

303 GALLERY

303 GALLERY PRESENTS A NEW INSTALLATION BY DOUG AITKEN

On View from April 13 through May 25, 2018



Doug Aitken, *NEW ERA*, (still), 2018. Video installation with three channels of video (color, sound), three projections, freestanding room, PVC projection screens, mirrors. 10:00 minutes/loop, Installation dimensions variable. Image © Doug Aitken, courtesy 303 Gallery, New York.

“Hello, My Name is Martin Cooper. In 1973 I invented the very first cellular telephone. Standing on 6th Avenue, New York City, near the Hilton Hotel, I made a phone call. This was the very first public cellphone call.”

New York, NY, March 13, 2018 – 303 Gallery presents a new installation by Doug Aitken, titled *New Era*. On view at 303 Gallery from April 13 through May 25, 2018, *New Era* is centered around 89-year-old protagonist Martin Cooper’s seemingly straightforward statements about his invention of the mobile phone and his thoughts on the future. Aitken’s film was inspired by his research into and conversations with the inventor of this ubiquitous device, and weaves the story of Cooper’s life into a poetic narrative about humanity’s history and future. Beginning with this simple introduction, Cooper’s words become the leitmotif of a gradual deconstruction of images and sounds into a dystopian landscape where nature and technology coexist.

New Era functions like a Greek mythology for the 21st century, positing what an age of absolute connectivity might look like. Will it lead to a possibility of a post-human future, where technology could reach the capacity to gradually alter the very essence of our existence?

New Era explores the technological ambivalence of contemporary culture, raising philosophical questions about the challenges of immediate access to communication and network while we distance ourselves from our metaphysical being.

This immersive installation of moving images, expanding architecture and surrounding sound

creates a “liquid environment”. The exhibition is set within a hexagonal pavilion built into the gallery space, featuring three projectors set opposite to three mirrored walls. Together, the walls become a 3-dimensional screen — a structure that at once holds and reflects images in a continuous loop, creating a vast and dynamic visual tapestry. The viewer “entering” the screen is no longer a spectator but an interlocutor. The screen dissolves the viewer into a hallucinatory world, distorting their sense of time and self. The work reflects how technology allows for connection, knowledge and communication to take place at light speed.

The exhibition continues in a second room connected to the main installation through a narrow corridor animated by an inexplicable flickering light. Titled *Jungle*, the single work hanging on a sidewall in an otherwise minimal, empty space is a neon object that glows in space while perpetually changing patterns and rehashing its title in seemingly endless variations. The neon’s pulsating beams of light form distinct iterations of the word “jungle” in a manner that is utterly hypnotic, addictive and unsettling.

New Era questions how technology and ideas of interconnectivity in the virtual reality age can impact our basic humanity. *New Era* is Doug Aitken’s first video installation since *Migration*, which was exhibited at 303 Gallery in 2008. It will also be the artist’s first exhibition in New York since 2013.

A video preview of the exhibition can be found at this [link](#).

DOUG AITKEN

Utilizing a wide array of artistic approaches, Doug Aitken’s immersive works lead us into a world where time, space, and memory are fluid concepts. His work has been featured in exhibitions around the world, in such institutions as the Whitney Museum of American Art, The Museum of Modern Art, the Vienna Secession, the Serpentine Gallery in London and the Centre Georges Pompidou in Paris. Aitken earned the International Prize at the Venice Biennale for the installation “electric earth”, the 2012 Nam June Paik Art Center Prize, and the 2013 Smithsonian American Ingenuity Award: Visual Arts.

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Owner and Director Lisa Spellman first established 303 Gallery in 1984 at 303 Park Avenue South. In addition to its address, the gallery name also references Alfred Stieglitz’s “Intimate Gallery” artists-collaborative located in Room 303 of the Anderson Galleries building. Spellman’s 303 Gallery moved to the East Village in 1986 where she invited such artists as Christopher Wool and Robert Gober to curate special artist projects and collaborations. 1989 marked 303 Gallery’s move to 89 Greene Street in Soho where Vito Acconci, Andreas Gursky, Larry Johnson, and Rirkrit Tiravanija had solo exhibitions. It was on Greene Street that Spellman initially exhibited Doug Aitken, Hans-Peter Feldmann, Rodney Graham, Karen Kilimnik, and Collier Schorr. In 1996, 303 Gallery was among the first galleries to move to Chelsea, opening at 525 West 22nd Street and subsequently moving to 547 West 21st Street in 2008 and to 507 West 24th Street in 2013. In 2016 the gallery opened its new location at 555 West 21 Street in a building designed by principal architect Norman Foster + Partners. Learn more at <http://www.303gallery.com>.

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IMAGE CAPTION:

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