

Issue n°2
February 2021

Beyond the Screen:



Living Art in Virtual Space

Beyond the Screen: Digital Art Dwelling the Virtual / **Collecting the Future:** Conversation with Sylvain Levy / **Q&A** with Alain Thibault / **Q&A** with Claudia Hart / **Displaying Immateriality:** Selected Books On Conservation, Care and Exhibition of Digital Art / **Danae's Art Reviews:** Selection of Recent Exhibitions to Experience Online



As a network for artists, curators and collectors of digital art, Danae's mission is to discover and commit in today's digital avant-garde. Danae's new Magazine presents thematic overviews on contemporary digital art practices.

About the current issue:

We share our insights on artistic experiences in virtual space; we review a selection of books on conservation, curation and exhibition of art in the 21st century; we interview Sylvain Levy (collector and founder of [dslcollection](#)), [Claudia Hart](#) (new media artist pioneer) and Alain Thibault (artistic and producing director of [ELEKTRA](#)); we explore some current virtual contemporary art events.

The history of contemporary art teaches us that the fusion of artistic and technological creation practices flourishes in a network of experiences of contamination, exchange and contrasting approaches. Today, more than ever, art is presented as a network of people and objects, linked by ever-changing and evolving connections. How does art inhabit virtual space? What are the new ways of preserving, collecting and displaying art? Art as an experience not only survives but proliferates and lives within virtual space. Emphasizing the communitarian nature of art, we left the word to cultural agents investigating new forms of experiencing art beyond the screen.

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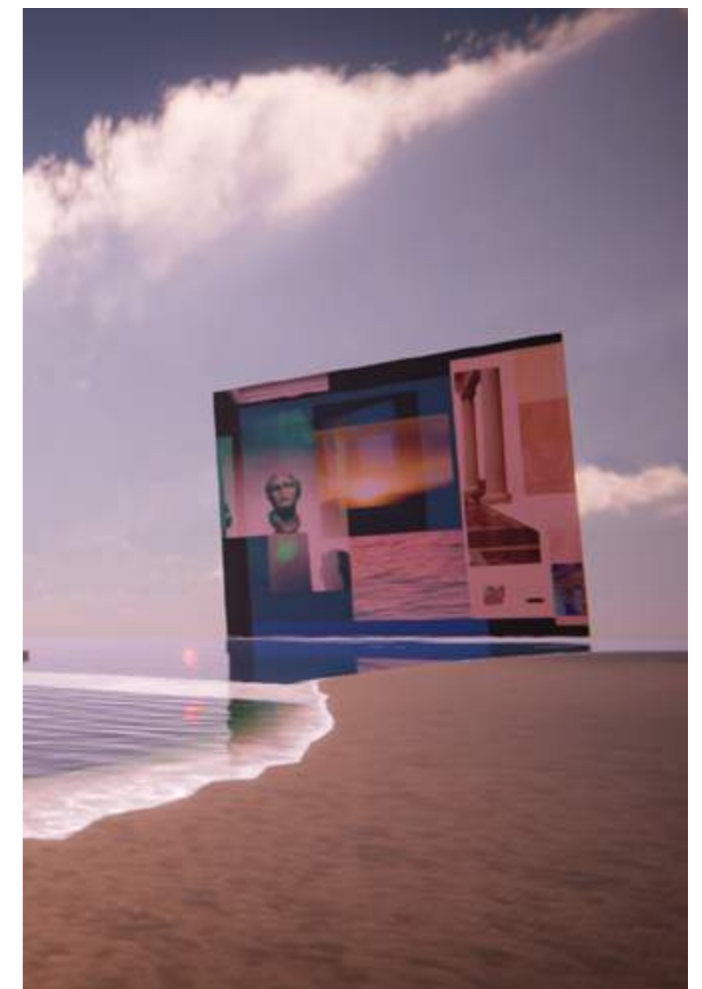
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Beyond the Screen: Digital Art Dwelling the Virtual

Article by Angelica Ceccato

Digital Art in Virtual Space: A Definition

When in the spring of 2020 the first wave of Coronavirus sent several countries into lockdown, many cultural institutions, artists and curators took the initiative - willingly or unwillingly - to dive into the world of the net proposing their content to their visitors, in the form of interactive showcases or real virtual playgrounds. We sit locked in our rooms but ironically one of the lessons the pandemic has brought so far is that all the artistic tendencies that we witnessed in what we call 'digital art' have exploded into a multitude of mind-blowing experiences, unexpected creative networks and creative experiments, all strictly online.

The rise of the World Wide Web drove art critics and historians to wrangle about the definition of 'digital' in technological arts, and they surely didn't stop since. Now we generally tend to give an ambivalent definition to the term 'digital' in art: digital as a means to the production of the artifact, and digital as a critical process towards technology. The first approach inherits from object-oriented artistic practices as cybernetic and kinetic art, and perceives digital tools as an updated version of the traditional fine arts instruments. The second approach is process-oriented, and perceives the digital medium as a meta-critic tool: technology explores the possibilities of technology. In this case, digital art corresponds to a more conceptual tendency, which includes computer-based art, software art, and net-art.

Initially these two approaches were antithetical and artistic trends tended to polarize, leaving an undefined nebula of 'new media' artworks in the middle. On the other hand, today the history of contemporary art and its exhibition reconciles the two positions, and the role of the virtual is one of the key factors. How do object-oriented and process-oriented digital art coexist in virtual space? What is the role of the curator in the design of the virtual and in the reconciliation of distinct but not incompatible approaches? Now that the internet becomes a personal and collective hideaway but also a mirror of the contemporary art scene, how do artworks inhabit the virtual space? What changes in their perception?

I would like to borrow Mark W. Bell's definition of 'virtual world' for which "[A virtual world is] a synchronous, persistent network of people, represented as avatars, facilitated by networked computers." Bell highlights the fact that the virtual (from latin 'vertus', i.e. virtue, possibility) is in itself a changeable network and susceptible to evolve according to the individuals (avatars) that populate it and the access device to it (computers). In this sense, the creation of virtual environments for artistic exposition assumes a fundamental role in the evolution of terminology related to digital art, proposing a truce and a common ground where digital critics and enthusiasts play the same game.

The virtuality of the artistic experience highlights the emergence of new forms of preservation, curation and exhibition of art that take note of the network-based essence of the internet as a showcase, but also as a platform and stage for new digital cultures. The net as a virtual space for cultural showcasing amplifies this need, and makes it symptomatic of its time.

“A virtual world is a synchronous, persistent network of people, represented as avatars, facilitated by networked computers.”

Preserving, Collecting, Displaying Digital Art: From the Net Archive to the Net as a Virtual Space of Experience

As already mentioned, the artistic experience, in its virtual dimension, implies the need to rethink the ways in which artifacts are preserved, exhibited and collected. The methods of archiving, cataloguing, displaying and restoring dedicated to traditional media are not always effective with respect to art that is born, grown and inhabited into a computer. Moreover, technological supports are neither absolute nor eternally adequate for this task - we could not store all the video art produced so far in miles of DVDs, just as we could not preserve Botticelli's Venus in a JPEG file.

In 1999, the Guggenheim Museum proposed "The Variable Media Initiative", a non-traditional strategy of preserving basic media and performance artifacts for the preservation of the museum's permanent collection, which later evolved into the Variable Media Network (VMN). As the Museum states: "VMN is recognized for its ground-breaking methodology, which seeks to define acceptable levels of change within any given art object and documents ways in which a sculpture, installation, or conceptual work may be altered (or not) for the sake of preservation without losing that work's essential meaning." The VMN project represents one of the first major attempts by an arts institution to bring attention to the potential loss of artifacts should we adhere to the rigidity of traditional storage methods.

For this reason, the VMN strategy proposes a tripartite protocol for artwork preservation. Artwork preservation may be static, it may involve migration from one medium to another, it may involve emulation or cloning of the artwork itself. These three elements do not correspond to three distinct steps, but to three modes of conservation that are flexible and subject to hybridization, according to the specificities of the artifact and the availability and evolution of technology.

"To say that a work is encoded implies that part or all of it is written in computer code or some other language that requires interpretation (e.g. dance notation or a musical score). A networked artwork is designed to be viewed on an electronic communication system, whether a Local Area Network or the Internet."

Guggenheim Museum

Since the early 2000s, more and more virtual archives dedicated to the digitization and exhibition of traditional works of art, but also network-based works, created with and for the Internet, began to emerge. For these works, the net becomes the space of preservation but also of exhibition: the archive becomes hypertextual, performed, networked. The accessibility of artistic heritage, whether contemporary or not, digital or digitized, is beginning to increase exponentially. Certainly, the web is master and servant as far as the accessibility of artistic heritage online is concerned: if, on the one hand, digitization and cultural networking allow access to a great quantity of contents, on the other hand, the contents are inserted in a network that is not homogeneous, but rich in its own hierarchies and markets. An emblematic example of this is the Google Arts & Culture platform, which since 2012 has been offering more and more virtual experiences of access to the collections of great museums, or 360° film viewing, or even street-view sightseeing experiences.

More recently, Rhizome's digital preservation department, Net Art Anthology, concluded a project that began in 2016. The aim of the project is to highlight the most relevant net-art works, whose preservation and consultation is often difficult to access. The project proposes a contemporary reading of internet-based and computer-oriented artistic practices, sketching a possible net art canon. Completed in 2019, the project was accompanied by an exhibition entitled The Art Happens Here, which premiered at the New Museum in NYC in winter 2019. The work-in-progress nature of the Net Art Anthology project highlights the fact that the process of art preservation requires constant evolution that respects the specifics of each artifact's media and artistic purposes. The online archive in turn becomes a platform for archiving, exhibition and research. The curation of the virtual archive embodies a form of traditional rigor and a changing content that is conscious of its place in art history and network culture.



ELEKTRA x Google Arts & Cultures
<https://artsandculture.google.com/partner/elektra>. Exhibition: *META-MORPHOSIS VOL.2*. Courtesy of ELEKTRA

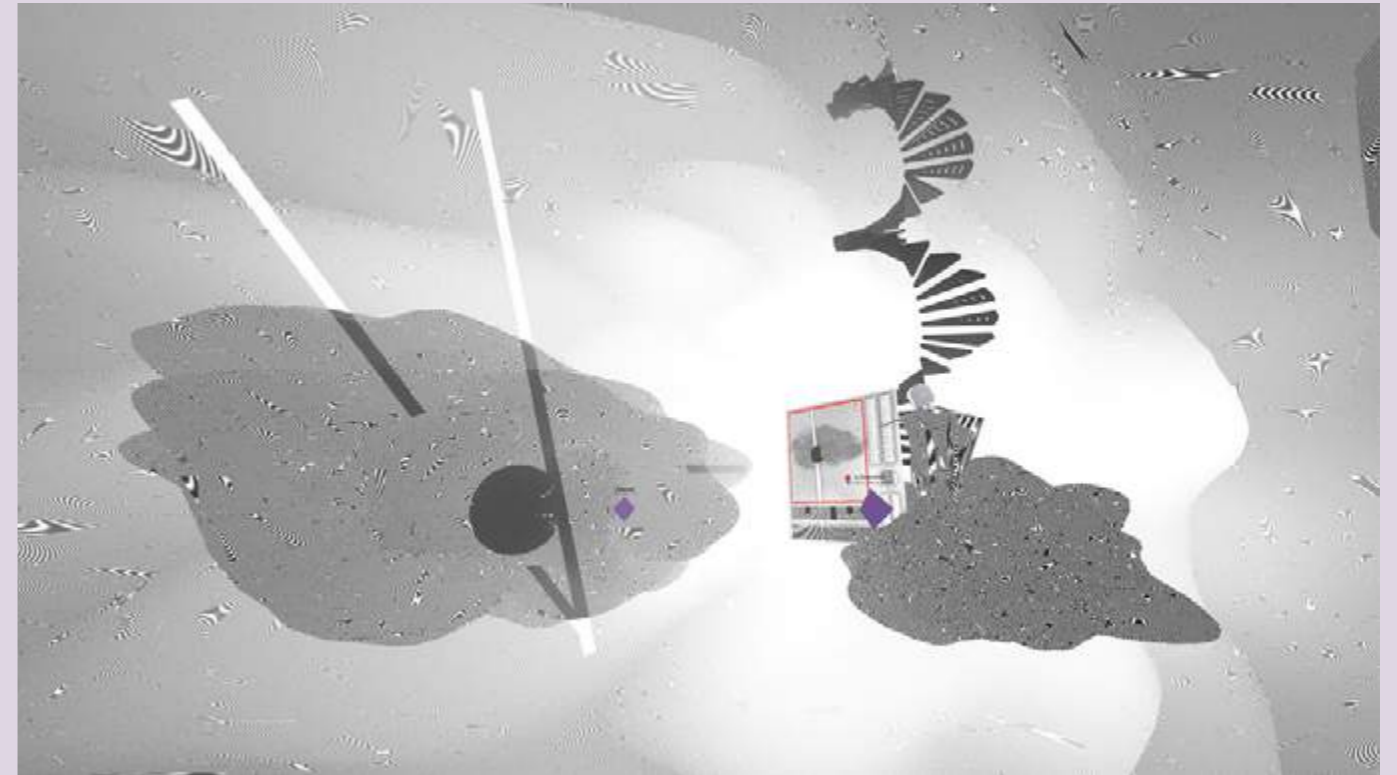
ELEKTRA presents and promotes works created at the intersections of contemporary art and new technologies, inscribed in the latest aesthetic currents of research and experimentation.

Interactive Environments: From Conservation to Experience, and Vice Versa

Artistic experimentations seem to be always one step ahead of their institutional curation, conservation, display, along with their commercial treatment. Nevertheless, we are witnessing the emergence of more and more varied forms of online exhibition that go beyond the static form of the catalog or archive of works, but tend towards hybridization and experimentation. The virtual art experience is articulated in increasingly hybrid forms, from the in situ installation of AR devices to the creation of truly interactive virtual sets.

The birth of these hybrid and experimental forms brings the exhibition of art beyond the catalog and against its stativity. In this regard, the New Museum is one of the most relevant institutions in offering online art experiences of various kinds, accompanying and not replacing the physical exhibitions organized by the museum. The online exhibition program curated by the New Museum is called *First Look: New Art Online* and features a series of innovative online projects and new commissions. Far from offering traditional curatorial methods, the New Museum offers a fresh and engaging look at the contemporary digital scene, putting it in perspective with art history and future prospects for cultural and technological innovation, and keeping track of the artistic experiences that mark its evolution in their New Museum Digital Archive. The New Museum privileges inclusivity and innovation in its cultural programming, with particular attention to the history of new media and their symbiosis with contemporary art.

Museums, galleries, festivals and other artistic events and institutions share the tendency to create hybrid forms that emphasize the brotherhood between art and technology. This is the case of the online biennial founded and curated by David Quiles Guilló with the emblematic name *the Wrong* (from 2013). *The Wrong* is a hybrid on and offline biennial built on a largely collaborative basis, contrary to the bureaucratic formalities that characterize the traditional institutional art programming. Curators and artists have an exceptionally broad scope in the creation of their exhibition pavilions, masterfully and transparently mediated and collected in the biennial general website.



Exhibition view: Rosa Menkman x New Art City, *The BLOB of Im/Possible Images*, 2021. Visit the exhibition at <https://newart.city/show/menkman-blob-of-im-possibilities>

The last edition of *The Wrong* ended in 2020 and the website which was hosting the exhibitions has been converted into a streaming channel dedicated to digital art, in particular video art, and prepares the ground for the next edition (starting on 1st November 2021). In addition to the astounding amount of participation received by *the wrong* (more than 5500 artists and curators have officially participated in the birth of the biennial), the project keeps its promises and proves to be a stage full of innovative and varied proposals on a global scale. The exhibition in its virtual interconnection allows access to a global and joyfully decentralized dimension of contemporary art. In unprecedented times, if nothing seems to go right we should definitely go wrong.

The increased accessibility, awareness and confidence towards online navigation and immersive experience find their counterpart in the creative experimentation of fantastic and strictly interactive sets. Digital art borrows the

aesthetics of immersion from the world of gaming, embraces and espouses the precision of set design and the enthusiasm for creating spaces in which the user - visitor - has the freedom to wander and create their own visual journey. This is the case of projects like the one proposed by New Art City, a platform and community for online exhibitions. The shows are designed and built in 3D through a basic and easy-to-use editing tool. The visitor accesses the virtual exhibition space through his web browser and has the possibility to move within the virtual gallery and interact with other Internet users through chat. New Art City proposes a simple and yet effective model, paradigmatic for the birth of a new format dedicated to digital art and in step with its evolutions. The values of the project aim at a possible democratization of the exhibition process, where the traditional modes of artistic showcasing are often scattered with obstacles of various natures.

The digital as a medium and the virtual as a mode of experience open the range of possibilities in artistic creation and fruition. In a historical and cultural moment of great changes and evolutions in the ways of living one's own space, both real and virtual, the art world has the creative power and responsibility to adapt to new ways of perceiving artistic objects.

The virtual appropriation of spaces and aesthetics once reserved for niches of experts allows the emergence of a new artistic avant-garde, untied from traditional exhibition canons and its spatial limitations. Emerging digital artists in the virtual world are armed with a creative spirit that disassociates itself from any demonization of the technological medium. On the contrary, it invites its visitors to immerse themselves in their own universe and to investigate their own spaces and take control of their own navigation. For this reason, the gaming universe becomes a valuable shoulder for the creation of increasingly rich and interactive narratives. The virtual is an invitation to embrace new visions and perceptions of art. Artists such as Alexandra Gorczynski share this invitation, and bring their works and their viewers into play. In her solo exhibition *Farniente, Matisse and I*, Gorczynski stages her research on the perception of the body in the

digital era, a perception that involves also and above all, the active part of the artistic experience. The works take on another understanding according to their mode of experience, and the artists' invitation to visit and be part of their own universe brings into play the contradictions and similarities between the real and virtual worlds. Between hyperrealism and fantastic landscapes, virtual movement and physical staticity, traditional display and experimental navigation, the experience of art as a game and immersion points the finger towards new creative directions. Virtuality in the digital art experience is not only a necessity but a choice, and the treatment of digital works of art and their exhibition and networking must reflect the consciousness of an art made today, and for tomorrow.



Alexandra Gorczynski, *Farniente, Matisse and I*, 2021, virtual exhibition

[Discover the experience](#)

Collecting the Future

*Conversation with Sylvain Levy, Laetitia Maffei founder of Danae
and Angelica Ceccato writer and content producer for Danae*

dslcollection is a contemporary
Chinese art collection created in 2005
by Sylvain and Dominique Levy.

The collection, which intentionally includes a limited number of objects, counts not more than 350 - the collection comprises major works of 200 contemporary Chinese artists. In addition to being the co-founder of dslcollection, a generous promoter of contemporary culture and a witty anticipator of trends, Sylvain Levy is also and above all a visionary. Far from being prone to any kind of reticence towards the marriage of art and technology, Sylvain Levy's projects take a big step towards a possible cultural democratization thanks to new technologies and new forms of artistic experience. Sylvain Levy conversed with us and shared his sharp, bold and, perhaps, prophetic ideas about the future of art and the centrality of openness and experience in the new, upcoming digital world.



Dsl collection, virtual museum, <https://www.viveport.com>

Laetitia Maffei: How did you begin collecting art? What interested you in Chinese art in particular?

Sylvain Levy: I began collecting art thanks to my wife, I can say that “women are the future of man”. We began collecting art when we got married thirty six years ago, the starting point of our couple was also the starting point of our collection. The important thing is that collecting art has been and still is part of our lives. That’s the more interesting thing in our lives. Collecting is a real life journey that allows us to meet people, objects, ideas, and now more and more to meet the world we live in. That is the main idea. If I had to write a book about my life I would begin with this story. The second chapter would be dsl collection. “DSL” stands for Dominique and Sylvain Levy, and we chose this name because the project was envisioned as an entrepreneurial and cultural project. My wife and I come from the world of fashion (through Caroll) and luxury (through my wife’s family). Our experience allowed us to understand the concept of ‘brand’ and

we wanted to see if we could apply it to a collection of objects. We wanted to collect alternatively, and we found the occasion to do that just after a trip to China in 2005. We went there because my brother in law moved there. There is a quite shocking difference between a European city like Paris and a city like Shanghai. It makes you ask yourself a lot of questions. We asked ourselves if we could find in Chinese contemporary art the same energy that we were dealing during our journey in China, knowing that art is the mirror of society. We wanted to find the energy of a country undergoing important transformations from the Middle Ages to the 21st century in just 40 years. Moreover, involving millions of inhabitants!

When we came back to Paris we decided to start our collection and open it to the public. It was new, because we were used to collecting design objects for quite a long time, but we never shared our collection before. We made this decision, and in 2005 we started to think about the ways in which we wanted to share the collection with the public. At

the time opening a place to showcase our collection would have been the more conventional way to do that, but we were not sure about the location (should it be in France or in China?). It didn’t feel right for us to just open a physical place. We foresaw its financial and intellectual limits in managing an exhibition space and keeping it alive in a meaningful way. We didn’t want just a display, the place should have been ‘alive’, and that would have been really complicated. So we thought of another way: in 2005 we got inspired by Youtube and the Internet more in general. We perceived that the Internet allowed us to connect with China, so we started to think about building experiences in the digital world. Very soon, we realized that these kinds of experiences were meaningful and that the digital world wasn’t just a temporary trend but a real wave able to transform society. We decided to surf on that wave.

From 2005, our collection’s aim is to enhance both the energy of the transforming Chinese society and the upcoming digital wave. The 2D museum became a 3D museum. In 2011 we created an iPad app, just a few months after the first iPad release, and I can still remember myself walking inside a gallery and seeing the people around me astonished by my iPad and wondering what it was for. There was already a negative reaction to technology in the art world. I remember an article I wrote in 2014 where I was clearly questioning the value of a digital visitor. Today, the Met Museum, which has 92 millions visitors on their Facebook page, has 9 millions of physical visitors. What is the value of these 92 millions visitors? At that time, and also today, digital visitors are not taken into account in the criteria of success of a museum, which just includes the surface of the exhibition space, the number of artworks it exposes, the number of physical visitors. We followed another path which led us to Second Life. We were among the first ones using that platform, and we had a lot of fun with it. It was a completely new experience, and we discovered that the digital world breaks down every physical limit. It was interesting because it wasn’t an exact replica of reality, but another thing.

[LM] Do you still have your museum on Second Life?

[SL] It is funny because we are now starting to rebuild it. We still have our ‘land’ in Second Life, but since most of the users abandoned the platform, we stopped taking care of our museum. Now it seems that the platform is living again, so we decided to relaunch our projects there. We also went quite far with it. People were really concerned about one of our experiences on Second Life: we hacked the Grand Palais and rebuilt it in 3D and filled it with artworks visible through some special glasses. There is also a video version of this experience we shared on Youtube.

In our path we discovered more and more things little by little, including virtual reality (VR) four years ago. We got in touch with a company from Dubai working with VR. They proposed us to create a virtual museum in which you could move around in VR. It was supposed to be a virtual copy of the traditional white cube. It was already good, but it wasn’t enough for us. For me, virtual reality is a real game changer for many reasons. Firstly, the main reason is that today, whether it is through a computer, a television or a smartphone, we always look through a screen. In VR you are transported in another dimension. In augmented reality (AR) you still are in reality, you just add something to it. VR is something else. There are, of course, some disadvantages: you have to wear a headset. Still, if you want to go swim to the bottom of the sea you need a headset, if you want to go to space you need a headset. If you want to change from an environment to another, you always need something that allows you to see, or breath, or both! That is the downside of VR, but I am sure that in the future we will have some more friendly-user designs.



Dsl collection, virtual museum, <https://www.viveport.com>

[LM] Have you tried the last Oculus headset?

[SL] Of course! I'm not selling any device so I'm trying to be objective in relation to what I know. What is fundamental in VR is that we have to split someone's head and someone's body (you could sit still and walk in the meantime). You cut the brain off of the body. This dissociation is what makes VR special. Secondly, VR addresses itself to a part of the brain that records physical reality. So if you kill someone in VR you have the impression that you kill someone in real life. At the memory level, the experience we record in VR lays on the same level as the memories we record in real life. That is the difference with the relation with a flat screen, we are not surrounded. Once we understood how it works, we started optimizing this system. We started another virtual museum, produced by a French company named Monochrome. We created a 400 meters long and 200 meters high museum. We didn't have any architectural limit. This museum featured our biggest artworks, and you could visit it walking around as in a traditional museum.

We later discovered that the people who were most interested in this kind of VR experience were elderly people, reduced mobility visitors, and children. For instance, VR allowed many people who were unable to physically move to go to see the Louvre, or the Guggenheim. We found in VR a tool to make these people part of the art world. For the children, seeing a museum in VR is like playing a game, and that brought us to think about the gamification of the art experience. In the further version of our VR museum you could not only walk but also fly around the museum and play with the sculptures. All of the studies around museums' audiences lead to the fact that one goes to the museum to get entertained, so once more, we decided to investigate the dimension of entertainment and education offered by a VR museum.

Then, something unexpected happened: COVID brought general panic and everybody went online. We quickly realized that online has limits: digital spaces are often poorly used. Today, what is the best way to manage the space behind the screen? The answer is video games. Video games allow you to create a space of empathy: you could play football alongside Cristiano Ronaldo or be James Bond's wing man. You could also create meaningful connections, interactions, and be part of an economic model that today does not exist in the art world. We know that today the art world is in real danger now, and every museum around the world is in precarious conditions. There is also an existential problem: the art market didn't rise from 2017, it is always around 65 billion dollars.

“Today, what is the best way to manage the space behind the screen? The answer is video games. Video games allow you to create a space of empathy.”

“We are entering a new chapter of the history of humanity. The human being is under transformation. The human being is building its personal digital twin.”

Cultural consumption raised, but the experience consumption didn't. Digital distribution, as it happens in music, cinema, and papers, will allow art to exist. We are in this transitional phase for culture: moving from the object to the experience. This doesn't mean that people will stop going to concerts, theaters, and cinemas, or will stop buying books and papers. There will just be something more.

Today, everyone has their own perception dealing with the pandemic. Of course, we are not all affected in the same way and everyone had time to process many different thoughts. I personally got an epiphany: we are entering a new chapter of the history of humanity. The human being is under transformation. The human being is building its personal digital twin. This digital twin has its own life: its own daytime meeting friends through video chat, its own consumption, etc. That is interesting because I could be in my room in Paris and have hundreds of people following my actions. Your digital twin makes you a superhero. It is fundamental to understand these dynamics because this digital twin doesn't have the same emotions and desire than us. The problem isn't whether we make VR or AR, but how to create

new desires and emotions for our digital twin, a new form of happiness. That is why we have to pass through something that is more than technology, something that passes through neurosciences and social sciences. The inconvenience of the digital twin is that it opened the door for a 1984-like scenario. The digital twin is a prisoner of Facebook, Instagram, and their puppet master. On the other hand, this digital twin really is alive, that is why we have to understand the world our digital twins are living in. In conclusion, this world is also accelerating. For instance, bitcoin became an actual digital currency, already used. The traditional way to conceive money doesn't exist anymore, and I have a big question mark around these tendencies. I think that the passage towards this new world is extremely fascinating. These subjects are at the base of our conception of the video game: for me video games are part of this new world, in which we have to learn how to sail. We are not 6 billions people in the world, but 12 billion, and we have to learn how to connect with these 6 billions of 'others'. Our children's digital twin will become more and more important than ours.



The Forgetter, the game

[LM] That is fascinating, and I share the same conclusions. And we are not talking about a distant future but something already happening.

[SL] I was talking about my projects with Andras Szanto, a curator and writer who has written [a very interesting book on museums in the 21st century](#), and he told me that my projects seem to be made for his children. I don't know if I come too early or if people around me are late. Are we living this present? Is my insight on technology already something that belongs to the past? It is really complicated to recognize the limits of what we call 'present', but I think the digital twin is living in the present and we are experiencing the transformation right now.

“Facebook bought Oculus for VR, knowing that tomorrow we will need to replace Facebook with some kind of social platform that goes beyond the screen. We could be able to meet friends and family through Oculus. Tomorrow is already today.”

Angelica Ceccato: Thank you very much for sharing your visionary ideas in such a rich and precise way. I like the fact that you perceive collecting as a way to tell both a collective and intimate story, and also an act of love towards people around us - physically or virtually. I share with you the need of rebuilding awareness on the artwork as experience more than an object. I find interesting the fact that with the metaphor of the digital twin the virtual experience gains autonomy from the physical world. What is the best way to configure the new way of experiencing art in the virtual? Is the video game format something that will spread in all artistic practices?

[SL] I do not have a lot of direct experience in playing video games. Why did we end up working with video games? It is important for me to talk in terms of community. Our world is more and more built on communities, therefore the need to address these communities with the right tools and language. Video games community is extremely important right now, counting 1 billion players all over the world and twice the turnover of the cinema industry. We cannot ignore that. And what makes a success criteria for a gamer is not necessarily the same concerning the art world. How can we fusion these two experiences? We began understanding VR and we got inspired by younger generations. We got in touch with a Chinese team of video games producers. I was

lucky enough to be in the Committee of museum education in Shenzhen - id est the Chinese Silicon Valley. The Shenzhen Museum devoted an entire space to *ds/collection* in VR, where three visitors can walk around with an Oculus headset interacting with the artworks and each other. Sociability is in this case fundamental. We started asking the production team to think about a videogame, and they proposed the first game, entitled *The Forgetter*, that will be released in March. They worked on Unity, and this experience got me the chance to discover a really wide range of practices. For a video game you need a screenplay, a set design, a theatrical apparatus, some music, etc. It is extremely complex from a creative point of view. You need plenty of different skills to make a video game, a world of really unique creativity made of a multitude of craftspeople. I find it really fascinating, along with the gamers community. They continuously train on them and cooperate with each other. There's a real community spirit among the gamers. I am interested in the way we can apply these concepts to other environments.

Lately we asked a French-Rumanian team to create a video game. Their game is called June and will be released next June. It is interesting to see that between China and Europe there's a completely different approach also in presenting the artworks. The Chinese community based in the USA who created Second Life asked us to create via VRChat a DSL Art Village (to be released in October), allowing us to visit a re-enactment of an 80s village made by artists. In the village you will be able to walk together with other users, to visit artists' studios and meet them, organize concerts, and so on. The platform will be similar to Fortnite. This is our next step. VRChat is a platform with a few millions users who can interact through a VR headset. For example, Jean-Michel Jarre showcased his concert on VRChat for New Year's Eve. The concert was staged in Notre Dame Cathedral, and with VR we could be there and see the concert as if we were actually there. This is the future, and someone who already understood that is Mark Zuckerberg with Facebook. Facebook bought Oculus for VR, knowing that tomorrow we will need to replace Facebook with some kind of social platform that goes beyond the screen. We could be able to meet friends and family through Oculus. Tomorrow is already today. This is always in the state of mind of meeting one's digital twin. That's our quest.



The Forgetter, the game

[LM] Can we say that VR is the future of the web?

[SL] Exactly. We live in a time where we strive to see the future, and in which we have been able to do the unpredictable - like creating a vaccine in just one year - that's something new for humanity. Will VR be the future? It will surely be part of it, but together with maybe the holograms, maybe the AR or a chip in our brain. I'm not sure, and I don't really like to talk about the future. I believe that it is already too complicated to define who we are now. I am a human being with two legs and one head. One leg lives in the past, one leg lives in the present, and my head is turned towards the future. If I could look towards the past or the present I would probably hit a wall, but I wouldn't be able to look towards the future without my past and my present. I believe that the future is to be in these three places at once.

[LM] What was the artists' feedback to your video game? Did it help them in their careers?

[SL] The feedback has been 100% positive. It surely contributed to a certain vision of their works. Everybody now takes pictures of artworks and posts them on Instagram, so everybody gives their own vision of the artwork itself. As it happens in music with video clips, artists realized that the art experience is not limited to the real physical one but is also made of its dissemination, and now people discover more music by watching a video clip on youtube rather than just listening to it on Spotify. We are going towards a new world, and this journey takes prudence. We have to be careful on how we handle digital material and art: artworks have digital property. For now our results are strictly positives.

[LM] Will your game be available for free?

[SL] The game will cost around 6\$, and 80% of the income will be given to the artists who made the game.

[LM] By putting your video game on Stream you will be confronted with live comments by the gamers. Who will answer these comments?

[SL] There will be two types of comments: the artistic one, whose I'm personally charged for them, and the gamer community one through Stream. For us it is a way to open DSL to a new community, it will be interesting to see what comes out of this.

[LM] How will the art market evolve?

[SL] I believe that the art market will always exist. Art is something almost impossible to define today. I believe that art is a confluence of many things, including the luxury market, the financial market, the cultural and education market, the entertainment market, etc. The problem is that today for most people there's art as a market (following the concept of ownership, it is a kind of elitarian and limited perception of art),

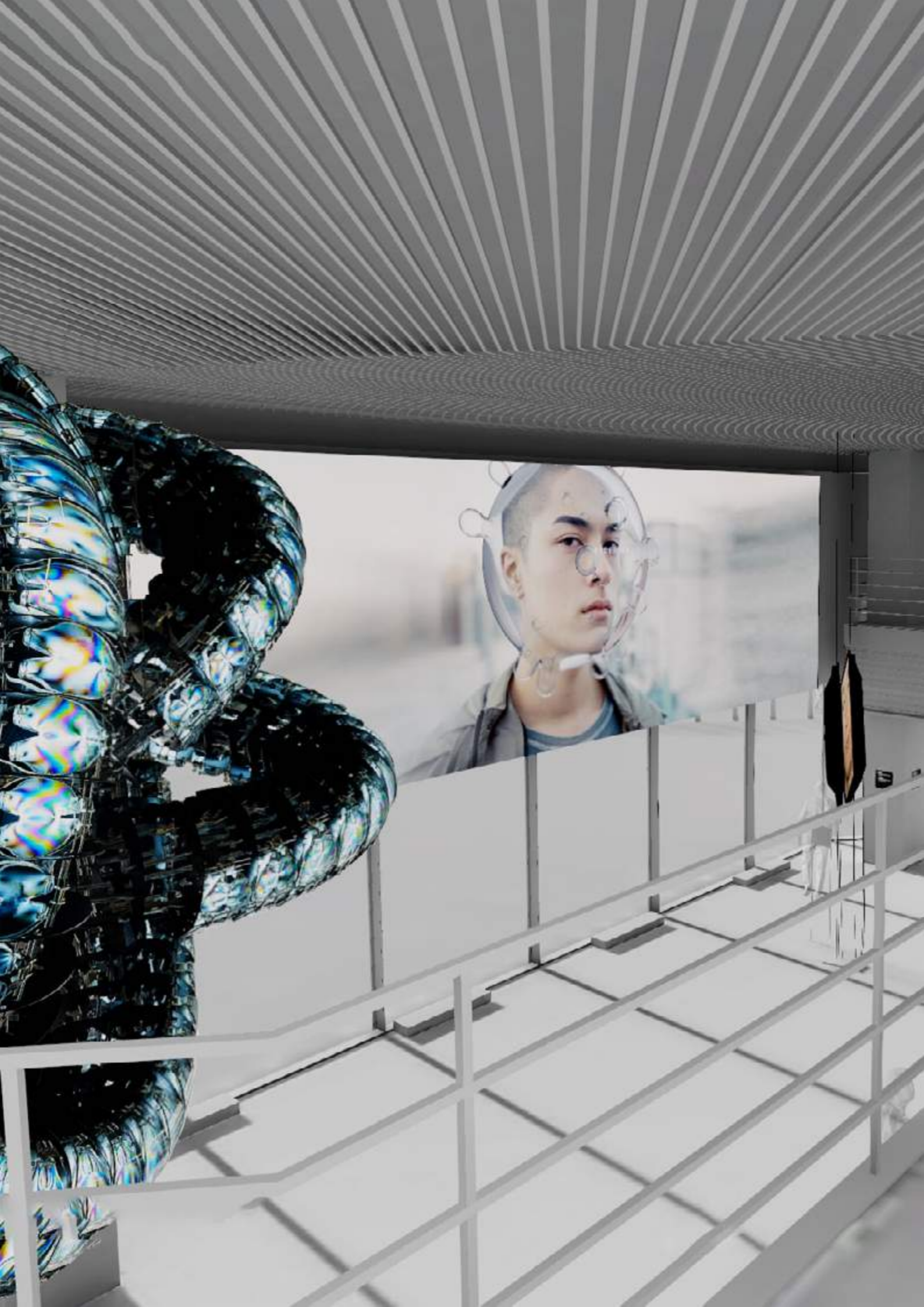
and art as the consumption of experiences. I believe in the second definition. Fortunately, we can witness that now people just ask one thing: to go back to museums. We need museums, culture is an essential need. Art education is an essential need. I really believe in art and in its market, I'm not sure where to place the monetization within this system. Is it in the traditional way to deal with artworks? Is it in the digital experience? I don't have an answer.

[LM] We are looking for the same answers.

[SL] I think everybody is pushing their boundaries in a certain way in building a new world.

The Forgetter, the game

https://store.steampowered.com/app/1499990/Forgetter/?l=french&curator_clanid=4777282&utm_source=SteamDB



Q&A with Alain Thibault

ELEKTRA is a Montreal based organization that presents works and artists that combine contemporary artistic creation and new technologies, and are in line with the current aesthetics of research and experimentation. Since 1999, ELEKTRA has organized an international digital art festival featuring multimedia art performances, involving immersive and participative experiences. ELEKTRA produces the BIAN (Biennale

internationale d'art numérique, International Biennial of Digital Art), exhibiting innovative artworks dealing with new technologies, and the MIAN (Marché international d'art numérique, International Market of Digital Art), hosting since 2007 major players in the digital art and culture ecosystem. Alain Thibault, artistic and producing director of ELEKTRA, shares an idea of the museum and of artistic display that favors innovation, partici-

pation and the removal of the limits of traditional exhibition methods. His virtual museum project is based on an avant-garde and original approach, proposing the realization of an interactive space of menstruation and artistic enhancement. For this reason we asked him some questions about his idea of virtuality and the construction of digital spaces thanks to new technologies.

How would you define a virtual space?

A 3D space where you can freely move.

What were your inspirations during your first creations?

Video games.

What is the purpose of virtual exhibition spaces? Is it creating a new space to display art or is it about rethinking the very nature of the art experience? Does the very notion of exposure remain?

We firstly recreated existing exhibition spaces to give the visitor the best possible experience of the in situ exhibition (hybrid mode). Our position regarding 3D, unlike Street View type exhibitions, also allows us to create spaces straight out of the imagination of architects and to present exhibitions without the physical constraints.

How is a virtual exhibition space different from a physical one?

Less constraining in terms of space but still having to take into account the current technological limits if one wants someone in Paris, Montreal or Seoul to have the same experience.

What should be the distribution of roles among the architect, the scenographer, the curator and the artist in a virtual space exhibition?

I believe that they are interrelated, in the same way as in a physical space but with different parameters.

To what extent are video games a source of inspiration and what should be the typology of such a virtual exhibition space?

At ELEKTRA we want to maintain the highest value of the place and the works of the artists we propose. Therefore a closed space, which will be able to expand according to our projects, but completely under control.

Do you think that only specific works of art are suited to be exhibited in a virtual space? In this case, which ones? Or, on the contrary, every kind of artwork could find its place in a virtual exhibition regardless of its medium?(digital works or not, immersive, generative, sculptures, classical paintings, etc.).

Indeed some physical works will be more difficult to show or represent. But these 3D representation techniques are evolving rapidly. For video works, their duration is the current issue. For interactive works, we develop different strategies in order to make the visitor experience the interaction in the best way. For digital works, in general not so much worries because they fit well in this type of environment.

What could be the new ways of visiting and what role does the visitor play in a virtual space? Should they be alone, in a group, accompanied by a guide or with strangers as in a traditional museum?

For the moment the visitor of our exhibitions is alone. We are going to explore the idea of being able to receive multiple visitors in order to make it a space for socialization.

The question of self-representation remains: what would his avatar look like?

What technologies do you use to create virtual spaces?

Cinema 4D, Unity.

Which devices are the best suited? Virtual reality headsets, still owned by few art enthusiasts, smartphones, or computers?

For the moment we are aiming at a fairly wide spread from there the use of a web browser like Chrome. We try to avoid downloading an application. It will depend on the technical constraints on the display of the works in a browser.

What do you think of the initiative of the Phi Center in Montreal, taken over by the 104 in Paris, to rent a headset with an uploaded experience?

For the moment we do not want to invest in the realization of exhibitions for VR headsets: problems related to current and future health constraints, the resolution and very little widespread among the public. Let's wait and see how they evolve.

Is there a recommended place to visit a virtual space? At the museum? At home? Elsewhere?

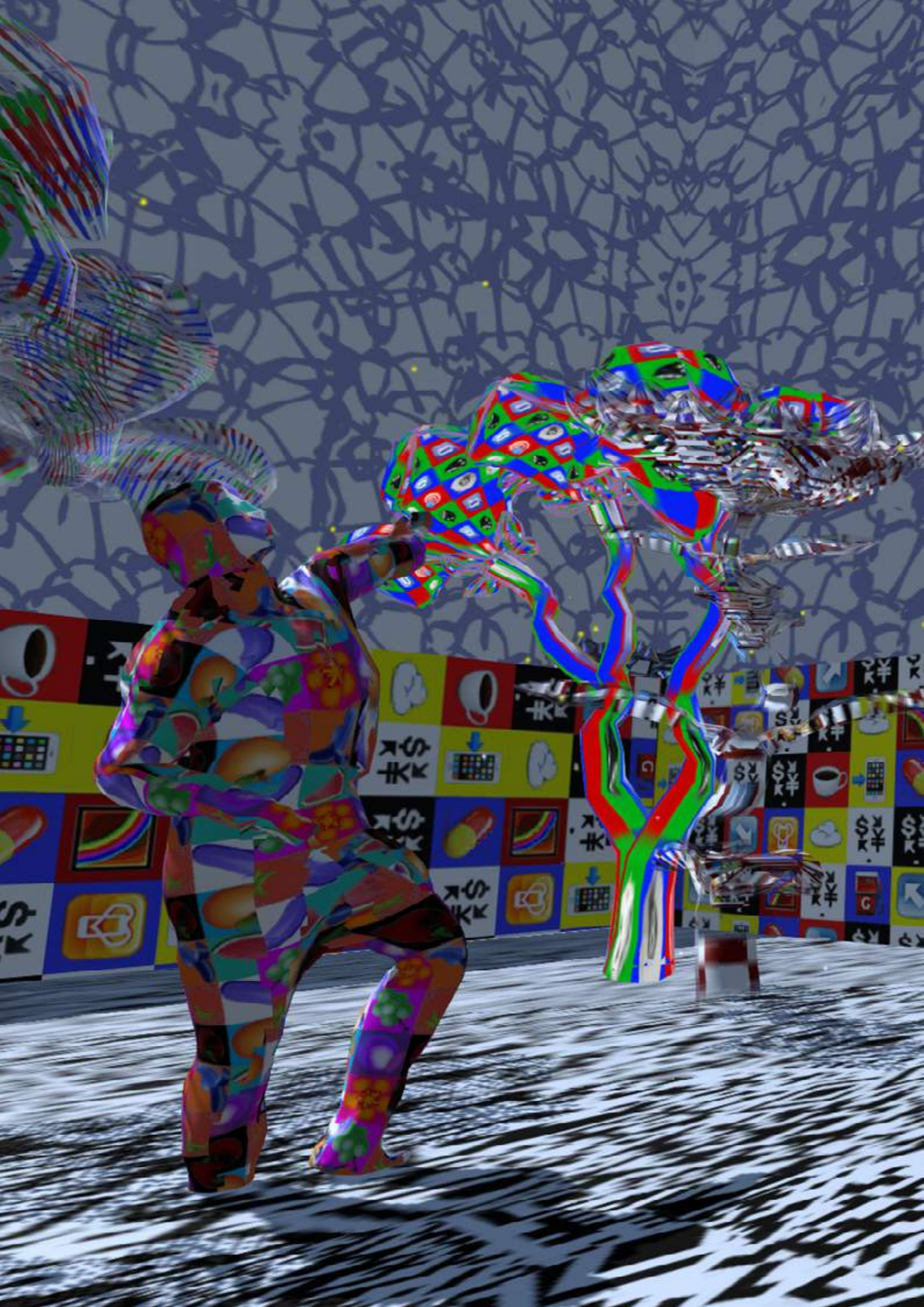
Why not at home, especially in confinement.

What economic models do you see for these spaces? Public grants, commissions from museums, art centers or foundations? Brand sponsorship? Financial contributions from visitors?

All these models are possible. Public aid generally gives us more freedom for artistic choices.



ELEKTRA x Google Arts & Cultures. Exhibition: *METAMORPHOSIS VOL.2*. Courtesy of ELEKTRA



Q&A with Claudia Hart

Claudia Hart is one of the first artists to have used computer-generated images through 3D animation for the design of media installations and projections. She is a pioneer artist in virtual reality, augmented reality, and computer-aided object design. Inspired by the cybernetic artists of the 1960s, Claudia Hart applies her feminist vision in a male-dominated computer world. In

2007, the artist introduced the first educational program on the use of simulation technologies in art at the School of the Art Institute of Chicago (SAIC). She has emerged among the generation of inter-media artists of the 1990s belonging to the so-called “identity” movement. Continuously renewing her work through the prism of technology, she keeps the question of identity at the heart

of her approach. Her work focuses on how technologies modify our interpretations of body and nature. Fascinated by the interface between the real and the unreal, Claudia Hart creates liminal situations that she sees as spaces for contemplation and transformation. That is why we asked her some questions on art, virtuality and perception through evolving new media.

How would you define a virtual space? How is a virtual exhibition space different from a physical space?

A virtual space is one in which the mind tricks the body. A physical space is one in which the body tricks the mind.

What is the purpose of the virtual exhibition spaces? Is it creating a new space to display art or is it about rethinking the very nature of the experience of works of art? Does the very notion of exposure remain?

The purpose of a virtual exhibition space is the same as the purpose of an artwork: to create a place for contemplation halfway between the real world and the world of symbols and metaphors and mythologies. If thought of in this way, all art is actually a portal into virtuality. Simulated environments, whether an exhibition space or an art installation, somehow heighten the intensity of the art experience one has in them. I think this is because virtual exhibition spaces turn “exposure” (to an object) into an immersive perceptual experience. In these kinds of environments, art is not an object to be viewed but an experience to be transformed by, super stimulating to the imagination and the senses.

What should be the distribution of roles between the architect, the scenographer, the curator and the artist in a virtual space?

I think that a real-life curator is always a scenographer and a designer creating visual relationships between art works as well as conceptual and historical ones. A virtual exhibition, however, is in all ways a fake and so is even more of a stage set than those you find in the physical world. In virtuality, even the user’s body feels fake. It feels like a gateway between the real physical world and the fake virtual one. So in virtuality, the body becomes a kind of haptic interface. To produce a powerful experience in a virtual space, therefore, a curator must also be a technician who

is also a haptic interface designer and in relation to art, also a philosopher of the interface! Most VR platforms offer pre-set buildings and rooms, usually very neutral, with generic corporate esthetics, and are meant as conference sites. So to transcend that, a VR curator actually needs to be a scenographer and an architect AND an expert in 3D animation, and a haptic interface designer - and so does the artist! A very tall order indeed.

Do you think that only certain works of art are legitimate to be exhibited in a virtual space, and in this case, which ones, or on the contrary that all have their place there whatever their medium (digital works or not, immersive, generative, sculptures, classical paintings, etc.)

Virtual worlds are 100% surface. They are pure *maya*: an illusion, without physical form, ephemeral. What works best in an immersive world are works that are ABOUT the surface, such as any form of media, and of course computer graphics and generative works. I am an immersive 3D artist IRL, using projections or other things that are somehow trompe l’oeil, so translating my work from installation-based, multi-channel 3D animation to a VR version was a natural. Physical, craft-based objects don’t translate well into virtual space. This is unfortunate, and is why virtual spaces often feel cold and sterile. They are too perfect! They need more mistakes in them, to humanize them and make them feel more natural. Mistakes are great! They reflect the process of an artist as they navigate an artwork, and are sadly not so much in the nature of simulations technologies. Too many mistakes just crash a virtual world. They can’t exist in there. It is possible, however, to simulate the beautiful imperfection of the natural, and to fake a mistake. My next body of virtual works reflect on this.



Claudia Hart, *Inside the Flower Matrix*, 2016, rendered screen grabs made inside the Oculus VR experience.

What could be the modes of visit and what role does the visitor play in a virtual space? Should he be alone, in a group, accompanied by a guide or with strangers as in a classic museum?

Since the quarantine began, last March, I became enamored with *Mozilla Hubs*, *Mozilla* being the not-for-profit *.org* that also produces the *Firefox* browser. The *Hubs* are a very simple version of VR, going back to the visualization capabilities of very early simulations technologies. Creators can build a virtual world using *Spoke*, the *Mozilla* freeware, placing it on the open Internet by means of a provided link that can be distributed or not. After clicking, users can enter *Hubs* environments in the guise of an avatar body: a cute baby robot, a talking plant, a ghost, an owl, etc etc. The avatars, though child-like, are actually elegant haptic interfaces, their eyes bulging and bodies throbbing in response to voice volume, which diminishes with distance. One sees the VR world through the eyes of the avatar, easily navigating with keyboard controls. *Hubs* worlds can be accessed by means

of a VR headset or a computer monitor. I find that experiencing them is magical. I become a mythological creature in a fairy tale world due to the system’s diminished ability to represent - its move away from realism - because all of its data is streamed over the cloud. So not much data possible. What is great about a Hub is that inside, one experiences the illusion that one is physically sharing the space with other creatures. One can hang out, meet friends, fly around, share screens, stream video. One can walk through another avatar’s body without being rude! A revelation. For the technologically uninitiated, a guide for the first visit is required. After that, it’s easy and fun. I prefer it head-over-heels to the isolation I feel alone inside of a world inside of a headset. I believe it will change our relationship to virtuality in general, and also to the Internet. Let’s see how it goes - hopefully sharing a virtual space with other bodies is less anonymous, and therefore less toxic and more difficult to weaponize than the social-media Internet we inhabit today.

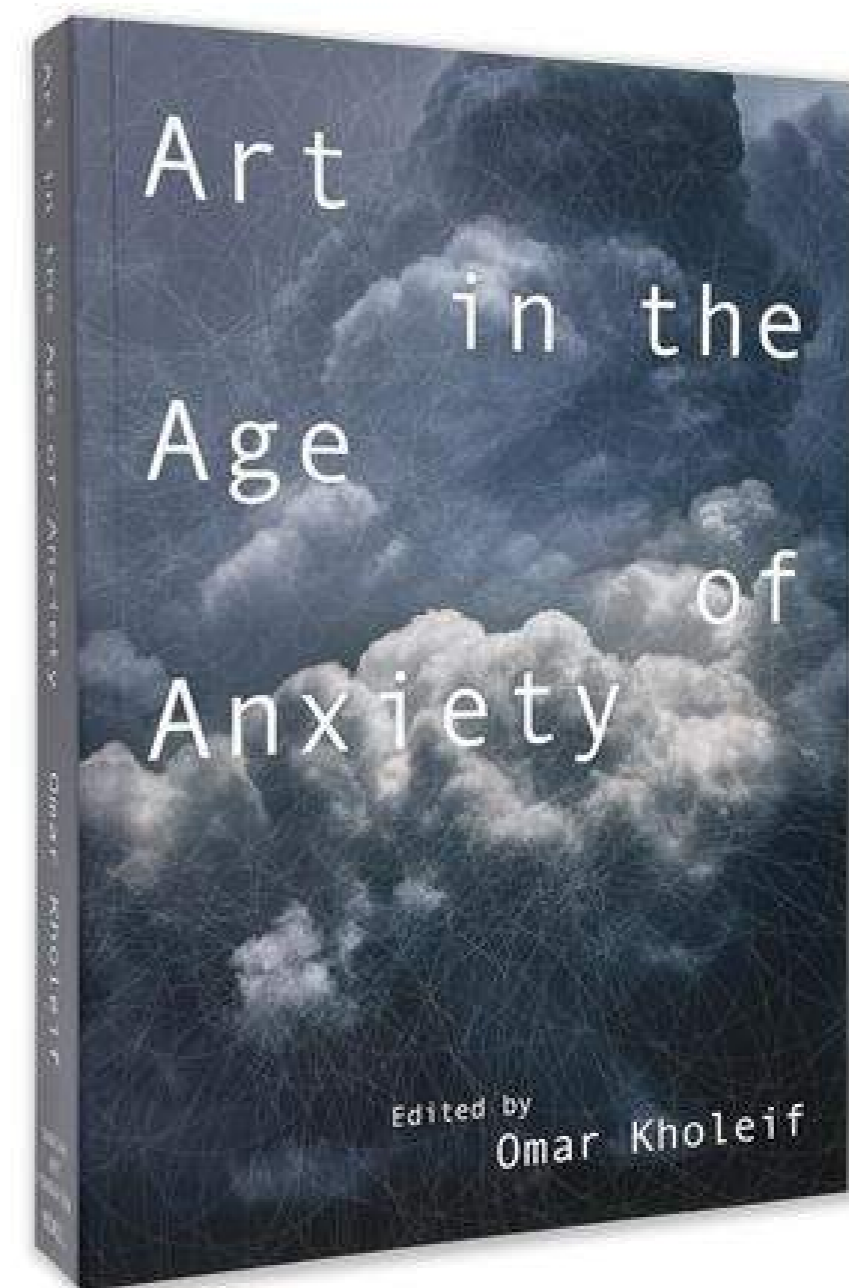
Displaying Immateriality

The emergence of new forms of art on and offline raises the need to rethink and rework traditional modes of art preservation and exhibition. Contemporary artists, curators and thinkers do not hesitate to provide us with numerous tools for reading and reflection. How do we construct our network culture? What paths does the virtual offer us? We have selected some texts that provide brilliant perspectives for the construction of new networks of meanings and new forms of artistic conception and perception.

Omar Kholeif: *Art in the Age of Anxiety*

What does it mean to make art in the Age of Anxiety? Omar Kholeif curated the exhibition and the homonymous catalog *Art in the Age of Anxiety*. The exhibition, born at the rising of the pandemic emergency, brought together a global group of contemporary artists to explore the ways everyday devices, technologies and digital networks have altered our collective consciousness. Kholeif borrows the poem *The Age of Anxiety*, by W.H. Auden (1947), to highlight a powerful and frighteningly consistent analogy and with the contemporary condition: isolation and the proliferation of technology and information become the cornerstone of a reflection on the ways of creating and sharing at the post-digital age.

Omar Kholeif's book proves to be much more than a classic exhibition catalog, and offers with masterful care a variety of insights into art and its evolving relationship to technology. What if our everyday devices and their attendant networks have affected our collective and individual consciousness? What art does the Age of Anxiety deserve, what art does it need? Omar Kholeif tells us in the words and images of: Hoor Al Qasimi, Anonymous, Saira Ansari, Cory Arcangel, Jeremy Bailey, Douglas Coupland, Simon Denny, Heather Dewey-Hagborg, Aruba Khalid, Omar Kholeif, Norman M. Klein, W. J. T. Mitchell, Todd Reisz, Danko Stjepanovic, Marc Tuters, Cory Arcangel, Douglas Coupland, Simon Denny, Danko Stjepanovic, Lawrence Abu Hamdan, Cory Arcangel, Jeremy Bailey, Wafaa Bilal, James Bridle, Antoine Catala, Douglas Coupland, Thomson & Craighead, Simon Denny, Aleksandra Domanović, Constant Dullaart, Electronic Disturbance Theater, Cao Fei, Oliver Laric, Lynn Hershman-Leeson, Rafael Lozano-Hemmer, Eva and Franco Mattes, Josha Nathanson, Katja Novitskova, Trevor Paglen, Jon Rafman, Tabor Robak, Pamela Rosenkranz, Aura Satz, Bogosi Sekhukhuni, Jenna Sutela, United Visual Artists (UVA), Siebren Veersteeg, Andrew Norman Wilson, Guan Xiao and YOUNG-HAE CHANG HEAVY INDUSTRIES. Welcome to a new age of anxiety, but also a new age of art.



Omar Kholeif, *Art in the Age of Anxiety*, The Mit Press, Mörel Books and Sharjah Art Foundation, 2021

Annet Dekker: *Collecting and Conserving Net Art*

Annet Dekker is an independent researcher and curator whose work focuses on the evolutions and reciprocal interactions of art and network cultures. In his book *Collecting and Conserving Net Art*, Dekker explores the peculiarities of net art in relation to museum studies. How does the emergence of net art highlight both the gaps and possibilities of art conservation, curatorship and exhibition? By arguing that networked systems bring into play the power relations of the traditional art palimpsest, Dekker highlights the mutability and transience of hardware and software. Art conservation in its virtuality is subject to the rapid obsolescence of technological supports. In this regard, Dekker sees in net art and in particular in software-based art a fertile field of study for the critical analysis of the choices of artistic conservation.

Dekker's book is without a doubt addressed to an audience of experts, and its precision and accuracy prove to be a valuable tool for reflection for art professionals.



COLLECTING AND CONSERVING NET ART

MOVING BEYOND CONVENTIONAL METHODS

Annet Dekker



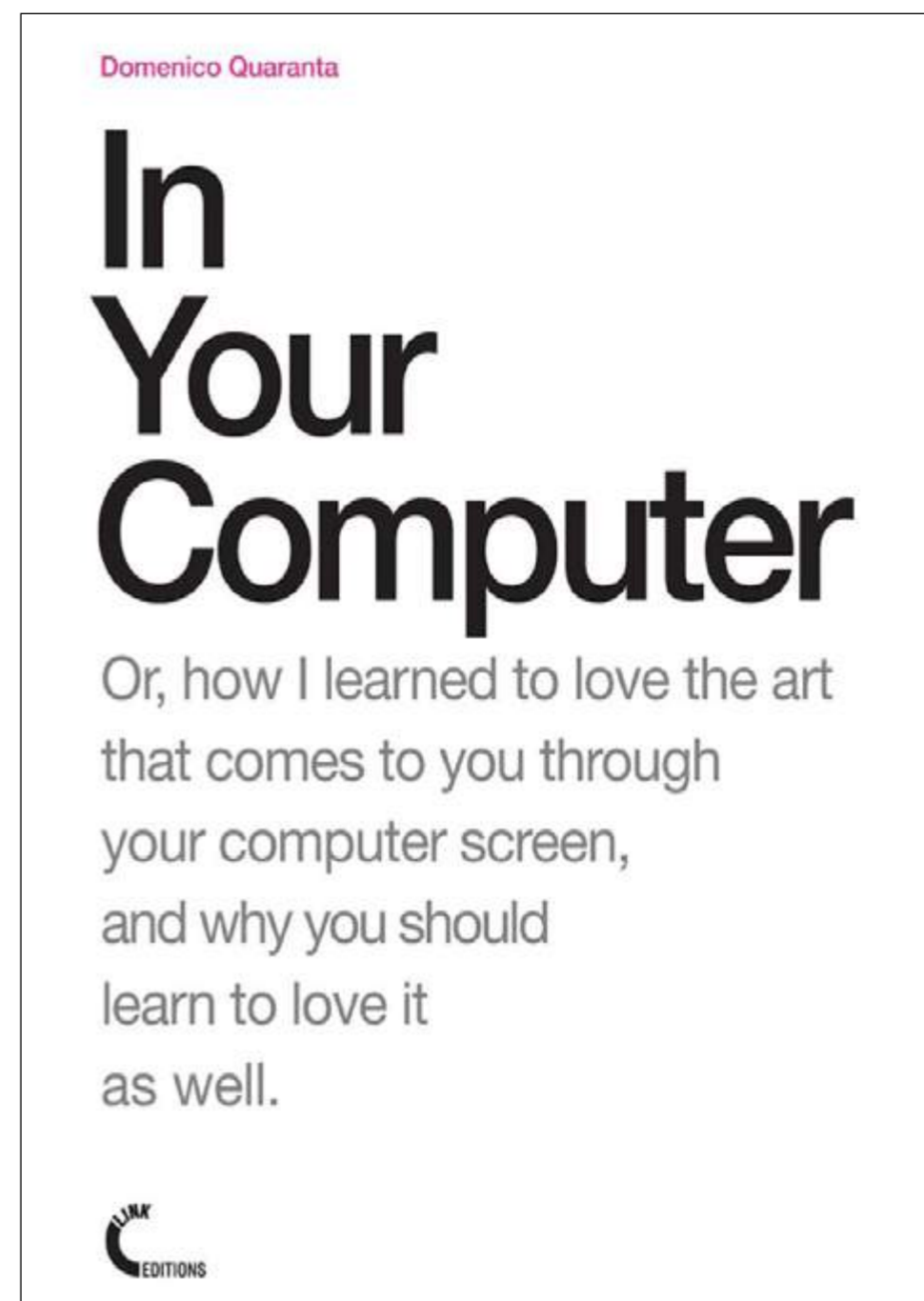
Annet Dekker, *Collecting and Conserving Net Art: Moving beyond Conventional Methods*, Routledge, 2020

Domenico Quaranta, *In Your Computer*, LINK Editions, Brescia 2011
Domenico Quaranta, *Sopravvivenza Programmata Etiche e pratiche di*
conservazione, dall'arte cinetica alla Net Art, Edizioni Kappabit, Rome
2020

Domenico Quaranta: *In Your Computer* and *Sopravvivenza Programmata*

In addition to being a brilliantly prolific author, curator, and publisher, Domenico Quaranta writes books and essays. His research clearly draws the evolution of digital art, the one made in the Net and for the Net, from Software art to videogames. His book entitled *In Your Computer. Or, how I learned to love the art that comes to you through your computer screen and why you should learn to love it as well* includes a collection of texts written between 2005 and 2010. His selection of essays, articles, and interviews with artists traces the history of Internet art, critical research around creative and self-generative processes, and methods of exhibiting and preserving works online. *In your Computer...* features many interventions of artists such as Eva and Franco Mattes, Casey Reas, UBERMORGEN.COM, Oliver Laric, Cory Arcangel, Tale of Tales, Jon Ippolito, and Gazira Babeli.

Quaranta's book offers a heterogeneous mixtape of artistic interventions that even more today - about twenty years after their birth - have a nostalgic flavor. Nevertheless, the book respects its promise and teaches its reader how the gaze on the works evolves together with the works themselves, and how one can love art that is made and proudly shown through a computer screen. Quaranta's research has most recently led to the editing of *SOPRAVVIVENZA PROGRAMMATA. Etiche e pratiche di conservazione, dall'arte cinetica alla Net Art* («PROGRAMMED SURVIVAL. Ethics and practices of conservation, from kinetic art to Net Art», in collaboration with Valentino Catricalà (2020, in Italian). The book provides the cues for an even more topical and profound reflection on the preservation, and therefore survival, of digital art. In this sense, *Programmed Survival* faces the obsolescence and potential inadequacy of traditional methods of care. In the introduction of *In Your Computer* Quaranta asks “ Why should you look at the world in a different way? ”. The answer becomes now more than ever an imperative, and the art that flourishes on the Internet needs the rise of a new look and new care.



Domenico Quaranta, *In Your Computer*, LINK Editions, Brescia
2011

Joasia Krysa: *Curating Immateriality*

Joasia Krysa's *Curating Immateriality*: the work of the curator in the age of network systems is the third volume of "AutonomediaOs DATA browser" series. Krysa, as an editor, curator and researcher analyzes the different parts of the debate around curating in the internet age. In Krysa's reading, the emergence of the net has triggered an evolution in the process of artistic production and distribution, shifting the attention to the process dimension of the network and no longer oriented towards the artistic object. One of the central ideas proposed by the author concerns the question of the immateriality of cognitive and creative work. It is this very immateriality that is called into question with the advent of the Internet as a virtual cultural space. Immateriality becomes the starting point for the definition of the concept of a distributed curatorial practice.

Krysa's publication is based on a systemic philosophical approach, in other words the action of curating is inserted in the context of interconnected and networked systems. Can we think of networks and algorithms as a future tool of art curating? *Curating Immateriality* proposes theoretical reflections and concrete examples of the application of the binomial software-curating, through the interventions of philosophers, artists, curators and other cultural agents. The book features articles by Joasia Krysa, Tiziana Terranova, Marina Vishmidt, Grzesiek Sedek, Geoff Cox, Christiane Paul, Eva Grubinger, Jacob, Lillemose, Josephine Berry Slater, 0100101110101101.org & [epidemiC], Alexander R. Galloway & Eugene Thacker, Franziska Nori, low-fi, Trebor Scholz, Beryl Graham, Piotr Krajewski, Olga Goriunova & Alexei Shulgin and Matteo Pasquinelli. *Curating Immateriality*, published in 2006, represents the avant-garde of its time and a fundamental reference for contemporary matters.



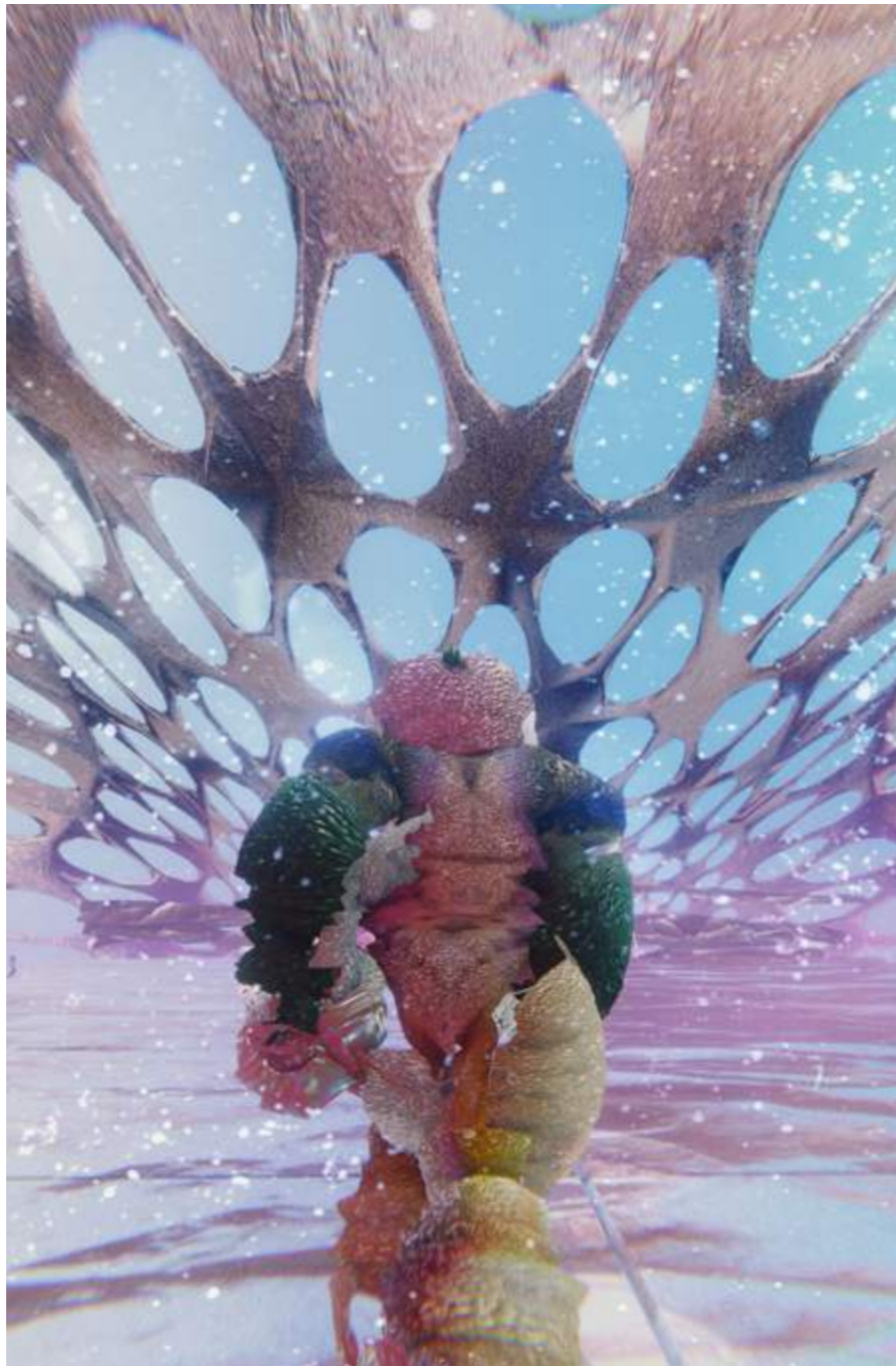
Joasia Krysa, *CURATING IMMATERIALITY: The Work of the Curator in the Age of Network Systems*, Autonomedia, 2006

Danae's cultural agenda

This year has so far been a moment of extreme cultural proliferation online and we witness, now more than ever, the birth of new forms of aesthetic experience. Art gains its virtual consistency, and cultural institutions, museums, art workers become of crucial importance in the construction of a new, conscious, network culture. Take a peek at our selection and prepare for a new and playful way to experience art!

CTM Cyberia

The festival, curated by James Grabsch, Jan Rohlf, Oliver Baurhenn, Remco Schuurbiers, takes the form of a multiplayer environment in which participants are immersed in a mystical and stimulating landscape called *Transformation*.



CTM Cyberia screenshot. Image Courtesy of CTM / Lucas Gutierrez

When? From 13 February to 14 March 2021

Where? Online at <https://www.ctm-festival.de/festival-2021/cyberia>

This year's CTM Festival is a very special edition. The festival, curated by James Grabsch, Jan Rohlf, Oliver Baurhenn, Remco Schuurbiers, takes the form of a multiplayer environment in which participants are immersed in a mystical and stimulating landscape called *Transformation*. The participant dives into the 3D environment, skillfully designed by Lucas Gutierrez, and is invited to explore the space and unearth the artworks amidst the disorienting environment of mercurial visuals and erratic sounds. In *Transformation*, visual and sound art embody new practices, models and worlds, challenging the rigidity of current socio-cultural canons. The artists presented at CTM Cyberia offer the visitor a universe of hypnotic atmospheres and rich details. *Transformation* exploits all the possibilities of the virtual and makes us lose ourselves in sinuous textures, cha-

acters and surreal spaces. The sound, designed by Elvin Brandhi shapes the experience of the viewer by mediating between the user and his avatar, between the virtual and the physical, the inorganic and the organic. The CTM Festival proposes several ways of fruition of its contents, depending on the technical availability of its visitor and the specificity of the artwork presented. CTM 2021 presents the works of artists and artistic collectives including Mouse on Mars & Louis Chude-Sokei, Khyam Allami x Counterpoint, IOR50 x Club Qu, Sote & Tarik Barri, Society for Nontrivial Pursuits (S4NTP), Alba G. Corral, Byrke Lou, Robert Lippok & Lucas Gutierrez, Gabber Modus Operandi x Rimbawan Gerilya x Siko Setyano, Florence To, Omsk Social Club x Cashmere Radio x Alexander Iezzi, Peaches & Pussykrew, Lucas Gutierrez & Robert Lippok, Marcin Pietruszewski & Alex Freiheit, ans SFX.

New Talismans

Founded in 2013 by Alfredo Salazar-Caro and William Robertson, The Digital Museum of Digital Art (DiMoDA) is one of the pioneering institutions in the preservation and exhibition of digital art through virtual reality experiences.



Still from *New Talismans*, DiMoDA 3.0. Courtesy of DiMoDA

When? Current exhibition

Where? You can download the exhibition at <https://dimoda.art/current-exhibition>

Committed to today's digital avant-garde, DiMoDA featured three VR exhibitions downloadable through the museum's website. Their last exhibition (DiMoDA 3.0), entitled *New Talismans*, explores the experience and embodiment of computer witchcraft in the post-internet age. *New Talismans* offers an immersive experience that orchestrates surreal landscapes and mystical atmospheres, which resonate in the music of ARIADNE. In the virtual, the visitor is captured in a new dimension and the works masterfully distributed in space are the new talisman. *New Talismans* presents the works of Morehshin Allahyari, Paul Hertz, Rindon Johnson, Shane Mecklenburger, Vicki Dang in the VR architecture designed by Debbie Ding. DiMoDA's fourth proposed exhibition is scheduled for 2021 (TBA), and will be curated by Christiane Paul (Associate Prof. and Associate Dean at the School of Media Studies, The New School, and Adjunct Curator of New Media Arts at the Whitney Museum of American Art). DiMoDA 4.0 « Dis/location » will feature works by Tamiko Thiel, LaJune McMillan, Banz&Bowinkle and Ricardo Miranda Zuniga

We=Link: Sideways

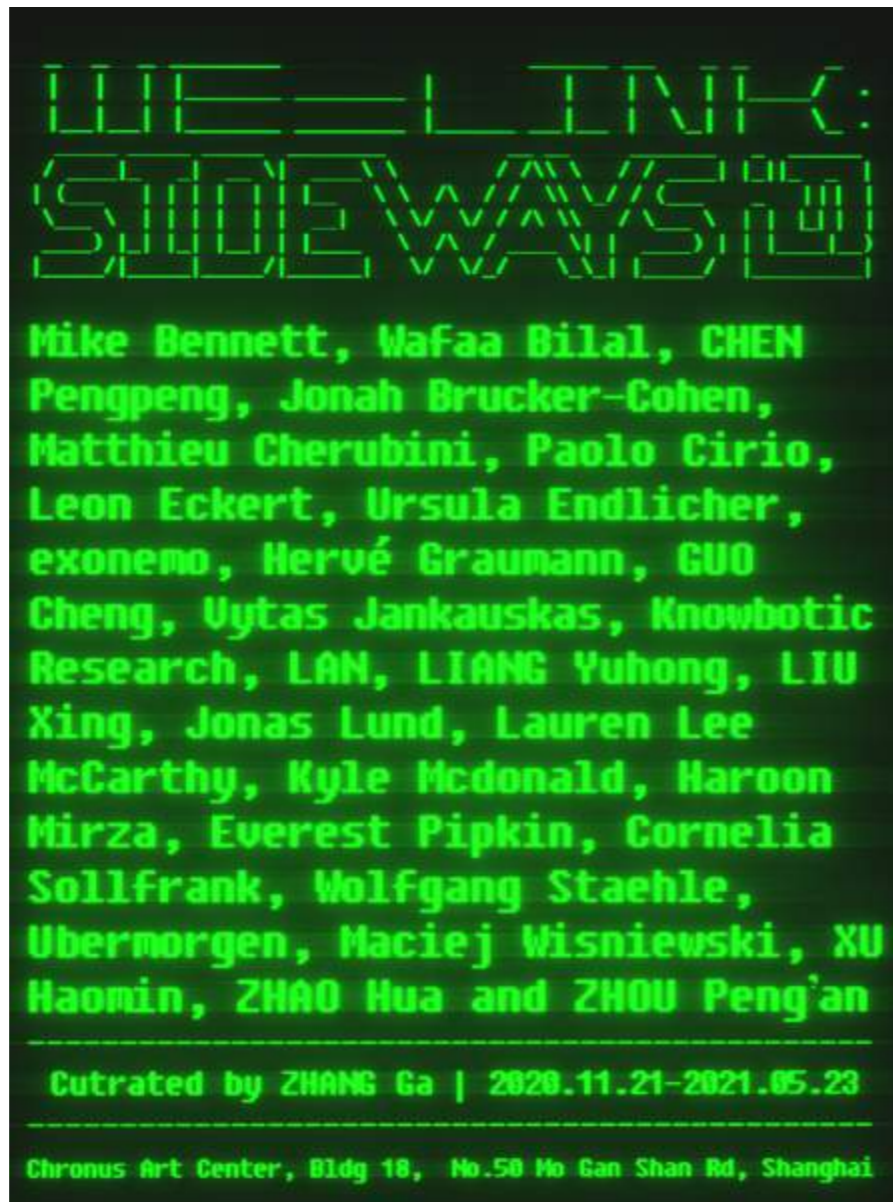
We=Link: Sideways presents some heterogeneous network-based artworks tracing the history of art in the internet and vice versa.

When? From 21 November 2020 to 23 May 2021

Where? Online at <http://we-link.chronusartcenter.org/>

The net is the focal point of the exhibition, and corresponds to the meeting point between aesthetic experiments and critical positions towards the internet as a tool for the production of meanings. The exhibition presents some examples of net art from the 90s to the present day. Is net art heading towards a dead end or does it correspond to a turning point for digital art? According to the narrative proposed by *We=Link: Sideways*, net art is not only the last of the great avant-gardes of the 20th century but also the starting point for new perspectives of experimentation and interconnection between art and technology. *We=Link: Sideways* celebrates the wedding of art and internet culture, it celebrates artistic legitimacy in the critique of the net as an institutional, commercial and political space, it celebrates the germination and flowering of a recent, intrepid and counter-cultural artistic tradition. In this sense Zhang Ga, curator of the exhibition, proposes the analogy of the 'sideway': online artistic links build a parallel and non-centralized history, therefore rich and inspiring.

The exhibition features twenty-two works by twenty-eight artists and artist collectives, including Mike Bennett, Wafaa Bilal, CHEN Pengpeng, Jonah Brucker-Cohen, Matthieu Cherubini, Paolo Cirio, Leon Eckert, Ursula Endlicher, exonemo, Hervé Graumann, GUO Cheng, Vytas Jankauskas, Knowbotic Research, LAN, LIANG Yuhong, LIU Xing, Jonas Lund, Lauren Lee McCarthy, Kyle McDonald, Haroon Mirza, Everest Pipkin, Cornelia Sollfrank, Wolfgang Staehle, UBERMORGEN, Maciej Wisniewski, XU Haomin, ZHAO Hua and ZHOU Peng'an. *We=Link: Sideways* is presented by Chronus Art Center (CAC) in collaboration with [CAFA Art Museum](#) (Beijing), [ZKM Center for Art and Media](#) (Karlsruhe), [Haus der Elektronischen Künste](#) (Basel), [V2 Lab for the Unstable Media](#) (Rotterdam), [Ars at CERN](#) (Geneva), [Elektra](#) (Montreal), [Leonardo/ISAST](#), [Nam June Paik Art Center](#) (Seoul), [Copenhagen Contemporary](#) (Copenhagen), [Light Art Space](#) (Berlin), and [The Whitney Museum of American Art's art-port](#) (New York).



World on a Wire

Hyundai Motor Company and Rhizome of the New Museum present *World on a Wire*, a new group exhibition premiering on January 28, 2021, simultaneously at the Hyundai Motorstudio in Beijing and online.



Sascha Pohflepp, Alessia Nigretti, and Matthew Lutz, *Those Who* (2019), Installation view: Hyundai Motorstudio Beijing.

When? From 28 January 2021

Where? Online at <https://worldonawire.net/> and physically at Hyundai Motorstudio Beijing (January 28 - April 5, 2021); Hyundai Motorstudio Moscow (April 1 - July 4, 2021); Hyundai Motorstudio Seoul (May 7 - August 8, 2021)

Oriented towards the exploration of the possibilities and poetics of computational simulation, the exhibition presents works related to emerging born-digital technologies, from augmented reality (AR), to virtual reality (VR), to artificial intelligence (AI). The website and gallery exhibition feature 11 works, of which 7 are commissions, by global artists. *World on a Wire* is curated by Rhizome's artistic director Michael Connor with Baoyang Chen (Central Academy of Fine Arts, Beijing) and Taiyun Kim (Hyundai Motor Company). The exhibition website, designed by Yehwan Song, is itself a work of interactive generative design that rearranges itself in unexpected ways depending on the user's navigation. Paradoxically anti-user friendly, the exhibition website offers a playful and surprising way to discover the works, elusive by design. The exhibition presents works by Mariia Fedorova, LU Fei & LEI Jianhao, JooYoung Oh, Sascha Pohflepp (1978-2019), Matthew, Lutz, and Alessia Nigretti, Pete Jiadong Qiang, Tabor Robak, Rachel Rossin, Timur Si-Qin, Theo, Triantafyllidis, YE Nan, and ZZYW (Zhenzhen Qi & Yang Wang).

not in, of, along, or relating to a line

The NYU Abu Dhabi (NYUAD) Art Gallery presents *not in, of, along, or relating to a line*, a collective exhibition showcasing nine artists engaged in the exploration of technology as a way to both escape and resist the physical restrictions we are globally experiencing.

When? From 20 January 2021

Where? Online at https://www.nyuad-artgallery.org/en_US/our-exhibitions/main-gallery/not-a-line/

Technology becomes the center of collective and intimate history, and artists investigate it as a tool for creating playful narratives and deconstruct it as a system of power relations. Designed for mobile phones and curated by Heather Dewey-Hagborg and Maya Allison, the exhibition allows its visitor to freely move from an artwork to another, building new lines and infinite possible paths. *not in, of, along, or relating to a line* explores a new way of experiencing digitally-born artworks in a unique virtual setting, and using an innovative curatorial approach. NYUAD Art Gallery disassociates itself from the frequent contemporary approach to curating, in which the gallery space is recast in the virtual. In the exhibition, the virtual takes on a space of its own completely unrelated to the physical exhibition space, offering another mode of experience linked to a more intimate dimension of the visitor and the work via smartphone. The smartphone itself becomes an extension towards the virtual, and the visitor holds the exhibition in his hands. The exhibition *not in, of, along, or relating to a line* guides us on a path of analysis and self-analysis with respect to the technological devices that pervade our daily lives, and it does so through the works of Addie Wagenknecht, Cao Fei, Eva and Franco Mattes, Lee Blalock, Maryam Al Hamra, Micha Cárdenas, Ramin Haerizadeh, Rokni Haerizadeh, Hesam Rahmanian, Sophia Al-Maria, and Zach Blas.



Addie Wagenknecht and Aiala Hernando, *Alive Still No. 1*, 2020.
Digital photograph

Farniente, Matisse and I

Investigating the frontiers between traditional painting and new media, Alexandra Gorczynski presents her second solo exhibition at Danae, titled *Farniente, Matisse and I*.

When? From 26 February 2021

Where? Online at <https://danae.io/experiences/3/farniente%2C-matisse-and-i>

Curated by Laetitia Maffei and Margaux Sanz, the exhibition borrows the canons of gaming by creating a virtual landscape in which the visitor can navigate and get lost. Ancient and modern atmospheres frame Gorczynski's works and offer an experience that is both meditative and interactive. Static and movement coexist in the exploration and playful experience of *Farniente, Matisse and I*, and offer new perspectives on artistic materiality and the perception of the real and hyperreal. The exhibition platform offers the visitor to dive into a universe with an ancient and classical flavor that meets the compositional grace of the artist's works. Danae offers an HD experience by downloading the exhibition directly to your PC or a version accessible through your web browser. Both experiences reveal the interactive and immersive dimension of the artistic display, and allow an absolutely personal and unique way to discover the artworks. Gorczynski's works investigate the perception of the body outside and inside the virtual, questioning the concept of femininity with a brilliantly contemporary gaze. In *Farniente, Matisse and I* we can admire [Emerald Obelisk](#) (2015), [Honey Water](#) (2016), [After Dark](#) (2014), [Illuminated Crescent](#) (2015), [Static Stream](#) (2014), [Vanity Theater](#) (2016), [Wild Eclectus](#) (2017), [Crystal with Pastels](#) (2016), [Languor in the Flowers](#) (2016), and [Paradise](#) (2016).



Alexandra Gorczynski, *Farniente, Matisse and I*, 2021, virtual exhibition

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