

# New Year New [Me]ntal Issues

January 23 - January 24, 2026  
13 Grattan St, #402, Brooklyn, New York

**Exhibit Artists**  
Thomas Brisson  
Alex Douglas  
Xubai Li  
Isabella Mebarak  
Evan Peltzman

**Juror**  
Jingyi Yu



Evan Peltzman, *The place but not the time*, 2025, 37.5 x 25.5 x 2"

## Opening Reception: January 23rd, 5-7pm

New York, NY — A Space Gallery is pleased to present “New Year New [Me]ntal Issues”, a juried group exhibition by artists Thomas Brisson, Alex Douglas, Xubai Li, Isabella Mebarak, and Evan Peltzman, whose practices engage with questions of mental strain, time, identity, and emotional persistence within contemporary life. Rather than framing the new year as a moment of renewal, the exhibition foregrounds the ways internal states often remain unresolved, shaped by cycles of pressure, expectation, and repetition.

New Year is often treated as a fresh start, but for many artists, the pressures of creativity, deadlines, and self-expectation mean that nothing truly resets. Burnout, anxiety, stress, self-doubt, and persistent patterns linger even as the calendar changes. “New Year New [Me]ntal Issues” examines these ongoing conditions and presents honest, direct, and personal responses to mental health, time pressure, emotional stagnation, and self-surveillance. Across painting, sculpture, installation, photography, text, sound, and mixed media, the works resist narratives of closure or recovery, instead emphasizing continuity, recursion, and unresolved emotional states as structural realities of contemporary experience.

Thomas Brisson presents *Timelessness of a Traffic Light*, a painting constructed through deconstruction and free association, where narrative is not an endpoint but a set of building blocks for tension and dialogue. A mangled umbrella anchors the composition, symbolizing an object rendered permanently unusable, while streaks of red, green, and yellow reference the repetitive logic of stop, go, and wait. The traffic light becomes a metaphor for cyclical interruption and renewal, echoing fluctuating hopes and fears. Ambiguous horizontal lines suggest steps or thresholds, leaving the direction of progress unresolved and reflecting the instability of perceived forward movement.

Alex Douglas presents "Next Year", a handmade artist book documenting ten years of self-portraits taken from a personal laptop's Photo Booth application alongside handwritten digital journal entries. Repurposed materials from an unfinished high school photography journal form the physical structure of the book, embedding memory and continuity directly into its construction. Divided into modular sections that allow readers to reconfigure timelines, the work explores how personal change remains cyclical rather than linear. Growth, healing, and burden coexist across years, challenging the idea that temporal milestones correspond to internal transformation.

Xubai Li presents *Turn on Light*, an interactive object composed of a front-facing switch panel containing an

unconventional number of functional toggle switches. Rather than activating an external light source, the work redirects attention to the act of switching itself, transforming a utilitarian device into an introspective system. By isolating and multiplying a familiar interface, Li reframes functional design as a site of self-reference, where repetitive action becomes symbolic of internal attempts at control, regulation, and emotional adjustment.

Isabella Mebarak presents the sculptural installation DON'T LET THEM TAKE YOUR WHIMSY, centered on a plaster block cast around personal relationship objects, including clothing, gifts, and shared memorabilia, sealing them into an immovable mass. The sculpture rests on a podium wrapped in memes and personal images, collapsing intimacy into the visual noise of digital culture. The work reflects tensions between emotional attachment and personal ambition, questioning what becomes fixed when choosing career over intimacy, and how softness persists within environments that reward emotional rigidity. Drawing from feminist theory and lived experience, Mebarak positions mental health not as narrative subject matter, but as a persistent structural condition shaping everyday life.

Evan Peltzman contributes The Place but Not the Time, a painting developed from a visit to a ghost town in southern New Jersey. Sharp black forms cut across a nostalgic rural landscape, obstructing the viewer's access to the distant farmhouse. These interruptions operate as visual manifestations of anxiety, representing psychological barriers that fracture moments of calm and slow personal momentum. Influenced by DIY culture and experimental material processes, Peltzman's practice blends atmospheric imagery with structural disruption, emphasizing how internal states reshape perception of external space.

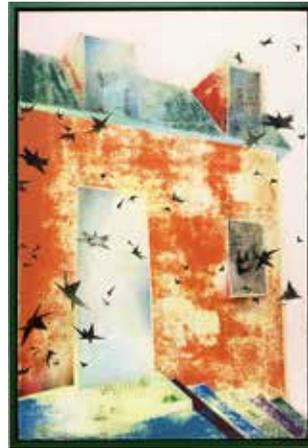
Together, the artists in "New Year New [Me]ntal Issues" articulate a collective resistance to narratives of renewal and self-optimization. The exhibition frames mental health not as an episodic crisis, but as an ongoing condition shaped by time, labor, identity, and social expectation. Through works that emphasize repetition, interruption, and unresolved emotional states, the exhibition invites viewers to confront persistence rather than progress, and to consider how personal interiority remains embedded within larger cultural systems of productivity and visibility.

**A Space**, founded in 2024, is a pioneering incubator dedicated to discovering and supporting emerging artists in the contemporary art world. As a forward-thinking platform, we provide young talents with the space and opportunities to experiment, grow, and connect with a wider audience. Through collaborations with visionary artists and brands, we curate cutting-edge exhibitions, immersive art events, and dynamic cultural experiences that push the boundaries of artistic expression. More than just a gallery, A Space Gallery is a hub for creativity, dialogue, and innovation, shaping the future of contemporary art.



Isabella Mebarak  
*Don't Let them take your Whimsy*  
2025  
Plaster, wood, Large format  
Inkjet print  
56"x10"x10"

\$2,500



Evan Peltzman  
*The place but not the time*  
2025  
Pastel and acrylic on  
canvas-wrapped wood panel  
37.5"x25.5"x 2"

\$2,500



Thomas Brisson  
*Timelessness of a Traffic Light*  
2025  
Oil and acrylic on canvas  
14"x24"

\$1,100



Xubai Li  
*Turn on Light*  
2024-2025  
Plexi glass, Toggle switches,  
Switch plates  
19"x5"x 5"

Not for sale



Alex Douglas  
*"Next Year"*  
2026  
Spiral book, mixed media,  
collage  
8.5"x11"x1"

Not for sale

