



arcade project

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Seeking the Digital at PHOTOFAIRS

The inaugural edition of PHOTOFAIRS New York, a new contemporary art fair dedicated to photo-based works, digital art, and new media, took place on Manhattan's West Side. Directed by Helen Toomer, the founder of Stoneleaf Retreat, and nestled next to the Armory Show in the Javits Center, PHOTOFAIRS offered a more highly inclusive selection of lens-based artwork, from traditional lens and film to ground-breaking technology. Three galleries — Postmasters, bitforms, and Von Lintel Gallery — exhibited works that pushed the boundaries of lens-based media with a focus on the digital.



Installation view of Postmasters Gallery's booth at PHOTOFAIRS New York. Image courtesy of the gallery.

At Postmasters, Damjanski created two apps and a series of digital photographs. The first app, *Napster* (2023), previously exhibited at a pop-up event at a Manhattan mattress store, uses augmented reality to place a 3D model of the sleeping artist wherever the user points the camera. The subjects are removed rather than inserted in *Bye, Bye Camera* (2020). Visitors take selfies with a wall-mounted iPad and watch themselves disappear into the background. The imperfection of the erasure is part of the app's charm. The resulting image resembles how the extraterrestrial hunters in the *Predator* films bent light to cloak themselves from their prey. The remaining visual artifacts suggest the absence of the subject, leaving behind a negative space formerly occupied by the human body.



Damjanski, *Post Human Dog - Einstein*, 2020. Digital print, 15 3/4 x 8 7/8, edition of 3 + 1 AP. Image courtesy of Postmasters Gallery.

The photographs in Damjanski's series *Post Human Dog* were created with the *Bye, Bye Camera* app. These photographs, taken during the height of the COVID-19 pandemic, depict ownerless dogs walking down the street, their leashes suspended mid-air. The comical vision of dogs walking themselves speaks to the dark anxiety felt by pet owners during the COVID lockdowns: "What would happen to my pet if I died from COVID?" Post-human, post-apocalyptic, or post-rapture, these photographs balance humor and dread and evoke memories of the era.



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Roman Kalinowski is the senior editor of Arcade Project and associate director of Arcade Project Curatorial as well as an artist and critic living and working in Brooklyn. Originally from Syracuse, NY, he received his BFA from Syracuse University and an MFA from Pratt Institute. His artwork and other writing can be found on his [website](#).