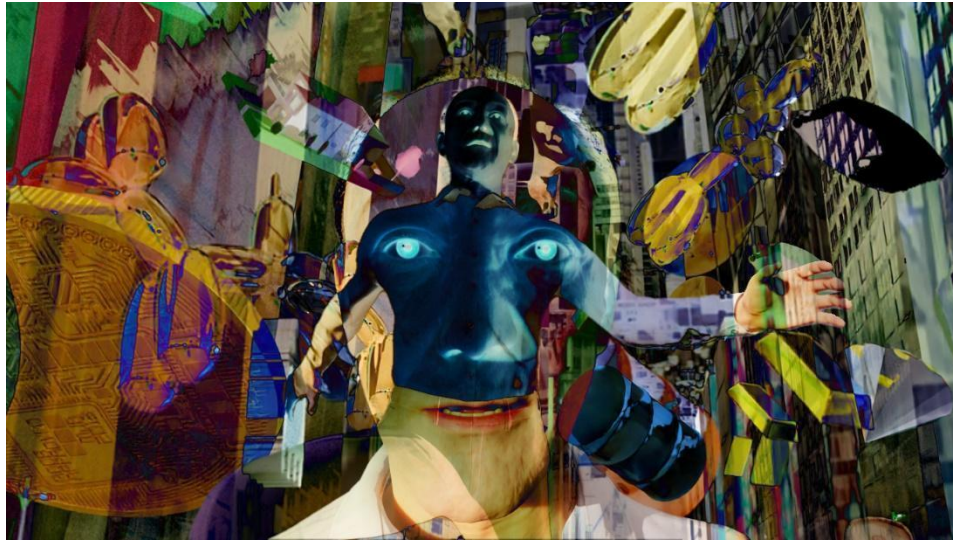


MEDIA RELEASE

RETHINK THE METAVERSE AND DISCOVER CONTEMPORARY ART IN UNEXPECTED DIGITAL SPACES WITH SINGAPORE ART MUSEUM'S NEW VIRTUAL INITIATIVE

SAM launches its first dedicated virtual initiative 'Open Systems' with an online exhibition that offers an immersive art experience exploring the digital worlds of video games.



Bahar Noorizadeh with Rudá Babau, and Waste Paper Opera (Klara Kofen, James Oldham, Gary Zhexi Zhang, Anna Palmer), *Free to Choose*, 2023. Image courtesy of the artist.

Singapore, 4 May 2023 – This May, reimagine the metaverse and find art in unexpected digital spaces with **Open Systems (OS)**, Singapore Art Museum (SAM)'s new initiative that surveys the ever-evolving nature of technology and its role in art and exhibition making. Examining the impacts of contemporary digital culture on creative expression through creative code, software, and digital video, OS is the first initiative in Southeast Asia presenting online exhibitions, interventions and virtual programmes where the sites of their production – the screen, the browser, and the platform – serve as the locus for both artistic expression and inquiry.

Eugene Tan, Director of SAM, said, "At SAM, it is our mission as a contemporary art museum to lead conversations about art today and how we can push the boundaries of what contemporary art can encompass. As SAM's first dedicated initiative exploring technology and virtual spaces as sites for exhibition and art production, OS seeks to present innovative, immersive, and interactive artist projects that reimagine the possibilities for art experiences in the digital sphere and offer critical reflections on the wider landscape of digital culture. Through this, we hope to inspire

renewed perspectives and foster dialogue on the future of art and newfound communities in contemporary virtual terrains.”

The first iteration of this initiative makes its debut in the digital sphere with ***Open Systems 1_Open Worlds (OS1)***, a virtual exhibition that explores the relationship between real and virtual worlds through video games and digital culture. From 4 May to 10 August 2023, audiences can access opensystems.sg and interact with 18 artworks featuring artists and thinkers from 14 different countries who reimagine digital realms and the limitations of virtual environments through film, music videos, video essays and interactive computer games that expose how the patterns of economic and social inequities of lived experience may also be observed in virtual spaces. Gradually unfolding with six themed chapters that are refreshed with three new artist projects every two weeks, *OS1* adopts an introspective riff off ‘Open World’ gaming, reflexive of the supposed autonomy these free-roaming environments provide to users. Exploring themes of privatisation, artificial scarcity and inequalities that transfer between lived and digital realms, *OS1* presents the question considering how games and virtual spaces may function as sites to rehearse alternative and novel modes of social, political, and spatial organisation.

Duncan Bass, Curator of *OS*, explained, “The selection of artists and works for *OS1* is guided by an interest in expanding conventional expectations of digital exhibitions and popular conversation surrounding the “metaverse” highlighting virtual spaces as potent sites to better understand pertinent issues of today across geographical and sociological boundaries. In many ways, video games combine and extend tendencies that defined contemporary art for the past several decades, including moving images and relational art forms. In exploring video games as a site of creation and innovation, *OS1* hopes to invite audiences to reflect on our positions as consumers of popular digital culture and media that permeate our everyday lives.”



Lawrence Lek, *Pyramid Schemes*, 2018. Image courtesy of the artist.

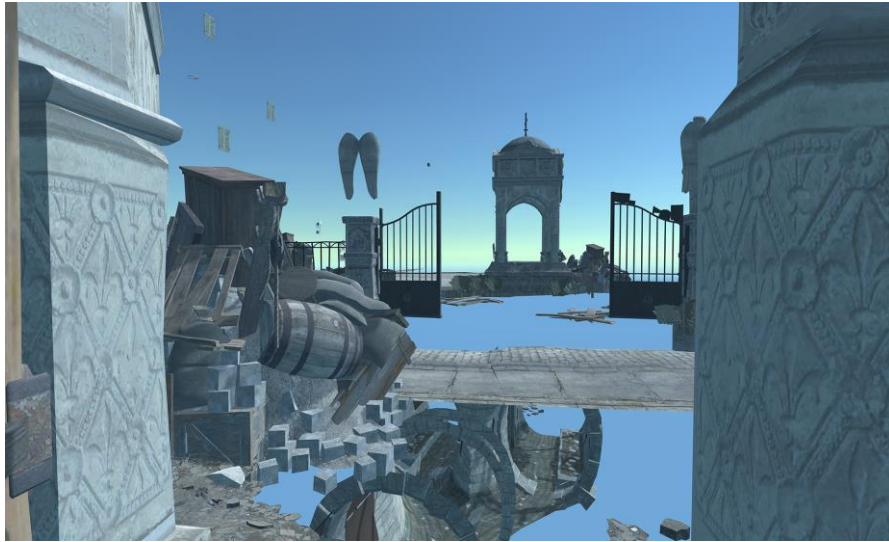
OS1.1_Virtual Capital

4 to 18 May 2023

Lawrence Lek, Alice Bucknell, Bahar Noorizadeh, Rudá Babau & Waste Paper Opera (Klara Kofen, James Oldham, Gary Zhexi Zhang, Anna Palmer)

Titled *Virtual Capital*, the opening chapter of *OS1* draws audiences into worlds where global capital and virtual economies occupy seats of political power and class within digital societies. Through satirical storytelling and science-fiction narratives of imagined investment schemes and architectural development projects, the artworks demonstrate how virtual cultures simultaneously react to and reflect tangible impact on real, lived experiences.

In *Pyramid Schemes*, **Lawrence Lek** combines virtual reality with scenes from the video game *Assassin's Creed* with other simulated environments, offering a study of the evolution of architecture and how it influences real-world issues of migration and access. **Alice Bucknell** similarly investigates the role of architecture and its contribution to systems of global injustice and the climate emergency with *E-Z Kryptobuild*, a scam crypto company offering a selection of celebrity architect-designed utopias to the one percent. On the other hand, **Bahar Noorizadeh's** film *Free to Choose* is a new commission exploring speculative finance based on her 2021 science-fiction short story, "The Red City and the Planet of Capitalism". The film follows a cast of historical and fictional characters travelling from Hong Kong, in the midst of 1997 financial crisis, to the year 2047 in order to borrow money from their future selves and descendants.



Cat Bluemke, *Gameworkers & Guildworkers*, 2020. Image courtesy of the artist.

OS1.2_ WoW, Unite!

18 May to 1 June 2023

Cat Bluemke, Joshua Citarella & Jacob Hurwitz -Goodman, Mario Mu

Exploring video games as unexpected sites for collective organisation, *WoW, Unite!*, aptly references the familiar rallying cry for class solidarity – “Workers of the world, unite!” – while serving as a nod to the popular game *World of Warcraft* (WoW). Featuring a series of videos and video game essays, the second chapter highlights and considers labour rights issues and organisational conditions in the video game industry.

Cat Bluemke’s *Gameworkers & Guildworkers* offers a comparative critique of the working conditions of virtual and real-world builders by comparing the construction of the Notre Dame Cathedral of Paris and its virtual counterpart in the video game *Assassin’s Creed Unity* (2014). ***DKP is Market Socialism*** by **Joshua Citerella** and **Jacob Hurwitz-Goodman** explores a longstanding phenomenon observed in the popular multiplayer game, *World of Warcraft*, where user communities had created their own system of goods distribution free from systems of debt and inequality. The chapter concludes with **Mario Mu’s *Sites of Encounter***, a video work surveying systems of labour in industrial and corporate environments, listening in on intimate existential dialogues between its characters as they navigate modern labour conditions.



Firas Shehadeh, *Like An Event In A Dream Dreamt By Another: Rehearsal*, 2022-23. Image courtesy of the artist.

OS1.3_Landscapes of the Political Imaginary

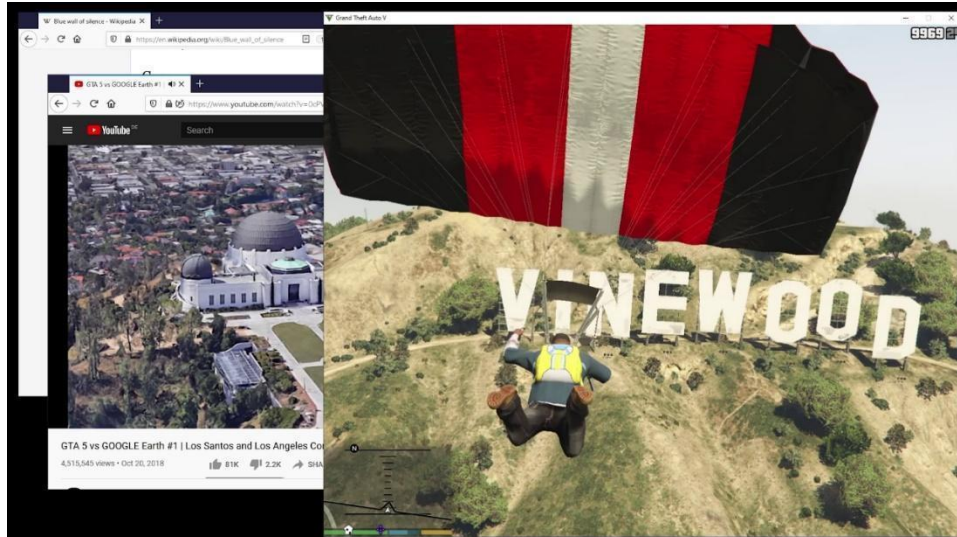
1 to 15 June 2023

Zheng Mahler, Shabtai Pinchevsky, and Firas Shehadeh

In the third chapter, artists delve into the concept of the nation-state, which is as much constructed and defined in physical environments as it is in the collective imagination. With this forming its premise, *Landscapes of the Political Imaginary* invites viewers to reassess their understanding of video games and the underlying assumptions that have been built into their virtual landscapes.

This chapter features OS's first video game commission, **Zheng Mahler's *The Green Crab: A Diagram of Auspicious Spatial Organisation***. A gamified reiteration of its previous presentation along SAM's hoardings on Bras Basah and 8 Queen Street, the work is an electrifying map of an East Asian *feng shui* city. Juxtaposing Hong Kong's cyberpunk image and Singapore's urban development, this interactive video game adopts a spiritual lens, observing state-led urbanism against the backdrop of guiding principles in Chinese alchemy. The remaining two artworks of the chapter take a deep dive into history and identity across various landscapes. **Shabtai Pinchevsky** presents ***An Abridged Draft for a Letter to Leila Khaled***, inviting viewers on an aerial tour of Palestine's digitised landscape reconstructed through the superimposition of rare archival photographs. In contrast, **Firas Shehadeh's *Like An Event In A Dream Dreamt By Another: Rehearsal*** draws from internet memes, video games, and the contemporary internet

culture of Twitch streaming and *Grand Theft Auto 5* modding¹ communities, projecting current digital concepts on the diasporic lived experiences of home and identity for Palestinian youth.



Grayson Earle, *why don't the cops fight each other?*, 2020. Image courtesy of the artist.

OS1.4_Unrealpolitik

15 to 29 June 2023

Yeyoon Avis Ann & George Chua, Clemens von Wedemeyer, and Grayson Earle

Playing on the 3D computer graphics engine “Unreal Engine” and the “realpolitik” politics of the early 90’s, the artworks in *Unrealpolitik* focus on the tensions between exaggerated images of violence prevalent in video games and the sterility of their virtual cityscapes, inviting viewers to question the assumed neutrality of the underlying ideologies embedded in gaming software, while highlighting the potential for intervention and political resistance in gamified environments.

The fourth chapter features **Yeyoon Avis Ann & George Chua’s *Neo-Punggol***. In this music video, the exaggerated violence of video games conceals real-world violence, reflecting the mania of ongoing global information warfare. **Clemens von Wedemeyer’s *70.001*** is a speculative virtual rendering of The Monday demonstrations of East Germany in 1989, creating an unending flow of protestors that never tire, packing the digital streets of Leipzig with a sea of animated clones. Lastly, ***why don't the cops fight each other?*** by **Grayson Earle** engages with *Grand Theft*

¹ (Short for “modification”): The act of altering a video game’s original structure, syntax or code by players or fans. Resulting changes range from simple modifications such as altering a character’s appearance to creating a whole new game altogether. The limitless creative possibilities offered by modding has nurtured modding communities across a variety of video games.

Auto's modding communities, revealing loopholes within the seemingly limitless world of modding in an introspective critique on police brutality across virtual and physical realms.



Total Refusal, *How to Disappear*, 2020. Image courtesy of the artists.

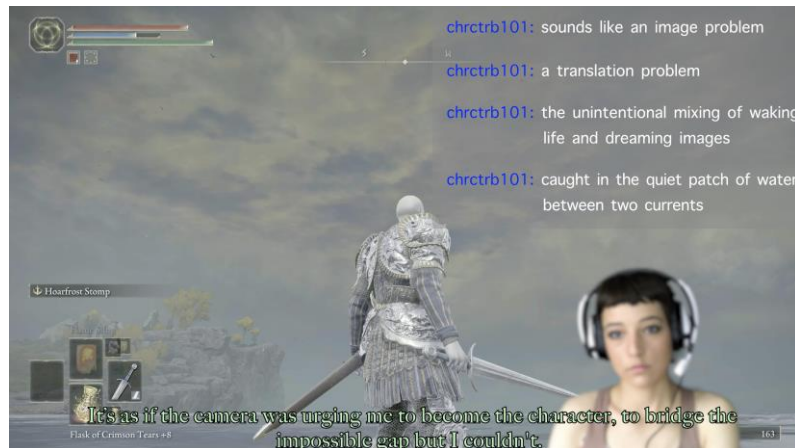
OS1.5_Dematerialised Zones

29 June to 13 July 2023

Hayoun Kwon, Total Refusal, and Antoine Chapon

In the penultimate chapter of *OS1*, the artists expand on sites of conflict as liminal spaces to subvert stereotypical perceptions of violence associated with video games, reclaiming these spaces as sites of healing, in search of escape and peace.

Inspired by the testimony of a former soldier who had entered the Demilitarised Zone (DMZ) dividing North and South Korea, **Hayoun Kwon's *489 Years*** explores the DMZ as a paradoxical place where immense anxiety and sublime beauty coexist. This is followed by the pseudo-Marxist media guerrilla collective **Total Refusal**, presenting ***How to Disappear***, an anti-war movie that searches for peace on the battlefields of an online war game. Set against the backdrop of picturesque war landscapes in *Battlefield V*, the work explores the hidden history of deserters, paying tribute to disobedience and resistance in digital and real-life warfare. Lastly, **Antoine Chapon's *My Own Landscapes*** takes introspection on the practice of virtual reality simulator games adopted by the American and French armies, simultaneously used for recruitment programmes at the beginning of one's employment and to treat post-traumatic stress disorders for veterans returning from war.



Kara Güt, *Hurt/Comfort*, 2022. Image courtesy of the artist.

OS1.6 Intimate Encounters

13 to 27 July 2023

Sara Sadik, Kara Güt, and Xafiér Yap

As the title suggests, the sixth and final chapter brings *OS1* to a close with a series of artworks reflecting on notions of identity and intimacy within virtual realms. Although the last two chapters draw on the nostalgic and familiar sights and sounds of both old school and contemporary video games, these works demonstrate how the character development of role-playing games is not unlike the process of personal identity construction, where one's "self" is nurtured from one's relationship with others and their surroundings.

Known for her ability to create space for emotional expressions in her work, **Sara Sadik** presents ***Khtobtogone***, a love story set in *Grand Theft Auto 5*. Based on the experiences of Marseille's Maghrebi community, the work coaxes a refreshing vulnerability that challenges traditional heteronormative masculinity and one's formative coming of age in contrast to the violent ideations associated with the game. In an ode to fandom culture and new forms of human intimacy in today's internet age, **Kara Güt's *Hurt/Comfort*** is presented through a series of confessional scenes between a streamer and their chat audience while playing *Elden Ring*. Referencing hurt/comfort fanfiction, the streamer's role and emotional state ebbs and flows across parasocial lines as the two parties convene through the screen. To conclude this series of artist projects, **Xafiér Yap** presents ***2nd Puberty***, adopting the form of a 2D video game where viewers can participate as players and navigate a game world amongst the virtual judgement of its side characters and the players' monologue. Using video games as portals to reimagine time, space

and ways of being, *2nd Puberty* seeks to introduce new ways of connecting, communicating and understanding ourselves and one another.

More information on the different chapters, artworks and participating artists for *OS1* can be found in **Annex A**.

Engaging with audiences familiar and new: *OS Broadcasts*

As a key component leading up to the launch of *OS1*, a series of virtual programmes featuring artists, designers, and curators titled ***OS Broadcasts*** was launched in January 2023. Broadcasted on the popular game live-streaming platform, Twitch, *OS Broadcasts* will continue to facilitate real-time interactions with participants, with upcoming artist talks and performances hosted on the [OS Twitch channel](#). Broadcasts of prior programmes can also be found on [opensystems.sg](#).

The hosting site for *OS1* will go live from 4 May to 10 August 2023 and can be accessed for free during the exhibition period. More information can be found at [opensystems.sg](#) and on [SAM's Website](#). Media assets can be accessed via our media kit [here](#).

- **Annex A:** Details on the artists and artworks in *Open Systems 1_Open Worlds*

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About the Singapore Art Museum

Singapore Art Museum opened in 1996 as the first art museum in Singapore located in the cultural district of Singapore. Known as SAM, the museum presents contemporary art from a Southeast Asian perspective for artists, art lovers and the art curious in multiple venues across the island, including a new venue in the historic port area of Tanjong Pagar.

The museum is building one of the world's most important public collections of Southeast Asian contemporary art, with the aim of connecting the art and the artists to the public and future generations through exhibitions and programmes. SAM is working towards a humane and sustainable future by committing to responsible practices within its processes.

To find out more, visit www.singaporeartmuseum.sg

Annex A: Details on the artists and artworks in Open Systems 1_Open Worlds

Artist & Artwork	Description
<p>OS1.1_Virtual Capital 4 to 18 May 2023</p> <p>The artworks in <i>Virtual Capital</i> explore the process of how the virtual can exist before the real, highlighting the relationship between financial systems, architectural development, and their impact on our lived experience. Here, the capital city, acting as the seat of political power, channels global flows of capital through speculative investment schemes and architectural development projects. Through the use of satire and science-fiction, the artworks chart the mechanisms by which capital circulates between real and virtual worlds.</p>	
<p>Lawrence Lek Pyramid Schemes 2018</p>  <p><i>Lawrence Lek, Pyramid Schemes, 2018. Single-channel video (colour, sound), 17 min. Image courtesy the artist and Sadie Coles HQ, London.</i></p>	<p><i>Pyramid Schemes</i> is a treatise on architecture in eleven chapters. Narrated by a computer-simulated voice, the video takes Victor Hugo's novel <i>The Hunchback of Notre Dame (1831)</i> as its historical point of departure. By fusing scenes from the video game <i>Assassin's Creed</i> with other simulated environments, Lek offers a sweeping journey through the evolution of architecture and spaces that reflect and inscribe power structures. The first-person perspective of a role-playing game asserts the agency of the video's wandering protagonist and reflects how virtual spaces reflect real-world issues of migration, access, and the privilege of being able to go to different places.</p> <p>About the Artist Lawrence Lek is an artist, filmmaker and musician working in the fields of virtual reality and simulation. He experiments with worldbuilding as a form of multi-dimensional collage that can incorporate elements from both material and virtual worlds, while also developing narratives that reflect on alternate histories and possible futures.</p>
<p>Alice Bucknell E-Z Kryptobuild 2020</p>	<p><i>E-Z Kryptobuild</i> is a work of speculative fiction that responds to architecture's role in producing systems of global inequity and the climate emergency. Here, a scam crypto company called <i>E-Z Kryptobuild</i> offers "post-apocalyptic sustainable luxury" to the 1% through a selection of celebrity architect-designed utopias for the end of times. Embodying a visual language of reality TV shows from <i>Selling Sunset</i> to <i>Love Island</i>, <i>E-Z Kryptobuild</i> uses satire, speculation, and AI technology to exaggerate our current conditions through the architecture of post-apocalyptic lifestyle scams. It</p>



Alice Bucknell, E-Z Kryptobuild, 2020. Single-channel video (colour, sound), 24 min. Image courtesy of the artist.

critiques the delusional complexes of Silicon Valley and starchitecture culture through a cast of characters including global influencers Kim and Kylie, a disgruntled intern and the resurrected ghost of Dame Zaha Hadid.

About the Artist

Alice Bucknell is a North American artist and writer based in London. Working primarily through game engines, she explores the intersections of architecture, ecology, magic, and non-human and machine intelligence. She is the organiser of New Mystics, a platform exploring magic, mysticism, ritual and technology.

Bahar Noorizadeh, with Rudá Babau, and Waste Paper Opera (Klara Kofen, James Oldham, Gary Zhexi Zhang, Anna Palmer)

Free to Choose
2023



Bahar Noorizadeh with Rudá Babau, and Waste Paper Opera (Klara Kofen, James Oldham, Gary Zhexi Zhang, Anna Palmer), Free to Choose, 2023. Single-channel video (colour, sound). Image courtesy of the artist.

Free to Choose is an operatic financial sci-fi (fi-fi) narrated by no other than Milton Friedman: The American economist who was the real-life narrator of Hong Kong's founding myth. In his long career as a neoliberal ideologue and advisor to the conservative governments of the US and the UK, Friedman hailed Hong Kong as "the modern exemplar of free markets" needless of heavy-handed government planning. "If you want to see Capitalism in action, you should go to Hong Kong." Neoliberalism, as a theory invented in the west, once tested in Hong Kong's advanced colony, would return to shape the economic policies of Western powers in the decades to come.

For the parable of neoliberalism, Hong Kong was the level-playing-field gamespace to test out their economic models, much like the economic worlds built in metaverse platforms today. Once claiming the highest rate of public housing in the world, Hong Kong in 2023 holds one of the deepest wealth gaps and one of the most lucrative real estate markets on the planet.

About the Artists

Bahar Noorizadeh looks at the relationship between art and capitalism. In her practice as an artist, writer and filmmaker, she examines the conflictual and contradictory notions of imagination and speculation as they suffuse one another. Her research investigates the histories of economics, cybernetic socialism, and activist strategies against the financialization of life and the living space, asking what redistributive historical justice might look like for the present. Noorizadeh is the

	<p>founder of <i>Weird Economies</i>, a co-authored and socially-connected project that traces economic imaginaries extraordinary to financial arrangements of our time.</p> <p>Rudá Babau is a filmmaker and artist based in Brasilia and São Paulo, Brazil. They work with the virtuality of reality and the fuzziness between digital and material as code.</p> <p>Waste Paper Opera is an experimental music theatre collective, comprising artists, makers, performers, writers and researchers, run by composer and performer James Oldham and artist and writer Klara Kofen. Their recent collaboration with writer and artist Gary Zhexi Zhang, <i>Dead Cat Bounce</i>, presented as an installation at Medialab Matadero and premiered at Somerset House in 2022, is a modularly expanding oratorio, a sacred work of choral music telling stories of money, time, and catastrophe. For this first extension of the work, they are joined by sound artist and performer Anna Palmer, composer and artist Cameron Graham, violinist and sound artist Chihiro Ono and the Waste Paper Opera Chorus.</p>
<p>OS1.2_ <i>WoW, Unite!</i> 18 May to 1 June 2023</p> <p>Taking up the potential for collective action in the face of real exploitation, <i>WoW, Unite!</i> considers the nature of labour as it moves between offline and online spaces. The title of <i>OS1.2</i> updates the familiar rallying cry for class solidarity — “Workers of the world, unite!” — with the acronym for the popular game <i>World of Warcraft</i> (WoW), which has turned out to be an unexpected site for collective organisation. Through video and video game essays, the artworks highlight the working conditions and modes of organisation that arise amongst gamers, game developers and the subjects of increasingly gamified labour.</p>	
<p>Cat Bluemke <i>Gameworkers & Guildworkers</i> 2020</p>	<p><i>Gameworkers & Guildworkers</i> is a video game essay focusing on the Notre Dame Cathedral of Paris and its virtual reconstruction in the video game <i>Assassin's Creed Unity</i> (2014) to examine the working conditions of the builders. Revisiting 13th century statutes of the guild workers who built the original cathedral reveals that contemporary game workers have fewer industry protections than their Medieval counterparts.</p> <p>The project is inspired by the international Game Workers Unite movement.</p>



Cat Bluemke, *Gameworkers and Guildworkers*, 2020. Videogame essay. Image courtesy of the artist.

About the Artist

Cat Bluemke uses game design, performance and expanded reality to explore the dynamic relationship between work and play. She is interested in discussing technology's impact on social and working relations, with a focus on precarious, feminised and domestic labour. Her work has been exhibited internationally at venues such as the 2018 Venice Architecture Biennale, Kunsternes Hus (Norway), and the Museum of Contemporary Art (Chicago). She currently lives and works in Treaty 4 territory.

Joshua Citarella & Jacob Hurwitz-Goodman
DKP is Market Socialism
2022



Joshua Citarella and Jacob Hurwitz-Goodman, *DKP is Market Socialism*, 2022. Single-channel video essay (colour, sound), 18 min. Image courtesy of the artists.

DKP is Market Socialism explores the in-game dynamics of the massively multiplayer online game (MMO) *World of Warcraft* (WoW). In games like WoW, gamers have devised their own version of market socialism to distribute the goods (loot) acquired from in-game bosses. Using a currency called DKP, members are able to acquire and exchange loot from shared battles. The guild is a kind of worker's cooperative that helps distribute based on particular needs, without systems of debt, vertical leadership, or inequality. While other political models exist, years of player history demonstrate that this sort of virtual socialism remains the most prevalent and long-lasting—proof that left economics can work even when the people that make up the polity are imperfect.

DKP is Market Socialism is the first installment of the trilogy *When Guys Turn 20*. The trilogy can be seen in full at dis.art


About the Artists

Joshua Citarella is a New York City-based artist researching online political subcultures. He is the author of *Politigram and the Post-left* and *20 Interviews*.

Jacob Hurwitz-Goodman is a Los Angeles-based, Emmy-winning director of documentaries, short films, and music videos. He has created small movies for PBS, Wired.com, Discovery Digital, *Huffington Post*, *New York Post* and more.

Mario Mu

Sites of Encounter deals with the transformation of the labour system—from factory settings to

<p>Sites of Encounter 2022</p>  <p>Mario Mu, <i>Sites of Encounter</i>, 2022. Single-channel video (colour, sound), 20 min. Image courtesy of the artist.</p>	<p>digital platforms—and of the subjects within. Created within the Unity game engine, this narrative video follows intimate dialogues between a group of characters as they navigate contemporary labour conditions. Presenting the architectural environments of the factory, the bridge and the office as protagonists, <i>Sites of Encounter</i> questions the morphology of spaces and objects and asks how space, memory and alternative ways of work could be re-mapped. A voiceover narrative presents several characters in dialogue or parallel monologues pondering work and death, but also subjects like architecture, forgetting and remembering, violence, relationships, coffee and composting.</p> <p>About the Artist Mario Mu is a visual artist and director living in Berlin, Germany. He works on various research projects that are often constructed as extended gaming platforms. Apart from frequently incorporating sound and drawing, his practice mainly shifts between game design, 3D animation and performance.</p>
<p>OS1.3 Landscapes of the Political Imaginary 1 to 15 June 2023 <i>Landscapes of the Political Imaginary</i> explores how the construction of the nation-state occurs simultaneously in the physical landscape and the collective imagination. Engaging colonial and post-colonial sites of the past, present, and future through archives and historical documents, these artworks complicate our understanding of video games and the underlying assumptions that are designed into their landscapes.</p>	
<p>Zheng Mahler <i>The Green Crab: A Virtual Diagram of Auspicious Spatial Organisation</i> 2022</p>	<p><i>The Green Crab</i> is a speculative investigation of East Asian urbanism taking Singapore and Hong Kong as its two diametrically opposed exemplars. The interactive video game allows users to explore a coastal map of Singapore to uncover the <i>feng shui</i> principles that inform the city-state's planning. While Hong Kong, as the cyberpunk city <i>par excellence</i>, projects and absorbs in equal amounts techno-orientalist fascination, horror and desire, Singapore is positioned in the western cultural imaginary as its opposite. Challenging this framing, <i>The Green Crab</i> reveals Singapore as the spiritual epitome of an East Asian <i>feng shui</i> city, engineered through (reverse) state alchemy.</p> <p><i>The Green Crab</i> was created in close collaboration with architectural historian Ian Tan and Onebite</p>



Zheng Mahler, *The Green Crab: A Virtual Diagram of Auspicious Spatial Organization, 2022*. Interactive computer game. Image courtesy of the artists.

Studio, Hong Kong.

About the Artist

Zheng Mahler consists of artist Royce Ng and anthropologist Daisy Bisenieks. Together, they collaboratively examine global trade, the relational networks connecting nature and technology and more-than-human geographies, while also exploring their flows of mutual influence and the environmental architectures they produce. Utilising digital media, performance and installation, they develop speculative scenarios and immersive, sensory encounters that explore the limits and potentials of their respective disciplines. They have exhibited, performed and participated in numerous art spaces, institutions and residencies, working alongside various communities in Australia, Asia, Africa, Europe and the US.

Shabtai Pinchevsky

An Abridged Draft for a Letter to Leila Khaled
2020




Shabtai Pinchevsky, *An Abridged Draft of a Letter to Leila Khaled, 2020*. Single-channel video (colour, sound), 12 min. Image courtesy of the artist.



An Abridged Draft for a Letter to Leila Khaled reconstructs the landscape of Palestine before the Nakba, as it is depicted in the Palmach Aerial Photographs Collection. Recorded in Microsoft's hyper realistic Flight Simulator program, an aerial tour of the reconstructed collection is superimposed onto satellite views of modern Israel. While the Palmach Collection was created through an aerial reconnaissance effort by the Zionist Paramilitary organisation (under the guise of civilian aerial tours) during the 1947–48 war in Palestine, today it provides rare documentation of the Palestinian landscape on the verge of its imminent erasure.


The fictional letter that structures the video is addressed to Leila Khaled, a member of the PFLP who gained notoriety for her role in the hijacking of a TWA Flight in 1969—a nonviolent act designed to bring international attention to the plight of Palestinians. Narrating the video in his own voice, the artist connects his family history and Khaled's actions through the fractured landscape of Haifa, past and present.



About the Artist

Shabtai Pinchevsky is a photographer and new media artist currently based in New York. His photographic practice is an extended one, employing video works, three-dimensional digital modelling, mapping and archival work. He uses these tools and practices to explore photographic

	<p>histories and investigate the political and social complications of the medium while reflecting on his own implications within the field.</p>
<p>Firas Shehadeh <i>Like An Event In A Dream Dreamt By Another: Rehearsal</i> 2022-23</p>  <p><i>Firas Shehadeh, Like An Event In A Dream Dreamt By Another: Rehearsal, 2022–23. Single-channel video (colour, sound), 14 min. Image courtesy of the artist.</i></p>	<p><i>Like An Event In A Dream Dreamt By Another: Rehearsal</i> explores Millennial and Gen Z humour, emotions and aesthetics on and after the internet. Looking at internet memes, video games and other forms of online culture, the project engages with the digital condition in Palestine and the Palestinian diaspora.</p> <p>An extension of Shehadeh’s ongoing research into video games and Palestinian youth culture, the first entry in the series, <i>Rehearsal</i>, combines found-footage of Twitch streamers and custom game mods for the video game <i>Grand Theft Auto V</i>. Unpacking video game mods as a form of contemporary archive—and therefore digitising historic and contemporary architectural sites in addition to seemingly ubiquitous objects—the artwork proposes Los Santos, the setting of the video game, as the proverbial “land of milk and honey.”</p> <p>About the Artist Firas Shehadeh’s practice is informed by his long-standing interest in history, technology and aesthetics. He also grapples with the understanding of home and identity in a post-internet age. He holds a Master of Fine Arts from the Akademie der bildenden Künste Wien and currently lives and works in Vienna.</p>
<p>OS1.4_ Unrealpolitik 15 to 29 June 2023</p> <p>Underscoring the potential for collective organisation that virtual spaces enable, <i>Unrealpolitik</i> explores the potential for digitised direct action to counter state violence. Highlighting the tension between the exaggerated violence of video games and the sterility of virtual cityscapes, the artists probe the underlying ideologies that are encoded by supposedly “neutral” software. These works recognise that the perceived impotence of gaming gives it a special power to intervene in a world that recuperates more legible forms of political resistance.</p>	
<p>Yeyoon Avis Ann & George Chua</p>	<p>The lead single from Singaporean sound artist George Chua’s 2021 album, <i>Neo-Punggol</i> is a thrilling audiovisual collage that serves as a commentary on the current global information war—</p>

<p>Neo-Punggol 2021</p>  <p><i>Yeyoon Avis Ann, Neo-Punggol, 2021. Single-channel music video (black & white, sound), 4 min. Image courtesy of the artist.</i></p>	<p>a manic reflection of a world over-saturated with information. The music video is assembled from found-footage by Yeyoon Avis Ann, and features architectural models, scenes of classic video games and documentation of protests in South Korea, Hong Kong and the United States. The exaggerated animated violence of video games obscures the everyday violence exercised by the state, reflecting the urgent tempo of Chua's soundscape. This melee contrasts with the pristine architectural renderings used to promote corporate real estate projects populated exclusively by passive subjects, suggesting another kind of violence.</p> <p>About the Artists Yeyoon Avis Ann is a Singapore-based artist and art director experimenting and exploring ways to repurpose and rearrange the existing in a synesthetic way.</p> <p>George Chua is an artist based in Singapore and has been active since the late 1990s. As an instigator and explorer of the psychedelic potential of sound, he has no interest in developing a singular style. His path is one of contemplative prayer and uncompromising music.</p>
<p>Clemens von Wedemeyer 70.001 2019</p>  <p><i>Clemens von Wedemeyer, 70.001, 2019. Single-channel video (colour, sound), 16 min. Image courtesy of the artist and Galerie Jocelyn Wolff, Paris.</i></p>	<p><i>70.001</i>, is a digital reconstruction of the Monday demonstrations that filled the streets of Leipzig in October 1989. However, there are two key differences between the computer simulation of the mass movement and historic events: the crowd of demonstrators flows through a digital version of the Leipzig of today and does not disperse in the evening as people go home. Unlike people, the algorithms do not need a break, and add new protestors each day. Soon, the streets are packed as far as the eye can see with animated clones, turning the demonstration into a viral sea of generic bodies.</p> <p>About the Artist Clemens von Wedemeyer creates films and media installations poised between reality and fiction, reflecting power structures in social relations, history and architecture. In his "cinema about cinema," normally hidden aspects of film production — such as the dressing of a set or the casting of actors — are incorporated in the final edit alongside scripted and improvised actions. Switching between drama and documentary, von Wedemeyer creates multiple layers of ambiguity in his work, pushing the viewer to question the conventions of theatre, film, news reportage and reality</p>

	TV.
<p>Grayson Earle <i>why don't the cops fight each other?</i> 2020</p>  <p><i>Grayson Earle, why don't the cops fight each other?, 2020. Desktop documentary (colour, sound), 9 min. Image courtesy of the artist.</i></p>	<p><i>why don't the cops fight each other?</i> is a documentary about an attempt to modify the relationships between police officers in the video game <i>Grand Theft Auto V</i> (GTA).</p> <p>Earle's work engages the “modding” scene for GTA, a community of people and tools that enable players to make modifications (or mods) to the game world. While these mods are almost limitless in scope, one property is completely immutable: the police officers in the game will never fight each other. Through an exhaustive forensic analysis of the game’s source code and engagement with mod developers, the artist demonstrates the extent to which the cultural imagination concerning the real-world police is projected into the game space.</p> <p>About the Artist Grayson Earle is a new media artist and educator. A member of The Illuminator Art Collective, Earle is the co-creator of <i>Bail Bloc</i> (2017), a computer program that bails people out of jail and <i>Ai Wei Whoops</i> (2014), an online game that allows the player to smash Ai Weiwei’s urns. His artworks have been exhibited internationally.</p>
<p>OS1.5_Dematerialised Zones 29 June to 13 July 2023 <i>Dematerialized Zones</i> traverses sites of conflict — both remembered and imagined — in search of escape. Expanding on demilitarised zones (DMZs) as liminal spaces, the featured artworks subvert the ubiquitous violence associated with video games, reclaiming these spaces in the pursuit of (inner) peace. In the process, the artists demonstrate the capacity for virtual spaces to help heal historical and personal traumas, as well as the structural limits of these virtual spaces as tools.</p>	
<p>Hayoun Kwon <i>489 Years</i> 2016</p>	<p><i>489 Years</i> depicts an animated landscape of the Demilitarised Zone (DMZ) between North and South Korea. It is based on the testimony of a former soldier who had entered the DMZ-, which is one of the most dangerous and heavily armed places in the world. Artist Hayoun Kwon was touched by the soldier's account revolving around landmines and flowers, leading to the realisation that the DMZ is a paradoxical place where intense anxiety and sublime beauty coexist. In creating her imagined landscape, Kwon addresses the geopolitical realities of the peninsular division, its</p>

 <p><i>Hayoun Kwon, 489 Years, 2016. Single-channel video (colour, sound), 11 min. Image courtesy of the artist.</i></p>	<p>violence and projected images of this mythical space.</p> <p>About the Artist Hayoun Kwon is a multimedia artist and documentary director. Her previous works have centred on the reflection on ideas of identity and borders. Since then, her later works have focused more specifically on the construction of historical and individual memory, and their ambivalent relationship to reality and fiction.</p>
<p>Total Refusal How to Disappear 2020</p>  <p><i>Total Refusal, How to Disappear, 2020. Single-channel video (colour, sound), 21 min. Image courtesy of the artists.</i></p>	<p><i>How to Disappear</i> is an anti-war movie in the truest sense of the word, searching for possibilities for peace in the most unlikely place: an online war game. It is a tribute to disobedience and desertion in both digital and real-life warfare. Shot in the picturesque war landscapes of <i>Battlefield V</i>, the hyper-real graphics become the backdrop for an essay-like narrative. The film revolves around the history of deserters—a part of human history that is not often known to the public. In this work, performances and creative interventions explore the scopes and limits of the audio-visual entertainment machine.</p> <p>About the Artist The pseudo-marxist media guerilla Total Refusal explores and practises strategies for artistic intervention in contemporary computer games. It works with tools of appropriation and rededication of game resources. Total Refusal is made up of Michael Stumpf, Leonhard Müllner, Robin Klengel, Jona Kleinlein, Adrian Haim, Susanna Flock and collaborators.</p>
<p>Antoine Chapon My Own Landscapes 2020</p>	<p>Within the French and American armies, virtual reality prepares soldiers for their future battles. It is also used to treat post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) after their baptism of fire. In <i>My Own Landscapes</i>, filmmaker Antoine Chapon meets Cyril, a former military video game designer and veteran who is dealing with the return to civilian life and loss of identity.</p> <p>Using the same tools used to create combat simulations, Cyril constructs his own world as a means of escaping the reality of civilian life and the constant presence of PTSD.</p>



Antoine Chapon, *My Own Landscapes*, 2020. Single-channel video (colour, sound), 18 min. Image courtesy of the artist.

About the Artist

Antoine Chapon is an artist and filmmaker based in Paris. His works create dynamic links and tensions between cinema, CGI animations and archives to question the concept of identity through the relationship between memory, image and new technologies. In his artistic practice, migratory tales, PTSD and algorithms of facial recognition appear as situations and tools.

OS1.6 Intimate Encounters

13 to 27 July 2023

Intimate Encounters investigates how identity and intimacy develop in virtual spaces. The featured artworks draw on the nostalgia for retro video games and the familiarity of contemporary ones, while also challenging the normative assumptions embedded by video games. In these works, the character development of role-playing games mirrors the process of personal identity construction, where the self emerges through its relationship to the "other."

Sara Sadik
Khtobtogone
2021





Sara Sadik, *Khtobtogone*, 2021. Single-channel video (colour, sound), 16 min. Image courtesy of the artist and Galerie Crèvecoeur, Paris.

A love story set in the video game *Grand Theft Auto V* (GTA), *Khtobtogone* explores masculinity in Maghrebi Marseille. *Khtobtogone* begins as a love story between protagonist Zine and the girl of his dreams, Bulma. Zine reflects more broadly on masculinity and coming of age in Marseille's Maghrebi community through an introspective narration. Inspired by the experiences of her male friends from southern France, Sadik collaged transcripts of their stories into Zine's internal monologue. Sadik complements Zine's poetic voiceover with custom modifications of GTA's graphics, which add specific cultural references and deepen his interior world. In these striking scenes, Sadik coaxes a refreshing vulnerability from a game designed to highlight idealised, heteronormative masculinity.

About the Artist

Sara Sadik creates spaces for ephemeral emotional expressions in videos, installations, and fictional interventions in ordinary situations in order to consider their broader social and cultural significance. In her works, Sadik repurposes public domains as spaces for exhibition and self-

	<p>reflection. Taking cues from pop culture and science fiction, she creates scenarios for youth peer groups, especially young men, to explore their inner emotional lives without judgment or mediation. Sadik often recruits teenagers from local communities as collaborators on her works. Together, they manifest the diverse bonds and codes that exist between outsiders who, while encountering some peers, recognise kindred spirits and develop new definitions of belonging.</p>
<p>Kara Güt Hurt/Comfort 2022</p>  <p><i>Kara Güt, Hurt/Comfort, 2022. Single-channel video (colour, sound), 11 min. Image courtesy of the artist.</i></p>	<p><i>Hurt/Comfort</i> is a series of confessional vignettes consisting of <i>The Character</i>, <i>The Camera</i>, <i>Fandom</i>, and <i>To Trade Places</i>. The video imagines the live stream as the contemporary confession booth. The streamer, while playing the video game <i>Elden Ring</i>, attempts to speak to an invisible audience. However, something has gone wrong, and the streamer's image has been distorted. A chat dialogue comforts the streamer during the ordeal, appearing to sympathise with her condition. Eventually, the chat dialogue manifests as a second avatar in the game, and the two "trade places." In the interest of deconstructing the self, the chat and live-streamer relationship stands as a mix between Socratic dialogue and hurt/comfort fanfiction.</p> <p>About the Artist Kara Güt is a multidisciplinary artist whose primary focus is image-based, digital media. Her work investigates the new shape of human intimacy formed by internet lifestyle, constructed detachment from reality and the power dynamics of the virtual.</p>
<p>Xafiér Yap 2nd Puberty 2022</p> 	<p><i>2nd Puberty</i> is an experiential work in the form of a 2D video game. Here, artist Xafiér Yap considers gaming as a portal through which time, space and ways of being are reimagined. Players are invited to adopt an avatar in order to navigate the virtual world, the judgment of others, and their own inner dialogue. Subverting traditional storylines and game mechanics, the work draws upon the experience of living and transitioning in a heteronormative society. In the process, <i>2nd Puberty</i> introduces new ways to connect, communicate and understand each other and ourselves.</p> <p>About the Artist Xafiér Yap is a re-packager, a mix of something between pre-writer and post-reader; They draw from different sources of information to build a world that is plausible. Their artworks explore the</p>

Xafiér Yap, 2nd Puberty, 2022. Interactive computer game. Image courtesy of the artist.

potentiality of sincere investments such as alternative kinships and entanglements (and all the embarrassments!) of the human condition.