



## How Do I Bring Attention to My Work?

*“How to Change” is a limited series for “Southland Sessions” exploring the most critical issues facing Southern California culture makers in this pivotal historical moment. Each column will explore a question posed to a range of artists and culture workers, and include recommendations to address these concerns from a practical, action-oriented perspective.*

### Changing Platforms?

For the third installment of “How to Change,” I asked, “How can artists bring attention to their work when the usual outlets like galleries and art fairs are inaccessible?”

Coronavirus has forced art galleries and museums to close. Art fairs are cancelled well into 2021. Deprived of venues to present their work, artists continue to create and to plan. Some are making their own platforms for art while the usual outlets are offline or hosting reduced programs. I asked Los Angeles artists and culture workers how they are getting their work and others’ out into the world while we’re all still mostly staying at home.

**Peter Wu+** is the founder of **EPOCH**, a virtual art gallery hosting its fourth group exhibition since the start of quarantine. Unlike most online exhibitions that comprise mostly still images, EPOCH’s exhibitions have taken place in unique, fully modeled environments with atmospheric effects including daylight, water, trees and wind. Artworks have didactic labels that pop up when clicked, providing all the information one would have access to in a museum.

The gallery’s latest exhibition, **Labyrinth**, on view until Oct. 23, presents seven artists in a virtual, navigable art gallery that has been designed by artist **Amir Nikravan** based on a sixth-century CE Persian architectural glyph. Featuring works by **Dorit Cypis**, **Lito Kattou**, **Jibade-Khalil Huffman**, **Danielle Dean**, **Christian Ramirez** and **Paul Rosero Contreras**, **Labyrinth** considers space and its absence — a chronic tension in our virtual atmosphere. Volume and flatness become metaphors for expansion and contraction, in politics as well as in our living ecological and biological systems.

## NATHALIE KARG



Installation view of EPOCH's Labyrinth exhibition. | Courtesy of EPOCH

Says Wu+, “When the quarantine started, we witnessed the galleries’ and institutions’ paralysis in adapting to an online world.” Wu+, a multimedia artist and COLA awardee, typically works as an exhibition installer for venues including Vincent Price Art Museum and 18th Street Arts Center, which have been closed since the spring. He explains how “EPOCH began organically from an accumulation of transformations within my own practice and from experiences gained from my many different roles within art institutions. From this perspective, I set out to create something that challenged the status quo while providing artists with a critical platform for people to engage their works virtually.”

For Wu+, EPOCH is not only a critical forum but a political one. “The Black Lives Matter movement unlocked some deep personal trauma in dealing with systemic and intergenerational racism, and I felt future exhibitions had to reflect this

sentiment,” he says. The previous exhibition, Fallen Monuments, addressed racist art history and racial profiling. Labyrinth contains references to police brutality, gun violence and internet incitement from incisive video artist Huffman, as well as soothing, generative words in an audio piece from artist and conflict mediator Dorit Cypis. Christian Ramirez’s painting “Bounty” (2019) shows a pile of severed hands in a barren golden landscape, a reference to the brutality with which the expansion of the United States was achieved. Danielle Dean’s 3D virtual installation, “Their Bed” (2020) addresses the gig economy from the perspective of the house-bound Amazon Mechanical Turk worker, whose condition of immersion in 24/7 labor without boundaries prefigures our larger social condition under quarantine. Meeting the present is part of the mandate: “EPOCH seeks to advance the momentum of this cultural moment and support BIPOC and LGBTQIA+ artists.” We can expect more socially engaged, provocative and anti-racist exhibitions in this space going forward.