SERPENTINE

Serpentine Galleries
Kensington Gardens
London W2 3XA

T +44 (0)20 7402 6075
serpentinegalleries.org
@SerpentineUK

ARTS TECHNOLOGIES

Press Release

GABRIEL MASSAN & COLLABORATORS
THIRD WORLD: THE BOTTOM DIMENSION

Serpentine builds new worlds through technology with an experimental video game and an immersive exhibition by emerging Brazilian artist Gabriel Massan and collaborators, with web3 tokens powered by Tezos.

Serpentine North
23 June – 26 November 2023
[Further images can be found here.](#)

Third World: The Bottom Dimension © Serpentine. Photo: Hugo Glendinning

Serpentine features *Third World: The Bottom Dimension,* an exhibition, a video game and web3 tokens powered by Tezos.

The project is conceptualised by Brazilian artist Gabriel Massan in collaboration

→

with invited interdisciplinary artists Castiel Vitorino Brasileiro, Novíssimo Edgar, Jota Mombaça, Ventura Profana and vocalist and music producer LYZZA.

Extended until 26th November 2023, the exhibition continues the ideas that have driven the creation and development of the mirroring video game. It offers audiences an opportunity to play the game in a communal setting around site-specific set design, sculptures, sounds and films.

Through the lenses of decoloniality, queerness and decentralisation, *Third World* challenges us to rethink the ways in which we understand and orient ourselves in the world. Central themes include ancestral knowledge, healing, ecological awareness, transmutation, and agency.

Third World: The Bottom Dimension emerges from Massan's interest in technological, social and economic decentralisation and includes participatory digital tokens powered by Tezos. Players can record 'memories' of their own actions as they play the game, and by minting this record (or snapshot) on the blockchain, build a public archive of multiple perspectives and actions. In addition, a limited-edition collection brings together Massan, their collaborators and a wider community of web3 artists.

Gabriel Massan said: "I want to create the experience of walking through possibilities and memories of life and narrative... A work that people can walk inside. The project is a meta-simulation about warped perspectives and an exercise in terms. It's a critique of a concept that persists in the everyday, more related to our own geographies rather than territories that truly exist. People are too invested in the idea of systems being something that are impossible to redefine. 'Third World' signifies a stratified structure; which 'level' of the world are you on? How does this relate to access, connection and maintain Western control over market representation and value? I call attention to this structure; 'Third World'; a burden that was given, and itself a fabrication, to allow us to reimagine and rewrite. These divisions of the world and these terms were based on fictional, human concepts that define and decentre the larger part of the world as 'periphery'."

Bettina Korek, CEO and Hans Ulrich Obrist, Artistic Director said: "*Third World: The Bottom Dimension,* is a dynamic commission powered by Tezos that brings pioneering digital artist Gabriel Massan and their collaborators to the forefront of gaming and cultural communities. Massan's project not only demonstrates an iterative process in terms of our relationship with the artist - supporting development of concept, game, then exhibition, but also how work like this can exist and engage across fields, building new connections between artists and society."

→

Valérie Whitacre, Head of Arts, Trilitech: "Massan's *Third World* exhibition is an elegant demonstration of how art and gaming can merge in web3 to provide an expanded field for artistic creation and unique, immersive experiences for users. We're excited to work with Serpentine in bringing this powerful in-person experience to the community, to support Gabriel Massan and their collaborators in bringing their artistic vision to life, and for the community to permanently leave their mark on Tezos."

GAME

Alongside **Massan's** digital sculptures, textures, concept and narrative development, the game features artistic contributions by **Castiel Vitorino Brasileiro, Novíssimo Edgar,** sound design by **LYZZA**, and work from **Masako Hirano, Marchino Manga, Ralph McCoy, Carlos Minozzi, Iraj Montasham, Alexandre Pina,** and **Sweet Baby Inc.**

Across interconnected but distinct episodes set across different dimensions, geographies and timescales, the game invites players to think about ideas of transformation. 'FUNFUN', an agent deployed to the 'Third World' by a resource extraction organisation and 'BUBURU' feature as playable characters.

As the player navigates the disorienting virtual environments of *Igba Tingbo* and *Sòfo,* they not only encounter new lifeforms, languages, and ways of knowing, but a growing state of reckoning with their own actions.

Expanding Massan's practice of 'fictional archaeology', the game is a fantastical simulation that investigates the converging landscapes and post-colonial complexities of contemporary Brazil and beyond. The project explores the concept of 'game-as-platform' and the role of a public arts institution in nurturing a constellation of diverse perspectives.

Each level or "episode' in the game is conceptualised by a featured artist, in collaboration with Massan, bringing themes central to their practice to build on the lore of Third World.

With *Igba Tingbo*, Castiel Vitorino Brasileiro explores themes of memory, healing, and transmutation.

In *Sòfo*, Novíssimo Edgar addresses violence, desertification, and ecological balance.

→

EXHIBITION

The exhibition offers visitors an opportunity to experience the ideas, emotions, and mechanics of the video game in a hybrid physical-virtual setting and in community with others.

Echoing the unique shifting sense of time in the game, and the inherent interactivity of games as a medium, the exhibition features sound, light and visuals to create a tactile, reverberant, and dynamic setting. Visitors are invited to play the game in two distinctly designed rooms and the space changes in response to their actions, making each visit to the exhibition unique.

The exhibition features work from artists **Castiel Vitorino Brasileiro, Novíssimo Edgar, LYZZA, Jota Mombaça and Ventura Profana**, including many new commissions.

Designed in collaboration with set designer **Furmaan Ahmed,** the materials and surfaces of the gallery have been carefully developed to create material connections and collisions between the video game and each of the artists' works in the space. From the reflective and curved surfaces throughout the exhibition to the sculptural mass of wires and botany that grows over the walls. This viral biota sprawls and clings to surfaces like overgrown weeds and characterises the video game's extractive and toxic Headquarters. These elements have been created, where possible, using reused and reclaimed materials from past Serpentine exhibitions and the park in the construction of its own world.

The project continues Serpentine Arts Technologies' commitment to experimenting with the role that the art field can play in the development of advanced technologies such as video games, blockchain and AI, and understanding their impact on culture and society. This is achieved through the commissioning and production of ambitious artist-led projects, and a research and development programme that includes Future Art Ecosystems and R&D Labs to prototype protocols and strategies for the future of art and advanced technologies.

Notes to Editors

Serpentine Arts Technologies

The project is curated and produced by Serpentine Arts Technologies led by Tamar Clarke-Brown (Curator, Commissions), Kay Watson (Head of Arts Technologies) and Róisín McVeigh (Associate Producer), with Eva Jaeger (Curator), Victoria Ivanova (Strategic Lead) and Alex Boyes (Producer), with the exhibition alongside Sarah Hamed (Assistant Exhibitions Curator) and Halime Özdemir (Production

→

Manager).

The programme proposes critical and interdisciplinary perspectives on advanced technologies through artistic interventions, challenging and reshaping the role that technologies can play in culture and society.

The foundation of Serpentine Arts Technologies' programme is in an evolving R&D Platform that nurtures innovation for future art ecologies by securing a crucial institutional space for pragmatic interventions and necessary risk-taking at the intersection of art, science and technology. This is achieved through dedicated research labs (Blockchain Lab , Creative AI Lab , Legal Lab, Synthetic Ecologies Lab), orientation and knowledge-sharing with the wider sector through Future Art Ecosystems, and co-facilitation of a national Creative R&D Working Group.

Tezos is a pioneering Proof of Stake blockchain, redefining what it means to hold and exchange value in a digitally connected world. A self-upgradable and energy-efficient Proof of Stake blockchain with a proven track record, Tezos seamlessly adopts tomorrow's innovations without network disruptions today. For more information, please visit www.tezos.com

Artists

Gabriel Massan (b.1996, Brazil) is a Berlin-based multidisciplinary artist. Combining storytelling and worldbuilding, Massan creates worlds that simulate and narrate situations of inequality within the Latin American experience. Framed through a conceptual practice they call 'fictional archaeology', and working across 3D animation, digital sculpture, games, sound, and interactive installations, the artist challenges warped conceptions of the so-called 'Third World' while investigating possibilities for subversive otherness. Selected residencies and awards include the Arts Explora Program supported by Cité Internationale Des Arts (2023), Dazed 100 (2022), Circa x Dazed (2021), Instituto Moreira Salles (2020) and ETOPIA - Center for Art & Technology (2019). They have created significant commissions with Serpentine Arts Technologies (2022-3), Bangkok Biennale (2022), The Photographers' Gallery (2022), and X Museum (2022). Massan has presented talks and conversations at institutions including La Biennale di Venezia, Art Basel Miami, DLD Conference, University College London, Royal College Of Arts and Institut Français. Recent exhibitions include: 'WORLDBUILDING: Gaming and Art in the Digital Age" (Julia Stoschek Collection, 2022; Centre Pompidou-Metz, 2023); 'Canon!' (Frieze No.9 Cork Street, 2022) and 'Possible Agreements' (Mendes Wood DM, 2022).

Castiel Vitorino Brasileiro (b. 1996, Brazil) is a visual artist, writer, and psychologist with a master's degree in Clinical Psychology, and who belongs to an

AfroBantu family lineage. Her works include photography, video making, dancing, painting, and installation (temples). With her artistic and academic practice, Castiel is interested in studying the principle of Transmutation as an unavoidable destiny. For this, she dribbles, incorporates, and immerses herself in the Bantu ontology, embracing healing [cura] as a perishable moment of freedom. Currently, Castiel studies and builds interspecific spirituality and ancestry.

Novíssimo Edgar (b.1993. Brazil) is a multidisciplinary artist, rapper, poet and creator of upcycled masks and costumes. Novíssimo appeared in the Brazilian urban scene in 2018 with his debut album "Ultrassom". As a compulsive creator, he has made books, performances, drawings, installations, games, drawings and NFTs, producing work that speaks to freedom, as a speculative exercise committed to an urgent futurism, passing through various supports and segments of metalanguage and transmedia research.

LYZZA (b. 1999, Brazil) is a producer and vocalist who has always been keen on mocking boundaries. Carving a space for herself in Electronic Music since her 2017 EP 'Powerplay,' LYZZA has since traversed the sonic world showing her artistic potency, with multiple collaborations ranging from Showstudio and Mugler to producing for billboard-nominated songstress Eme1 Mathlouthi. In recent years, LYZZA has been widely hailed as one of electronic music's most promising young avant-pop producers.

Jota Mombaça (b. 1991, Brazil) is an interdisciplinary artist whose work unfolds in a variety of mediums. The sonic and visual matter of words plays an important role in her practice, which often relates to anti-colonial critique and gender disobedience. Her work has been presented in several institutional frameworks, such as the 32nd and 34th São Paulo Biennale (2016 and 2020/2021), the 22nd Sydney Biennale (2020), the 10th Berlin Biennale (2018), and the 46th Salon Nacional de Artistas in Colombia (2019). Currently, she has been interested in researching elemental forms of sensing, anti-colonial imagination, and the relation between opacity and self-preservation in the experience of racialized trans-artists in the Global Art World.

Ventura Profana (b.1993, Brazil) is a missionary pastor, singer, writer, composer and visual artist. Her practice is rooted in the research of the implications and methodologies of evangelization in Brazil and beyond, through the spread of neo-Pentecostal churches.

Project influences include Saidiya Hartman's 'critical fabulation' and Paulo Freire's 'radical pedagogy', which encourage praxis, the process of taking action, as a liberating tool.

⟶

For more information, please contact:
Nicolas Smirnoff, Head of Media Relations, nicolass@serpentinegalleries.org

Follow

Instagram	@Serpentineuk
Twitter	@Serpentineuk
Facebook	@SerpentineGalleries