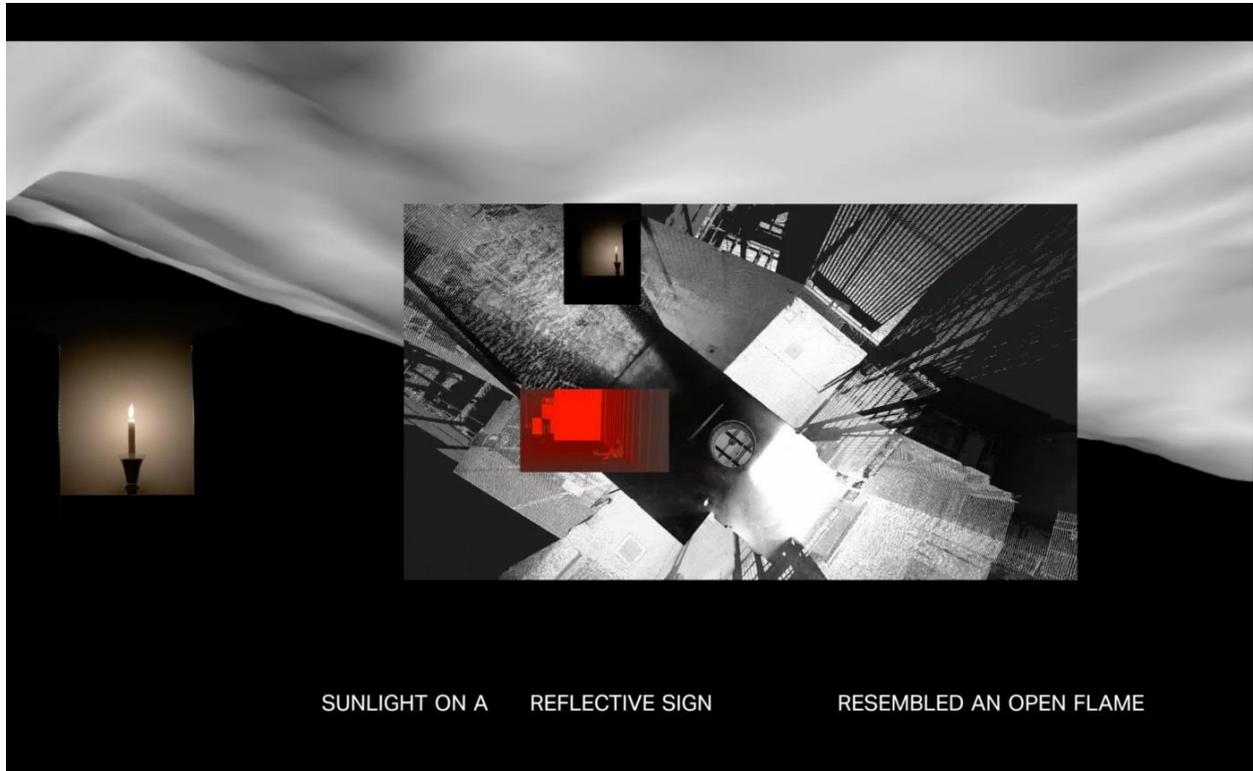


INTERVIEW

Isaac Sullivan

UTOPICS 3: Cosmogony, Apocalypse, Utopia



Isaac Sullivan (b. 1980, US) is a Dubai-based artist whose research interests include artificial intelligence, sound art, and the problematics of space and place. His projects explore spatial and temporal forms of latency through video, installation, and sonic intervention.

In conversation with Verena Voigt, M.A. (Potsdam)
Gesellschaft für zeitgenössische Konzepte e.V. (Kunstvereinsleiterin)
Curator, Member of IKT – International Association of Curators of Contemporary Art

VV: What is Utopics?

IS: *Utopics* is a recursive series of spatial interventions that employ 3D scans; video projections; text; organic materials; satellite photographs; and techniques of audio recording and playback to contemporaneously index and mediate its placement. Each iteration places material traces alongside physical attempts at tracing – while enabling missed traces, and the remainders they engender, to spill into subsequent architectures.

VV: When was Utopics first performed in public?

IS: At 58th Venice Biennale, in the European Cultural Centre's collateral exhibition at Palazzo Mora in May 2019.

VV: In which contexts has it been shown so far?

IS: In addition to appearing in Venice in May 2019, *Utopics* was shown at Alserkal Avenue, Dubai, in August 2019.

VV: How does Utopics relate to your other projects?

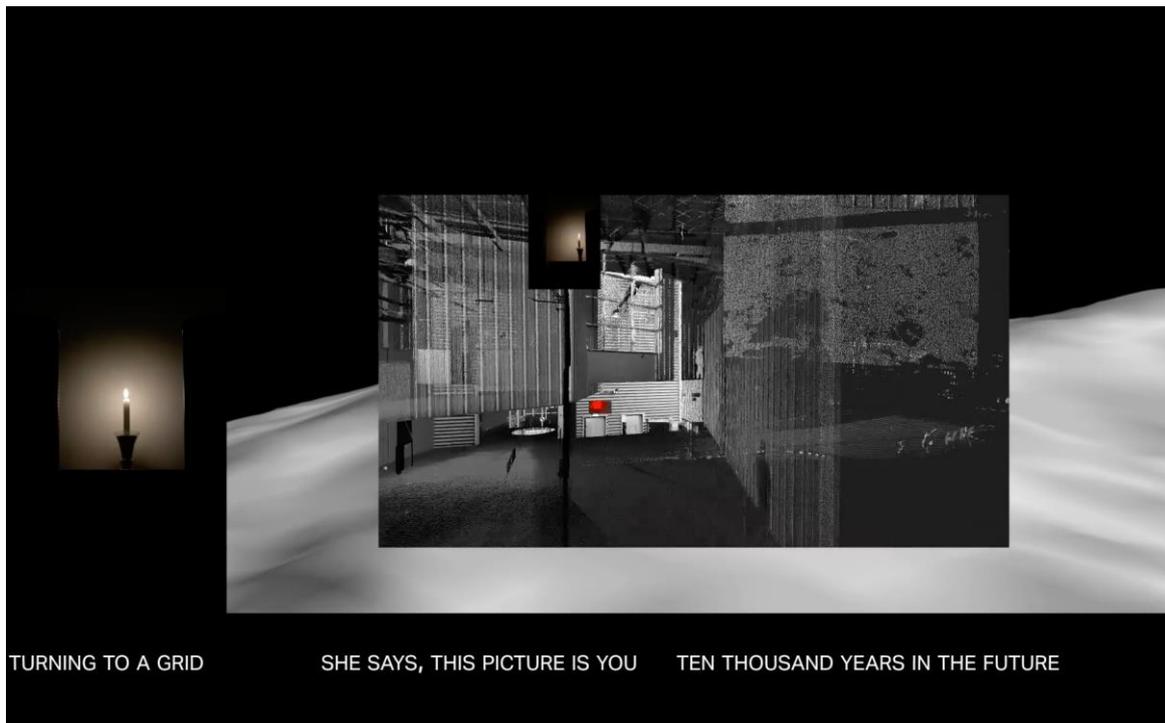
IS: *Utopics*, and two of my other projects, *Hypothetical Spaces* and *Echo Holdings*, employ the formal technique of mise en abyme as a contemplation of material and temporal forms of latency – and as a critical engagement with notions of site-specificity.

VV: What are this project's historical or historiographic references?

IS: What does apocalypse sound like? How do the affective intensities that accompany such speculations converse with other drafts on timelessness such as utopia and cosmogony? *Utopics* includes text projections that address these questions, while at the same time building up layers of sonic decay as the reverberations of its previous architectural interiors accumulate with each iteration. These texts emerge from a fraught consideration of progressive, Hegelian, and linear views of history. In a psychoanalytic sense, they explore the preconscious topos of the human psyche.

VV: How did the Echo Holdings label come about?

IS: An echo is an encounter with the past that requires no memory. *Echo Holdings*, like *Utopics* and *Hypothetical Spaces*, takes up the ecstatic blurring of presence and asynchrony inherent to the contemporary.



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