

Alexandria's Genesis

Dian Joy

15 November 2024 – 12 January 2025

Press Preview: Thursday 14 November, 2 – 4pm

Opening Evening: Thursday 14 November, 6:30 – 9pm

arebyte Gallery

Java House, 7 Botanic Square, London City Island, E14 0LG



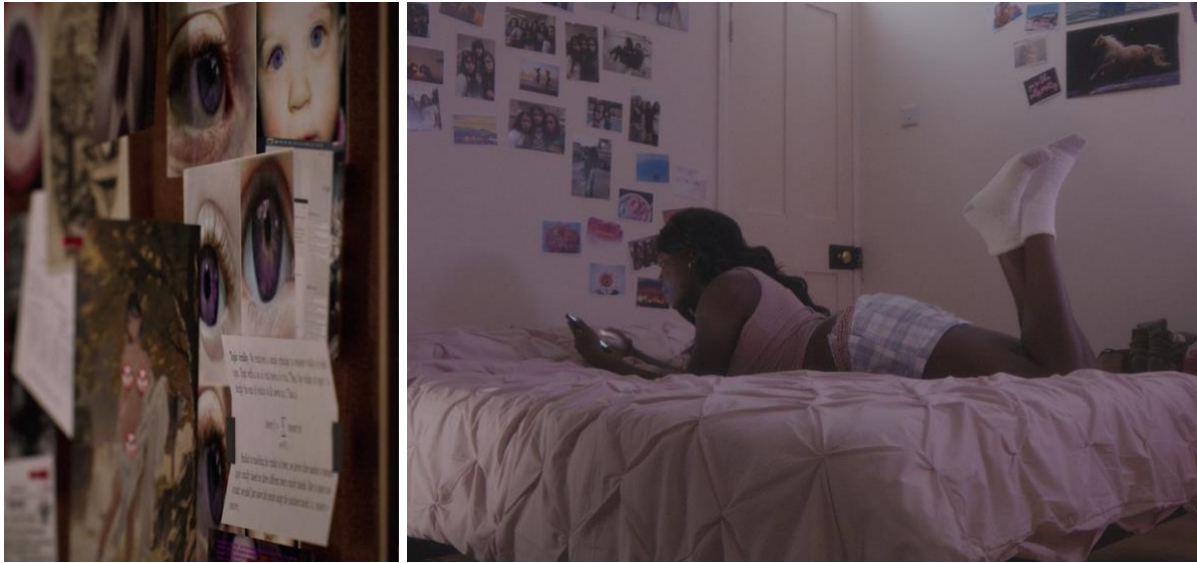
arebyte Gallery is pleased to announce *Alexandria's Genesis*, an exhibition by British-Nigerian interdisciplinary artist Dian Joy. Taking its title from an internet myth – a cospypasta – this exhibition situates itself between beliefs, insecurities and desires to form a fanfiction of a fanfiction. Operating in the dystopian struggle between disinformation and information, fake and real, *Alexandria's Genesis* explores how reality may be mutated, augmented and propagated by any means possible. At its core, it is a study of the social life of ideas, in the digital age.

The myth of *Alexandria's Genesis* – once relegated to the obscure corners of the internet – has circulated on online forums and social media, evolving into many forms. A rumoured genetic anomaly, transforming people into long-living “perfect human beings” with violet eyes and flawless pale skin, gave those with the condition strength and vitality. Circulating online since 1998, the conspiracy was created by “Daria” fanfic writer Cameron Auburnon to explain her too-perfect female characters, gaining traction and spreading widely until it was eventually medically debunked. This sticky narrative, told as an illusory truth, offers a seductive deception of genetic superiority – a story that blurs the line between desire and reality, shaping perceptions of identity and feeding fantasies of perfection that favour youth, shimmering white skin, lack of hair beyond what was there at birth, perfect bodies and purple eyes.



The show is a cinematic experience set across the backdrop of both digital and physical spaces, which delves into the evolution of this myth. Taking on this fanfiction and its hold on the collective imagination, Dian Joy transforms and remixes this myth once again. Joy approaches the story of “Alexandria’s Genesis” as a hyper-referential text – a meme that thrives on its ability to mutate and replicate. Like similar viral phenomena, the story has taken on a life of its own, mutating to survive and thrive within algorithmic systems. The myth, once a piece of fanfiction, has evolved into a viral meme, with its persuasive logic propelled by the architecture of the internet. Through this lens, the exhibition offers a critique of how digital content acts as both a reflection of our desires and a disciplinary force – policing what we see, how we see ourselves, and how we exist within these systems. Grounded in real conversations from online chatrooms, the narrative prompts reflection on contemporary media’s influence on the perceptions of the self.

Once referred to as a democratising force for knowledge, information, and political participation, the internet has, over the past few decades, become a playground for competing narratives and increasing polarisation. With the growing encapsulation of life within algorithmic processes and systems, our way of looking and understanding the world has drastically altered: echo chambers flourish, algorithms boost engagement at the expense of truth, and the lines between fact and fiction become blurred. In platforms driven by clicks and attention, conspiracy theories thrive, offering compelling and often simplistic explanations for complex global events. As trust in institutions—governments, media or science—breaks down and anxiety increases, people increasingly turn to “alternative facts”, dark plots and secret explanations to make sense of the world in an era of uncertainty, inequality, and systemic failure.



The rise and fall of conspiratorial or viral fantasies are often linked to real-world events and social, economic or technological change. These narratives offer a sense of clarity and belonging to individuals seeking explanations where there is seemingly none. Conspiracies like Alexandria's Genesis thrive by exploiting insecurities, anxieties about the world or gaps in official explanations. But, beyond offering personal solace or identity, conspiracies, often framed as “objective truths”, have long been spaces for ideological co-option.

Stories like Alexandria's Genesis are not just myths – they are adaptive narratives that morph and survive, shifting with the anxieties of the moment. As social media enables their rapid spread, they offer an illusion and a breeding ground for ideologies to take root and grow, from harmless entertainment to tools of cultural and political influence. In this exhibition, Dian Joy invites us to consider how narratives – whether in the form of fanfiction or something more sinister – reflects deeper truths about power, identity, and the underlying social and political dynamics they exploit.

ENDS

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NOTES TO EDITORS

About arebyte

arebyte advances new experimentation in digital cultures. Meeting the growing demand for immersive experiences and digital content creation, arebyte pioneers new forms of engagement with creative technologies, to critically explore the impact of technology in contemporary society.

From digital environments, online exhibitions to live performances, arebyte's art programme spans VR, AR, motion capture, CGI, AI, blockchain technology, and draws 10,000 visitors per year to its gallery in East London, with a yearly online audience of 350,000 which is constantly growing.

arebyte is committed to further support London's creatives by providing affordable workspaces in the capital city. In partnership with private landlords and Councils, arebyte strives to preserve a vibrant community of 330 artists, makers and designers in East and South London.

arebyte Gallery

Java House, 7 Botanic Square, London City Island, E14 0LG

Opening Hours: Tuesday – Sunday, 1 – 6pm

E: hello@arebyte.com

W: www.arebyte.com

About Dian Joy

Dian Joy is a British-Nigerian interdisciplinary artist and educator based in London. Their work explores the intersection of biological and technological systems through videos and installations. Grounded in Cultural Analysis, their work bridges personal experiences and political realities, offering alternative social modalities.

EXHIBITION CREDITS

Artist: Dian Joy

Production Manager: Adriana Navarro

Digital Producer: Ellinor Paik

Technicians: Dmitry Timofeev, George Browne, Henrique Lázaro, Jon Fawcett, Noah Griffin, Rizq Yazed

Graphic Designer: Camilla Does

Hotel Generation Curatorial mentoring: Rebecca Edwards

FILM CREDITS

Director: Dian Joy

Producers: Dian Joy, Isidora Fairhust, Miles Ahmad

Choreography by: Zinzile

DOP: Miles Ahmad

2nd Camera: Olivia Prendergast

Camera Assist: Hugo Mostachfi

Gaffer: Belle Palmano

Spark: Kat Hanratty

Sound: cajm, Oliver Palfreyman

Production Design: Alexandre Tarek

Make-up: Eve Shashoua

Wardrobe: Gina Corrieri

Runner/Wardrobe Assist: Ella Corrieri

Editor: Adam Muscat

Editors Assist: Vincent Holden

Graphics: Arna Beth

VFX: Sarah-Lou Sasha Maarek

Grade: Nathaniel Skeels



Soundtrack: cajm, Golce Kummer

Featuring: Cameron Aubernon as Herself

Cast: Josiane MH Pozi, Leo Bhanji, Juliette Motamed, Jacob Phil Ebosie, Isidora Fairhurst, Billy Jacobson, Adam Grant, Megan Ita O'Rourke, Cold, Kutcha Bouzin, Bianca Scout, Ama Jones, Sarah-Lou Sasha Maarek, Arna Beth

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