

5Gsus
Pray for Us

working title

Sarah Danaher

hotel generation

2020

arebyte gallery

Liturgy

Introduction

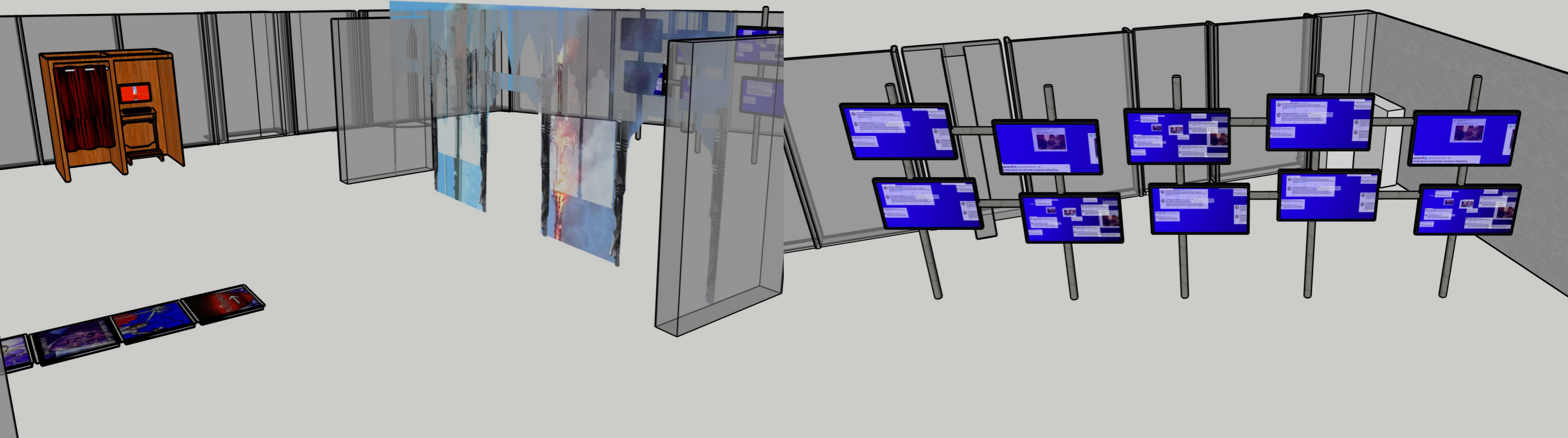
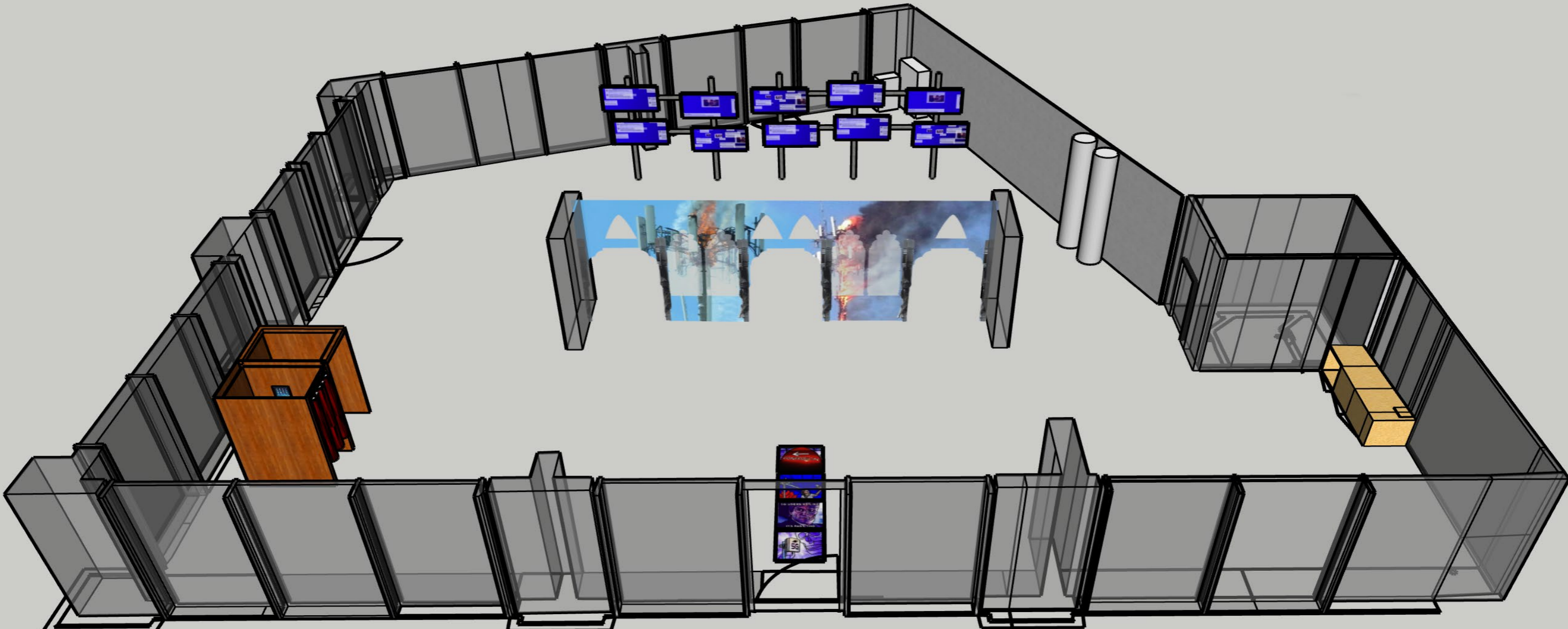
Is data a new god? Our world is constantly growing more reliant on data; in our social interactions, in how we get around, the way we consume news, what we eat, watch, read. We need data, we crave its blessings, and in return it knows everything about us, placed in judgement above us. We are so devoted to our data distribution that it takes on the form of its own religion. Christened Dataism, this new religion will worship data as the highest source of meaning in the universe. We feed this devotion by letting our online devices track our every move, the thought of being without them and going off the grid leaving many in a state of panic.

Is data a benevolent god? It is assumed that with omniscience comes benevolence, yet the ideology 'if there's nothing to hide, then there's nothing to worry about' implies a sinister blind faith. This all-seeing god strips people of the opportunity to choose to confess their guilt, placing an inordinate amount of power in the hands of the unthinking data collectors, and we must pray that the unconscious bias is in our favour.

Can we sin against Dataism? The scale would start with lesser sins, such as hiding location services or deleting cookies, and would escalate up to major sins like burning down 5G towers. The advent of 5G has brought with it a small but virulent group of non-believers, their unifying belief in the rejection of the non-consensual use of their data and airspace.

This exhibition asks viewers to confess their sins against Dataism. Is our reason blind faith or is our blind faith reason? From data fanatics to 5G heretics, this body of work will situate the British relationship with data within the Catholic tradition of faith, sin, confession and absolution.

Drawing on my practice of colliding competing belief systems, I will combine the overwhelming nature and the everyday humour of Catholicism and the internet. I will push my video and installation work forward to create a consuming sensory experience like that felt in a sacred space, involving elements of stained glass, projection, sound and scent.



heretics

Conspiracy theorists have always existed in opposition to technology, and the basic concerns of this newest iteration are with the physical effects of '5G rays.' They also object to the rise of the Internet of Things, the omniscient objects such as smart fridges, fitness trackers, and driverless cars, which will come to know us better than we know ourselves. For most major cities in the UK, there has been a 'Stop 5G' Facebook group disseminating information or misinformation about 5G. The content in these groups varies, from instructional videos on burning down masts and clips of masts on fire, to other conspiracy theories about microchipping, and, since Facebook's recent inclusion of the 'fake news' feature, posts condemning the power of Mark Zuckerberg.

Facebook has recently started cracking down on misinformation around coronavirus, as unsubstantiated claims of the link between 5G and the virus were brought on by the intensified emotions of the global pandemic. Consequently, the prohibited use of 'Stop 5G' in group names means a lot of these groups have either gone private, changed their names to something more incognito, or have been deleted.

Many posts link to pages sermonising far-right content, such as 'InfoWars', a website run by right-wing radio show host and conspiracy theorist Alex Jones, and 'BitChute', a video hosting website sharing far-right and conspiracy material. The alignment of this demographic with far-right politics is interesting in the juxtaposition with Dataists who are more likely to fall under the neo-liberal umbrella, often 'alt-right' leaning individuals. Perhaps the two opposing groups are closer than they seem, sheltering under the right-wing umbrella. Considered in a Christian analogy, their struggle could be compared to Protestant – Catholic conflicts.

The exhibition will repurpose the ephemeral memes posted on some of these groups, by solidifying them in faux-stained glass panels: the age-old form of information distribution. Made from resin rather than glass, the material choice is important in its toxicity and fake-ness, whilst also speaking to consumerism and plastic religious memorabilia. In making these throw-away digital images into physical objects with the purpose of telling a visual story, it throws into question the strength of the message – does it stand up when brought into the 'real' world? As many of the Stop 5G Facebook groups are now being deleted, along with the collection of links and memes, this question becomes even more pertinent.

Clockwise from top: Stop 5G Facebook group banner, mock-up of the stained glass panels in the floor, a previous work using stained-glass style resin panels, stained-glass panel mock-up.

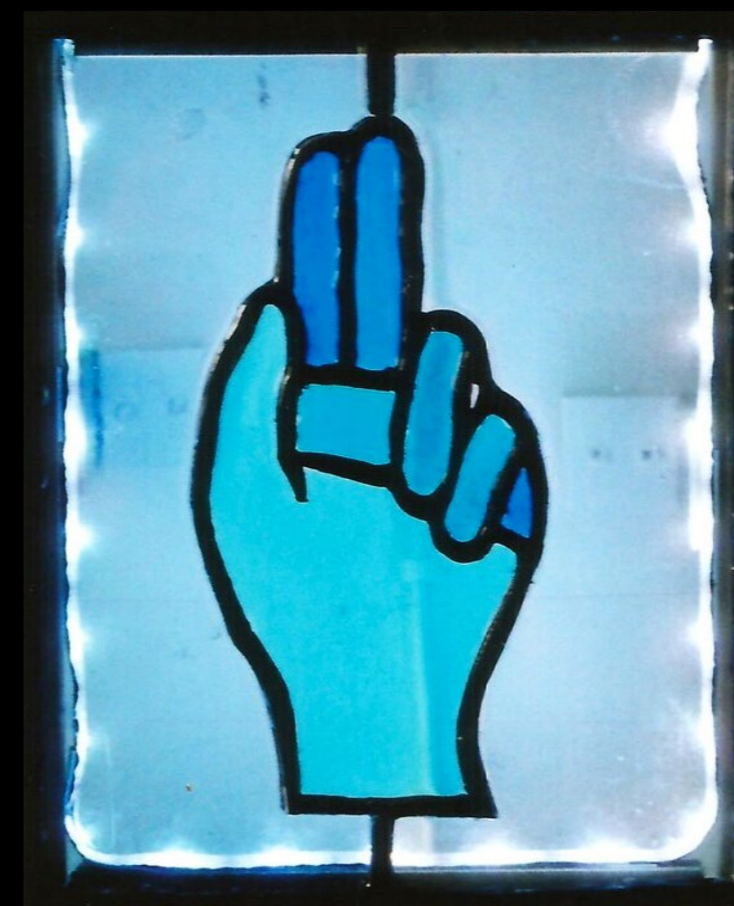
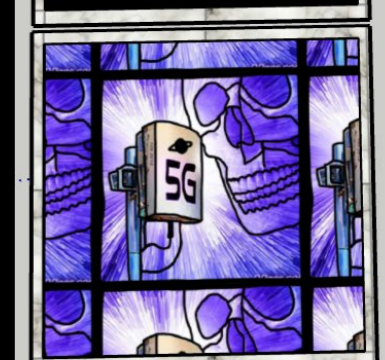
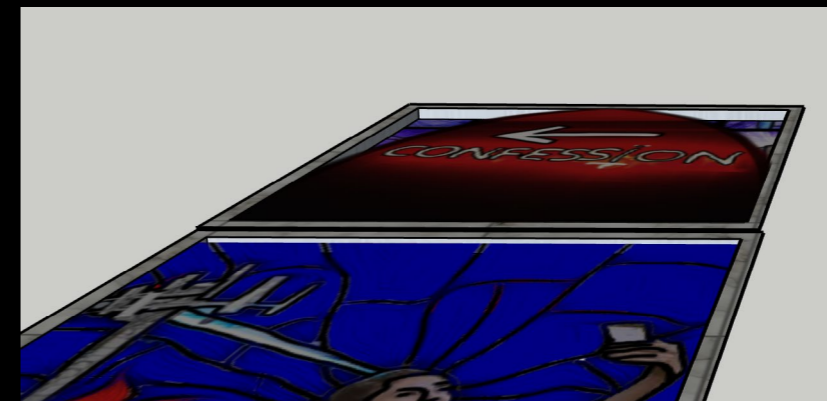
Cumulative Harmful Non-Native EMFs Erratic Pulsed Microwaves Radiating You and (y)our Children 24/7



Join: Fb.com/groups/Stop5G

Founder: John Kuhles

Every New Stop5G Fb Group Post Requires Hashtag: #Stop5G 2h approved ... Study: tinyurl.com/Stop5G-FbGroupRules2020



Confession

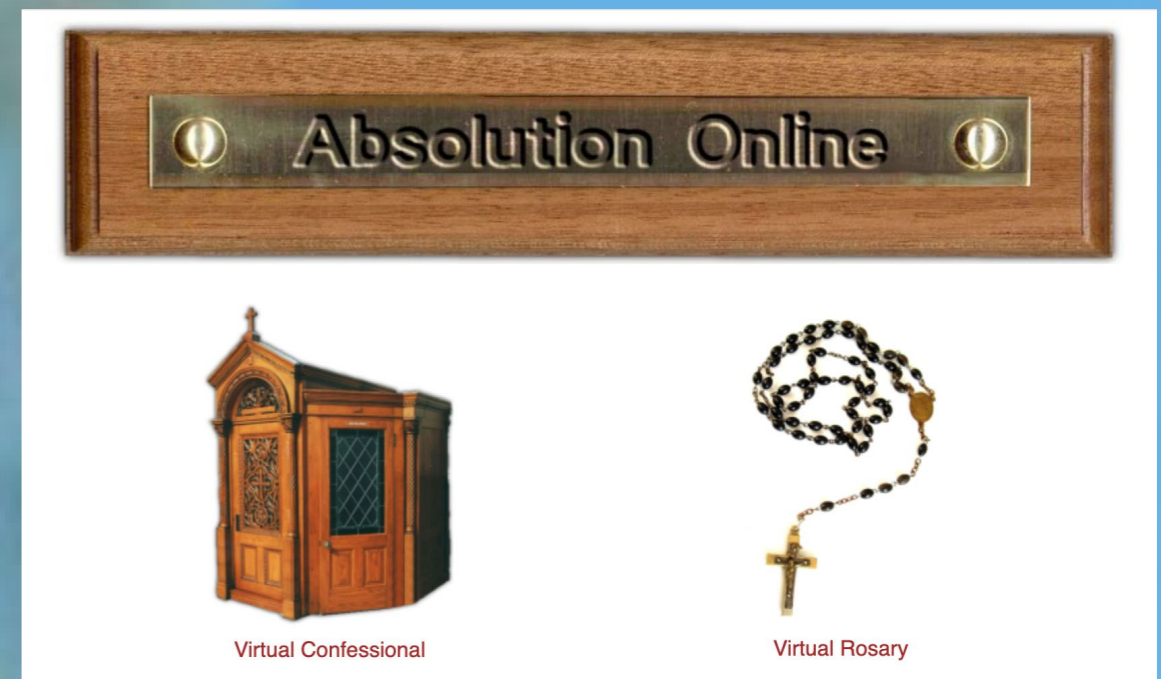
The exhibition will direct viewers to a confession booth containing an iPad, where a website will instruct them to confess their sins against Dataism. The website will have a button to Tweet sins, but there will also be the option for viewers to post from their own accounts and devices using the hashtag #confession. With Dataism being the worship of the free flow of information and personal data, to sin against it would be to do anything that stops this flow. However, there is a difference between 'venial' (or lesser) sins and 'mortal' sins. For example, a venial sin could be to hide your location when using an app, whereas a mortal sin could be to delete all social media accounts and live life entirely off the grid. The different categories of sins will be dealt with accordingly.

The website will have a button labelled 'Penance', which in Catholic confession is a set of tasks given to the sinner by the priest in order to prove that they repent so they can be absolved. When pressed, the button will allow users to indicate whether their sin is venial or mortal, and they will then be issued with an instruction or task, such as 'Google "5G" and accept cookies on the first 5 results', or 'Share the last 3 images in your phone to social media'.

The website is inspired by absolution-online.com, a site dedicated to tracking sins and giving penance, with a retro Web 2.0 design.

At the back of the room, there will be a social media wall across 10 screens that will collect all posts containing #confession using the Twitter API function, including those unrelated to the exhibition from other internet users. The tweets will float across as they appear, and the screens will also be installed as if floating across the room. This suggestion of movement reflects the ethereal or supernatural elements of religion, which is something that is often considered analogous to technology and AI.

The colours in the background of the social media wall will reflect the blue of Twitter and Facebook, with a hint of the multicoloured logo for Instagram. These networks have been the basis for the spread of memes, and are also frequently used for online confessions of any kind. When researching for an appropriate hashtag, #confession brought up hundreds of daily results of people confessing anything and everything.



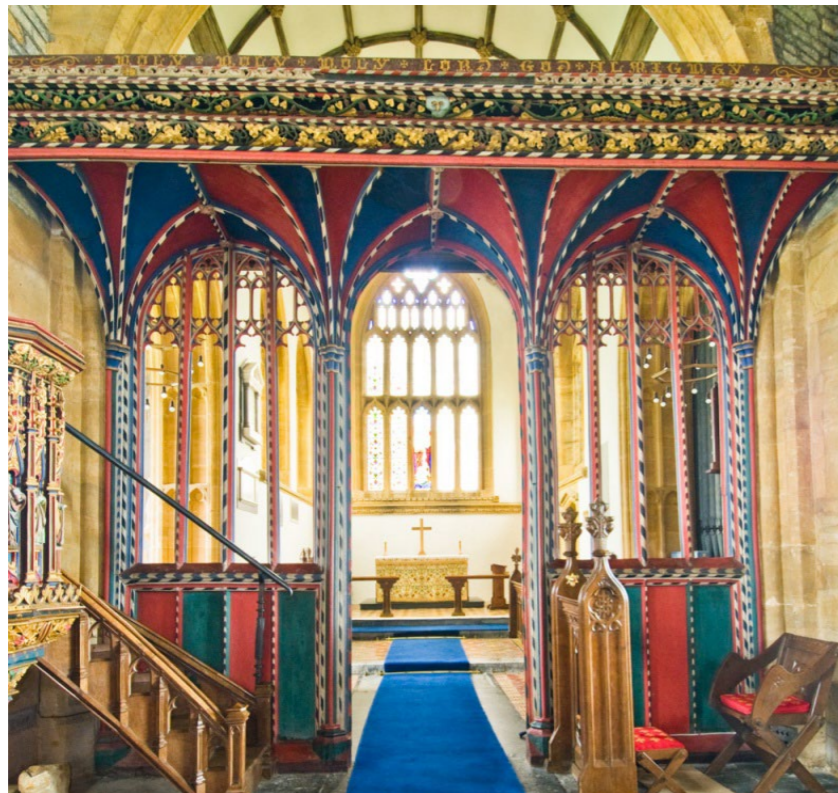
I am interested in this use of social media as an outlet for things that normally wouldn't be admitted to, as there is no obvious opportunity for absolution.

While the confession booth is obviously a church reference, it also takes on the connotation of a photo booth, which is frequently advertised as the best way to encourage engagement at corporate events. This was unearthed in my research into the social media wall, another corporate event feature, that encourages the use of technology and social media as a form of free promotion for a company or event. The Catholic church can be considered as its own corporate system, where 'corporate' means a body of individuals united by a single purpose, and mass is the corporate event trying to find the best way to engage visitors. For Dataism, the corporate event is happening at every second of every day online, every moment shared online is a communion of data.

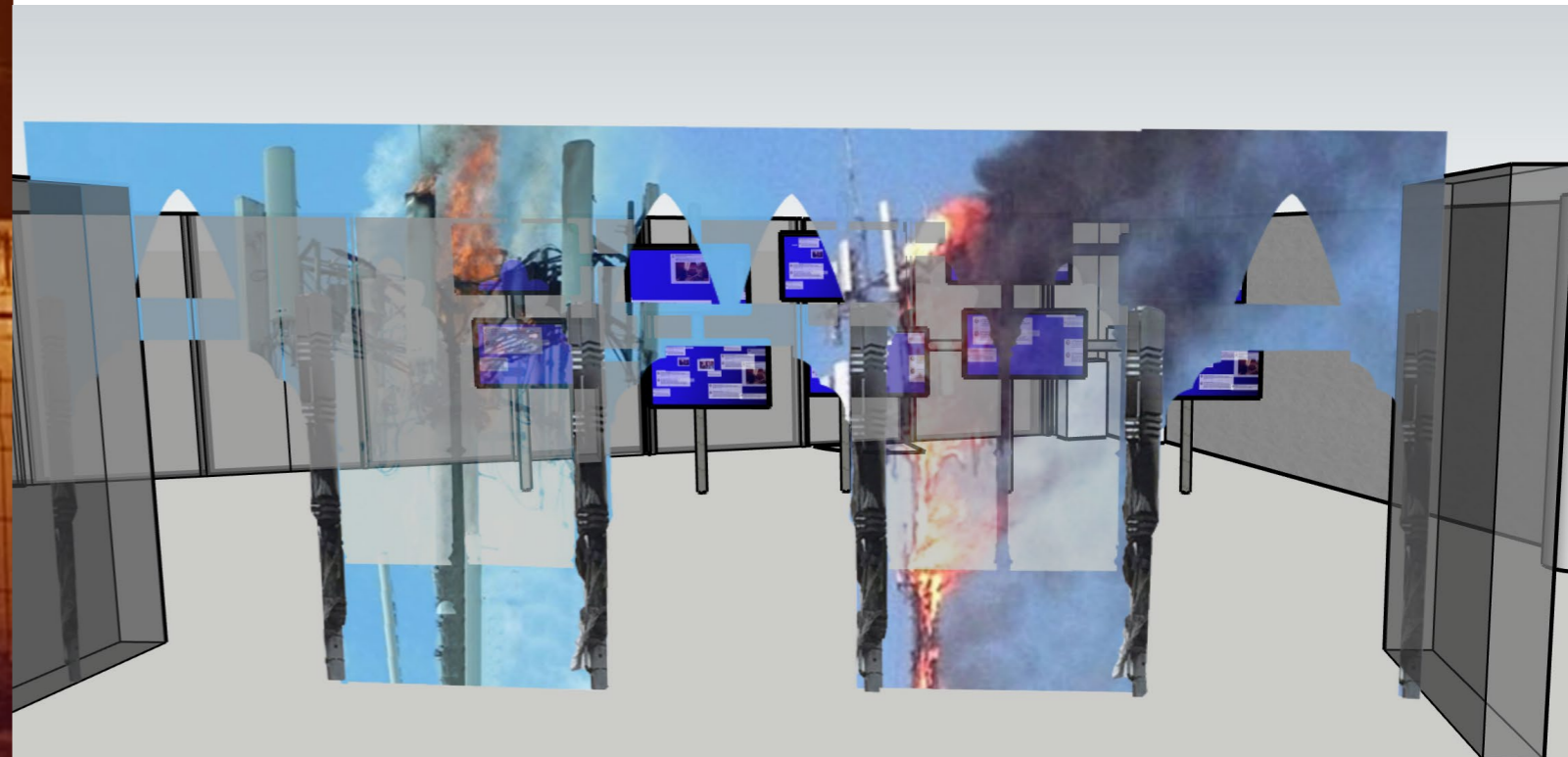
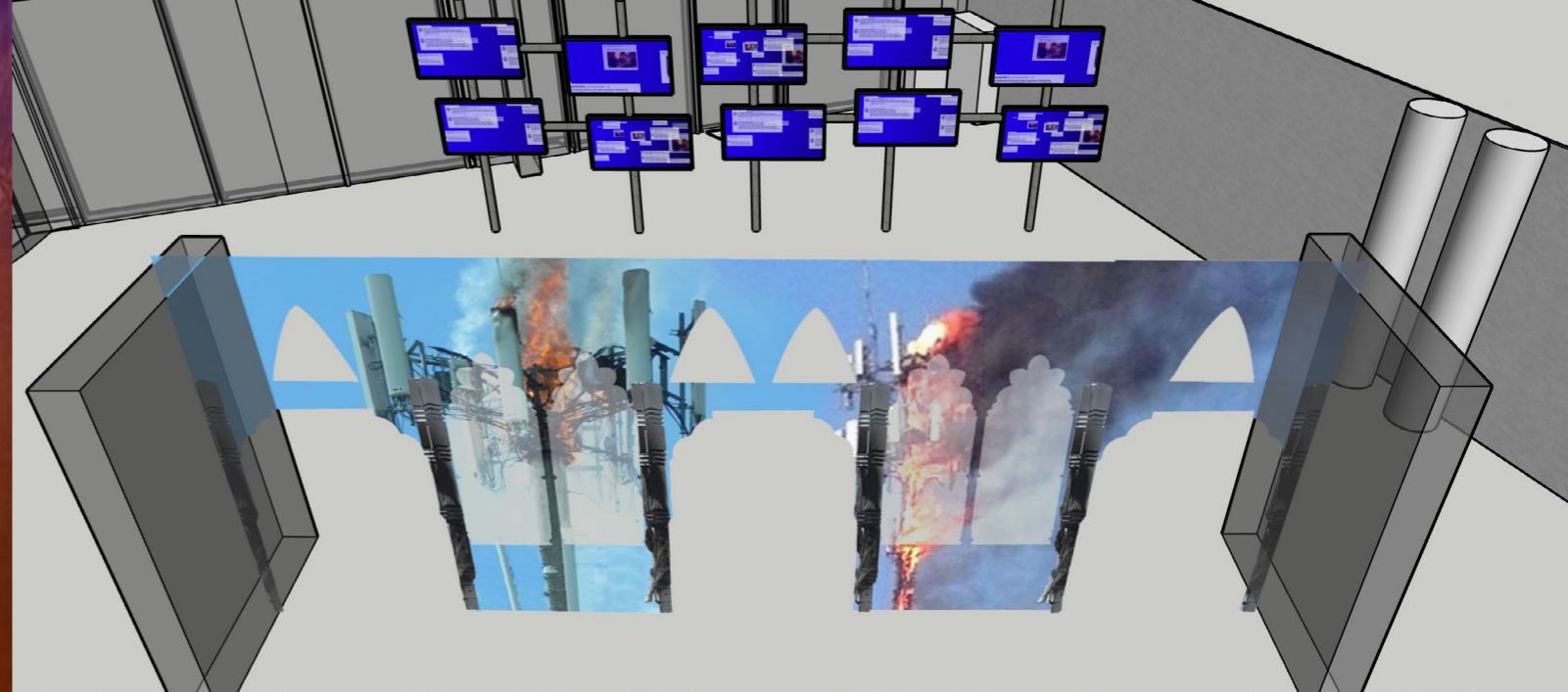
Rood Screen

A rood screen, which in a church separates the clergy from the congregation, will be projected onto a cut-out mesh sheet across the centre of the gallery. This liminal barrier acts as a transition between profane and sacred; the profane representations of the 5G heretics in the stained-glass panels are on the floor by the entrance, and the sacred screens containing the absolved confessions appear on the other side. The projection will contain videos of burning 5G towers; the liminoid act performed by many across the country during the pandemic, shedding the normal constraints of society and uniting in communion for the destructive ritual process.

The burning of the 5G idols is a form of iconoclasm, which through the history of Christianity was used not by different religions, but largely by those with sectarian divides under the same religion: comparable to the Protestant iconoclasm of Catholic iconography. An important thing to note was that many of the destroyed towers were actually 4G masts, indicating this could also have been a general desire to cause anarchy rather than targeted destruction.



Rood screen at Long Sutton Church, Somerset.



Jesus in the Matrix

During the research process, I came across a number of Christian games, which were intriguing in their narrative style and unfinished feel. One game called Jesus in the Matrix is based on the idea of Christianity in modernity, where the matrix is 'the damned world where people are spiritually dead and have no relationship with God. The lied worldview in front of their eyes prevents them from seeing the truth'. The game is an RPG (Role Playing Game) in which the player is quizzed on various bible passages and must restart every time they answer a question wrong. The website encourages players to 'activate the playing cards in the RL (real-life)' by printing them out and spreading the message to non-believers. Due to lack of funds, the game is half-finished, and the website asks for donors to contribute so it can become an MMORPG (Massively Multiplayer Online Role-Playing Game). The lines between RL and the game are blurred. In a Dataist world, how could data be carried forth into the RL? Would disciples of the faith be the tech moguls of Silicon Valley?

In the exhibition, a prayer kneeler will be installed on the opposite side of the confession booth in front of a desktop computer where viewers will be able to play Jesus in the Matrix. I found that whilst there is the quiz element to the game, there is a lack of obvious purpose, and outside the small area with the quiz cards, the player is free to roam into uncharted territory. I would be interested to see if visitors tried to answer the questions or if, like me, they run off into the matrix.



Hymns

Part of the overwhelming transcendent atmosphere in a church or cathedral are the atmospheric sounds, which are instantly recognisable as being inside a sacred space. The echo, reverberating off the high ceilings and stone walls, is often heard alongside choirs practicing or being played through the speakers. This has the effect of making the visitors feel small, sublimely insignificant, or intimidated by the power and might of the surroundings.

To translate this feeling into the arebyte gallery, I want to transform the space sonically, using two microphones to collect the voices of visitors as they enter. These live sounds will then be replayed at the back of the room with added echo, done using a reverb pedal. This live sound will be accompanied by a soundscape, using modified choral voices, whispers, organ ambience, and short hymns, all distorted through digital editing software.

The gallery will be filled with incense such as frankincense and myrrh to fully complete the sensory overload felt in a church.



Altar Servers

Collaborators and Technical Support

Joseph Marcus

Joe is a musician and producer who will create a soundscape for the exhibition. The track will be modified choral, ambient sounds, which will incorporate whispers and voices along with digital instruments. This sonic layer of the show will immerse the viewer in the enforced-transcendental environment.

Daniela Maria Geraci

Daniela is an artist working with live sound, and she will work with me to capture live audio of visitors which will then be played back in an augmented, cathedral-style echo.

Jubal Green

Jubal is a technician from Leeds University with experience in building large structures; he will assist me in the construction of the confession booth.

Rob Prouse

Rob is a programmer that works frequently with arebyte and will work on the Twitter API which will form the 'confessional' aspect of the show. This will involve displaying the results of a hashtag on the 10 screens at the back of the gallery, so viewers can see their social posts in real-time, along with other posts from internet users around the globe also using the hashtag.

Mark Stokes

Mark will provide technical support for the projection mapping of the rood screen, which I will have designed.



Click here to listen to a sample of the soundscape by Joseph Marcus

Ceremonies

Events

Christian Games Online Marathon:

Using the desktop set up in the gallery space, as well as another computer, attendees will be invited to play games such as Jesus in the Matrix, which informed a big part of my research, found on the website christian-games-online.com. This site also includes various other games, including TPS (Third Person Shooter) games, with the common objective of protecting and sharing 'the truth'.

Film Screening and Q&A:

One event would be to show films that focus on internet culture, storytelling, and religion by artists that are from some of the local art scenes outside of London that I have been involved in, namely Leicester and Leeds, and possibly some from wider Europe. This would be followed by a Q&A with the artists, either at the gallery or via video call, depending on corona restrictions and where the artists are. I plan to invite artists such as Courtney Askey, an artist from Leicester making work about cyber-feminism, Lily Lavorato, an artist working in Leeds creating videos about her father's adoption of religion, D'arcy Darilmaz, an artist based in Leeds making work about memorialisation in the digital age, and Iisa Lepistö, an artist from Helsinki working with surrealist narratives in video installations.

Youth Film Workshop:

Welcoming in a school group from the local area, I will host a workshop that uses chroma-key technology to create a short film on the subject of digital religions, which we will write and create together as a group. Another iteration of this workshop could be hosted on Zoom using a google drive containing a folder of backgrounds, which we could use to create a short clip. The results of this would be displayed in the gallery on the screen next to the office.

Contingency

Plans

With the threat of another lockdown and other unforeseen events, I have taken into consideration a few alternative options:

Confession booth iPad:

If people are unable to get to the gallery or if it is not possible to use a communal iPad, I will give viewers the login details to the exhibition Twitter account, so they can have free-reign over their confessions. This would be an interesting experiment but would of course involve monitoring for any unsavoury posts.

Confession booth:

Should the booth prove too difficult to construct; it could be changed for a simple partition with a kneeler on each side.

Social Media Wall Display:

If the social media wall is too difficult to customise aesthetically, I will use a more standard layout like the grid used in corporate events. In the worst case scenario, the screens at the back could just show a twitter feed of the hashtag search.

Budget

EXPENDITURE					
Artistic fees	Fee	Unit	Amount		Total
Artist Fee	£1 500,00				£1 500,00
Rood screen projection production	£100,00	per day	8		£800,00
Resin Stained glass production	£100,00	per day	7		£700,00
Public Engagement Programme - Workshop Leader Fee	£130,00	per day	1		£130,00
					£3 130,00
Production costs					
Exhibition - Freelance Creative Collaborators Fee	Fee	Unit	Amount	Delivery	Total
Joe Holley - composition soundscape	£500,00	per track	1		£500,00
Daniela Geraci - live sound engineer	£100,00	per day	2		£200,00
Mark Stokes - projection mapping technical support	£150,00	per day	1		£150,00
Jubal Green - Confession booth production	£100,00	per day	2		£200,00
Programmer - Rob Prouse	£150,00	per day	2		£300,00
					£1 350,00
Exhibition - Material, props	Price	Unit	Amount	Delivery	Total
Sharkstooth Gauze - 6.1m	£58,02	per sheet	1		£58,02
					£58,02
Epoxy Resin	£124,95	per 3L	2		£249,90
Jesmonite	£24,49	per 1.4kg	1	£7,75	£24,49
Silicone	£20,80	per 1kg	1	£5,20	£26,00
Resin tint	£9,95	per box of 10	1	£7,08	£17,03
Air Dry Clay	£13,50	per 12.5kg	1	£7,99	£21,49
Acrylic sheet 60x60x0.5cm	£37,28	per sheet	3		£111,84
					£450,75
Kneeler - eBay	£25,00	per unit	1	£10,00	£35,00
Frankincense & Myrrh Incense Sticks	£1,18	per unit	6	£2,50	£9,58
					£44,58
Plywood Board (L)2.44m (W)1.22m (T)9mm	£24,00	per board	6	£30,00	£174,00
Timber (L)2.4m (W)89mm (T)38mm	£7,23	per unit	10		£72,30
Silver No Fix Curtain Pole 100-150cm	£8,00	per unit	1		£8,00
Contingency	£63,35		1		£63,35
					£317,65
Equipment	Price	Unit	Amount	Delivery	Total
Microphone rental - Shure SM57	£35,00	per month	1		£35,00
Microphone rental - Shure SM58	£59,00	per month	1		£59,00
Reverb pedal rental	£55,00	per month	1		£55,00
					£149,00
Total expenditure					£5 500,00

Exhibition Timeline

SEPTEMBER

Call/meeting with Arebyte to discuss project	1 day	Third week
Meeting with collaborators Joe and Daniela	½ day	
Meeting with Claudel	½ day	
Feedback from judging panel	7 days	
Contact schools for events	1 day	Fourth week
Order resin and gauze	1 day	
Contact Rob Prouse	1 day	
Progress report with arebyte	1 day	

OCTOBER

Tutorial with arebyte artist	1 day	First Week
Introduction to Stelios for booklet design	1 day	
Contact artists for film screening	2 days	
Make first resin panel	2 days	Second week
Progress report with arebyte	1 day	
Plan school workshop	3 days	Third week
Send tech requirements to arebyte	1 day	
Start designing rood screen projection	4 days	Fourth week
Finalise booklet design with Stelios	1 day	

NOVEMBER

Make second and third resin panel	4 days	First week
Meeting with Jubal for confession booth	½ day	
Finalise events	2 days	Second week
Contact Rob Prouse about social media wall	½ day	
Start website design	2 days	Third week
Make fourth resin panel	1 day	
Order kneeler	1 day	Fourth week
Make rood screen from gauze	2 days	

DECEMBER

Order materials for confession booth	1 day	First week
Reserve microphones and reverb pedal	1 day	
Jubal to construct confession booth	2 days	Second week
Finalise rood screen projection	2 days	
Progress report with arebyte	1 day	Third week

JANUARY

Deliver confession booth to gallery	1 day	First week
Install confession booth	1 day	
Install rood screen	1 day	
Mark Stokes to assist with projection mapping	1 day	
Rob Prouse to assist with social media wall	1 day	
Daniela to install mics and reverb pedal	2 days	Second week
Finalising and testing period	3 days	
Exhibition opening 15 th Jan – 28 th Feb		

Curriculum Vitae

S

arah

Danaher is an artist working with the antagonism between the internet and religion, in that the internet can be used to occupy time in a purposeless, mindless way: the eternal scroll replaces the pursuit of eternal life.

She uses the humour of her experiences growing up in a large Irish Catholic family, questioning the underlying power at play in the domestic setting. Predominantly working in video, sculpture and installation, her current interests are the world of post-truth online, the echo-chambers of communities based around a set of beliefs, and the effect on identity when these subjective truths come into conflict.

Based in Leicester, she has exhibited internationally in Marseille, Barcelona, Moscow, and across the UK, and recently completed a graduate residency at The Art House in Wakefield.

Awards & Residencies

- The Art House Graduate Residency*
Wakefield, February 2020.
- Best Collective Award: Free Range Shows*, London, July 2019.
- Two Queens Summer School Residency*
Leicester, August 2017.

Selected Group Shows

2020

The Art House Graduate Residency Showcase
Wakefield.

2019

- Spread the Mustard* - Freehold Projects.
- This is a gift to* - The Brunswick, Leeds.
- Ones to Watch* - Sunny Bank Mills, Farsley.
- Letters of Love* - Hyde Park Book

2018

- I Like = I Prayer* - University of Leeds.
- Wish you were here* - University of Leeds
- Certified, Fresh, Free-Range Art*
- Part of Barcelona Loop Cityscreen Festival, La Cera 13, Barcelona.
- Space is the Place* - Atelier Hyph, Marseille.
- Uncommon Ground* - Friche Belle de Mai, Marseille.

2017

- Eh?* - Two Queens, Leicester.
- Finding Both Your Hands* - Assembly House, Leeds.
- Personal Space* - Art Hostel, Leeds.

Film Screenings

- 'Cough Like Nobody's Watching'*
Anharmonic Film Festival, August 2020.
- 'Busy Hands'*
Freehold Artist Film Screening on the theme of 'Becoming', Leeds, April 2019.
- 'Life's a Beach and Then You Die'*
- Leeds Big Screen in Millennium Square, throughout December 2018.
- SiCinéma Film Festival at Café des Images Cinéma, Caen, France, May 2018.

Education

- 2015-19** First Class BA Hons Degree in **Fine Art with History of Art**, University of Leeds
- 2017-18** Erasmus+ exchange year, École supérieure des beaux-arts de Marseille
- 2014-15** Distinction in Foundation in Art and Design, De Montfort University