



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE  
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## NEW INC AND RUINART CHAMPAGNE PRESENT MIXED REALITY POP-UP

*Artists and technologists explore AR and VR over two weekends*



New Reality Co., *Tree*, 2017. Virtual reality experience; 12 min. Courtesy the artists

**New York, NY...** NEW INC, New Museum's cultural incubator, announces a "Forever First" Mixed Reality Pop-Up this winter, in partnership with Ruinart champagne. Over the course of two weekends, January 24-26 and February 1-2, 2020, Ruinart will transform the New Museum's seventh floor Sky Room into a space where visitors will experience the power and fragility of nature through two Mixed Reality projects by NEW INC alumni team Milica Zec and Winslow Porter, and current member Reese Donohue working with artist Sarah Meyohas, exploring new ecologies in augmented and virtual reality.

Zec and Porter started their studio New Reality Co. at NEW INC, where they incubated their VR piece *Tree* in 2015-2016. This virtual-reality project transforms the participant into a rainforest tree, via touch, sight, sound, and smell, as they experience the tree's growth from a seedling into its fullest form, and witness its fate firsthand. Having premiered at Sundance Film Festival in January 2017, the work has since toured the globe, making stops in Copenhagen, Bogotá, Davos, and Los Angeles, with this presentation at the New Museum marking its homecoming. Produced in partnership with the Rainforest Alliance, *Tree* serves as a dramatic wake-up call that deforestation is a key factor in global warming.

*Dawn Chorus* is a multisensorial, augmented reality experience created by artist Sarah Meyohas and produced by audio technologist Reese Donohue, who founded his company Tempo at NEW INC. Experienced through a HoloLens, the work presents virtual birds flocking around a Yamaha Disklavier™ piano which is present in the space. Upon landing on the piano, the virtual birds trigger a real-life musical accompaniment of piano phrases derived from Franz Liszt's "Jeux d'Eau" ("Water Games") and nightingale songs. Watercolors bloom across the surface of the piano, visualizing the sound waves that emanate from vibrating strings. As the birds flock around the room, a spatialized audio system matches their flight with the sound of flutes and bird calls. The whimsical interactions in *Dawn Chorus* demonstrate the underlying statistical concept of universality: the idea that many phenomena we perceive as different, such as the frequencies of musical scales, and the flocking patterns of birds, follow the same underlying statistical pattern.

Over the past two years, Ruinart champagne has hosted a series of "Forever First" salons celebrating NEW INC members whose works are defined by original thinking and being first in their field. This is the first time Ruinart champagne, in its long history of supporting the arts, will partner with a museum to create an artistic platform for virtual reality.

NEW INC's Director, Stephanie Pereira remarked, "It's wonderful to bring the VR project *Tree* back to the Bowery where it was first conceived, and to share *Dawn Chorus*—a work in progress that will have its public debut. This extraordinary pairing would simply not be possible without our partner Ruinart who has embraced the creativity that abounds when art and technology intersect."

Ruinart's Brand Director Sebastien Vitry added, "We have a storied legacy of supporting the arts, and it is doubly gratifying to support NEW INC artists and these new mixed reality experiences that probe the beauty of nature, both as poetic and perilous."

These pop-up experiences will be first come first serve with a regular New Museum admission ticket from 12 to 6 PM. The Sky Room will feature a Ruinart lounge and champagne bar, and the New Museum's Hester Street Cafe will have a special menu in tribute to birds and trees.

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#### **ABOUT NEW INC**

NEW INC was cofounded by Lisa Phillips and Karen Wong in 2014 and is the first museum led cultural incubator dedicated to supporting innovation, collaboration, and entrepreneurship across art, design, and technology. NEW INC's Director is Stephanie Pereira. For more information, visit [newinc.org](http://newinc.org).

#### **ABOUT NEW MUSEUM**

The New Museum is the only museum in New York City exclusively devoted to contemporary art. Founded in 1977, the New Museum is a center for exhibitions, information, and documentation about living artists from around the world. From its beginnings as a one-room office on Hudson Street to the inauguration of its first freestanding building on the Bowery designed by SANAA in 2007, the New Museum continues to be a place of experimentation and a hub of new art and new ideas.

## **ABOUT RUINART**

Founded in 1729, Maison Ruinart is the very first established champagne house. With a rich and complex history, the Maison has never stopped developing and promoting its own special art of living, echoing the Enlightenment period during which it was created.

Each of its cuvées bears the distinctive signature of Chardonnay, the House's emblematic grape variety. Elegance, refinement, purity, light and distinctive taste make Ruinart a true timeless and modern icon.

Ruinart's subtle art of champagne making resonates with its commitment to art and creativity, echoing the boldness it took to ask the Czech artist Alphonse Mucha to create a poster for the Maison in 1896 that caused a sensation at the time. Since then, Ruinart has commissioned numerous artists, designers and creative minds to deliver their own vision of the Maison, making it forever contemporary.

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## **SUPPORT**

This presentation of *Dawn Chorus* is made possible by Yamaha Corporation of America.

This presentation of *Tree* is made possible by Rebecca Chasin of PlantWalls.

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### PRESS CONTACTS

#### NEW MUSEUM

Paul Jackson, Communications Director

Nora Landes, Press Associate

press@newmuseum.org

212.219.1222 x209

#### RUINART

LaFORCE

ruinart@laforce.nyc

212.367.8008