

# *A Brave New World*

2021yr AHL-T&W Foundation Contemporary Visual Art Award Winners Exhibition

Jin Yong Choi | Areum Yang | Jiwon Rhie



Curated by Leeza Meksin  
Assistant Curator: Jiyoung Lee  
Juried by Leeza Meksin, Marshall Price and Hallie Ringle

AHL Foundation, Inc.  
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AHL Foundation, Inc. is a 501(c)(3) not-for-profit organization.

Cover Images from left:

1. Jin Yong Choi, *Sibsaseong Bang-ul*, iPhone 6, ceramic, laser pointer, LED, resin, silicone, epoxy clay, acrylic paint, cable, 17"x12"x10", 2020
2. Areum Yang, *Forest Series*, acrylic, oil pastel, pencil on paper, 40"x32", 2020
3. Jiwon Rhie, *Stranger(Kyrre1)*, Kyrre stool purchased at IKEA, 17"x18"x13", 2020

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**Jin Yong Choi | Areum Yang | Jiwon Rhie**

June 18, 2022 - June 30, 2022

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## A Message from the President

It is my pleasure to congratulate the three recipients of the 2021yr AHL-T&W Foundation Contemporary Visual Art Awards Exhibition at AHL Foundation's first owned gallery in West Harlem, New York. I am glad that we are finally able to host the exhibition with the 2021yr Winners, which was postponed due to the pandemic.

Established in 2003, the central goal of the AHL Foundation has been to promote visual artists of Korean heritage living in the United States. Ever since AHL Foundation was established, we have been trying to open doors to artists of Korean heritage in the United States. Alongside the AHL Artist Fellowship, this annual visual art award is one of our most important programs. The selected artists receive both monetary awards and the opportunity to participate in a group exhibition in New York, providing them important resources to showcase their work to a wider audience.

I would like to thank our jurors, Leeza Meksin, Marshall Price, and Hallie Ringle. They dedicated many hours to reading artist statements and looking at submitted proposals. Three winners, Jin Yong Choi (Gold Award), Areum Yang (Silver Award), and Jiwon Rhie (Bronze Award). I am proud of all of them. Their talents and passion for art make the art world and the Korean American community richer and fuller. Leeza Meksin has shown admirable devotion as Head Curator and I am also thankful for the hard work of Jiyoung Lee, Curatorial Fellow and Program Manager, to create this exhibition featuring the winners.

This award and exhibition would not have been possible without the help of the T&W Foundation and support of the board of directors of the AHL Foundation. I would also like to thank the New York City Department of Cultural Affairs, National Endowment for the Arts, and Chun Family Foundation for their generous support.

**Sook Nyu Lee Kim**

Founder and President  
AHL Foundation, Inc.

## Foreword to the Exhibition

The AHL Foundation, founded in 2003 by Sook Nyu Lee Kim, supports visual artist of Korean ancestry living in the United States. The foundation presents a wide range of programming that fosters NYC's artistic community. The annual Contemporary Art Awards program recognizes the significant achievements of three artists selected by a jury of art world professionals who designate financial support and visibility in three categories: the Gold, Silver, and the Bronze Awards. Recipients of these awards are also invited to participate in a group exhibition held in New York City, and this year's awards mark the 18th year of this important program.

This year there were close to a hundred applicants, and many of them were highly deserving of support. It was a very difficult decision, but I feel fortunate to have been introduced to the work of all the artists who applied this year. The quality and diversity of the submissions was impressive and exciting. I have tremendous respect for AHL foundation's award program, and am honored to have been invited to participate in the jurying process this year. I greatly enjoyed the discussions with my fellow jurors – Marshal Price, Curator at the Nasher Museum of Art at Duke University and Hallie Ringle, Hugh Kaul Curator of Contemporary Art at Birmingham Museum of Art. After a careful review and much discussion amongst us, the three winners were selected: Jin-Young Choi was awarded the Gold prize, Areum Yang the Silver, and Jiwon Rhie the Bronze. All three artists are making ambitious and sensitive work. We congratulate all of them on this prestigious distinction.

Jin-Young Choi, the Gold winner of the Contemporary Visual Art Awards, received his BFA in Fine Art from Kookmin University in Seoul and his MFA in Sculpture from Pratt Institute. He was an artist-in-residence at the Vermont Studio Center, ChaNorth Upstate and Trestle Gallery in Brooklyn. His work has been exhibited at Paradise Palace, Williamsburg Art & Historical Center, The Wassaic Project and in the 14th A.I.R Biennial curated by Jasmine Wahi. Jin-Young Choi's sculptures reflect an integration of traditional Korean motifs with contemporary technology, as well as a merging of prehistoric animal imagery with post-human sensibilities. The works encompass statuary, wearable art such as helmets and jewelry, and kinetic sculpture with lights, hand-held devices and projections. Shamanic animal masks alluding to cave paintings and rituals are combined with plugged-in pods a-la Cronenberg's 1999 film *eXistenZ*. The Sci-fi qualities fuse in surprising ways with the decorative embellishments creating a fresh forecast for future modalities. The sheer variety of materials employed by Choi is in itself a testament to resourceful ingenuity, suggesting survivalist strategies and a foreboding of what the future holds.

Areum Yang, the Silver award winner, received her BFA in Painting from Hongik University in Seoul and her MFA in Studio Art from CUNY Hunter College in NYC. She has exhibited her work at Hauser & Wirth, New York and is the recipient of the Chung Mong-koo Foundation - Hyundai Motors Scholarship and Materials Grant.

Areum Yang's expressive paintings exhibit both an economy of means and a cohesion of vision. These large scale works employ areas of loosely applied paint balanced with calligraphic use of dry brush, while portraying figures caught up in contortionist or fleeing postures. Painting Number 3 shows an exciting exploration into alternative planes within the picture plane – suggesting screens and virtual reality as universal themes now inextricably linked to the human condition. In the background of a starkly monochromatic painting Number 6 Yang presents a diagrammatic structure that skillfully and effortlessly alludes to a high rise building, suggesting that our love of the grid, and perhaps our obsession with order has gotten us into a prison-like cell.

Jiwon Rhie, The Bronze award winner, received her BFA in Painting from Hannam University in Daejeon, South Korea and her MFA in Painting and Drawing from Pratt Institute in Brooklyn, NY. She is the recipient of the A.I.M. fellowship from The Bronx Museum of Arts and the NARS Foundation Fellowship. Her work has been exhibited at Governor's Island, NY, Steuben Gallery, Brooklyn, Hannam University Museum, Daejeon, Korea and Gwang Ju Museum of Art, Gwang Ju, Korea.

Jiwon Rhie's architectural interventions speak to notions of belonging and assimilating to new environments. IKEA furniture items are made at once useless and poetic by being miter-fitted to staircases, banisters, door frames and closets, anthropomorphized like a vine covering a brick building. Disposable furniture brings to mind student life as well as the immigrant struggle to survive in a new possibly hostile environment. It also alludes to the makeshift nature of the symbiosis between human-made and natural elements, materials and structures. Rhie's Instant Forest works repurpose shipping materials and use images of custom forms slapped on packages sent from Korea by her mother. Collectively the work explores the nuanced ways in which our identities shift and meld into new forms through proximity to institutions and navigation of national and cultural norms.

I'm so grateful to be invited by the AHL Foundation to participate in the selection process for the Visual Art Awards 2021. I am impressed by the inspiring energy of the AHL Foundation's Founder and President, Sook Nyu Lee Kim and also thankful for the guidance of Jiyoung Lee, AHL Curatorial Fellow and Program Manager, who made the jurying process so smooth for the jurors to navigate.

I hope that the artist receiving this important recognition will continue to thrive in their art practices, and I'm sure that the awards from AHL Foundation will prove formative for future developments and new opportunities to share their work with the public.

**Leeza Meksin**

Artist & Educator

Co-founder and Co-director, Ortega y Gasset Projects

Assistant Professor, Department of Art, Cornell University

August 14, 2021





**Jin Yong Choi**

*Yeom-la Daewang suit-2*, tablet, battery pack, solar panel, LED light, print on paper, smartphone hanger, rice, mealworm, resin, silicone, epoxy clay, acrylic paint, paper box, found object, 35"x10"x8", 2022





**Areum Yang**

*Forest Series*, Acrylic, oil pastel, pencil on paper, 32" x 40", 2021



**Jiwon Rhie**

*Defined Boundaries Installation View* at Stueben Gallery,  
Variable size, 2019

## Evaluations from the Jurors

**Jin-Young Choi** creates technology-inspired sculptures that appear to have simultaneously been excavated from a past civilization and sent to us from a dark, dystopian future. Many of the artist's works appear as devotional or ecclesiastical objects from a techno-centric temple in which digital connectivity and surveillance are customary, even obligatory. They are shamanistic in nature and function as a talisman for a post-natural, or perhaps even post-human, world, in which the lines between humanity and the digital realm are blurred. In doing so, these sculptures ominously question the relationship between culture and technology and raise larger questions about our anthropocentric world. Choi's inventive combination of digital technology with intrinsically analogue materials results in mesmerizing, if cautionary, objects.

**Areum Yang** makes medium- and large-scale paintings and drawings that elicit a certain universal empathy. While they are figurative in nature and rooted in the human experience and condition, these works do not necessarily illustrate identifiable moments in time or specific events, but instead present the dynamics of emotions, sentiments, and other ephemeral states of being. Yang deftly uses the formal qualities of the material to create her dream-like sequences and, as a result, makes delightfully ambiguous scenes populated by familiar yet vague shapes and characters. These scenes, some of which appear as fantastical landscapes, others as quiet solitary interior scenes, allow for an expansive range of subjective interpretations and are not limited to any one specific reading.

**Jiwon Rhie** uses furniture, domestic spaces, and non-art objects such as rice and customs forms to explore issues of transculturalism and identity. In some works, the artist uses generic modern furniture placed in unexpected areas of a house. The modified furniture blends seamlessly with walls, bannisters, and other architectural spaces. In doing so, Rhie's work creates a cognitive dissonance in the viewer that forces us to question our understanding of spatial relationships. On a deeper level, however, this work may be understood as a metaphor for the difficulties and dynamics of navigating transcultural relationships. Other series, such as *Instant Forest*, is a very personal essay on the artist's Korean immigrant experience. Garments and domestic objects (bedding, for example) are constructed from customs forms and visually articulated in a poignant and relatable way.

**Marshall N. Price (Ph.D.)**

Chief Curator and Nancy A. Nasher and David J. Haemisegger Curator of Modern and Contemporary Art  
at the Nasher Museum of Art at Duke University

**Jin Young Choi's** sculptures come from an imagined apocalyptic future, where past knowledge is preserved and communicated through his shamanistic sculptural forms. Combining simplistic electronics with highly complicated technology and found objects, Choi's composite forms reference religion, perception, and the passage of time. Called "Digital Shaman" Choi envisions each of these sculptures as protective forms, meant to be used to symbolize a new, hybrid culture.

**Areum Yang** Using a combination of pencil, pastel, and oils, Areum Yang's paintings memorialize her everyday experiences. Yang renders her figures in a loose, gestural style that at times allows her figures to emerge from the canvas with perfect clarity and in others dissolve into amorphous masses. Yang is completely unburdened by the figurative/abstract binary, choosing instead to meld both styles of painting, allowing her to explore the emotional experiences of her subjects.

**Jiwon Rhie's** practice combines disparate materials as means representing the complex negotiations of her experience immigrating to New York from Korea. In one work, *Rice Set Theory*, Rhie literally alters the landscape of the gallery by pouring plastic rice into thin lines that form borders, referencing systems of classification that contain significant areas of overlap. Rhie then asks the audience to walk around the installation, disrupting her highly-ordered system and betraying its borders as ultimately superficial. Other works, like *Hi, Nice to Meet You* combine functional, mass-produced furniture, and interior spaces, rendering both useless. Like *Rice Set Theory*, *Hi, Nice to Meet You* changes the gallery as much as it's governed by it. By combining its form with the gallery, it both refuses any suggestion of functionality and forms new ways of existing in these spaces.

**Hallie Ringle**

Hugh Kaul Curator of Contemporary Art at the Birmingham Museum of Art



**Jin Yong Choi**

*Sib-Seong, Sib-ill-Seong and Sib-O-Seong Bang-ul, bug zepper, brooch, zingle bell, found object, epoxy clay, 22"x14"x2.5", 19"x12"x4", 18.5"x12"x2", 2021-2022*





**Areum Yang**

*Forest Series*, Acrylic, oil pastel, pencil on paper, 32"x40",  
2021



**Jiwon Rhie**  
*Hi, Nice to Meet You\_Arrangement Study\_03,*  
Partially cut furniture, Variable size, 2020



# Jin Yong Choi

www.jinyong-choi.com

b. 1990 in Seoul, South Korea

Lives and works in New York, NY

## Education

2020 MFA in Sculpture from Pratt Institute, Brooklyn, NY

2015 BFA in Fine Art from Kookmin University, Seoul, Korea

## Selected Exhibition

- 2022 'Free to be' CulturelabLIC at the Plaxall Gallery, Queens, NY  
'Chromotherapy in an Age of Doubt' Pratt Manhattan Gallery, New York, NY  
'Crop of Kismet' I LIKE YOUR WORK, online exhibition
- 2021 'If You Lived Here You'd Be Home By Now' Wassaic Summer Exhibition, Wassaic, NY  
'Togetherness & Oneness', Williamsburg Art & Historical Center, Brooklyn, NY  
'In The Wake Of Slumber' Paradise Palase, Brooklyn, NY  
'Emergent Poise: Transcorporeality' CulturelabLIC at the Plaxall Gallery, Queens, NY  
'Borderwalls III' The Border Project Space, Brooklyn, NY  
'An A-historical Daydream' the 14th A.I.R. Biennial, A.I.R. Gallery, curated by Jasmine Wahi, Brooklyn, NY
- 2020 'Works Created During the Lockdown Period', Williamsburg Art & Historical Center, Brooklyn, NY  
'ShinHaus November', Shin Gallery, New York, NY link  
'Here, Now', Trestle Gallery, Brooklyn, NY link  
'Inheritance', Super Dutchess, New York, NY link
- 2019 'Artist Co-Op' Jamaica Center For Arts & Learning (JCAL), Queens, NY link  
'Animal' Site:Brooklyn, Brooklyn, NY link
- 2017 'New Portrait', Vanzih B $\frac{1}{2}$ F, Seoul
- 2016 'Anagram', 800/40, 300/20, 200/20, Seoul link  
'Seoul babel', Seoul Museum of Art (SEMA), Seoul  
'PLOT' KOFAC Science & Creativity Annual Conference SCI-ART, National Museum of Modern and Contemporary Art (MMCA), Seoul

## Awards / Grants / Residencies

- 2022 Lower Manhattan Cultural Council (LMCC) Art Center Residency Program, NY
- 2021 BRIC Bridge Space, BRIC Arts Media, NY (Aug 2021 -June 2022)
- 2021 18th Annual AHL – T&W Foundation Contemporary Visual Art Awards, Gold Prize link  
Vermont Studio Center Residency, Vermont Studio Center, Johnson, VT (cancelled)  
The Stutzman Foundation MFA Fellowships, Vermont Studtman Center, Johnson, VT  
ChaNorth Artists in Residence, Pine Plains, NY (Aug-Sep 2021)  
Pratt>Forward, Brooklyn, NY (Apr-May 2021) link  
Sculpture Space Residency program, Utica, NY (Feb – Mar 2021) link
- 2020 Trestle Artist Residency, Brooklyn, NY (Apr – Sep 2020)  
GSEF, Graduate Student Engagement Fund, Pratt institute, Brooklyn, NY

## Collection

- 2021 Yuko Nii Foundation

# Areum Yang

[www.areumyang.com](http://www.areumyang.com)

b. 1994 in Seoul, South Korea

Lives and works in New York, NY

## Education

2022 Skowhegan School of Painting and Sculpture

2021 MFA in Studio Art, CUNY Hunter College, New York, NY

2017 BFA in Fine Art, Hongik University, Seoul, South Korea

## Solo Exhibition

2022 Trees in Me, Derek Eller Gallery, New York, NY

## Selected Group Exhibition

2022 Of Foxes and Ghosts, Mammoth, London, UK

2022 Last Call, Bradley Ertaskiran, Montreal, Canada

2021 Brooklyn Seoul, Brooklyn Waterfront Artists Coalition, Brooklyn, NY

2021 We Were Already Gone, Hauser & Wirth, New York, NY

2021 Intermission, KCC Gallery, Tenafly, NJ

2019 Discipline, 154 Stanton St. New York, NY

## Awards

2022 Leeman-Boksenbaum Endowment Graduation Award

2021 AHL T&W Foundation Contemporary Visual Art Awards, Silver

2021 KCC Young Artist Awards

## Publish

2022 Friend of the Artist Volume 15

2021 Art Maze Magazine edition 23

# Jiwon Rhie

www.rhiejiwon.com

Born in Daejeon, South Korea

Lives and works in Brooklyn, NY

## Education

- 2019 MFA in Painting and Drawing, Pratt Institute, Brooklyn, USA
- 2014 BFA in Painting, Hannam University, Daejeon, South Korea.
- 2010 BFA in Visual Communication Design, Hongik University, Seoul, South Korea.

## Award / Grant / Fellowship

- 2022 NYFA 2021-22 Immigrant Artist Mentoring Program: Visual and Multidisciplinary Arts
- 2021 New York City Artist Corps Grants
- 2021 AHL – T&W Foundation Contemporary Visual Art Award, Bronze Prize
- 2021 Queens Art Fund Award by The Queens Council on the Arts
- 2021 The Bronx Museum of the Arts, A.I.M Fellowship
- 2020 NARS Foundation Partial Residential Fellowships
- 2020 Vermont Studio Center Artist/Writer Grant
- 2012 24th Daejeon Metropolitan Fine Art Grand Contest 2012, Printmaking Merit Award.
- 2012 28th Kwangju Mudeong Art Competition, Printmaking Merit Award.
- 2009 Asia Digital Art Award, Still Images, 20 Finalist Prize.
- 2008 Hongik University 33rd literature and Art Award, The grand prize.

## Residency

- 2021 4Heads Artist in Residency at Governors Island, New York, NY, USA
- 2021 Chinatown Soup, New York, NY, USA
- 2021 NARS Foundation, Brooklyn, NY, USA
- 2020 4Heads Artist in Residency at Governors Island, New York, NY, USA
- 2020 Vermont Studio Center, Burlington, VT, USA

## Solo Exhibition

- 2021 Instant Forest, NARS Foundation Project Space, Brooklyn, NY, USA
- 2019 Defined Boundaries, Steuben Gallery, Brooklyn, NY, USA.
- 2016 Florilegia: Hybrid flowers, Topohaus Gallery, Seoul, South Korea

## Selected Group Exhibition

- 2022 In/Between 2022: Transcendental Coordinates, New York Live Arts, New York, NY, USA
- 2021 BORDERWALLS IV, THE BORDER, Brooklyn, NY, USA
- DOG PARK, Curated by Field Project, Petty Cash, Brooklyn, NY, USA
- Intervene, Temporary outdoor public art installation, 4Heads, Governors Island, NY, USA
- Two Moons, HOME Gallery, New York, NY, USA
- AIOP 2021: NORMAL, Hosted by Shasha Dothan, Art in Odd Places, New York, NY, USA
- Space-honey, NARS Foundation Main Gallery, Brooklyn, NY, USA
- 2020 Moments, Temporary outdoor public art installation, 4Heads, Governors Island, NY, USA
- Radical Hope, 3D virtual art exhibition for COVID-19 relief to support IRC

## About AHL Foundation

AHL Foundation, Inc. is a 501(c)(3) not-for-profit arts organization established in 2003 by Sook Nyu Lee Kim to support artists of Korean heritage working in the United States and promote exposure of their work in today's highly competitive contemporary art world. Our mission is threefold: 1) to seek, identify and promote talented Korean and Korean-American artists active in the United States; 2) to provide the artists with a platform and resources to further develop their talents; and 3) to host educational, cultural, and artistic events with the goal of building wider public awareness of contemporary artists of Korean heritage.

With the generous backing of its supporters, AHL Foundation has been able to provide monetary support, through awards, grants, and fellowships, to artists and curators of Korean ancestry and researchers with interest in Korean contemporary art in the United States. This includes the annual AHL - T&W Contemporary Visual Art Awards (Formerly AHL Visual Art Competition), founded in 2004, and the AHL Foundation Artist Fellowship, supported by the Dow Kim Family Foundation, which award monetary prizes and the opportunity for an exhibition in New York to exceptional artists. In 2020, the foundation awarded nearly \$70,000 in grants and awards to artists, curators, and researchers, and welcomed upwards of 10,000 visitors/participants to its exhibitions and programs, including professional development forums, gallery tours, and community outreach exhibitions.



### Support Us

Your support keeps the AHL Foundation going. Whether it be supporting an artist's practice or helping hold Korean-language art education programs for immigrants, your contribution is crucial to advancing our burgeoning Korean contemporary art community. Please consider making a contribution today. Any amount would be greatly appreciated.

For more information, Please visit [www.ahlfoundation.org/support/donate](http://www.ahlfoundation.org/support/donate)

## Previous Grant / Award / Fellowship Recipients

### AHL – T&W Foundation Contemporary Visual Art Awards

(Formerly AHL Visual Art Competition)

2004	Heejung Cho	2017
Hyun Jean Lee	Keosang Yoo	Tai Hwa Goh
Ran Hwang	Ha Lee	Xavier Cha
Jeong Han Kim		Joo Yeon Woo
Jung Su Han	2011	
	Sung Rok Choi	2018
2005	Jee Young Lee	Valery Jung Estabrook
Seok Hee Jung	Sandra Eula Lee	Hyunjung Rhee
Sung Ho Choi	Seungwook Sim	Myung Gyun You
Jaye Rhee	Jiyoun Lee-Lodge	
Aegi Park	Jonggeun Lee	2019
	Kiseok Kim	Jennifer Moon
2006		Jean Oh
Suk Won Shin	2012	Mary Laube
Haegeen Kim	Hong Seon Jang	
Dooeol Lee	Jung Sun Kim	2020
Sang Woo Koh	Seung Jae Kim	A young Yu
	Grace Kim	Chang-Jin Lee
2007		Cheon pyo Lee
Hae Ri Yoo	2013	
Kyung Woo Han	Seong-min Ahn	2021
Jia Lim	Inmi Lee	Jin Yong Choi
Shin Il Kim	Young-mi Song	Areum Yang
	Jang soon Im	Jiwon Rhie
2008		
Zaun Lee	2014	<b>AHL - Artist Fellowship</b>
Jane Jin Kaisen	kate hers RHEE	2019
Eun Hyung Kim	John Seung-Hwan Lee	Dayeon Kim
Jong Il Ma	Yusam Sung	Judy Junghee Koo
	Sang-Mi Yoo	Woojin Lee
2009		ChaeWon Moon
Jinkee Choi	2015	
Kakyoung Lee	Eunsook Lee	2020
Jaye Moon	Buhm Hong	Mookwon Han
Jarrett Min Davis	Yoosamu	Sungjae Lee
Yeon Jin Kim	Heelim Hwang	Yi Sa-Ra
Jeong Hyun Lee		Jayoung Yoon
2010	2016	
Ji Eun Kim	Ji Yeon Lim (Yaloo)	2021
Eun Jung Hwang	Kira Nam Greene	Heehyun Choi
	Soi Park	Gyun Hur
		Dohee Lee
		Yozmit

### AHL Foundation Project Grant (Previously AHL-

Jason J. Kim Grant)

2015 Nancy Hwang, Jaye Rhee

2017 Ran Hwang

2019 Kate-hers RHEE

### Andrew & Barbara Choi Family Project Grant

2017 Xavier Cha

2018 Sun You

2019 Sunhee Kim Jung

2020 Aram Han Sifuentes

2021 Mina Cheon

### AHL – Chun Family Foundation Curatorial Fellowship

2017 Jinkyong Choi

2018 Hye Seong Tae

2019 Jeon Young

2020 Dahye Kim

2021 Jiyoung Lee

### AHL – Grace Charity Foundation Research Fellowship

2015 Juyoung Yoo

2016 Joo Yun Lee

2017 Jeong-A Kim

2018 Suzy Taekyung Kim

2019 Soojung Hyun

2020 Jiyoung Lee

2021 Joohee Kim

### AHL - Kim Family Fund Senior Research Fellowship

(Tchah Sup Kim and Myong hi Kim)

2021 Jiyoung Lee

### AHL Wolhee Choe Art Writer Grant

2017 Jennifer Hope Choi

2018 Paul Laster

2020 Sun Young Lee

2021 Yunlee Hong

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Presented by



Sponsored by



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