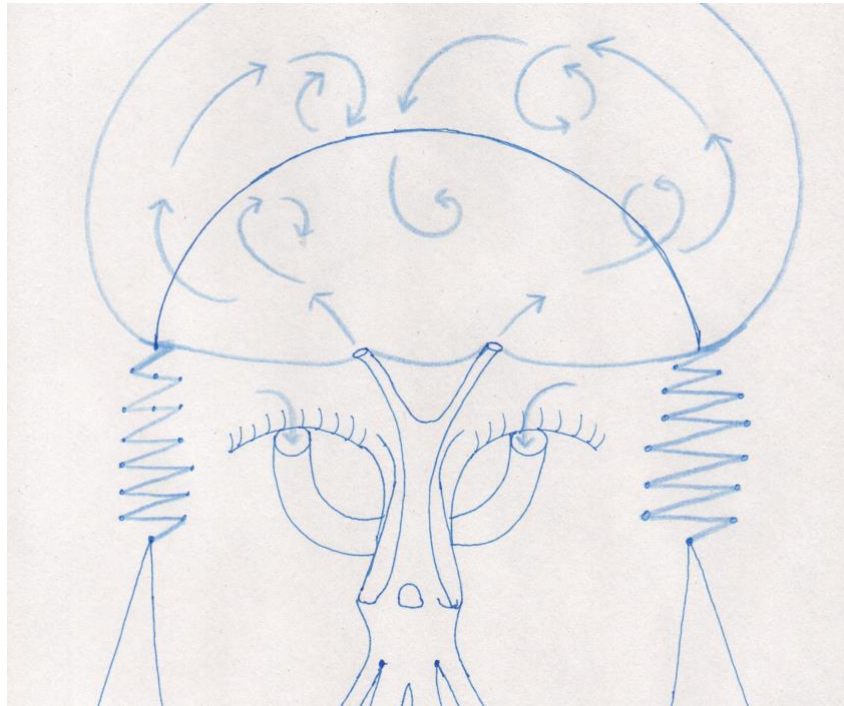


# G A S W O R K S

PRESS RELEASE

**Eduardo Navarro: (*breathspace*)**

1 October - 20 December 2020



Eduardo Navarro, *Breathing drawing*, 2019 (detail). Courtesy of the artist.

Gasworks presents the first UK solo exhibition by Buenos Aires-based artist Eduardo Navarro. His work moves away from representation, instead creating sensorial experiences with the potential to induce a radical transformation of the self and others.

In recent years, Navarro has sought to adopt the slow metabolism of a reptile, experimented with ways for dancers to embody the physical properties of light, and invited a large group of performers to animate a mechanical octopus, in order for them to become part of its decentralised nervous system.

First scheduled for April 2020, Navarro's original plans for the exhibition at Gasworks consisted of transforming the gallery into a living, breathing organism. Developed in the months preceding the Covid-19 outbreak, his immersive installation in the form of a gigantic lung was designed for visitors to synchronise their most vital functions with one another, offering a space for collective meditation and oceanic breathing. But the construction of Navarro's installation would coincide with the onset of a global pandemic with unprecedented effects on our lives.

As the exhibition was postponed until further notice, Navarro made a habit of drawing every day during the lockdown in Buenos Aires. In his words, this practice enabled him to 'relocate the studio to inside my own head'. Produced in self-isolation, the one hundred drawings featured in the exhibition became a portal between unknown dimensions and timelines, past and future visions, unrealised and impossible ideas.

Instead of looking back at what the exhibition could have been, Navarro's drawings resist any melancholy towards the possibilities foreclosed by the pandemic. Inspired by quantum physics, according to which information in the universe cannot be created nor ever destroyed, his drawings metabolise the original exhibition and enact its transformative spirit in a more intimate language.

Sitting in a corner, the viewer encounters *Self-Doll* (2020), a stuffed humanoid covered in orange fleece. Navarro's soft and cuddly robot is fitted with a phone compartment, providing a sense of physical warmth in long-distance communications, where *Self-Doll* stands in for the caller.

This work was conceived as an emotional support tool for children. However, in a time of strict distancing regulations, *Self-Doll* has become a surrogate for the artist, acting as Navarro's proxy in the gallery and for public events. Throughout the exhibition the artist will communicate through the doll at random times, inviting conversations with the audience.

Projected in the second gallery, a hand-drawn animation features a colossal head with a bellows mechanism, reminiscent of Navarro's unrealised plans to build a large-scale breathing device at Gasworks. Like the universe after the Big Bang, the head expands and contracts at regular intervals. The cyclical nature of Navarro's cosmology is highlighted in the film's soundtrack, a recording of the artist's breathing during a meditation session.

As the sound spills into the main gallery with each exhalation, Navarro's breathing connects the works in the exhibition, encouraging viewers to sync their biorhythms with one another.

Eduardo Navarro's exhibition is commissioned and produced by Gasworks. The online public programme accompanying the exhibition is supported by Vauxhall One.

Gasworks commissions are supported by Catherine Petitgas and Gasworks Exhibitions Supporters.

**Free admission. Please book your visit online.**

**For high resolution images visit:** <http://www.gasworks.org.uk/about-us/press/> or email [sheena@gasworks.org.uk](mailto:sheena@gasworks.org.uk)

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**Listings Information:**

**Gasworks**

**Free admission**

**Open Weds - Sun 12-6pm**

[www.gasworks.org.uk](http://www.gasworks.org.uk)

**155 Vauxhall St, London SE11 5RH**

**Facebook/ Twitter/ Instagram/ Vimeo/ Soundcloud: @GasworksLondon**

**URL:** <https://bit.ly/navarro-breathspace> / **Hashtags:** #EduardoNavarro #breathspace #GasworksLondon

**PLEASE NOTE:** Free tickets are available via online booking in half hour slots. We recommend booking as those without pre-booked tickets may have to wait to enter the exhibition. We have put new health and safety measures in place to safeguard the welfare of both staff and visitors, and a maximum of 6 people can enter the gallery.

**Editor's Notes:**

**About Eduardo Navarro:** is an artist born in Buenos Aires. Recent solo exhibitions include MAC Niterói, Rio de Janeiro (2019); The Drawing Centre, New York (2018); Der TANK, Basel (2017); and Museo Tamayo, Mexico City (2016). His work has featured at Castello de Rivoli, Turin (2018); TBA21-Academy, Vienna (2017); the São Paulo Biennial (2016 and 2010); the New Museum Triennial, New York (2015); the Sharjah Biennial (2015); MALBA, Buenos Aires (2015); and Mercosul Biennial (2013 and 2009).

**About Gasworks:** For over twenty years Gasworks has played a unique role in the contemporary visual arts sector by working at the intersection between UK and international practices and debates. It does this by providing studios for London-based artists; commissioning emerging UK-based and international artists to present their first major exhibitions in London; and developing a highly-respected international residencies programme, mainly working with artists based outside Europe and North America. All programmes are accompanied by events and participatory workshops that engage local and international audiences with artists and their work.

Gasworks is also the hub of Triangle Network, an international network of small-scale arts organisations and projects that support and disseminate the work of emerging artists through artist-led workshops, residencies, exhibitions and outreach events. Gasworks and Triangle Network are registered as a charity in the UK under 'Triangle Arts Trust' and all their activities are free to the public.

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Supported using public funding by  
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