

**Opening Times:**  
Fri-Sun: 11-6 PM;  
Mon: 11-3 PM

**Address:** 165 Euston Rd  
London NW1 2BA

# BEYOND

**The Crypt Gallery**  
**30 June — 3 July 2023**

**Yiwen Li, Julie Maurin, Frederika Dalwood, Estefania B. Flores, Chaney Diao, Polina Osipova, Malu Laet, Bo Sun, Sofia Bordin, Maria Joranko, Jiemin Ren, Maximilian Prag, Jiayi Li, Chen Di, Deng Lina, Chika Annen, Ajla Yi, Samuel Barbier-Ficat**

*To affirm is not to bear, carry, or harness oneself to that which exists, but on the contrary to unburden, unharness, and set free that which lives.*  
— Gilles Deleuze, Nietzsche and Philosophy

What is our relation towards the future if the present is obscure, thus diminishing the possibilities for alternative realities or existence? In this instance, we turn ourselves to the concept of fictioning, as formulated by David Burrows and Simon O'Sullivan in their book by a similar title.<sup>1</sup> Defined as a practice of 'writing, imaging, performing or other material instantiation of worlds or social bodies that mark out trajectories different to those engendered by the dominant organisations of life currently in existence', fictioning thereby strives to avoid becoming a mere simulation, parody, or simulacra — a problem addressed since Plato's writings regarding the deceptive nature of art.

The book, performing its own practice of fictioning, defines and maps out three myth-functions — mythopoesis, myth-science and mythotechnesis — that, although presented separately, all deeply entangled with each other.<sup>2</sup> This results in the fact that different art practices may carry out more than one of these myth-functions. 'Beyond' takes as a point of departure the two latter concepts of myth-science and mythotechnesis and thus aims to explore what fictioning as a tool can offer us if we specifically address the problematics of non-European and diasporic

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<sup>1</sup> Burrows, David J, and Simon O'Sullivan. 2019. *Fictioning : The Myth-Functions of Contemporary Art and Philosophy*. Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press.

<sup>2</sup> 'Mythopoesis is proposed as productive of worlds, people and communities to come, often drawing upon residual and emergent cultures. Myth-science functions by producing alternate perspectives and models, revealing habits of thought concerning physical, historical and social realities as yet more myth. Lastly, mythotechnesis concerns the ways in which technology enters into discourse and life, through projections of the existing and future influence of machines.' - Burrows, O'Sullivan, *Fictioning*, p. 1.

cultures, the division between nature and culture, and future human-machine relations and assemblages.

The context of the Crypt Gallery, where 'Beyond' takes place, helps us to unpack the initial concept further in a spatio-temporal sense. The space, which opened in 1822 as a part of St Pancras Parish Church, has a rich and complex history, having changed its purpose many times. It became a final resting place for more than five hundred people over the course of the first 30 years of its existence, in both World Wars it was used as an air raid shelter, and in 2002 it was finally reopened as a permanent gallery space. As a place in which different space-time relations were manifested throughout its existence, the Crypt acts as a fitting environment to meditate on the possible synchronous nature of time. Taking as a premise the idea of a non-linearity of time, with the past and future equally not fixed or determinate, we aim to explore the potential encounters that might happen between them — the thing enabled by the very idea of fictioning.

Emerging from these points of contact the exhibition aims to explore fictioning from two main points of view: how it can serve as a resource against the existing frameworks of the present and take a critical power in analysing them. While the artists in the project employ fictioning in different ways — as only a small patch of fictionalised presents or pasts or by creating complete alternative realities — what brings them together is the belief in its transformative power. By imagining possibilities yet to come we make a first step towards building a future that embodies our deepest aspirations for a newer, more unconventional, and infinite world.

**Curated by Jennifer Sun, Yiwen Li, Anastasia Chugunova, Charlotte Yuan**

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# 1. Lina Deng

## **bottoms up and the devil laughs, 2023**

Mixed media, 160x170 cm

*bottoms up and the devil laughs* is a monster energy drink fountain evoking the anti-corporeality of gaming culture and the configuration of gender, mysticism and productivity under neoliberalism.

The piece explores Donna Haraway's concept of the liminal monstrous body via the caffeinated masculinity of energy drink consumption. It is the feeling of being endlessly wired online, connected and overworked; bottoms up is a grotesque parody of the militarised alertness and productivity demanded by our late capitalist condition.



Lina Deng is a British-Chinese multimedia artist based in London. Her interests include sardonic and political interrogations into the chronically online, viral, conspiratorial, and esoteric. She is currently undertaking an MA in Computational Arts at Goldsmiths. Lina has exhibited in group shows for Digital Artist Residency, Close Isn't Home, fetchish\_net, IKLECTIK, Solo Show, and AAIFF. Her work has been featured in the literary anthology *Against Disappearance: Essays on Memory*.

@linatheeban

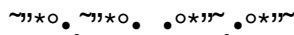
# 2. Frederika Dalwood

## **The Backrooms, 2023**

Digital print, acrylic glass, 168x127 cm

## **World is suddender than we fancy it, 2023**

Hama bead tapestry on lightbox, 60x60cm



Frederika Dalwood lives and works in London. Working predominantly with video and digital-based media, Dalwood's practice compiles of ultimately overstimulating syntheses which echo the tropes of internet culture and suggest the atmosphere of an absurd and weird realm that borders on the irrational and surreal. Recent exhibitions include 'Liminal Cracks', SET Kensington, London, UK (2023), Interim show, Slade SFA, London, UK (2022), 'Prelude to Space', Stokey Pop-up, London, UK (2022) and 'Lambing Season', WORLDING, London, UK (2022).

@frederika\_\_\_\_\_ <https://frederikadalwood.com/>

## 3. Ajla Yi

### **Apoptosis II, 2021**

Polylactic acid, metal trays, hooks, chains, dimensions variable

*Apoptosis II* represents the artist's ongoing exploration of queer speculative design, body modification, and world-building methodologies. It originated as a tentacled mushroom creature during a collaborative project with Chán magazine, where the artist sought to question the prevailing anthropocentric perspectives on human consumption. By contemplating the multifaceted meanings and implications of food in the context of a diasporic and queer body, *Apoptosis II* invites viewers to reflect and engage with these ideas in an enchanting and captivating manner.



Ajla Yi is a London-based artist and filmmaker who was born and raised in China. Their practice involves speculative fiction and world-building, where trans\*, non-binary and alien bodies are often centred in a scenic situation within a post-human world-setting. Their works often take the form of sculptures, CGI films, computer games and texts. Surrounding their research interests on the intersection between neuroscience and transgender theory, in 2021 they were selected to participate in the Activist Neuroaesthetics programme at Saas Fee Summer Institute of Art, and Blue Cables, an interdisciplinary art residency at Power Station of Art in Shanghai. Since completing their MFA Fine Art at Goldsmiths, University of London in 2020, their works have been shown recently in *Underpinned by the Movements of Freighters* at Florence Trust, *Blue Cables in Venetian Waters WIP* at Power Station of Art in Shanghai, and *Conditions* group exhibition at the Whitgift Centre.

@ajlayi\_ <https://ajla.studio/>

## 4. Sofia Bordin

### **1. Untitled (Hearth), 2022**

Steel, 28x30x16 cm

### **2. by worldly mouths, 2023**

Steel, 74x30x32 cm



Sofia Bordin (Rome, 1998) is an Italian multidisciplinary artist living between Rome and London. After graduating in Animation from the London College of Communication in 2020, she started a Masters degree in Sculpture at the Slade School of Fine Art in London. Her artistic practice harvests symbols and languages from popular myth and the magic world, bringing them back into a human one as simulacra. Presented as assemblages, superimpositions or sculptural installations, crystallised and made ethereal through a spectral or grotesque patina. The works engage with media altered in their material state: organic elements, stones and metals, chosen for their evocative features and their belonging to emotional, interstitial and metamorphic places. Her most recent shows include: 'Pharmakon Ep.2', Museo delle Mura, Rome, IT (2022), 'SCOPPIO TERZO - There Are More Things', Scoppio, IT (2022) and 'LUNATIKA', Ex-Mattatoio, Rome, IT (2022).

@healing.grotto

<https://www.sofiabordin.com/>

## 5. Yiwen Li

**hybridization, 2023**

UV print on plastic sheet, 25x25x20 cm

~\*o. ~\*o. .o\*~ .o\*~

Yiwen Li (b.1995, China) is an artist and curator based in London. Her work navigates the alternative world and the psychology of religion, addressing the relationship between science and mysticism, technology and magic, instrumental and value rationality. Using a variety mediums ranging from sculpture and painting to video, film and performance, she is interested in bridging the gap between Eastern and Western cultural frameworks and the reconfiguration of reality. Recent exhibitions and curatorial projects include: Degree Show, Slade SFA, London, UK (2023); 'Air and the Absent', Resource for London, London, UK (2023); 'Squeeze', Barbican Art Group Trust, London, UK (2023); 'Frameless Contact', Old Brompton Gallery, London, UK (2023); 'Liminal Cracks', SET Kensington, London, UK (2023); 'Colour & Poetry: A Symposium V', Slade SFA, London, UK (2022); 'Objects of the Misanthropocene', Octagon Gallery, London, UK (2022).

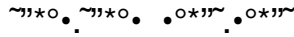
@yiwen.lii

<https://yiwenliart.com/>

## 6. Maria Joranko

**INTRATERRESTIA: MARIETTE, 2023**

London earth, cardboard, wood foraged from Epping Forest, tulip petals, rose petals, used soap, mirrors, UK5 shoe size



Maria Joranko is a mixed media artist+performer, dancer, musician, and researcher who is specifically interested in examining how healing, transformation, and change can be presented as possibilities within the context of the arts. She is currently based in London, where she maintains a practice integrated with meditation, bodywork, and sculpture while using soil and plant-based materials as the primary conduits for connection with the Earth, ancestors, and those yet to come. Maria draws on carried knowledge from her Latinx, American, and Indigenous biological+chosen family, her research in decolonial land practices, and her racial activism experiences to create objects that are relics from a potential future that has sustained equity and a sense of magic connection. With our bodies constantly being subjected to systemic pressures and oppressions, the goal is to continue bringing people physically together to experience potentials from this world for collective experiences of restoration+healing. It is necessary that we see our possibilities for change and let our imaginations take steps to begin pivoting towards an equitable reality, and with each physical piece and performance, MARIA infuses a longing for a portal to these worlds based on love.

@foxy\_azucar

<https://www.mariajoranko.com/>

## 7. Polina Osipova

### 1. Envelope Opener, 2023

Acrylic, canvas, 89x29 cm

### 2. Envelope Opener II, 2023

Acrylic, canvas, 92x30 cm

### 3. Love Letter Box, 2023

Vintage mirror, papier-mâché, acrylic, polymer clay, mica, 40x45 cm

I have over 1,000 unread emails in my inbox, I'm the kind of person who has trouble replying in a timely manner. But my love letter box never has a 'new message' notice for more than an hour.



Polina Osipova (b.1998, Cheboksary, Chuvash Republic, Russia) is an indigenous Chuvash artist currently based in the UK. Polina's work includes sculptures, textile sculptures, masks, photography and video art, using traditional handcrafted techniques at the junction of digital technology. In 2021 Polina won the Creative Activism Awards, Cultures of Resistance Foundation, BR. In the same year Polina opened her first solo exhibition at Hoxton gallery, London, UK. Recent exhibitions

include: Artlab Eyeland, Taranto, IT (2023), 'Ome', NGBKxBethanien, Berlin, GE (2023).

@polinatammi

## 8. Maximilian Prag

**lore of interfering event, 2023**

resin, metal, chains, 40x40x60 cm

realities are merging again, you can't intervene, it's a canon event. Take care of what you break when you enter in your tabi clown shoes. Entangled in extinction and the last cigarette of the pack, we sit out the last hours, lab conditions: 21° Celsius. no friction. vacuum sealed. The apocalypse will be live-streamed. What will it feel like listening to Lana on the last morning via a cracked iPhone in our hands?

~\*o.~\*o. .o\*~.o\*~

Maximilian Prag is an interdisciplinary artist and designer testing contemporary visual and new media culture. Working with new media technology in between visual communication and art, they create new formats of digital representation, virtual worlds, digital generative imagery and multimedia installations. Maximilian's interests lie in contemporary imagery, internet culture and experimenting with phygital experiences exploring new interactions in between our mixed realities, online and away from screens. They are involved with sound:frame for the Vienna-based media arts festival CIVA and are part of the artist-led collective room69. Maximilian is currently studying Transmedia Art and Graphic Design at the University of Applied Arts, living and working in Vienna.

@maximilianprag

<https://www.are.na/maximilian-prag>

## 9. Estefania B. Flores

**U fore me, 2023**

Steel mesh, epoxy resin, latex, pewter, LED screen, 64x50 cm

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Estefania B. Flores is a visual artist and former architect based in London and Spain. After completing her MA in Architecture at the Polytechnic University of Madrid, she went on to complete a MA in Fine Arts at Goldsmiths, London in 2022. Her practice is concerned with simulated emotions, affections and aversions within game spaces, and the emergence of a technological demodé culture.

@estefantastic

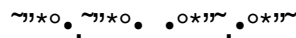
<https://estefaniabflores.com/>

## 10. Chaney Diao

**Untitled, 2022**

Mixed media, 60x60 cm

The work looks at bridging different surfaces and different eras of technology together in questioning representation. The mingling and the transcendental moment emerge on a contact surface between the three - from image and projection to metal plate.



Chaney Manshu Diao (b.1996, China) is an artist and poet whose research-based practice explores the conception of identity from the lens of trans\* (-gender, -human, -bodies...) studies through dress and appearance, body, linguistics, and geography. Chaney's practice emphasizes the awareness of feminism and culture diaspora. By considering body as a mobilised site entering in-and-out of the geographical boundaries, Chaney explores the meaning of being inter/national, multi/cultural; community and otherness; as well as the construction of asianness. Chaney had her solo show 'Pleasure 41' at 5th Base Gallery, London, UK (2019) as part of the annual east end Nocturnal Creature art festival. Recent artist workshop, publishing and group exhibitions include: Power to change Programme at TATE, London, UK (2021); The Paper, by good press, Glasgow, UK (2021); Stand Up! at Artcore Gallery, Derby, UK (2020). Chaney's conceptual approach to fashion, clothes and identity has been featured by magazines including i-D, Numero, Vogue, BoF, WWD, French Fries Magazine, Schon Magazine.

@chaney\_dms

<https://www.chaneydiao.com/>

## 11. Julie Maurin

**HAPPINESS FOR EVERYBODY, FREE, AND MAY NO ONE BE LEFT BEHIND! / SOME CONTRACTS WITH MYSELF / PARTY AT THE END OF THE WORLD, 2023**

Round metal table, glasses, newspapers, coins, spills, pills, flowers, silicone, epoxy resin, xanthan gum, 200x150x50 cm

*A party. Picture a room, a derelict house, a village. Cars drive off the country road into the village, a group of young people get out carrying bottles, baskets of food, transistor radios, and cameras. They light cigarettes and turn on the music. In the morning they leave. The animals, birds, and insects that watched in horror through*



*the long night creep out from their hiding places. And what do they see? Old spark plugs and old filters strewn around... Rags, burnt-out bulbs, and a monkey wrench left behind... And of course, the usual mess—apple cores, candy wrappers, charred remains of the party, cans, bottles, somebody’s handkerchief, somebody’s penknife, torn newspapers, coins, faded flowers picked in some meadow.\**

\*Text inspired by the novel ‘Roadside Picnic’ (1972) by Arkady and Boris Strugatsky.



Julie Maurin (b.1993, Marseille) currently lives and works in London. She has an MA in Sculpture from the Royal College of Art, London, an MA in Accessories from ENSAV La Cambre, Brussels and a BA in Textile Design from ENSBA Lyon, France. Her practice oscillates between photography and sculpture. The toxicity of the materials that she uses, alongside their synthetic aspect, stands side by side with dead organisms to evoke our ambivalent relationship towards the environment we inhabit. Julie has recently exhibited at St. Chads Projects, London, UK (2023), Asylum Chapel, London, UK (2023), South Parade, London, UK (2022), Staffordshire St, London, UK (2023) and OSHS Projects, London, UK (2023).

@me7usa

## 12. Chen Di

### **Ever Since I Lost My AddOn, I Saw Her Everywhere - Episode I, 2023-ongoing**

Digital video, duration variable

*Ever Since I Lost My AddOn, I Saw Her Everywhere* is the first episode of an ongoing project currently in the format of a digital video. The story follows the inhabitants of its corresponding fictional world vaguely located in coastal Fujian, South-East China.



Chen Di is an artist, researcher, and coder, who lives between Fujian and London. Sometimes she feels like a weird body among other temporary proxies, operating between categories like individual-collective, virtual-embodied, natural-cultural, object-subject, or human-nonhuman. Her current practice combines the elements: of speculative-fictional documentaries, organic moving sculptures, digital games, and performative/improvised activities. Her latest project steals and transforms ideas, methodologies, and stories from animism, machine learning, synthetic food and biotechnology industries, internet-oriented mass sociogenic illness as well as her family group chats. She graduated from the MFA Fine Art program at Goldsmiths, University of London in 2019, and got her second Masters in Computational Arts. Since 2020, she has been a member of The New Centre for

Research & Practice. She is currently part of 'Conditions', an alternative pedagogical studio program in Croydon. Her works have been part of exhibitions and events in London, Hamburg, Busan, Hong Kong, and Beijing.

@chendi\_chen\_di  
<https://www.chendi.online/>

## 13. Samuel Barbier-Ficat

### **The Backrooms**, 2023

Audio, 4 min 29 sec

Capitalism has commodified water and the possession of it into a class signifier. With the reimagining of the crypt as a shameless future swimming pool, in a time of water scarcity, this sound piece's fictional narrative imagines the familiar sounds of a pool interrupted by the sharp gasping and drowning of a patron who represents the outcome of post-capitalism.

~\*o.~\*o. .o\*~.o\*~

Samuel Barbier-Ficat is a French multidisciplinary artist based in London. Enmeshed in the art world and music communities, Samuel draws inspiration through different mediums via installations, performances, music, and film, resulting in a chaotic yet clarified artistic approach. Samuel's art often intertwines relief, tension and disruption. Previously, Samuel has performed at the renowned Bloomsbury Theatre, London, UK (2023). He has toured extensively across Europe and the UK with his various musical projects. His music video, 'Fausse Nouvelle', was nominated at the Bogotá Short Film Festival and Berlin Interfilm Festival (2022). As a composer, Samuel was also nominated at the Côté Court Festival, Paris, FR, for his score for a film in competition.

@vampi.xo

## 14. Jiemin Ren

### **Stupa**, 2023

Projection, VR set, dimensions variable

The quest for 'eternity' is an indelible legacy of Orientalism, where power holders in Asia tirelessly seek eternal life or ideas. In primitive Buddhism, for example, monks would see monks who possessed much Buddhist knowledge as the embodiment of the Buddhist will. To ensure that this knowledge did not disappear with the death of the body, they disposed of the bodies of those monks in a very religious way: 'Golden body,' that is, covering the body with a layer of gold and offering this gold in the Stupa to ensure the eternity of knowledge. This small

tomb's opposing concepts of 'eternal knowledge' and 'momently flesh' are preserved. It is a ghostly space; it can be recreated in a scene of daily life by creation but is in fierce conflict with it, just like the concepts of 'eternity' and 'moment' in the Stupa. The VR in that case enables to insert fantasy scenes into the cracks of reality, so that all viewers can jump out of the actual space for a short time and experience the balance maintained by two contradictory concepts of the space.



Jiemin Ren (b. 1999, Chengdu, China) is living in London, UK. He graduated from CSM, and now studying at Slade School of Fine Arts, undertaking research in Fine Arts and Computer Vision as an artist and engineer. He is interested in the complex relationship that might emerge between the individual and the environment—for example, caused by the contradictions in urban space and the resulted confused individuals in a vast group. Most of his works are presented as 3D film projects, digital art, and mixed-media installations.

@jiemin\_ren

## 15. Bo Sun

### **Silent Bird, 2023**

Aluminium, resin, metal fixtures, strings, 50x50x28 cm



Bo Sun (b. 1998) lives and works in London. He gained his BA Fine Art (Honours) from Central Saint Martins in 2022. In his practice, Sun explores the perimeter around industrial construction form, animate and inanimate structure. By reinventing techno-futurist skeletons, he articulates a reflection on and reverence for structural design in nature and across the industry. Recent group exhibitions include 'Terminal Parlour', The Split Gallery, London, UK (2023), 'At Dawn', Sherbet Green, London, UK (2023), 'Baggage Claim', Staffordshire St, London, UK (2023), 'Your Heart to A Dog to Tear', Take Courage Gallery, London, UK (2022), 'MacArthur Park', Cromwell Place, London, UK (2022), 'Upcoming Promises', Simulacra, Beijing, CH (2022), 'Kissaten/Tea Room', UCL Japanese Gardens, London, UK (2022), 'Meltdown', Ridley Road Project Space, London, UK (2022) and 'Port of Call', Changing Room Gallery, London, UK (2021).

@the98bo

<https://www.boxuansun.com/>

## 16. Jiayi Li

## Infection series, 2023-ongoing

Acrylic, metal, dimensions variable



Jiayi Li (b. 2000, Beijing) is an artist who graduated with BA in Fine Art from Central Saint Martins. His practice spans music, images, and installation, with the latter two working as an extension of the music. Inspired by biblical stories, his sonic works aim to transform abstract aural experiences into visual images. His music attempts to create a grand aural narrative space through vocal distortion as well as synthetic noise. The music is further dismantled into grainy monochromatic images that form a complete spatial narrative in multiple collages.

@11\_jiayi

## 17. Malu Laet

### 1. Magic Tech, 2023

Mixed media, dimensions variable

Sally is a tech-wizard, a silicon metal alchemist who develops magic technologies: a **wand** and a **sword**. They transfer objects that permeate virtual currents to activate their force sonically. Sally operates ritualistically using her cyber-magic tools and employing them in her speculative playground.

### 2. Exo-Hearts, 2023

Mixed media, 50x60 cm

*Exo-Hearts* are intimacy technologies, sensual machines that filter magnetic intensity and erotic signals. This attraction organ when extracted becomes a vessel of desire, an icon for erogenous allure and cyber-positive ooze.



Malu Laet is a Brazilian-born sound and performance artist. She graduated from Fine Arts at CSM and is currently enrolled in the MFA Computational Arts at Goldsmiths University. She performs as Sally, a haptic avatar that practices cyber alchemy, develops magic technologies and implements them in her rites of integration.

@mmmmmmlllll

<https://s2ally.linha.stream/>

## 18. Chika Annen

## 1. Diorama 'Utopia', 2023

Mixed-media installation, 50x50x50 cm

## 2. Mobile 'Pteranodon', 2023

Paper, wood, fishing wire, 200x200x100 cm

The visual representation of dinosaurs and their association with social demands surrounding science has changed over time. Our general impression of dinosaurs is cultivated through the pedagogical employment of palaeontology within mass entertainment productions such as figures, magazines, and films. Therefore, people constantly feel the incongruity between the mental images and the appearances of dinosaurs considered real in the present; a reaction exemplary of the dinosaur's complex image development in the contemporary. My playful approach to the subject allows me to investigate the autonomy of images in this modern society beyond their original demand.



Chika Annen is an international artist based between London and Tokyo. Her works are wandering amidst 'nonsense' and myths that are socially and culturally relevant to all, and her multi-media work explores the discrepancies among these subjects to construct a unique brand of language and stories. Based on her Japanese background, she expands this notion of differences through my 'outsider' perspective.

**@zwacan401**

**<https://annenchika.com/>**