

Exhibition Review—Sam Ghanous: "your golf course made my GPU" at YveYang, New York City

By Yihsuan Chiu June 30, 2025

Sam Ghanous's "your golf course made my GPU" opens with an absurd yet coherent pairing: luxury sports and computational force. The unlikely bridge between these two worlds is sand, the elemental grain that shapes both golf courses and the graphical processing units powering our devices. Ghanous's inquiry into silica goes deeper into how Earth's materials underpin the systems we use to measure, map, and control it. When U.S. customs in New Jersey held his silicon wafer-based pieces for a week before the exhibition opened, the works became entangled in the very networks of control they examine.

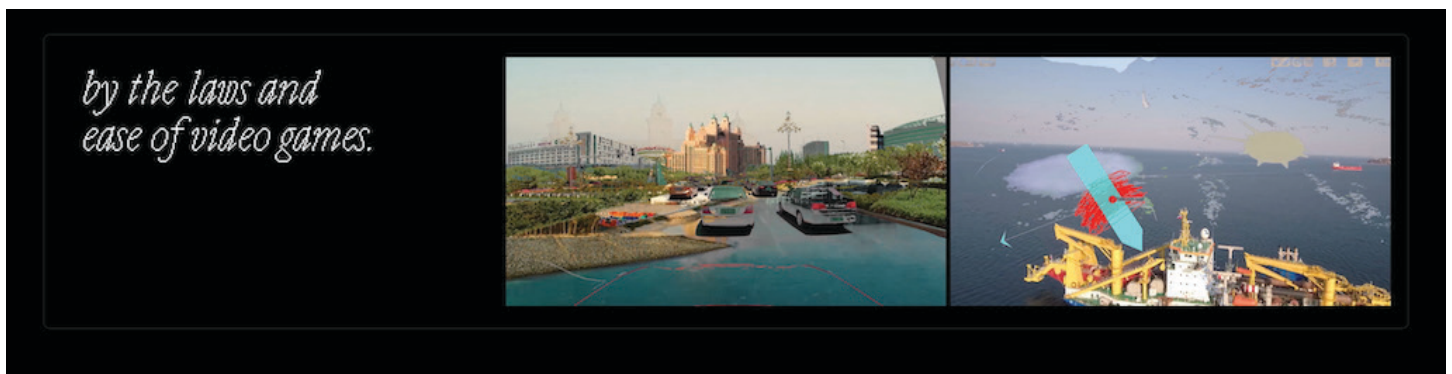


(Installation view of Sam Ghanous: your golf course made my GPU. Courtesy of YveYang Gallery.)

At the gallery's center, a three-channel video arcs across the space, emitting a looping techno beat and drifting dialogue between an AI-generated voice of a young girl and the artist himself. The artist chose the child's voice to bring a perspective of naivety and non-judgment to the world's development, if that is indeed what has been depicted in the film. She asks, "Is Tiger Woods cutting through pulverized digital promises?" Here, Ghantous reveals his method: using the recognizable to illuminate the weight of our digital world.

The artist wants us to understand the material basis of our networked world, yet he speaks in the language of poetry and dream logic. The knowledge here is for sensing. His narrators guide us through semiconductor manufacturing to sand dredging, but the real instruction happens atmospherically, through composite footage melting into digital graphics. This creates a disorienting temporal flow as viewers find themselves caught between industrial time scales and digital immediacy. These shifting visual scales collapse fact and fiction, making visceral the feeling of living inside systems we barely comprehend.

The video shows Chinese trawlers "editing the map," dredging sand from ocean floors to construct artificial cities where new forms of civilization will take root, shaped by both geopolitical ambition and digital infrastructure. Ghantous overlays the industrial footage with digital graphics—visually resembling modeling and video game interfaces—those same tools we once used to build imaginary worlds. "It is inventing worlds from earth," the video intones. This collision exposes a reversal. Where we once extracted sand to create our digital tools, we now deploy those tools to remake the earth itself. The virtual has stopped mimicking reality and begun commanding it. Through sand dredging, old settlements disappear as new ones emerge, each extraction causing geopolitical tensions and displacement in service of what the narrators call our "silicon paradise."



(Still from Sam Ghantous, your golf course made my GPU (2025). Courtesy of the artist.)



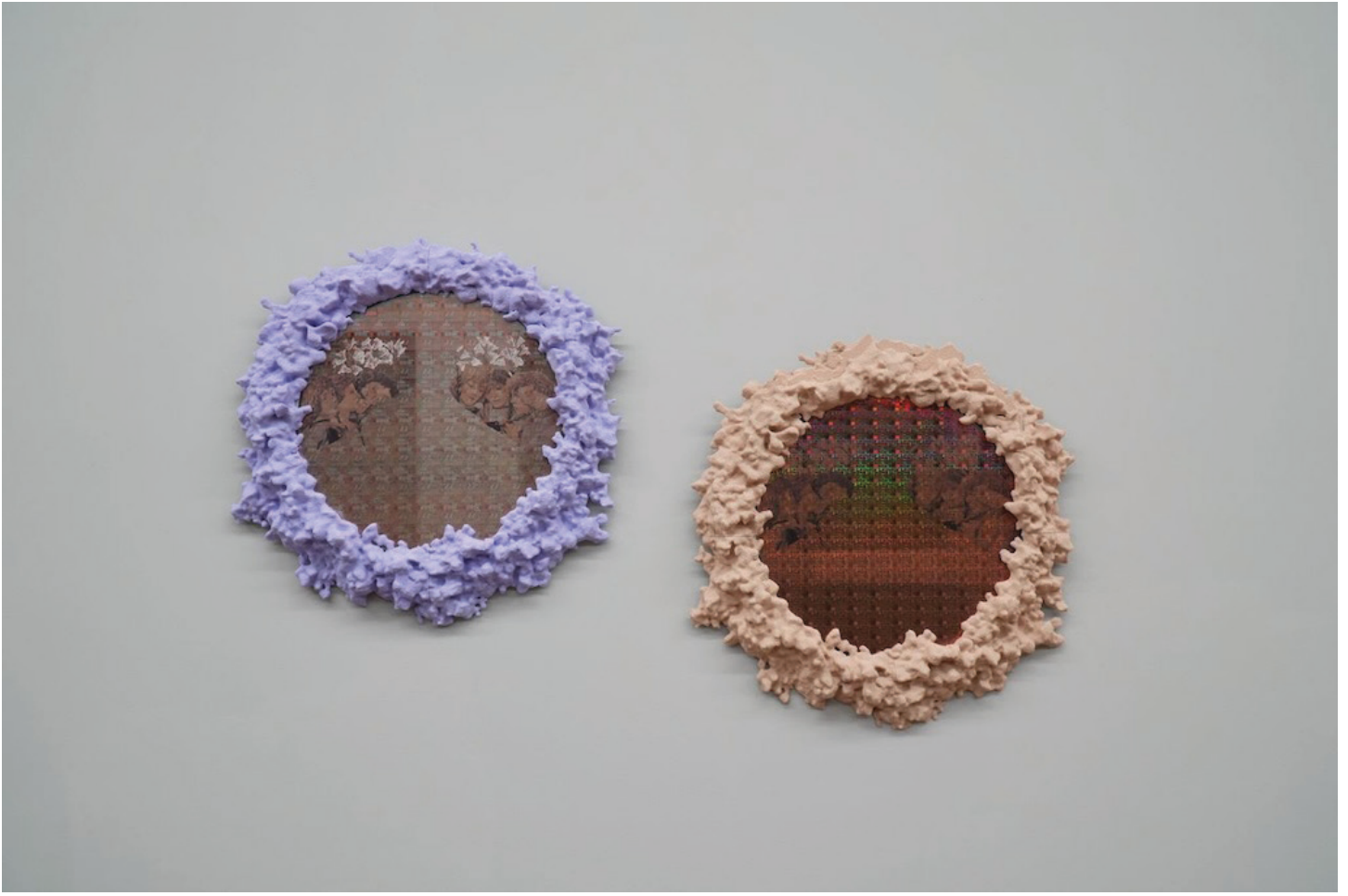
(Still from Sam Ghantous, your golf course made my GPU (2025). Courtesy of the artist.)

The video spirals into questions of temporality. Following the circuit of mineral extraction, Ghantous extends the inquiry toward time. The quartz crystals that synchronize our devices also govern the rhythm of networked existence. "Must we discipline the Earth to discipline time?" the AI child asks. The minerals that measure our days also measure our displacement from natural cycles, binding us to the mechanical pulse of progress itself. This reveals the true synchronicity at work—one that transforms earth into time, and time into control.

Accompanying the video are the wafer-based works held in customs, which are styled as mirrors or portals. These reflective pieces reveal the metallic layers that make computation possible. Renaissance figures appear UV-printed on actual semiconductor wafers, their coral-like frames created through 3D printing—technology printed onto the canvas of technology itself. Across the exhibition, synthetic colors and mechanical textures pulse across the walls, creating an atmosphere both seductive and disorienting. What emerges is a portrait of now, rendered through the grammar of the digital.



(Installation view of Sam Ghantous: your golf course made my GPU. Courtesy of YveYang Gallery.)



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Ghanous doesn't offer solutions to the complexities he maps. Instead, he succeeds in creating an uneasy and alert atmosphere that exposes the accelerated rhythms shaping our present—making visible the supply chains, trade routes, and the gradually digitized reality we half-understand. The exhibition captures the emotional texture of our technological moment. The customs incident becomes the perfect metaphor for how the exhibition operates, not standing outside the systems it examines but embedded within the same infrastructures it critiques. In making the golf course speak to the GPU, Ghanous offers us a way to sense the weight of our digital promises built grain by grain on extracted earth.

Exhibition information:

your golf course made my GPU

Solo exhibition by Sam Ghanous at YveYang Gallery, New York

May 02, 2025 - July 05, 2025