

Birth of Virtual Character “DOKU”
Created by Multimedia Artist Lu Yang
and Managed by Spiral / Wacoal Art Center



doku2020

Spiral / Wacoal Art Center presents the virtual character DOKU, a new art form by Shanghai based, multimedia artist Lu Yang.

In January 2018, Lu Yang held a solo exhibition at Spiral called “Electromagnetic Brainology,” in which a new video artwork in collaboration with a Japanese idol was released. Lu’s striking visual style and exceptional ability to convey profound messages about the transience and fragility of life, fusing science and spirituality, has both attracted much attention online and brought him international acclaim from the art community.

Lu Yang's new creation, DOKU, floats on the internet with no restriction of time and space. DOKU is a virtual character that looks back and reflects on mind and spirit and reaches closer to a space beyond outer space without being restricted by innate human desire, gender, race, religion, or other attributes. Going forward, DOKU will be used as a medium for its creator, Lu Yang to engage in collaboration with artists, musicians, dancers, poets, scientists, philosophers, and other professionals from different fields, and explore the potential of new creation that goes beyond the framework of contemporary art.

Spiral / Wacoal Art Center will collaborate with Lu Yang in the direction, character management, and various aspects of the operations to develop the presence of DOKU.

Who is DOKU?

The name DOKU comes from the Buddha’s doctrine, “We are born alone, die alone, go alone, and come alone,” and represents that life is solitary in any dimension; real world or virtual space. DOKU is genderless, representing a non-binary worldview. By using latest facial performance capture technology, DOKU has almost perfectly reproduced Lu’s facial expressions.

It also has a body that Lu Yang thinks is ideal and can only be realized virtually. Projecting an image of Lu Yang himself and that of another person simultaneously on DOKU is called "Digital Reincarnation," the idea of which is based on the Buddhist concept called Alaya-Vinana, attempting to express all beings with a single being.

DOKU's Activities

DOKU participated in "NOACF: The Exhibition," an online exhibition organized by British rock band The 1975 and creative director Ben Ditto in July 2020. In this exhibition, 14 artists published video artworks that respond to each track recorded on The 1975's new album, "NOACF." Lu Yang used the virtual character DOKU in the music video of "Playing On My Mind" that he directed.

Online Exhibition "NOACF: The Exhibition" <https://the1975.com/noacf/>

Music Video "Playing On My Mind" <https://youtu.be/us90bg6WoQM>

Spiral / Wacoal Art Center and Digital Art Contents

The unexpected spread of coronavirus disease has been accelerating the ongoing digital transformation of everyday life. Spiral, an arts complex located in Tokyo known as a place to encounter a wide range of artistic experience, is now offering art lovers the opportunity to interact with art and artists regardless of where they are. Besides making its existing art contents, including exhibitions, concerts and workshops, available online, Spiral is working closely with artists around the world to come up with creative interactive solutions that unleash the potential of digital art engagement.

► About Spiral / Wacoal Art Center <https://www.spiral.co.jp/en/about>

Artist's profile

Lu Yang (b. Shanghai, China) is a multi-media artist based in Shanghai. Mortality, androgyny, hysteria, existentialism and spiritual neurology feed Lu's jarring and at times morbid fantasies. Also taking inspiration and resources from Anime, gaming and Sci-fi subcultures, Lu explores his fantasies through mediums including 3D animation, immersive video game installation, holographic, live performances, virtual reality, and computer programming. Lu Yang has held exhibitions in UCCA (Beijing), M Woods (Beijing), Cc Foundation (Shanghai), Spiral (Tokyo), Fukuoka Museum of Asian Art (Fukuoka, Japan), Societe (Berlin), MOCA Cleveland (Cleveland, Ohio) and participated in several international biennials and triennials such as 2012 & 2018 Shanghai Biennial, 2018 Athens Biennale, 2016 Liverpool Biennial, 2016 International Digital Art Biennale (Montreal), China Pavilion, the 56th Venice Biennale, and 2014 Fukuoka Triennial. In 2019, Lu became the 8th BMW Art Journey winner and started Lu Yang Digital Reincarnation project. <http://luyang.asia>