

Paul Ward, Still from *LUCK IS ALIVE*.



# locustprojects

## *Portals of Introspection*

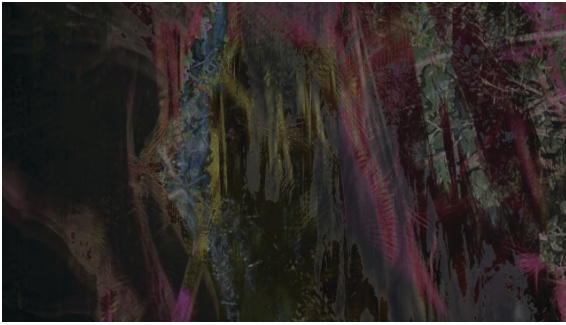
Locust Projects presents *Portals of Introspection*, the seventh in a series of guest-curated video exhibitions in Locust Projects' Screening Room which launched in fall 2019. The exhibition features a selection of video works curated by Donnamarie Baptiste featuring Dmitry Saïd Chamy, Mikey Please, Duke Riley, and Paul Ward.

*"Often used to refer to internal self-awareness, or looking inward, the word 'introspection' evokes varying thoughts and feelings among individuals depending on their experiences and emotions. The selected films reveal different journeys of introspection used to accomplish a desired outcome."*

*"When one is truly passionate, what seems complicated can become simple, and the mundane can become extraordinary. Highlighting connections between humans and our environment, artistic desire and how we navigate through life each day, this collection of films delves deeply to understand our engagement and place in the world."*

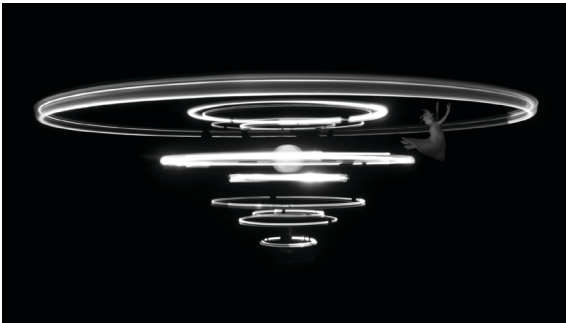
— Guest curator, Donnamarie Baptiste

## ABOUT THE VIDEOS

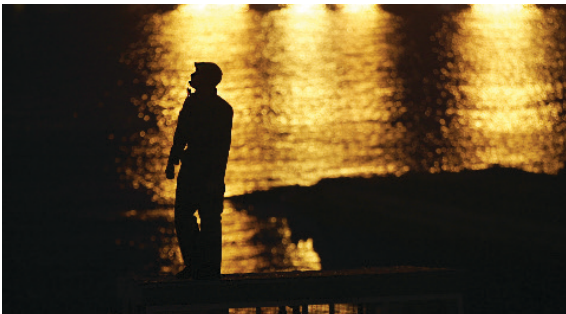


well-manicured garden. They are all threatened by developers, each week older homes are torn down, their lots razed for zero-lot line cubic homes with Astro Turf lawns and Home Depot trees. I visit a tree. I pause and extend my arms like a human selfie stick. I take a photo or video of my limb casting its shadow on the limbs of my verdant friend.”

**Dimitry Saïd Chamy** | *Portals (of the Night Garden)*, 2022 is a Meltiverse video project exploring the threshold between physical and virtual realities. “I fell in love with the tropical canopy while on my daily walks in Miami. As summer temperatures rose, my routine shifted toward dusk and evening hours. In that liminal space when my eyes begin to fail, my memory returns to my native Haïti. I see trees with limbs fragrant with flowers or fruit in the jungle of my childhood fifty years ago. Under the protective canopy, these streets verge toward wildness—the smaller shrubs and plants seem to resist the allure of a

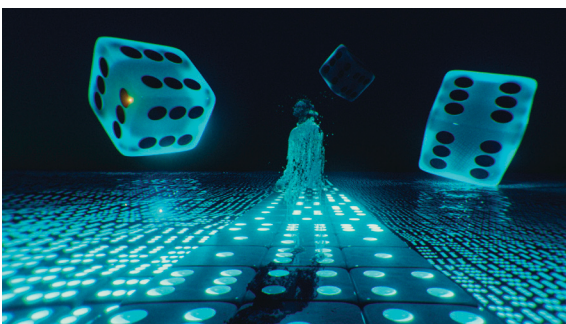


**Mikey Please** | *Marilyn Myller*, 2013 is a stop-motion short, which features the voice of comedy wiz Josie Long, one zillion hand carved tiny things, literally tens of carved foam puppets, two eyefulls of in-camera, long-exposure light trickery and a pair of tiny dolphins, smooching. Marilyn is trying really hard to make something that is good. For once her expectations and reality are going to align, perfectly. No, it will be even better than she imagined. It will be epic. It will be tear-jerkingly profound. It will be perfecter than perfect. Nothing can go wrong.



**Duke Riley** | *FLY BY NIGHT*, 2016 is the story of thousands of pigeons and the man who made them stars. *FLY BY NIGHT* follows artist Duke Riley as he embarks on his biggest project to date— training thousands of pigeons outfitted with tiny LEDs to twirl, swoop, and glide over the East River at dusk from a decommissioned naval vessel in the Brooklyn Navy Yard. *FLY BY NIGHT* paid homage to pigeon keeping, in New York and farther afield. Pigeons have been domesticated for thousands of years and kept by people around the world for their companionship, sport, and service. Commissioned by the public arts

nonprofit Creative Time, the visually mesmerizing project received acclaim from the art world and the thousands of New Yorkers who witnessed the performances during the spring of 2016. The Village Voice awarded Riley a lifetime achievement award for “elevating the prestige of pigeons in the public consciousness.” This piece follows Riley’s process from conception to final performance, and ultimately like the project itself, examines urban humanity’s relationship to the natural world.



**Paul Ward** | *LUCK IS ALIVE*, 2022 tells the story of an African surfer who is a believer in Animism, a sensibility prevalent among surfers throughout Africa. Animism is based on the idea that everything is sentient: that inanimate objects, plants, animals or even entities such as the ocean have a spirit or a soul, often in the sense of having ‘personhood’. The film demonstrates an animistic sensibility through the concept of luck. The line, ‘Luck is Alive’, encapsulates this way of relating to the world: a sense of the aliveness of chance, and by believing in luck and that luck is alive, luck can lead you to be lucky. It is through his belief in luck

that our protagonist is led to the water, and where he finds ultimate freedom. The film features Damme Samb, a surfer from Dakar, Senegal (a predominantly Muslim country on the west coast of Africa).

## ABOUT THE ARTISTS

**Dimitry Saïd Chamy** is a transdisciplinary artist, designer, and educator. Working from a queer, mixed Haïtian-Lebanese immigrant perspective, he explores speculative futures, generative systems, and symbolic world-building through co-creation and participatory storytelling. Chamy has exhibited work from Miami to Beijing, including Fashion Week at Lincoln Center, New York, and the Yerba Buena Center for the Arts, San Francisco. He has worked on projects at multiple scales in diverse sectors, including art, education, fashion, technology, and the nonprofit world. Born and raised in Port-au-Prince before immigrating to the United States, Chamy has taught at six universities and served as an Erasmus+ Scholar and Honorary Chair at the Art Academy in Latvia. He is an Ellies Creator Award recipient from Oolite Arts and holds an MFA in Graphic Design from Yale University. Chamy is a Research Associate Professor, Resident Artist and founding faculty at the Ratcliffe Art + Design Incubator at Florida International University in Miami, where he bases his studio.

**Mikey Please** (born 1984) is a BAFTA-winning and Academy Award nominated writer, director, animator, and illustrator. An alumnus of the Royal College of Art (MA Animation) his music videos and short films have garnered over 50 international awards including a BAFTA for his short film *The Eagleman Stag*.

**Duke Riley** received his BFA from Rhode Island School of Design and his MFA from Pratt Institute. Riley is fascinated by maritime history and events around urban waterways. His signature style interweaves historical and contemporary events with elements of fiction and myth to create allegorical histories. His re-imagined narratives comment on a range of issues from the cultural impact of over development and environmental destruction of waterfront communities to contradictions within political ideologies and the role of the artist in society.

**Paul Ward** first made a name for himself as a documentary photographer, capturing niche sub-cultures within the South African youth landscape. Having proven an ability to seamlessly adapt his documentary aesthetic to commercials, Paul has been working internationally, shooting all over the globe for high profile clients who seek his real-world representation of youth culture. Paul has collaborated with brands such as Adidas, Puma, Karcher, Originals, G-Star, Nike, Ray-Ban, Sony, Vice & Hyundai.

## ABOUT THE GUEST CURATOR

**Donnamarie Baptiste** is an arts and culture professional with a strong background in project management and contemporary art. Her 17+ years of experience include art fair operations, community engagement, exhibition and event production, marketing, sponsorship, fundraising, and programming. She has held positions with and worked for major organizations and brands including Art Basel in Miami Beach, The Armory Show, Photo Miami, Creative Time, Lexus, Magic Leap, and Remy Cointreau. Baptiste is currently working between arts organizations, brands, artists, designers, tech companies, and city officials to deliver high profile creative projects, and a Senior Associate with AEA Consulting.



## ABOUT LOCUST PROJECTS

Founded by artists for artists in 1998, Locust Projects is Miami's longest running nonprofit alternative art space. We produce, present, and nurture ambitious and experimental new art and the exchange of ideas through commissioned exhibitions and projects, artist residencies, summer art intensives for teens, and public programs on contemporary art and curatorial practice. As a leading incubator of new art and ideas, Locust Projects emphasizes boundary-pushing creative endeavors, risk-taking and experimentation by local, national and international artists. We invest in South Florida's arts community by providing artists with project grants and empower creative careers by supporting the administrative work of being an artist through an onsite artist resource hub and access to pro bono legal services.



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# ART HAPPENS HERE.

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