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# Being Water

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### Abstract

Being Water is an interactive experience that seeks to create a speculative space for contemplating what it might be like to be water.

**Keywords:** Interactive Art, Speculative Aesthetics, Water

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*You find yourself immersed in water, it's particles moving around you. You notice the presence of waterbeings. You listen to the sounds of the water and to the waterbeings and you find yourself immersed in water, being water.*

Hayles argues that in order to escape anthropocentrism, we can engage into an “imaginative projection into the worldviews of other objects and beings, based on evidence about their ways of being in the world” (Hayles, 2014). However, it is important to not mistake these imaginative projections for the object’s own experience (ibid.). Hayles calls this speculative aesthetics. Our intention with Being Water is to put this notion of speculative aesthetics into practice, asking, based on what we observe and know about water, what might it be like to be water? We employ interrelated artistic transformations to this question to arrive at an immersive world in which participants are invited to engage with this question.

Being water is an online interactive art experience, combining different forms of media to create an immersive waterworld. Through our collaborative practice, several artists (the authors) created

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and transformed each others contributions - as such, we do not individually speculate as water, but the speculation becomes a collective effort, further decentring the human experience through the flow-like experience of working together (Isaza-Giraldo et al., 2025). In light of ongoing developments with generative AI and LLMs, we were interested in augmenting our collaborative process by inviting the agency of LLMs into our flow. One version of the work thus experimented with including LLMs as co-constituents in the creative process (Nunes et al., 2025), but these LLMs are not included in the online version of the work due to technical constraints. The version published here (Marttila et al., 2024), in the journal of interactive narrative, includes only the efforts of the human collaborators. Both versions were exhibited as part of the art exhibition (on-site and online) of ICIDS'24 STREAMS ~ CORRIENTES in Barranquilla, Colombia.



<https://paulobala.github.io/being-water>

Figure 1: Click the image above to experience *Being Water*

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