

About Face(less)

'In Between' series kicks off with Ben Hagari

ZAZ Corner, a recently introduced public digital gallery presented by ZAZ10TS that showcases artwork on a large LED billboard in the heart of Times Square, kicks off its latest “In Between” series with artist Ben Hagari and his pandemic-inspired “About Face” collection.

Located on the corner of 41st Street and 7th Avenue, the “In Between” series of video art is a public service sponsored by Tzili Charney, owner of 10 Times Square and founder of ZAZ10TS, in an effort to have the art continue in the area for public viewing.

Hagari is an award-winning artist whose works have been shown in prominent museums around the world. At the center of his project is an expressionless protagonist shown from the back of his head — which is shaved — and a projected face void of all facial features. His attire is worn front side back and his movements are reversed.

“The scenarios portray a mundane existence in a world whose marks have been erased,” Hagari said. “Books have no titles or words, photographs are blanked out, labels are removed; we are left with data. It generates a binary structure: backward and forward, front and rear, serious and funny.”

The video project is shot entirely at home in New York City as the Tel Aviv artist was isolated and stayed in place during the COVID-19 pandemic. The character, constrained by limited expression and space, continues to navigate daily routines. The faceless protagonist found new relevance with everyone around wearing masks, concealing their faces and, inevitably, their facial expressions.

ZAZ Corner features a digitally activated screen with a rotating series of images and videos that individually morph, bringing the art to life for public street viewing. The “In Between” series will feature a rotation of artists and themes that are interspersed between commercial messages every two to three minutes.

“Although New York City has been in a shut-down mode due to the pandemic with galleries and museums closed to visitors, ZAZ Corner continues to bring digital art to the public for viewing safely while social distancing and wearing a mask,” Charney said. “The ‘In Between’ collection will feature artwork on a continuous ongoing basis with inspiring themes and images. Even though museums continue to be shuttered, our intent is that the show must go on and the art can never stop.”



“About Face” by Ben Hagari, photography courtesy of ZAZ10TS