

RIFUGIO DIGITALE

SQUAM OCEAN

August Quinn

23.07 - 11.09.2026

From **July 23** to **September 11**, 2026, **Rifugio Digitale** presents ***SQUAM OCEAN***, a new solo exhibition by August Quinn. Through animations, imagery, and a complex narrative universe, the artist constructs a sci-fi ecosystem populated by artificial creatures, exploring the relationship between identity, technology, and the digital imagination. The opening will take place on **Thursday, July 23 at 6:30 PM**, preceded by a **press preview** scheduled for **6:00 PM**.

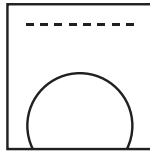
The exhibition, curated by **Wills Baker** and with artistic direction by **Laura Andreini**, is presented in collaboration with **Forma Edizioni**, with the support of **Traent**, **Boyarski Fritz LLP**, and **Creative Intell**, and produced by **Quinn Vision**.

SQUAM OCEAN by August Quinn is set in an imaginary planetary system inhabited by a technologically advanced civilization that has transcended the need for consumerism. Seeking to continue exploring the fundamental experience of existence, this society has artificially created new life forms designed to inhabit a socially engineered and simplified condition. Suspended between apparent perfection and subtle unease, these beings inhabit a vast ocean planet where every hierarchy is visible, yet conflict is absent.

Quinn's planetary system emerges from a precise and historically identifiable cultural heritage. Born in 1999, Quinn belongs to the first generation raised within the media landscape of what could be described as "mid-poly" 3D animation: an aesthetic window that opened after the strict limitations of digital rendering in the 1980s and closed before photorealism became the undisputed goal of digital media. His visual universe is shaped by the imagery of the GameCube and Wii, of Super Mario Sunshine and Luigi's Mansion, alongside the independent, self-produced animations of early YouTube, when a short jingle or a looping animation could become the focal point of a shared visual culture.

The result is an imaginative universe populated by husks, animated figures that interact, observe, and express emotions, accompanied by the hypnotic rhythm of contemporary airport music. This visual language draws as much from cinema as it does from video games. Quinn's artistic formation was shaped by *Men in Black*, *Blade Runner*, *Starship Troopers*, and Ridley Scott's *Alien* as the foundations of his science-fiction sensibility: an imaginary realm in which alien intelligences appear bureaucratic and lived-in, embedded within a believable world rather than existing as mere decoration; civilizations with their own politics, systems, and reasons for being, however unfathomable they may be.

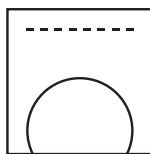
The fundamental rule of ***SQUAM OCEAN*** – according to which these creatures do not compete with one another because they are avatars rather than autonomous organisms – appears less like a fictional convention



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than a controlled experiment, staged within the aesthetic framework of early YouTube. The artist is explicit: in the exhibition, nothing attacks or kills. The only behavior that comes close to conflict is a creature hiding from another, and even the hierarchy suggested in the videos – from simple stone fish to apex predators, from primitive forms to almost divine beings – is never conceived as leading to violence.

Rather than depicting a possible future, *SQUAM OCEAN* constructs an ecosystem in which technology, visual memory, and collective imagination merge. Through the historically situated language of mid-poly 3D animation and post-internet visual culture, the artist reflects on the relationship between creator and creation, between simulation and experience, showing how even an artificial world can become a tool for questioning the human condition.



RIFUGIO DIGITALE

Florence, via della Fornace 41
July 23, 2026

6.00 - 6.30 pm

Press preview in the presence of artistic director Laura Andreini and artist August Quinn, at Rifugio Digitale.

Event by reservation writing to info@rifugiodigitale.it

6.30 pm

Opening to the public at Rifugio Digitale Firenze, via della Fornace 41

SQUAM OCEAN

August Quinn

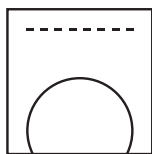
July 23 – September 11 2026

wed-sat. 11 am - 7 pm

Rifugio Digitale

via della Fornace, 41

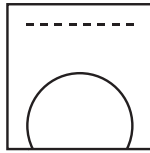
50125 - Florence (FI)



RIFUGIO DIGITALE



August Quinn



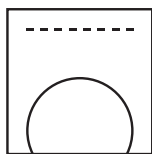
RIFUGIO DIGITALE

August Quinn

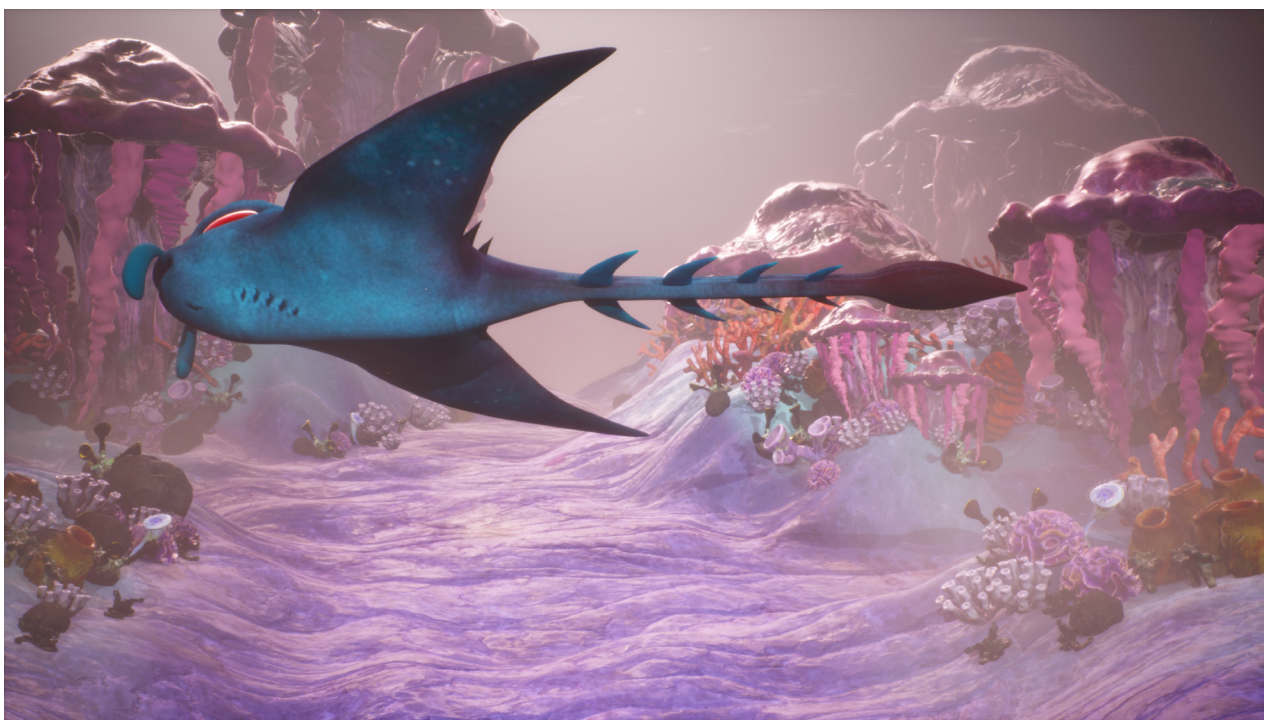
Born in New York in 1999, he is a painter and multidisciplinary artist whose practice reflects a generation shaped by the early years of the Internet, underground culture, and a highly stylized media landscape.

He studied Painting at Central Saint Martins in London before earning a BFA in Media Arts with a specialization in 3D Animation from Emily Carr University of Art + Design in Vancouver. His practice moves seamlessly between painting and digital media, placing equal emphasis on 3D modeling, character design, and animation.

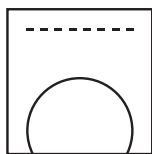
His artworks and animation projects are produced through Quinn Vision, the independent media company he founded in 2022. Drawing equally from underground and mainstream culture, Quinn's work exists at the intersection of personal memory and the collective history of post-Internet pop culture, where the imagery of childhood collides with the anxieties of postmodern life.



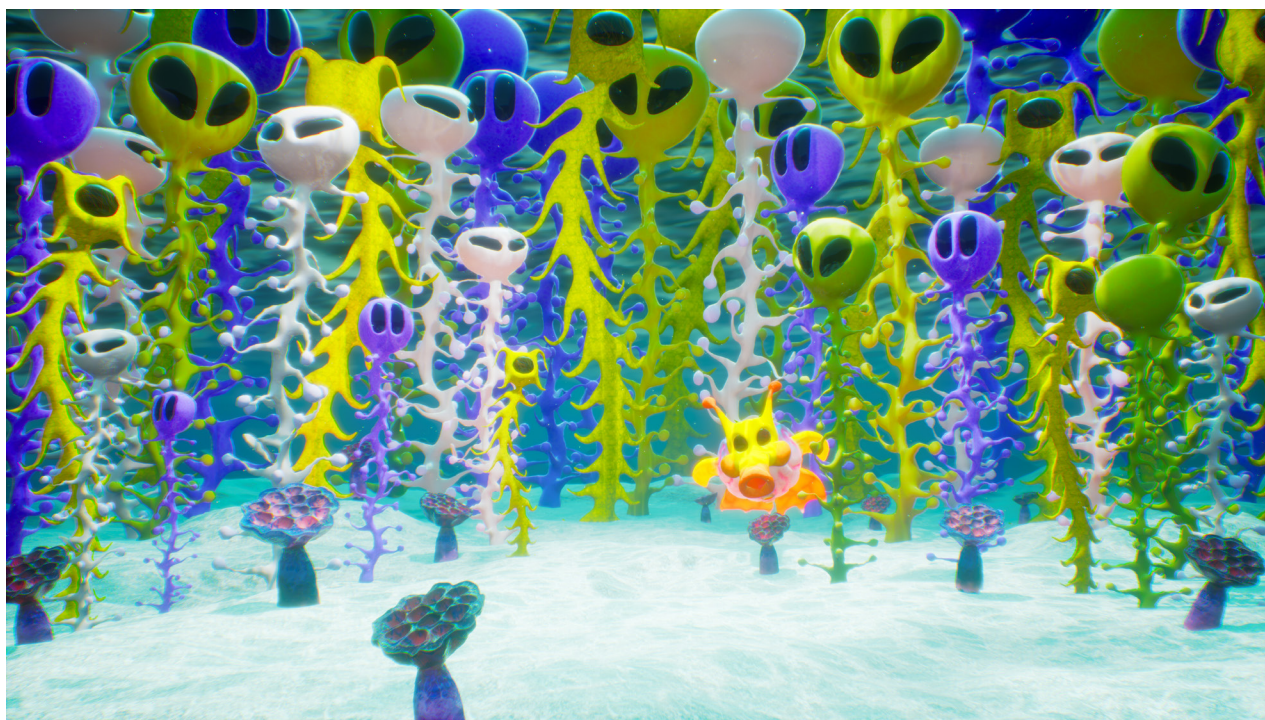
RIFUGIO DIGITALE



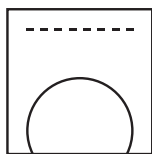
August Quinn, *Flaura & Fauna of Squam*, 2026



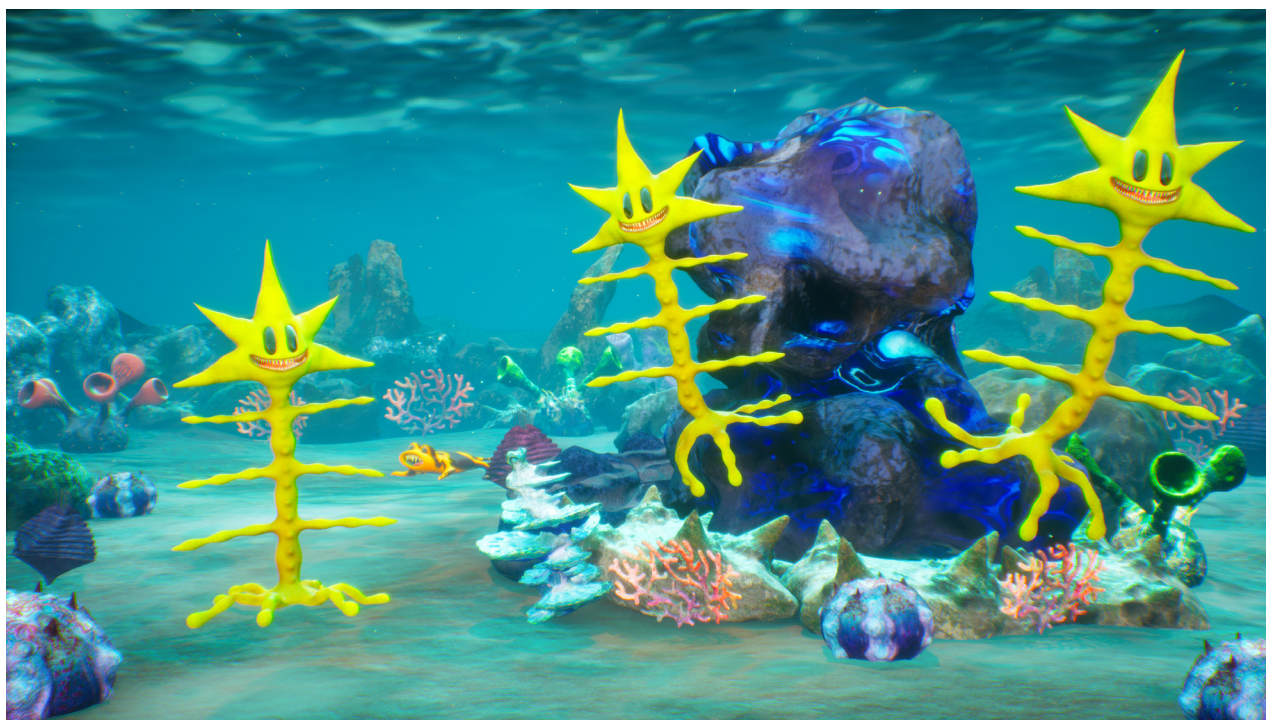
RIFUGIO DIGITALE



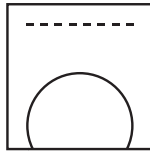
August Quinn, *Pengufa*, 2026



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August Quinn, *SeaweedGuys*, 2026



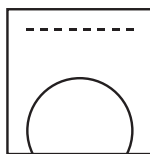
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Wills Baker

He is a curator, art advisor, and art historian whose career began at Hauser & Wirth in 2013, before continuing with positions at White Cube and within the collection of the Executive Vice President of Goldman Sachs. Between 2014 and 2019, he oversaw acquisitions and curated a significant collection of twentieth-century Japanese art. He later served as Director at Artvisor in London and, more recently, as Senior Advisor to the Estate of Peter Beard.

His curatorial work has been presented by institutions including the Swiss Institute, the Zabłudowicz Collection, and Pioneer Works, and has also encompassed projects for Galerie Eva Presenhuber in Zurich and, most recently, Josiah McElheny's exhibition *Aeon* (αἰών) at the Church of the Heavenly Rest in New York.

His exhibitions have been reviewed in "Purple Magazine" and "Art Observed". Baker holds a joint Master's degree in Art History and Business Management from New York University, and subsequently conducted postgraduate research in material culture at the Bard Graduate Center and Columbia University. In 2017, he also completed a curatorial residency at the School for Curatorial Studies in Venice.



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August Quinn
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AN EXHIBITION PROMOTED BY
Associazione Rifugio Digitale E.T.S.

PRODUCED BY
Quinn Vision

IN COLLABORATION WITH
Forma Edizioni
Traent

WITH THE SUPPORT OF
Traent
Boyarski Fritz LLP

ART DIRECTION
Laura Andreini

CURATED BY
Wills Baker

SCIENTIFIC COORDINATION
Beatrice Papucci
Ester Menichelli

EXTERNAL RELATIONS
Irene Borsotti

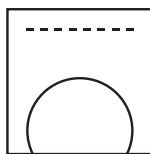
EXHIBITION TEXTS
Wills Baker

MUSIC OF
Mason Dreiling

PRESS OFFICE AND COMMUNICATION
Associazione Rifugio Digitale E.T.S.
Niccolò Natali
Giulia Guasti
Eugenio Pincelli

GRAPHIC AND SET-UP PROJECT
Veronica Paoli
Vitoria Muzi
Mattia Gerardi

VIDEO INSTALLATION
Associazione Rifugio Digitale E.T.S.



RIFUGIO DIGITALE

Forma Edizioni

Is an editorial (publishing) initiative developed in order to allow the dissemination and knowledge of avenues and experiences belonging to the world of art, architecture photography and more generally, to promote the best research in production and technology, following the changing lifestyles and contemporary living.

Since its foundation in 2010, the catalogue has grown with about twenty titles a year giving "form" to the expressive traces that animate today's cultural debate, deepening both specific areas of knowledge already known to the public, and investigating those intellectual and artistic areas considered, for various reasons, revealing new points of observation of reality. A common feature of each project is the high quality of the product, images, printing, typographic or IT processes used, as well as a targeted diffusion and distribution in places of use, such as specialized bookstores, museum bookshops and exhibition sites, which they add to the normal availability on the net that necessary and indispensable presence in the "sites" where opinions and evaluations of merit are built.

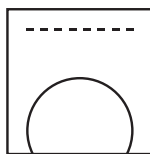
The publications range from, important monographs dedicated to contemporary and renowned architectural works, such as *Cantina Antinori. Chronicle of the construction of a new landscape*, research and insights related to university study issues, catalogues of important exhibitions, such as the one hosted at the Cini Foundation of Venice *EST. Italian travel, city and architecture stories* curated by Luca Molinari or the monographic exhibition hosted at the MAXXI Museum in Rome *Gio Ponti. Love architecture* in 2019.

Exhibitions and events expand the cultural enhancement process that *Forma* sets out to offer to a refined and attentive public. The publishing house is in fact involved in the creation of volumes relating to the exhibitions annually hosted at the Forte di Belvedere in Florence and at the Stefano Bardini Museum and to the monographic exhibitions hosted in private galleries dedicated to artists of the calibre of Alighiero Boetti, Arnaldo Pomodoro, Lucio Fontana and Alberto Burri. There is no shortage of photography and design texts, such as the important monograph dedicated to the work and life of Karim Rashid, or the overview of contemporary Milanese design *The Design City. Milan city laboratory*. The *On the road city* architectural guide series is currently under construction. Mainly focused on contemporary works, each volume investigates the peculiar aspects of the most important cities in the world, proposing a critical reading of future scenarios. The publishing house has counted important collaborations with personalities of high intellectual depth and international fame such as the late Adolfo Natalini, founder architect of Superstudio, Bruno Corà, Luca Massimo Barbero and Sergio Risaliti, art critics and historians, Luca Molinari, architecture critic.

FORMA

Forma Edizioni

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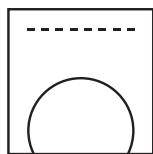
Is a new exhibition space in a former bomb shelter tunnel repurposed as a site devoted to the promotion of digital art, where architecture, design, photography, cinema, literature and all the other multiple forms of art and visual expression find their dimension and interact with one another. It was built on the foundations of an old anti-aircraft tunnel that served from 1943 as a bomb shelter in World War II. It was known as the *Rifugio della Fornace* a safe haven during the tragedy of the war, and now it has been rechristened as the *Rifugio Digitale*, a place of rebirth, where technology meets art, offering a contemporary space where people can explore creativity through the modern language of technology.

The requalification project, handled by Archea Associati, will house digital expressions of every kind, with an eye always on the future and on the new vanguards. In collaboration with the publisher **Forma Edizioni**, it will house exhibitions, but also events and performances related to art, architecture, photography, literature, cinema and other initiatives linked to the digital world. It will show original views and more on the 16 screens positioned along the 33 meters of the tunnel, a new idea for Florence where the connection between art, people and technology generates an intense visual experience, unexpected and interactive. It is a space designed for constant change, always dynamic, with a new and exciting speed that distinguishes it from a traditional art gallery.

Rifugio Digitale occupies an area of 165 square meters and is a versatile structure ideal for organizing exhibitions, events, presentation, but also debates, lectures and simple discussions. It is expected to appeal to a vast public desirous of indulging their interest in ideas and novel cultural experiences right in the heart of Florence.

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Archea Associati, Rifugio Digitale, Firenze, 2022
ph. Pietro Savorelli e Associati