

# Networked Curatorial Practices\*

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A workshop and programming  
space for artist curious about working with  
technology.

[www.tmrw.art](http://www.tmrw.art)

**“Given both the theoretical uncertainties curators find themselves faced with concerning their own role in relation to new media art and the practical uncertainties in relation to the institution (finding the right space and getting the right technology), models of practice (iterative, modular, distributive) are useful, but understanding the modes is essential. It is these modes, particularly when it comes to collaboration, that best ‘fit’ or mirror the processes of new media art.”**

*- Beryl Graham and Sarah Cook, Rethinking Curating, p. 156*

The *Mixed Reality Workshop* (TMRW) is a unique space, which combines artistic exploration and technologies in a physical workshop space, gallery, and R&D environment. Initially located in Johannesburg, South Africa, this space focused heavily on working with artists to cultivate a sense of the possible, exploring different digital mediums, including mixed realities like VR (virtual reality) and AR (augmented reality).

TMRW started in early 2018, initiated by a diverse range of investors and technologists, under the initial combined curatorial direction of Ann Roberts and Brooklyn J. Pakathi, with Pakathi taking on sole responsibility in early 2020. In November 2020, Carly Whitaker joined as the Artistic and Curatorial Director. TMRW's physical space is no longer operational, as in January 2022 the programming was paused, with the intension of reimagining its capacity in another form.

In 2020 and 2021, as a result of Covid-19 and the subsequent lockdowns, the context in which we were working was neither reliable nor predictable. TMRW was required to reconsider how our VR and AR mediums were presented in the gallery space. Different methodologies and approaches needed to be employed in order to circumvent the anxiety caused by, and the health and safety parameters required to manage, the Covid-19 pandemic.

TMRW's mandate was to work with artists to produce, make and create. This added another, albeit interesting, layer of complexity and nuance, in terms of the curator's role in working with artists, the degree of active involvement required in the production of the artwork, and the extent of negotiation with the artist or partner concerned. Often, working with VR and AR as a framing or display mechanism or as a medium became challenging, because the VR/AR headsets could not be shared during the pandemic – meaning that only one person could view the artwork at a time, which ultimately meant rethinking what curatorial strategies would be appropriate for the different mediums, while still retaining the essence and experience of them.

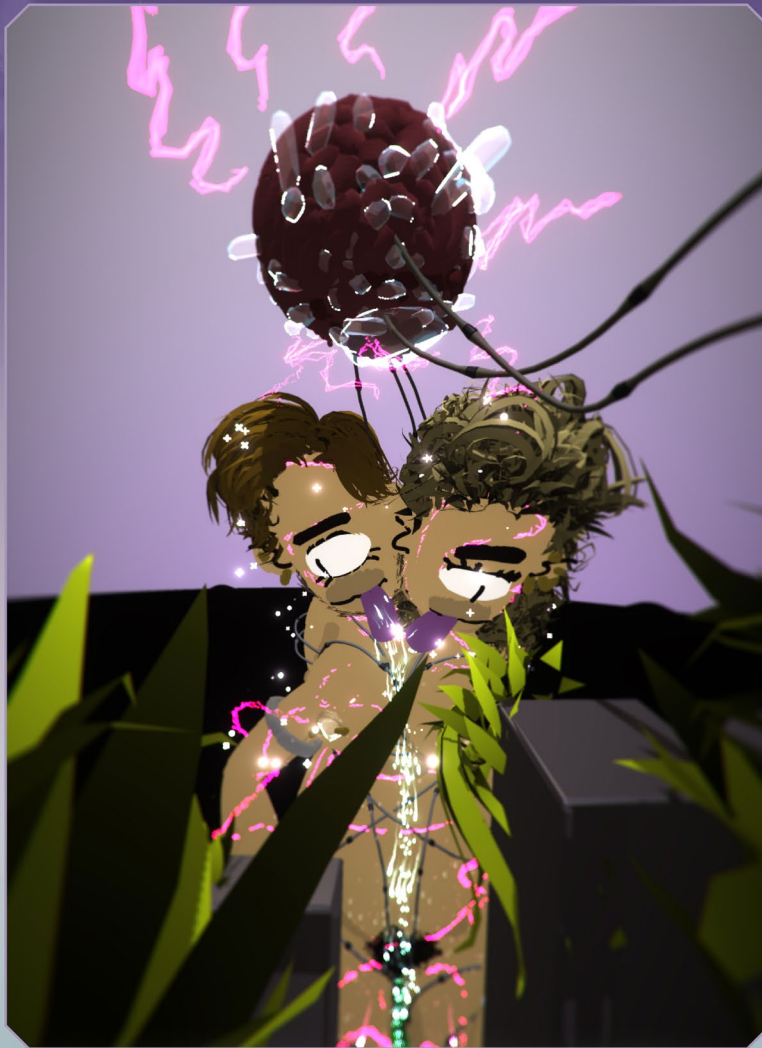
# Touch: The Fantasy

The exhibition, *Touch: The Fantasy*, was created by Kim Windvogel and Tiffany Mugo, who co-edited the book called *Touch: Sex, Sexuality and Sensuality* (2021), a compilation of personal stories and explorations of personal narratives and stories around sexual experience and pleasurable endeavours. The exhibition was a creative response to and a manifestation of selected stories from the book. The intention was to create different worlds in which the audience could be immersed, in imagined spaces recreating select stories and sexual experiences in VR. Windvogel worked with selected artists to create an audio to the selected stories, and then with visual artists, who responding to the audio, created three-dimensional worlds of the audio and stories in Tilt Brush, a programme on the Oculus Rift, which allows you to draw and create worlds in three dimensions.

The exhibition was conceptualised during the national lockdown, and as a result of health and safety constraints, *TMRW* was unable to display artworks using VR headsets. The subsequent question, however, was how to continue to create an immersive environment that echoes a virtual immersion? The irony is that artists and technologists have been asking the inverse for decades – that is, how to create the ‘real world’ digitally.

As a solution, we decided to recreate each story in a physical, dedicated room in the gallery, and displayed the VR films as 2D films, which were screen-based. Windvogel was acutely aware of the need to accurately represent the artists’ artworks – intentionally creating moments of activity and interaction that reflected the spaces virtually. Pakathi designed posters for each film or room, which framed the exhibition as a movie premiere or preview. The film premiere became a motif to guide the audience through the space.

TOUCH  
THE FANTASY



# VOYEUR EYES ONLY

WELCOME TO SIN(NER) CITY

9.10 – 30.10  
21 Keyes Avenue, Rosebank



THE MIXED REALITY WORKSHOP PRESENTS A KIM WINDVOGEL & TIFFANY MUGO PRODUCTION  
WITH PERFORMANCES BY LOREN LOUBSER & PARTNER <sup>SOUND</sup> ART BY BUJIN  
IMMERSIVE ARTWORK CREATED BY KHANYA KEMAMI

The three posters designed for each film.

TOUCH  
THE FANTASY



# Custom Request

IT'S THE WETTEST TABOO

9.10 - 30.10  
21 Keyes Avenue, Rosebank



THE MIXED REALITY WORKSHOP PRESENTS A KIM WINDVOGEL & TIFFANY MUGO PRODUCTION  
WITH PERFORMANCES BY BONI MNISI & WES LEAL SOUND ART BY BUUJIN  
IMMERSIVE ARTWORK CREATED BY KHANYA KEMAMI

TOUCH  
THE FANTASY



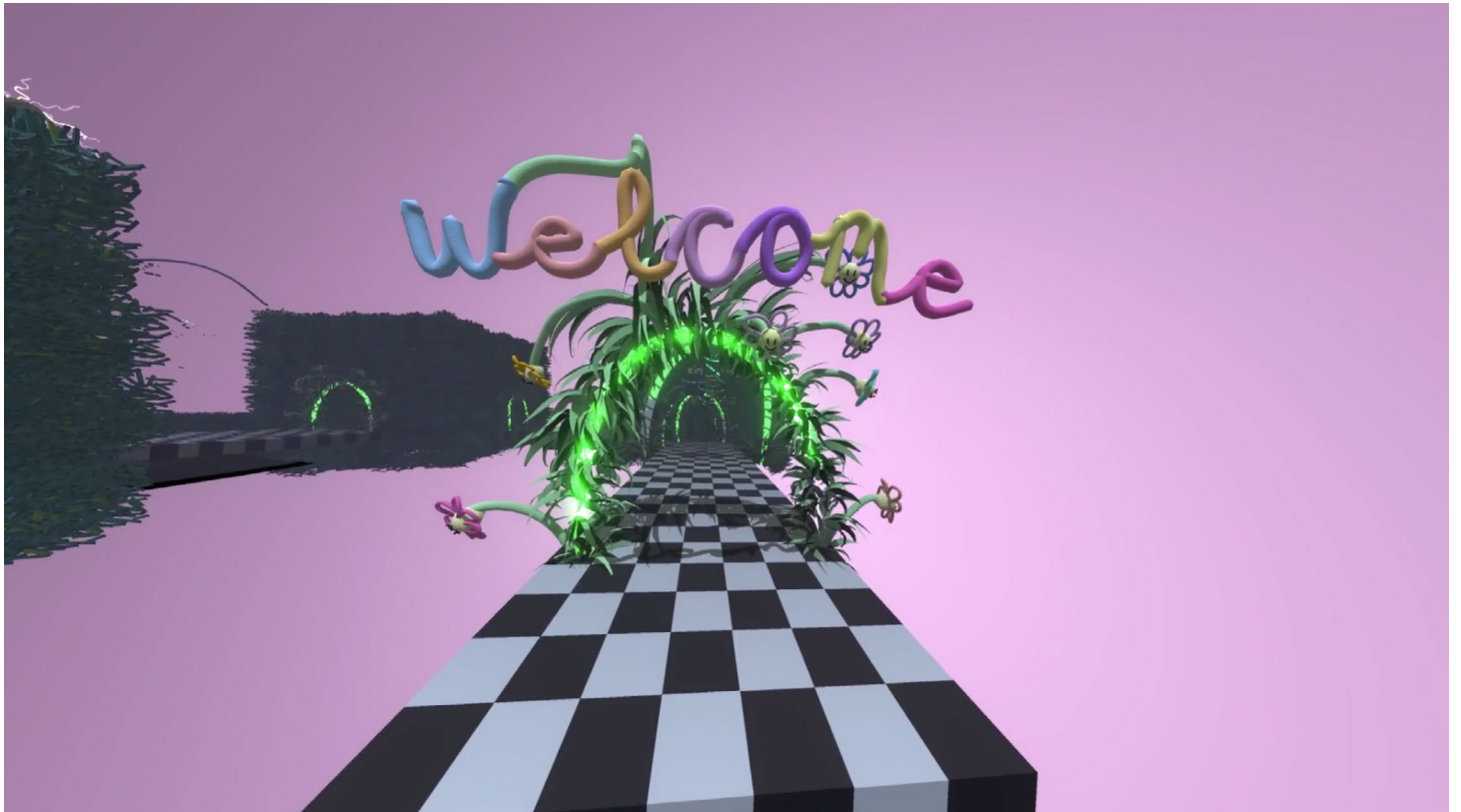
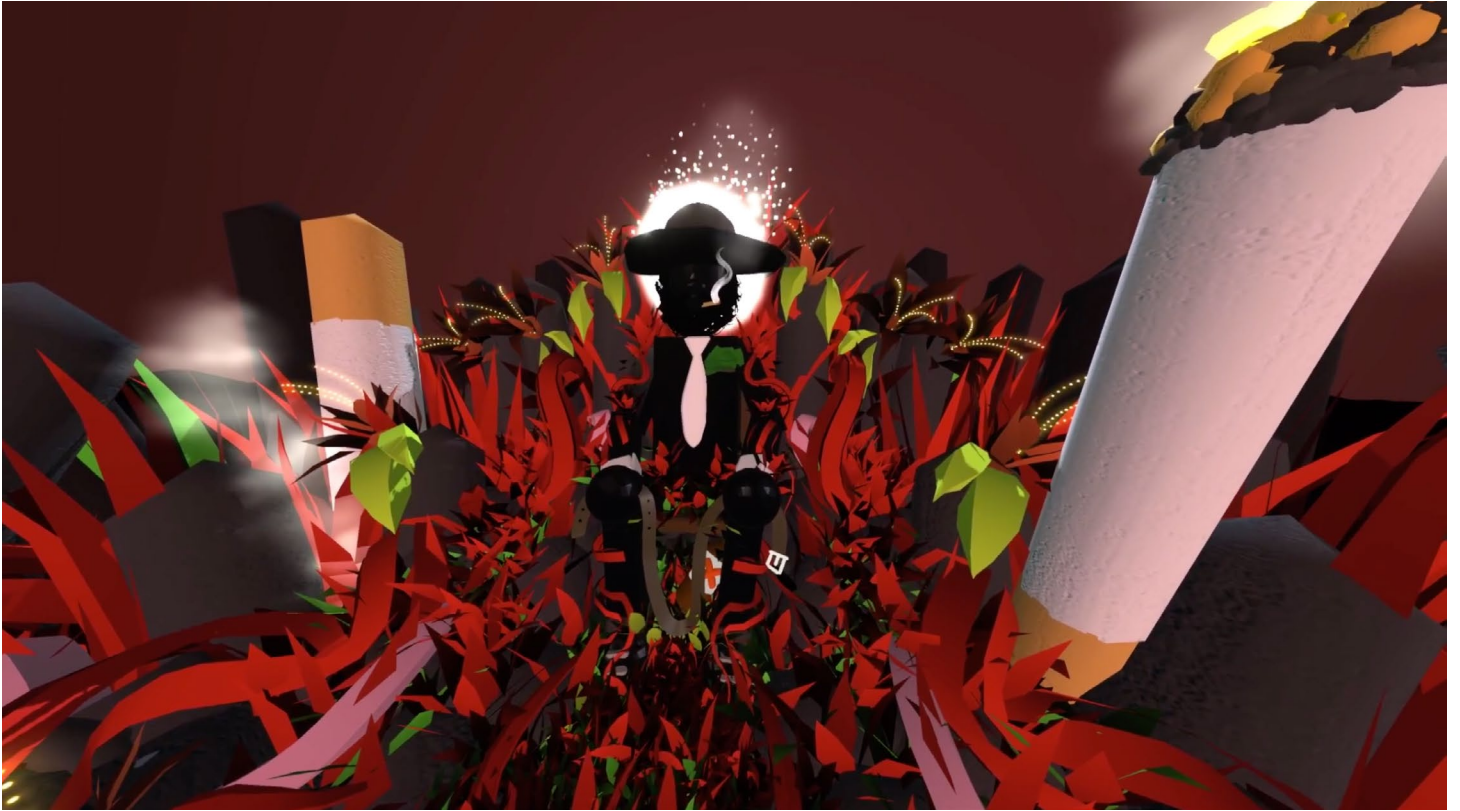
# Marital Bliss

FUCK ME THROUGH THE PHONE

9.10 - 30.10  
21 Keyes Avenue, Rosebank



THE MIXED REALITY WORKSHOP PRESENTS A KIM WINDVOGEL & TIFFANY MUGO PRODUCTION  
WITH PERFORMANCES BY KIM WINDVOGEL & PARTNER SOUND ART BY BUUJIN  
IMMERSIVE ARTWORK CREATED BY GOOD GOOD BOY



Screenshot from 'Custom Request' (2021)

Screenshot from 'Marital Bliss' (2021)



Screenshot from 'Voyeur  
Eyes Only' (2021)





Opposite page: Installation views of the room 'Custom Request' (2021)

Installation views of the room 'Marital Bliss' (2021)

“Because the characteristics and hence the aesthetics of new media art are constantly evolving and being redefined, curators need an adaptable framework in which to investigate and exhibit new media art that allows for both the aesthetic and the practical consideration of not only those characteristics but also the behaviors of new media art to be evident.”

- Beryl Graham and Sarah Cook, *Rethinking Curating*, p. 154

Contributing artists in  
*Touch: The Fantasy* were:

Khanya Kemami  
Good Good Boy  
Loren Loubser  
Boni Mnisi  
Wes Leal  
Kim Windvogel

# Digital Gardens

*Digital Gardens* was a group exhibition that invited artists to respond to how we nurture digital spaces, and cultivate our own spaces online; yet also consider that when spaces are defined online, who gets to define them, and what are the politics around those borders? Gardens have borders and walls; they are designated spaces for cultivating an aesthetic, and for claiming land which is not necessarily functional. They have historically also been symbols of colonialism and class divisions the world over – tools for cultivating a visible hierarchy.

A digital garden is an online space, which exists at the intersection of a notebook and a blog, and where ideas are cultivated in a public realm, based

**“... the same is true online as AFK [away from the keyboard]. All technology reflects the society that produces it, including its power structures and prejudices. This is true all the way down to the algorithm. The outmoded myth, however, that equates the digital and the radical continues to prove counterfeit.”**

**-Legacy Russell, *Glitch Feminism*, 2020, p. 23**

on specific themes or topics.

They are spaces that have been nurtured and cared for by their author, possibly a space where the author can retreat and explore themselves openly and freely. These spaces could be described as safe havens from

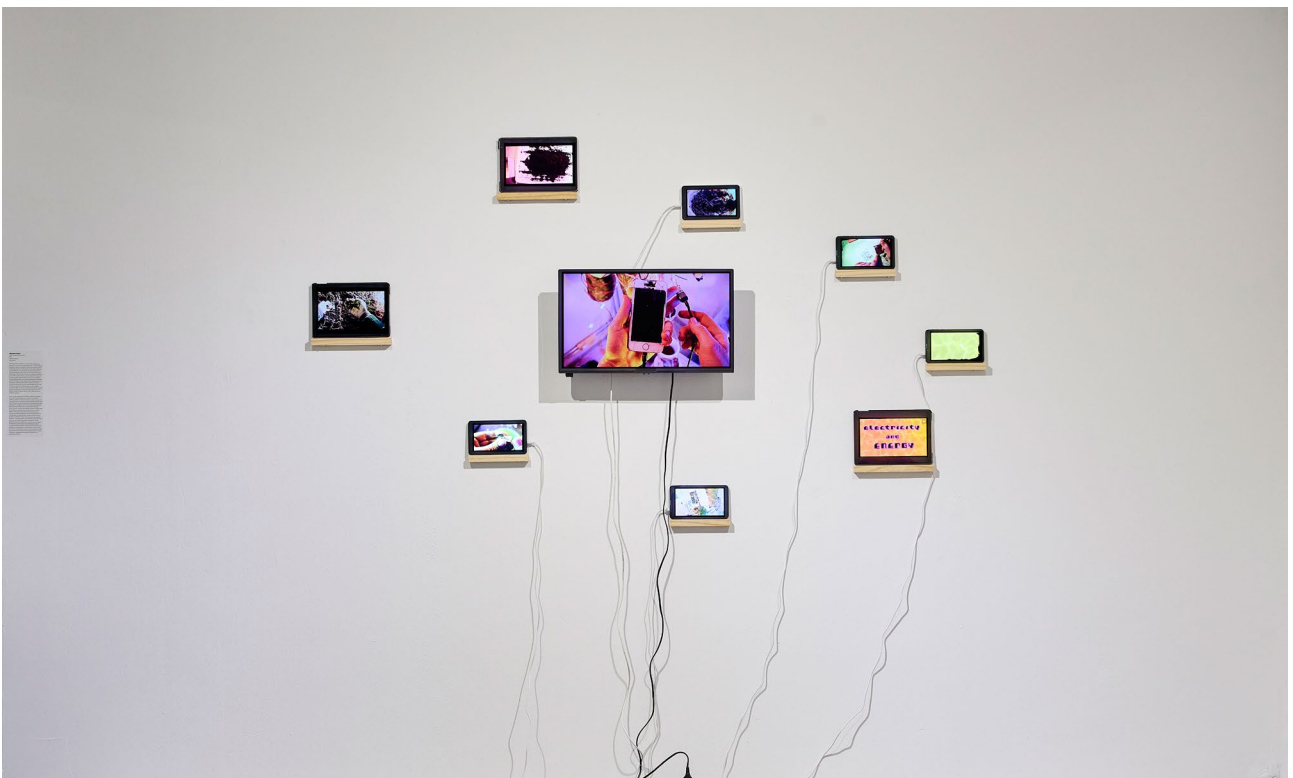
the overwhelming nature of the broader internet. Unlike a blog, where linear content can quickly become outdated and act more as an archive over time, a digital garden is a networked, evergreen space where ‘digital gardeners’ keep on editing and refining their notes. Conceptually, this could be extended to social media – to your Instagram page, which gets revisited and revised, linked and tagged to other accounts, content, and information. The internet is not without borders, barriers, and politics, which requires continuous reviewing, critiquing and revising, in a similar way to a garden.

The artists responded in a variety of ways to this exhibition proposal, employing different types of technology, such as interactive CCTV cameras, AR-triggered paintings, multiple screens, digital visual video essays, and combining natural materials and projections. Each artist expanded on their usual mediums using the digital, referencing the internet and our behaviours online, and questioning how we critically engage in that space.



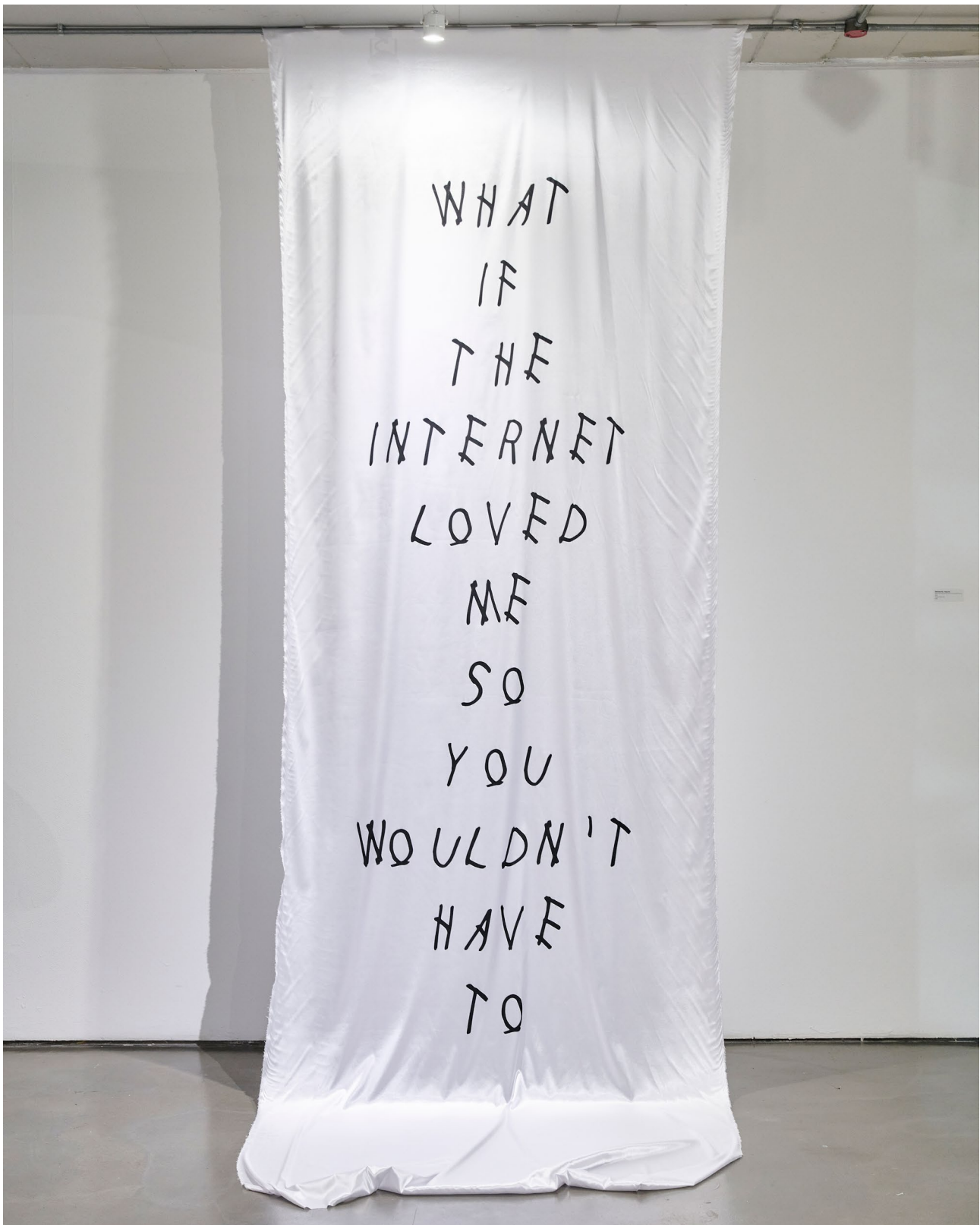
*Digital Gardens, installation view, image by Anthea Pokroy (2021)*

*Digital Gardens, installation view of Daniel Rautenbach and Naadira Patel's artworks, image by Anthea Pokroy (2021)*



*Digital Gardens, installation view, image by Anthea Pokroy (2021)*

*Power Harvest (growing pissed), Miranda Moss, image by Anthea Pokroy (2021)*



*What if the internet loved me so you wouldn't have to, Brooklyn J. Pakathi, image by Anthea Pokroy (2021)*



*I've heard you laugh but  
I've never really seen  
you smile, installation  
view, Nathan Gates,  
image by Anthea Pokroy  
(2021)*

Artists participating in  
*Digital Gardens* were:

Aluta Null

Brooklyn J. Pakathi

Daniel Rautenbach

Io Makandal

Miranda Moss

Naadira Patel

Nathan Gates

Phumulani Ntuli

Womb\_anifesto

# Our World to Come

Making the technological production of digital artworks more visible, and increasing their accessibility, is essential in terms of educating and promoting an understanding of digital art. Should this happen, digital art will become increasingly mainstream. *Our World to Come* is a proposed residency programme that seeks to achieve this. Conceptualised in late 2021, it was intended to be a collaboration with *TMRW*. However, while *TMRW*'s programming has been paused, the options for collaborating remain under review.

The residency programme is cyclical, lasting two months, which can be iterated indefinitely. Participating artists will be selected through an open call and then assigned to a collaborative pair, based on certain criteria, especially their conceptual and skills alignment. One artist in each pair will be based outside of Johannesburg, working remotely within the Global South/Majority World, and one will be based in a physical space in Johannesburg. Each pair will attend a two-month residency, the first month of which will be studio/practice time to create the artwork, while the second month will be for exhibiting/showcasing the work produced during the first studio month. This hybrid and collaborative working model is influenced both by new creative practices that have emerged as a result of the Covid-19 pandemic, and by a networked curatorial method. The artmaking process employed by the two artists in each residency, and their interaction, will be documented and published, allowing audiences insight into and visibility of their process.

**“... it is undeniable that the intangible space of the internet has propelled the most significant cultural shift of the twenty-first century thus far. The manner in which individuals populate, surf, negotiate, and share the contents of the web’s endless stream of information has radically changed over the last decade.”**

**–Omar Kholeif, ‘Preamble’, *I was Raised on the Internet*, 2018, p. 11**

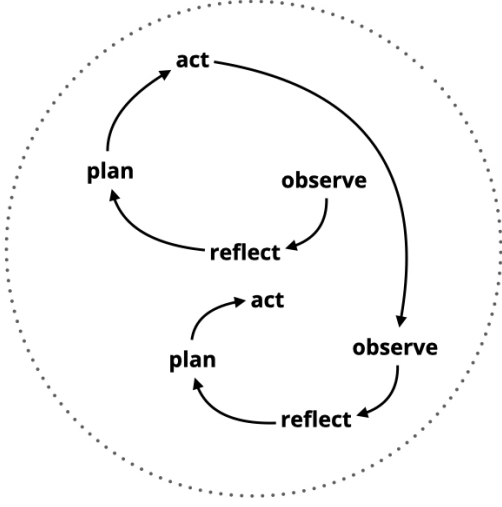
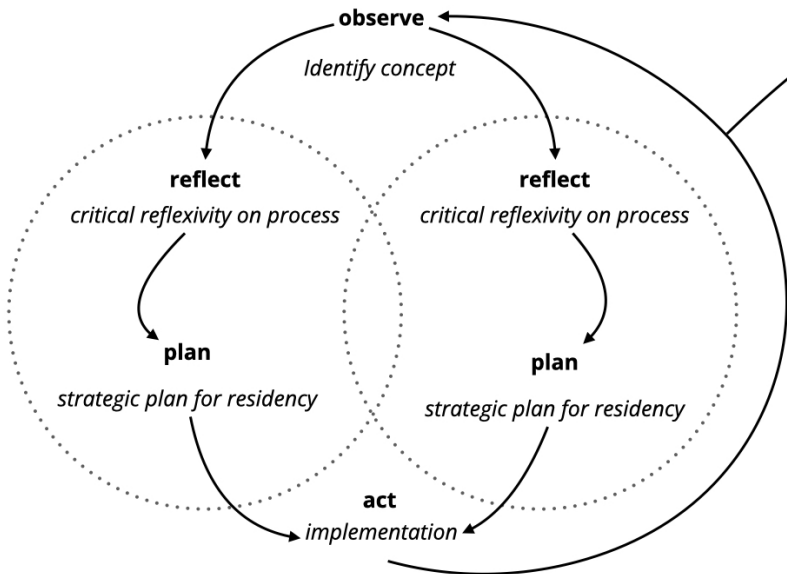
**OUR WORLD TO COME**

**HYBRID COLLABORATIVE RESIDENCY**

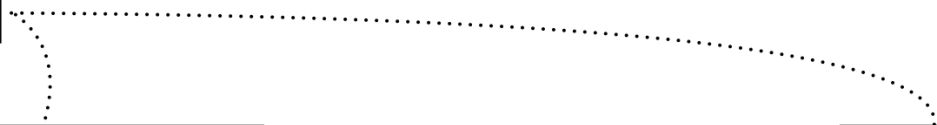
1 month

**EXHIBITION**

1 month



**INTERVIEWS WITH CURATOR**



Writers will be identified and asked to engage with the artists and their process, in order to produce a text or discursive product of some sort at the end of the residency, contributing published reflections on the artists' methodologies and approaches, and their curatorial direction/s.

*Our World to Come* asks artists to respond to how the world has changed since early 2020 – how their lives, artistic practices and audience reach have been affected? Artists are encouraged to reflect on what has happened, while reimagining what will come. In essence, artists are asked to reimagine the use of technology in a world where we rely increasingly on the digital realm as our primary mode of communication and information storage.

**“It only takes a handful of mutual friends before [Facebook and LinkedIn] start recommending you as worthy of connecting with the art world elite’s avatars. But how would a curator feel if they realized that their curatorial strategy – or indeed, their entire taste – was developed purely through the same algorithms that set up these scenarios?”**

**-Omar Kholeif, ‘The Curator’s New Medium’, I was Raised on the Internet, 2018, p. 79**

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**TMDW**  
**TMRW**