

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**Contact: [press@gallerywendinorris.com](mailto:press@gallerywendinorris.com)**YORGO ALEXOPOULOS: C L O U D S**

March 12–May 2, 2015

Opening reception: Thursday, March 12, 6–8PM

Artist's rendering of *C L O U D S*

February 26, 2015—San Francisco, CA—Gallery Wendi Norris is pleased to present *C L O U D S*, an exhibition of new works by New York-based artist **Yorgo Alexopoulos** on view from March 12 through May 2. *C L O U D S*, the artist's first exhibition with the gallery, features three seven-foot-tall hybrid sculptures that resemble modern industrial data servers but are in fact constructed from a combination of both archaic and cutting-edge technologies. Like Potemkin villages or the faux facades of buildings in Hollywood Westerns, the works in *C L O U D S* are meant to deceive the viewer into trusting that complex operations are being performed, when in actuality the data is fake and the intrigue purely visual.

The collective effect of these sculptures from afar is monolithic; as one approaches, they become individualized and uncannily figurative, reminiscent of the futuristic cyborgs that typify the science fiction books of Philip K. Dick and the films of Kubrick and Jodorowsky. Their mesmerizing flashing lights and colorful numbers suggest that they are performing computations beyond the realm of human comprehension. In reality, they only threaten to function, revealing something mysterious, almost sinister, in the discrepancy between their appearance and their purpose. What do these machines actually do? Upon closer examination, it is revealed that the posteriors of the sculptures feature intricate dioramas whose imagery draws upon archetypal narratives—the myth of David and Goliath, for example—as they can be applied to contemporary society. In this way, the dioramas function much like a political cartoon, presenting expansive cultural commentary within a single frame. Here, the artist emphasizes the inherent duality in this body of work by contrasting the seemingly complicated but ultimately fruitless machinations of the front of the sculptures with the visually and semantically suggestive dioramas in the back.

In *C L O U D S*, Alexopoulos challenges humanity's often blind faith that automation will enhance our lives, and points towards how easily we can be seduced by facile demonstrations of ersatz technology—and sometimes destroyed by it. *C L O U D S* obliquely references the story of Bernie Ebbers, the CEO of MCI WorldCom, who organized tours of the WorldCom corporate campus that included taking investors into enormous—and entirely fake—data centers, filled with server racks comprised of bogus computers displaying false data and randomly blinking lights. With this conjuring of a seemingly superior technology, Ebbers deceived investors into loaning billions of dollars to a failing company. In *C L O U D S*, the viewer is also brought along on a deceptive tour, moving from an initial belief in the presence of a familiar object to a closer encounter with a very convincing, but ultimately hollow and purposeless, facsimile.

In order to produce the works in *C L O U D S*, Alexopoulos spent years studying the hardware and interior mechanisms of data servers—circuits, LED indicator lights, fiber optic networks, cooling systems—and incorporating aspects of these into his plans. The sculptures were developed through a vigorous research and development process. Plans were based on expertise garnered in topics including industrial and graphic design, fabrication, programming, physical computing, animation, photography, painting, light engineering, and even miniature diorama construction. Each component in the sculptures has been custom-made, including the highly designed industrial exteriors.

The artist's rigorous research and use of both antiquated and cutting-edge technologies in these sculptures create an experience in which, as he says, "the digital age meets the Library of Alexandria." *C L O U D S* draws viewers into an immersive environment, and invites them to have an introspective moment. What do these machines do? Ultimately, nothing. Here, Alexopoulos pulls back the curtain and shows us the mechanisms of the proverbial Wizard, revealing that he is no more than a human after all.

### **ABOUT YORGO ALEXOPOULOS**

Yorgo Alexopoulos is a New York-based artist who combines a variety of media into immersive fine art installations. He fuses his own paintings, drawings, photographs, and films with digital animation and sound, often with multiple synchronized monitors or projections. Alexopoulos' work engages transcendental themes, astronomical images, religious iconography, scientific diagrams and mythological symbolism. Permanent installations include a 27-channel video installation in Norman Foster's Bow Building in Calgary, Alberta, and a 432 LCD screen installation for the lobby of the Cosmopolitan Hotel in Las Vegas, commissioned by the Art Production Fund. His work has been exhibited at the Torrance Art Museum in California. Alexopoulos worked as the visual effects supervisor on the award-winning documentary film *The Kid Stays In the Picture* and is a member of the Los Angeles graffiti crew WCA (West Coast Artists). Alexopoulos received a BFA from The School of the Art Institute of Chicago in 1995.

### **ABOUT GALLERY WENDI NORRIS**

Gallery Wendi Norris presents both a contemporary and Modern program that showcases a variety of artists working over many geographic locations and in a wide array of media.

The gallery, located at 161 Jessie Street in downtown San Francisco, often shows two exhibitions simultaneously in order to encourage a re-contextualization of work by Modern artists while providing connections with the contemporary. Gallery Wendi Norris is active locally as well as internationally, working with individual collectors and museums alike in both primary and secondary markets. Founded with an emphasis on scholarship and education, the gallery produces researched exhibition catalogues, sponsors artist talks, hosts visiting academics, and engages in local public art projects, among other initiatives. Learn more at [gallerywendinorris.com](http://gallerywendinorris.com).

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