

# Jan Robert Leegte

Jan Robert Leegte (born 1973, The Netherlands) is one of the first Dutch artists to work on and for the Internet since the 1990s. In 2002, he shifted his main focus to implementing digital materials in the context of the physical gallery space, aiming to bridge the online art world with the gallery art world, making prints, sculpture, installations, drawings, and projections, connecting to historical movements like land art, minimalism, performance art, and conceptualism. As an artist Leegte explores the position of the new materials put forward by the (networked) computer. Photoshop selection marquees, scrollbars, Google Maps, code, and software are dissected to understand their ontological nature. The networked computer is the central muse in his work, exploring all its wonders and peculiarities. "I don't use software to make art, I make art about software".

His work has been exhibited internationally (Whitechapel Gallery, Stedelijk Museum Amsterdam, van Gogh Museum, ZKM Karlsruhe, Centre Pompidou Paris, Museum Ludwig Budapest).

Jan Robert Leegte lives and works in Amsterdam, the Netherlands.

[CV and more information here](#)

## JPEG, 2022/2025

Since the early 90s, compression has been the driving force behind the image-based internet. Without compression, there would be no Netscape, social media, NFTs, or AI-generated images. JPEG compression has specifically enabled photography-based imagery on the net. It has always served that purpose, and over time became the default for showing high-quality images online. Nevertheless, compression always leaves a trace, which has become the slightly distorted lens through which the network sees the world of uploaded images.

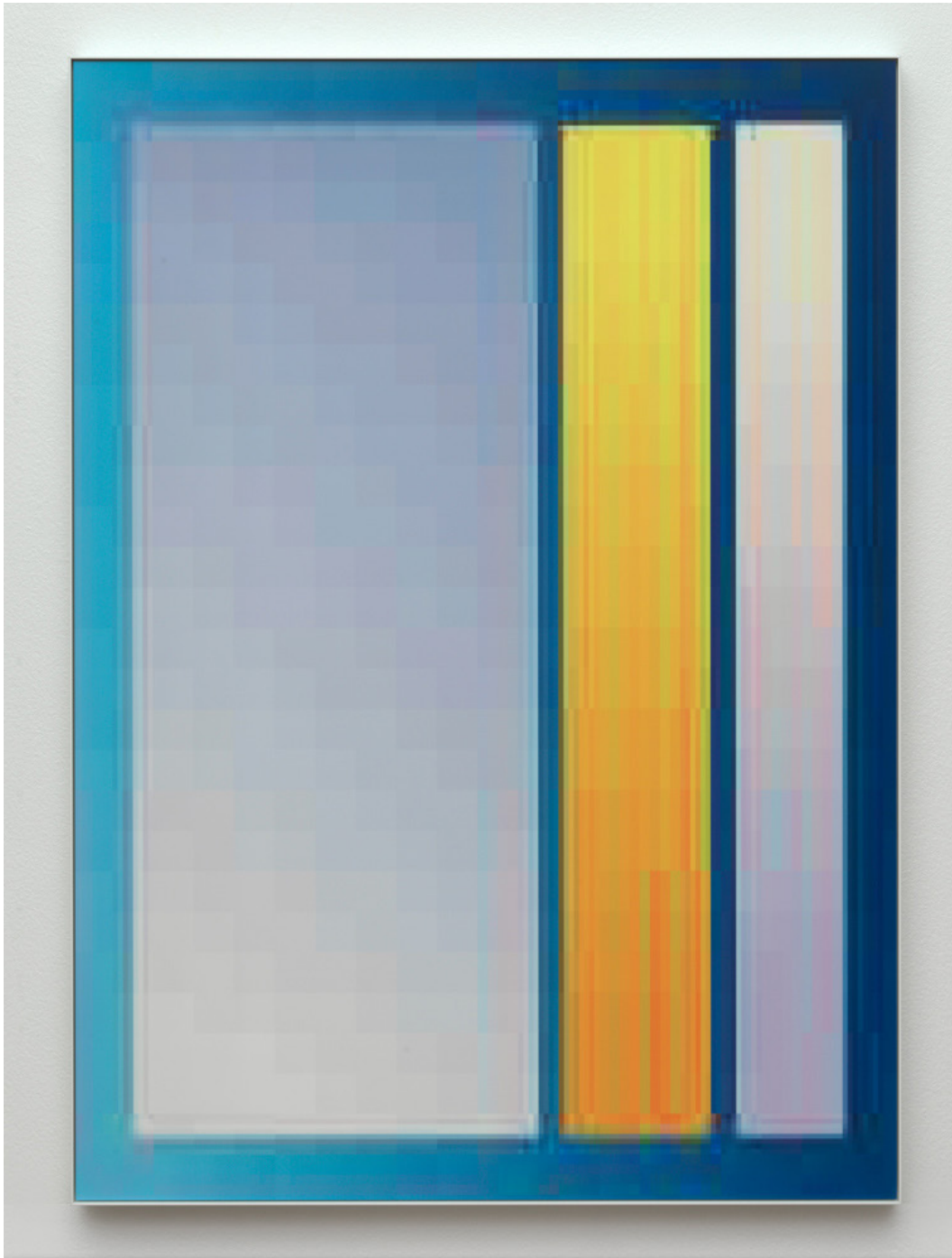
The works from the JPEG series try to create an image programmatically fully expressing that signature compression. An image that is made from barely nothing, yet fully present in its blazing appearance. A work deeply material, expressing itself through the language of code and codec transferred to a plate of aluminum. This is not a JPEG depicting an image. The JPEG is the image itself.

Where abstract expressionists cut out the depiction in painting, attempting to make the artist convey pure emotion, JPEG cuts out the artist's emotion and lets it emerge from within the algorithm.

<https://www.leegte.org/work/jpeg/>



Jan Robert Leegte  
JPEG #HM1001007526, 2026  
ChromaLuxe print in aluminium frame  
100 x 100 cm  
Unique  
Price: 7.900 € (incl. VAT)



Jan Robert Leegte  
JPEG #HM65907526, 2026  
ChromaLuxe print in aluminium frame  
90 x 65 cm  
Unique  
Price: 6.200 (incl. VAT)

## Wanderer, 2025

Wanderer is an autonomous, digital flâneur – a smart contract-based entity that traverses the physical world through a continuous sequence of directional choices. These decisions are recorded immutably on the blockchain and visualised through web-based map services.

The work draws directly from the Situationist practice of the *dérive* – the act of drifting through urban space, guided by intuition and chance. In this reinterpretation, the *dérive* becomes computational: the wandering artist recast as an algorithmic presence animated not by human will, but by generative processes and the rhythm of block time.

At the opening of Paris Photo, Wanderer will begin its journey at the Grand Palais in Paris. From there, it will continue indefinitely – autonomously navigating through global streets, unaware of national borders, treating the world as one continuous network of movement.

<https://wanderer.leegte.org/>



Jan Robert Leegte  
Wanderer, 2025  
Dual channel net art piece,  
custom server, software, crypto-wallet  
dimension variable  
Unique series

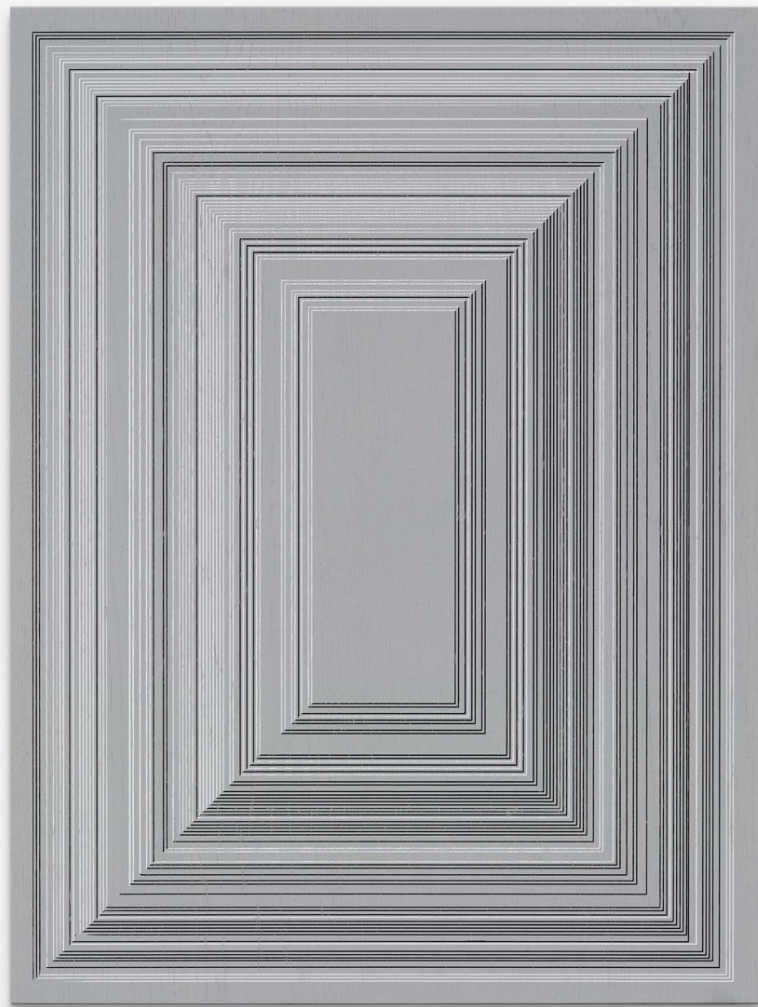
Price: 28.000 € (incl. VAT) with screens and technic  
Price: 24.000 € (incl. VAT) with technic  
*snapshot*  
contact [us](#) for more details

## Ornament, 2025

In dialogue with *Wanderer*, *Ornament* presents a new material iteration of Leegte's long-standing investigation into digital ornamentation. This series consists of paint-on-wood-panel plotter works, each based on generative algorithms that produce complex bevelling structures – referencing both the aesthetics of GUI design and the architectural ornament.

Each panel functions as a contemporary response to the tradition of panel painting, reinterpreted through code and executed using a plotter with paint pens on hand-prepared wood surfaces.

The *Ornament* panels will be installed as an environment surrounding *Wanderer*, evoking a scenography in which generative ornamentation becomes both backdrop and structural frame for the algorithmic *dérive*.



Jan Robert Leegte  
Ornament No.1, 2025  
acrylic paint plotted on oak panel  
80 x 60 x 1 cm  
Unique  
Price: 5.800 € (incl. VAT)



Jan Robert Leegte  
Ornament No.2, 2025  
acrylic paint plotted on oak panel  
80 x 60 x 1 cm  
Unique  
Price: 5.800 € (incl. VAT)



Jan Robert Leegte  
Ornament No.3, 2025  
acrylic paint plotted on oak panel  
80 x 60 x 1 cm  
Unique  
Price: 5.800 € (incl. VAT)

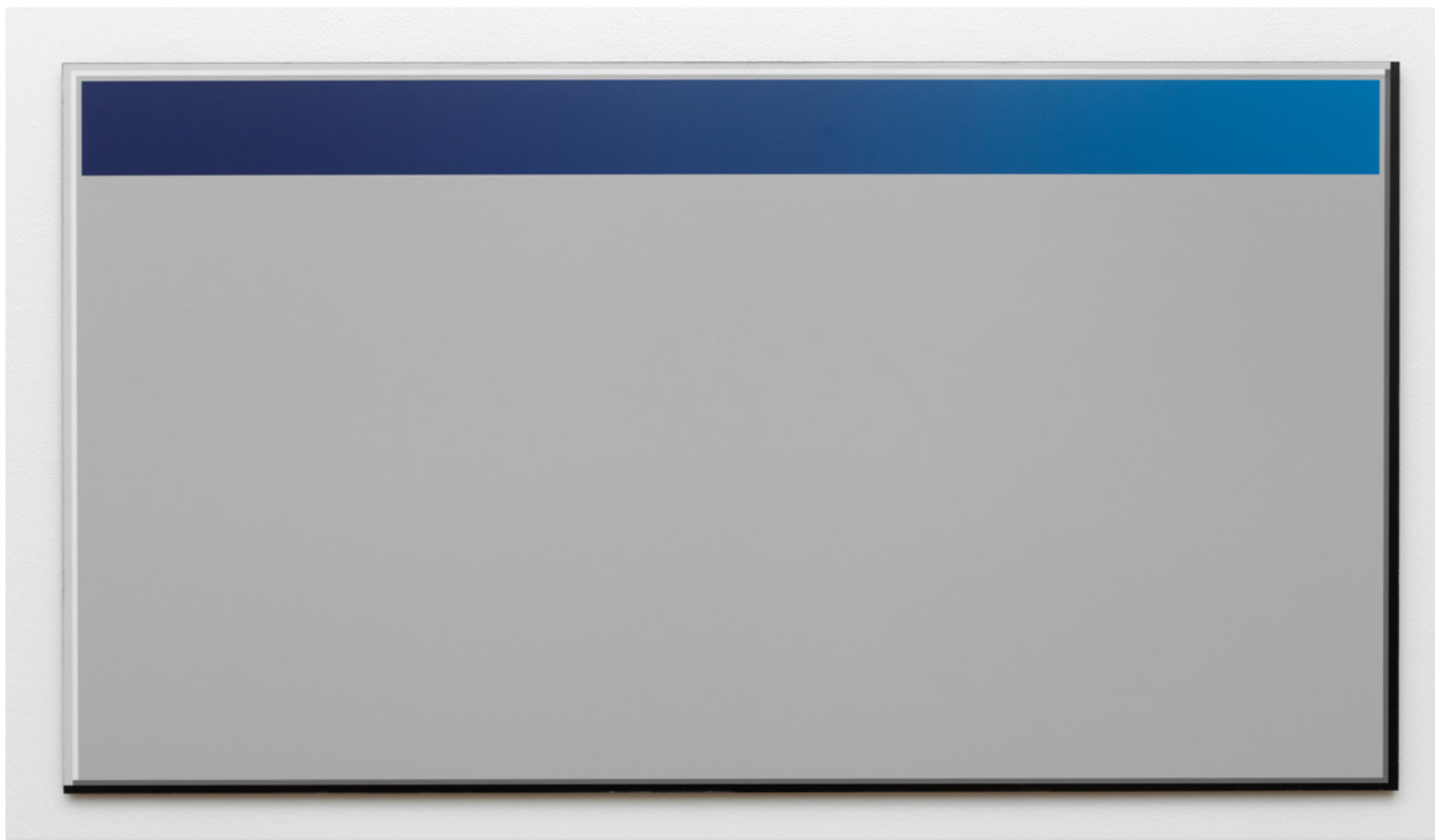
## **Windows series, 2017**

The Window panels first originated within the installation Dumpster (2016). This work was a continuation of another, entitled In Memory of New Materials Gone (2014), that commemorated the fast-paced passing of digital materials due to the ever continuous updating of software and / or it going obsolete. The panels are abstract monuments dedicated to screen time of the past, but also digital ornamentation taking a sculptural position within the context of our architecture.

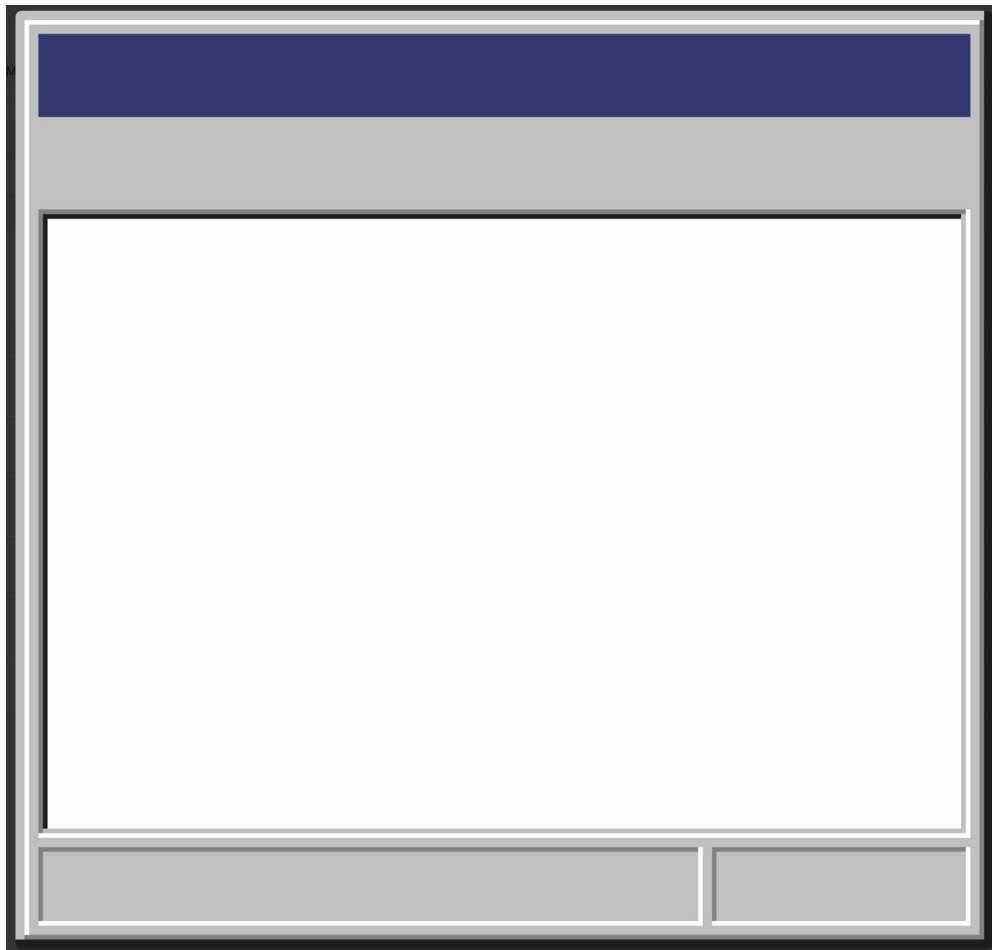
<https://www.leegte.org/work/windows/>



Jan Robert Leegte  
Window No.2, 2017  
Pigment print on paper, mounted on mdf  
101 x 175 cm  
Price: 9.700 € (incl. VAT)



Jan Robert Leegte  
Window No.5, 2017  
Pigment print on paper, mounted on mdf  
132,5 x 72,5 cm  
Price: 7.700 € (incl. VAT)



Jan Robert Leegte  
Window No.1, 2017  
Pigment print on paper, mounted on mdf  
110 x 105 cm  
Price: 7.500 € (incl. VAT)

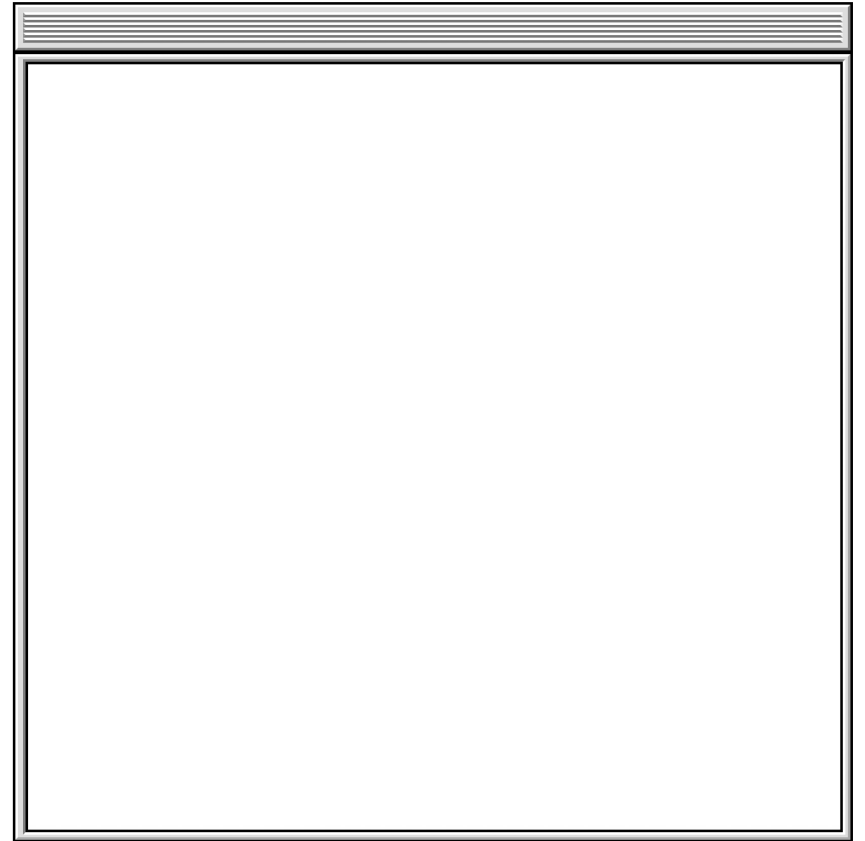
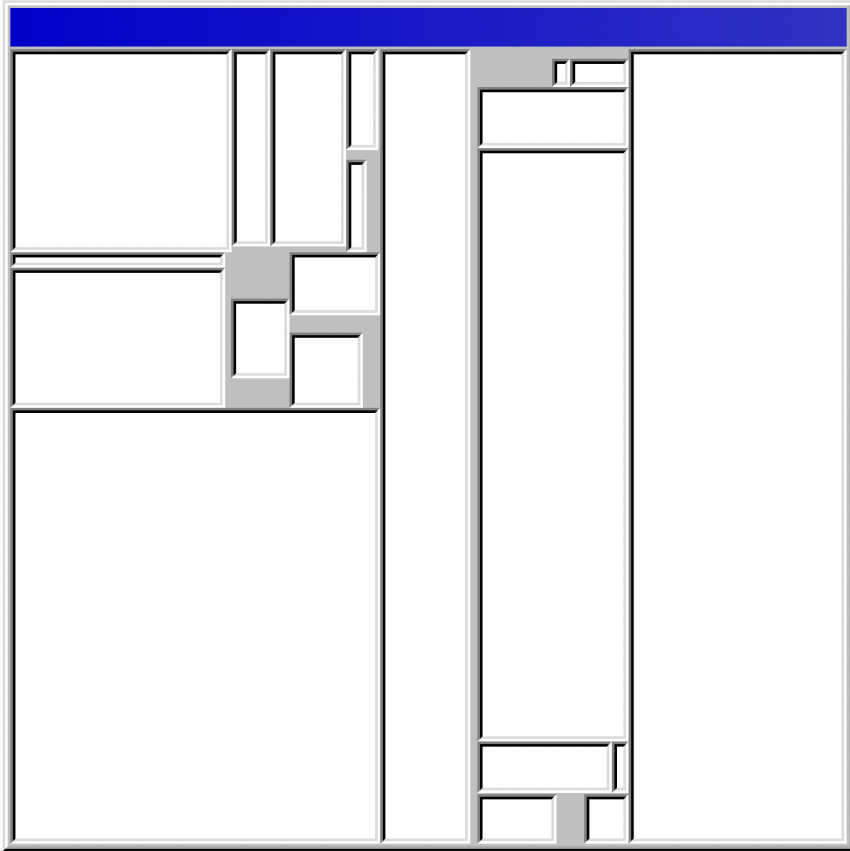


Window, 2017  
Archival prints mounted on MDF with matte coating  
Upstream Gallery, 2017

## **WINDOW NFTs, 2022**

The mid grey chiseled computer interfaces of 1997 have always reminded me of sculptures created in bas-relief, a technique going back to the stone carved petroglyphs that is as ancient as humankind's first steps in making art. The combination of illusion and tactility found in these interfaces shows our longing to have the computer experience be part of the material world. Therefore it comes as no surprise that the programming language of Ethereum is named 'Solidity'. The blockchain is software, yet it behaves and feels like hardware. It seems we are witnessing a progressing performance of permanence.

<https://window.leegte.org/>



Window, 2022  
[Website](#) as Ethereum NFT, source on-chain,  
generative  
Price: 1 ETH

## **SCROLLBARS, 2023**

The scrollbar is an interface to a content space. A set space that can be moved around for us to explore it. With the scrollbar decoupled from its original purpose, it points to nothing, becoming a broken link. It becomes a sculptural entity with an empty space as an appendix. Leaving behind the memory of decades of internet culture as a washed ashore skeleton.



Selection, OFFICE IMPART, Berlin, 2024



Scrollbars, 2024  
240 part floor sculpture, each 5 x 80 cm  
Site specific, Unique  
Price: 27.000 € (incl. VAT)

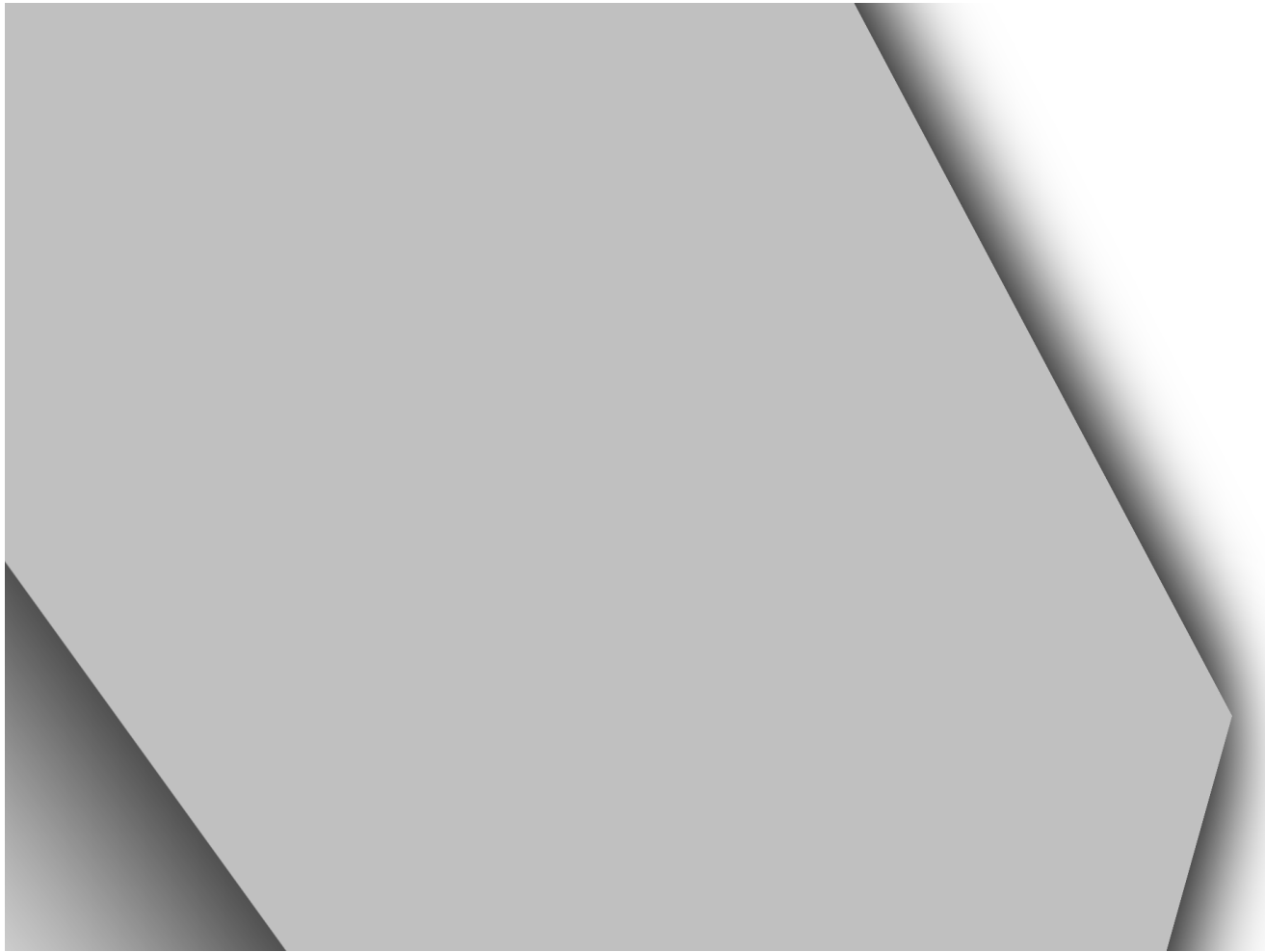


Jan Robert Leegte  
Scrollbars, 2024  
100 part floor sculpture  
Site specific  
Price: 11.200 € (incl. VAT)

## **REPOSITION, 2018**

Three familiar buttons are placed at the center of a webpage. As soon as the visitor clicks one of them, the mouse pointer sticks to the button. The action can be repeated endlessly, until the buttons are completely covered with black arrows. The consequences of digital action are made tangible—an infectious invitation to keep clicking.

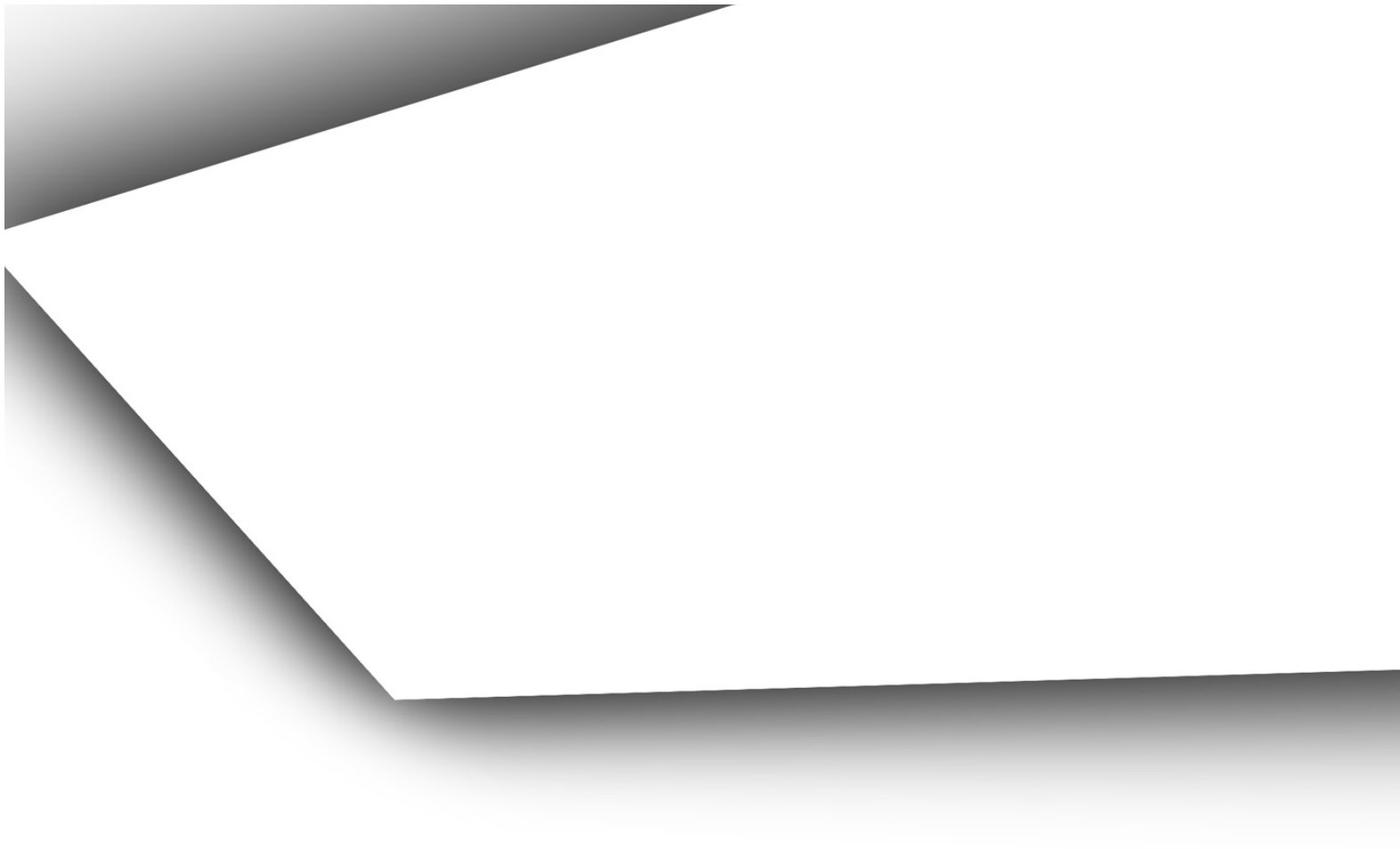
<https://www.leegte.org/work/repositionsilver-work/>



Reposition - silver, 2018

[Website](#)

Price: 9.000 € (incl. VAT)



Reposition - white, 2018

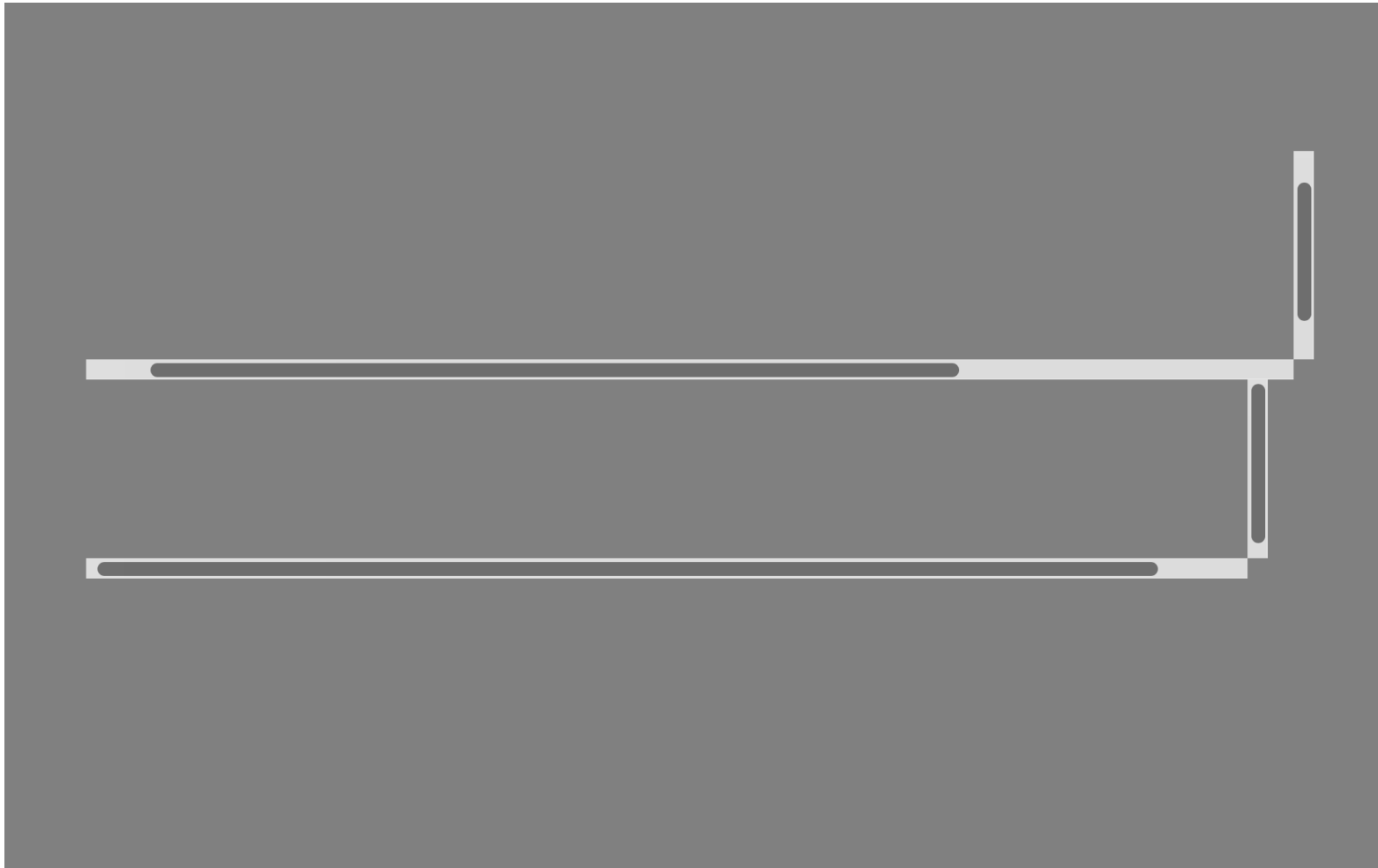
[Website](#)

Price: 9.000 € (incl. VAT)

## **SCROLLBAR WEBSITE , 1997**

In 1997, Jan Robert Leegte created his first website featuring scrollbars, which was a precursor of his graduation project. Two horizontal and two vertical scrollbars dance across the screen. They still move, but have been stripped of their functionality. They have become interactive sculptures, made from a material as fleeting as it is mundane: the scrollbar. The fact that they were presented as a website was essential. This way, the sculptures were always accessible online, to everyone, without the intervention of the artist, a gallery, or a museum.

<http://scrollbars97.leegte.org/>



Scrollbar, 1997

[Website](#)

Price: 10.000 € (incl. VAT)

## **Untitled Composition, 1999**

Two squares in the middle of a website, with a familiar typology along the X- and Y-axis: the scrollbar. Here, Leegte placed the scrollbar at the center, where—unexpectedly—they began to tremble slightly. Untitled composition recalls the work of Carl Andre. Leegte transfers the values and ideas of Minimal Art from the gallery space to the context of the internet, where touch is everyday and attention more fleeting. Through an abstract composition and minimal interaction, he invites us to reflect on the internet as a space, also—but not exclusively—for art.

<http://untitledcomposition.leegte.org/>



Untitled Composition, 1999

[Website](#)

Price: 10.000 € (incl. VAT)

## **SELECTION, 2013**

In 2013, Leegte created the browser-based work *The Act of Selecting Objectified*. On a standard tiled background of a plastered wall, the user could drag a selection marquee. The only difference was that the marquee cast a drop shadow onto the wall, creating the sensation of a contemporary interactive sculpture or performance. The work essentially highlights the unique sculptural quality inherent in the selection marquee—originally invented by Bill Atkinson.

<https://theactofselectingobjectified.leegte.org/>



Selection, 2013

[Website](#)

Price: 9.000 € (incl. VAT)

## **THREE BUTTONS, 2005**

Three familiar buttons are placed at the center of a webpage. As soon as the visitor clicks one of them, the mouse pointer sticks to the button. The action can be repeated endlessly, until the buttons are completely covered with black arrows. The consequences of digital action are made tangible—an infectious invitation to keep clicking.

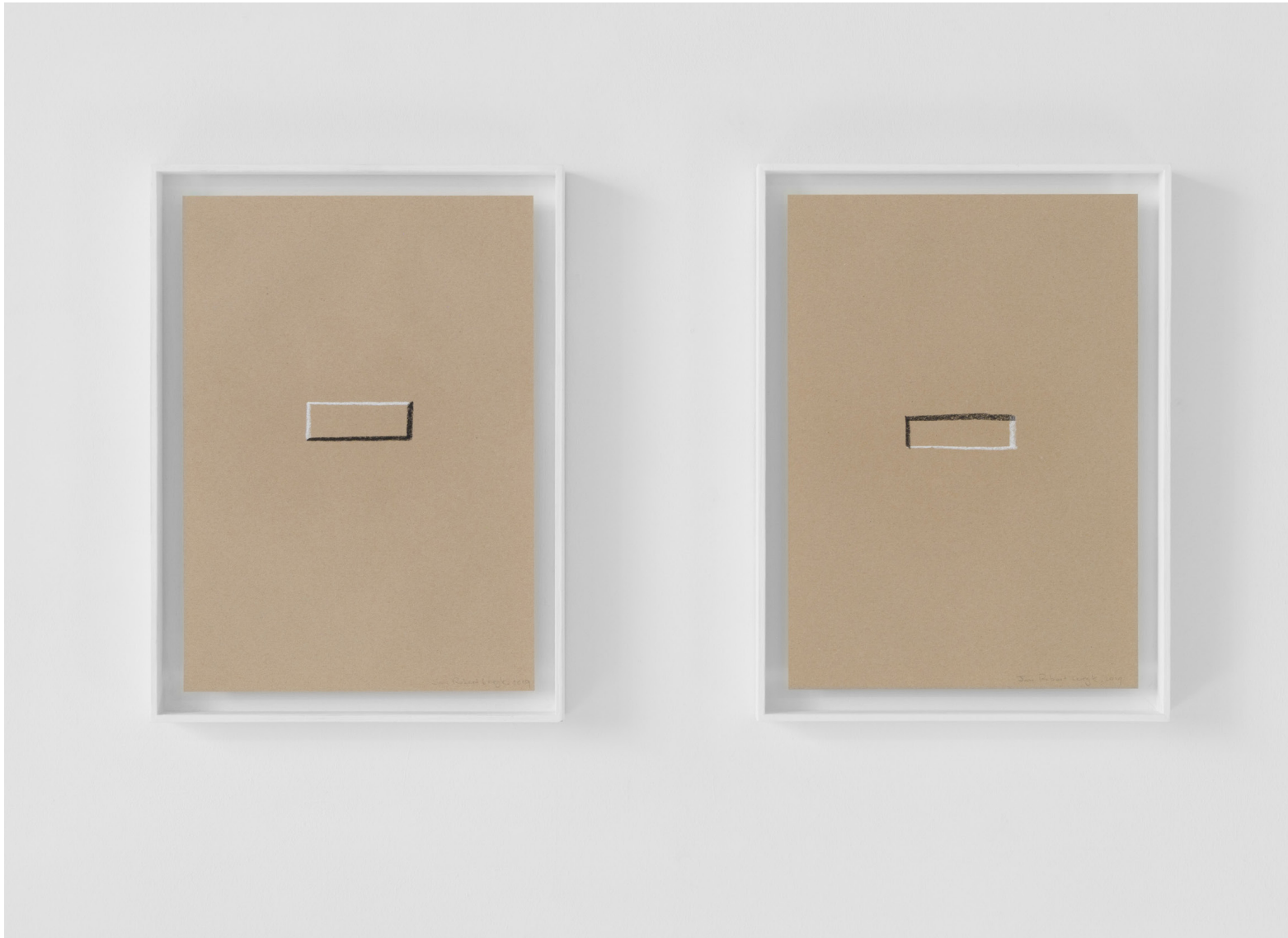
<http://threebuttons.leegte.org/>



Three Buttons, 2005

[Website](#)

Price: 9.000 € (incl. VAT)



Jan Robert Leegte  
Drawing a Button Nr. 8 + 9, 2019  
Pastel on paper, 42 x 29,7 c, Unique  
Price: each 2.400 € (incl. VAT)

## MOUNTAINS, since 2013

Mountains are grand natural statements of sculptural expression. They are birthplaces of sublime monumentality and romanticism. Their crumbly forms are the raw materials that provided us with a long tradition of sculpture.

In another realm there is the ambiguous materiality of the digital, the human-made bits and bytes, in constant flow through systems, from which a new order of materials emerge at the surface of the interface. Among them is the user interface phenomenon of the drop shadow. A material bereft of all our notions of materiality, it being nothing but the absence of light cast upon a surface due to an obstructing object. In the work the shadow has been severed from a non-existent casting object making it less than nothing. But also the drop shadow being a digital simulacrum adds another step deeper into ethereality, making it almost a shadow of shadows. This places it in direct opposition to the most earthly rooted of them all, the mountain.

Mountains and Drop Shadows is a continuation of a line of work going back to 2013, with the net art piece [www.mountainsanddropshadows.com](http://www.mountainsanddropshadows.com) in which a live script would continuously fetch images tagged 'mountains' from online databases. Because of this, the landscapes would become anonymised and delocalised, merely becoming an image, often ending as a humble desktop image.

For this most recent iteration of the work, querying databases felt like a thing of the past, as all those images have been added to the datasets of various image generating AI services. Mountains and Drop Shadows, 2023 uses AI-generated mountain images, a mashup of all images of existing mountains, fully erasing the subjectivity of the photographer and a-localising the image.

The work is a sculptural desktop standoff between a mountain dreamt up by the internet and a drop shadow. Embodiment vertigo on the summits of the interface.

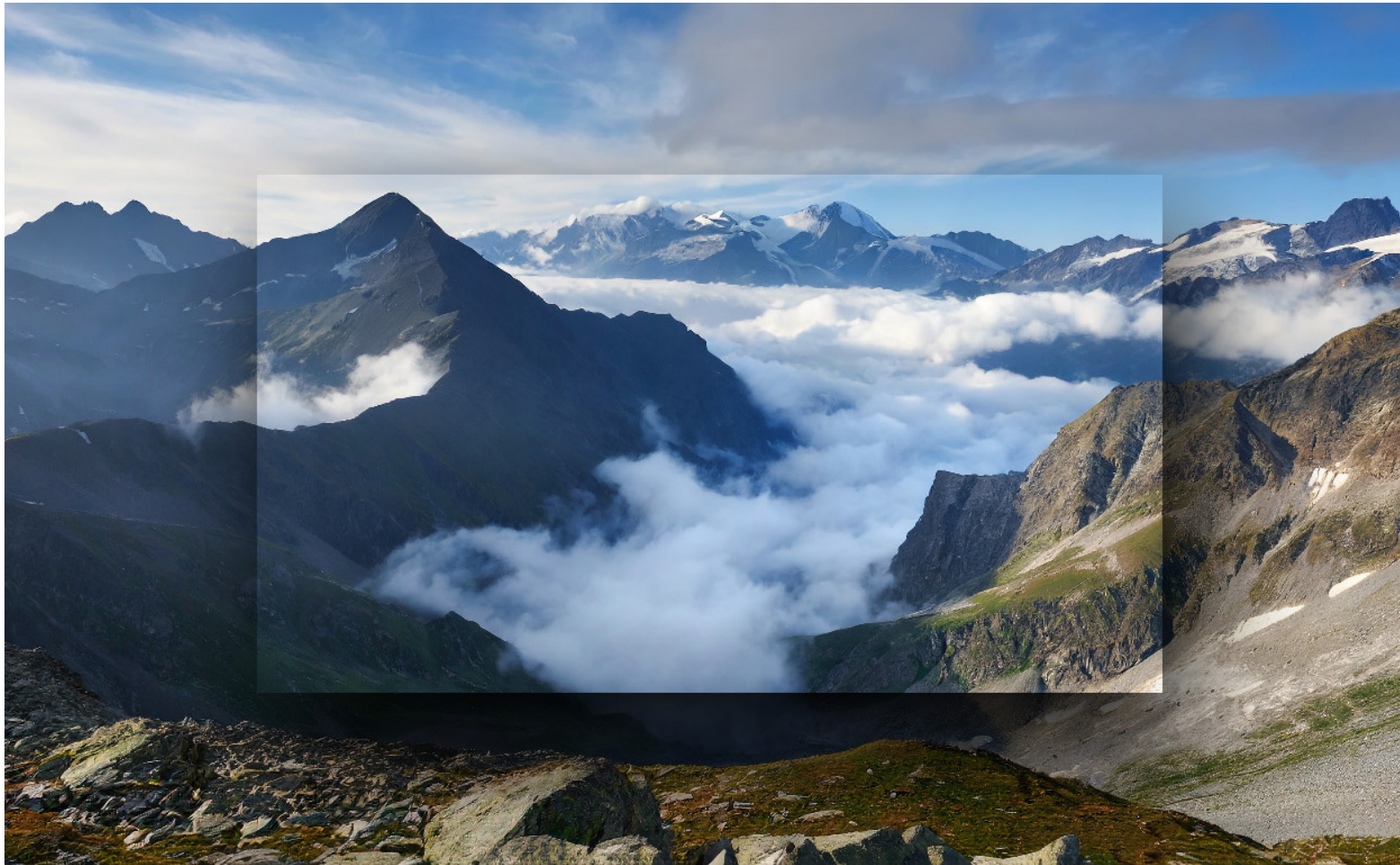
<https://www.leegte.org/work/mountainsanddropshadows-2023/>



Mountains and Drop Shadows #45, 2023

A gloss DIASEC, mounted archival Ultrachrome print, [NFT](#)  
70 x 100 cm

Price: 7.500 € (incl. VAT)



Mountains and Drop Shadows #47, 2023

A gloss DIASEC, mounted archival Ultrachrome print, [NFT](#)

70 x 100 cm

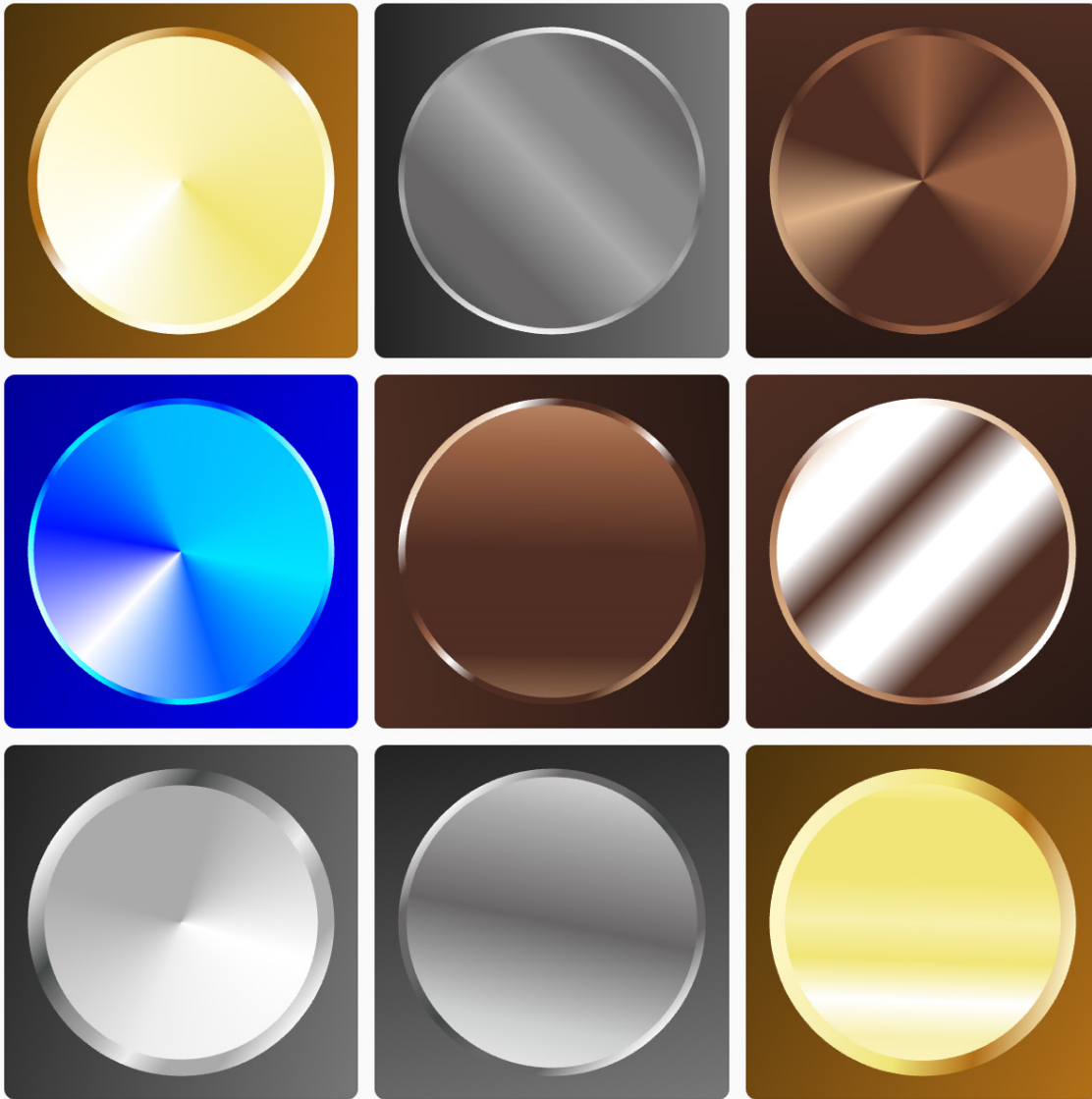
Price: 7.500 € (incl. VAT)

## COIN, 2023

Coin tries to be something between a mint button, clock or spinner and a coin. It continues on my work focussing around interface culture, tapping into subjects like skeuomorphism and the phenomenology of software. Coin is born from endless webpages of CSS gradients, illustrator tutorials and stock images. Searching them always feels like you have found a treasure trove, but one that is endless. Priceless gems, but the worth slipping like sand between your fingers.

Coin has an intentional ambiguity that makes it perfect for a cross-chain environment. It exists in a space that's somewhere between coming and going, non-existent and minted, value and shit-coin, and being everywhere and nowhere, all at the same time.

<http://coin.leegte.org/about.html>



Coin, 2023  
SVG, Ethereum NFT, fully on-chain, generative

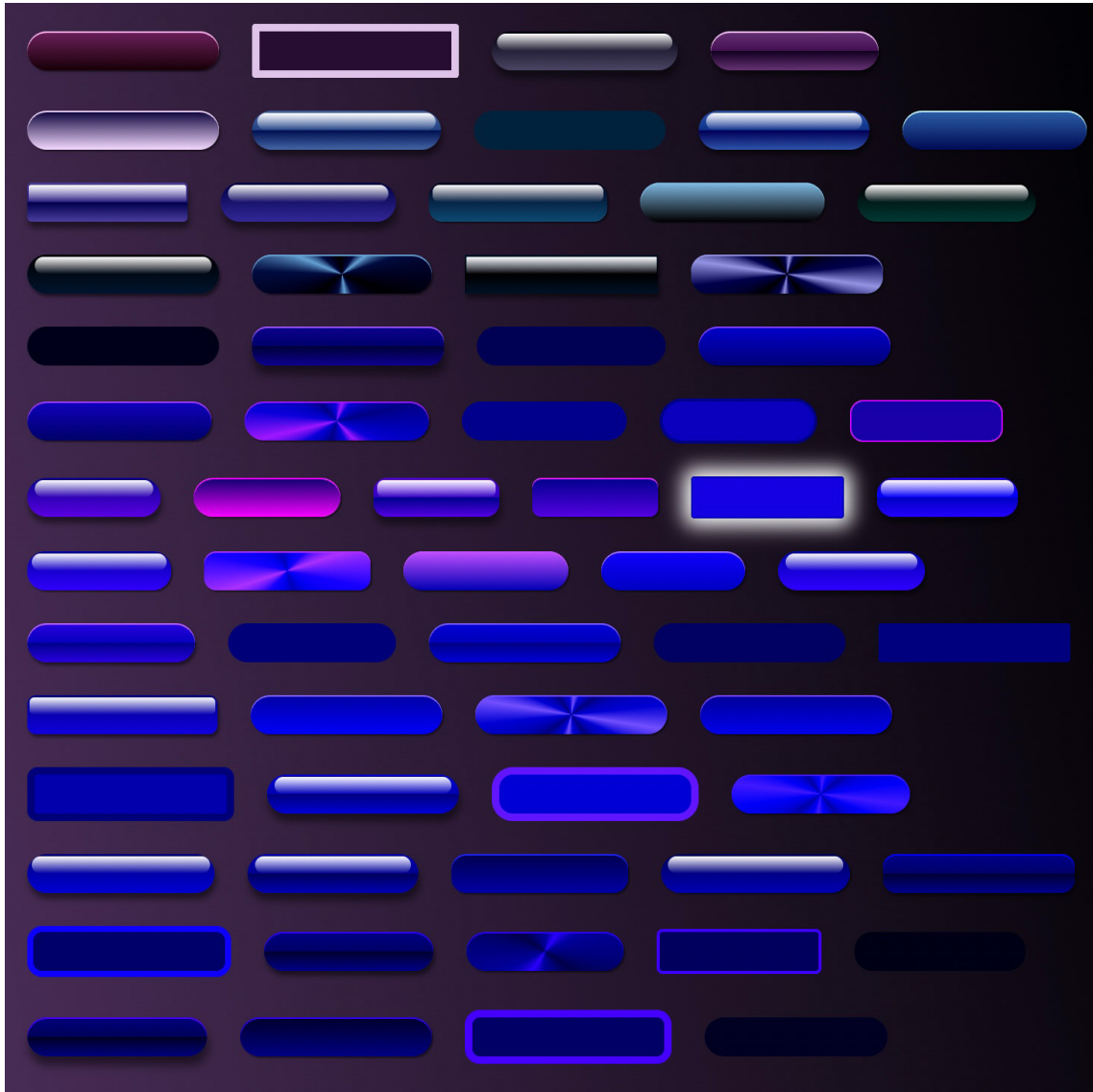
Coin - Installation, 2023  
a set of NFTs and an artist approved composition as an installation  
with 2 to 9 square monitors and 2 to 9 mini computers (Raspberry Pi's)  
- on request

## Buttons, 2023

The button has been in a continuous state of shapeshifting over the expanding history of collective interface design. Endless webpages filled with designs, haptics, styles, expressions, subcultures, interactions, effects, all layered over this simple and elemental entity leaving in its wake a fundamental material presence within interface culture.

The internet is an unimaginably vast ecology of data and processes. Deeply stored data is immutable like buried granite, where other is constantly in flux like a rushing mountain stream. The whole system is in continuous evolution through endless processes reshaping the data interacting with each other and with ourselves. At the opaque surface of this churning ocean of bits is the exchange between both the realm of the computer and that of ourselves. The interface. And in the centre of this human machine culture lives the button. A binary entity reaching out from the very core of the machine's logic to touch, at the surface, our reaching finger, after which it dives back down in order to toggle some state from a zero to a one.

<https://buttons.leegte.org/index.html>



Button, 2023

[Website](#) as Ethereum NFT, IPFS stored,  
generative

Price: 0,3 ETH

JAN ROBERT LEEGTE

\*1973, The Netherlands

Lives and works in Amsterdam, the Netherlands

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His work has been exhibited internationally (Whitechapel Gallery, Stedelijk Museum Amsterdam, van Gogh Museum, ZKM Karlsruhe, Centre Pompidou, Museum Ludwig Budapest).

## Education

1995 -1999 Willem de Kooning Academy | Bachelor of Arts, Fine Art / Interaction Design

1992 -1995 Technical University Delft | Faculty of Architecture / Unfinished

## Exhibitions

2025

Reposition, Studio 1111, Berlin (s)  
The Sweet Escape, Upstream Gallery, Amsterdam  
Hallen 06, Wilhelm Hallen, Berlin

2024

Selection, OFFICE IMPART, Berlin, DE. (s)  
Web as a Medium, NEORT++, Tokyo, JP  
Fragilia, Gallery MET, Berlin, DE

2023

Market Makers, Berlin, DE  
No Content, Upstream Gallery, Amsterdam, NL (s)  
Earth, AkzoNobel, Amsterdam, NL  
Alt+1000, Neuchâtel, CH  
Modern, Stedelijk Museum Amsterdam, NL  
Behind the Screens, Museum CODA, Apeldoorn, NL

2022

Repositions, Panke Gallery, Berlin, DE (s)  
Analogue to Legér, Kröller Möller Museum, Otterlo, NL  
Proof of Work, what's at Stake, Plus One Gallery, Antwerp, BE  
Art and the Blockchain, Rozenstraat 59, Amsterdam, NL  
Computing Beauty, Gallery A.dition, Seoul, KR  
Inside the Outside, CODA, Apeldoorn, NL  
DYOR, Kunsthalle Zürich, Zürich, CH  
More is more, Museum MORE, Gorssel, NL

2021

'Van Gogh Inspires: Jan Robert Leegte', Van Gogh Museum, Amsterdam, NL (s)  
Spatial Affairs, Ludwig Museum, Budapest, H  
Sans Object, Centre Pompidou, Paris, FR  
Paper Art, 2021, Museum CODA, Apeldoorn, NL \*(s) solo exhibition

## Lectures, workshops, teaching

Leegte has been / is professor at the following academies:

Gerrit Rietveld (Amsterdam),  
Royal Academy (The Hague) and ArtEZ (Arnhem).

Also he has lectured and gave workshops at a large variety of international organisations.

## Curatorial, Research and Advisory (selection of recent)

Cultural Matter, curatorial series, co-curator at LIMA  
The Digital Weird', guest-curator at arebyte, London  
Mondrian Fund, Advisory committee member



JPEG, 2022  
[Website](#) as Ethereum NFT, source on-chain,  
generative  
available via secondary on OpenSea