



Cryptocurrency & NFT OSINT

Introduction to Web3/Ethereum Profiling & Deanonymization



Summary

- Introduction to Blockchain & NFT
- Web3 OSINT
 - On-chain & Off-chain
 - Example
- Use-cases
 - Public Personality Profiling & Analysis
 - Bernard Arnault & family
 - Rug-Pull Victims Identification
 - Frosties
 - Animoon
 - Tornado Cash
 - User statistics & Deanonymization
- Conclusion & Future





Who are we?





- Patrick Ventuzelo (@Pat Ventuzelo)
 - CEO & Founder of Fuzzinglabs
 - Senior Security Researcher
- Specialized in
 - Fuzzing, vulnerability research, and reversing.
 - o **Rust**, Go, **Blockchain**, Wasm, & Browser security.
 - Speaker & trainer at various security conferences:
 - BlackHat USA, OffensiveCon, REcon, etc.



Tanguy Laucournet

- Security Engineer
- Blockchain/OSINT expert
- Specialized in
 - Blockchain, cryptocurrencies, NFTs, etc.
 - Scripting & Python development for data analysis
 - Investigations, profiling, and de-anonymization related to blockchains



Introduction to Blockchain & NFT



Peer-to-peer (P2P) network

"Blockchains are politically decentralized (no one controls them) and architecturally decentralized (no
infrastructural central point of failure) but they are logically centralized (there is one commonly agreed state
and the system behaves like a single computer)" - Vitalik Buterin

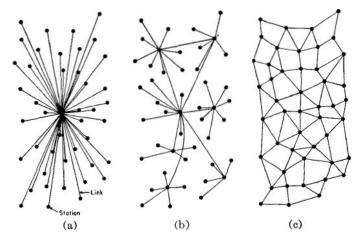
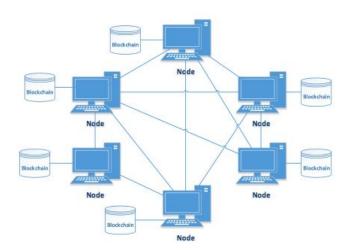


Fig. 1—(a) Centralized. (b) Decentralized. (c) Distributed networks.





Block + chain

Addresses

- Public key
- Unique identifiers
 - Ex: 0x21a06d452a1f49f55635ecac61348df606ed9bae

Transaction

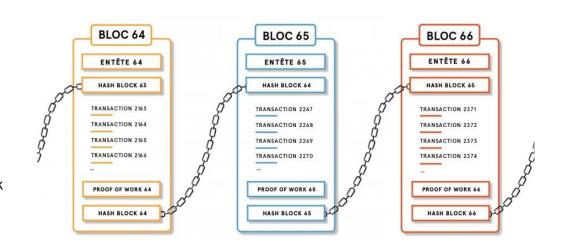
- Interaction between participants
- Ex: Address A send money to Address B

Block

Set of transactions between accounts

Blockchain

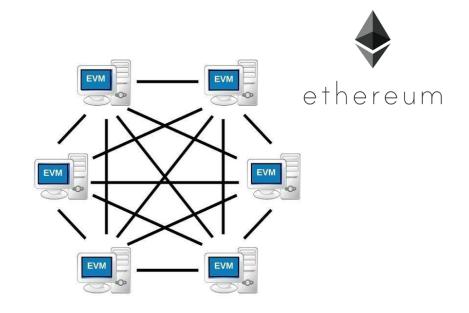
- Series of blocks
 - each linked to the previous block
- o **Immutable** public transaction ledger
- Stored forever in the blockchain





What is Ethereum?

- Ethereum is a **decentralized platform** that **runs smart contracts**: applications that run exactly as programmed without any possibility of downtime, censorship, fraud, or third-party interference.
- Created by Vitalik Buterin, Gavin Wood, etc.
- Open source
- Decentralized cryptocurrency
- Decentralized network (P2P)
 - o launched on 30 July 2015
 - Public data 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.
- Consensus
 - Proof of work (PoW)
 - Since September 2022: Proof of Stake (PoS)
- Ethereum Virtual Machine (EVM)
 - Sandboxed virtual stack machine



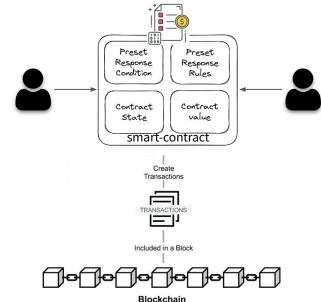


What is a Smart Contract?

"A smart contract is a computer program or a transaction protocol which is intended to automatically execute, control or document legally relevant events and actions according to the terms of a contract or an agreement. The objectives of smart contracts are the reduction of need in trusted intermediates, arbitrations and enforcement costs, fraud losses" - Wikipedia

- Ethereum Smart Contracts
 - Written is Solidity.
 - - Stored on the blockchain
 - Executed by the EVM







What is a NFT (Non-fungible token)?

- An NFT (Non-fungible token) is a digital asset that can be used to represent all kinds of things on a blockchain.
 - ERC-721 standard

Token ID	Owner's Address	
12	0x3a058aD56A	
Token ID	Token Meta Data URI	
12	ipfs://bafybeic3ui4dj5dtefgq/metadata.json	
	IPFS Metadata	{ "name": "my cool avatar #12" "description": "very cool ninja avatar" "image": "ipfs://bafybeihhii26gwpdl3fq/ninja-avatar.png" }

- Key features:
 - Immutability
 - Transparency
 - Can be owned and transferred
 - Indivisible
 - Uniqueness







Profile Picture



Sport



POAP



Ticketing



Art



Gaming



Luxury



Metaverse



Web3 OSINT Usage & Analysis



Web3/Cryptocurrencies OSINT in the wild

PRESS RELEASES

U.S. Treasury Sanctions Notorious Virtual Currency Mixer Tornado Cash

Council of the EU Press release 16 May 2023 10:30

Anti-money laundering: Council adopts rules which will make crypto-asset transfers traceable

The EU is making it more difficult for criminals to circumvent anti-money laundering rules via crypto currencies. Today the Council adopted updated rules on information accompanying the transfers of funds by extending the scope of the rules to transfers of crypto assets. This ensures financial transparency on exchanges in crypto-assets and provides the EU with a solid framework that complies with the most demanding international standards on the exchange of crypto-assets, ensuring that these are not used for criminal purposes.



The EU is making it more difficult for criminals to misuse cryptoassets for money laundering purposes

Five Charged in France With \$2.5M Fraud Targeting Bored Ape NFT Owners

Noted online crypto sleuth "ZachXBT" played a key role in helping French authorities uncover the fraudulent Bored Ape NFT scheme.



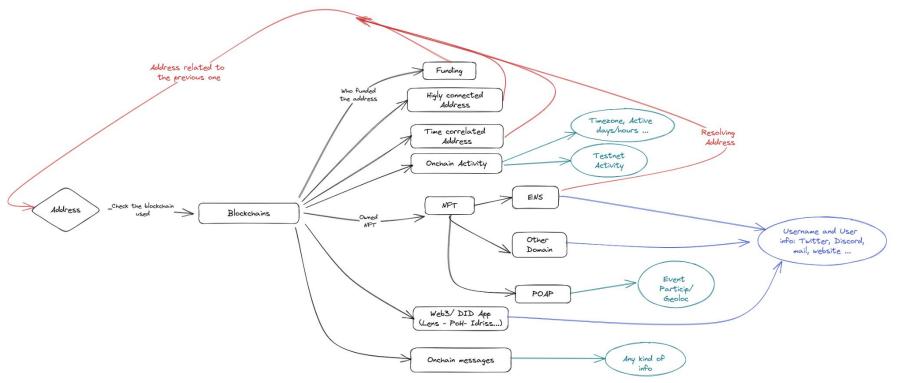
☐ Oct 13, 2022⑤ 3 min read





link3

Wallet Address to Identity - **On-Chain** analysis





Example: Analysis of the 0x116cef...

- Address: <u>0x116cefda507b6e7be67baa27b31b5f5ceabea154</u>
 - Mentioned in <u>Aleno's blogpost</u> about the Euler hack

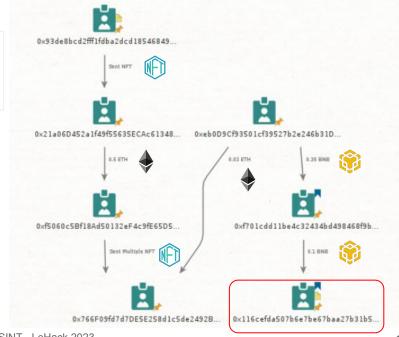
For each address, we conducted a behavioral and transactional analysis to analyze the habits of the addresses and we found that <u>0x116ce</u> has really suspicious behavior.





- o Exchange BNB over BNB Smart Chain
- Exchange NFT over Ethereum

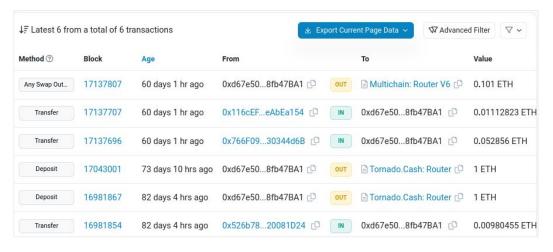
Is it enough to assume there are linked together?

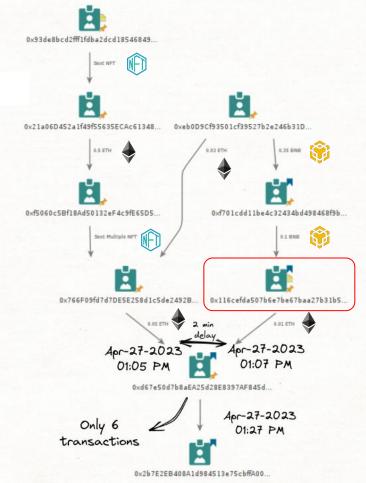




Example: 0x116 relationships

- Is it enough to assume there are linked together?
 - Depends of how strong is the wallet's relationship
 - In this case, we have in/out transactions with 0x766F
 - I.e. 0xd67e50d7b8aea25d28e8397af845da808fb47ba1





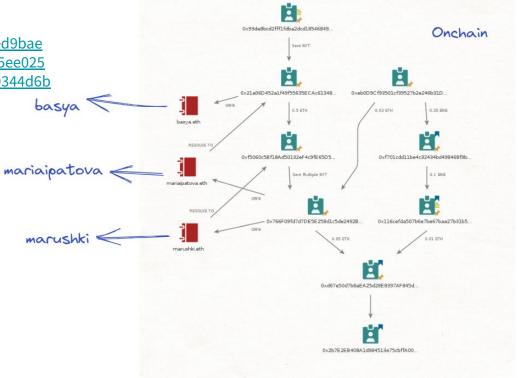


Example: Wallet's ENS relationships



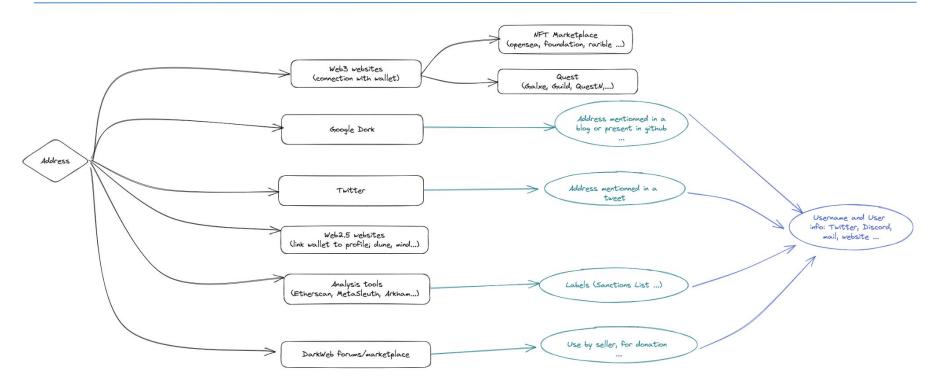
- o 0x21a06d452a1f49f55635ecac61348df606ed9bae
- o <u>0xf5060c5Bf18Ad50132eF4c9fE65D52eBc55ee025</u>
- o <u>0x766f09fd7d7de5e258d1c5de2492b2d530344d6b</u>
- Domain Name Lookup
 - ENS
 - Unstoppable Domains





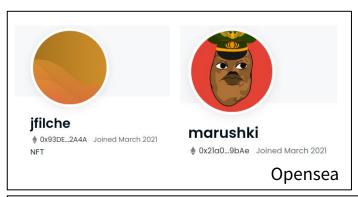


Wallet Address to Identity - **Off-chain** Analysis

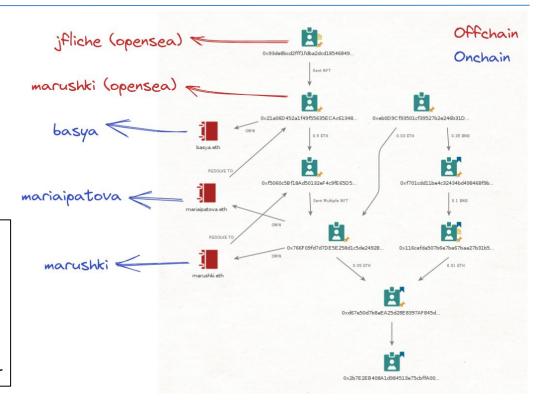




Example: Identities behind those wallets









Example: How to confirm it's the same people/friends?

Maria made a tweet about a TOONZ #5081 Maria @marushki_ · 8 janv. 2022 In April 2022, 0x21a6 was the owner of this NFT Meet the Dic-Tater Julian @Jfilche · Apr 3, 2022 Maria @marushki_ · Apr 3, 2022 Not hung up yet but damn is it pretty @ @cbwagmi @DegenToonz Item Activity A total of 9 records found First (Page 1 of 1 > Last 0xd0d6f3b0c766cafa2.. 0.189 ETH (\$347.71) 0xb813f3...E9f2C6C5 Oxwn.eth 39 days 5 hrs ago 0x5ae1e153592c4539... 39 days 19 hrs ago 0.20801 WETH (\$382.68) 0xDadD6e...4E39de53 rD 0xb813f3...E9f2C6C5 rD 0xe672b4b196c45ec2... 39 days 19 hrs ago () david-taylor.eth 0xDadD6e...4E39de53 [] 0.2 Blur Pool 0x09c9bb8e84981d41... 0.6 ETH (\$1,103.83) 0x3Dd932...e2a937Ba r () david-taylor,eth (113 days 8 hrs ago 0x1269f67e284e29269... 122 days 7 hrs ago 0.52 Blur Pool () suthie.eth 0x3Dd932...e2a937Ba [] 0.57 ETH (\$1,048,63) 0x8c2b618ac3d2120d... 122 days 10 hrs ago 0x766F09...30344d6B 0xfefadafe5bef88a84c... 122 days 21 hrs ago Transfer 0xf5060c...c55ee025 0x766F09...30344d6B 0xa3f7ab66a3e51c665... 170 days 14 hrs ago 0x21a06D...06Ed9bAe (0xf5060c...c55ee025 []



472 days 3 hrs ago

Mint

Null: 0x000...000 r

0x21a06D...06Ed9bAe r

0x684b601f512447a07..

Use-cases Public Personality Profiling & Analysis



Bernard Arnault owns NFTs?

- Ian Rogers (Former chief digital officer at LVMH)
 - Say during Aarthi and Sriram's Good Time Show podcast.
- "I don't think he'd mind if I said this—he has shown
 me, of his own volition, his OpenSea page," said
 Rogers, referencing a digital NFT marketplace. "Which
 means he had to pull out his phone, find it, and then
 take me through it. So, yes."

• Let's try to find Bernard's NFT Wallet!

Source: Observer - <u>link</u>

LVMH's Bernard Arnault Has a Secret NFT Collection

The billionaire is a prominent art collector and opened a private museum but has expressed doubts about digital artwork as an investment.

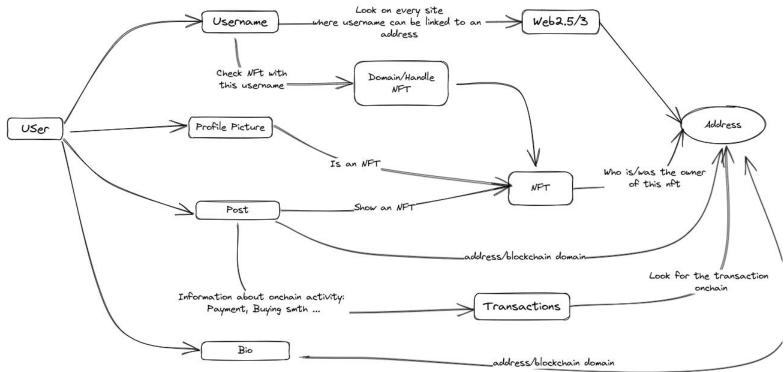
By Alexandra Tremayne-Pengelly • 05/03/23 2:48pm







User to Wallet Address - Process overview





Arnault's family & LVMH | NFTs

- Frederic Arnault Twitter
 - CEO of watch brand Tag Heuer





- Alexandre Arnault <u>Twitter</u>
 - CEO of jewelry brand Tiffany & Co.

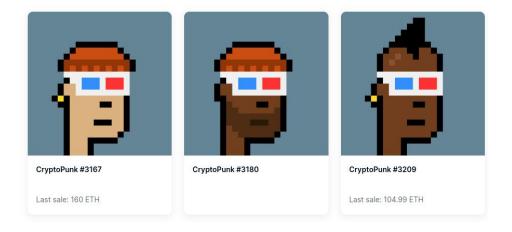






How to find the wallet behind an NFT?

- NFT Reverse Image Search
 - o <u>Fingible</u>
 - NFT Finder
 - o Bing.ly
 - Not working well with a screen capture
- Google image search
 - o https://images.google.com/
 - look for NFT marketplace results
- OpenSea/Marketplace
 - Trait filtering <u>link</u>
- Al Image Similarity is your friend



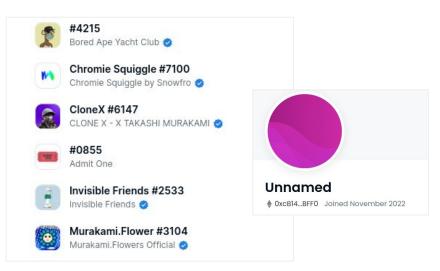
✓ 3D Glasses	286
✓ Male	6,039



OpenSea Profiles

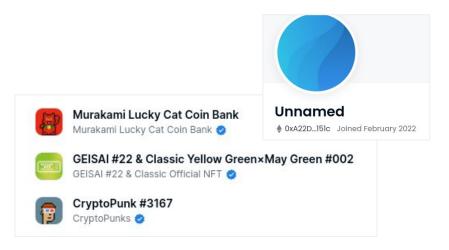
<u>Frederic</u>

- Address: 0xcB142075Ae31E89D939B74494415B3d7d9b0BFF0
- OpenSea Profile <u>link</u>



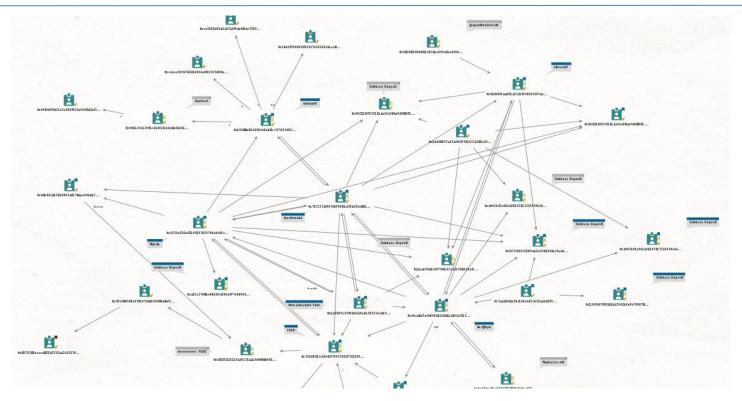
<u>Alexandre</u>

- Address: 0xa22df8a27f62ad49e2a3d23cea0a86421ec1151c
- OpenSea Profile <u>link</u>





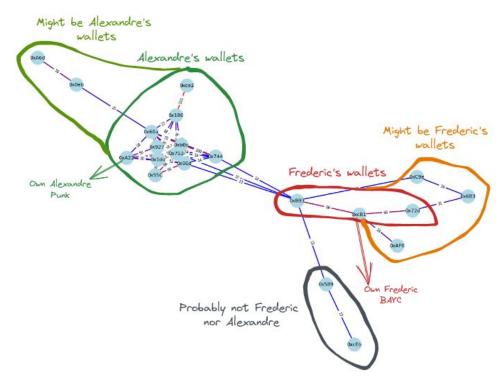
On-chain Analysis





Wallet Clusterization through Time Correlation

- Get all the transactions for each address.
- For each transaction from a wallet
 - look for other transactions from other wallets within a predefined time window
 - Graph the data with weighted relation based on the frequency of close interactions between addresses
- What's the purpose?
 - Differentiate multiple users behind a list of highly connected addresses.
 - Find all wallets controlled by a single user.





Does Alexandre is doing NFT insider trading?

- Pre-reveal (Blind auction)
 - No one knows the rarity of each NFT
 - Alexandre
 - Bid 32% more to get #9021
 - Bid 58% more to get #7777
 - Bid for 7 other NFT
- After Reveal
 - He bid on 5 of the 10 rarest and win 3
 - Sell <u>#9021</u> for \$14,700
 - 377% gain, **\$11,600 profit**
 - Sell <u>#7777</u> for \$12,900
 - 330% gain, \$9000 profit
 - o Use multiple wallets to make the trades
- Could it be random? Odds are 1/440,000
 - o In comparison, lifetime odds of getting struck by lightning are about 1/15,000
- Source: Forbes Article using Convex Labs analysis <u>link</u>



Mar 30, 2022, 06:30am EDT





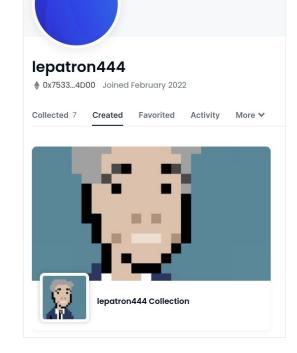


Do we find Bernard Arnault's NFT wallet?

- No, but one of Alexandre's wallets is surprising...
- Address: 0x7533374f6b7CEF86DA4754352eB21Cf2d9664D00
- Opensea profile: <u>lepatron444</u>
 - o "lepatron" mean "theboss" in French
 - 444 might refer to LVMH's market cap valorization (444 billion)
- This wallet owner created a collection of NFT





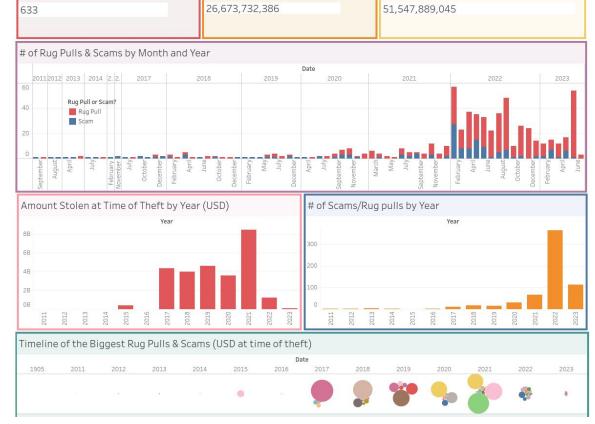


Use-cases Rug-Pull Victims Identification



What is a Rug-Pull?

- A rug pull is a scam where a cryptocurrency or NFT developer hypes a project to attract investor money, only to suddenly shut down or disappear, taking investor assets with them.
- The name comes from the idiom "to pull the rug out" from under someone, leaving the victim off-balance and scrambling.
- <u>Source</u>: Comparitech's Worldwide crypto & NFT rug pulls and scams tracker - <u>link</u>



Actual Amount Stolen (USD)



Total # of Rug Pulls & Scams

Amount Stolen in Today's Value (USD)

Rug-Pull Victims Identification Frosties



What is Frosties?



- One of the first cases of rug-pull charged by the U.S
 - ~ \$1.2 Million NFT Fraud Scheme
- 20 years old founders:
 - o Ethan Nguyen & Andre Llacuna
- Got charges for
 - conspiracy to commit Wire Fraud
 - o conspiracy to commit Money Laundering
 - Usage of Tornado Cash
- They were planning to create another one
 - o "Embers" for around \$1.5 Million
- Sources: PRESS RELEASE <u>link</u>, FINAL Complaint <u>link</u>



PRESS RELEASE

Two Defendants Charged In Non-Fungible Token ("NFT") Fraud And Money Laundering Scheme



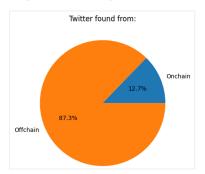
Defendants Executed a \$1 Million NFT Fraud Scheme in January 2022, and Were Preparing to Execute a Second Prior to Their Arrests

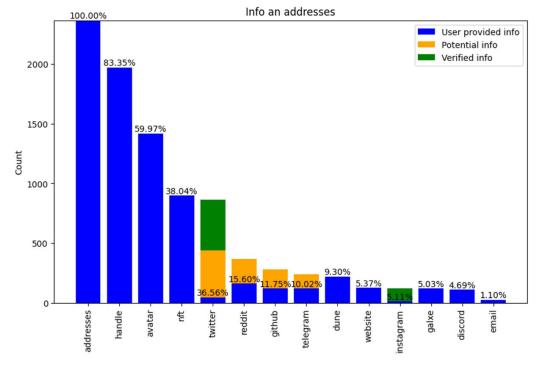
Damian Williams, the United States Attorney for the Southern District of New York, Thomas Fattorusso, Special Agent in Charge of the New York Field Office of the Internal Revenue Service, Criminal Investigation ("IRS-CI"), Ricky J. Patel, the Acting Special Agent-in-Charge of the New York Field Office of the Department of Homeland Security ("HSI"), and Daniel B. Brubaker, Inspector-in-Charge of the New York Office of the U.S. Postal Inspection Service ("USPIS"), announced that ETHAN NGUYEN, a/k/a "Frostie," a/k/a "Jakefiftyeight," a/k/a "Jobo," a/k/a "Joboethan," a/k/a "Meltfrost," and ANDRE LLACUNA, a/k/a "heyandre," were charged in a criminal complaint with conspiracy to commit wire fraud and conspiracy to commit money laundering, in connection with a million-dollar scheme to defraud purchasers of NFTs advertised as "Frosties." Rather than providing the benefits advertised to Frosties NFT purchasers, NGUYEN and LLACUNA transferred the cryptocurrency proceeds of the scheme to various cryptocurrency wallets under their control. Prior to their arrests in Los Angeles, California, NGUYEN and LLACUNA were preparing to launch the sale of a second set of NFTs advertised as "Embers," which was anticipated to generate approximately \$1.5 million in cryptocurrency proceeds.



Frosties victims - Analysis & Identifications

- Why are we doing that?
 - Help law enforcement identify victims.
 - Help lawyers with class actions.
- What are we looking for?
 - Any point of contact
 - Twitter, Reddit, Github, Mail, etc.
 - Timezone/Location information
 - Language
 - Usage of exchange with KYC/AML







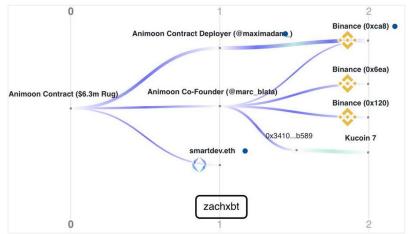
Rug-Pull Victims Identification Animoon



What is Animoon? **\$6.3M** NFT Rug-Pull

- Classic PFP NFT project
 - Website, Opensea, Instagram
 - Advertised as a P2E game
 - with utilities such as large giveaways
 - breeding, IRL trips, & more.
 - Claims to
 - Have an NDA signed with Pokémon
 - Be working with Bandai Namco (Digimon)
 - Promoted by Jake Paul
- Created by
 - Marc Blata (@marc blata)
 - Real name: Singainy Marc Oceane
 - Maxime Adam (<u>@MaximAdam</u>)
 - Real name: Mounis Mokaddem
- Source: ZachXBT Analysis link







Animoon victims - Analysis & Identifications

Verified information



Information verified by a website (ex: OpenSea, Galxe)

User-provided information

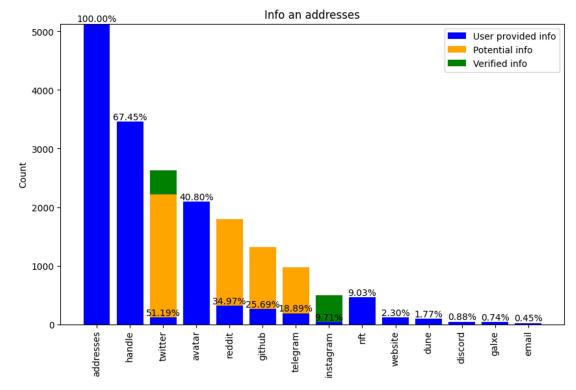


 Information provided by the user but not verified (ex: ENS)

Potential Information



Other information found using Osint tools on handles related to the address (ex: Maigret)





How to detect Timezone/Location?

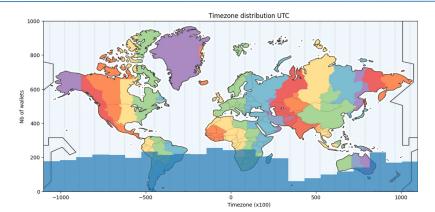
On-chain

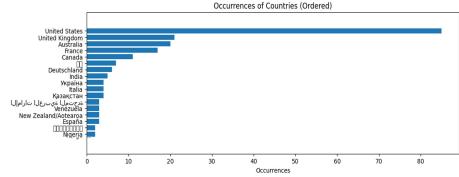
- Transactions timestamps
- NFTs with location information (POAP, etc.)

Off-chain

- Twitter description location & language
- OpenSea bio language









What French victims should do?

- We identify:
 - ~ 20 french & ~ 50 french speaking victims
- Contacts
 - Tweet
 - Tweet #2







Use-cases Tornado Cash User Statistics & Deanonymization



What is Tornado Cash?

Tornado Cash

- Open source, non-custodial
- Fully decentralized cryptocurrency tumbler/mixing service
- Running on EVM-compatible networks
- Designed to make it harder to trace cryptocurrency transactions.
- Used worldwide as a money-laundering platform.

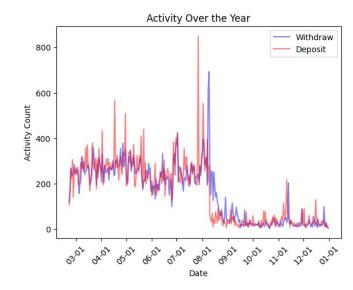


In August of 2022

- the U.S. Treasury's Office of Foreign Assets Control (OFAC)
 sanctioned Tornado Cash.
- Blacklisted the service, making it illegal for US citizens, residents, and companies to use.









How does Tornado Cash work?

Processus

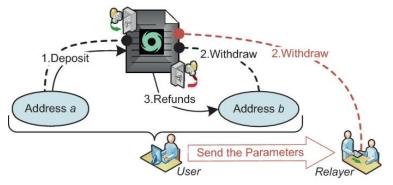
- Depositor (A) sends ETH to Tornado Cash pool
 - Fixed values per pool: 0.1, 1, 10, 100 ETH
 - Generate a random key: note
- Wait some time to improve the privacy
- A user (address B or a Relayer) withdraw
 - Provide proof of the note
- Money is sent to the Receiver

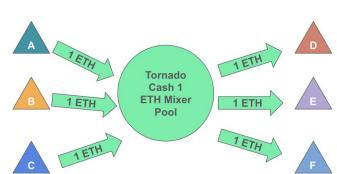
Different actors

- Depositor: send the money
- O Withdrawer:
 - **Relayer**: withdraw for someone else
 - **Receiver**: receive the money

Sources:

- What is a cryptocurrency mixer and how does it work? <u>link</u>
- How does Tornado Cash work? link
- Analysis of Address Linkability in Tornado Cash on Ethereum <u>link</u>

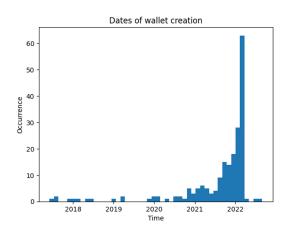


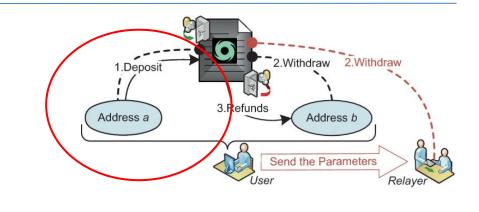


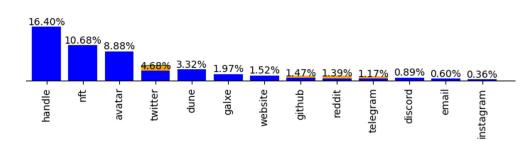


Depositor Statistics (Feb - Dec 2022)

- Global statistics
 - 50 687 transactions
 - 15 722 unique addresses
- OSINT statistics
 - Most wallets < 1 year old
 - ~50 users located in the USA



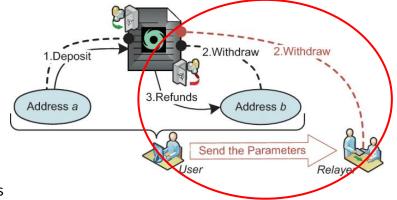


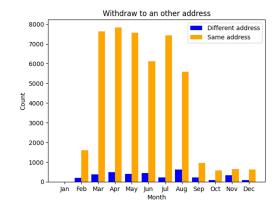




Withdrawer Statistics (Feb - Dec 2022)

- Global statistics
 - 50 024 transactions
 - 1 444 unique addresses
- Same Withdrawer & Receiver
 - Already have ETH to spend to initiate withdrawing
 - I.e. Already funded address
- **Different** Withdrawer & Receiver
 - No need for any money in the wallet to pay the transaction fees
 - The Relayer takes a cut on the retrieved ETH
 - Meaning a brand-new wallet can be directly funded with Tornado
- OSINT statistics
 - Recipient:
 - 20k + recipients
 - Relayer:
 - 257 relayers





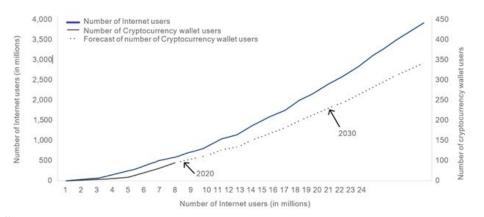


Conclusion & Future



Conclusion & Future

- Takeaways
 - Blockchain OSINT is fun and surprising
 - Accessible with only public tools
 - A good start to discover how blockchains work
 - Mandatory to control your OPSEC
- How blockchains will evolve in the future?
 - Better adoption and native integration
 - More day-to-day users
 - Privacy-Oriented Blockchain L1/L2
 - Leveraging on ZKP (zero-knowledge proof)
 - <u>Ethereum ERC-5564</u>: Stealth Addresses
- What are Fuzzinglab's next steps?
 - o Continued building our web3 deanonymization product
 - More talks, training & workshops
- Sources: Cryptocurrency Adoption Across Europe and America 2021 link







Thanks for your time! Any questions?

- Thanks to
 - LeHack staff, Sylvain, OSINT-FR, Fuzzinglabs team, etc.

Patrick







Tanguy



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