

Silvia Ruzanka: Botanical Computing
Opens March 4 at New Media Artspace,
Baruch College, CUNY

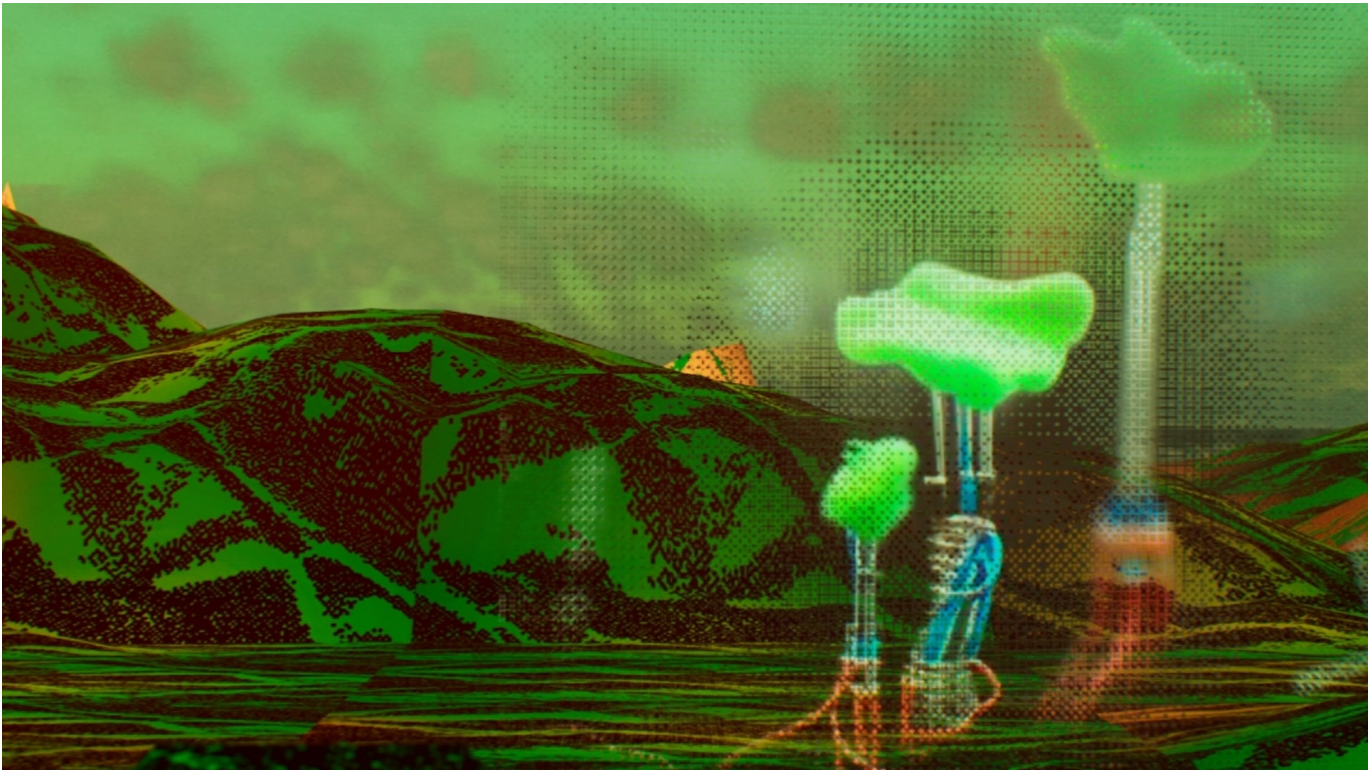


Image: Silvia Ruzanka, *Growth Study*, digital animation, 2023-24. Image courtesy of the artist.

NEW YORK, NY - February 21, 2024 – The New Media Artspace is proud to present *Silvia Ruzanka: Botanical Computing*, a solo exhibition of digital animations from an ongoing cycle of interdisciplinary new media artworks. At the New Media Artspace, Ruzanka’s science fictional animations are accompanied by digital ephemera and analog research materials, which shed light on how she simultaneously conceives, creates, and theorizes her *Botanical Computing* world. The collected works imagine environments where organic and human-made beings coexist in mutuality and even hybridity. In Ruzanka’s speculative world, biological and computational processes might generate life, and Jewish principles of caring for the natural environment as stewardship might manifest. *Botanical Computing* pays tribute to such potentialities in circuits of plants, air, breath, word, language, code, and care. *Botanical Computing* will be on view from March 4 through May 2, 2024 at the New Media Artspace website, bit.ly/nma_silviaruzanka, and at the New Media Artspace gallery in Baruch’s Library and Information Building, 151 E. 25th Street.

The Sandra Kahn Wasserman Jewish Studies Center and the New Media Artspace will host Silvia Ruzanka for a public artist lecture on Wednesday, April 10, from 6:00–8:00 p.m. at the Baruch Performing Arts Center’s Engelman Recital Hall. The event is free and open to the public. Please register [here](#) to attend.

The New Media Artspace will host casual discussions with the artist for Baruch students from 10-11 a.m. and 1:30-2:30 p.m. on April 10 in the New Media Artspace and room 320A in the Library and Information Building and 10-11 a.m. on April 11 in the New Media Artspace and room 415 in the Library and Information Building. Members of the public who wish to attend may RSVP to newmediaartspace@gmail.com.

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Botanical Computing coalesces layered accretions of three different scales of time—technological time, botanical time, and human time—within the time of creation, which in turn includes the creation of meaning, the creation of life, and the creation of art. The online exhibition uses shifting colors and Sunderings of the interface to destabilize human time, melding time periods and temporality. The design of the website contrasts contemporary 3D rendering with pixelated references to 1990s World Wide Web culture and early 2000s net art. As human viewers peer into *Botanical Computing's* worlds, they may encounter “easter eggs”—hidden elements of the interface that reveal failed remnants of abandoned past projects predating the artist’s present finished work. Further incorporating artistic process across time, the in-person exhibition includes four evolving research collages—created with the New Media Artspace Docent Team—that unearth continuities between botanical and technological patterns as form, structure, and content. Mixing in yet another timestamped reference to 1970s scientific illustration, these elements draw a connection between the processes of technological and biological growth, and the creative process artists engage daily, through which a creative world buds, morphs, withers, and blooms.

In *Botanical Computing*, Ruzanka positions the special potentialities of care and cultivation against the trope of depressive overdetermination that is frequently attributed to technological futures. To break through the truncated imagination of overdetermination, *Botanical Computing* reaches what we might call a “vegetal velocity,” as though breaking the sound barrier or in the language of Star Wars science fiction accelerating into “hyperdrive” to achieve lightspeed. At this velocity, *Botanical Computing* summons audacious hope for coding new forms of coexistence.

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Artist Bio: Silvia Ruzanka is an artist-philosopher whose projects include virtual reality, interactive installation, video, and performance. Her work is concerned with the archaeology and memory of technology and media, and their intersections with everyday life. Her work has been presented at galleries, museums, and festivals internationally including the Museum of Contemporary Art, Chicago; SIGGRAPH; ISEA; the New Forms Festival (Vancouver); and the Bi-City Biennale of Urbanism/Architecture (Shenzhen, China), among others. She holds an MFA in Art and Technology Studies from The School of the Art Institute of Chicago and a B.A. in Physics from Smith College. She is an Assistant Professor in the Department of Arts at Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute, and is a Ph.D. candidate in Visual Arts: Philosophy, Aesthetics, and Art Theory at the Institute for Doctoral Studies in the Visual Arts in Portland, Maine. Her current research is in the philosophy of computation and care.

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 visit the virtual exhibition on the gallery website, www.newmediartspace.info, or contact newmediaartspace@gmail.com to arrange an in-person visit by appointment. For updated information, please check the gallery website or dial a docent at 646-312-1664.

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](#) 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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