# gameZ & ruleZ. The Mechanics of Play in Arts and Culture
## 20. & 21. Oktober 2022

Zurich University of the Arts ZHdK, Toni-Areal, 5.K12 (Kunstraum)

**Sjors Rigters. Concepts of the virtual sandbox and how to change them.**

## Abstract

"The popular video game Minecraft exemplifies the inner contradictions of the digital age. Lauded by many pundits as a highly creative form of entertainment, the so-called "digital LEGO" is a powerful vessel for neoliberal ideologies and hyper-capitalistic imperatives, with its frenzy of accumulation, extraction, circulation, production, and exploitation. An effective indoctrination tool now pervasive in thousands of US elementary schools, Minecraft is a techno-dream of endless growth, a manifesto for the perpetuation of devastating patterns of consumption, competition, and destruction. Informed by colonialist principles, its gameplay elevates numbing grinding routines into a recipe for the good life, casting the player as both a conqueror and an entrepreneur. In his video The Virtual Frontier, Dutch designer Sjors Rigters brings to the foreground the toxic message of one of the most successful video games of all time."

- Matteo Bittanti

'The Virtual Frontier' is a video essay that resulted from the research of Sjors' thesis 'Concepts of the Virtual Sandbox'. During his lecture, Sjors will present his video essay, outline his thesis and share his insights and conclusions from the research with us.


## Biography

Sjors Rigters (b. 1995) is a graphic designer specializing in branding, web and social design. After receiving his BA in Graphic Design at the Royal Academy of Art, The Hague, he opened his own studio (Studio Rigters).

Sjors his practice is mainly defined by the way he works. Together with the client, he always searches for a core narrative to communicate. Based on this narrative and through a playful, albeit critical visual research, Sjors develops a system of design principles and decisions. This gives each project its own visual logic that can be incorporated into visual identities, publications, websites and more. His credo is therefore 'form follows content', since he believes that good design is guided by its content.

Sjors lives and works in Rotterdam, The Netherlands.

https://gamezandrulez.ch/