

CATALYST

June 16 - September 15, 2023

Tanya Aguiñiga

Carla Gannis

Trulee Hall

Auriea Harvey

Bahareh Khoshooee

Caroline Sinders

Sammie Veeler

E P O C H

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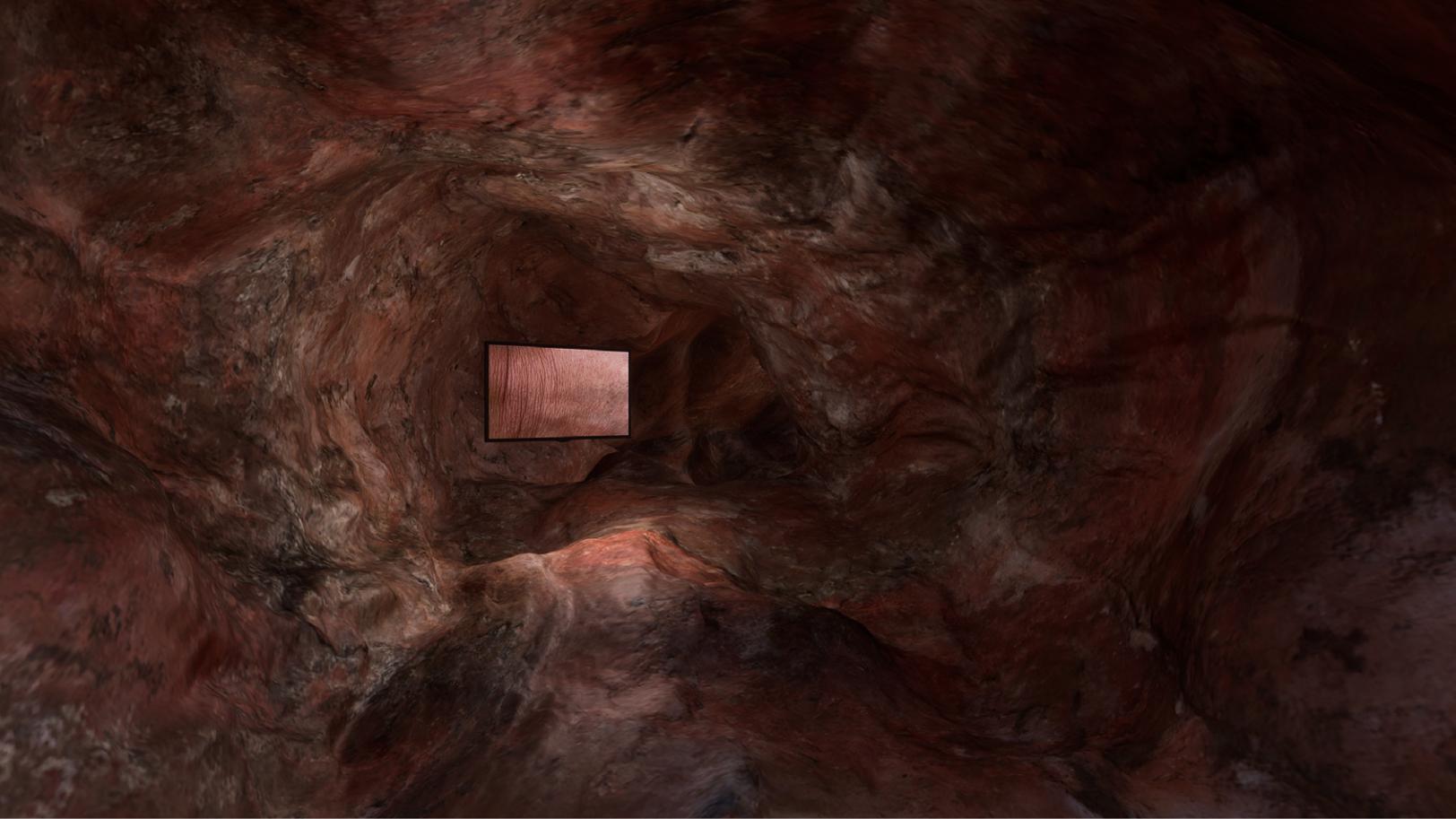
EPOCH is proud to present, **CATALYST**, a group exhibition in collaboration with **Honor Fraser Gallery**. EPOCH is partnering with Honor Fraser to mount our first hybrid physical/virtual installation. The exhibition features seven internationally celebrated artists who have developed artworks which are situated within a speculative 3D model of LACMA's forthcoming building, designed by Peter Zumthor. Like chemicals in a laboratory or warm sunlight grazing photosensitive emulsion, the artists in *CATALYST* use their artwork to provoke and accelerate change, whether that be personal, social, or political. The hybrid exhibition will be on view at Honor Fraser from June 16th to August 19th. An opening reception will be held on Friday, June 16 from 6pm - 8pm at Honor Fraser Gallery.

CATALYST, EPOCH's collaboration with Honor Fraser, is the third chapter in a triptych of virtual exhibitions each set within and around a digital representation of LACMA's campus. The first two exhibitions in EPOCH's LACMA Saga *PHANTOM LIMB* and *ECHOES* can be understood as architectural precursors to *CATALYST*. The exhibition's environment in *PHANTOM LIMB* was inspired by and modeled after the demolition of LACMA's Ahmanson building. The term "phantom limb" in context became a metaphorical framework to suggest a sense of loss and displaced feelings of pain and growth. The second exhibition in the series, *ECHOES*, developed in collaboration with LACMA's Art + Technology Lab, was modeled after the physical excavation area of LACMA's east campus, as well as neighboring locales around Wilshire Boulevard. The term "echo" refers to the reverberation of ideas, movements, or events that, like sound waves, collide and coalesce at sites of creative exchange.

Unlike the two exhibitions before it, *CATALYST* plays out in both physical and virtual environments. Building upon the themes of *PHANTOM LIMB* and *ECHOES*, *CATALYST* is set in a post-apocalyptic LA, drawing inspiration from LACMA's forthcoming building. This digital environment is experienced using VR headsets placed within a physical installation at Honor Fraser. The interior of the digitally fabricated museum is clean and undisturbed – nearly tomb-like—where viewers can interact with artworks safe from the compounding disasters unfolding outside of the museum's colossal glass windows. The architectural contours of the forthcoming museum are replicated outside of the headsets, transforming Honor Fraser white walls into undulating partitions of translucent fabric and warm LA light.

The curation and corresponding environments invite us to question the role and responsibilities of our cultural institutions, as well as who these spaces best represent and serve. In turn, *CATALYST* allows viewers to consider the utility of a single idea/vision/object/building to provoke change in two moments in time – virtually in the present and physically in the future.

On June 16th, the entire **CATALYST** exhibition is offered in an edition of 4 as an interactive HTML on the Ethereum blockchain. The proceeds will be equitably distributed among the artists and collaborators.



Tanya Aguiñiga

Mi Nepantla, 2023

Virtual installation, HD video (TRT: 3 min 46 sec), directional audio (TRT: 1 min 14 sec)

Somewhere between the embodied and the metaphysical. Occupying a space untethered by time, an energy dips into the realm I can currently see. Communicating through the language of air, in a dialect I lost the ear for. Stepping out of myself I make space, a bridge to try and coalesce the border reality I currently occupy in this femme body, a moment in a long journey of a thousand migrations through multiple lifetimes.

An inbetween for an inbetween.

The wind mouthing sounds through the border fence, or the border fence shaping the wind. I try to translate for you my translation of this liminality. As the cars waiting to cross the border desperately gasp, I return to this earthly body and wonder if in the future we will still have borders. Will we still constantly fail each other, will we continue to other.

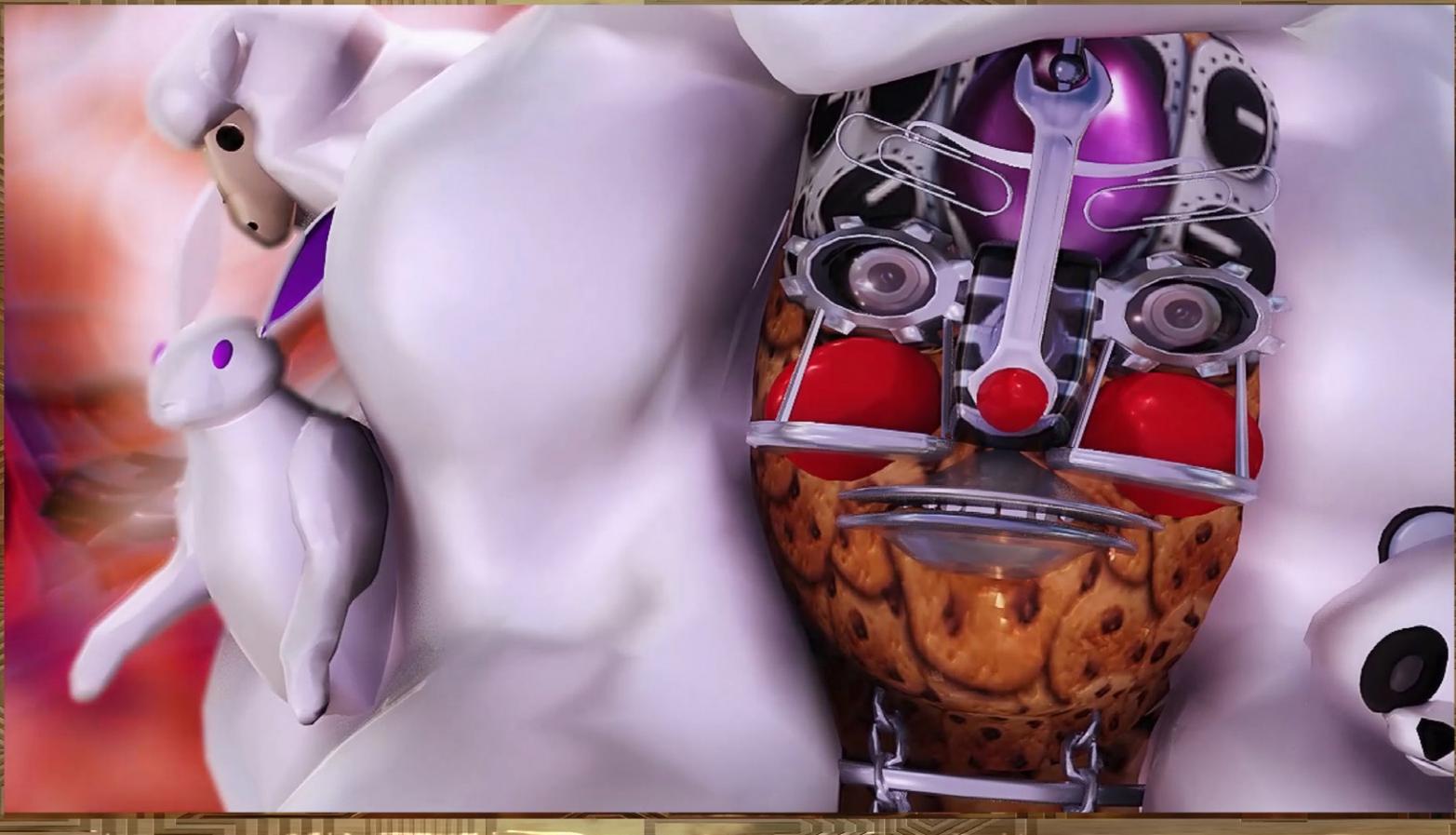
Tanya Aguiñiga was born in 1978 in San Diego, California, and raised in Tijuana, Mexico. An artist, activist, and craftsperson, Aguiñiga works with traditional craft materials like natural fibers and collaborates with other artists and activists to create sculptures, installations, performances, and community-based art projects. Drawing on her upbringing as a binational citizen, who daily crossed the border from Tijuana to San Diego for school, Aguiñiga's work speaks of the artist's experience of her divided identity and aspires to tell the larger and often invisible stories of the transnational community.



Tanya Aguiñiga

Mi Nepantla, 2023

Virtual installation, HD video (TRT: 3 min 46 sec), directional audio (TRT: 1 min 14 sec)



Carla Gannis

Virtues and Vices, 2023

HD video (TRT: 12 min 17 sec)

As an elaboration of her five year long project *wwwunderkammer*, in the moving image work *Virtues and Vices*, New York artist Carla Gannis presents a pantheon of avatars, embodying paradigms of digital culture and her own personality, now given voices by artificial intelligence.

In *Virtues and Vices*, Gannis focuses on the digital deconstruction of identity, foregrounding the eclectic pantheon of personalities that she has developed, over the years, as an integral part of her investigation into the breakdown between the virtual and the actual. The work is performative, enacting the diversity of identities that we assume on the Internet and elsewhere, both as expressions of who we are and as the alien effects of digital media, which nevertheless shape our sense of ourselves and our relationships with others. At the same time, these figures present defining features of digital culture itself, which Gannis highlights, explores, and develops to her own ends. And, for the first time in this show, Gannis gives her avatars new voices with the Artificial Intelligence, ChatGPT, further pressing the question of where she ends and they begin.

- Clark Buckner, 2023

For *Catalyst*, the artist is exhibiting a shorter form version of *Virtues and Vices* and a virtual sculpture as cabinet of curiosity. The artist's avatars and herself are presented as artifacts of human digital culture. Lining the cabinets are images generated in collaboration with an AI platform.

Carla Gannis is a transmedia artist based in Brooklyn, New York. She produces works that consider the uncanny complications between grounded and virtual reality, nature and artifice, science and science fiction in contemporary culture. Fascinated by digitalsemiotics, Gannis takes a horror vacui approach to her artistic practice, culling inspiration from networked communication, art and feminist histories, emerging technologies and speculative fiction.

Gannis holds an MFA in painting from Boston University and a BFA in painting from the University of North Carolina at Greensboro. Today she teaches "healing-edge" technology as an Industry Professor at NYU's Tandon School of Engineering in the Integrated Design and Media Program.

Acknowledgements: Studio assistance by Tess Adams



Carla Gannis

Virtues and Vices, 2023

Virtual sculpture



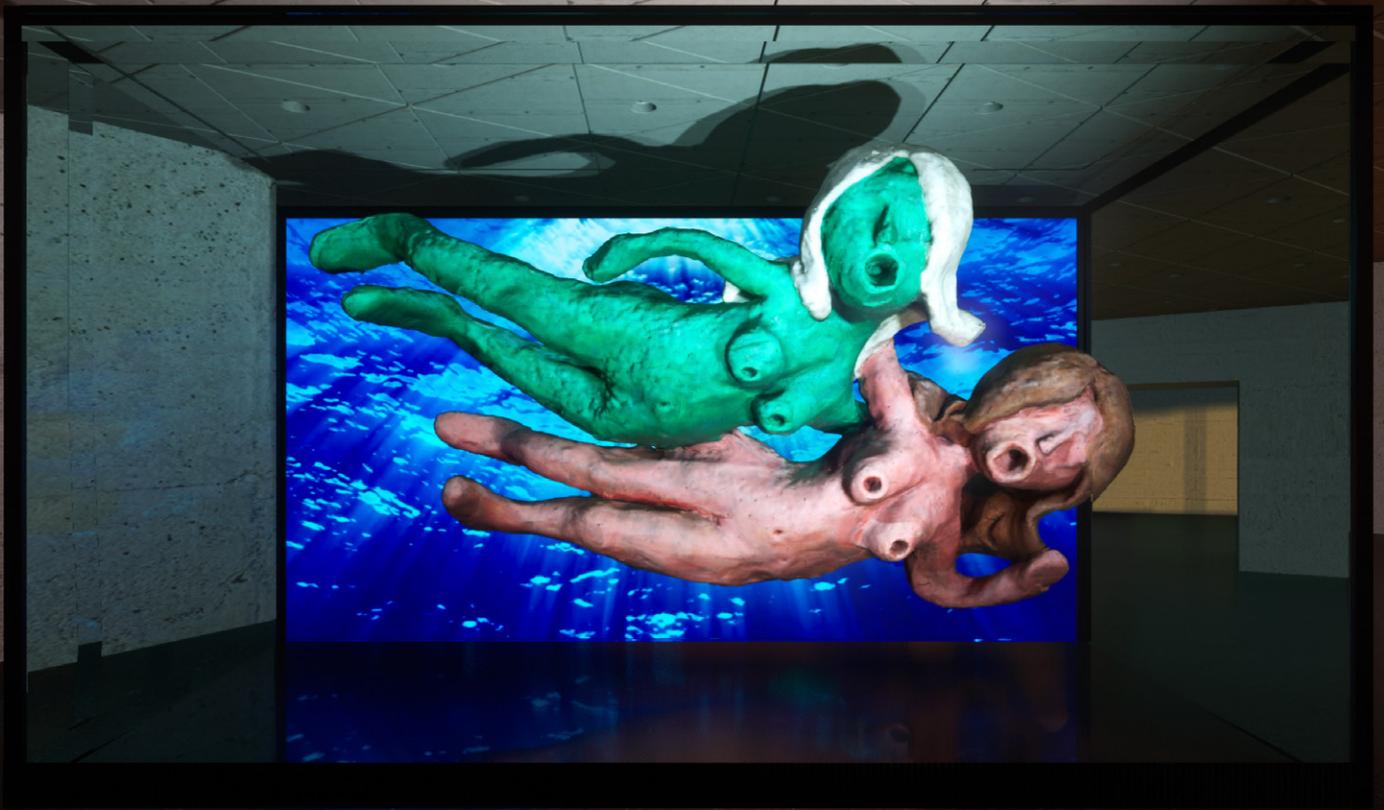
Trulee Hall

Mermaid Mutations, 2023

Virtual installation, video animation (TRT: 1 min 44 sec)

In the installation *Mermaid Mutations*, multimedia artist Trulee Hall envisions a post-apocalyptic transmuted utopia. Combining the historical myths of a great flood with humanoid sea creatures akin to horny tail-less mermaids, she weaves these archetypes into an optimistic tale of romantic and blissful survival. The cause of Hall's imagined cataclysmic flood is purposefully ambiguous. Perhaps it was caused by nuclear bombardment or a mysterious planetary collision. She proposed this event was accompanied by an other-worldly bright light or other catalyst that blinded and transformed the remaining humans. The only survivors are sensual mutants that have adapted to life as blind human/fish with serpentine tongue-like genitals, living happily in an idealistic water community. When the survivors lost eyesight, they gained divine wisdom, using their psychic intuition and pulsing connective body parts to navigate and commune with the surrounding waters.

Trulee Hall was born in 1976 and raised in Atlanta, Georgia. She received her BFA from Atlanta College of Art in 1999 and her MFA from CalArts in 2006. She currently lives and works in Los Angeles. Hall's richly textured practice spans video, painting, sculpture, sound, dance, and immersive installation, routinely employing diverse technical skills gleaned from her prior work in various creative industries. Hall began working in performance, music and video as an adolescent and developed a complex practice involving immersive sets, elaborate costumes, puppetry, claymation, CGI and sound. Her paintings, sculptures, and installations integrate with and inform facets of her videos and soundtracks in an overarching practice. Her choreographed videos of non-narrative, surreal, feminist/erotic, philosophical and symbolic systems employ a fiercely playful sense of humor, a patient appreciation for the mundane, and a love of the absurd. Hall's work has been shown at the Museum of Contemporary Art in Los Angeles, Los Angeles County Museum of Art, the Rubell Museum in Miami, the Zabludowicz Collection in London, the Villa Schöninghen in Berlin, the Chuang Collection in Taiwan, the Hammer Museum in Los Angeles, The Museum of Contemporary Art in Chicago, Barrick Museum of Art in Los Vegas, Deitch Projects, The Armory Show, Paramount Studios for Frieze Art Fair, REDCAT, Los Angeles Nomadic Division (LAND), Maccarone Gallery, among numerous other exhibitions and film screenings internationally.



Trulee Hall

Mermaid Mutations, 2023

Virtual installation, 3D scanned sculpture, video



Auriea Harvey

Black Conversation, 2023

GLB digital sculpture, AR

Dimensions variable

The sculpture, in the form of a Greek Kantharos, a drinking vessel often adorned with dual faces, has been transformed into a work rife with double meanings. A mother figure is seen 'conversing' with her son, representing abundance and motherly giving. What may appear as his gesture of hunger is actually an ancient sign. His gesture places him in the persona of Harpocrates, an antique god of Silence. What was once a small conversation, confined to the size of a cup, is now depicted monumentally large, becoming a discussion for the entire community and highlighting the notion that small words sometimes yield significant effects.

Auriea Harvey is a digital artist and sculptor living and working in Rome. Her practice encompasses virtual and physical sculpture, drawings and simulations that blend technological and handmade production including 3d printing, XR. She is primarily concerned with making the mythological world visible through form, interaction and immersion. Her work can be found in the collections of the Whitney Museum, Buffalo AKG Art Museum, Walker Art Center, KADIST Collection, R.F.C Collection, and Rhizome's Net Art Anthology. Her video games and VR works have had exhibitions at the Tinguely Museum, Basel; the Victoria & Albert Museum, London; the New Museum, New York; Brooklyn Academy of Music, New York; and ZKM, Karlsruhe.

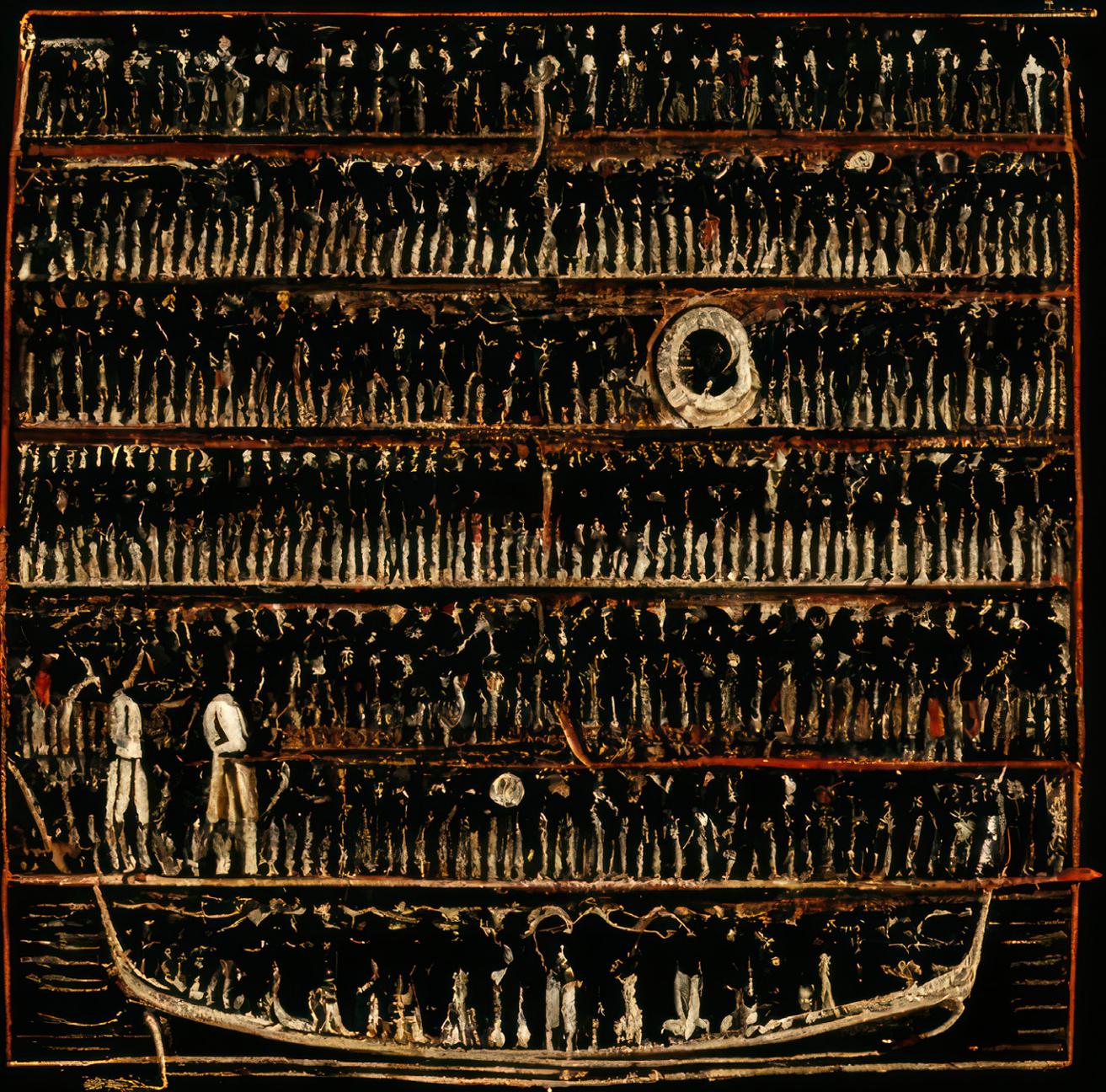


Auriea Harvey

Slave Ship Sketch #1, 2022

AI generated PNG, 8192 x 4608 pixels

Using prompt-based AI, Harvey is seeking three-dimensional representations that, in their abstraction, represent the idea of slave ships. They are neither ship nor human in the end but rather an uncanny mix, which, through materiality and form, reminds us of both craftsmanship and brutality. The outputs are considered concept art for 3D models and texture maps, which the artist uses as concept art for the final physical sculptures.

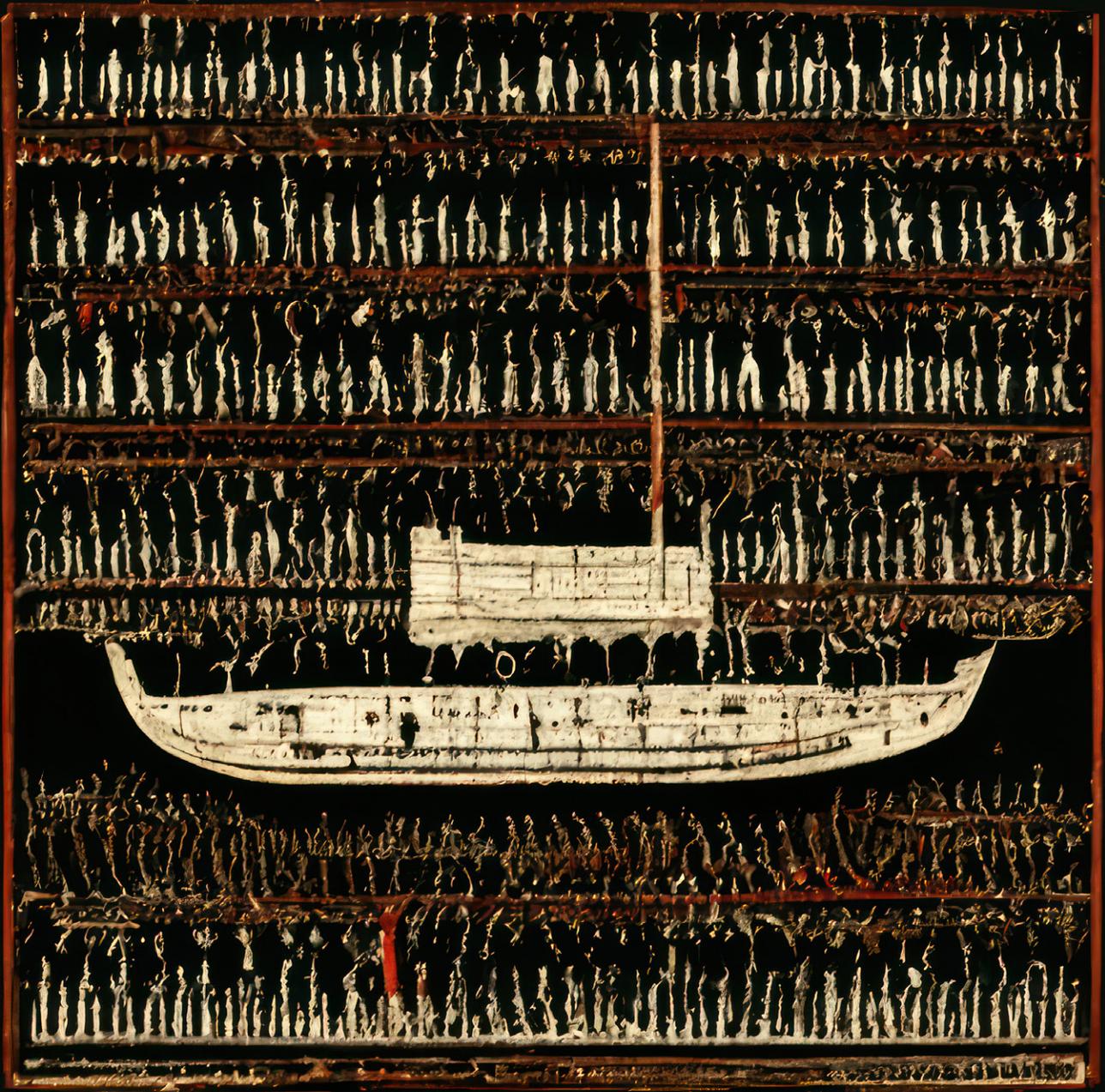


Auriea Harvey

Slave Ship Diagram #2, 2022

AI generated PNG, 6144 x 6144 pixels

Excerpts from a dialog (an argument) with the algorithm about slave ships. The artist is seeking diagrams of a ship which after generations of use one can no longer distinguish between the humans and the ship itself. Using prompt based AI, not for images as an end unto themselves but as ideation. In this series Harvey is describing an idea that is both literal: "a ship" and an attempt to visualize how what that ship held can effect its outward appearance.

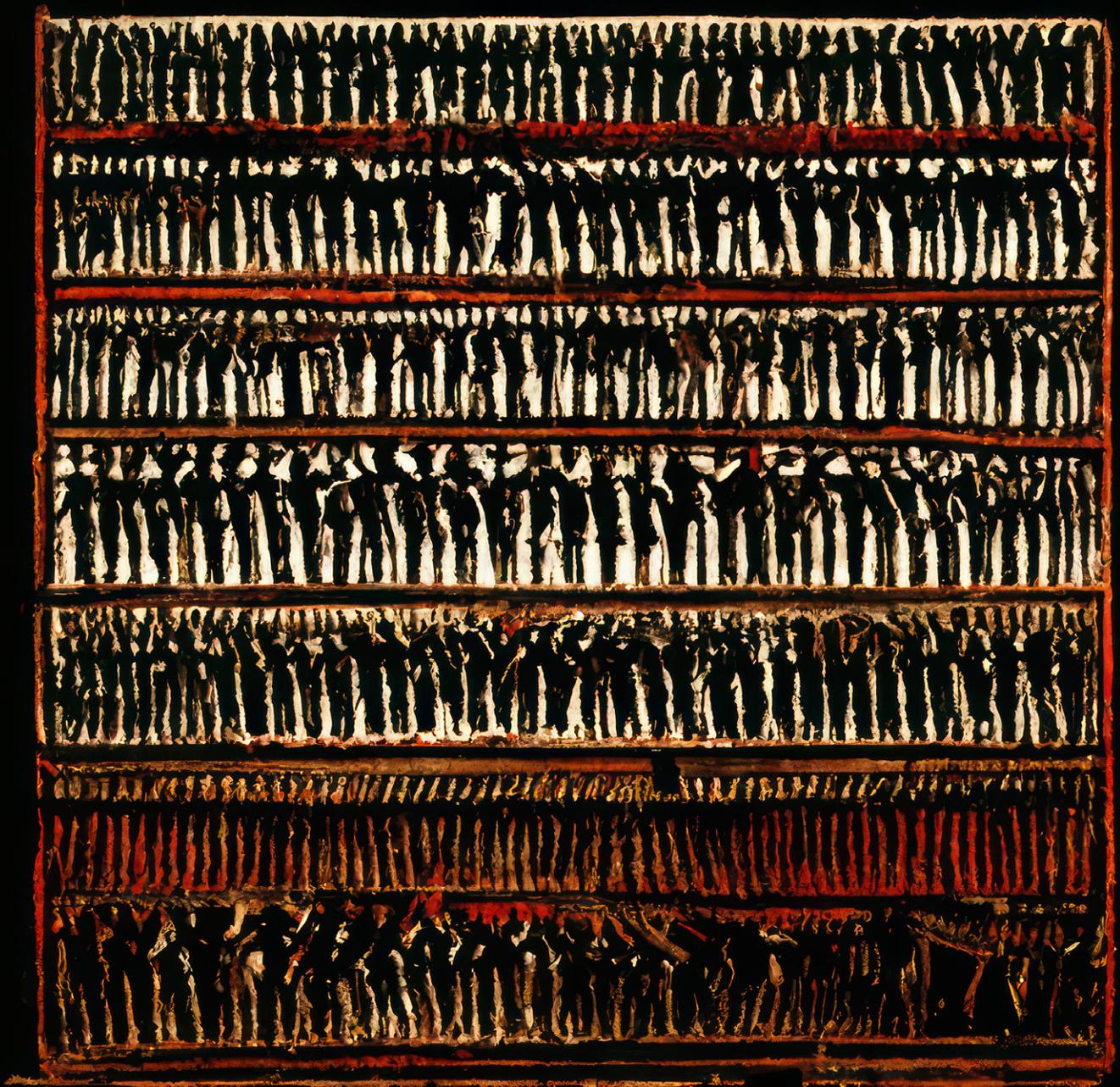


Auriea Harvey

Slave Ship Diagram #3, 2022

AI generated PNG, 6144 x 6144 pixels

Excerpts from a dialog (an argument) with the algorithm about slave ships. The artist is seeking diagrams of a ship which after generations of use one can no longer distinguish between the humans and the ship itself. Using prompt based AI, not for images as an end unto themselves but as ideation. In this series Harvey is describing an idea that is both literal: "a ship" and an attempt to visualize how what that ship held can effect its outward appearance.



Auriea Harvey

Slave Ship Diagram #4, 2022

AI generated PNG, 6144 x 6144 pixels

Excerpts from a dialog (an argument) with the algorithm about slave ships. The artist is seeking diagrams of a ship which after generations of use one can no longer distinguish between the humans and the ship itself. Using prompt based AI, not for images as an end unto themselves but as ideation. In this series Harvey is describing an idea that is both literal: "a ship" and an attempt to visualize how what that ship held can effect its outward appearance.



Bahareh Khoshooee

#EverChangingFacade (Virtual Iteration), 2023

Digital sculpture, video texture, audio (TRT: 6 min 40 sec)

Music credit: Baker-Barganier Duo, "My Father How Long," 2017

#EverChangingFacade examines governmental and capitalist modes of surveillance specifically through the lens of the artist's lived-experiences.

Visual content from social media (specifically images pulled from Explore on Instagram which are sensitive to where one lives, who they follow, and what they "like") are digitally layered with Bahareh Khoshooee's own self-portraiture, animated, and projected upon the surface of a cloud-shaped form. Blurring the edges of her identity as a femme Iranian immigrant based on the U.S., the piece becomes an ever-shifting digital skin of algorithmic content projected upon the static aggregate of overlapping forms, fighting against the flattening of these assumed or imagined identities.

Examining the disjunct between digital and physical space, mind and body, body and language, language and second language, the piece looks at the struggle to communicate and to navigate as an immigrant in the US, and as a human in the virtual realm. The audio and text piece uses humor in combining texts of the Executive Order 13769 (Muslim Ban) with Fun Facts about the United States and excerpts from The book *Society Of The Spectacle* by Guy Debord as a strategy to highlight the absurdity of this order and the inhumane political laws that were put in place during Trump's presidency on 7 Muslim majority countries.

Bahareh Khoshooee is a multidisciplinary artist born in Tehran, Iran in 1991, the year the Internet was made available for unrestricted commercial use. She uses digital time-based strategies in presenting work that fuses video, projection mapping, sculpture, text, sound and performance to explore the un-capturable qualities of diasporic bodies, fragmented culture, and transnational identity. Khoshooee has presented her multimedia installations at Baxter St CCNY, The Elizabeth Foundation for The Arts (The Immigrant Artist Biennial), The Orlando Museum of Art, NADA MIAMI 2018, Elsewhere (New York), Housing (New York), and Rawson Projects (New York). She attended Skowhegan School of Art and Painting in 2018.



Caroline Sindera

The Rig, 01, 2023

Virtual installation, 3D models, HD video with audio (TRT: 4 min 38 sec)

The Rig, 01 is a mixed media piece created by artist Caroline Sindera, exploring a futuristic world in which the narrator, voiced by the artist, has overtaken an abandoned oil rig and reclaimed it as her new home. This world is one where climate change has accelerated, impacting Louisiana, the artist and the narrator's home state. Louisiana, like many states along the Gulf of Mexico has an economy deeply intertwined with and dependent upon oil and petroleum services, even as that industry ravages the environment. Many small scale oil rigs dot swamps and the Gulf of Mexico, with many being 'abandoned' or closed by the companies, but still remain physically. In generating the videos and images used in this project, the artist found an abandoned oil rig, which serves as the rig in this video. In this video, the artist grapples with both grief and hope, situating resiliency, with nature retaking the oil rigs in the video, along with a barrel yielding magnolias, the flower of Louisiana.

Caroline Sindera is an award winning critical designer, researcher, and artist. For the past few years, she has been examining the intersections of artificial intelligence, intersectional justice, systems design, harm, and politics in digital conversational spaces and technology platforms. She has worked with the United Nations, Amnesty International, IBM Watson, the Wikimedia Foundation, and others. Sindera has held fellowships with the Harvard Kennedy School, Google's PAIR (People and Artificial Intelligence Research group), Ars Electronica's AI Lab, the Weizenbaum Institute, the Mozilla Foundation, Pioneer Works, Eyebeam, Ars Electronica, the Yerba Buena Center for the Arts, the Sci Art Resonances program with the European Commission, and the International Center of Photography. Her work has been featured in the Tate Exchange in Tate Modern, the Contemporary Art Center of New Orleans, Telematic Media Arts, Victoria and Albert Museum, MoMA PS1, LABORal, Wired, Slate, Hyperallergic, Clot Magazine, Quartz, the Channels Festival, and others. Sindera holds a Masters from New York University's Interactive Telecommunications Program.



Caroline Sindors

The Rig, 01, 2023

Virtual installation, 3D models, HD video with audio (TRT: 4 min 38 sec)



Sammie Veeler

We Become Our Own Ancestors, 2023

Virtual installation

Two moments of becoming seven years apart sit on a dining table in a living room scene formed from a composite of photographs and memory. This was the place where my lives as an artist and as a woman began. In 2016, a man sits at his computer generating AI poetry from *Finnegans Wake*. A tall woman glides in behind him, out of nowhere. He doesn't seem to notice. She leaves him an offering of poems, weighing them down with rocks. At the time, he was captivated by an impression that words are rocks—meaningless until gathered and worn through with retelling. The witness animates these forms. At the moment of creation, every retrieval calls back from the future.

Sammie Veeler is a Los Angeles based artist examining the problematics of digital representation, the role of archives in the production of personal and shared histories, and the psychic transits between physical and virtual spaces. Her work takes the shape of undulating loops in time playing out across writing, performance, digital media, and world building.

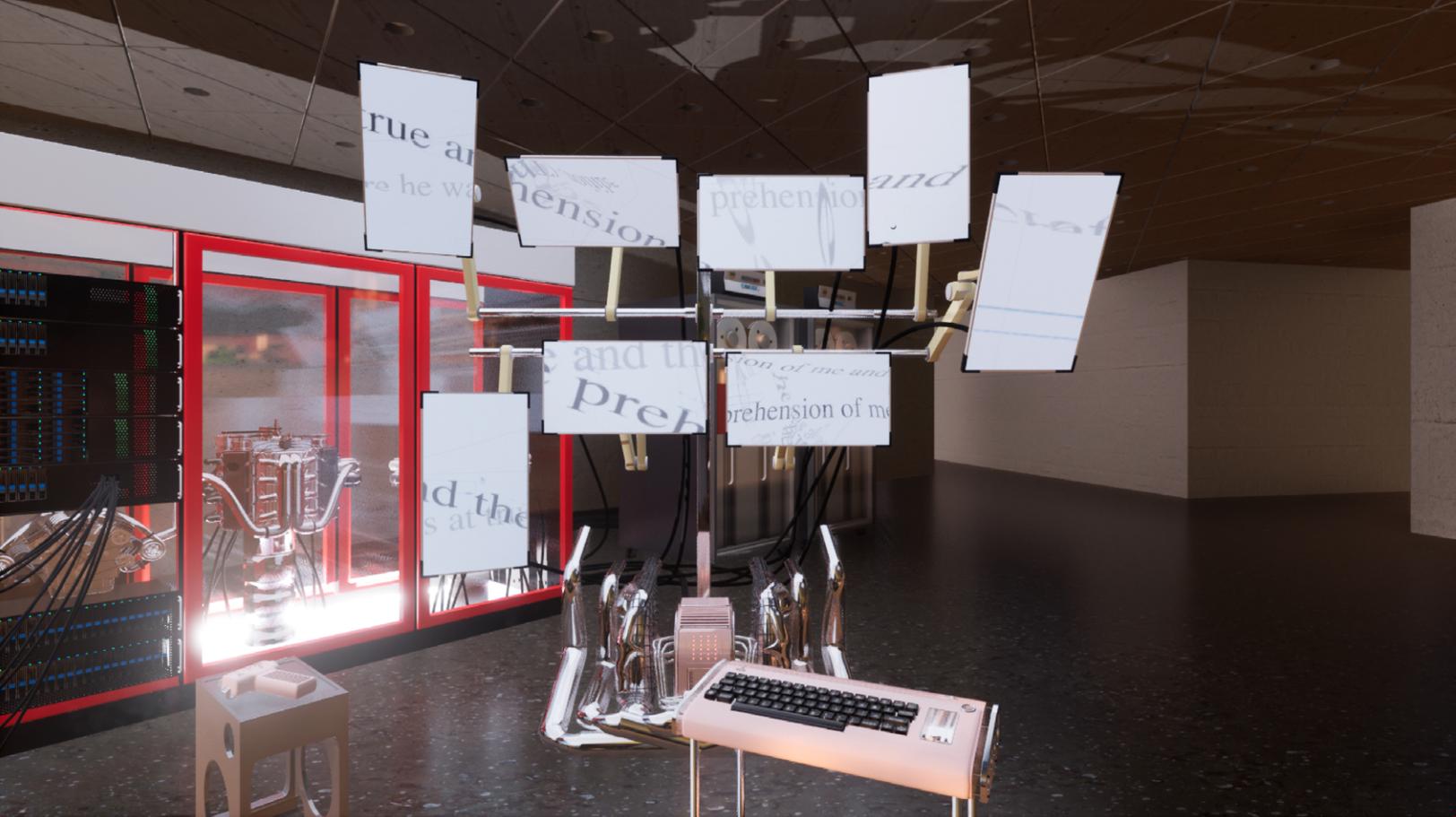


Sammie Veeler

Miss Sammie, 2022

3D avatar

"I see the avatar more like clothes than a body. Avatars can contain as much fiction as you like. That is part of the fun. You are only one part visual- an expansive domain to experiment in, but far from the only one. This recurring shape in my work is a visual manifestation of Miss Sammie. I don't always have a body online and I enjoy the internet's ability to facilitate disembodied experience. But when I have to have just one, this is what I look like." - *About My Avatar*, January 2023



Sammie Veeler

Come Over Here, 2023

Virtual installation, HD video with directional audio (TRT: 19 min 39 sec)

The act of reading is special because words are kind of like code. Words are inert before they are experienced. Reading opens up the congruent structure in time and space. Embodied as a cursor and annotating as I went, I inscribed a bridge between the output of the model and the process of reading it.



A time capsule
So abundantly
duplicated
that they
or a grave?
I carried his files lovingly
from hard drive to hard drive
ever since.
will never perish.

his absence
it is easier
is a form
to archive
than delete
of presence

i will go to the world
examine the archive
of a mask in
his incompleteness.
I didn't realize what I was doing until it was already done.
and take you home
to my computer

two local machines
the soul departing the body
Who is speaking?
Find out and hold
them responsible.
his and hers
the voice departing its origin

This was the difference
what death
the aura of the electrons
is not the end of the story
are we considering?
between drowning
and diving

on the other side of time
logging on
we are already
here together
a way to leave the body
there is a hand
reaching back to you

his ghost
we are not rehearsing
HEAVEN
IS A
DATACENTER
and my ghost

Sammie Veeler

Miss Sammie, 2023
3D model

These spatial poems interleave phrases and fonts to express atemporality in the process of remembrance. As I return over and over to the digital artifacts my husband left behind, I rewrite my embodied memory. Each moment of retrieval cascades across time.



Sammie Veeler

Theseus, 2023

3D model

I have maintained this computer since 2011. This machine is a medium for communicating with a different iteration of myself. He gave me this gift that he didn't know was a gift. Now years after the transition, his memories do feel like a dream. The songs, poems, and images he made in private opened network connections to the future. The act of picking up on the other side lets me tell that person that making art in private was worth doing, and life on this side is worth living.

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