

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

TRANSFER and Gray Area Announce FORA – A Consortium to Revolutionize Media Arts and Cultural Infrastructure through Decentralized Technology

Media Contact: Danielle Amodeo · (347) 684-0323 · danielle@artsequitygroup.com

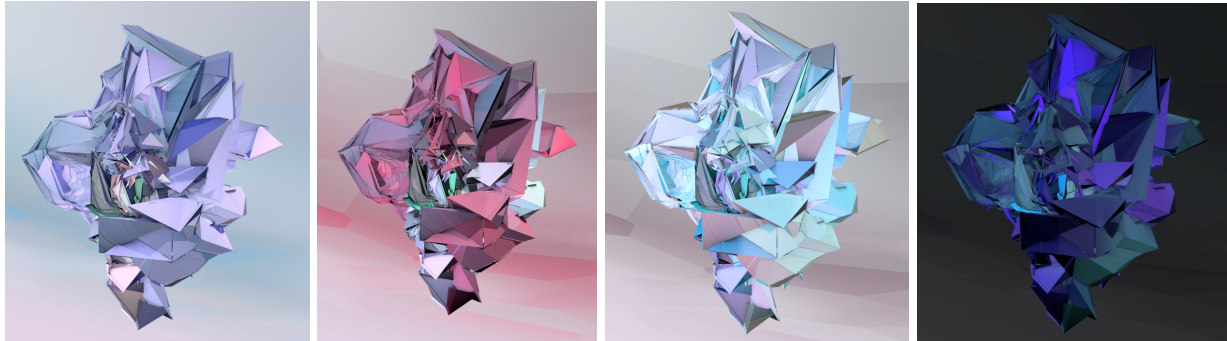


Exhibition render for LaTurbo Avedon's New Sculpt at TRANSFER Gallery NY in 2013 featuring 'Rainbow Six' (2013) a virtual artwork being conserved with NYU Engineering Graduate Students and Researchers.

New York City, NY — [September 21, 2023] — In a groundbreaking collaboration, TRANSFER and Gray Area are delighted to announce the launch of [FORA](#), a consortium dedicated to conservation and regenerative cultural infrastructure built on decentralized technology. The initiative convenes conservators, curators, engineers, appraisers, artists, and collectors for open peer-review processes to boost conservation and care methods for media art. Each FORA event focuses on an exhibition of media artworks that have been restored or preventively conserved with decentralized methods. The inaugural convening and exhibition features [LaTurbo Avedon's exhibition New Sculpt](#) and will be hosted at Onassis ONX Studio in NYC from October 27 to November 4, and online for global audiences.

“Specialized knowledge of conservation, appraisal, and archival preservation processes are currently centralized within institutions and private collections,” says Kelani Nichole, Founder of TRANSFER. “FORA’s goal is to make that expertise open and available to the next generation of artists who explore solidarity, transparency and iteration in their studio practice. These decentralized methods create efficiencies and can be leveraged to generate new resources to ensure the longevity of media art.”

New Sculpt, the case study for the FORA debut, was originally staged at TRANSFER in 2013. Avedon explores decentralized identity as a core aspect of virtual being, and for the exhibition priced artwork in Bitcoin to start a conversation about value and speculation in contemporary art. This prescient hybrid virtual/physical installation spanned the physical gallery space and the virtual world in Second Life. The exhibition is being restored in collaboration with students and researchers from [NYU Tandon School of Engineering's Integrated Design and Media \(IDM\) program](#), using decentralized storage and reengineering display elements using technological advances to better align with Avedon's artistic goals.



Still from *Rainbow Six (2013)* a 3D Virtual Sculpture by LaTurbo Avedon.

“Since 2012, LaTurbo Avedon has emerged as a [thought-leader about virtuality](#). Through their virtual embodiment—symbolic of a widespread cultural shift to digital representation—the artist continues to reveal new or overlooked truths about our shared online worlds,” says Wade Wallerstein, Director of TRANSFER and Associate Curator at Gray Area “With *New Sculpt*, Avedon brings a new sensibility about digital materials to the market for the first time, prophesying how emerging technologies would come to define social narratives around reality.”

The central work, a virtual sculpture called *Rainbow Six (2013)*, was initially installed in the physical gallery using flat projections, while in Second Life, the sculpture appeared as a shimmering weightless object. Today, with assistance from ONX Studio and IDM, this work will be re-installed using cutting edge virtual production techniques. “TRANSFER is breaking new ground in time-based media art conservation and restoration. IDM is thrilled for our students to contribute both in the scholarship and hands-on practice with the artists and gallery in this vital and growing space. We're excited to provide real-world applications and experiences bridging engineering and the arts,” says Scott Fitzgerald, Associate Professor and Academic Director of the Integrated Design & Media program at NYU. The end result of this collaboration is an uncanny holographic experience that brings viewers much closer to Avedon's original vision.

The restored artworks in *New Sculpt* will be on display at [Onassis ONX Studio](#), a production and exhibition space founded in partnership with the Onassis Foundation and NEW INC, situated in the Onassis Gallery in Midtown Manhattan. “ONX's commitment to building a global community around experimentation and interdisciplinary collaboration makes the studio a perfect fit for *New Sculpt* and the launch of the FORA consortium,” says Jazia Hammoudi of ONX Studio.

The consortium invites artists, experts and enthusiasts alike to engage with the restoration of *New Sculpt* by visiting the exhibition and participating in the convening. "FORA's approach to more accessible, peer-reviewed conservation efforts engages a broader audience," says Regina Harsanyi, Associate Curator of Media Arts at Museum of the Moving Image and FORA advisor. "Transparency and education on conservation are needed across all sectors that touch media arts to ensure this artwork remains accessible in even the near future."

FORA is cultivating a network of stakeholders committed to co-creating and stewarding models of collective care for emerging arts and cultural infrastructure. As a consortium, FORA exists outside of any singular institution; it is interdisciplinary, collaborative, and efficient by design. This intra-organizational identity helps FORA remain nimble, responsive, and quick to embrace new technological and ideological approaches to conservation and care.

"Twenty-first century culture requires twenty-first century infrastructure," says Barry Threw, Executive and Artistic Director of Gray Area. "FORA is holding the foundational, multi-stakeholder conversation we need to ensure a sustainable future for the next generation of digitally-native artists and cultural institutions."

###

Inaugural FORA Program Series | 2023 - 2024

FORA Convening on LaTurbo Avedon's *New Sculpt*

Friday, October 27, 2023 | 9AM PT / 12 ET / 6PM CET

In-person at ONX Studio | 545 5th Avenue, Lower Level, New York, NY + via livestream

Exhibition on view October 27 - November 4, 2023

Open Hours: Thursday - Saturday 12-6 PM

ONX Studio | 545 5th Avenue, Lower Level, New York, NY

FORA Convening on Auriea Harvey's *My Veins Are the Wires, My Body Is Your Keyboard*

Convening date TBA

Exhibition on view at the Museum of the Moving Image: Feb 2 — Jul 7, 2024

FORA Convening on TRANSFER Download *Sea Change*

Convening Date TBA

Exhibition forthcoming at the Pérez Art Museum Miami in 2024

FORA is a consortium focused on conservation and regenerative cultural infrastructure built on decentralized technology. This initiative convenes conservators, curators, engineers, appraisers, and collectors to engage in an open peer-review process to boost conservation and care methods for media art. FORA aims to address a range of challenges in the media art world, including loss prevention, knowledge dissemination, transparency in appraisal, and value exchange.

[TRANSFER](#) is an experimental gallery that explores simulation and expanded practice. Founded by Kelani Nichole in 2013, TRANSFER's mission is to support artists examining the social, cultural and political implications of emerging technology in their work.

[Gray Area](#) is a San Francisco-based nonprofit cultural incubator. Our mission is to cultivate, sustain, and apply antidisiplinary collaboration — integrating art, technology, science, and the humanities — towards a more equitable and regenerative future.

[Onassis ONX Studio](#), created by Onassis Culture is an accelerator - a hybrid production and exhibition space, with a global community of members who create interactive and immersive XR and AI works. Located in the Olympic Tower in Midtown Manhattan, it was founded in 2020 in partnership between the Onassis Foundation and NEW INC.

[Integrated Design & Media \(IDM\) Program](#) fosters creative practice, design research and multidisciplinary experimentation with emerging media technologies. As a research-active program within NYU Tandon School of Engineering, IDM faculty collaborate in research that integrates digital media and society. Our faculty include leading artists, designers, developers and performers who passionately engage in professional work and research at the intersection of engineering and creative practice.