

MEDIA RELEASE

Asier & Exitus

Fall 2020 New Media Arts Capstone Exhibition Opens December 7, 2020 at New Media Artspace, Baruch College, CUNY



NEW YORK, NY - December 7, 2020 – [The New Media Artspace](#) at Baruch College presents *Asier & Exitus*, a group exhibition led by the Fall 2020 Capstone class of the New Media Arts undergraduate minor. The exhibit will run from 7 December 2020 to February 5, 2021 online at newmediartspace.info.

The exhibition is comprised of original works created and curated by New Media Arts students Martin Alfaro, Ji Na Chen, Ansheng Fan, Gloria Ge, Shakeelah Graham, Grace Guo, Yizhe Ling, Heenaskshi Malhotra, Bryan Martinez, Aishwarya Minocha, Amber Morales, Rashed Rafson, Angel Santa, Adam Tarin, Ivan Tjen, Isaac Wei, Sally Xie, Gigi Zhao, and Fangrou Zhou.

A live premiere of the website will be held from 1:30-2:30 p.m. ET, 7 December 2020 on YouTube. Members of the public are welcome to attend at <https://tinyurl.com/asierandexitus>

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Asier & Exitus is an exploration of the world at large told through stories centered around seemingly mundane objects. This exhibition features *Asier*, an incorporeal being who guides the viewer through the exhibition and into different

“worlds” contained in various objects. *Asier & Exitus* challenges viewers to reconsider their place in the world and their relationships with everything in it. A lack of awareness and care has created a culture where there is a disconnect between individuals and the everyday objects that surround them. By reimagining the world through the lenses of different objects and speculating on the hypothetical futures those objects may summon, the exhibition attempts to cultivate a new appreciation for the things we often take for granted in the present.

Originating from the Basque and Latin languages, the title *Asier & Exitus* together means “the beginning and the end.” Navigating this spectrum, the works are categorized into three overarching concepts: “The Other Place,” “The Spoken Place,” and “The Tragic Place.” Viewers get a glimpse into worlds outside of the physical realm in “The Other Place,” worlds of individual objects in “The Spoken Place,” and worlds of foreseeable dystopias in “The Tragic Place.”

The Other Place

“The Other Place” collection enables viewers to imagine and explore virtual worlds. Some of the artworks experiment with preparing for the unknown in an unpredictable world and other pieces focus on capitalism and making up for injustices. Isaac Wei’s art game, *Liberating the Human Inside* takes participants to a futuristic digital world where they can shop, learn, socialize and even work. *Wipe Craft*, an interactive work by Heenaskshi Malhotra, Aishwarya Minocha, and Amber Morales, transports players into a germy virtual game world where they can wipe viruses, malware and toxins off the screen with a digital version of the COVID-era’s ubiquitous Clorox wipe to stay safe from infection. Ji Na Chen, Grace Guo, Ansheng Fan and Gigi Zhao’s work, *The Watch Is on the Clock* transitions to a world where a hardworking watch is paid minimum wage for its work keeping time digitally for the duration of the exhibition. *The Other Place* takes the user into a virtual world where they can explore shopping, cleaning viruses and keeping track of how many hours the watchman has worked.

The Spoken Place

The exhibition’s second collection, “The Spoken Place,” features artworks that take on an unconventional medium of communication through feelings, actions, or gestures. In addition, the artworks adopt an object’s perspective, reveal its *umwelt* or “sense world,” or explore the dependent relationships between objects and humans. *T-MEME: A SERIES OF UNFORTUNATE EVENTS* by Angel Santa and Bryan Martinez is a collection of digital photos that explores the struggle and mistreatment of an everyday object, a neglected T-shirt. The artists personify the object by giving it a voice and allowing the observers to feel for its life. Shakeelah Graham’s *Q-tip Nation* is an audio book that portrays a science fictional future world in which Q-Tips live without humans or human ears to clean. Rashed Rafson’s video *Shine Bright in Darkness* advertises a Chindogu-like invention, nightlight slippers. In his short film *FORECAST*, Ivan Tjen adapts the importance of the umbrella as it evolves to protect humans from small-scale weather and natural elements and eventually from large-scale climate change. On entering the world of “The Spoken Place”, observers are challenged to reevaluate their relationship with the objects they interact with on an everyday basis through various communication styles.

The Tragic Place

The final collection of the exhibition, *The Tragic Place*, invites the viewers to imagine dystopian societies. Some artworks experiment with darkness in search of a gleam of light—a sense of hope or means for survival—while others take a closer look at a society where humans have exploited and carelessly used the world’s natural resources and can no longer sustainably coexist. Gloria Ge, Fangrou Zhou, and Yizhe Ling’s video *In The Dark* takes viewers into what seems to be a fantastical future in which air pollution blocks out the sun, entering this sunless world viewers experience the production of light and commodification of pollution as a failed search for hope. Adam Tarin’s *Burn the Celluloid*, a screenplay and film trailer, offers an expedition into a world consumed by darkness to understand the role of light in the medium of film, and the role of film media in the preservation of cultural memory. Martin Alfaro’s *Future Absence*

depicts a world of waste where creations become the creators and embody those who have mistreated, misused, and misrepresented them. This photographic series sculpts body parts out of refuse. *Disposable Home* by Sally Xie offers a different perspective on being resourceful in a time where natural resources are completely depleted, but the world must continue to operate. Her videos juxtapose pristine 3D renderings of imaginary domestic products with material constructions for the same products fabricated out of used Amazon shipping boxes. *The Tragic Place* ultimately wants viewers to imagine dystopian societies in order to sense their importance to understanding *Asier's* purpose of bridging the appreciation gap between humans and the world's objects.

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Asier & Exitus is created and curated by Baruch's New Media Arts Capstone Class of Fall 2020; with the supervision of 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 artists.

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. However, the physical exhibitions of the New Media Artspace are closed in response to the COVID-19 outbreak. Current exhibitions will be displayed at www.newmediartspace.info.

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 is a senior college in the City University of New York (CUNY) 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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