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We live in a world that operates on bits and bytes. Reality has become synthetic, a convergence of the material and the immaterial. The synthetic power of new media art_integrative, interdisciplinary, interactive_expresses the blurred boundary between the physical and the digital. Synthetic Times collects new media art created since 2001 by artists and art collectives from nearly thirty countries. These innovative and groundbreaking works investigate how we perceive reality and what it means to be human on the threshold of human-machine symbiosis.

The artworks in Synthetic Times (which accompanies a milestone exhibition at the National Art Museum in China, an Olympics Cultural Project) explore a trajectory of uncanny visions ranging from the desire to transcend the corporal to the construction of synthetic worlds; from telematic dreaming to transgenic hybrids; from whimsical apparatuses to the deadpan gaze of magnetic fields. They reveal the tension between man and machine, between the animated and the inert, rekindling a discourse about relationships between nature and culture, the perceived and the imagined. Essays by leading new media theorists accompany the artworks, and an appendix documents additional programs held in conjunction with the exhibition.