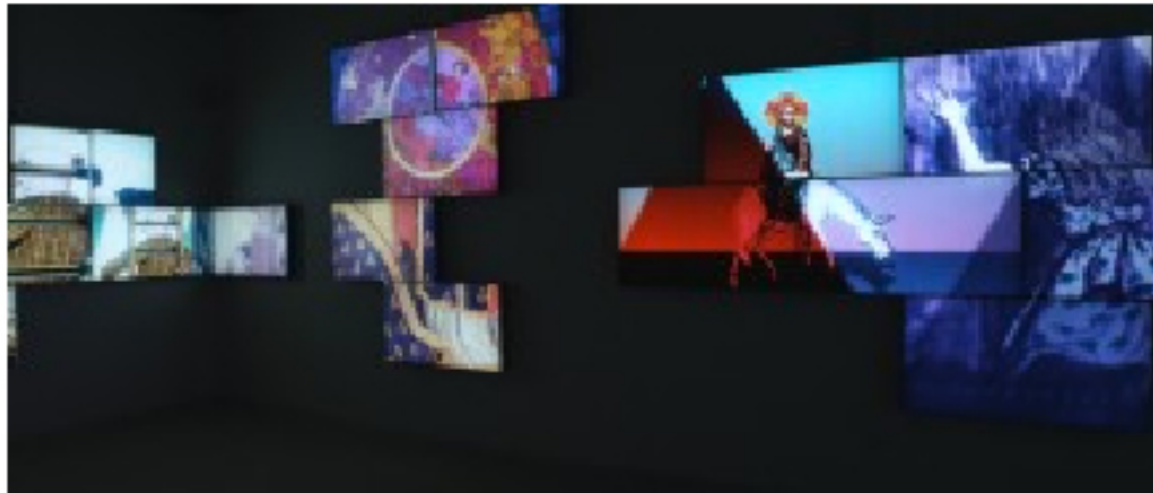


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Mixed Media Artist Yorgo Alexopoulos on His Latest Solo Installation

It's about exploring the curious species that is the human being.

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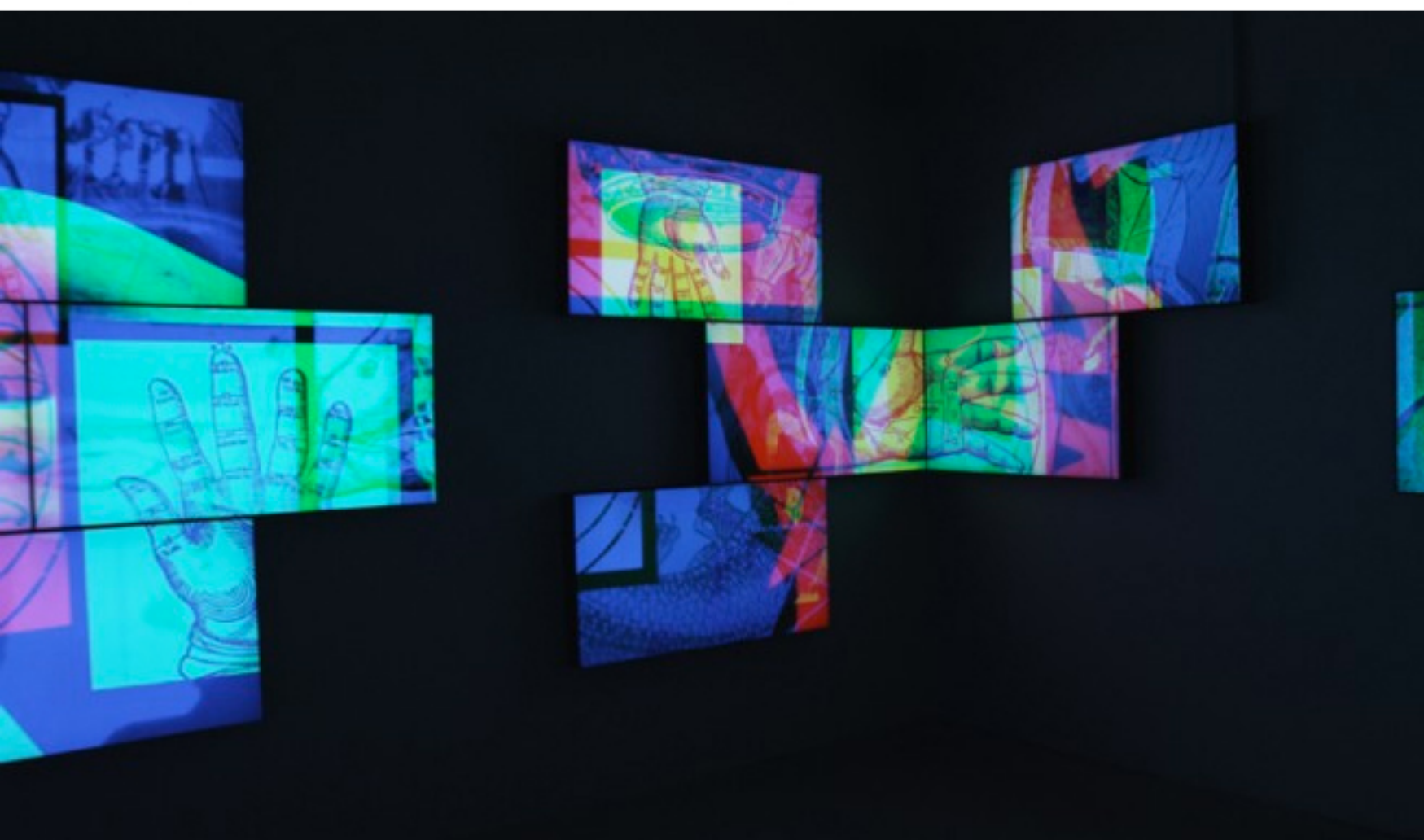
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March 14th, 2012

by CECILIA BUSICK

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New York-based artist Yorgo Alexopoulos refuses to stick to one medium. His goal is to transcend themes of nature, folklore, and spirituality, and he does so using a variety of methods. A graduate of the School of the Art Institute of Chicago, Alexopoulos first worked as a visual effects supervisor for highly acclaimed documentaries (*The Kid Stays in the Picture*). His experience with animation software is a common thread through his work, as he often uses the technology to fuse painting, photography, film, and sculpture into digital media. Adding to his compelling body of work is *Transmigrations*, on display now at the [Cristin Tierney](#) gallery in New York. The twenty-four panel digital animation is a testament to the extraordinary amount of momentum Alexopoulos has gained in inspiring his viewers to reflect upon the power of raw, natural beauty.

BULLETT: Could you tell us about the initial inspiration behind *Transmigrations*?

Alexopoulos: This piece is the third installment of a larger body of work that I've been working on since 2007. In 2007, I exhibited a piece called *The Infinite Sphere* in Los Angeles. It was a five channel video installation that explored themes dealing with grand scale cosmology juxtaposed with quantum physics. Following that, I worked on the second installment of the project called *No Feeling Is Final* which was a project that I did for the [Torrance Art Museum](#) in Los Angeles. In that project, I produced a video installation that went through five different chapters, exploring different landscape symbols. Like mountain, tree, desert, ocean – and all of these landscape symbols are sort of rooted in our religion and folklore. That piece took the similar themes that I was using in the previous piece and brought them more down to Earth – dealing with the terrestrial. It was an exploration of landscape symbolism.

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Are there any more specific themes that the current installment deals with?

The larger body of work explores what has come out of the personification of nature. It primarily deals with magic, religion, things that grapple with the various symbolisms of religion and folklore, myth, superstition, and astrology. All of the ways that we personify nature ultimately turned into ways that we are trying to interpret things that are bigger than ourselves. Early man through evolution personified nature because he didn't truly understand what he was looking at. So we created stories out of our experiences, trying to survive within the context of nature.

Why did you choose to work with digital media?

Over the course of the last twenty years I've worked in a variety of media, from painting to photography to film, as well as digital media along the way. I'm first and most interested in creating something that's visually compelling, to draw the viewer in. Once the viewer gets in front of a work, they can then start peeling back all the various layers within it. I'm also using digital media as a way of creating formal nuances within an environment that I can play with. Not just the positioning of the objects but also using light, sound, and creating an immersive environment for a viewer to have an introspective experience with the work. I like to think of the video installations as light pieces. The light in the room changes and it creates a mood and an atmosphere that you don't get from just a photograph or a painting. So the use of digital media is just like a natural vehicle for me to use to explore juxtaposing a variety of media into one new way of experiencing art.

Was it your goal to get the audience think about how humans incorporate science, evolution, and religion?

It's not necessarily about religion. It's about how we as human beings are constantly trying to interpret things: What happens after we die, what happens before we are here, you know, we're a curious species. We're constantly grappling with these ideas. And religion is just one of the many ways that we've interpreted nature and our existence. Ultimately, all of the work that I'm doing has a lot to do with how we collectively share this common thread with one another. I'm interested in how a symbol has various meanings for different people, but ultimately the motivation for interpreting the symbol is to figure out or to know more about something bigger than the individual.



What did you think of Terrence Malick's *Tree of Life*?

I'm a big fan of his work in general and a big fan of that type of filmmaking. So I loved it, it was a very inspiring film.

What's next?

I'm basically carrying on with what I'm doing. I've been focused on *Transmigrations*, which has been a very ambitious, large-scale work. There's a lot of smaller works that I'm creating at the moment that incorporate similar themes and augment the larger piece. But I'm in pre-production for another ambitious installation.



Transmigrations will be on display through March 31 at Cristin Tierney, 546 West 29th Street, New York, NY.