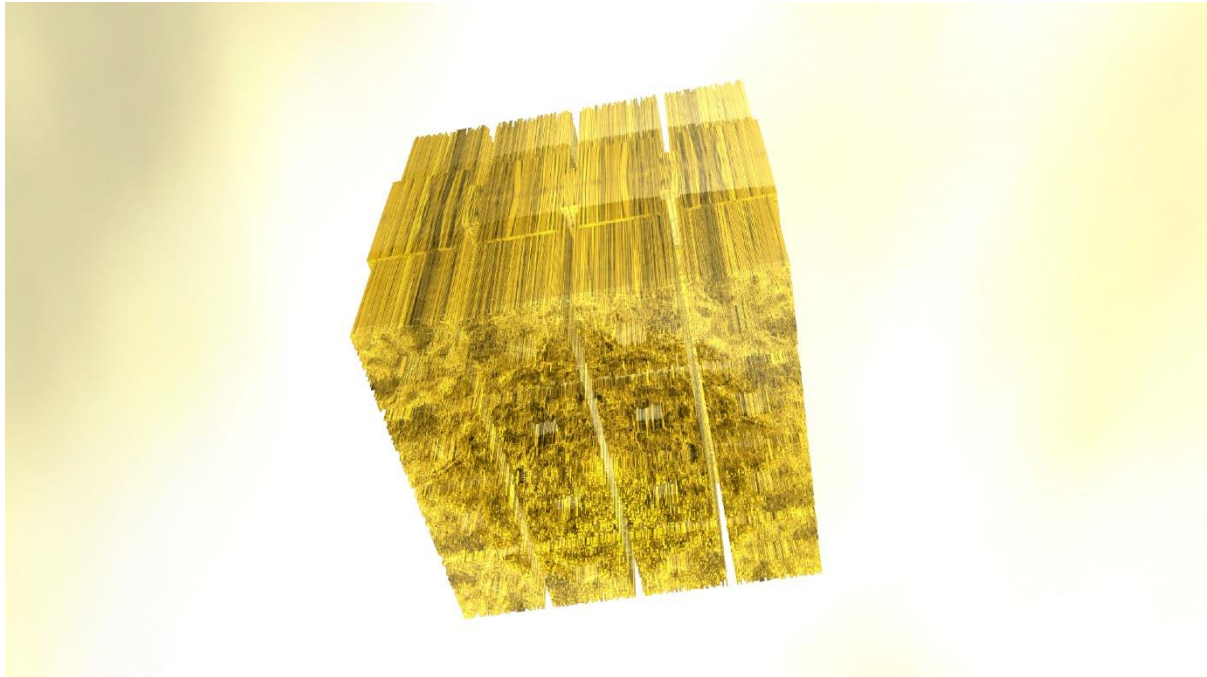


Join us for the opening reception of Synthesis Gallery's latest exhibition:

# A New Jerusalem

Michael Takeo Magruder

September 11 – 15<sup>th</sup>, 2019



**Synthesis Gallery, the first VR Art gallery, is pleased to announce its opening exhibition season and the Berlin premiere of *A New Jerusalem* by Michael Takeo Magruder.**

The narrative of the Book of Revelation is not just one of apocalyptic destruction; it is also a journey of salvation and unveiling. The Book's positive culmination is expressed in the creation of a heavenly city – referred to as New Jerusalem – that arises from the remains of the old world.

*A New Jerusalem* is an immersive virtual reality installation that seeks to embody the spirit of this prophesied city. The artwork manifests as a beautiful and illuminated metropolis that is based upon Revelation's architectural descriptions and can be experienced through two distinct perspectives as witnessed and related by the Book's narrator, John the Seer.

Unlike other pictorial visualisations of this biblical prophecy that have been created throughout history, the underlying structure of *A New Jerusalem* is generated solely from the text of Revelation itself that has been translated into a data code form and rendered in four-dimensional virtual space (XYZ plus time). However, the imagined cityscape is also constructed using current Google Maps data of present day Jerusalem, thus offering the possibility that – in the words of theologian Professor Edward Adams – "the new creation is not a wholly unrecognisable place, even if the new Jerusalem is like no city the world has ever seen". Within this context, the artwork asks viewers to contemplate why we should care about our present society and environment if promises of "a new heaven and a new earth" (Rev 21.1) await us.

**MICHAEL TAKEO MAGRUDER** (b.1974, US/UK, [www.takeo.org](http://www.takeo.org)) is a visual artist and researcher who works with new media including real-time data, digital archives, immersive environments, mobile devices and virtual worlds. His practice explores concepts ranging from media criticism and aesthetic journalism to digital formalism and computational aesthetics, deploying Information Age technologies and systems to examine our networked, media-rich world. In the last 20 years, Michael's projects have been showcased in over 290 exhibitions in 35 countries, including the British Library, London; Circulo de Bellas Artes, Madrid; the Courtauld Institute of Art, London; EAST International, Norwich; Eastside Projects, Birmingham; FACT, Liverpool; Georges Pompidou Center, Paris; KIBLA Multimedijski Center, Maribor; Museum of London; Nam June Paik Art Center, Seoul; QUAD, Derby; SESI' Cultural Centre, São Paulo; Somerset House, London; Tokyo Metropolitan Museum of Photography; and Trans-Media-Akademie, Hellerau. His art has been funded by the Andy Warhol Foundation for the Visual Arts; Arts Council England; the British Council; the Esmée Fairbairn Foundation; the EU Culture Programme; the Leverhulme Trust; the National Endowment for the Arts, US; and the National Lottery, UK. In 2010, Michael was selected to represent the UK at *Manifesta 8: the European Biennial of Contemporary Art*. He is artist/researcher-in-residence at the British Library, undertaking the *Imaginary Cities* project that creatively examines digital map archives drawn from the Library's *One Million Images from Scanned Books* collection on Flickr Commons. Michael is currently the first ever artist-in-residence at the National Archives (UK) and is exploring the institution's ongoing digital transformation and what constitutes an archive in the 21st century.

**SYNTHESIS GALLERY** is an immersive blend of technology and art displayed under one roof, showcasing cutting-edge experiences by new wave artists and visionaries through virtual reality. Founded in New York in October 2017 by George Vitale, the gallery opened his doors to the public in April 2018 in Berlin. Synthesis' shows have so far been selected to be part of Berlin Art Week and participated in art festivals such as Transmediale/Vorspiel. Pieces are displayed through different media. Tangible and traditional art forms intermingle with Oculus and Vive headsets. Dedicated to exhibiting internationally renowned, well-established artists alongside emerging ones, since its inception, Synthesis has garnered considerable attention in the art scene.

**Opening reception:** September 11th 2019, 6-9pm;

**Private view:** September 11th 2019, 5pm (by invitation only);

**Exhibition dates:** September 11th - September 15th 2019, 1-7pm;

**Press Accreditation:** [email](mailto:info@synthesis.gallery) to register, +49 176 325 10217;

### **Synthesis Gallery**

Kopernikusstrasse, 14 - 10245 Berlin

Join the discussion about the exhibition online at:

**Instagram:** [@synthesis.gallery](https://www.instagram.com/synthesis.gallery)

**Facebook:** [/Synthesis Gallery](https://www.facebook.com/Synthesis-Gallery)

**Website:** [synthesis.gallery](http://synthesis.gallery)