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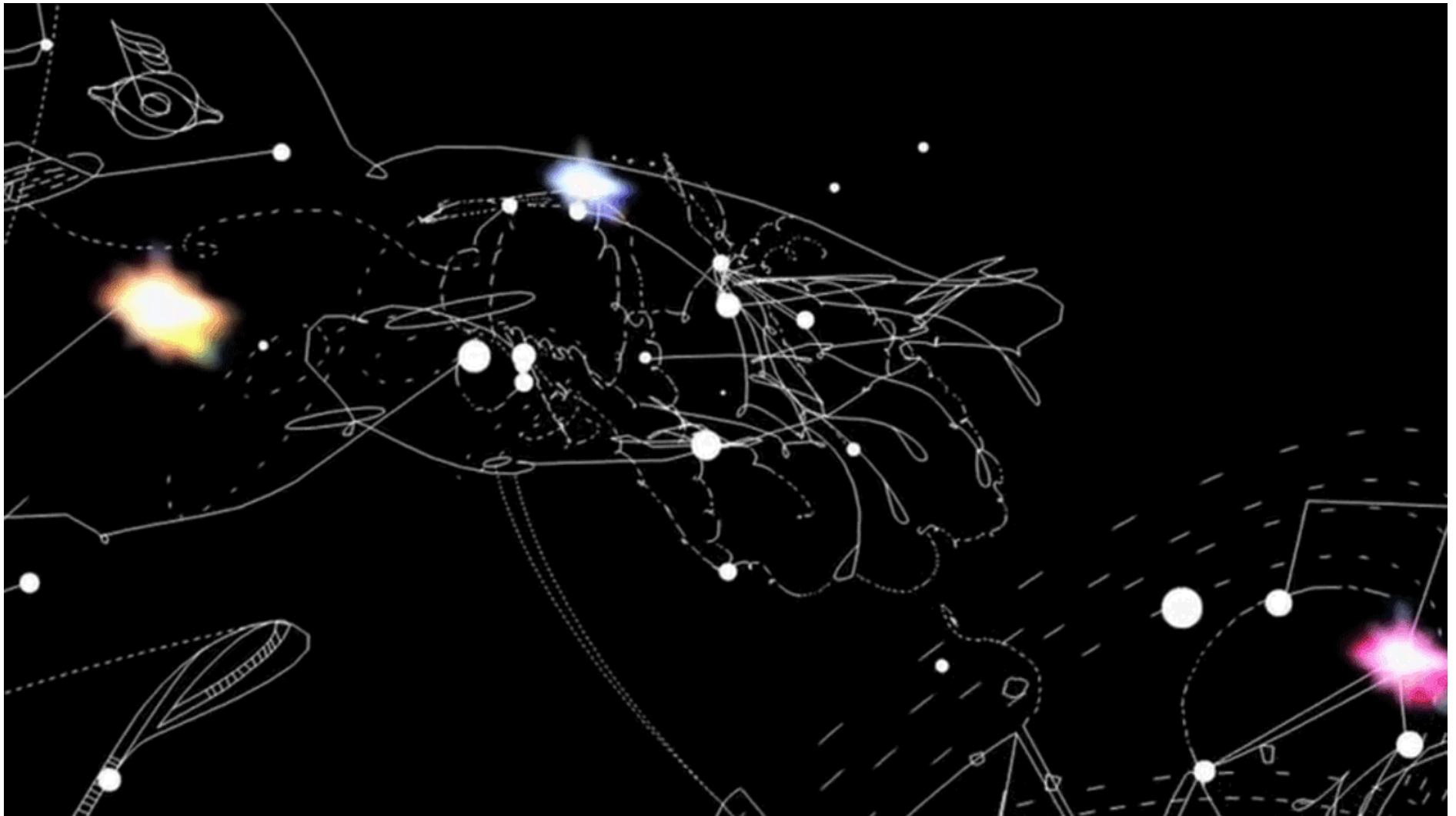
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MoMA Acquires Bjork's Trippy Interactive App-Album "Biophilia"

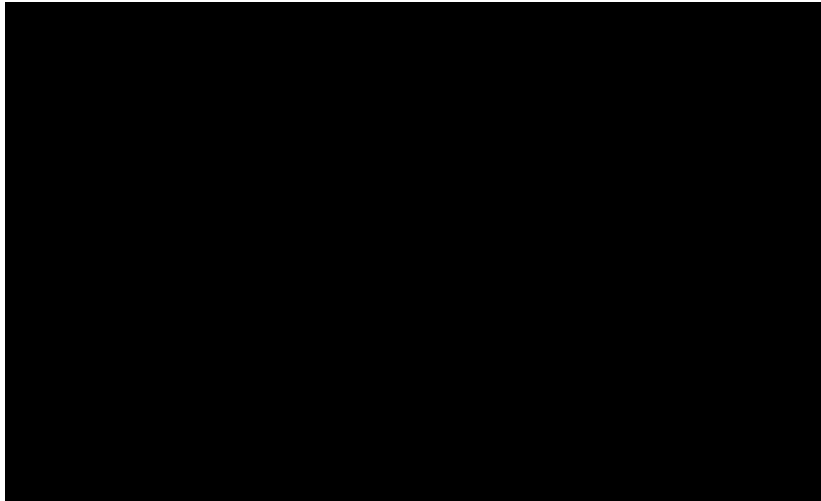
Biophilia is the first downloadable software ever purchased by the museum

These days even museum curators shop the App Store.

MoMA has purchased [Biophilia](#), an app-album hybrid released by Bjork and a team of interaction designers in 2011.

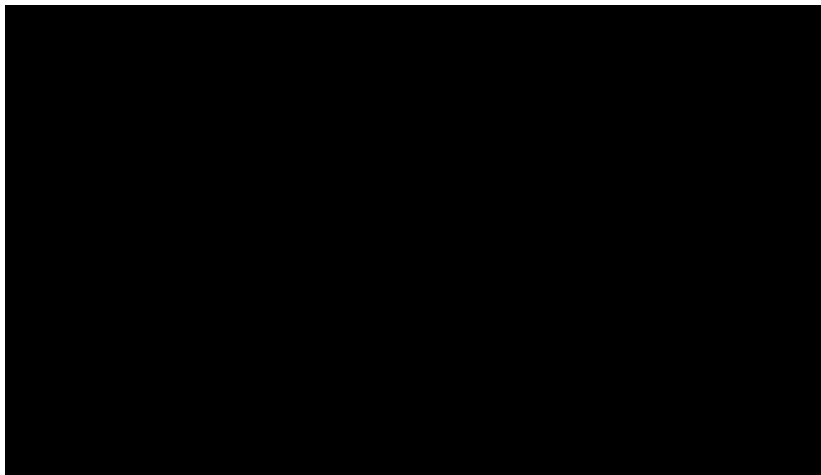


"Apps are highly 'collectible' because of their finite or semi-finite nature," [Paola Antonelli](#), senior curator for architecture and design, wrote in a [post](#) explaining the acquisition. "They might be connected to live feeds and to the web, but their infrastructure design is stable and defined, unlike that of websites."



Biophilia joins a growing MoMA software collection. The museum purchased its first app, [Reactive Books by John Maeda](#), in 1994; Maeda placed floppy disks inside of printed books and described the series as a way to explore the "complete expressive control" that computers offer.

[Biophilia](#), in contrast, is a freewheeling work of art. It includes 10 songs, each a distinct user experience in keeping with the biophilia ("living systems") theme, that invite listeners to become collaborators. A "galaxy" provides visual structure for the album.



Designer [Scott Snibbe](#) has described his contribution to the love song "Virus" as "a kind of love story between a virus and a cell. And of course the virus loves the cell so much that it destroys it." Protect the cell from its attacker, and the song stops playing.

In other songs, users can adjust the string instruments accompanying Bjork's vocals, or record new sounds of their own. For Bjork, Antonelli wrote, "sound and music are the spine, but never the confines, for multimedia performances." The result, in Biophilia, is "true innovation—technological, social, performative—supported by great art."

Biophilia is available for download on iOS and Android platforms.



[Ainsley O'Connell](#)

Ainsley O'Connell writes about technology, education, and design. Follow her on Twitter at @ainsleyoc. [Continued](#)

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