

Andrew Demirjian: pause+rewind+connect+combine+sequence+delay+repeat

Opens September 12th at the New Media Artspace,
Baruch College, CUNY



ANDREW DEMIRJIAN: pause+rewind+connect+combine+sequence+delay+repeat

NEW YORK, NY- September 12, 2018 – [Baruch College](#) presents *Andrew Demirjian: pause+rewind +connect+combine+sequence+delay+repeat*, an exhibition of video works by Andrew Demirjian, curated by Katherine Behar, Associate Professor of New Media Arts at Baruch College.

The show will open on September 12th, 2018 and run through November 30th, 2018 at the New Media Artspace gallery in Baruch's Library and Information Building, 151 E. 25th Street. The New Media Artspace will host a casual discussion with the artist for Baruch students on Wednesday, September 12th, from 3:00–4:00 PM in the New Media Artspace and room 415 of the Library and Information Building. Members of the public who wish to attend may RSVP to katherine.behar@baruch.cuny.edu. A public artist lecture and reception will be held on Tuesday, November 6th, from 6:00–8:00 PM, at the Baruch Performing Arts Center's Engelman Recital Hall.

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Our short-term memory is short. It is tough to remember whole telephone numbers let alone an entire poem. Fragments remain. Slivers stick. A slogan from a billboard is glanced, a book chapter is read, and a phonetic

pattern match is made linking the two. A gossip magazine headline is seen while getting groceries while a hash-tagged tweet appears on your phone and overheard dialog interrupts your train of thought. What combines, what attaches? Which sensory experiences resonate?

—Andrew Demirjian

The exhibition *Andrew Demirjian*:

pause+rewind+connect+combine+sequence+delay+repeat is titled with a string of verbs. The actions describe a sampling of countless operations that the artist imposes on texts in the creation of his work. Explicitly manipulating a broad spectrum of sources, Demirjian invites viewers to question how we all mentally process texts constantly in our minds, in similar though subtler ways.

pause+rewind+connect+combine+sequence+delay+repeat includes interactive and video artworks in addition to an artist's book. All incorporate texts, playfully reworked into the library setting of the New Media Artspace. Demirjian's material derives from diverse cultural expressions, ranging from books and magazines, to anthem lyrics and poetry, to film subtitles. With this, the artist gives a nod to the role of contemporary libraries, where cultural sources overlap and a traditional codex can share a shelf (so to speak) with a natively digital text.

The video *The Rustle of Language*, for instance, remixes the codex itself through a seemingly algorithmic yet game-like approach to reading. And to be certain, motifs of proximity, mixing, and transgressed boundaries are central for Demirjian. His most recent works, *Pan-Terrestrial People's Anthem* and its accompanying book, suggest the political potential and significance of "connecting and combining" by imaginatively erasing or eroding the symbolic borders of nation states. Demirjian has sampled over 100 national anthems and flags, and used this material to algorithmically regenerate a combinatorial utopia where borders are no longer barriers. Users spin through an interactive 360-degree virtual sphere, panning the globe to witness new visual forms and enveloping audio, passing between cultural fusions and comparisons. A pair of interactive works, *Amiri Baraka from A to Z* and *Mary Oliver from A to Z*, invites viewers to replay these poets' spoken word lexicons, disassembled and reorganized alphabetically. The results are surprising and rewarding, prompting comparisons that starkly differentiate the two poets' language. Finally, *I Tremble with Anticipation*, returns us to the question of consciousness and cognition. Reconstituted through a painstaking edit, the video combines found footage from commercial foreign cinema, sequenced so that the subtitles spell out a complaint against the oppressive, burdensome ennui of modern humanity. The mass media we consume can haunt us as partially remembered fragments that stick in our brains, but with a subversive message.

Of this exhibition, the artist writes:

Through remixing and recombinatory aesthetics, the pieces presented here question notions of stable identities, authorial intentions, mass media messaging and the embedded ideologies of language. Our taxonomies, classification systems and information organization techniques seem ill-equipped to entirely capture the porousness of how language combines in our embodied spatial explorations. What can we understand about a poet's oeuvre from listening to the gesture of words out of context? Can remixing music and lyrics of national anthems emancipate our understanding of nations and borders? *pause+rewind+connect+combine...* plays with the shards, the excess, and the sound of language that our pattern finding and meaning-making minds can't resist, turn off, or shut down.

Language, in Demirjian's hands, is unstable and fluid. As conventional wisdom would have it, we express our subject positions through language, but the works in this exhibition suggest it may work the other way around. Our subject positions are constituted, consciously and subconsciously, from the metamorphosing language we continuously encounter. This makes our cognitive mutability a model to embrace in reforming our worlds and selves.

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Andrew Demirjian is an interdisciplinary artist who creates experimental assemblages of image, sound and text. He uses constraint systems, chance operations and remixing to question notions of stable identities, authorial intentions, mass media messaging and the embedded ideologies of language. The pieces take the form of interactive installations, digital poems and audiovisual performances.

Andrew's work has been exhibited at The Museum of the Moving Image, Fridman Gallery, The Newark Museum, Eyebeam, Rush Arts, Fieldgate Gallery, the Center for Book Arts, LMAK Projects, and many other galleries, festivals, and museums. The MacDowell Colony, Puffin Foundation, Artslink, Harvestworks, Clocktower Gallery, Bemis Center, LMCC, and the New Jersey State Council on the Arts are among some of the organizations that have supported his work.

Andrew teaches theory and production courses in emerging media in the Film and Media Department and Integrated Media Arts MFA program at Hunter College. He is currently a Fellow at the MIT Open Documentary Lab working on a computational text analysis and visualization project.

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Andrew Demirjian: pause+rewind+connect+combine+sequence+delay+repeat is curated by Katherine Behar, Associate Professor in the Department of Fine and Performing Arts in the Weissman School of Arts and Sciences at Baruch College. The exhibition is made possible by support from the Baruch Computing and Technology Center (BCTC), the Weissman School of Arts and Sciences, and the Newman Library.

All images appear courtesy of the artist.

Gallery Location: New Media Artspace at Baruch College, Library and Information Building, 151 E. 25th Street, New York, NY 10010

Gallery Hours: The New Media Artspace is open to the CUNY community during regular library hours. Members of the public may request access to the New Media Artspace at the security desk at the second floor entrance to the library. For this week's public hours, please check the gallery website: www.newmediartspace.info or dial a docent at 626-312-1664.

The New Media Artspace is a teaching exhibition space in the Department of Fine and Performing Arts at Baruch College, CUNY. Housed in the Newman Library, the New Media Artspace showcases curated experimental media and interdisciplinary artworks by international artists, students, alumni, and faculty.

About Baruch College:

[Baruch College](http://www.baruch.cuny.edu/) is a senior college in the [City University of New York \(CUNY\)](http://www.cuny.edu/) with a total enrollment of more than 17,000 students, who represent 160 countries and speak more than 100 languages. Ranked among the top 15% of U.S. colleges and the No. 4 public regional university, Baruch College is regularly recognized as among the most ethnically diverse colleges in the country. As a public institution with a tradition of academic excellence, Baruch College offers accessibility and opportunity for students from every corner of New York City and from around the world. For more about Baruch College, go to <http://www.baruch.cuny.edu/>.

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