



PRESS RELEASE

Date: Monday 30 August 2021

John Powell-Jones: CYBERJUNK

17 October – 19 December 2021

Public Preview: 6pm-8pm, Thursday 14 October

Slow-Saturday Preview: Saturday 16 October 2021



John Powell-Jones, *Quantum Loop* (Video still), 2020

CYBERJUNK takes place on the planet Durt 1,000 years after the Quantum Crash: a botched experiment that saw the first humanoid quantum teleportation result in a disaster of apocalyptic scale.

This post-crash present is populated by Borgs: evolved residue of the humanoid teleporter, now known as Awl-The Original Walker. The Borgs inhabit a walled enclosure, the only liveable area left on Durt. They were brought here by Droer - The Carrier of the Maggot, the only entity who can survive outside the walls. Droer then left their settlement in order to protect the Borgs from any outside threat, long before first consciousness. This history is remembered by monument and artefact, the story of Awl and Droer passed from one Borg to the other, carrying out their daily duties making sure everything is as it should be, awaiting Droer's return.

John Powell-Jones' first major solo exhibition *CYBERJUNK* includes: 3D and 2D animation, life-size characters, a comic book, ceramics and tufted wall hangings. His work is informed by the ways in

which dominant ideologies and power structures influence our perceptions of reality. In particular, how the warped western view of progress and success affects our understanding of morality. These ideas are explored through the use of speculative fiction, taking inspiration from European folklore, body horror, survival horror and science fiction. Powell-Jones aims to form a dialogue with our present and an imagined dystopian future in which the horrors of capitalism and neoliberal ideology are present as cyborgs, demons and maggots.

A B-movie aesthetic runs through the work with bright blues, fleshy pinks and slime greens. Powell-Jones puts his self-taught skills to work in a variety of mediums. Characters from the *CYBERJUNK* story recur in comic illustrations, ceramic figures, life-size models and textile pieces throughout an exhibition which takes on the form of a museum of sorts; transporting audiences to the *CYBERJUNK* universe as spectral observers of a looped timeline spanning a thousand years. In places, Powell-Jones makes good use of inexpensive materials such as cardboard, tape and recycled wood, as well as open-source software; embracing a DIY ethos and a culture of openness that runs contrary to the toxic neoliberal ideology that places the gains of a small human elite and technological progress above the health and wellbeing of the Earth and the rest of its inhabitants.

Characters from *CYBERJUNK* also recently appeared in *Technotrash: The Fellowship of Technoid* (2020) a performance for the Holden Gallery, Manchester and *Quantum Loop* (2020) a video series exhibited as part of *This Is A Not Me*, IMT gallery, London.

Castlefield Gallery is partnering with IMT Gallery, London to deliver this exhibition in two parts across both venues. *CYBERJUNK: QUANTUM CRASH* will be on show at IMT Gallery London, 8 October – 12 December 2021, Preview: 7pm - 10pm, Thursday 7 October 2021. imagemusictext.com

Ends//

For further information, images or to arrange interviews, please contact: Jennifer Dean, Communications and Audience Development Coordinator at Castlefield Gallery, on jennifer@castlefieldgallery.co.uk / 07766046672

Notes to editors:

John Powell-Jones (b. 1984, Teesside) lives and works in Todmorden, West Yorkshire. His practice deals with themes of perception, power structures and personal reality in an ongoing study into how the warped western view on progress and success acts to inform our perception of morality. These ideas are explored through the use of speculative fiction played out through video, performance and installation, interweaving costume, dance and ritual, taking inspiration from European folklore, body horror and science fiction. His aim is to form a dialogue with our present and an imagined dystopian future in which the horror of capitalism and neoliberal ideology are presented as cyborgs and demons.

Castlefield Gallery has supported and followed Powell-Jones' work over several years. He has taken part in several exhibitions and projects including: *Other Transmissions* presented at the Whitworth, (2020); *Other Transmissions* presented at TATE Liverpool (2019); *Conversations Series II* (2018/19); *Spilling Out* with Venture Arts and Castlefield Gallery, *The Manchester Contemporary* (2018); our 2018 Artists' International Delegation to Budapest, a partnership between Castlefield Gallery and a-n; and SUBI, Castlefield Gallery (2018).

Other recent group exhibitions include: *It's A Not Me*, IMT Gallery, London/The Internet (2020); *Technotrash: The Fellowship of Technoid*, Holden Gallery, Manchester (2020); *Here and How?*, Motion Sickness Project Space, Cambridge (2019); *Slime Of UR Life: Work Drinks*, Paradise Works, Salford (2019); *Proforma Pavilion*,

Corte Supernova, Venice (2019); *Work Drinks*, STOCK Gallery, Levenshulme (2019); *INSANIA*, Storm and Drunk Gallery, Madrid (2018).

At **Castlefield Gallery** (Est. 1984), we make new art possible. We are dedicated to the advancement of contemporary visual art. We are artist facing. We work with artists and creatives in Greater Manchester and beyond, at all career stages. We support them to develop their practice and careers, and to find ways not just to make art, but to make a living. We do this through: our gallery, and its free exhibitions and events that are open to all; through tailored career and practice development support; through our 200-strong artist Associates scheme; through the provision of low-cost studio and project space; through commissions and co-commissions; and through collaboration with universities, including annual graduate programmes that provide mentoring, coaching and more. For 35 years, we have supported young and older artists, new graduates right through to established artists, connecting them to each other, and to our international network of curators, arts organisations, artists and collectors. Castlefield Gallery's international work is focused on exchange between artists in the North West of England, and the rest of the world. We have an established track record in public art commissioning and public realm animation and activation. We are a female led organisation and a registered charity. Castlefield Gallery is an Arts Council England National Portfolio Organisation and Manchester City Council Cultural Partner. Our Artist Patron is the celebrated Ryan Gander, OBE.

Castlefield Gallery, 2 Hewitt Street, Manchester, M15 4GB

Admission is FREE

Visiting information including our covid-safe measures can be found [HERE](#)

castlefieldgallery.co.uk

info@castlefieldgallery.co.uk

Opening Times: Wed to Sun, 12noon – 5.30pm

The gallery is fully wheelchair accessible, including provision of an accessible bathroom.

Special thanks to Castlefield Gallery Commissioning Patrons Allan & Jo Melzack.

Exhibition partners:



Castlefield Gallery funders and supporters:



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