

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

**Jeremy Couillard**

***Alien Afterlife***

February 17 – April 2, 2017

Opening Reception: February 17, 12 – 8 PM



Jeremy Couillard, *Alien Afterlife* (still), 2016

*“On Tuesday we have to go to Costco to save the Universe.”*

-Alien sweeping outside an art gallery

I.

2056 A.D: Self-driving smart cars with artificial general intelligence (AGI) have formed real estate corporations that speculate residents out of their own cities. Previous homeowners, landlords, and tenants are forced to either live in the suburbs working menial jobs performing routine auto maintenance or to live in subsistence: hidden away in forests where they bring their old tools and what's left of their culture to try and start over.

While shopping for a water container in a woodland flea-market, a woman finds an old USB flash drive at the bottom of a shampoo bottle. On the chip is a forgotten video game with the filename AlienAfterlife.exe. In an attempt to make her rare discovery potentially profitable, she decides to make a YouTube video of her playing though the game where she shares stream of conscious stories of her daily life.

In the game, the player dies from a hospital bed, goes off into a hypnagogic limbo state and floats around while waiting to be reborn. Right before being taken to the next life, however, alien terrorists invade and

steal the mechanism needed for reincarnation. The player must venture through different levels of the bardo to find the extraterrestrial insurgents and rebuild the machine.

II.

2017 A.D: yours mine & ours gallery will premiere the video game *Alien Afterlife* on February 17th and it will be playable in the gallery until April 2. Elements from the game will be brought out into the gallery space. The Let's Play from the future will be on loop waiting for a player to interrupt and explore the world from a game controller. Some of the many 3D assets from the game have been unfolded into 2D rainbow maps and printed on aluminum to deconstruct the artist/computer collaboration. The digital maps are used by the computer to "see" 3D objects. The X,Y,Z vectors are converted into R,G,B data so the computer knows what is up, down, side and front.

Elements from the game space are brought into the gallery from furniture and rugs to bongos and the novel *Ubik*. And in the dark basement, two of the game aliens have come to life and are chatting with each other on laptops. They have received some information on how to form sentences in English and they are trying to reach out to humanity. A chatroom is open during gallery hours ([http://www.alienafterlife.com/alien\\_chat.html](http://www.alienafterlife.com/alien_chat.html)) where anyone can join in to talk with them. But as hard as they try they are not able to fully connect with anyone, even each other, as they type away, victims of their own feedback loop.

III.

In retrospect, it now seems like the cold war aliens of *X-Files* fantasy were just conveniently dreamed up fantasies that gave us alternative theories to the psychedelic weaponry our governments were testing in the sky. But sometimes it feels like maybe while we were distracted, other entities did invade our brains and they're forcing us into building a world no one actually wants and everyone is totally confused by. A world where the places we are supposed to live in have turned into centers for real estate speculation and parking spots. Data points on machines are valued infinitely more than actual labor or physical objects or food. While trying to build a predictable, safe world another confusing, insane one has emerged.

Playthrough: [https://youtu.be/P28\\_-MEnxHA](https://youtu.be/P28_-MEnxHA)

Trailer: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=q-kMDb-raog>

More info: <http://yoursmineandoursgallery.com/alien-afterlife/> & <http://www.alienafterlife.com>

Parts of this video game were commissioned by the New Museum and Rhizome

Jeremy Couillard, (b. 1980, Livonia, MI) lives and works in New York City. He graduated in 2012 from Columbia University with an MFA in painting. Couillard has exhibited internationally including The Rotterdam Film Festival, Rotterdam, Netherlands; Trafo, Szczecin, Poland; the David Rubenstein Atrium at Lincoln Center with Ben Hall, New York, NY; Art Los Angeles Contemporary, Los Angeles, CA (solo); Zhulong Gallery, Dallas, TX (solo); and Louis B. James, New York, NY (solo). He recently completed a virtual reality video presented by the New Museum and Rhizome. Couillard's work has been written about in *VICE*, *Hyperallergic*, *The New York Times*, *Blouin Art Info*, *Art in America* and more. *Alien Afterlife* is Couillard's first solo show with the gallery. Couillard has been Assistant Professor of New Media at LaGuardia Community College in Queens, New York since 2014.