J.J. Hellerman

Curatorial Portfolio · asdfasdfasdf collective

asdfasdfasdf

(yes, like the keys on the left-hand side of your keyboard.)

What seems random at first holds a context of dexterity, labor, tactility, materiality. Why is the keyboard organised the way it is? How is the path of least resistance laid out for us?

Manufacturers of the modern keyboard, in the 1870s, organised the current paradigm at your fingertips through a series of mechanical compromises: avoiding jams, responding to use, and arranging the machine around the limits of its own parts. HIC CONDITA EST QWERTY (and from there, asdf!). Tactile necessity created the language of the system, its symbolic ordering.

For Nathalia Bertazi and JJ Hellerman, this inherited arrangement becomes a model for exhibition-making: not a fixed format imposed from above, but a structure which emerges through available tools, shared pressure, and collective use. Founded on a principle of open calls, the pair seeks to explore notions of material and structural emergence alongside other artists. Bertazi and Hellerman employ the exhibition as both medium and outcome of research. They are interested in moments which combine the fixed with the serendipitous, in the meeting of motion/notion/emotion.

asdfasdfsadfcollective.com · jjhellerman.xyz · hellermanjulianna@gmail.com

a system at scale, 2026

Three Rooms Gallery, London · 23 artists · open-call group exhibition
Produced and curated by asdfasdfasdf collective (J.J. Hellerman and Nathalia Bertazi)

When organic truths become translated into a symbology legible to and through a system, what is lost? Is anything gained?

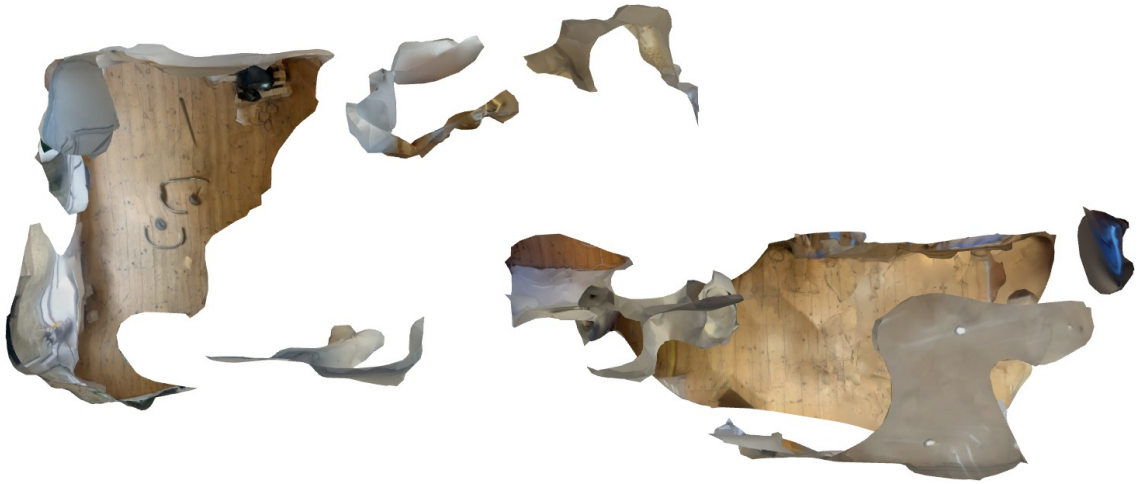
Rosenblatt's perceptron, an ancestor of modern machine learning, claimed to imitate biological vision while treating each pixel as an isolated coordinate in space. It could process information, but not relation. No hierarchy. No context. No understanding of how one thing leans against another.

We learned to count finger by finger, to build brick by brick, to contour body beside body. How do such material proximities become synthesised at mass scale? Does systemic expansion call for a flattening of complexity, or, conversely, does the one feed off the other? Infrastructure turns to image; labour to algorithm; memory becomes storage; signal becomes noise. For soundness of mind, lines are painted in chalk, drawn in the sand(box), temporary borders against something too large to hold in full.

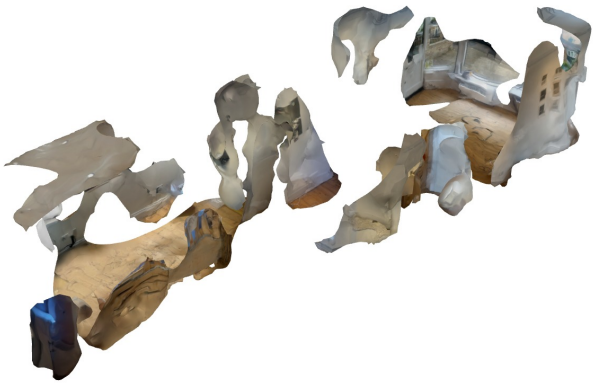
A System At Scale unfolds inside this gap between proximity and abstraction.

Across sculpture, installation, print, moving image, sound, and digital processes, 23 participating artists trace the unstable territory between material experience and systemic abstraction. Between the hand that counts and the code that calculates. Between a thing and the image of a thing. Between a body and the systems that organise it. Again and again, the works return to the moment relation becomes relative.

a system at scale, 2026. Three Rooms Gallery window.



a system at scale, 2026. LiDAR scan of the exhibition, plan view.



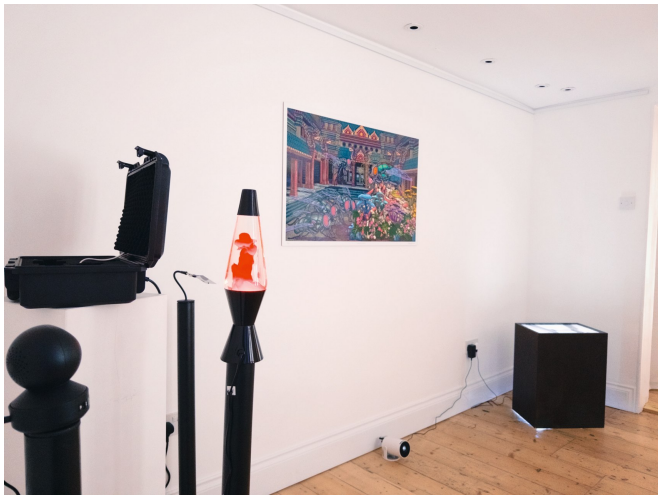
Scan, axonometric view.

Scan, from below the floor.

Polycam LiDAR scan, adaptive remesh (51%), 14,173 faces. Rendered without retouching.

a system at scale, 2026. Installation view through the gallery window.

a system at scale, 2026. Installation view.



a system at scale, 2026. Installation view.

a system at scale, 2026. Sound installation, view through the pallet structure.

a system at scale, 2026. Sound installation, listening space.

a system at scale, 2026. Pallet wall, installation view.

a system at scale, 2026. Pallet wall, detail.

a system at scale, 2026. Pallet wall, installation view.

Performance in progress.

Projection installed across the gallery window.

Luchen Zhang, live performance with projection and TouchDesigner

a system at scale, Three Rooms Gallery, London, 2026

Rites of Ruins, 2025

Safehouse 1, 139 Copeland Road, London · 22–23 March 2025 · open-call group exhibition
Produced and curated by asdfasdfasdf collective (J.J. Hellerman and Nathalia Bertazi)

Time erodes all things—places, memories, identities. Rites of Ruins explores the beauty and fragility of transformation, where decay is not an end but a process of becoming. Through material degradation, shifting narratives, and ephemeral traces, the works in this exhibition examine what is preserved, what fades, and what is reimagined.

Ruins serve as both relics and possibilities, holding the weight of histories while making space for new meanings. They remind us of the instability of personal and collective memory, the tension between permanence and loss.

Here, erosion is a ritual, a rite of passage through which we confront the impermanence of all things—inviting us to reflect on how we shape, and are shaped by, the remnants of the past.

Rites of Ruins, 2025. Installation view, Safehouse 1. Photography: Sophie Anna Green.

Rites of Ruins, 2025. Installation view.

Rites of Ruins, 2025. Installation view.

Rites of Ruins, 2025. Installation view.

Photography: Sophie Anna Green.

Anthony Cho, live performance

Rites of Ruins, Safehouse 1, London, 22–23 March 2025

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asdfasdfasdf collective · asdfasdfsadfcollective.com
jjhellerman.xyz · hellermanjulianna@gmail.com · +44 7362 707889