

ALEXANDER HAHN

Artist dossier

Electronic media • Video • Installation • Digital image

Aug 21, 2025



TRANSIT OF EARTH

2022, LED mosaic, 210 × 650 × 20 cm; video, 46 min 31 s, loop, silent. Edition of 3; copy 1/3, collection of Kunstmuseum St. Gallen. <https://alexanderhahn.com/transit-of-earth.html>

A visual poem on the nature of light, conceived as a contemporary “cycle of the months”: it opens with the creation of light, follows its outward diffusion as well as its passage through the portal of the eye, and ends with the evocation of an “original, unseen state of light.”

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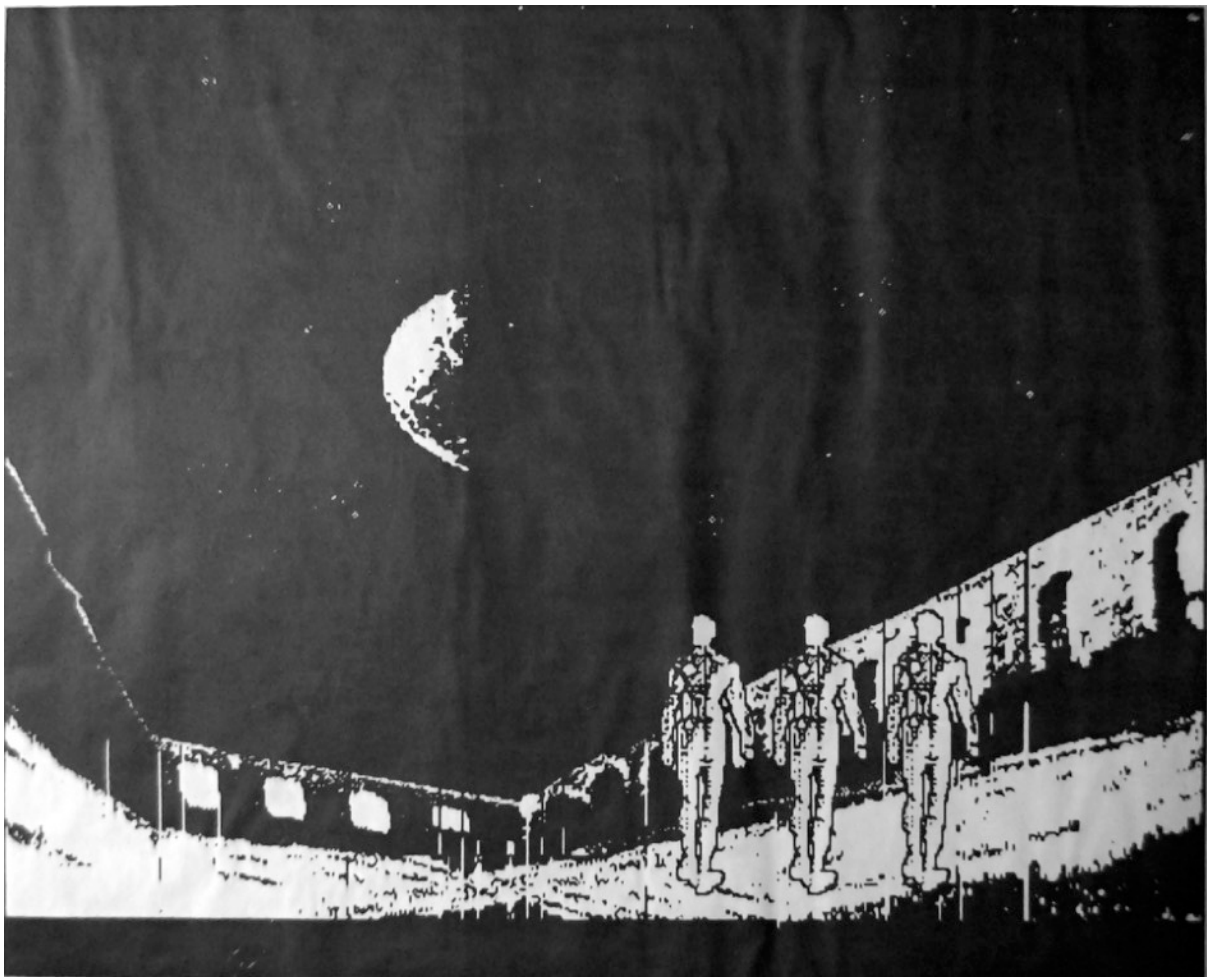
Artist Statement

The subject of Alexander Hahn's art is **the everyday**. From daily video recordings—often fortuitous, sometimes captured openly, sometimes covertly—then processed and transformed on the computer, he creates works spanning long-form and ultra-short video, installation, computer graphics and print, animation, virtual reality, artificial intelligence, and writing. His works merge the intimate and the universal, fusing imagination, memory, and dream with motifs borrowed from science and history. Through the transformative power of media, they turn ordinary experiences into deep reflections on the human condition.

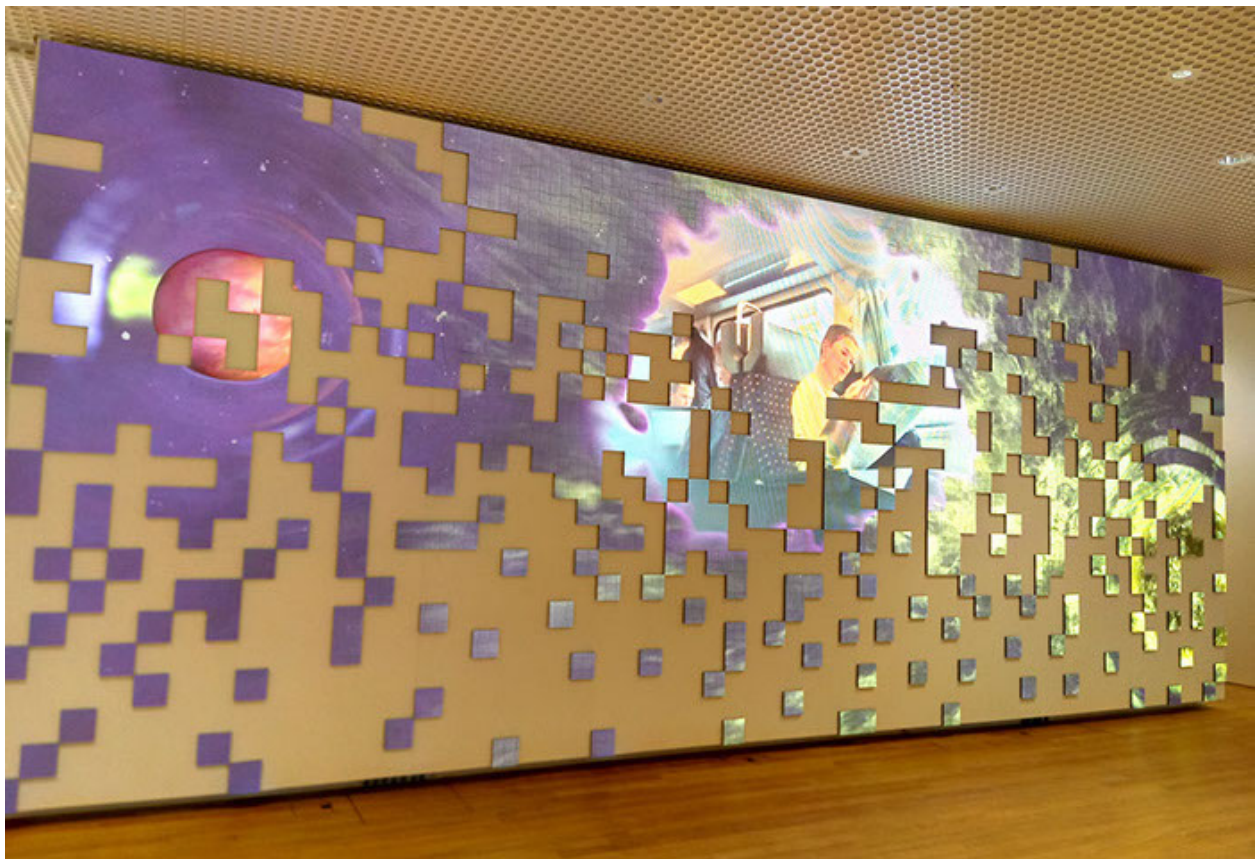
Practice overview (1976-2025): early works established a vocabulary of layered time and chance; the middle period introduced 3D computer graphics and expanded the practice into installation; recent projects—LED mosaics, kinetic objects, and printing processes—re-materialize the electronic image.

Short Bio

Alexander Hahn is a Swiss artist who has worked with electronic media since the late 1970s. He has presented his work internationally in museums and media-art contexts. After living and working many years in New York, he now resides in Kołobrzeg/PL.



SELF PORTRAIT - clones with Moon , 1984, 24 × 19 inch., mouse drawing; dot-matrix print; Xerox transfer on vellum paper.



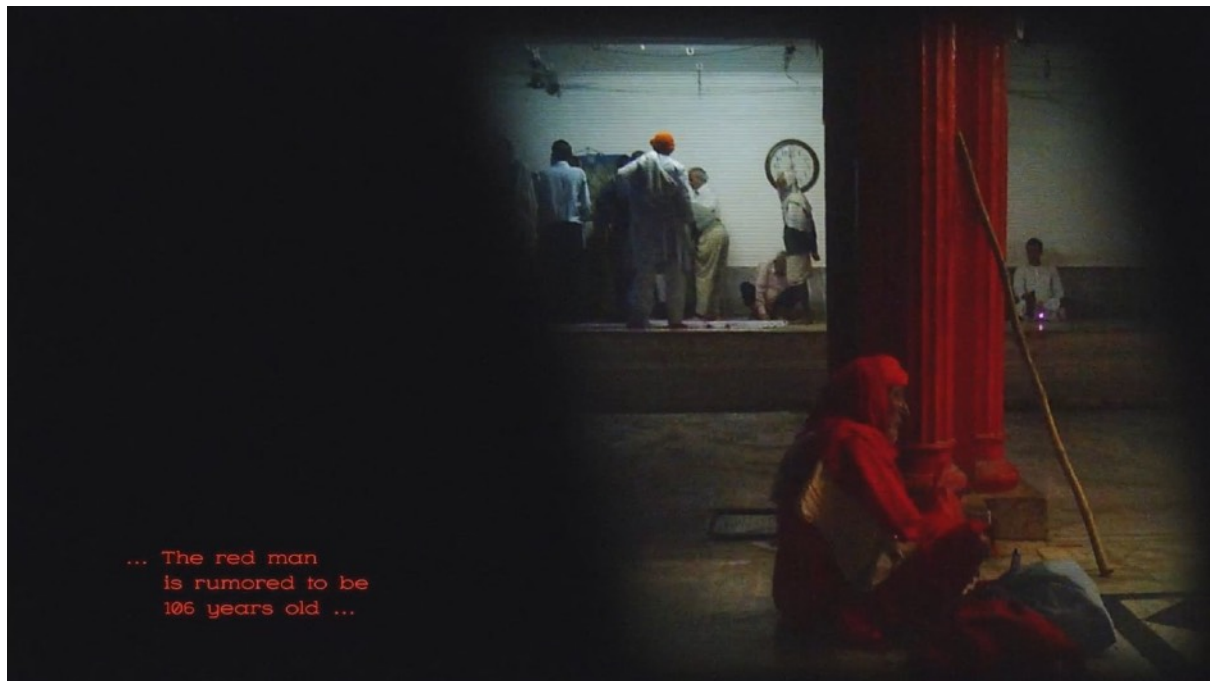
ALBEDO 0.30, LED mosaic. 3D computer animation and analog video (hybrid setup). 24-hour loop. Commissioned by LaRoche; permanent installation in their “Home for IT,” Kaiseraugst.

In astronomy, **albedo** is the fraction of light reflected by a surface (≈ 0.30 for Earth). In this work—under the sign of life cycles and the sun—it is the light of memory that feeds a large LED mosaic, made from everyday observations rescued from oblivion.



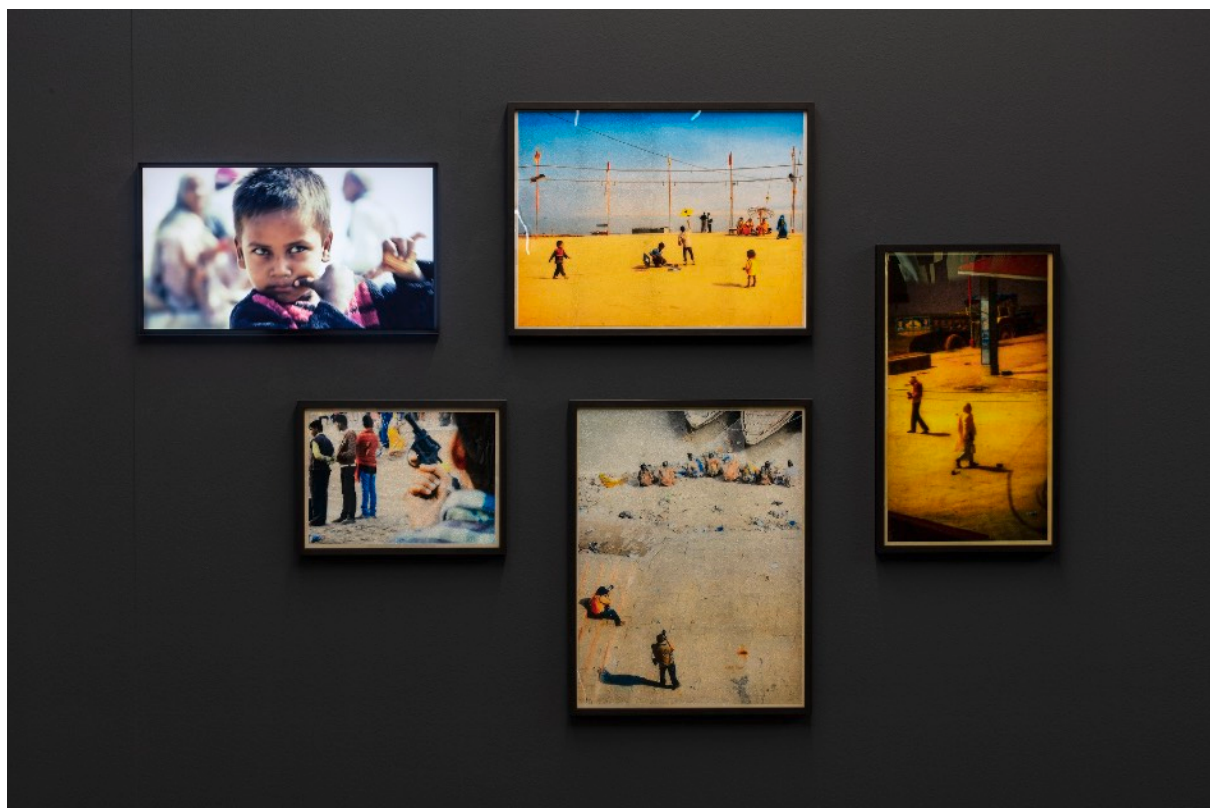
(Thomas Daniell and) **THE RUINS OF NAURATTAN**, 2022. Installation; 3D animation; 60-second loop; kinetic object (rear-view mirror with LCD monitor, 6 V DC motor at 280 rpm with wheel)..

An endless loop: driving along the painted ruin, plunging into a burrow, resurfacing in front of it—again and again. As during a bumpy ride. The trembling rear-view mirror frames the head of a tuk-tuk driver, wrestling with sleep.



INDOCAM (2022, 1:24:20') is a covert travelogue from New York to India, filmed with a concealed wristwatch camera. Dispensing with the usual apparatus, it captures unguarded exchanges across private, cultural, political, and public spheres. With no framing eye—only timing, wrist, and chance—the film weaves a quiet narrative in which everyday encounters become both candid and unsettling.

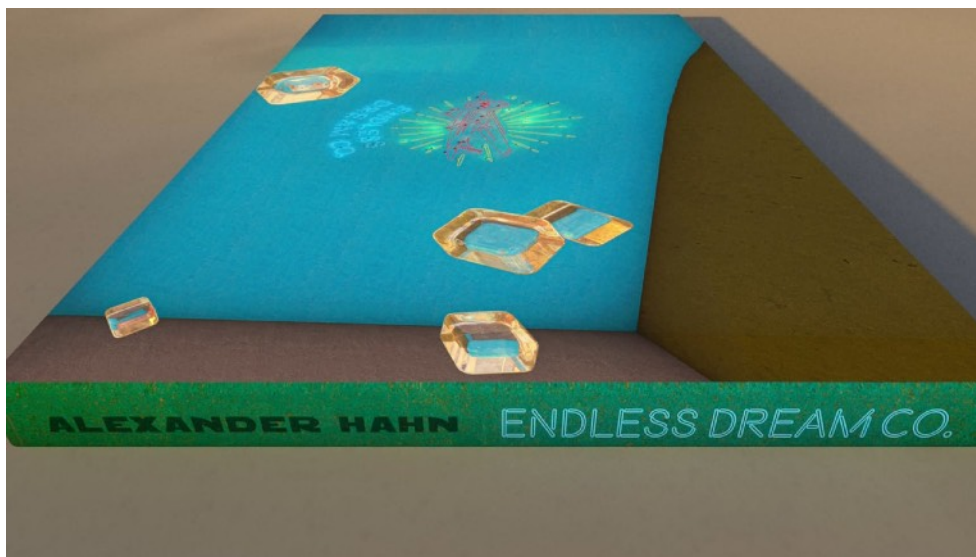
Presentation in Poland : **On Art**, 2023, Centrum Kultury, Lublin, **Winner** in the category Video Art



BOY BY THE GANGES (2016/2022, 1:30' loop, bare LCD monitor, media player, pigment ink on polycarbonate, Epoxy, tulle, imitation silver Leaf, Joss Paper, Polyurethane, found frames, dimensions variable)

« **Boy by the Ganges** » HD video with digital prints. Presented on a stripped LCD monitor and mounted in found picture frames, respectively, they create a narrative normally associated with the comic strip format.

<https://alexanderhahn.com/boy-by-the-ganges.html>



ENDLESS DREAM CO (2023, 3D-Computer animation, hardcover video book, 21 x 28.5 cm
Edition 20 + 2 AP, issued by the Kunstverein St. Gallen/Switzerland

My work has always grown out of everyday life, intertwined with parallel observations from science and art history. In **Endless Dream Co.** I reconstructed the room where I was quarantined during the pandemic. The title nods to the stranded protagonists in J. G. Ballard's novels. As the work evolved, the motif of ice kept resurfacing, gradually shaping its narrative. Inspirations ranged from Ice-Nine in Kurt Vonnegut's **Cat's Cradle**, to news of a newly discovered medium-density amorphous form of ice, to reports on the search for life on the frozen moons of gas giants—and even something as fleeting as a bed of ice cubes spilled in front of a hydrant on Allen Street, my usual path to the studio on the Lower East Side.

The hardcover video book and its box are bound in printed linen by bookbinder Bettina Zeitz. When the lid is lifted, a computer animation with sound plays automatically on the integrated LCD screen. A mini-USB port and cable are included for recharging the battery via computer or phone charger.



TRANSMISSION (2020, 7" HD video brochure, video loop, sound, 8.26" x 5.82")

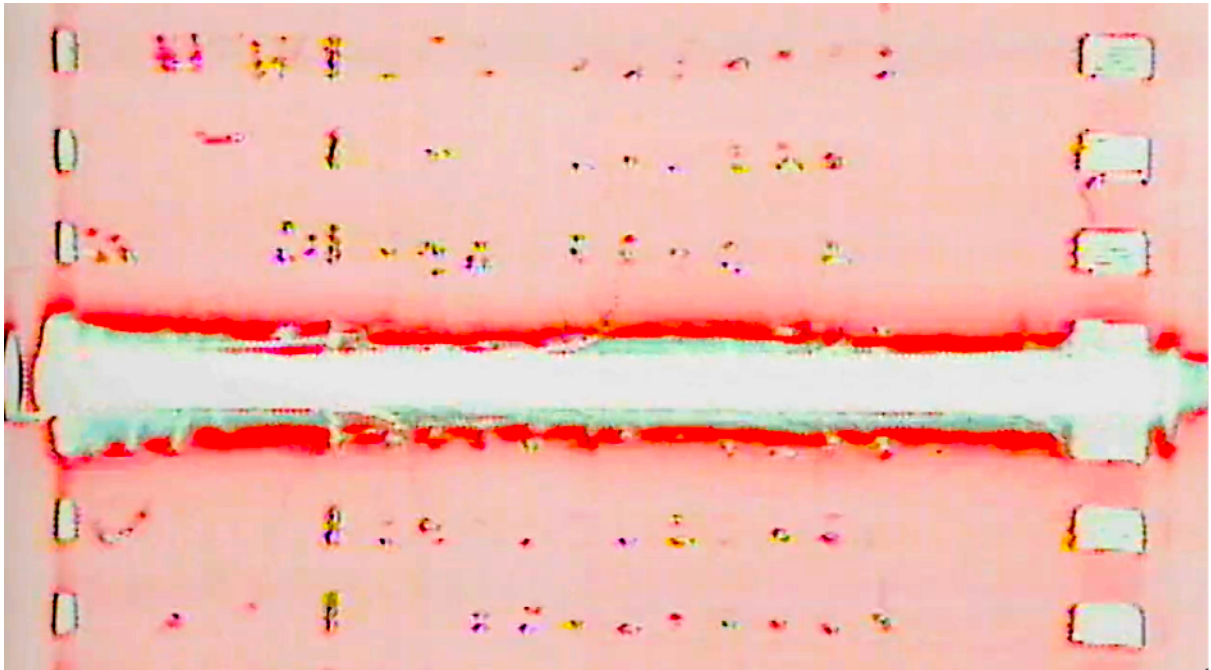
Covertly captured while on transit to New York in 2019. I found myself next to a fellow traveler suffering from a severe cold. These days, in 2020, I would most likely start up and run, but at that time, I stayed seated, transfixed and recorded.



COUP d'OEUIL, from **THE PARK** — Installation at Heimspiel 21, Kunstmuseum St. Gallen, Dec 10, 2021 – Feb 6, 2022. Pigment ink on self-adhesive textile, digital photo frames, headphones; variable dimensions and layout; edition 3 + 2 AP.

« **Coup d'Oeil** », a term mostly used in the military, literally « **Stroke of Eye** », consists of multiple folios, originally conceived as Instagram posts, by now numbering more than 400, « **The Park** » and « **Strangers** » among them. « **The Park** » is shot from an eye-in-the sky perspective, safely distanced up in my Chinatown studio. « **Strangers** » finds me embedded in the streets, an inconspicuous person with a covert camera. Serendipitous daily snapshots, they present a comprehensive personal picture of the ephemeral reality of my neighborhood during the pandemic, its compelling and repelling scenes an unfolding theater, unaltered by the apparent presence of a lens.





OCCULT CHEMISTRY, 2019, single channel video, 6:04', 720 HD, stereo

Analog devices digitize and process texts and drawings — clairvoyant “observations” of chemical elements — taken from **Occult Chemistry**, a book by **Annie Besant** (1847–1933). Created with Jones Colorizer, Sequencer, and Wobbulizer during an artist residency at **Signal Culture**, Owego, NY.

Presentation in Poland: **Videosyntezy 2022**, Galeria Ring, Legnica

(<https://vimeo.com/319108294>)



JITTER RABBIT #1 & 3, 2003, 50 x 67,3 cm, pigment ink on polycarbonate, epoxy, tulle, imitation silver leaf, joss paper, polyurethane; Art Collection of the Canton of St. Gallen

Suite of five images, created with **Jitter**, a component of **Max**, a visual programming environment, during an artist residency at **Signal Culture**, Owego, NY.

VIDEO VIGNETTES

Selection from over 200 video vignettes created for social media since 2008.

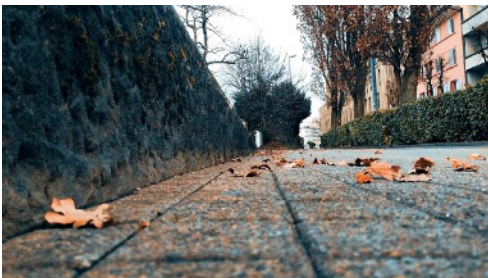
<https://alexanderhahn.com/vignettes.html>



JUN 26, 2025 My emptied-out studio as an unconventional vehicle for a geodesic leap from New York to above the waters of the Baltic at sunset, $\Delta x \approx 6,600$ km, $\Delta t \rightarrow$ negligible."



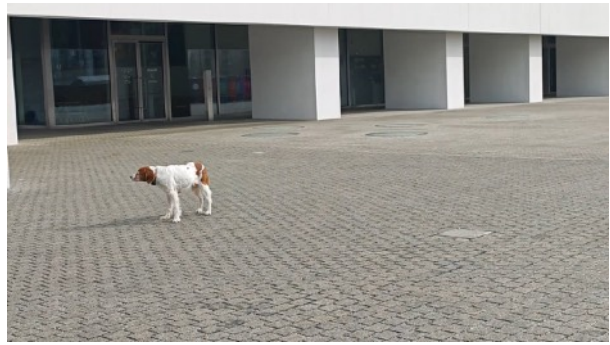
MAR 16, 2025 Looking out the window ... unexpected ending ...



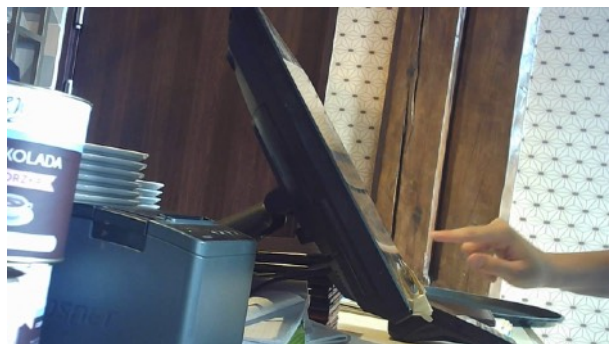
DEC 31, 2024 Skittering oak leaves, captured on the way to buy bread dough on Dec. 31, 2023. Behind the wall is the fragrant rose garden for the visually impaired. On Jan. 1, 2024, arte.tv broadcast *Gone with the Wind*.... Joy in small things for 2024.



NOV 01, 2024
As I chanced to sit next to a writer of thrillers...



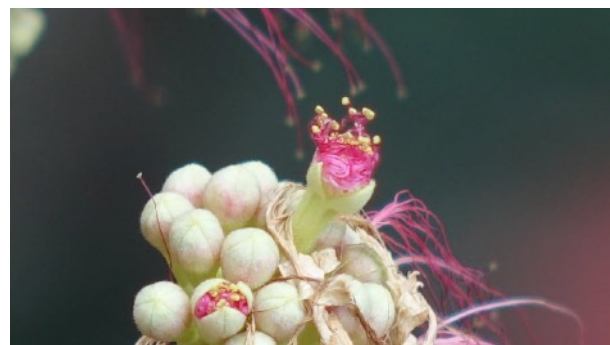
MAR 24, 2025 52°14'02.0"N 21°00'30.2"E
Passing by ...



AUG 24, 2024 Performing an input-validation loop in a POS system and calculating the total.



FEB. 05, 2022 Occurrence on Allen Street



AUG 06, 2014 Albizia Julibrissin - Life forms.
Sound track from the science fiction movie
«*Invasion of the Body Snatchers*»



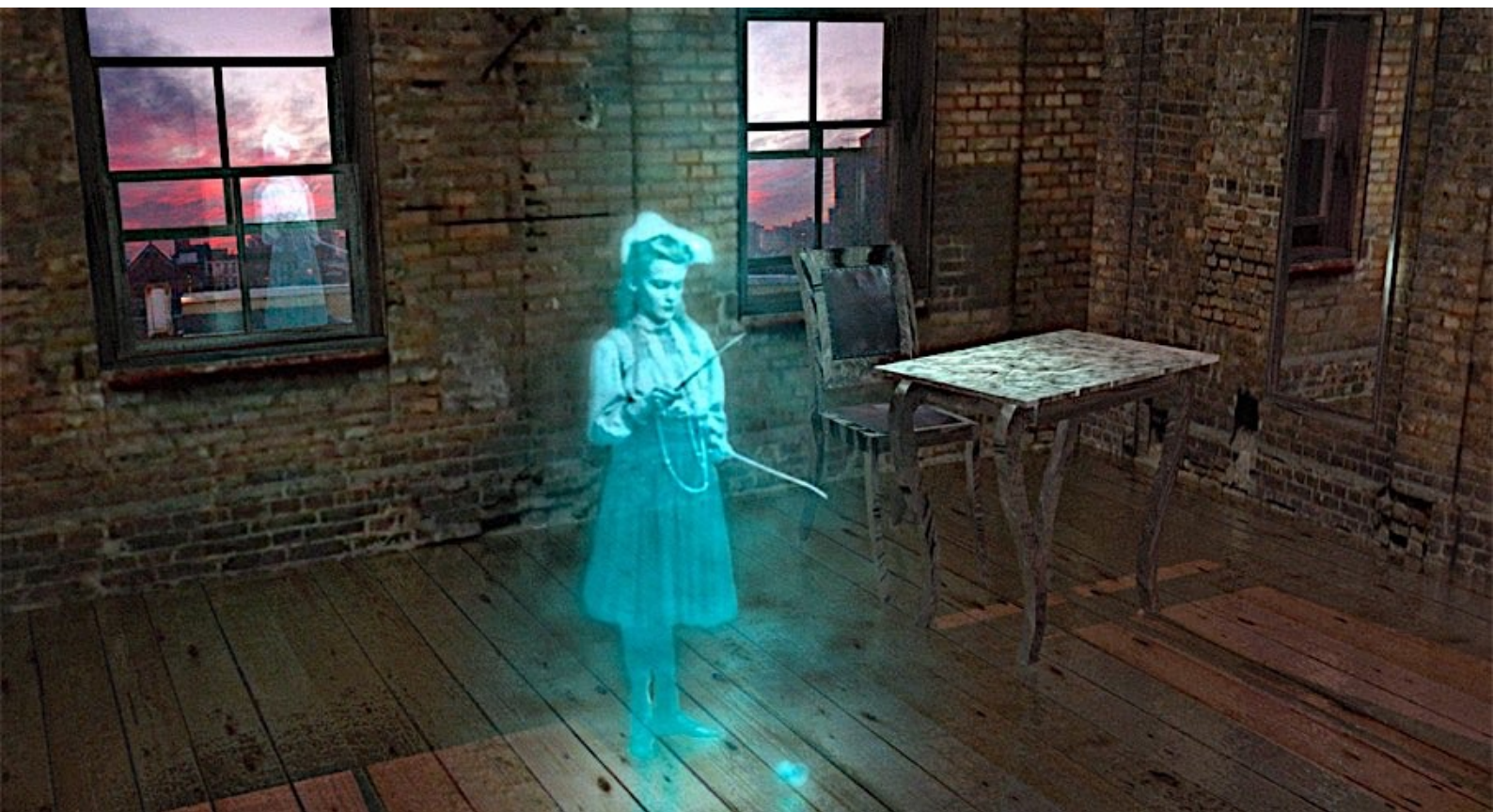
THE ARTIST'S STUDIO AS ENCRYPTION LAB - **THE RED SANDS OF MARS**, 2022. 3D CGI, pigment ink on soft gloss paper, 106,7 × 182,9 cm ; edition 7 + 2 EA

«**The Red Sands of Mars - Les sables rouges de Mars**» offers an imaginative glimpse into my studio on Chrystie Street in Chinatown, where I have been working since 2016. On a reddish sandy floor stands the sculpture of an Egyptian scribe, opposite a model of a 1797 experiment in which the British scientist Henry Cavendish proved gravity. Between them yawns a large hole.

The scribe is a photogrammetrically generated 3D model based on photos I took in 2019 at the Egyptian Museum in Cairo, while the stone reliefs with symbols are borrowed from the facade of the Swiss National Bank on Bahnhofstrasse in Zurich. The floor, on the other hand, is a procedural texture, i.e., created with 3D noise and displacement. The hole alludes to the 32 drill holes from which the Mars rover Curiosity took rock samples during a NASA mission..



THE ARTIST'S STUDIO AS ENCRYPTION LAB - **BRINGING THINGS TO A STANDSTILL**,
2010, 3D CGI, pigment ink on soft gloss paper, 43 x 64 inch ; edition 7 + 2 EA



THE ARTIST'S STUDIO AS ENCRYPTION LAB - **STILL WITH MY SPIRIT DAUGHTER ON
174 LUDLOW ST, NYC** 1995/2009, 3D CGI, 21.6 x 40 inch, pigment ink on soft gloss paper, edition 7 + 1 EA



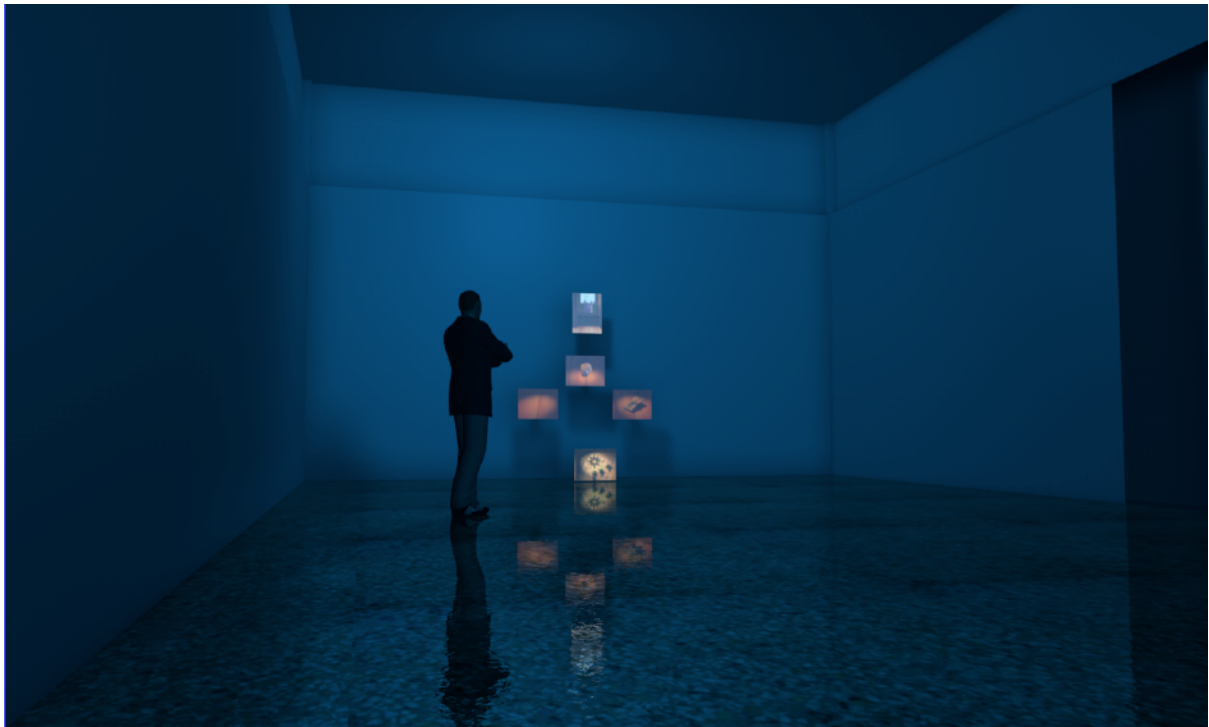
LUMINOUS POINT (2005, interactive DVD, ~90 min).

An interactive investigation of memory and architecture: the artist's tenement apartment unfolds into a virtual wunderkammer where distant places and times intersect. Visitors traverse a potentially infinite labyrinth across microscopic and macroscopic scales, in a seamless hybrid of video and computer-generated imagery.



THE ASTROMAGICKAL CHAMBER, 1999, 3D computer animation, 5 min, loop.

A sun with the classical planets orbits above a carpet, while a scene on Zelazna Street in Warsaw unfolds on the back wall. Inspired by **Tomaso Campanella's** "magical planetarium" for **Pope Urban VIII** during the 1628 eclipse, it forms part of the triptych **My Own Private Universe** — rear-projected as a permanent installation at Swisscom's management building near Bern.



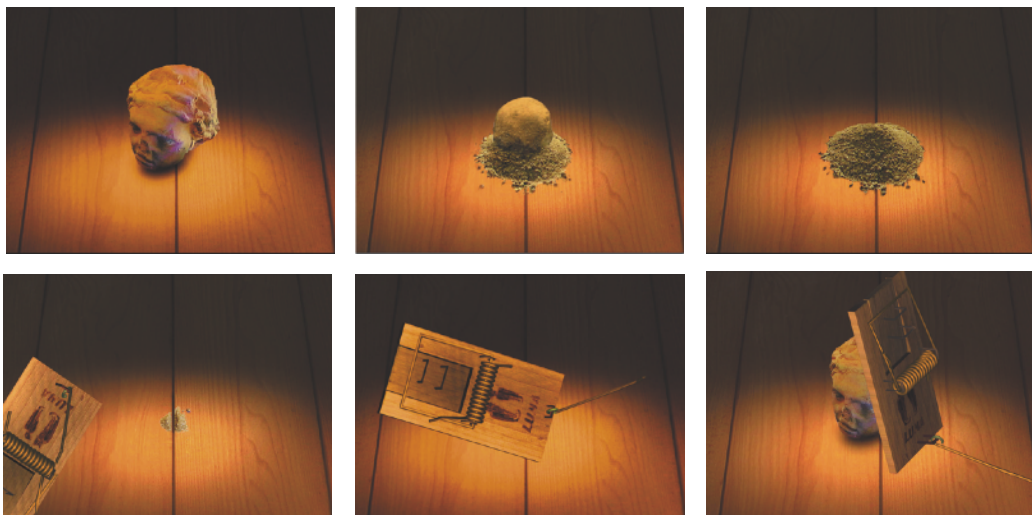
FUNDAMENTALS OF LEGERDEMAIN. Part of the installation cycle
THE KIRCHER ITINERARY.

Five bare CRT television tubes, each showing a segment of **Caspar David Friedrich's** studio. The digitally altered space presents concurrent actions that usually unfold on very different timescales: a stone head eroding; sand trickling between floorboards; a Luna-brand rat trap snapping shut; a cups-and-balls routine; and a pickpocket scene in Rome....

"Five naked TV tubes simulate a kind of memory chamber in the form of a space consisting of computer-animated elements. The top monitor shows a fluttering flag. On the middle one a stone head is imperceptibly crumbling into sand. Just before it has disappeared completely into a crack in the ground, a trap snaps shut, flying from the left-hand to the right-hand monitor. At the same moment the head appears again. Simultaneously with this, a short sequence replaces the image of the flag: are we seeing a pickpocket's rapid movements here? Before we can take it all in, the image of the flag returns and the bottom monitor is showing the three little cups used in the famous confidence trick. A ball is hidden under one of them, and you can never guess where. Memory is tricked, perception taken by surprise and time passes in a rush or infinitely slowly. The installation's rhythmically interlinked images contrast imperceptible time sequences: the process of geological decay and the fleeting quality of a moment."

(Lysianne Lechaut- Hirt)

<https://www.vimeo.com/7495681>





DIRT SITE (1990; 15:50') was inspired by a medieval heresy, which held that the world was created by Satan and that we live in a counterfeit universe. Images of abandoned houses and somber industrial landscapes, shots of dirt, mud, dust, and water seamlessly dissolve into each other in constant metamorphosis, creating a blurry watery symphony that gradually comes to a stand-still.

The tape has won several festival prizes such as the Grand Prix of the 1992 Festival International du Jeune Vidéo, Montréal/CA or Work of Excellence at the 1990 Tokyo Video Festival.



AERIAL STILLS (1988; 4:30') opens in darkness pierced by blinding flashes that leave only afterimages—skyscrapers, planes, a solitary bust—recalled more than seen. Silhouettes of flying figures drift across shifting landscapes in a tight, fluid montage. With no narration, the work hovers between perception, memory, and invention; the black intervals become fertile latency while the pixel's tactile grain turns fleeting vision into a monument to memory.



AVIATION MEMORIES (1986, 6:09'; computer animation, SD, stereo) is a "virtual multi-channel video installation, created with a Fairlight CVI, using images derived from the illustrations of the Dutch artist Jan Vredeman de Vries. The work begins as an introduction to possible video installations, showing (with diagrams and animation) how monitors, stripped TV tubes and related objects would be placed in an exhibition setting.



STATE OF BEING (1982, 18:27', b/w, SD video, stereo)— A TV-thriller «**Mission Impossible**» pastiche, in which a secret agent trials the psychotropic "Sanidin," a supposed soul-calming drug, whose side effects tilt toward violence and self-destruction. Shot b/w on a **1/2" Sony Portapak**, it splices staged scenes with news, pharma advertisements, stills, and found footage—an early showcase of my probing the line between reality and its (televisual) double.



A YOUNG PERSON'S GUIDE TO WALKING OUTSIDE THE CITY (2'25", 1983). Computer animation written in **Texas Instruments Extended BASIC**, combining personal code and found fragments. The flying fish and canon are randomly generated.



FLIGHT-2ND TAKE (1977) Six static vignettes, "flight simulations" of approx. 1 minute each, made with Xerox cutouts of engravings by **Hendrick Goltzius** (1558–1617), arranged at different heights above a linoleum floor. The black-and-white pattern evokes a contemporary **3D displacement map** simulating waves. Recorded on a Sony open-reel (**reel-to-reel**) videotape recorder..

ÉDOUARD VUILLARD'S « MISIA NATHANSON DANS LA FORET » RE-IMAGINED

WORK IN PROGRESS



Édouard Vuillard's eponymous painting viewed as an interim frame in **Stable Diffusion's** "latent space" — it began in 2023 with the question, if AI could turn it into a photographic snapshot? Today AI can go further still, producing brief videos: **Misia** steps out of the canvas, perhaps stumbles; leaves rustle, wind stirs the foliage, a brook gurgles. Everything is synthetic, yet grounded in Vuillard's brushwork. The AI acts like a time machine, transporting a tableau more than a century old into a vibrant present.

