WHITNEY

PRESS RELEASE

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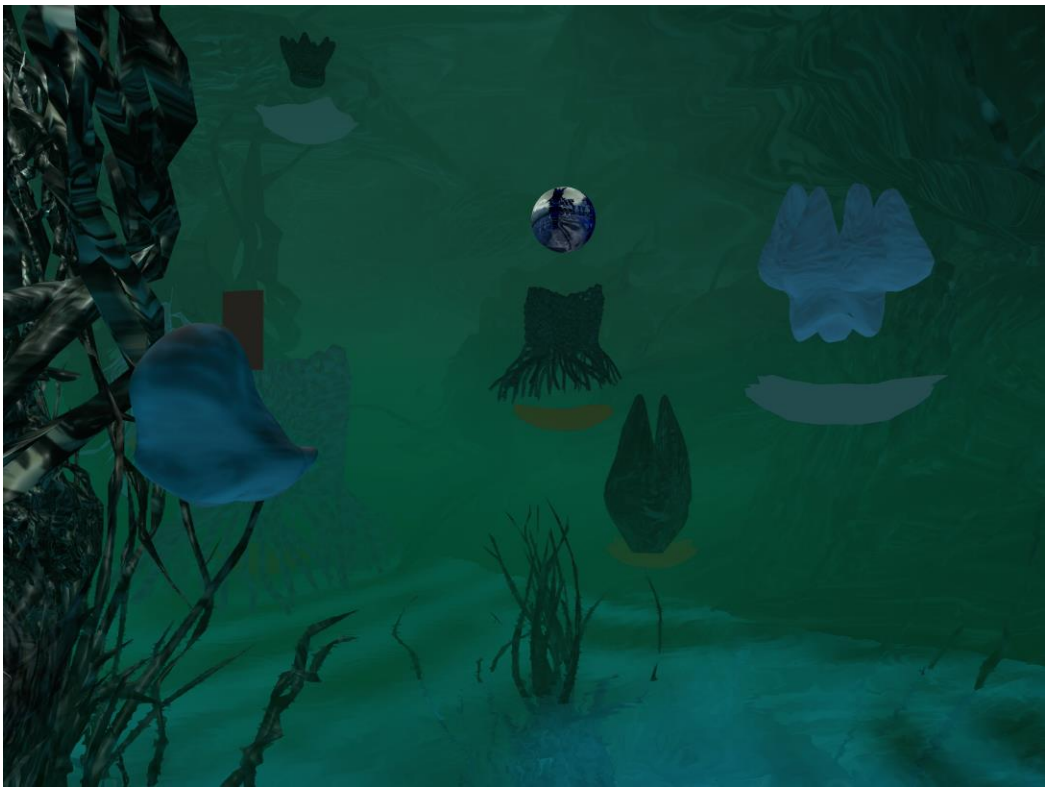
WHITNEY MUSEUM LAUNCHES LEO CASTAÑEDA'S NEW INTERACTIVE DIGITAL WORK COMMISSIONED FOR THE 2026 WHITNEY BIENNIAL



Artist Leo Castañeda's latest project launches on whitney.org, inviting audiences to cultivate a garden in a responsive environment shaped by ecological and technological frameworks.

New York, NY, March 2, 2026 — The Whitney Museum of American Art launches *Camoflux Recall Grotto*, a digital art project by Leo Castañeda commissioned for *Whitney Biennial 2026*, and available on artport, the Museum's online gallery space for Internet art. *Camoflux Recall Grotto* is a web-based game that invites players to cultivate a garden within its surreal, primordial landscape. The game's environment draws inspiration from the Brazilian Amazon rainforest and the Everglades in South Florida, as well as works by Colombian artists Maria Thereza Negreiros, Ever Astudillo, and Alfonso Quijano. Blending organic and technical infrastructures, the game's virtual grotto offers a space to examine processes of growth in a technology-driven ecosystem.

As players enter the game, they assume the role of an organic drone hovering above water in a

shadowed grotto. Players navigate through the otherworldly landscape, collecting water and sunlight resources to nourish the “cyberflora” organisms. Holographic memories from past and future worlds emerge from the cyberflora as they sprout, intertwining natural ecosystems and computational networks within a shared environment, revealing the relationality and tension that exists. With *Camoflux Recall Grotto,* Castañeda challenges conventional game patterns of rapid, continual progression. The game’s tempo fluctuates in an unpredictable way, slowing to a calm, meditative cycle when seeds are sparse, then accelerating when seedlings multiply beyond sustainability.

“It’s so meaningful to work with the team to bring to life the surreal landscapes I grew up with and spark reflection on relationship between mechanical, biological and collective memory,” said artist Leo Castañeda.

Through its shifting rhythm and responsive environment, *Camoflux Recall Grotto* reimagines cultivation as a feedback system rather than an experience of cumulative progression. Growth unfolds from reciprocal exchanges between the player’s interactions and the game’s framework, foregrounding the ways balance, adaptation, and response are influenced by the systems they occur within. By placing ecological and technological processes in dialogue, Castañeda reflects on the intertwined infrastructures that increasingly organize contemporary life.

Whitney Biennial 2026 is organized by Marcela Guerrero, DeMartini Family Curator, and Drew Sawyer, Sondra Gilman Curator of Photography, with Beatriz Cifuentes, Biennial Curatorial Assistant, and Carina Martinez, Rubio Butterfield Family Fellow.

Camoflux Recall Grotto is accessible within artport, the Museum’s portal to Internet art and an online gallery space for commissions of net art and new media art. More information about artport and past projects can be found at whitney.org/artport.

ABOUT *WHITNEY BIENNIAL 2026*

Opening March 8, *Whitney Biennial 2026* is the 82nd edition of the Museum’s landmark exhibition series and the longest-running survey of American art. Featuring 56 artists, duos, and collectives across most of the Museum’s galleries, the Biennial is accompanied by a robust schedule of performance and public programs at the Museum and online. Co-organized by Marcela Guerrero and Drew Sawyer, the exhibition brings together artists working across media and disciplines, reflecting evolving notions of American art.

Whitney Biennial 2026 offers a vivid, atmospheric survey shaped by a moment of profound complexity. The work on view examines varied forms of relationality, from interspecies and familial kinships to geopolitical entanglements, technological affinities, shared mythologies, and the infrastructures that support and constrain contemporary life. Rather than offering a definitive answer to life today, the exhibition foregrounds mood and texture, inviting visitors into environments that evoke tension, tenderness, humor, and unease, while proposing imaginative, unruly, and unexpected forms of coexistence.

ABOUT THE ARTIST

Leo Castañeda (b. 1988, Cali, Colombia) is a multimedia artist and video game designer exploring Latin American Surrealism in the digital age. His artwork primarily takes the form of episodic games and immersive installations that meld atmospheric paintings, video, mixed reality, wearables, and sculpture. Castañeda is a Knight Foundation Arts + Technology Fellow, YoungArts Artist Technology Fellow, Emergent Strategy Ideation Institute Praxis Project Fellow, and an Ellies Creator Award, and Harpo Foundation grantee. Castañeda has exhibited at Pérez Art Museum Miami; Bronx Museum of the Arts; Haus der elektronischen Künste Basel; Museu do Amanhã, Rio de Janeiro; Museo National de Arte Guatemala; Espacio ArtNexus, Bogotá; Locust Projects Miami; Museo de Arte Moderno La Tertulia Colombia; Bienal de Antioquia y Medellin and the Bienal de Artes Mediales, Santiago, Chile. His work has been featured on PBS, Rhizome, Killscreen, Vice, Hyperallergic, ArtNexus, El Pais, Spike Art Magazine, and New American Paintings. He is currently a resident at the Bakehouse Arts Complex in Miami.

ABOUT ARTPORT

artport is the Whitney Museum's portal to Internet art and an online gallery space for net art and new media art commissions. It is organized by Christiane Paul, curator of Digital Art at the Whitney. Launched in 2001, artport provides access to original commissioned artworks, documentation of net art and new media art exhibitions at the Whitney, and new media art in the Museum's collection. Recent commissions include Memo Akten and Katie Hofstadter's *The Thinking Ocean* (2026); Robert Nideffer's *12 Years in Azeroth – The Journey Begins* (2025); Frank WANG Yefeng's *The Levitating Perils #2* (2025); INFANT'S *BANNED SKILLS* (2025); Ashley Zelinkskie's *Twin Quasar* (2024); Maya Man's *A Realistic Day In My Life In New York City* (2024); Holly Herndon and Mat Dryhurst's *xhairymutantx* (2024); Nancy Baker Cahill's *CENTO* (2024); Peter Burr's *Sunshine Monument* (2023); Rick Silva's *Liquid Crystal* (2023); Auriea Harvey's *SITE1* (2023); Amelia Winger-Bearskin's *Sky/World Death/World* (2022); Mimi Ọnụọha's *40% of Food in the US is Wasted (How the Hell is That Progress, Man?)* (2022); and Rachel Rossin's *THE MAW OF* (2022). Access these and more projects at whitney.org/artport.

PRESS CONTACT

For press materials and image requests, please visit our press site at whitney.org/press or contact:

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EXHIBITION SUPPORT

Whitney Biennial 2026 is presented by

The exhibition is also sponsored by

Leadership support for the 2026 Whitney Biennial is provided by David Cancel, and Stephanie March and Dan Benton.

Major support is provided by the Adam D. Weinberg Artists First Fund; Marcia Dunn and Jonathan Sobel; The Holly Peterson Foundation; the Kapadia Equity Fund; The KHR McNeely Family Foundation | Kevin, Rosemary, and Hannah Rose McNeely; and the Whitney's National Committee.

Significant support is provided by Sotheby's.

2026 Biennial Committee Co-Chairs: Sarah Arison, Paul Arnhold and Wes Gordon, Suzanne and Bob Cochran, Salvador Espinoza and Jonathan Rozoff, Amanda and Glenn Fuhrman, Further Forward Foundation, Becky Gochman, Christina Hribar, Stephanie and Tim Ingrassia, Peter H. Kahng, Deepa Kumaraiah and Sean Dempsey, Miyoung Lee and Neil Simpkins, Dawn and David Lenhardt, Sueyun and Gene Locks, George Petrocheilos and Diamantis Xylas, Nancy and Fred Poses, Dr. Jan Siegmund and Dr. Benjamin Maddox, Ron and Ann Pizzuti, Jackson Tang, Teresa Tsai, and Todd White and Cameron Carani.

2026 Biennial Committee: Shelley Fox Aarons and Philip Aarons; Susan and Matthew Blank; Estrellita and Daniel Brodsky; James Keith Brown and Eric Diefenbach; Yolanda Colón-Greenberg and Craig Greenberg; Stephen Dull; Charlotte Feng Ford; Christy and Bill Gautreaux; Elaine Goldman and John Benis; Grace Gould and Jonathan Goldberg; Marieluise Hessel; Judelson Family Foundation; Michèle Gerber Klein; Gina Feldman Love and Steven Feldman; Joel Lubin; Bernard I. Lumpkin and Carmine D. Boccuzzi; Marc S. Solomon, Cindy Levine & Interlaken LLC; The Robert Mapplethorpe Foundation; Jamie Watson in memory of Emmett Watson; George Wells and Manfred Rantner; Casey and Lauren Weyand; and an anonymous donor.

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Biennial funding is also provided by endowments created by Emily Fisher Landau, Leonard A. Lauder, and Fern and Lenard Tessler.

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Support is also provided by the Marshall Weinberg Fund for Performance, endowed in honor of his parents Anna and Harold Weinberg who taught him the meaning of giving.

The Whitney Biennial and Hyundai Terrace Commission are a multiyear partnership with Hyundai Motor. The Hyundai Terrace Commission is an annual site-specific installation on the Whitney Museum's fifth-floor outdoor gallery.

ABOUT THE WHITNEY

The Whitney Museum of American Art, founded in 1930 by the artist and philanthropist Gertrude Vanderbilt Whitney (1875–1942), houses the foremost collection of American art from the twentieth and twenty-first centuries. Mrs. Whitney, an early and ardent supporter of modern American art, nurtured groundbreaking artists when audiences were still largely preoccupied with the Old Masters. From her vision arose the Whitney Museum of American Art, which has been championing the most innovative art of the United States for ninety years. The core of the Whitney's mission is to collect, preserve, interpret, and exhibit American art of our time and serve a wide variety of audiences in celebration of the complexity and diversity of art and culture in the United States. Through this mission and a steadfast commitment to artists, the Whitney has long been a powerful force in support of modern and contemporary art and continues to help define what is innovative and influential in American art today.

Whitney Museum Land Acknowledgment

The Whitney is located in Lenapehoking, the ancestral homeland of the Lenape. The name Manhattan comes from their word Mannahatta, meaning "island of many hills." The Museum's current site is close to land that was a Lenape fishing and planting site called Sapponckanikan ("tobacco field"). The Whitney acknowledges the displacement of this region's original inhabitants and the Lenape diaspora that exists today.

As a museum of American art in a city with vital and diverse communities of Indigenous people, the Whitney recognizes the historical exclusion of Indigenous artists from its collection and program. The Museum is committed to addressing these erasures and honoring the perspectives of Indigenous artists and communities as we work for a more equitable future. To read more about the Museum's Land Acknowledgment, visit the Museum's website.

VISITOR INFORMATION

The Whitney Museum of American Art is located at 99 Gansevoort Street between Washington and West Streets, New York City. Public hours are Monday, Wednesday, and Thursday, 10:30 am–6 pm; Friday, 10:30 am–10 pm; and Saturday and Sunday, 10:30 am–6 pm. Closed Tuesday. Visitors twenty-five years and under and Whitney members: FREE. The Museum offers FREE admission and special programming for visitors of all ages every Friday evening from 5–10 pm and on the second Sunday of every month.

Image credit:

Leo Castañeda, still from *Camoflux Recall Grotto* (2026)

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