

**ACID CHAT: GESTURAL INTERFACE DESIGN /  
ASIT SOHBET: ISARETLI VE HAREKETLI ARAYÜZ TASARIMI**

**by  
ALI OYTUN GÖKHAN**

**Submitted to the Institute of Social Sciences  
in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the Degree of  
Master of Fine Arts in Visual Arts Visual Communication Design**

**Sabanci University  
Fall 2005**

**ACIDCHAT: GESTURAL INTERFACE DESIGN /  
ASITSOHBET: ISARETLI VE HAREKETLI ARAYÜZ TASARIMI**

APPROVED BY:

Murat Germen .....  
(Supervisor)

Elif Ayiter .....

Assoc. Prof. Dr. Wieslaw Zaremba .....

DATE OF APPROVAL: .....

© Ali Oytun Gökhan, Fall 2005  
All Rights Reserved

## **Abstract**

### **ACIDCHAT: GESTURAL INTERFACE DESIGN**

Ali Oytun Gökhan

M.F.A., Visual Arts Visual Communication Design

Supervisor: Murat Germen

Fall 2005, vii + 54 pages

AcidChat is an experimental design project that aims to create an innovative computer software interface for Internet chat software using today's well known technologies; Adobe Photoshop, Macromedia Freehand and digital photography. The aim of the project is to create new understandings of interface and its usage, by adding new conceptions to chat based interfaces which creates a totally new look at the computer software and application. One of the key features is to add a gestural approach to the interface to create new meanings in interface design.

**Keywords:** gesture, interface, chat, Internet relay chat, IRC, 3D interface.

## ÖZ

### ASITSOHBET: ISARETLI VE HAREKETLI ARAYÜZ TASARIMI

Ali Oytun Gökhan

Görsel Sanatlar Görsel İletişim Tasarım Yüksek Lisans Programı

Tez Yöneticisi: Murat Germen

Sonbahar 2005, vii + 54 sayfa

Bir deneysel tasarım projesi olan AsitSohbet'in amacı geliştirilmiş arayüz tasarımlarını internetteki sohbet yazılımlarının kullanımı için tasarlanmıştır. Günümüzün bilinen iyi tasarım teknolojileri kullanılmıştır; Adobe Photoshop, Macromedia Freehand ve sayısal fotoğrafçılık bunlardandır. Bu proje'nin amacı arayüz tasarımında yeni anlayışlar yaratmak ve bu yenilikleri kullanıma yansıtmaktır. Bu yenilikleri yeni görsel kavramlarla geliştirip bunları sohbet programlarına uyarlamaktır ve uyarlarken tamamiyle yeni bir görsellik kazandırmak amaç edinilmiştir. Bu yeniliklerden kilit olarak eklenebilecek işaretli ve hareketli yaklaşımı arayüze tasamak ve arayüz tasarımında yeni görsel manalar üretmektir.

**Anahtar Kelimeler:** işaret, hareket, arayüz, sohbet, IRC, 3D arayüz.

*To my family :)*

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I am grateful for Elif Ayiter in encouraging me to start this masters program and for being my instructor. I appreciated Murat Germe'n's supervision and friendly support. I would like to thank Erdag Aksel for the unexpected support he gave me. I would like to thank Lewis Johnson for being an excellent instructor.

Many thanks to all graduate friends and undergraduate friends in sharing the Sabanci University nights .

Special thanks to the Gökhan family(Yildiz Gökhan, Bilgehan Gökhan) in all the big support during my stay in Istanbul.

Not to mention, Sertaç Mustafaoglu for being with me and sharing the same flat.

Thanks to my family (Yavuz Gökhan, Çigdem Gökhan and Zafer Ulas Gökhan) in their unlimited support, advise and the unlimited influences they gave me.

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

Abstract.....	i
ÖZ.....	ii
Dedication.....	iii
Acknowledgements.....	iv
Table of Contents.....	v
List of Figures.....	vi
Gestures.....	1
The Design.....	3
Conclusion.....	5
Bibliography.....	6
Appendix A (Interfaces).....	7
Appendix B (Wallpapers).....	27
Appendix C (Website).....	37
Appendix D (Corporate Identity: logo, letterheads, posters, billboards, calendar) .....	38

## LIST OF FIGURES

- Figure 1** Splash screen interface, variable size, 2003
- Figure 2** Interface design sketches, variable size, 2002
- Figure 3** Interface of AcidChat, 1280x1024 pixels, 2003
- Figure 4** Interface of AcidChat, 1280x1024 pixels, 2003
- Figure 5** Interface of AcidChat, 1280x1024 pixels, 2003
- Figure 6** Interface of AcidChat, 1280x1024 pixels, 2003
- Figure 7** Interface of AcidChat, 1280x1024 pixels, 2003
- Figure 8** Interface of AcidChat, 1280x1024 pixels, 2003
- Figure 9** Interface of AcidChat, 1280x1024 pixels, 2003
- Figure 10** Interface of AcidChat, 1280x1024 pixels, 2003
- Figure 11** Interface of AcidChat, 1280x1024 pixels, 2003
- Figure 12** Interface of AcidChat, 1280x1024 pixels, 2003
- Figure 13** Interface of AcidChat, 1280x1024 pixels, 2003
- Figure 14** Interface of AcidChat, 1280x1024 pixels, 2003
- Figure 15** Interface of AcidChat, 1280x1024 pixels, 2003
- Figure 16** Interface of AcidChat, 1280x1024 pixels, 2003
- Figure 17** Interface of AcidChat, 1280x1024 pixels, 2003
- Figure 18** Interface of AcidChat, 1280x1024 pixels, 2003
- Figure 19** Creation of the AcidChat Interface, variable size, 2003
- Figure 20** Creation of the AcidChat Interface, variable size, 2003
- Figure 21** Desktop wallpaper ,1280x1024 pixels, 2003
- Figure 22** Desktop wallpaper, 1280x1024 pixels, 2003
- Figure 23** Desktop wallpaper, 1280x1024 pixels, 2003
- Figure 24** Desktop wallpaper, 1280x1024 pixels, 2003
- Figure 25** Desktop wallpaper, 1280x1024 pixels, 2003
- Figure 26** Desktop wallpaper sketch, 1280x1024 pixels, 2003
- Figure 27** Desktop wallpaper, 1280x1024 pixels, 2003
- Figure 28** Desktop wallpaper, 1280x1024 pixels, 2003
- Figure 29** Desktop wallpaper sketch, variable size, 2003
- Figure 30** Desktop wallpaper, 1280x1024 pixels, 2003

**Figure 31** Website for the project, <http://acidchat.org>, 2004

**Figure 32** Logo, variable size, 2003

**Figure 33** Billboard, variable size, 2003

**Figure 34** Billboard, variable size, 2003

**Figure 35** Calendar, variable size, 2003

**Figure 36** Card visit, variable size, 2003

**Figure 37** Invitation, variable size, 2003

**Figure 38** Envelope, variable size, 2003

**Figure 39** Flyer, variable size, 2003

**Figure 40** Flyer, variable size, 2003

**Figure 41** Flyer, variable size, 2003

**Figure 42** Letterhead, variable size, 2003

**Figure 43** Fax Letterhead, variable size, 2003

**Figure 44** Poster, variable size, 2003

**Figure 45** Poster, variable size, 2003

**Figure 46** Poster, variable size, 2003

**Figure 47** Poster, variable size, 2003

**Figure 48** Poster, variable size, 2003

## **Gestures:**

The purpose of this design project is to come up with exceptionally a new idea to the interface of chat based software. This means that advancing the visual items and creating a totally new interface; by adding three dimensionality to an interface, using color and shading to create depth, giving volume to application windows and suggesting dynamic interaction to the user. By this it is meant to make the chatting experience more aesthetic and functional both at the same time.

Current chat clients can be considered to have a rather dull interface. It is very solid and the user has limited options regarding interface usage and preferences. Using colorful text is available but limited to using colors and there is no other option to make text a little bit more meaningful, more thought of and used in a unconventional way. Response to mouse movements, animated user window interfaces, tilted and bending text that has three dimensional movements to user actions aren't available.

AcidChat is the name to this experimental design project that aims to combine these features to create a new design and understanding in interaction design. The name AcidChat was driven by "Acid" and "Chat". Acid in the meaning of a substance that deteriorates and gives a new meaning philosophically.

Interface designing is actually in a way designing for the face of a computer. Computers have faces, and like all faces it has a gesture also. To start with it has many buttons and icons that have different functionalities and different meanings. Their gestures are their existence in a way and is very static. To break this stillness of interfaces I tried to combine the features of design and gestural understanding humans have to the computer screen.

Chatting over the Internet is one of the simplest and most common things that is done among Internet users. It is best known for its fast and distant communication. With running a chat client software on your desktop computer you can connect to the server within seconds and chat with someone you know or whose close to you, located in a totally different place than you are from. All of this happens through a very simple

interface having no more than three buttons and a text input box where you can enter your statement in text and then press the “enter” key to send it to the server and from the server to the destination's computer screen.

This process happens in real time. The aspect of communicating this fast actually bans the human gestures and creates a meaning that is unchangeable, keeping the information sent very clear and leaves no space to further meanings.

Interpreting human gestures to words can be achieved only by describing them, which can be achieved by long sentences of text. But it wasn't much thought of actually giving text some gesture character using its environment. For example surrounding of interacting the surrounding of text and the interface it is in. And by this way creating new ideas and having new meanings creates a richness to the interface. This richness is its new meaning and gestural movement it might bear.

With giving motion, advancing the base line with angles and distortion and occupying the screen in a sensible way; text can bare information that might be regarded as a gestural meaning. This can't or might not be exact transfer of translations of actual gestures but new ones with new meanings. Meanings that can re-define what conventional text and image means. It shouldn't be understood that a conventional interface is not a gesture. It is but has its own limits and AcidChat aims to add newer context to these limits by adding design features that weren't available before.

## The Design

As all Internet users I used to chat using different software. These were different among themselves and were separate in the way they used technology. IRC known as Internet Relay Chat, ICQ which is the abbreviation of “I seek you” and web based chat are all synchronous media where everything happens in real time. And also there were different software that had different types usages which were were experimental and new, but weren't that practical to use. As the most common one was IRC, I thought of it being improved in usage and in design.

To start with every screen design has a basic and linear usage of typography. Type is always as it is, and there is little attempt to change this attitude. Even in the most experimental chatting software there isn't any attempt to experiment with typography. Though our eyes are used to seeing type in perspective, there isn't much attempt to use that idea a lot.

One of the reasons why it is hard to create a different understanding of typography and text is that, once it loses its linearity? the way it is written on a base line, but not a curve, it becomes hard to read. Creating and designing something against this understanding is one of my great challenges in this project. So I thought of ways to create new meanings changing these aspects and experimented with the text, and also experimented with the interface also? to find out how to change the linearity and the meaning the text bears visually.

Text usage has meanings as words; text bears little meaning besides its meaning as a word. It has very certain preferences that it can bear, as a typeface or the character it is written in.

So in terms of design there were two types of challenges: in one which you have to think of new forms of text and in the other one which you have to think of the interface the text is in. Once you design a text in a certain layout that is available, then it becomes essential to create and design the environment it is in.

Designing the interface of such a project started out in experimenting using the page layout and design software Macromedia Freehand. This software has numerous advantages in usage; there are certain effects that let you change a two dimensional design to a three dimensional design. So it also brought an approach the way I was designing the the interface of AcidChat, which was to bulge the text and windows together to create a harmonious shape in all, which made the text and window three dimensional.

The approach was to come up with a new design that was three dimensional, which happened to be so in a inverted way, that brought a unique way of three dimensionality. Instead of creating everything in a 3D software, I ended up in converting two dimensional designs. This approach in creation has brought limitations, but it worked out to be a right choice to continue with.

The concept of three dimensionality was a rather a challenging concept due to its limits and visualization. This challenge how ever started to make me think three dimensionality as an aspect that was to be used in a very different way of understanding. What was to be three dimensional in an interface like this? Was one of the major questions I had in designing this interface. Well to start with is that thinking of a text as three dimensional is one step in answering the question.

## Conclusion

“Virtuality is the cultural perception that material objects are interpenetrated by information patterns.”<sup>1</sup> Within this penetration of information you get to create new environments that give new ideas. This approach can be a critical viewpoint to such a project and make it distinct.

In every way you create and design something virtual you have a set of information that says certain things to the computer which makes it possible to be seen on the screen. As long as everything that is said as information—the computer code that gives directives to the computer, can be regarded as virtual. Yet on this side it can be criticized aesthetically.

To understand something virtually created— computer generated images, interactive design projects, you must judge and see it in a different context. Perhaps the amount of computer information it has can identify its virtuality but not aesthetics it has. Being able to see the difference between virtuality and aesthetics underlies the answer whether one project can be aesthetic. I think that the answer to this is that if a work of art or design is virtual than it is in deed aesthetic because it bears, has computer generated information that is in its background and this can be considered as a cultural process that takes place through computers. This could be considered as something thought of and in this respect it can be considered as aesthetic. So in this everything that is created, designed or made in the computer is aesthetic. To evaluate something virtual you also need to see the visual concepts it has. This can be a way to see whether a design project like this, is aesthetic and is successful in this manner.

---

1 N. Kathrine Hayles, “The Condition of Virtuality”, The Digital Dialectic, Peter Lunenfeld, U.S.A.: MIT press, 1999. 69-94

## **Bibliography**

**Dodge, Martin and Kitchin, Rob** *Mapping cyberspace*, New York : Routledge, 2000

**Lunenfeld, Peter** “*The Condition of Virtuality*”, *The Digital Dialectic*, Cambridge, Mass.: MIT press, 1999.

**Lunenfeld, Peter** *Snap to grid : a user's guide to digital arts*, Cambridge, Mass. : MIT, 2000

**Maeda, John** *Maeda @ Media*, Hong Kong: Rizzoli New York, 2000

**Maeda, John** *Design By Numbers*, Cambridge, Mass.: MIT Press, 1999.

## Appendix A (The Interface)

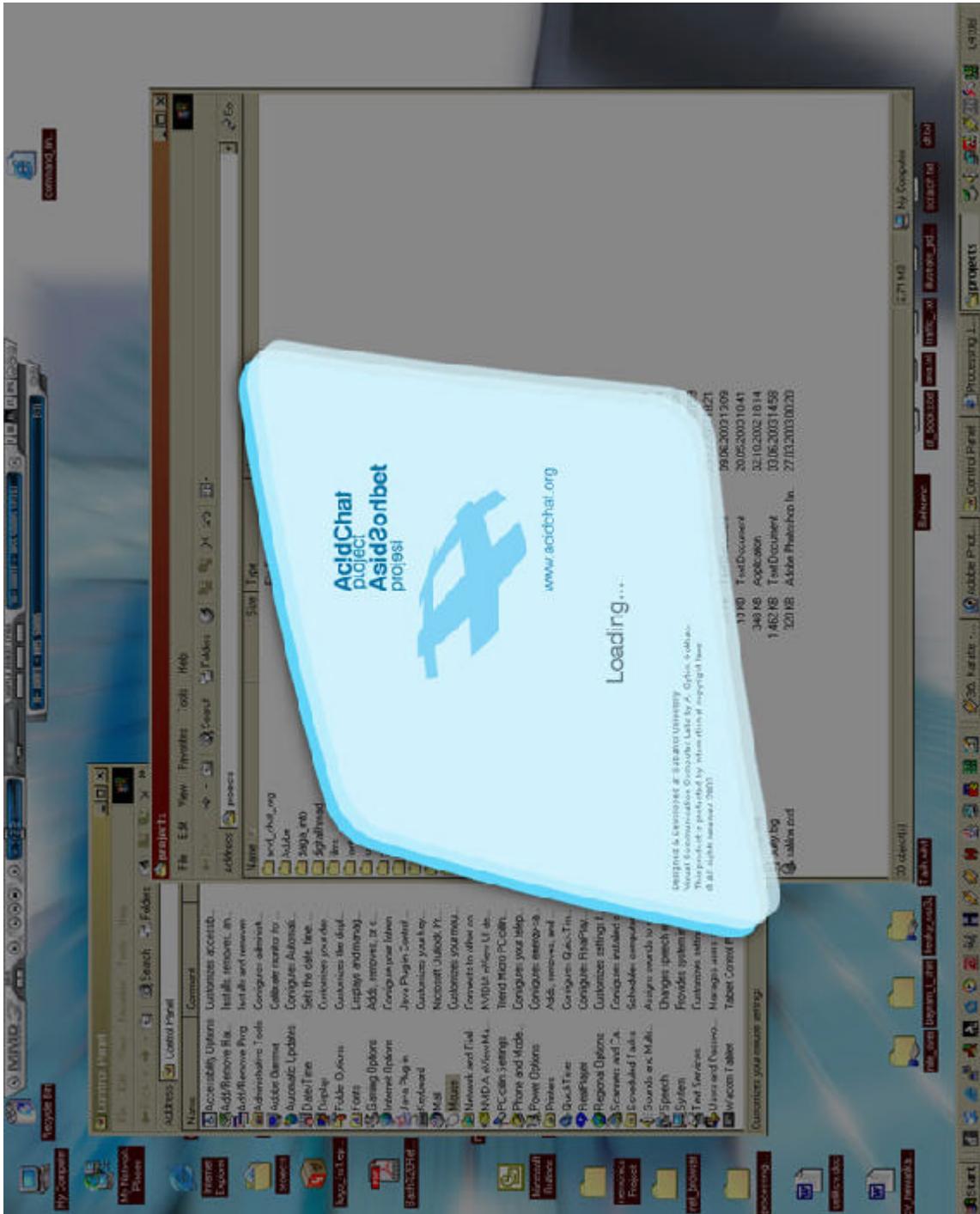


Figure 1.



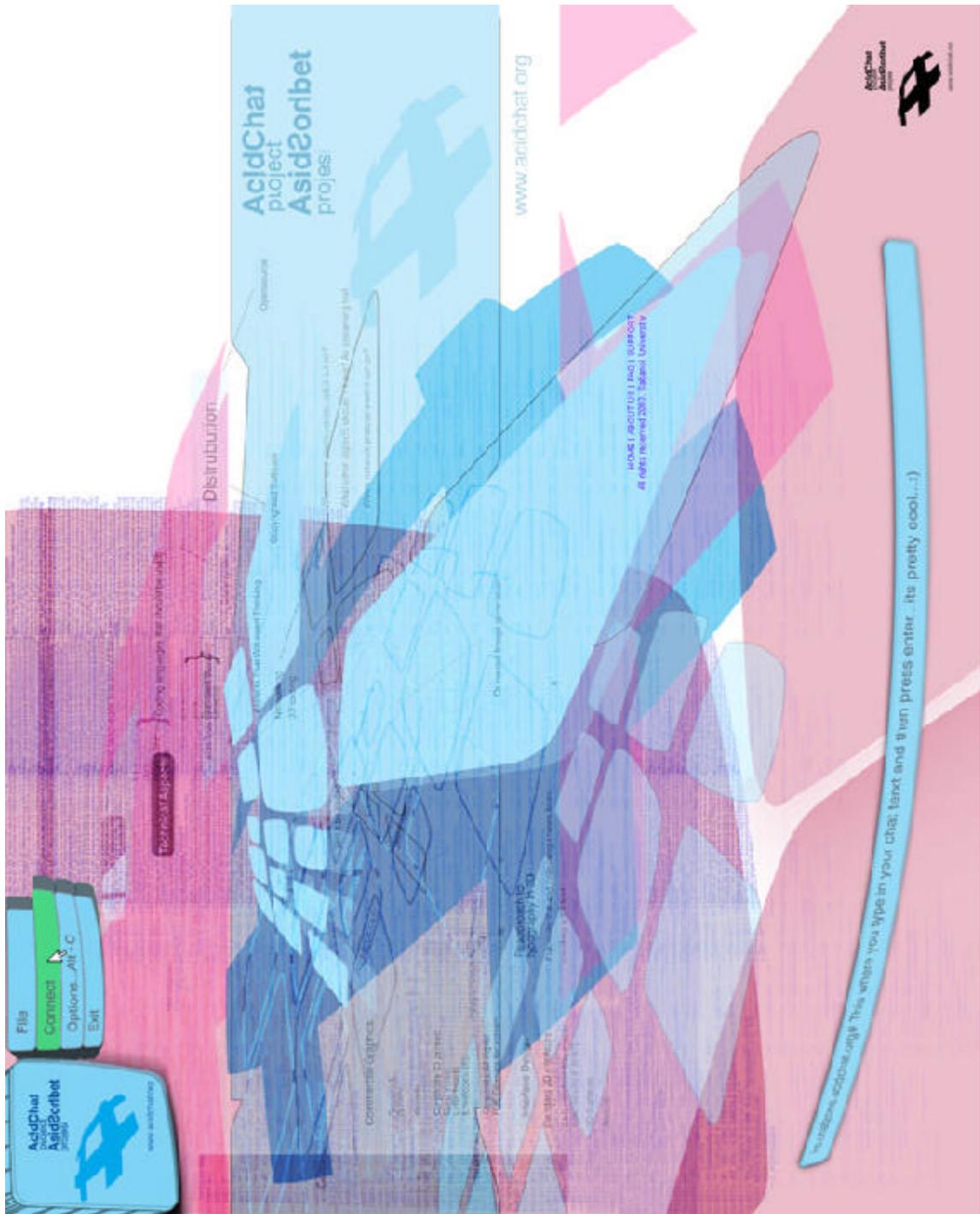


Figure 3.

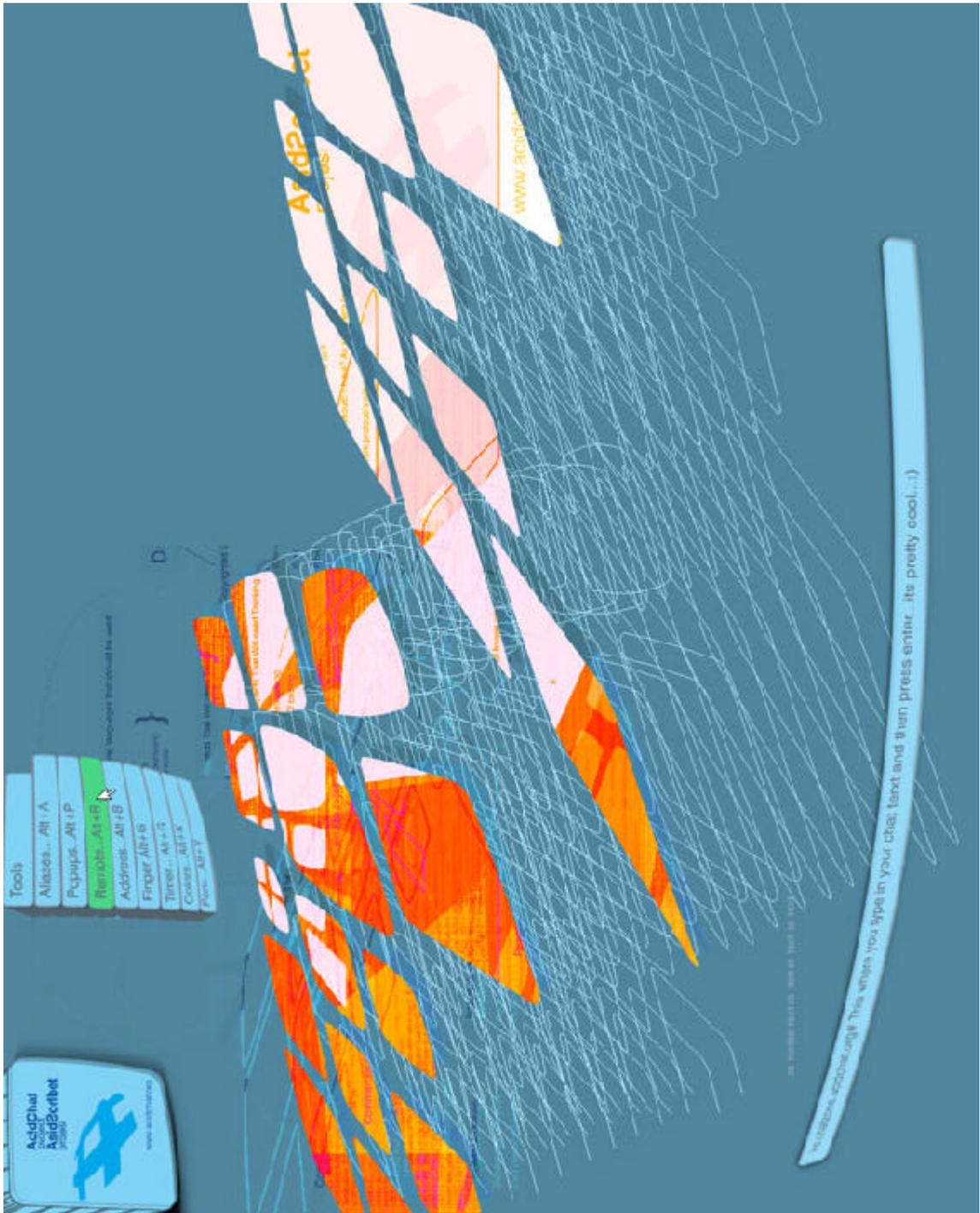


Figure 4.

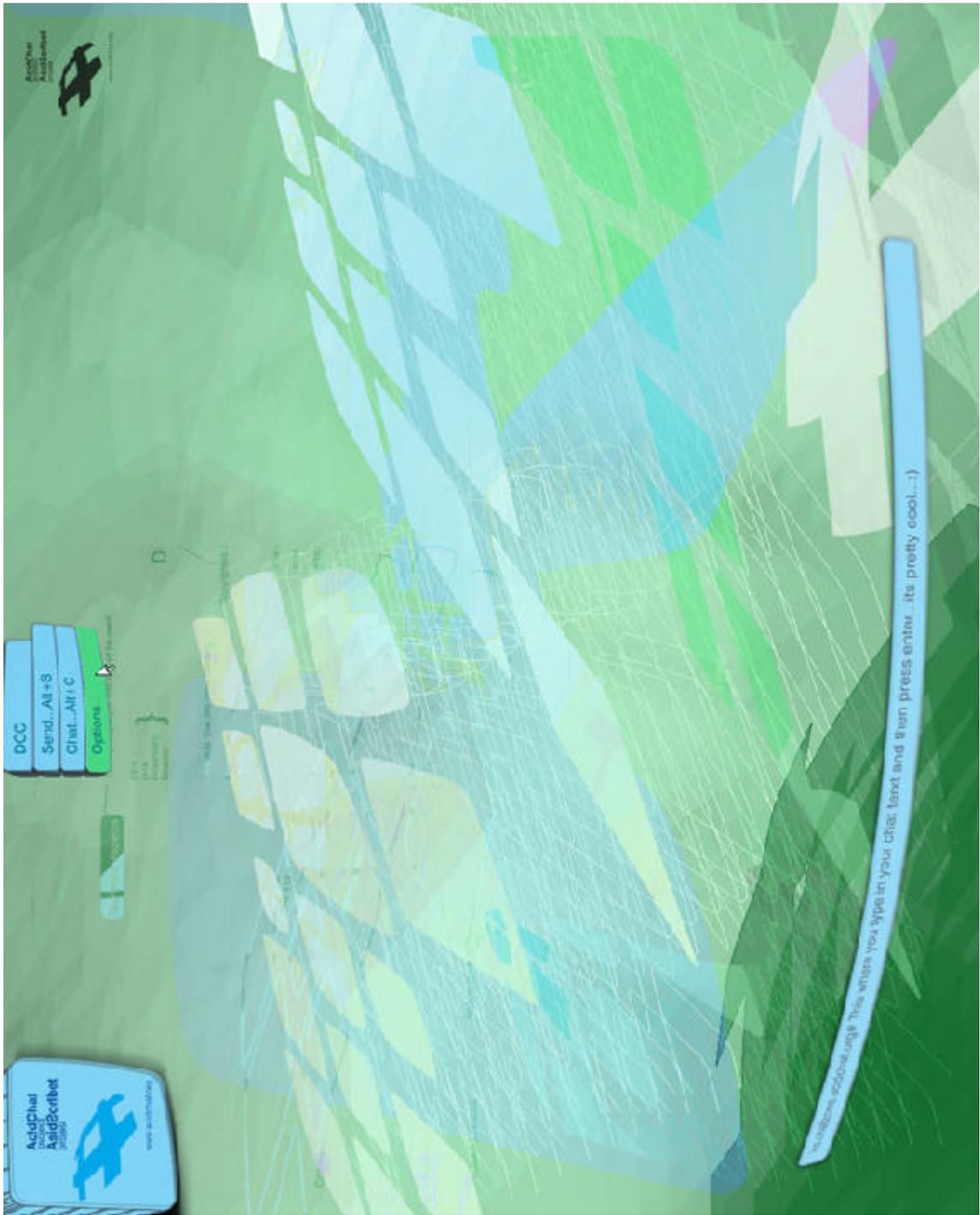


Figure 5.

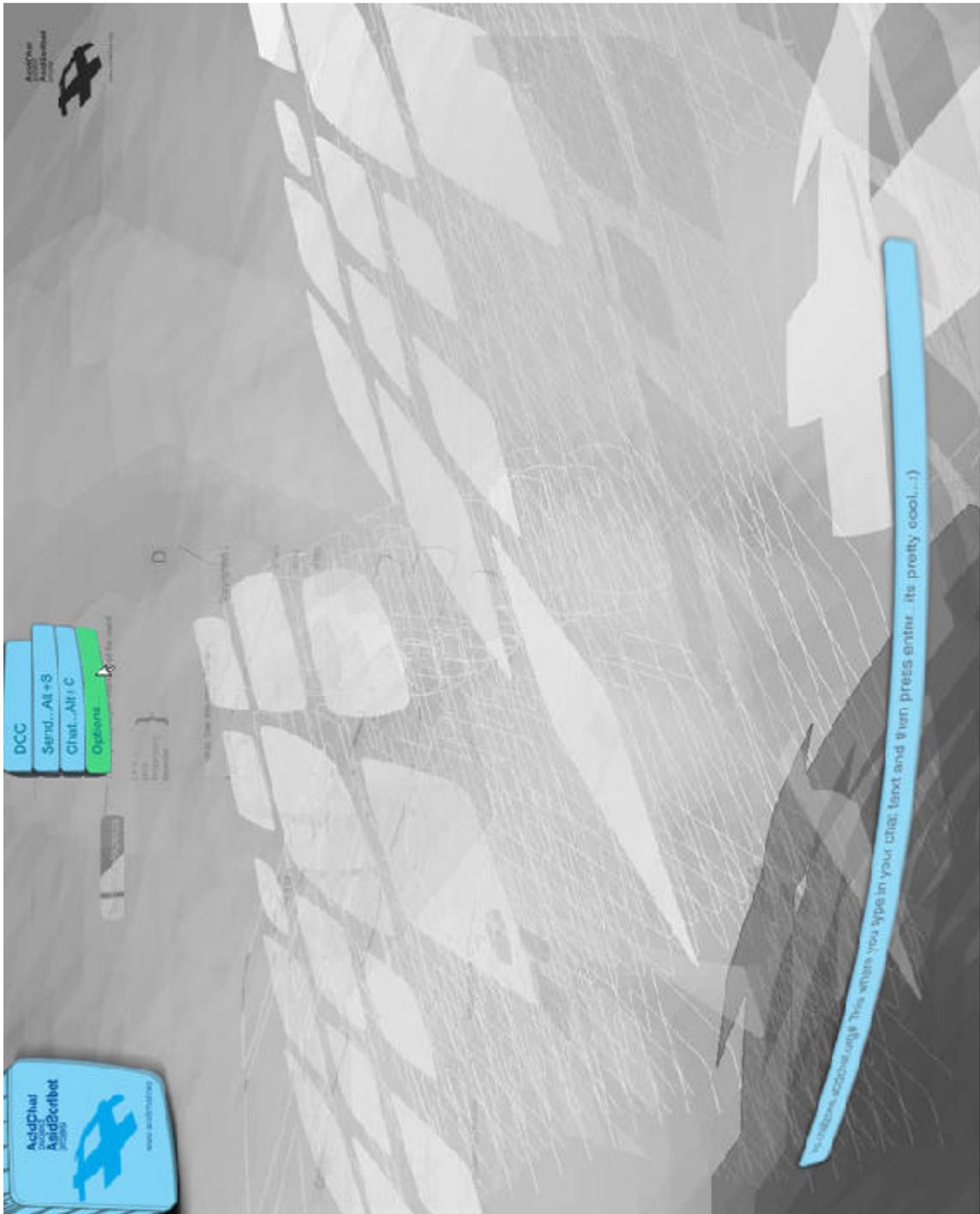


Figure 6.

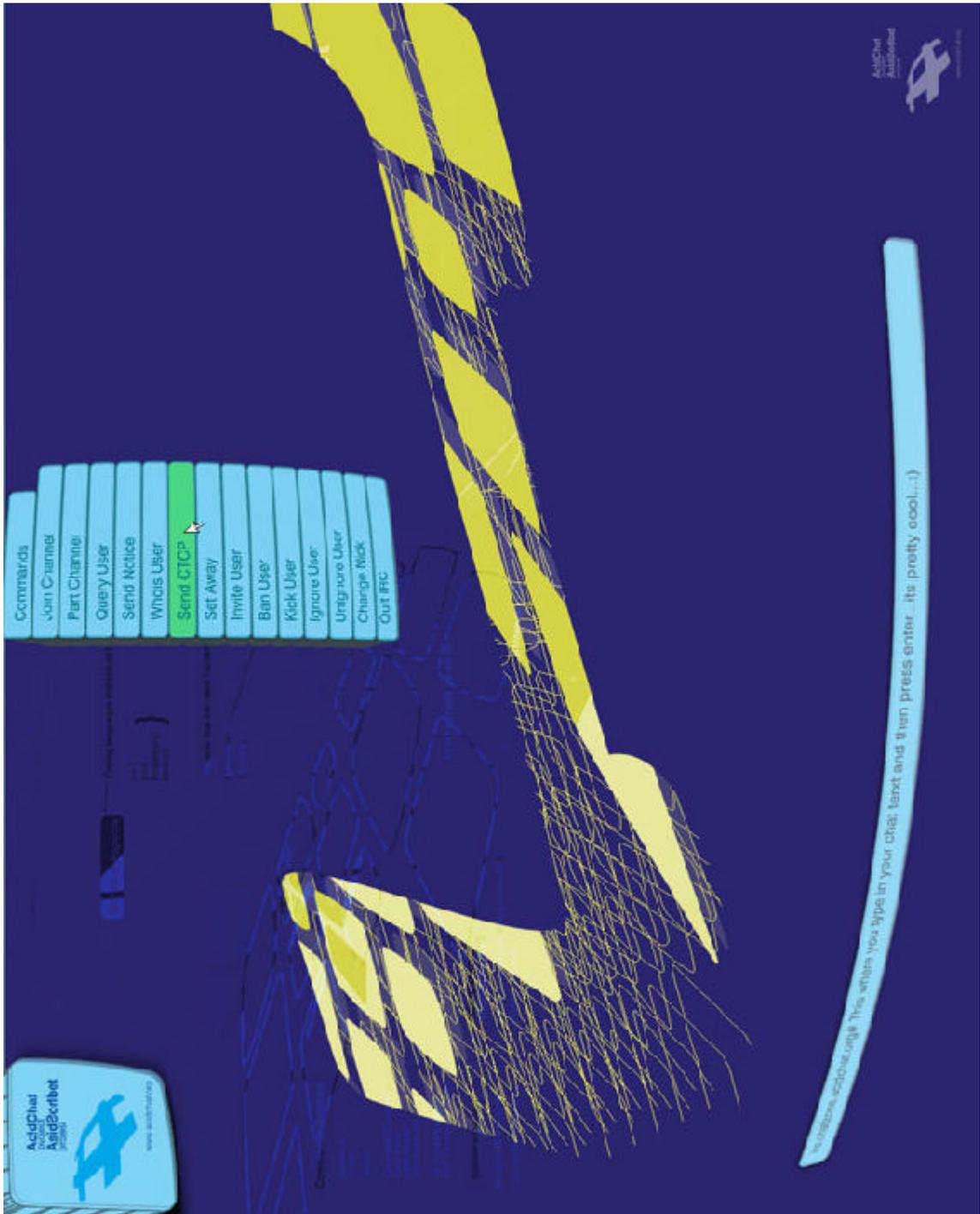


Figure 7.



Figure 8.

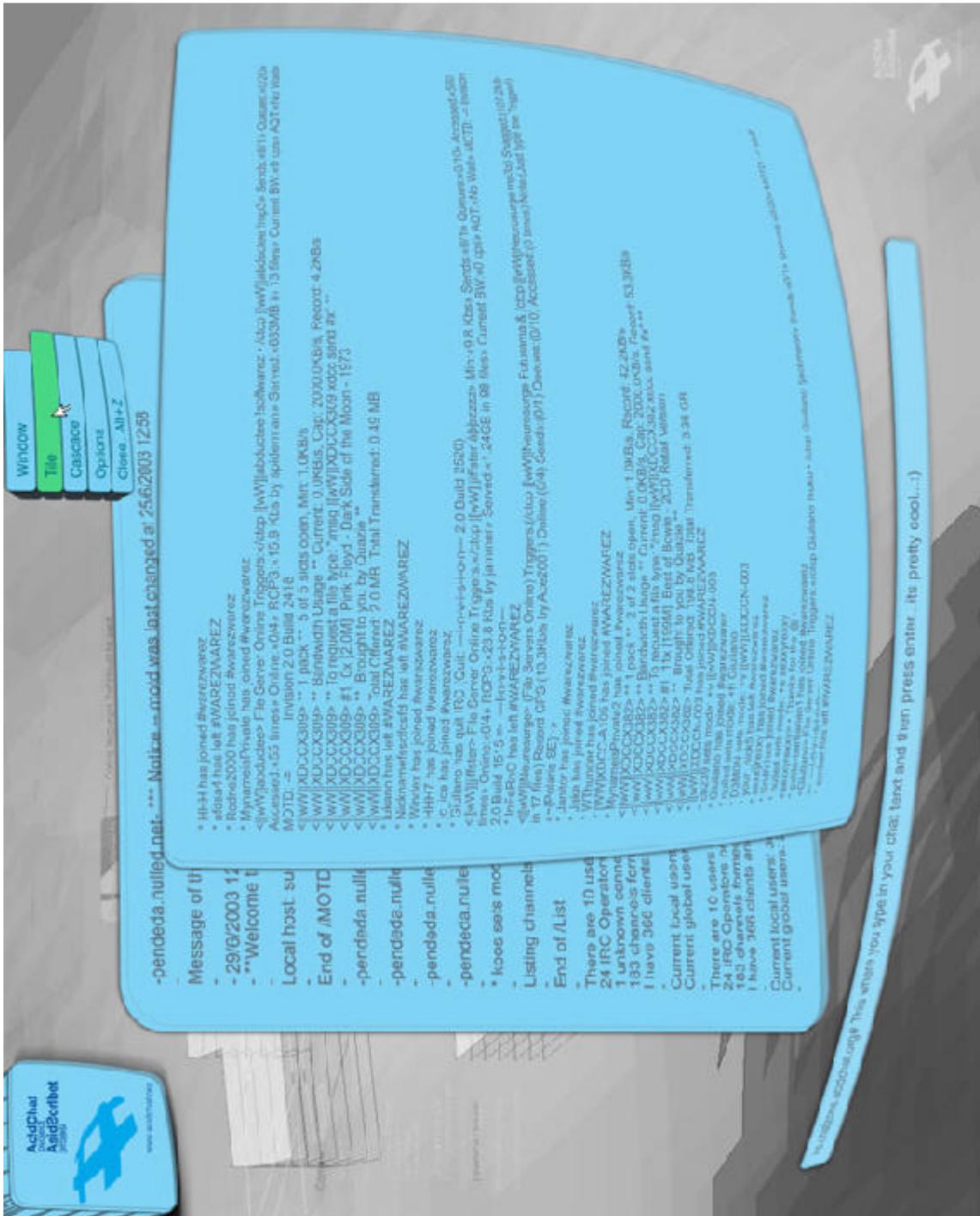


Figure 9.

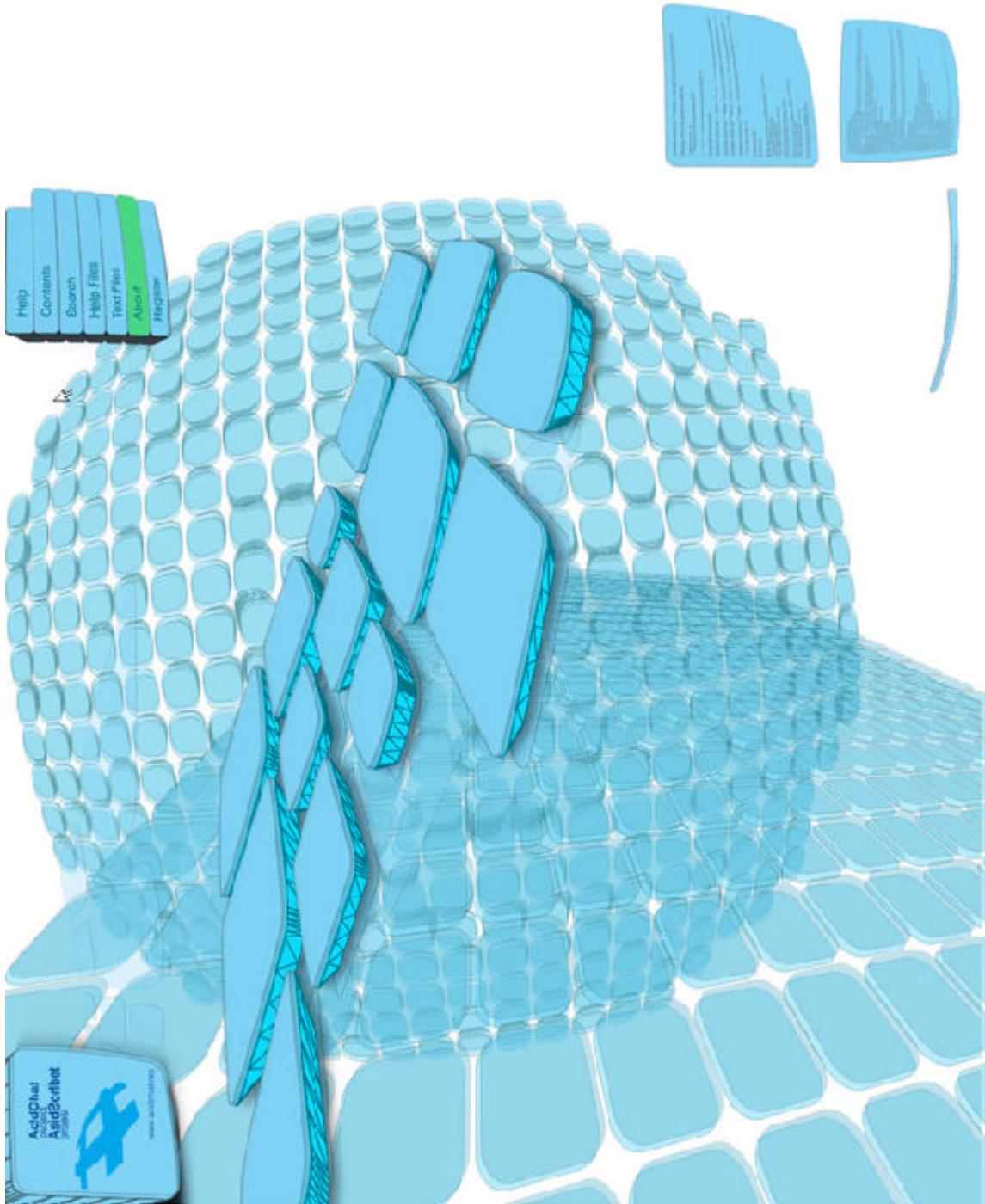


Figure 10.

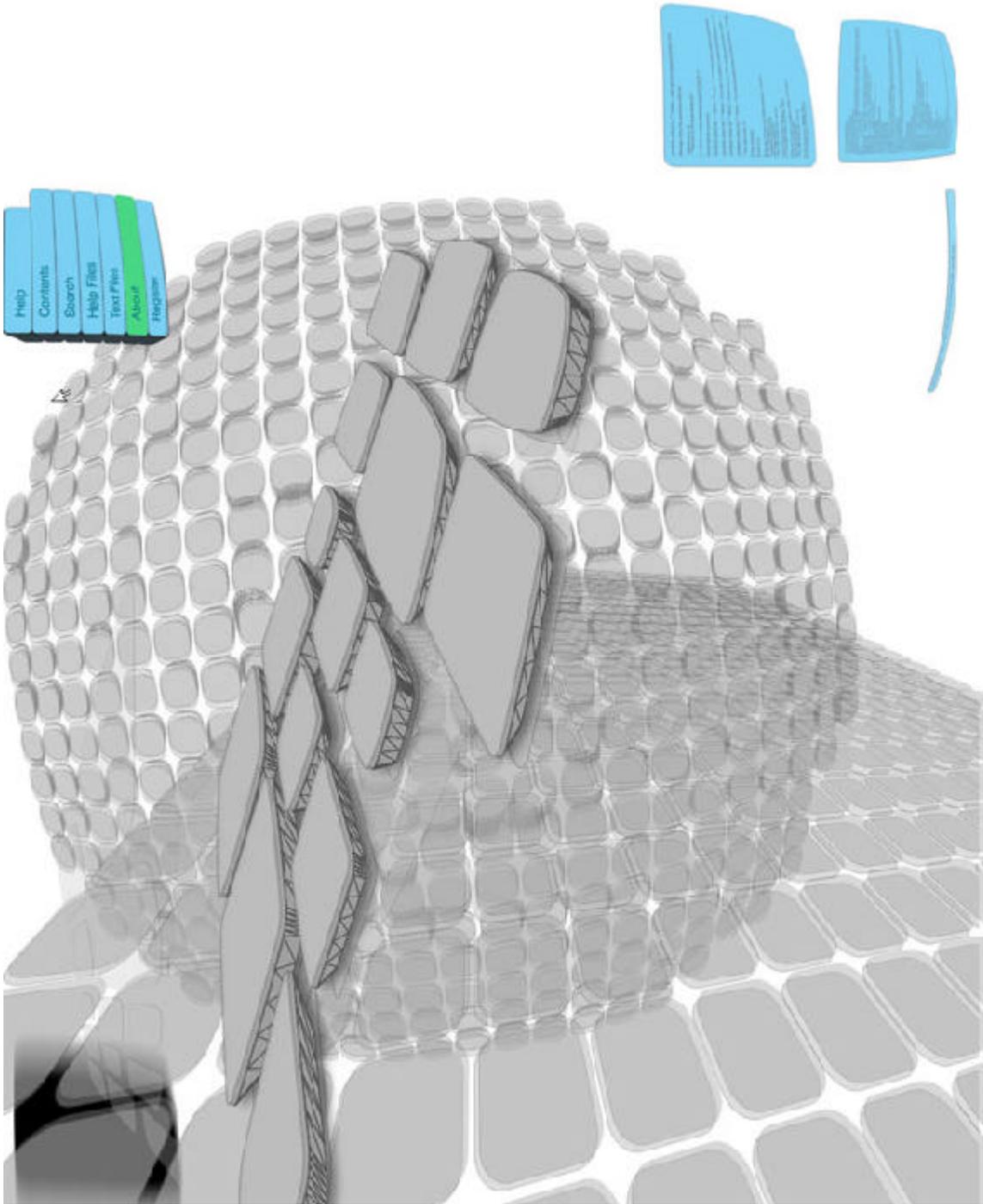


Figure 11.



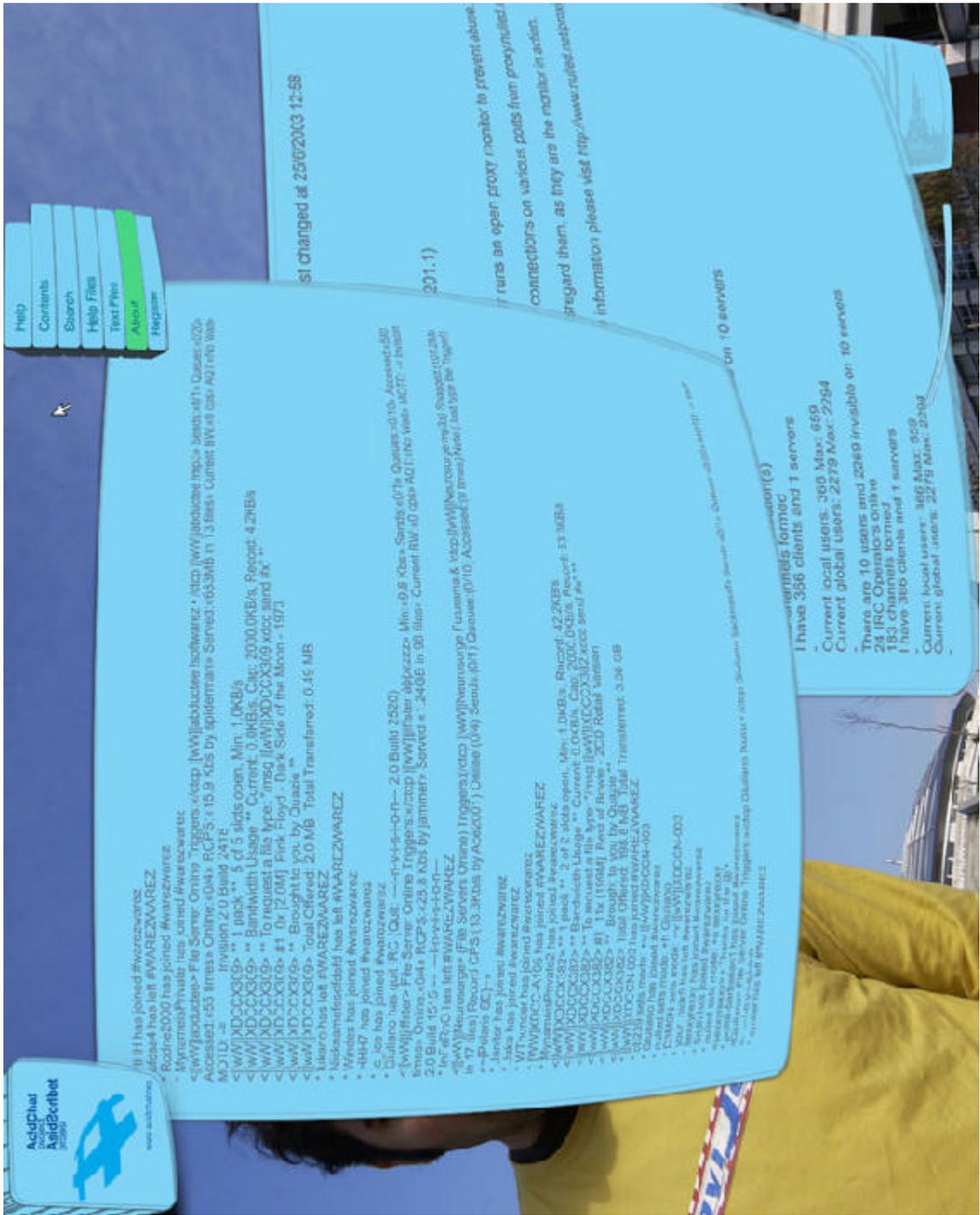


Figure 13.



Figure 14.



Figure 15.

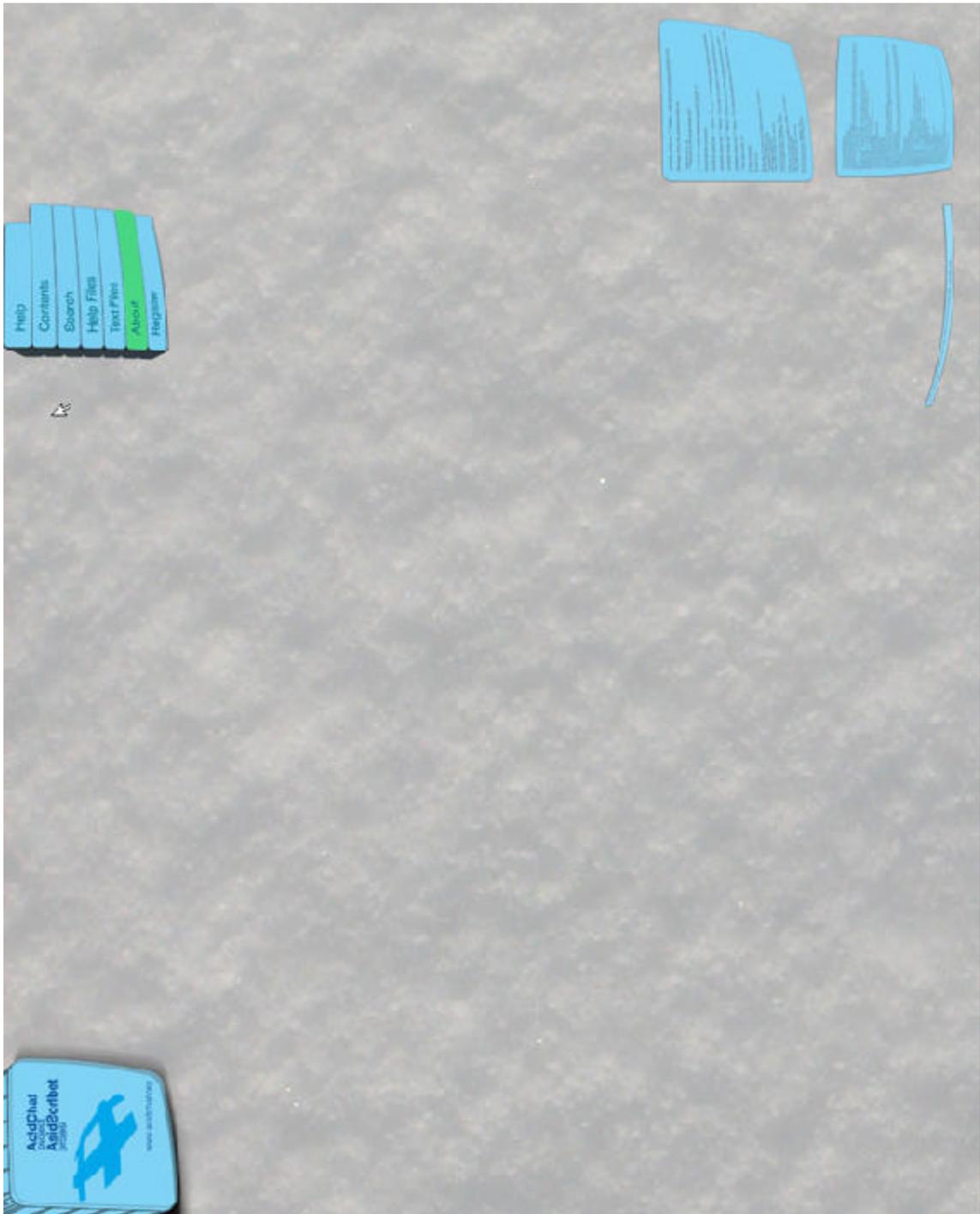


Figure 16.

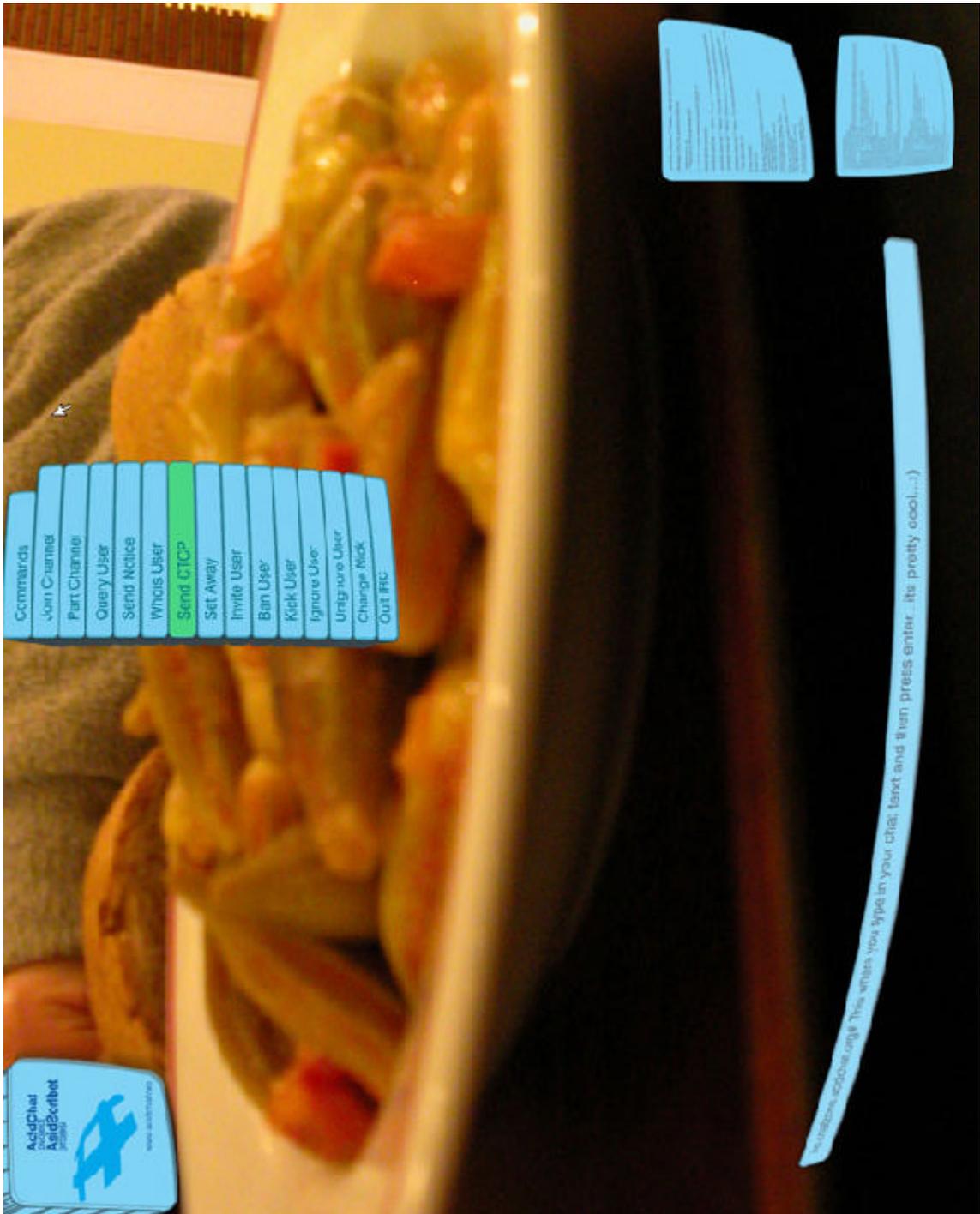


Figure 17.



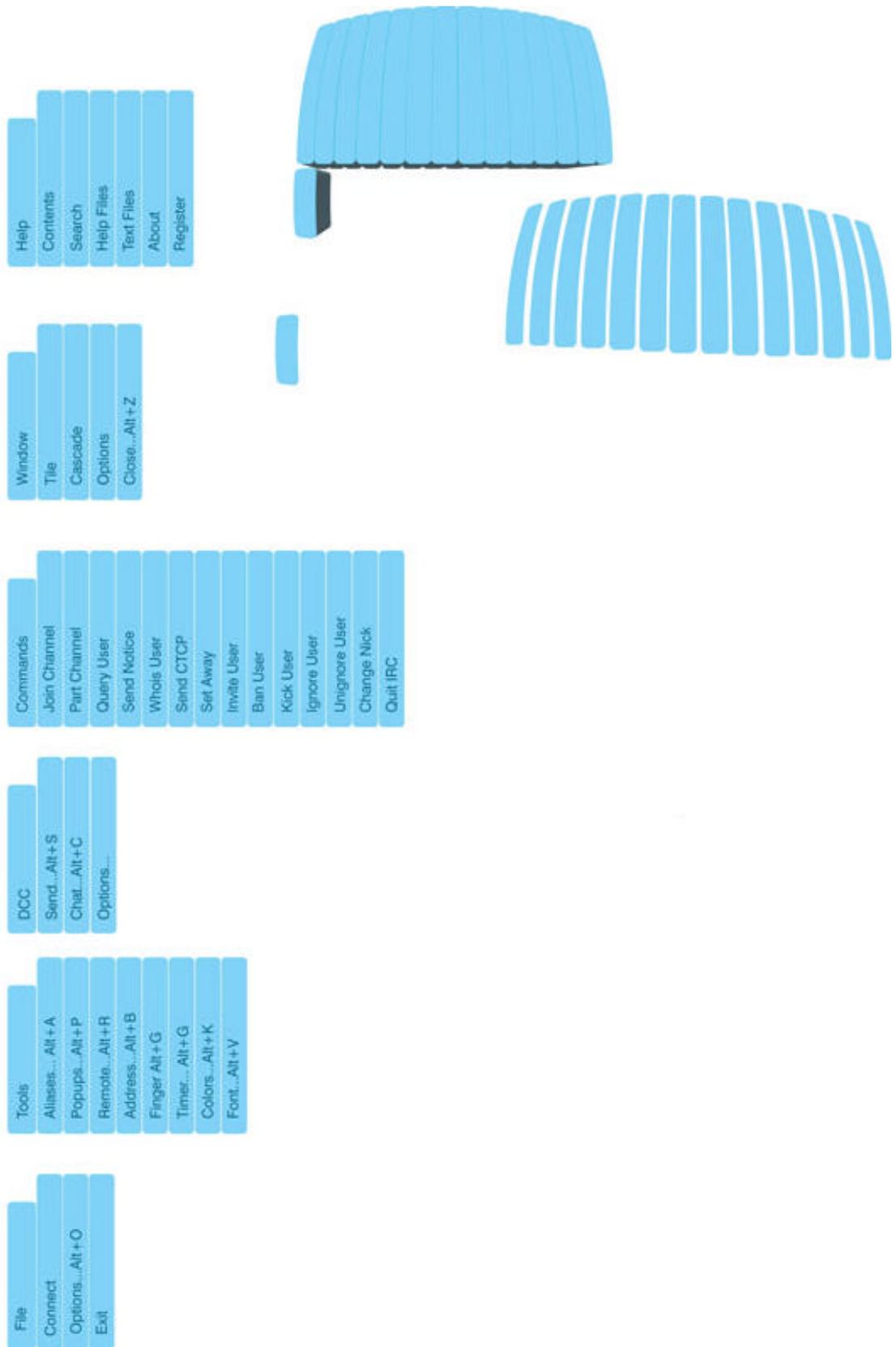


Figure 19.

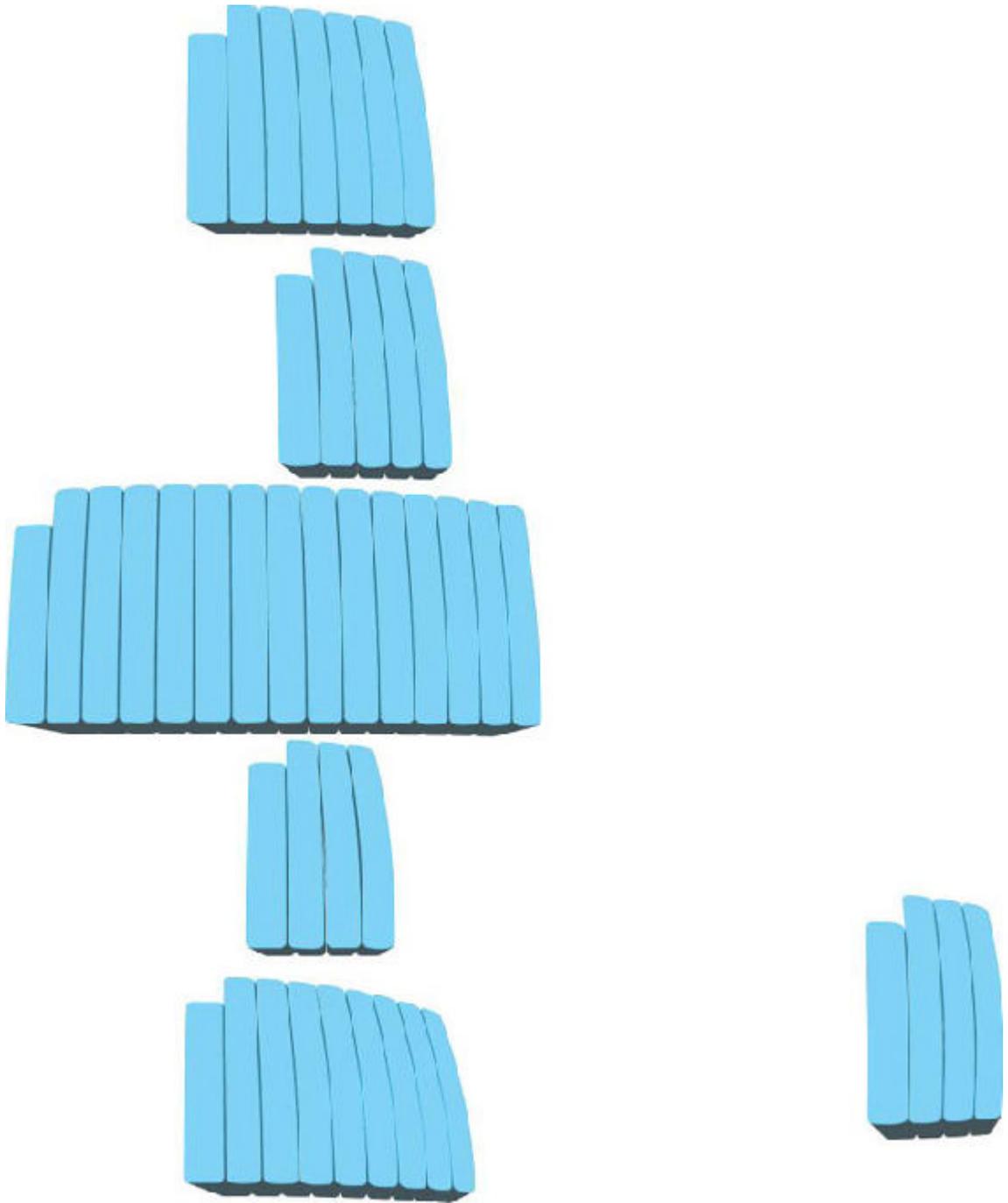


Figure 20.



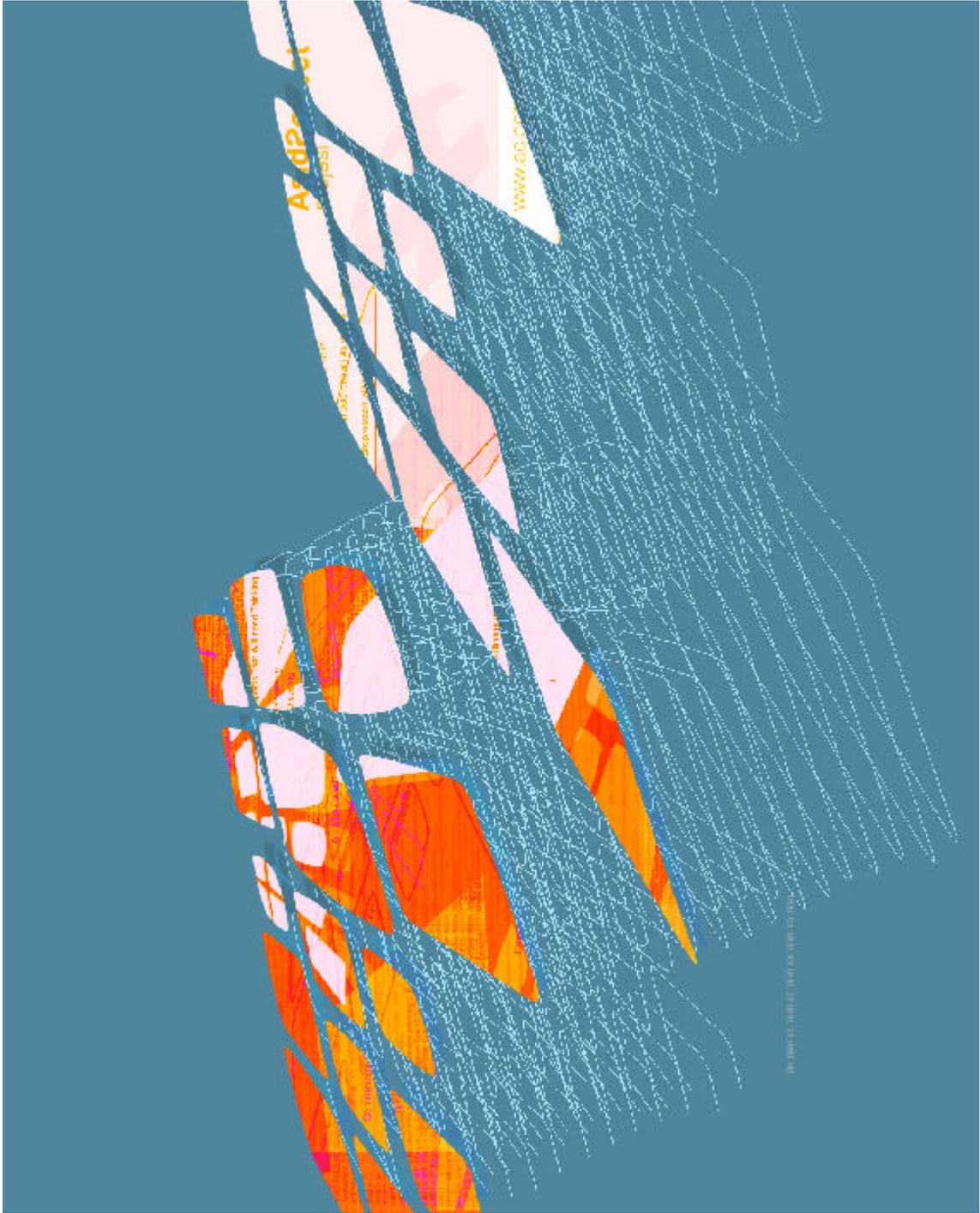


Figure 22.

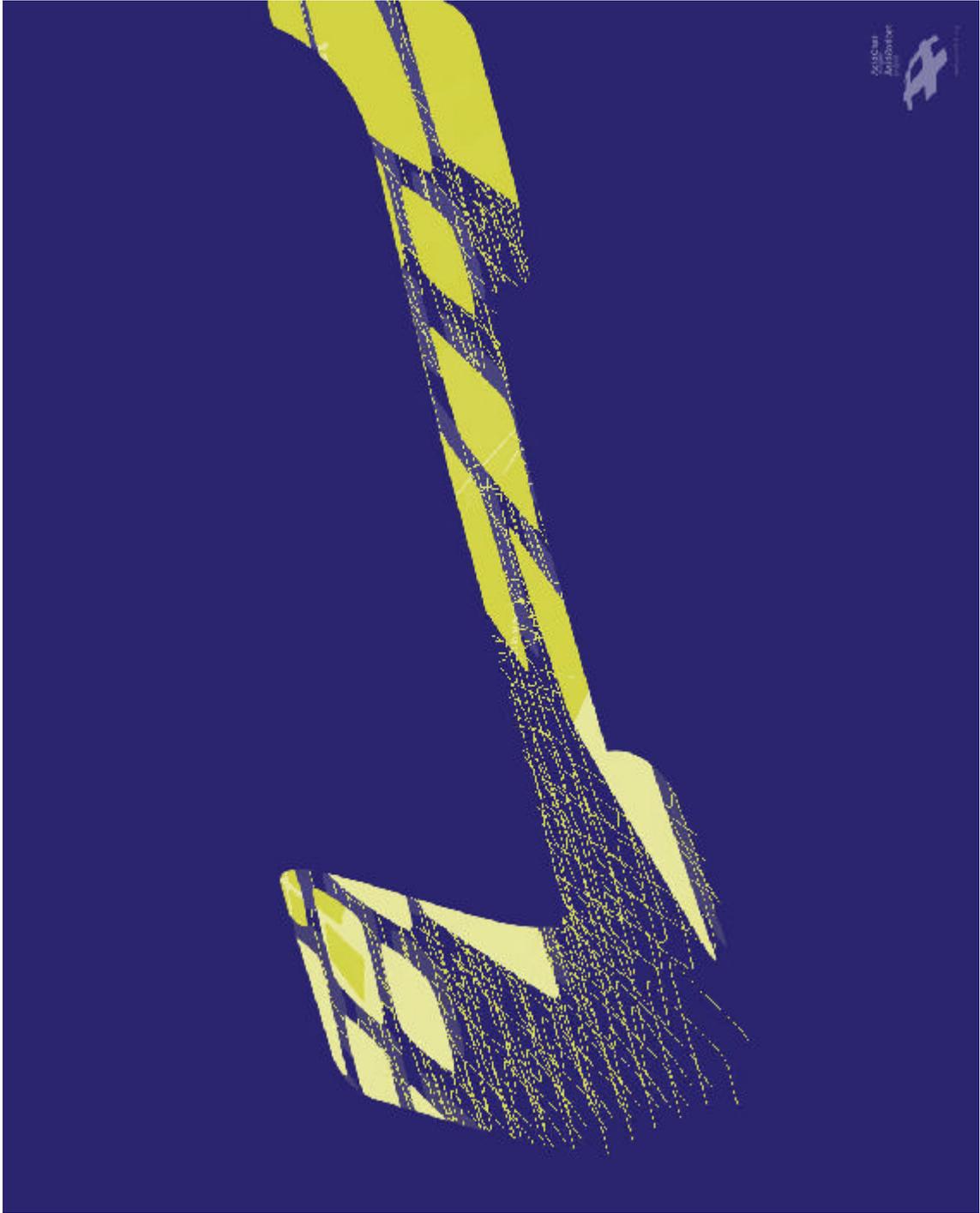


Figure 23.



Figure 24.

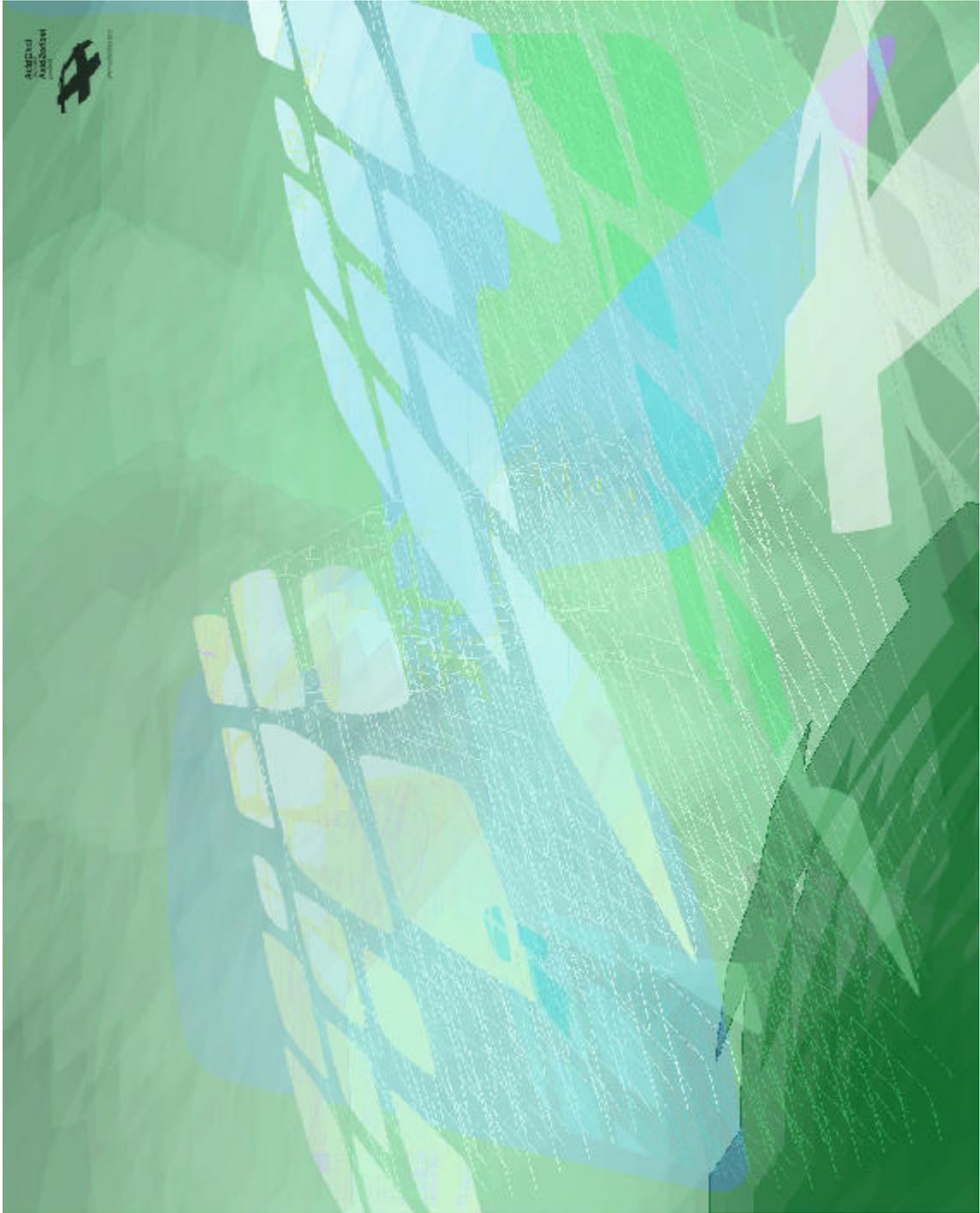


Figure 25.

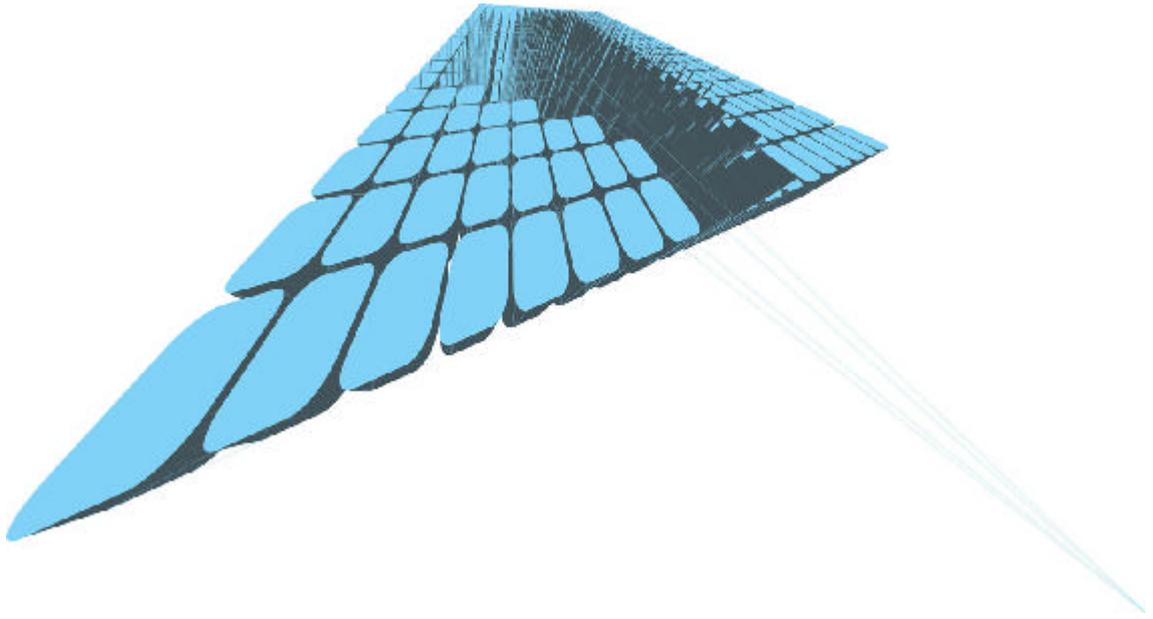


Figure 26.

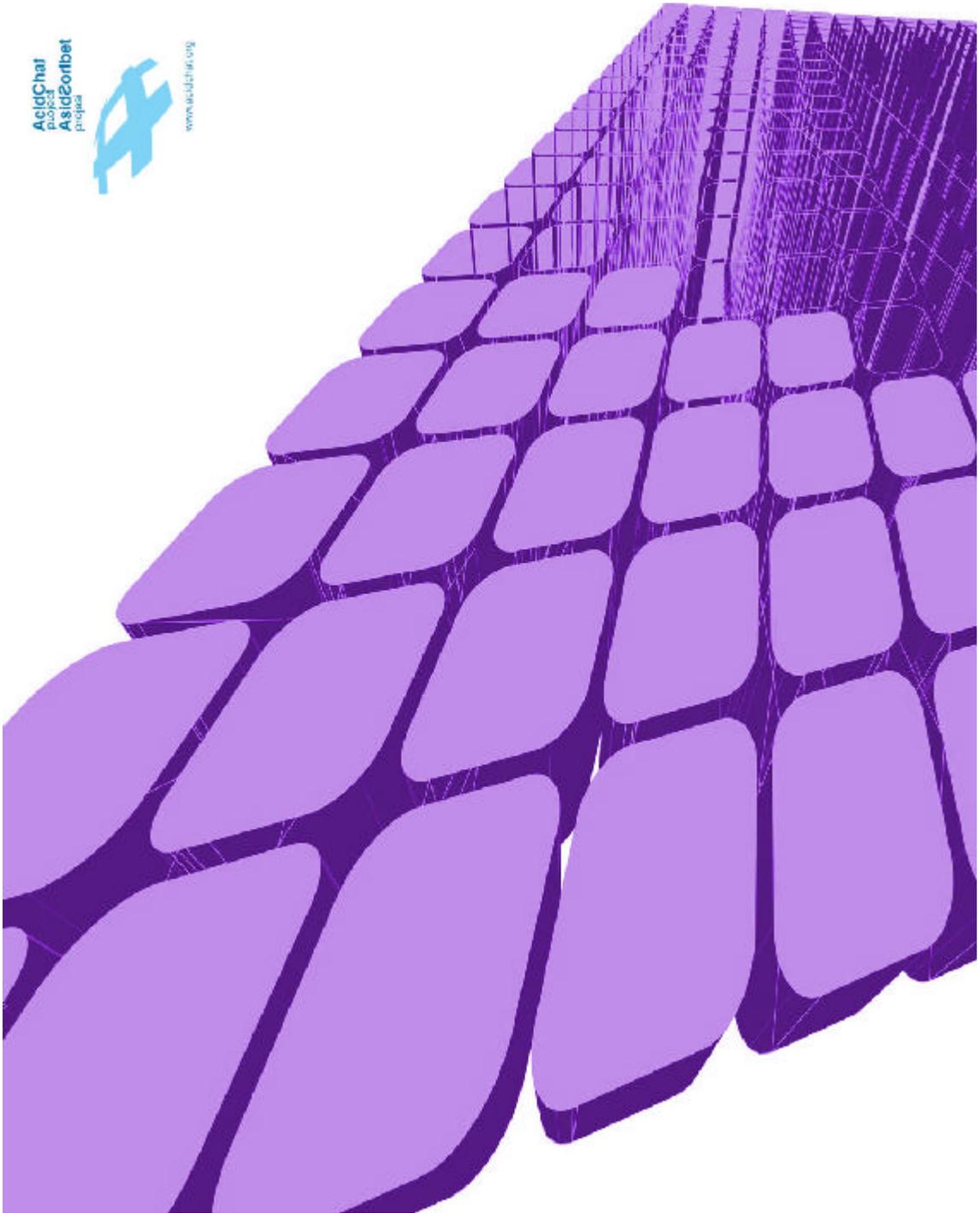


Figure 27.

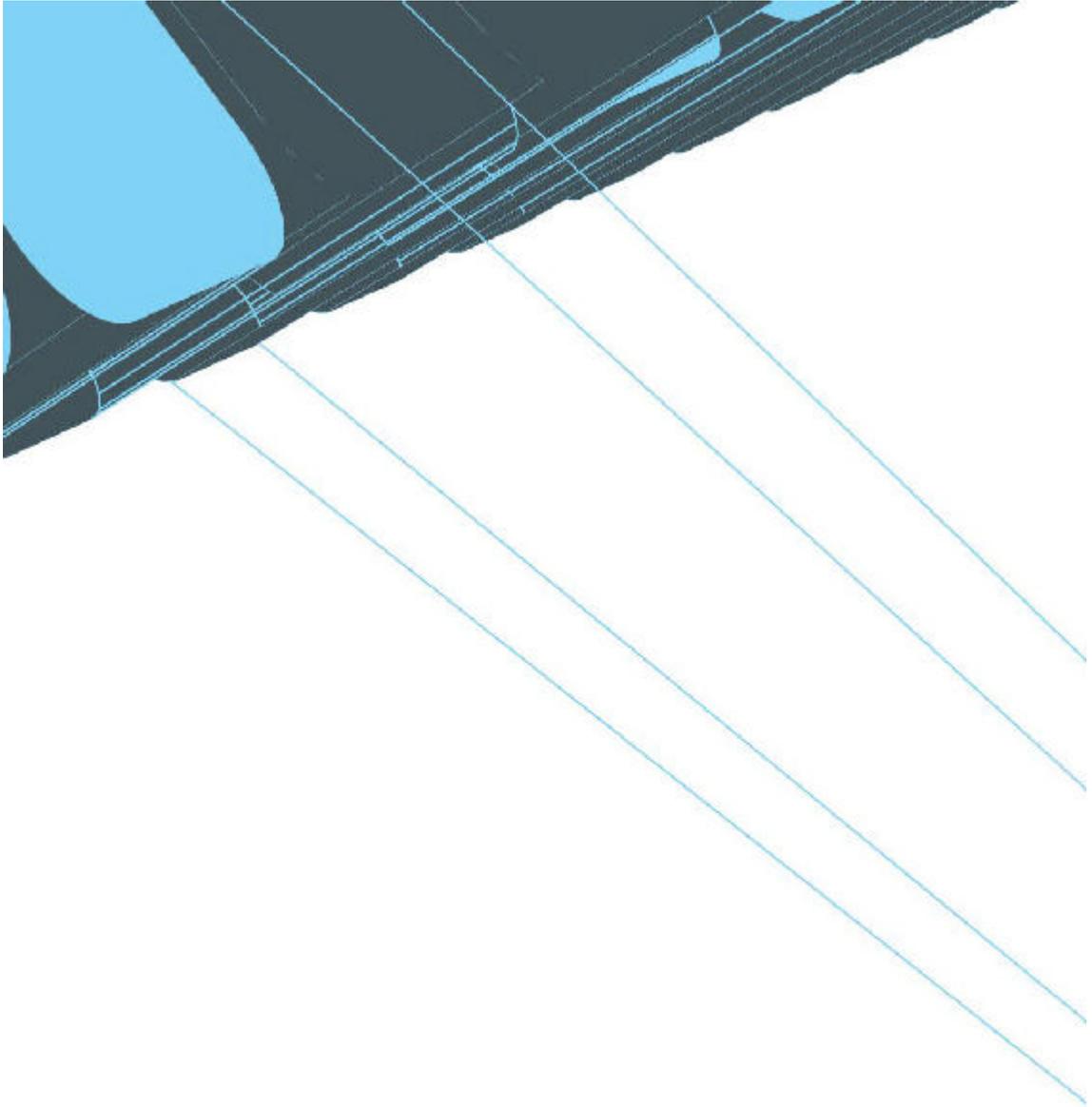


Figure 28.

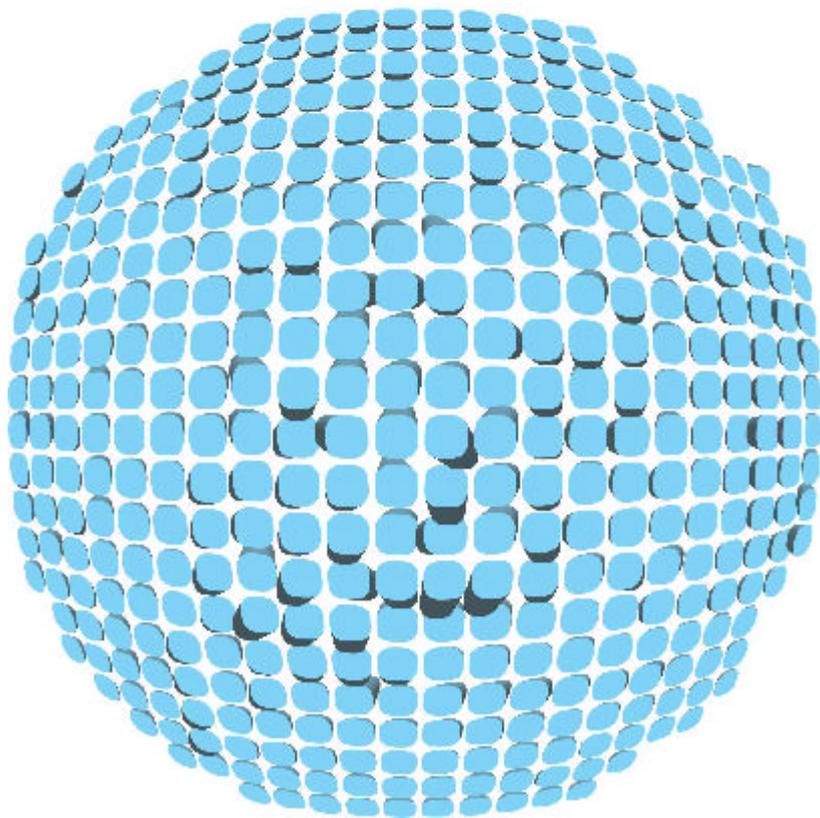
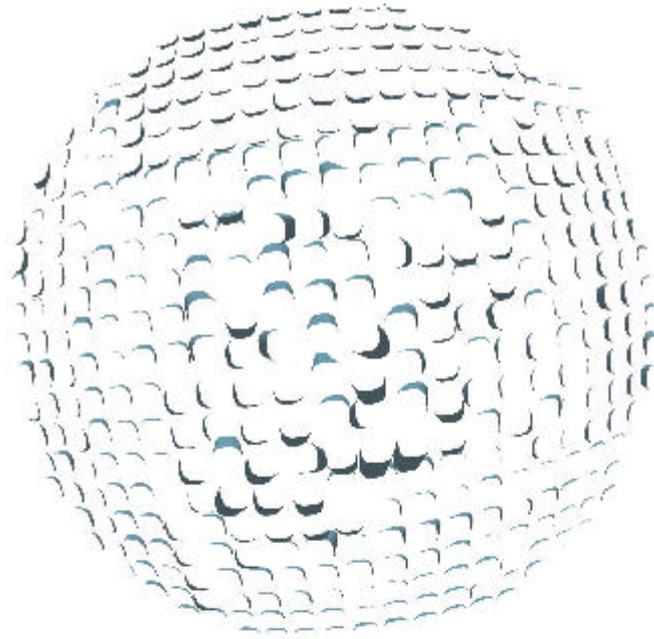


Figure 29.

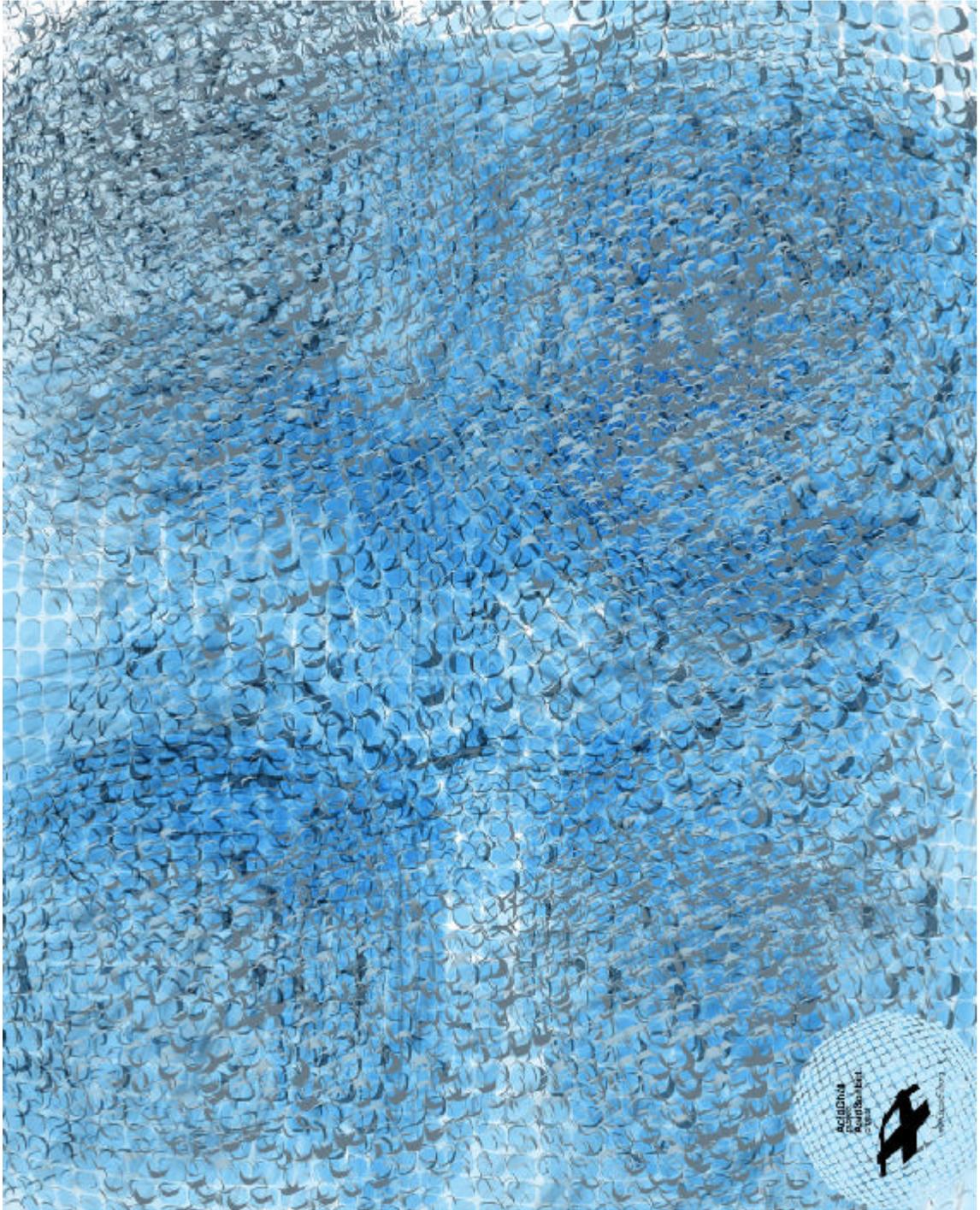


Figure 30.

## Appendix C (Website)

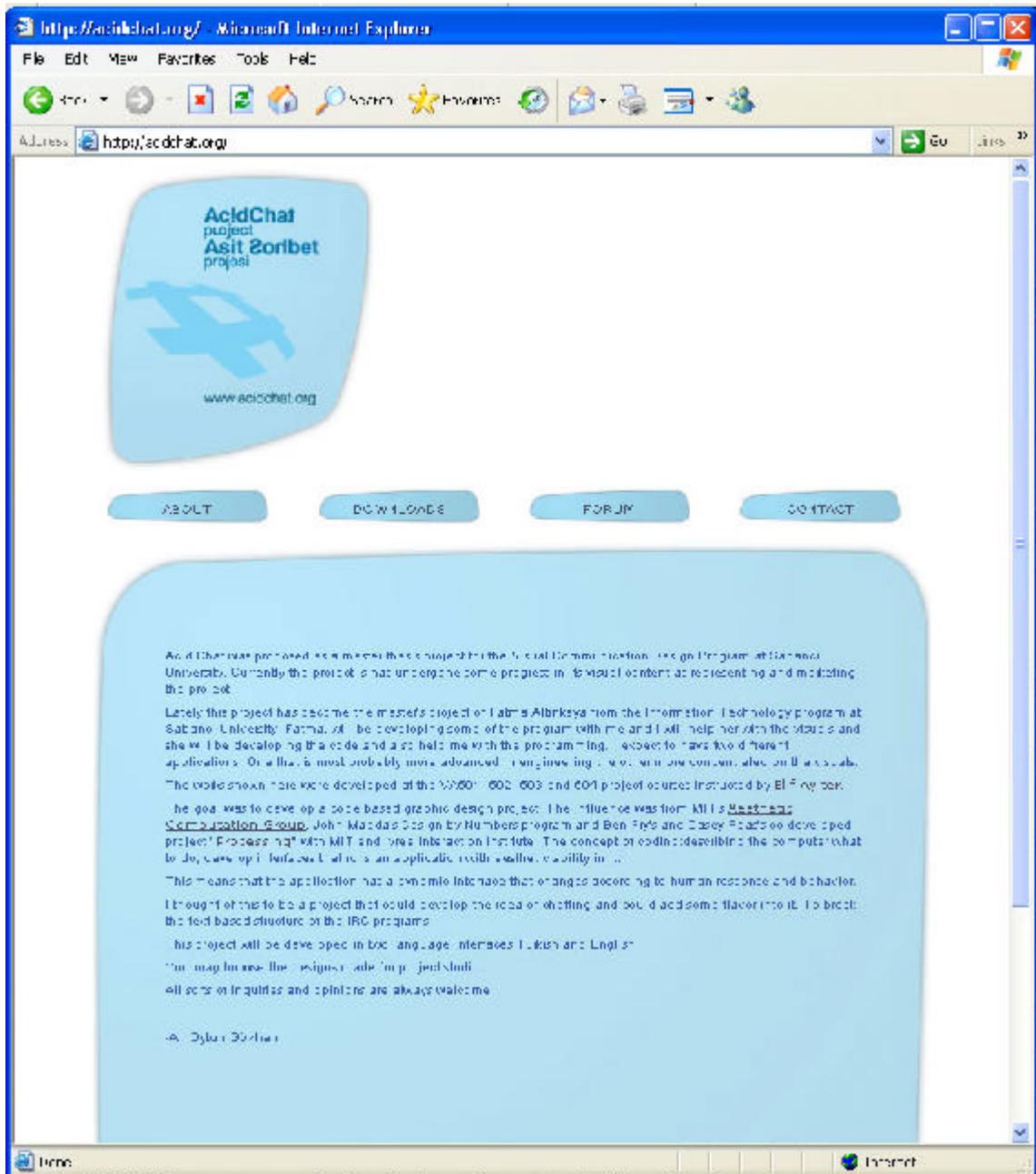
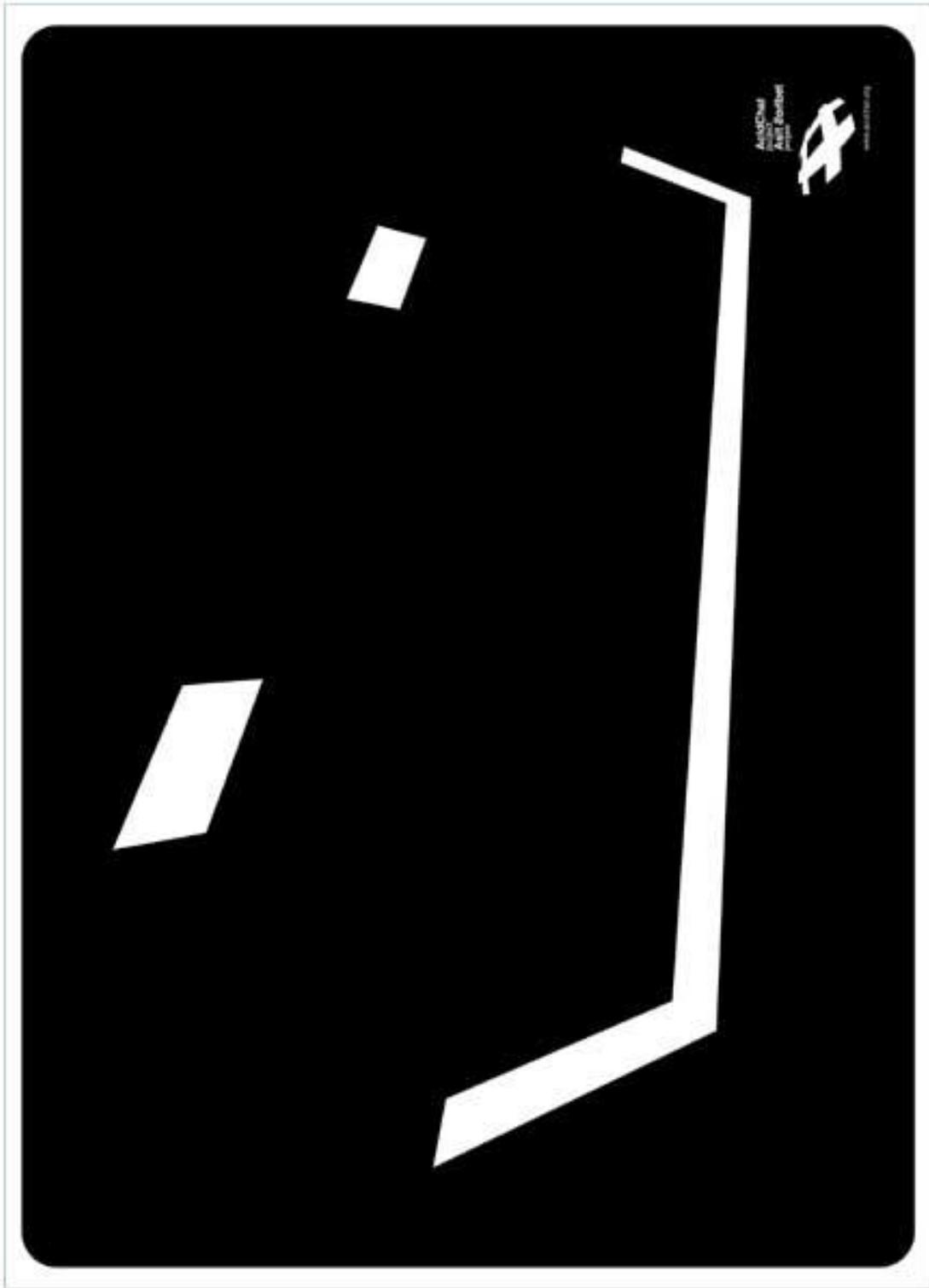


Figure 31.

Appendix D (Corporate Identity: logo, letterheads, posters, billboards, calendar)



Figure 32.



Billboard - Billboard

Figure 33.



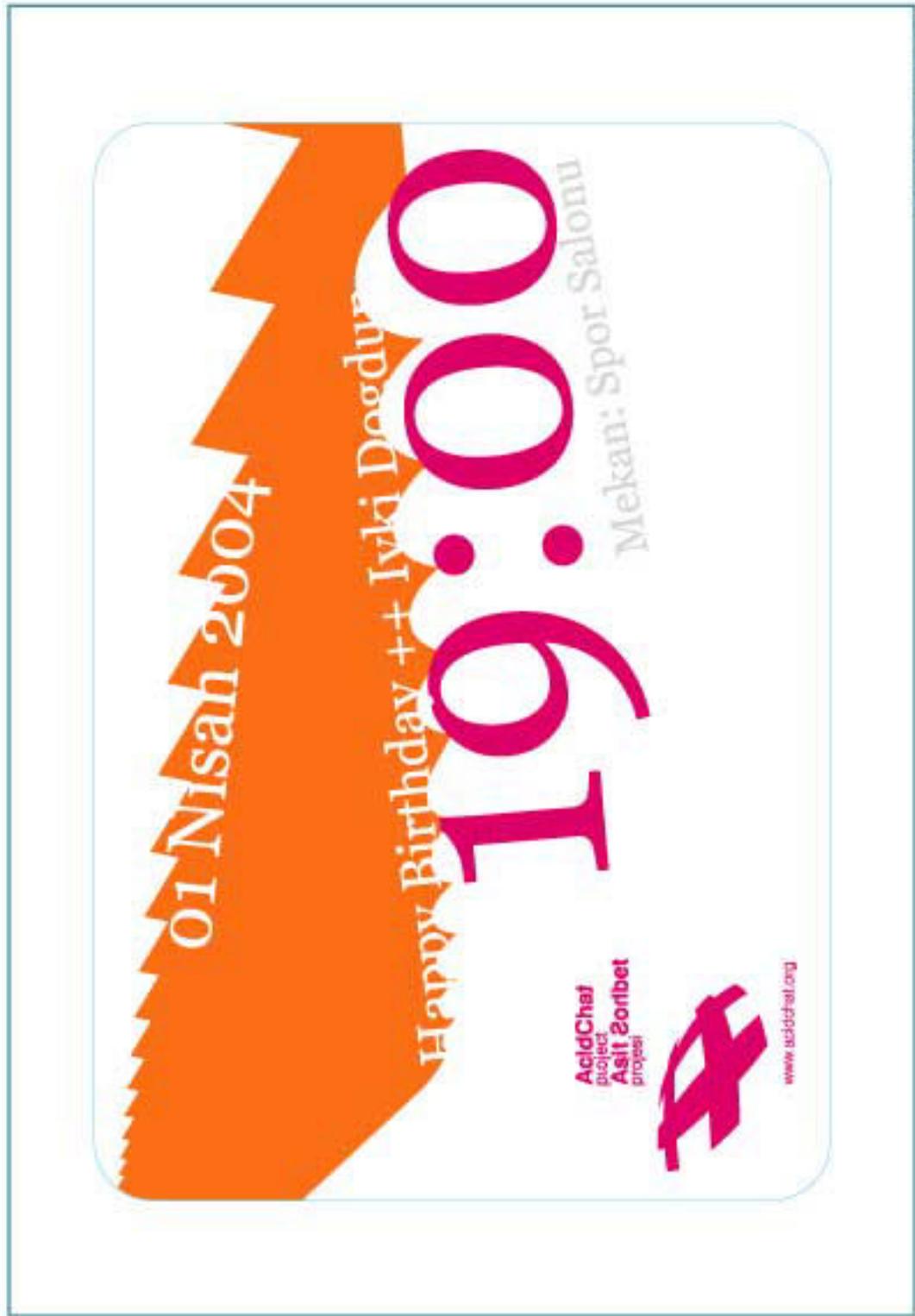


Figure 35.



Kartvizit - Cardvisit

Figure 36.



Davetive - Invitation

Figure 37.

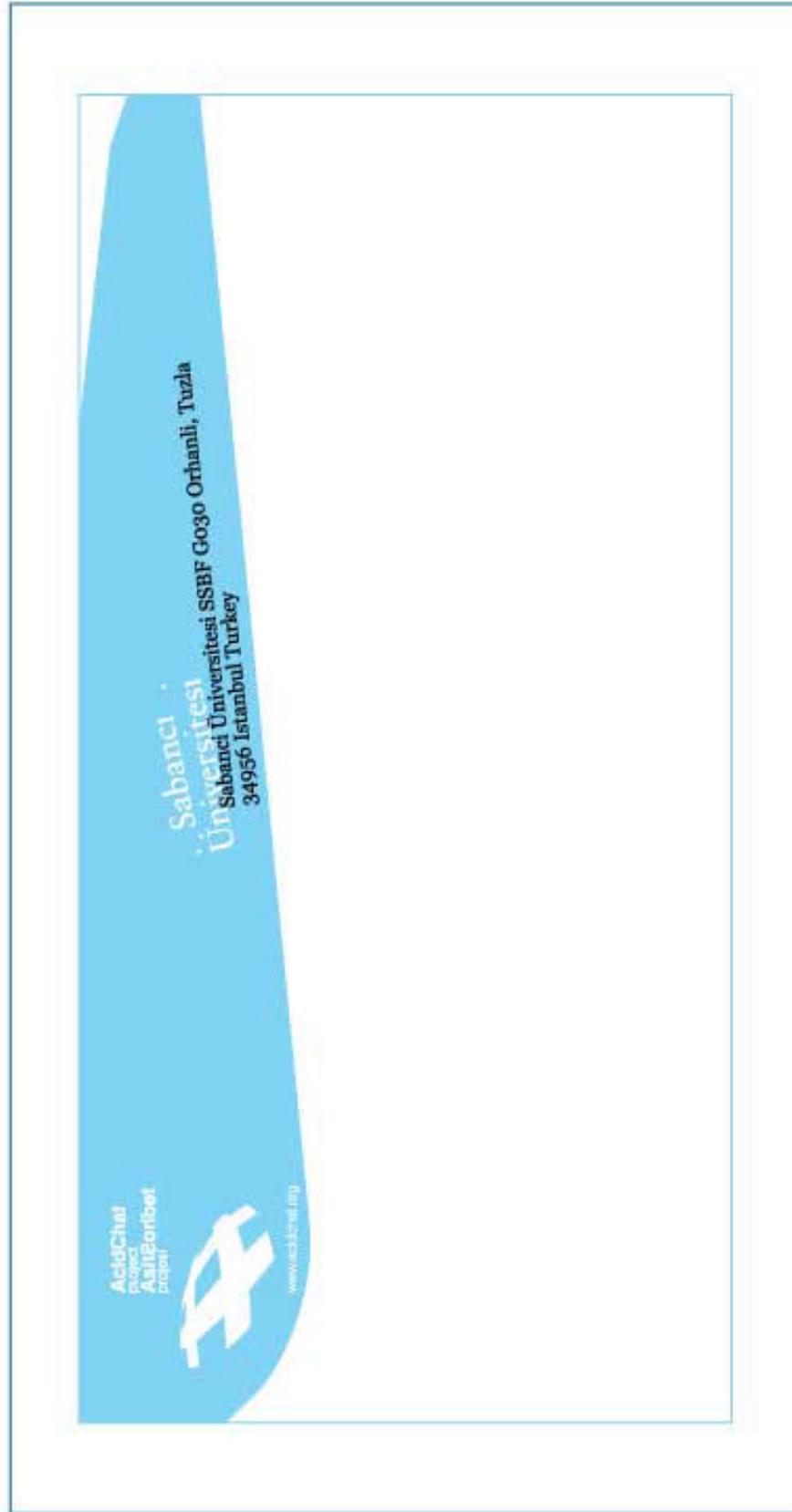


Figure 38.

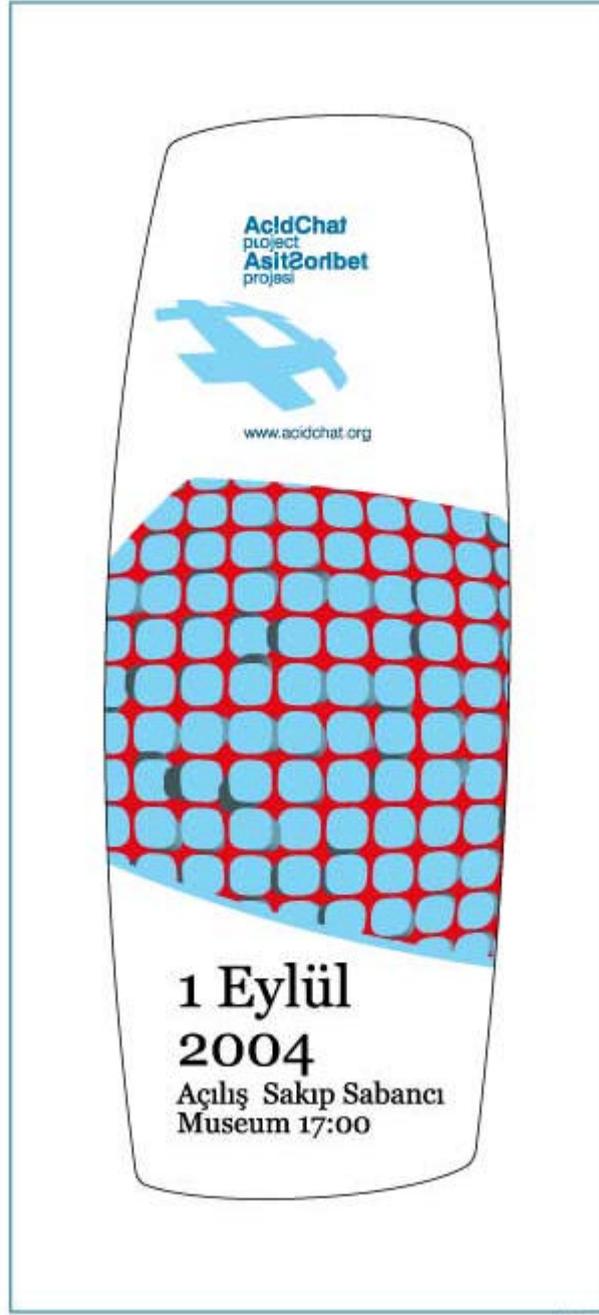


Figure 39.

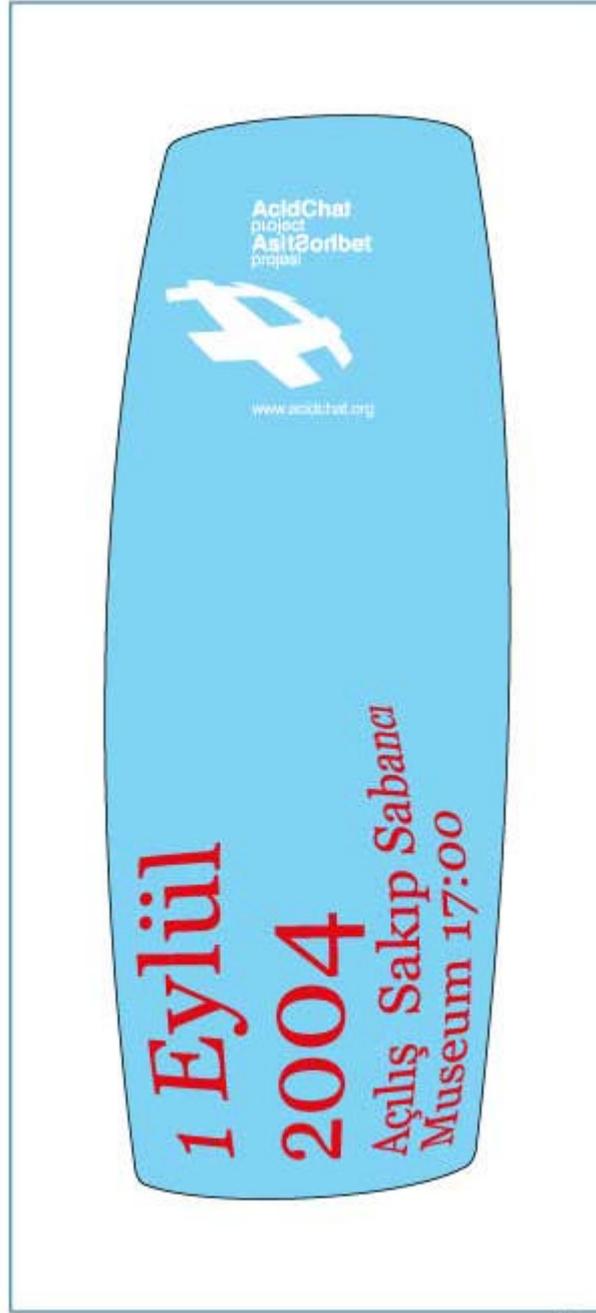
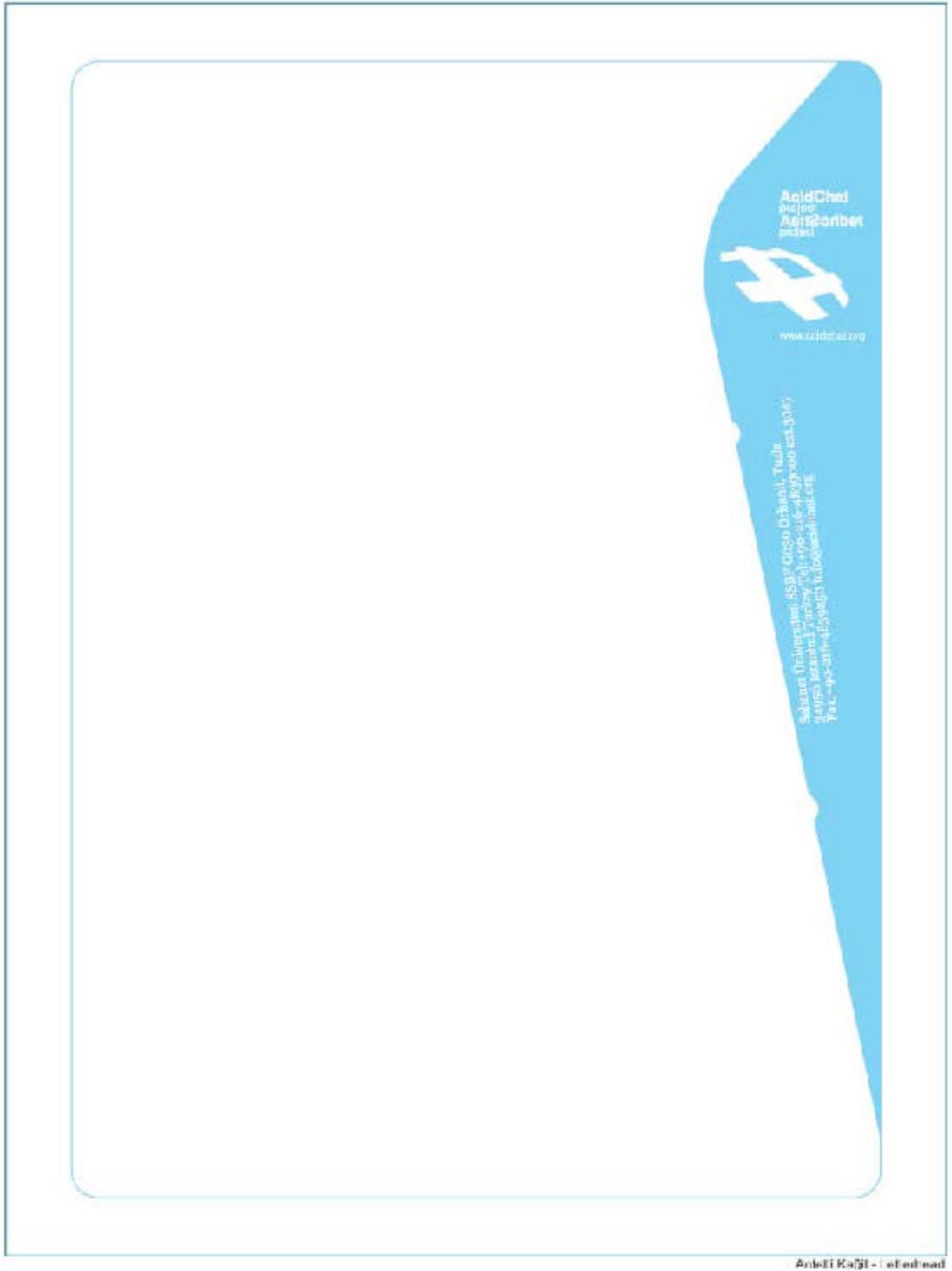


Figure 40.



Flyer

Figure 41.



AcidHead - | [www.acidhead.org](http://www.acidhead.org)

Figure 42.



AcidChat  
AcidChat  
AcidChat



www.kidslife.org

Solomon Islands  
Tel: +677-210-4191 (ext. 326)  
Fax: +677-210-4191 (ext. 326)

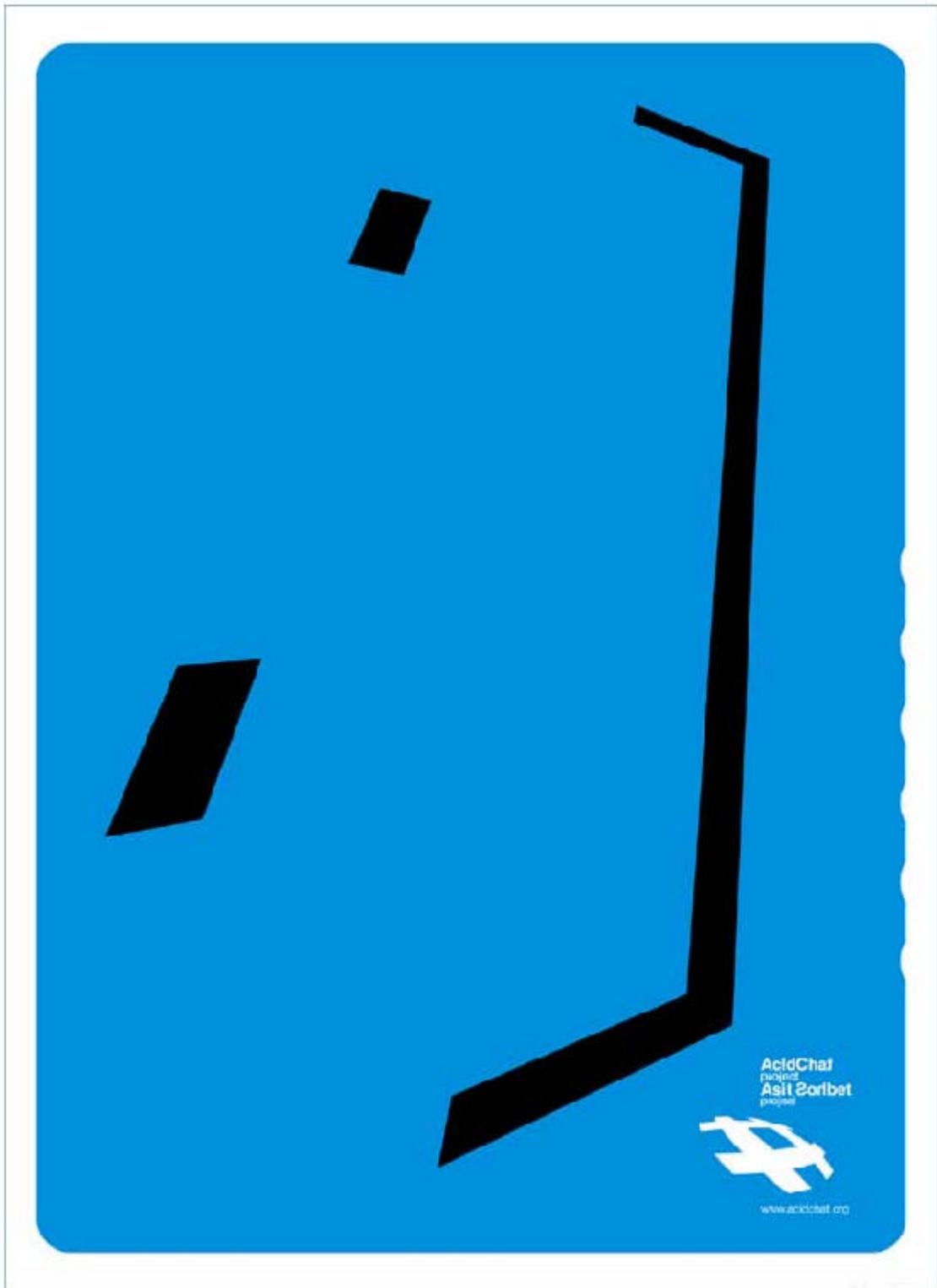
AcidChat - 1 of 1

Figure 43.



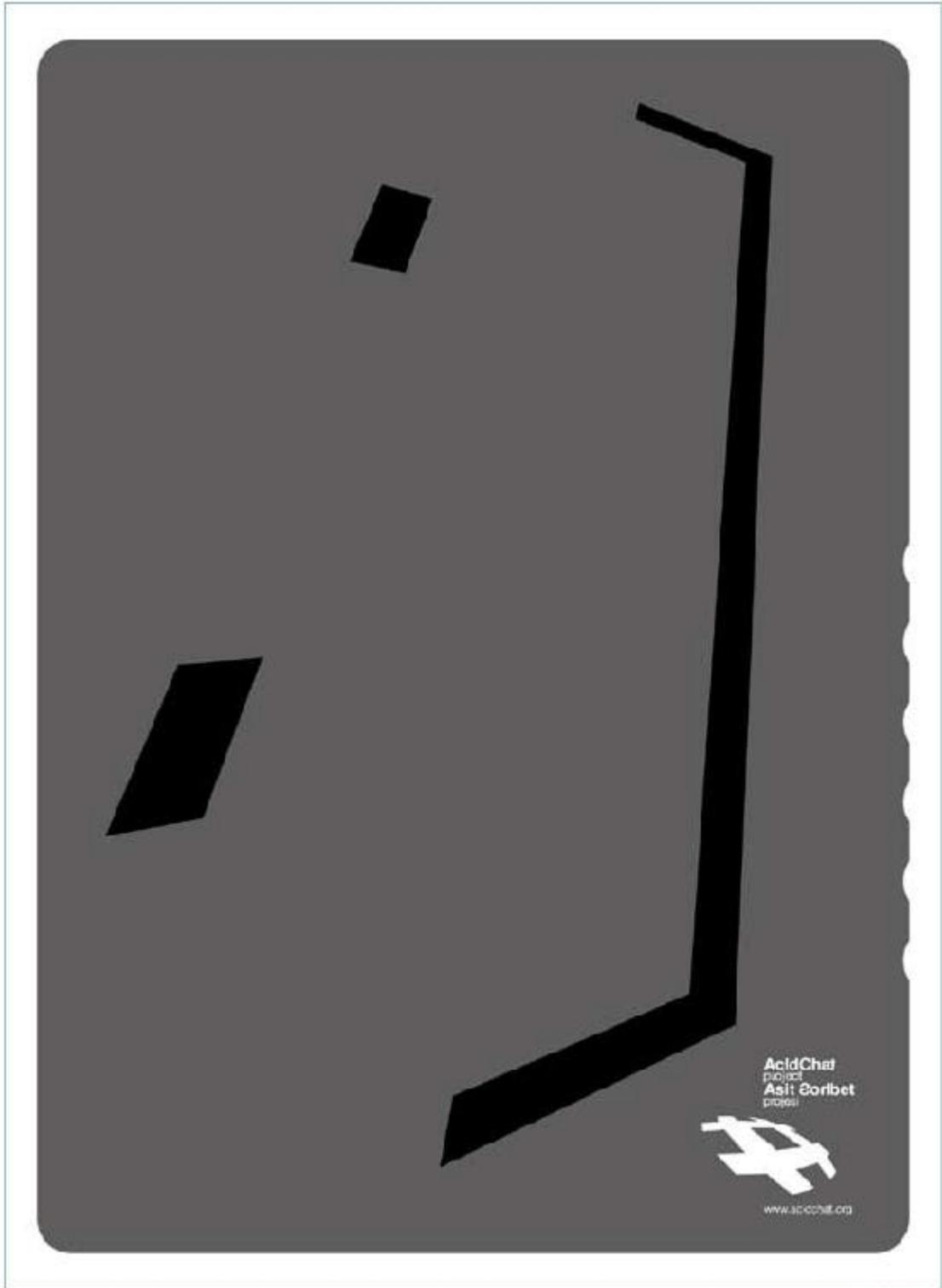
Afs - Proles

Figure 44.



Afs - Poster

Figure 45.



Afis - Poster

Figure 46.



Afiş - Poster

Figure 47.



Afiş - Poster

Figure 48.