Since 2002, Queens International has highlighted contemporary art-making in Queens in a single major group exhibition at the Queens Museum approximately every two years. Like earlier iterations, Queens International 2018: Volumes is driven by the artists represented, the perspectives of its curators, and current social and cultural issues. Marking a first for the exhibition series, Queens International 2018: Volumes also includes a partnership with the Queens Library.

The term volumes and its many historical and current meanings bridges libraries and museums and their respective legacies. Starring from the Latin volumes, in 13th century France volume referred to a scroll of writing on parchment or something that is rolled or turned. The word later came to indicate “quantity” and “a book forming part of a set,” and, over the last three centuries, has acquired its meanings of degrees of sound, physical dimensions, and units of data storage.

QI 2018 encourages poetic readings of volumes in relation to plurality, materiality, and space, especially the turns we can take through it. The exhibition’s AQI-connected artists and collective represent 15 neighborhoods and several generations. Their works respond to sites throughout the entire museum and select Queens Library branches to question and expand conventional systems of knowledge production using analog and digital forms. Working through abstraction, chance operations, the transformation of found materials, and the construction of new archives, along with other strategies, they pose profound and multiple questions about centuries- or decades-old human systems, algorithmically-generated realities, and possibilities for progressive selfhood.

While QI 2018 marks an expansive presence in these sites, its interventions are largely non-monumental, positioned rather for speculation and dialogue with these spaces, its publics, and beyond. What aspects of the past are constructed within and because of libraries and museums? What limits and possibilities do they present spatially, temporally, and virtually, today?

The QI 2018 website is meant to function as an alternative experience of the exhibition and is developed by artist Ryan Kuo with research support and motion graphics from Tianwei Kim. Adapting materials used internally for the process of planning the show, including the 3D exhibition model of QI 2018 developed by Queens Museum Exhibition Production Manager John Werner, Kuo created an active experience of the limitations and advantages of both physical and virtual space, as well as their hopelessly reinscribed similarities. The publication, designed by Bryce Wilner, addresses and exploits the inherently volumetric architecture of bookmaking in order to allow readers to navigate it in multiple and idiomatic ways. Both are co-edited with Queens Museum Curator Larissa Harris.

Queens International 2018: Volumes is made possible in part by support from the New York City Department of Cultural Affairs, the New York State Council on the Arts with the support of Governor Andrew Cuomo and the New York State Legislature, the Lambent Foundation, Booth Ferris Foundation, and the Lily Auchincloss Foundation, Inc. Significant support for the Queens Museum is generously provided by the New York City Department of Cultural Affairs, the New York State Council on the Arts with the support of Governor Andrew Cuomo and the New York State Legislature, the Lambent Foundation, Booth Ferris Foundation, and the Lily Auchincloss Foundation, Inc.

The Queens Museum is committed to providing a safe and welcoming environment for all visitors. Guests are encouraged to wear masks to protect themselves and others from the transmission of COVID-19. The health and safety of our audience, staff, and community remain a top priority. For the latest updates on the museum’s safety guidelines and the status of exhibitions, please visit queensmuseum.org.