

**FIRST SOLO U.S. MUSEUM EXHIBITION FOR ARTIST IAN CHENG
FEATURING PREMIERE OF THE EMISSARY TRILOGY
OPENS APRIL 9**

Ian Cheng: EMISSARIES
3rd Floor Galleries
April 9–September 25, 2017

(Long Island City, NY – April 4, 2017) – MoMA PS1 presents the first U.S. museum solo exhibition for Ian Cheng (b. 1984, Los Angeles), featuring the artist’s complete Emissary trilogy (2015–17), a series of live simulation works created using a video game engine. Described by the artist as “a video game that plays itself,” the works are comprised of computer-generated simulations like those used in predictive technologies for complex scenarios such as climate change or elections. Populated by a cast of characters and wildlife that interact, intervene, and recombine in open-ended narratives, Cheng’s simulations evolve endlessly as self-contained ecosystems. The exhibition *EMISSARIES* marks the completion of this series of works, which contemplate timeless questions about evolution, the origins of human consciousness, and ways of relating to a chaotic existence. The trilogy was recently acquired by The Museum of Modern Art and is on display for the first time at MoMA PS1.

EMISSARIES is presented as a large-scale installation that transforms the gallery into a portal-like environment for Cheng’s simulations to build, generate, regress, and progress. The 10-foot-tall projections allow each simulation to unfold at life-size, positioning viewers as observers who can follow the lives of specific characters as they interact within the simulated worlds and each other in an ever-changing environment.

Cheng’s Emissary trilogy is composed of three interconnected episodes that take place on a time continuum ranging from a pre-conscious era to the distant future. Each episode focuses on an emissary figure caught between unraveling old realities and emerging new ones as they attempt to achieve a series of predetermined narrative goals, which can be disrupted at any time. *Emissary in the Squat of Gods* (2015) simulates an ancient community living under the threat of a volcanic eruption, following a young emissary who experiences the first flicker of consciousness. *Emissary Forks At Perfection* (2015-2016) takes place thousands of years in the future where the volcano has become a fertile Darwinian playground managed by an Artificial Intelligence who sends a “canine superpet” as an emissary to gather information about humans. *Emissary Sunsets the Self* (2017) simulates the last days of the AI, who has evolved into a sentient substance searching for a radical evolutionary successor.

The exhibition is extended into the digital space through a collaboration with Twitch, a social video platform and community for gamers. Over the course of the exhibition, all three works in the Emissary trilogy will be available for viewing on Twitch in unique versions that exist online only. The Twitch live stream of these works will also be on view in the gallery space, highlighting the iterative nature of these works across platforms both physical and virtual. Available for viewing continuously at www.twitch.tv/moma, *Emissary In the Squat of Gods* will stream

from April 9 to May 22, *Emissary Forks At Perfection* from June 6 to July 24, and *Emissary Sunsets the Self* from August 8 to September 25.

To accompany the exhibition, an artist-designed exhibition guide detailing the ecology and ethology of the trilogy can be purchased at the MoMA PS1 admissions desk.

On Monday, April 24, Ian Cheng will participate in a screening and conversation at The Museum of Modern Art, moderated by Stuart Comer, Chief Curator, Department of Media and Performance Art, as part of the “Modern Mondays” series.

Ian Cheng: EMISSARIES is organized by Peter Eleey, Chief Curator, MoMA PS1, with Jocelyn Miller, Curatorial Associate, MoMA PS1.

Ian Cheng (b. 1984, Los Angeles) is a New York-based artist whose work champions the use of computer simulation as a way to understand and relate to continual change. Cheng has been the subject of solo exhibitions at Migros Museum, Zurich (2016), Pilar Corrias Gallery, London (2015); Triennale di Milano (2014); and Standard, Oslo (2013); among others. His work has been included in group exhibitions at the Hirshhorn Museum and Sculpture Garden, Washington, D.C. (2016); the Whitney Museum of American Art, New York (2016); Taipei Biennial (2014); 12th Biennale de Lyon (2013); and Sculpture Center (2012); among others. Cheng holds an MFA from Columbia University (2009) and a dual BA in Cognitive Science and Art Practice from the University of California, Berkeley (2006).

The exhibition is made possible by the MoMA PS1 Annual Exhibition Fund.

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For downloadable high-resolution images, register at MoMA.org/press.

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Hours: MoMA PS1 is open from 12:00 p.m. to 6:00 p.m., Thursday through Monday. It is closed on Thanksgiving, Christmas, and New Year’s Day.
artbook@MoMA PS1 is open from 1:00 p.m. to 5:30 p.m., Thursday through Sunday.

Admission: \$10 suggested donation; \$5 for students and senior citizens; free for New York City residents*, MoMA members and MoMA admission ticket holders. The MoMA ticket must be presented at MoMA PS1 within thirty days of date on ticket and is not valid during Warm Up or other MoMA PS1 events or benefits.

**Free admission as a Gift to New Yorkers made possible by the Anna-Maria and Stephen Kellen Foundation.* Through October 15, 2017 all residents of New York’s five boroughs receive free entrance to all exhibitions during regular museum hours; excluding concerts, fundraisers, and ticketed events. Upon arrival please present proof of New York City residency such as a driver’s license, state-issued identification card or a New York City utility bill.

Directions: MoMA PS1 is located at 22-25 Jackson Avenue at 46th Ave in Long Island City, Queens, across the Queensboro Bridge from midtown Manhattan and is easily accessible by bus and subway. Traveling by subway, take either the E or M to Court Square-23 Street; the 7 to 45 Road-Courthouse Square; or the G to Court Sq or 21 St-Van Alst. By bus, take the Q67 to Jackson and 46th Ave or the B62 to 46th Ave.

MoMA PS1 Background: MoMA PS1 is one of the largest and oldest organizations in the United States devoted to contemporary art. Established in 1976 by Alanna Heiss, MoMA PS1 originated from The Institute for Art and Urban Resources, a not-for-profit organization founded five years prior with the mission of turning abandoned, underutilized buildings in New York City into artist studios and exhibition spaces. P.S.1 Contemporary Art Center, as it then was known, became an affiliate of The Museum of Modern Art in 2000.