists. You are never far from technology. In an interview with The Creators' Project, Triantafyllidis likened this sensation to dating apps and, more broadly, how we relate to technology: "It's like these intense instant messaging sessions,

with multiple ‘bling’ sounds, that cause your hand to be stuck to your phone. Eventually, the hand and phone become one, their souls spliced forever.”

A psychedelic, glitchy, dildo-riddled version of online dating

This union with our devices may be a dispiriting state of affairs, but that ship has sailed. There is now a phone—if not a lover—for every soul. There’s an uber-for-this and uber-for-that. There’s Tinder and Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi’s app, which the BBC described as “like Tinder for good governance.” The sensory overload and endless accessibility that Pin-Pon references and exaggerates are very real.



The table on which Pin-Pon’s two players parry one another’s shots resembles the American artist George Maciunas’ “Fluxus Table.” The surface pitches up and down. Its angled expanses are punctured with large holes. In purely practical terms, the table is more suitable for whack-a-mole than Ping-Pong. In his 1963 Fluxus Manifesto, Maciunas collaged and annotated varying definitions of the word flux. In one of his annotations, he

wrote “Promote living art, anti-art, promote non art reality to be grasped by all peoples, not only critics, dilettantes and professionals.”

Maciunas might therefore have enjoyed Pin-Pon, which engages with ideas about technology and relationships in a manner that is broadly inclusive. Moreover, its glitchy quality, wherein objects gleefully pop up and overlaps, might well have appealed to the man whose manifesto built on the idea of flushing effluent. Pin-Pon gives the motions involved in online dating a good whack—this is but one of its parallels with Robert Yang’s *Hurt Me Plenty*—and can be used as an exercise tool. It could turn out to be the ideal first date.

TAGS

