Somewhere in the maze of Tabitha Nikolai’s Ineffable Glossolalia, you can find the words of Max Beckmann, saying all I want to say: “The stronger and more intense my desire becomes to capture and record that which is unsayable, the more tightly my mouth stays shut.”

But I will engage in the degeneracy of nonfiction because I do love these artists, despite my genetic tendency toward keeping secrets. Not for YOUR benefit, heck no, but for the nebulous intangible benefit.

Dire Jank is the sublime worlds that blossom in the trash, and if they’re a little radioactive, it’s because those are the materials we had to work with. Trash has memory, strata. It doesn’t disappear when you flush it. It just changes, into a gyre patch or the rings of a tree, or another nation’s problem, or a kid’s epigenetic traits. On the internet people re-fashion it into something better or at least weirder, until eventually the normies want it back, they’re like, “Oh my god feed me that trash that I threw away, that I literally figuratively shat out my asshole, because you’re better at working with trash than we are at spending billions of dollars.” Pocket worlds to shelter you from the neurotoxin rain, the worlds we deserved as children.

Jank is the inevitable disconnect between real life and systems that simulate life. Jank is when software stutters and a videogame character’s face falls off. In this era of hyper-photorealism, everything leaks jank. The harder they try to simulate everything, the more weird and broken it all feels. Nothing has the luxury of simply being itself.

This is where the fun and the suboptimal come in. Phone games have janky models that look like someone’s brush tried to paint a gyre patch. It doesn’t disappear when you flush it. It just changes, into a gyre patch or the rings of a tree, or another nation’s problem, or a kid’s epigenetic traits. On the internet people re-fashion it into something better or at least weirder, until eventually the normies want it back, they’re like, “Oh my god feed me that trash that I threw away, that I literally figuratively shat out my asshole, because you’re better at working with trash than we are at spending billions of dollars.” Pocket worlds to shelter you from the neurotoxin rain, the worlds we deserved as children.

Tabitha Nikolai makes mutant artifacts from cosplay, video games, and suburban occult—fragile teen rites to summon, after years of heartache, herself. In her work you can find a power glove encrusted with bismuth, a blue screen of death meteorite, and a reconstruction of her lonely suburban bedroom surrounded by giant spiders.

Ineffable Glossolalia is an architectural fusion of Borges’ infinite library with the Institut für Sexualwissenschaft, a key structure in pre-war Berlin’s progressive landscape, influential in early trans studies until fire and concentration camps consumed its books and inhabitants.

Tabitha Nikolai makes mutant artifacts from cosplay, video games, and suburban occult—fragile teen rites to summon, after years of heartache, herself. In her work you can find a power glove encrusted with bismuth, a blue screen of death meteorite, and a reconstruction of her lonely suburban bedroom surrounded by giant spiders.

Ineffable Glossolalia is an architectural fusion of Borges’ infinite library with the Institut für Sexualwissenschaft, a key structure in pre-war Berlin’s progressive landscape, influential in early trans studies until fire and concentration camps consumed its books and inhabitants.

Depending on the graphics card your computer is using, the sky can glitch out, making parts of the game dependent not on the player’s movements within the game, but the guts of your machine—much like real life.

I think of some of these works—Tabitha’s especially—as digital assemblages (she also calls them “set dressing”). I love finding people’s first Unity projects (Unity is a common program used to make 3D games) because they’re often rudimentary shapes full of random objects they found on their desktop, like a virtual subconsciousness.

The desire to unify an aesthetic is a very expensive desire. I am not against coherence, but I cannot always achieve
coherence. These assemblages are linked to perceptions of time, from the intensities available to us. They are drowsing.

Like many of thecatastumes' games, Magic Wand is a homeoplastic distillation of a monolithic experience, a cartoon fast-forward fever dream of *Final Fantasy*, turged cinematic "classics," pot-broilers, any genre that is more about the repetition of its own delivery mechanism than actual meaning. The murky feeling of playing a 30-hour game as a kid, that slurry of hot dog meat.

Devi McCallion's songs are awkward and hot, blood, drowning in blood, drowning in god, cannibalized by the world, sick with cop-radiation, full of the sweetness of plants dying. Like the work of every artist in this show, you see the seams in it, the connection to your own hands. *Prayers & Heaven* sounds like a made up girl burning up in the atmosphere, cured to die beautifully.

Why quote lyrics, they're meant to be heard with music, it would be like telling you about a friend by showing you a print-out of their genetic data.

Devi, like thecatastumes, has quickly made and discarded a lot of work over time, the relentless drive of making jury-rigged ad-hoc derringers and shivs instead of, I dunno, the Death Star approach of mainstream canonized art. She writes, "It's not something I go back to listening to and it's honestly not something I want to perform in front of a group of people." Art that fits in the time we have, conducting cursed energy away from our aortas so it can discharge harmlessly (?) into the cyber-abyss.

The high-exposure crunchy saturation of Devi's music videos feels like pixel masks, jaggy veils. Her face is like, what is affect for, the absurdity of having a face and a face signalling anything at all. *Black Cloud* is a new age cyber-meadow of hot death. No, her songs don't sound like death, they sound like the disappointment of not being allowed to live.

People have been separated from the means to be human. To circulate their feelings through their bodies, to determine their future, to control their housing. In this void, corporations, and net idols replace real community, offering a mythical pool where you drink but you are never sated.

Why should you like this stuff? Because if you don't, everyone will think you're stupid, and you will be executed by Caligula.

The internet is now our infinite library and we anxiously sift through it, Facebook moderators separating images of dead children from influencer's dead smiles. We have the whole world in our phones but it's been babelized, scrambled, shorn of context, torn from the land. We scavenge the astroturf tundra for genuine creatures of information, hoping they speak the same language as our heart. But until then, we put our jury-rigged beacons into the world, hoping we haven't lost too much blood in the rite.