

3 0 3 G A L L E R Y

For Immediate Release

DOUG AITKEN

NEW ERA

April 13 - May 25, 2018

Opening reception Friday, April 13, 6 – 8 pm

"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."



303 Gallery presents a new installation by Doug Aitken, titled *New Era*. On view 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.

Doug Aitken is widely known for his innovative fine art installations. Utilizing a wide array of artistic approaches, Aitken's eye leads 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 Hirshhorn Museum and Sculpture Garden of the Smithsonian Institution, The Museum of Contemporary Art Los Angeles, 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, the 2013 Smithsonian American Ingenuity Award: Visual Arts, and the 2017 Frontier Art Prize.

303 Gallery is open Tuesday-Saturday from 10 am - 6 pm. For press inquiries, please contact Renee Delosh at press@303gallery.com. For further information on Doug Aitken, visit 303gallery.com or contact Cristian Alexa.

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