

Digital Distribution

Of course, one of the advantages of digital work is that it does not necessarily need to be exhibited in galleries at all. It can be experienced online and on any number of devices. Artist Dominic Hawgood works across still and moving image, using light installation to create complete environments that reflect on the experience of the real in the world, in the mind and in the digital realm.ⁱ He began to produce exhibitions in digital space in response to the limitations an emerging artist faces in trying to produce his work. His first digital installation renders allowed him to envision his work in its ideal form and to solve issues in its presentation. In a world in which digital documentation frequently has more impact and reach than the original works, Hawgood's virtual exhibition images have begun to play an active role in his practice, sometimes becoming an end in themselves. As a 2017 commission for Brighton Digital Festival and the British Science Festival, Hawgood created a virtual version of an exhibition that had been unexpectedly cancelled. The animated simulation combines digital renders of artworks he has already made in the real world with others that only exist as speculative models. Some artists choose to exhibit exclusively in digital space. For Hawgood, as for many other artists, the digital artwork is most complete when it meets its audience in the social presentation space of the gallery—and indeed it is in the gallery that Hawgood's virtual exhibition is shown.ⁱⁱ

ⁱ For an online project and a more extensive discussion of the thematics of Hawgood's work, see <http://postmatter.com/galleries/new-mythologies/dominic-hawgood/> (accessed 26 July, 2017).

ⁱⁱ Theorist Boris Groys provides an influential discussion of the push and pull between the dematerialized digital work and its exhibition in the gallery in "From Image to Image File and Back Again: Art in the Age of Digitalization," *Art Power* (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 2008) pp. 83-92