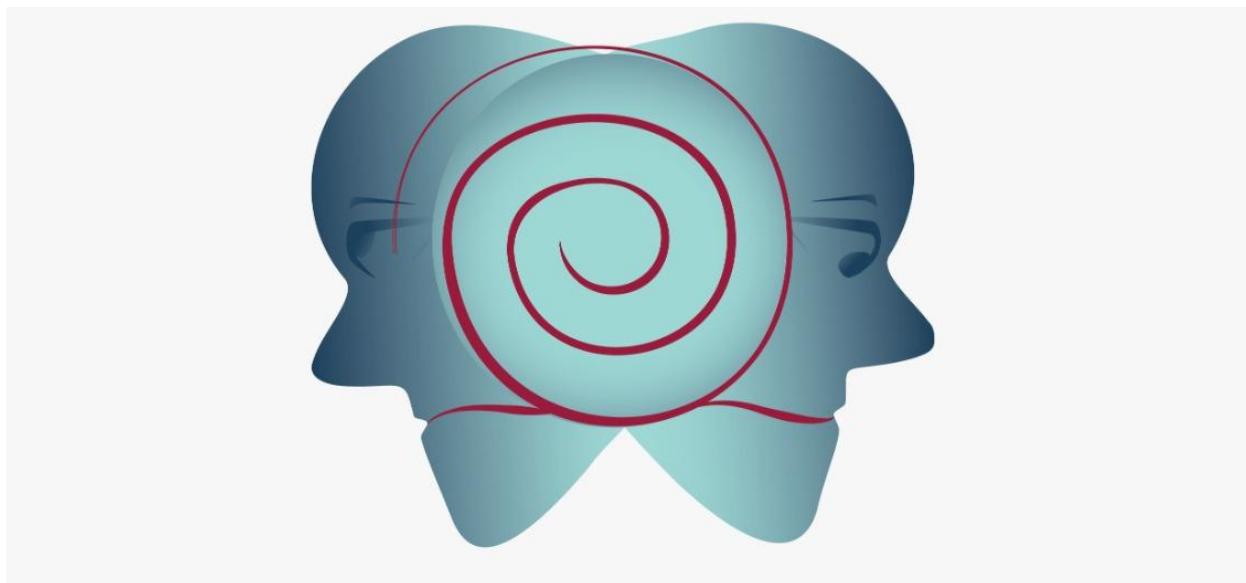


*you are but what am i*

Fall 2023 New Media Arts Capstone Exhibition Opens December 11, 2023 at New Media Artspace, Baruch College, CUNY



**NEW YORK, NY - December 11, 2023 -** [The New Media Artspace](#) at Baruch College presents *you are but what am i*, a group exhibition led by the Fall 2023 Capstone class of the New Media Arts undergraduate minor. The exhibit will run from December 11, 2023 to February 1, 2024 online at [newmediartspace.info](http://newmediartspace.info) and in the New Media Artspace located in the library of Baruch College.

The exhibition is comprised of original works created and curated by New Media Arts students Abiha Amir, Allison Lai, Amanda Martinez, Amely Gonell, Anika Rios, Eric Ip, Francis Alicka, Ismael Hernandez, Jack Vazquez-Perez, Jessica Lian, Jesus Pinto, Joel Bautista, Josie Romano, Julie Li, Julio Ramirez, Kevin Wang, Matthew Han, Molonie Rishilakram, and Xinyao Li.

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*you are but what am i* explores the intricate tapestry of human experience through the themes of self-discovery, surreal exploration, and acceptance of imperfections. It delves into the raw, tactile essence of being alive—offering a profound journey through the diverse perspectives of the featured artists.

The artists explore existential topics of both internalized and externalized discontent, a search for connection and belonging and a desire to strike a balance in the overly saturated technosphere. While the works tend to be meditative, and intuitive, they carry an anxiety of needing to digest the chaos and uncanny biome of the modern world. The exhibit draws on the observer to call themselves into the conversation of how these subjective experiences affect our social gardens. By touching on childhood wonders and color, dreamscapes of *surreal*, the embodiment of *lost*, reflection and peace in *accepting*, and an open-ended resolution pointing back toward the audience to confirm the arts and artists' existence in *i am alive i swear*.

The exhibit is kitschy, it's serious, it's fun, and the works are all unified in their introspective tone. Through the use of video, audio, animation, collage, game design, illustration and performance *you are but what am i* begs the question are you: lonely? lost? anxious? in touch? connected? searching?

I know *you are but what am i?*

The exhibition's first collection, *Lost*, delves into the exploration of one's identity amidst conflict, internal struggles, and obstacles. It reflects the experience of losing oneself not only mentally but also physically—immersing in the depths of personal thoughts and navigating the complexities of the world. Abiha Amir's *Unveiling Realities: A Cinematic Exploration of Life* challenges common perceptions and portrays the raw, unfiltered truths that define the human experience through illustrating the dual lives people lead. Anika Rios' *What I Am Desperately Ashamed Of* discusses the behavioral effects of human isolation and sheds light on the discomfort often associated with it. Eric Ip's *Something to Forget* highlights the negativity prevalent in the lives of people within his generation. Jesus Pinto's *TRPPD/BRKNG-FREE* explores the consequences of prioritizing wealth and materialism over the richness of life's experiences. Kevin Wang's *Weekend Blues* illuminates the hidden emotions and pressures behind procrastinatory behavior. Matthew Han's *The Absence of Communication* questions whether a system void of communication and social connection is truly humane, prompting us to reflect upon our own existence within societies current social and technological structures.

The second collection, *Accepting*, evolves confusion into self affirmation. It rewrites the terms of acceptance for specific aspects of ourselves, provides solace in contradictions of personality, as well as embracing past mistakes and the nothingness of life. It invites the artist and viewers to express feelings wholly and authentically. Allison Lai's *Lingering Light* utilizes footage shot within a video game to convey the story of two characters in their struggle for closure. Amanda Martinez's *gemininity* embarks on a transformative journey to humanize Geminis and to challenge the stereotypes that have long clouded the zodiac sign in misunderstanding. Francis Alicka's *The Bench* provides insight into the kinds of conversations and questions you would not

normally hear between guys through his own conversation between himself and a friend. Joel Bautista's *MAN* takes native Bolivian mythology and connects it to his experience of growing up in New York. Molonie Rishilakram's *6096868* explores the state of mind at the end of a human connection with the use of the visual sensory. Xinyao Li's *Perfection is an Illusion* is a humorous critique of modern media communication on individual life and self-cognition, how it can lead to anxiety and self-doubt.

The third collection, *Surrealism*, dreams up and combines all the uncanny aspects of the universe. From mythology to the future of AI, everything is not solely based in reality and these works explore the playful spaces in between. Amely Gonell's *Journey* shows the process of being moved by the mind and how it processes concepts through various forms of symbolism and space-time. Jessica Lian's *Futur Mechs* challenges AI art generators with her own pieces mimicking that of the AI style, revealing humans as a key source of input for future machines. Julie Li's *Colors* embarks on an exploration into the manifold repercussions of rapid and capricious trends on our quotidian decision-making processes. Julio Ramirez's *La Leyenda del Chupacabra* is a mockumentary where a group of journalists travel to Puerto Rico in search of the mysterious creature "El Chupacabra."

The final collection, *i am alive i swear*, declares one's place in the world, embodying the acts of touching, being, breathing and feeling. It seeks a connection to the mental and physical planes through collection, reflection, and introspection. Ismael Hernandez's *R3AL* emphasizes the idea of enjoying the present, not just living it but to fully attend to each molecule of the moment. Jack Vazquez-Perez's *Inner Discourse* delves into the phenomenon of self-dialogue with a quest to unearth a profound understanding of one's existence and purpose, but in doing so reveals a perpetual state of uncertainty. Josie Romano's *108* is a cumulative collage rooted around the number 108 exploring the innate connection between all things and moments where we are particularly mindful.

*you are but what am i* is created and curated by Baruch's New Media Arts Capstone Class of Fall 2023; with the supervision of Dominika Ksel, Adjunct Assistant Professor in the Department of Fine and Performing Arts in the Weissman School of Arts and Sciences at Baruch College. The exhibition is made possible by support from the Baruch Computing and Technology Center (BCTC), the Weissman School of Arts and Sciences, and the Newman Library. All images appear courtesy of the artists.

**Gallery Location:** New Media Artspace at Baruch College, Library and Information Building, 151 E. 25th Street, New York, NY 10010

**Gallery Hours:** The New Media Artspace is open to the CUNY community during regular library hours. The New Media Artspace is a teaching exhibition space in the Department of Fine and Performing Arts at Baruch College, CUNY. Housed in the Newman Library, the New Media Artspace showcases curated experimental media and interdisciplinary artworks by international artists, students, alumni, and faculty.

**About Baruch College:** Baruch College is a senior college in the City University of New York (CUNY) with a total enrollment of more than 17,000 students, who represent 160 countries and speak more than 100 languages. Ranked among the top 15% of U.S. colleges and the No. 4 public regional university, Baruch College is regularly recognized as among the most ethnically diverse colleges in the country. As a public institution with a tradition of academic excellence, Baruch College offers accessibility and opportunity for students from every corner of New York City and from around the world. For more about Baruch College, go to <https://www.baruch.cuny.edu/>