

COLUMBIA UNIVERSITY SCHOOL OF THE ARTS

FILM | THEATRE | VISUAL ARTS | WRITING

1965
2025
YEARS

[VISUAL ARTS](#)

Quan Wenfei '25 is an Internet Archaeologist

By Emily Hollander
October 06, 2025



This fall, Eli Klein Gallery presents [Quan Wenfei: Internet Archaeology](#) [↗](#), a debut solo exhibition for Visual Arts alum [Quan Wenfei '25](#) [↗](#).

The exhibition features twelve multimedia pieces selected from three series, *CAPTCHA*, *Click and Win!*, and *Tetris*, as well as a selection of installations.

Across the series, Quan employs unique methods to capture and slow down fleeting moments from the online world. Self-described as an "internet archaeologist," Quan digs up visual information from past web visits, deconstructs it, and remakes it using highly tactile mediums, like oil paint or silkscreen. Using these methods, Quan hopes to both mirror and trouble the torrent of digital images that we face on a daily basis, blurring the boundaries between the real and the virtual.

In *CAPTCHA*, Quan samples low-resolution images recycled in CAPTCHA, or "Completely Automated Public Turing test to tell Computers and Humans Apart" (i.e., "select all images that include a traffic light)." By distorting images intended to authenticate humans, she questions what it means to repeatedly prove one's own humanity.


Click and Win! hyperfocuses on a nostalgic image: the bursting of playing cards that occurs when one wins the titular retro card game. This excavated image traces internet history, both in its visual aesthetics and its consistently dopamine-driven addictive qualities.

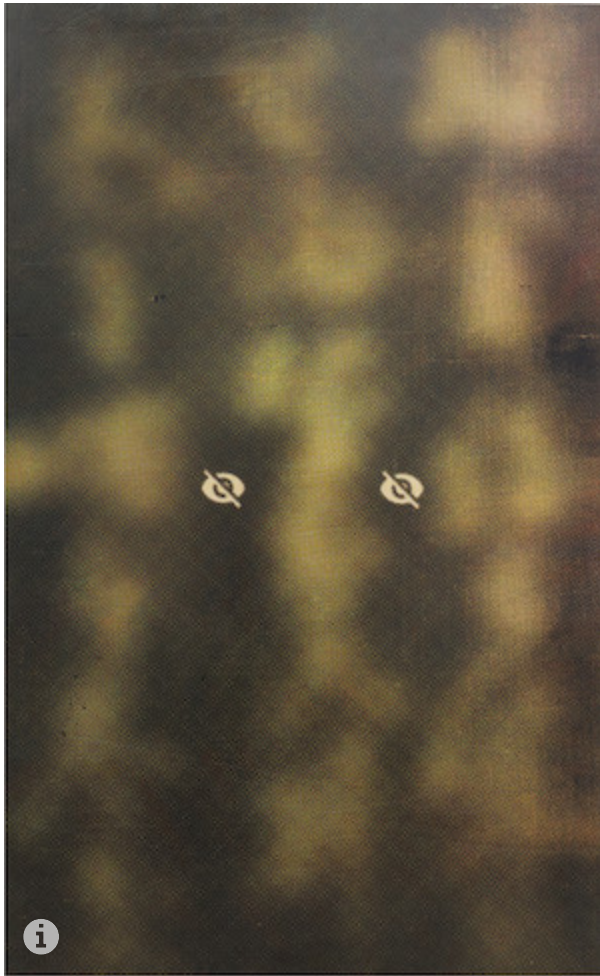
Tetris Remix 1 - Silver is the most ambitious in its tactility; the flattened world of tetris is brought to life in 3-dimensional moveable, interlocking canvases.



In this exhibition, the screen becomes an archaeological site, as digital images are translated into material culture. Bringing the deliberate, methodical approach of an archaeologist at a dig to the high-velocity digital realm, Quan slows down the process of perception, forcing the viewer to reflect on how visual narratives are created.

Born in China and residing in New York City, Quan is an interdisciplinary artist whose practice spans painting, printmaking, video, and installation. Her work has been exhibited across the country and globe, including at THE BLANC, New York; ONE Gallery, Beijing; Shanghai Peninsula Art Museum, Shanghai; One Herald Plaza, Miami; TanArt Community, Xi'an, China; Hello art, Hangzhou, China; Radius Gallery, Xi'an, China; Yellow Box Art Museum, Qingdao, China; and the Himalayan Art Museum, Shanghai.

[Internet Archaeology](#)  is on view September 13–November 29, 2025 at Eli Klein Gallery on 398 West Street in New York City.



Tags: [Visual Arts](#) [Alumni](#) [Exhibit](#)

More News:

October 06, 2025

[Sasha Fishman '24 Fixates on Fish in Solo Exhibition at ILY2 Gallery.](#)

October 06, 2025

[Visual Arts Alum Motohiro Takeda '23 in Group Exhibition at MAMA Projects](#)

September 08, 2025

[Sara Stern '17 Opens Latest Solo Exhibition, 'STALL,' at Turley Gallery.](#)

August 15, 2025