



Science Fiction(s)
If There Were a Tomorrow
30 March 2023 to 9 January 2024

Weltmuseum Wien & Theseus Temple

How do we together shape a future worth living for all? The major annual exhibition *Science Fiction(s) – If There Were a Tomorrow* in the Weltmuseum Wien presents alternative future scenarios against the background of global crises as tools for critiquing the present, decolonization, and healing. With a focus on Indigenous, Black, and Muslim voices, it draws attention to the perspectives of those who are often excluded from Western narratives about the future. Paintings, installations, films, spaceships, costumes for performances, comics, beadwork, and games by 24 international artists invite visitors to think about the limits of art, pop culture, and activism beyond clichés about the technological colonization of space.

Many of the artists use icons from science fiction to tell their own stories and to reinvent the genre. The exhibition is about empowerment, critiques of “science fiction” as a genre that continues colonial narratives, and imagining alternatives.

Indigenous artists show that their lives do not belong to the past, and that they are fighting for their future. They defend themselves against land appropriation and the destruction of their cultural identity. Fictional space travel projects present the journey into the unknown not as a conquest of space, but as a utopian experiment.



“Non-humans” such as algae report on a post-apocalyptic world. With a focus on cosmologies, the exhibition consciously shifts attention to world views that call for responsible action on the part of all and emphasize the connections between people, animals, and other beings.

The curatorial team developed the exhibition around four theses:

- The West has no monopoly on science fiction and alternative speculative stories about the future.
- Science fiction in the West is often a thinly veiled story about colonial conquest.
- Ethnological museums were places for denying the future at the time of their founding.
- If we wish to design a fair future, we must do this together with all beings on this planet.

The rooms of the exhibition

The narrative of the exhibition spans six rooms in the Weltmuseum Wien and presents the installation *Alimasag* (crab) by Leeroy New in the Hall of Columns. In the first room, indigenous artists from North America and Brazil show how the future of their communities was stolen, and how they nonetheless struggle for a self-determined future. They use motifs from popular science fiction for these narratives, especially from Star Wars. They “indigenize” mainstream science fiction and reinvent the genre.

In the second room, videos and collages explore science fiction as creative resistance. Indigenous artists from Brazil show that their lives do not belong to the past. They are designing their own future with their struggle against land appropriation and the destruction of their cultural identities.

The focus of the third room is on fictional space travel projects that imagine the journey into the unknown not as the conquest or colonization of space, but instead as a social experiment. Here, the first Syrian cosmonaut, who today lives in Istanbul as a refugee, continues his journey to Mars.

The fourth and fifth rooms explore questions about the “non-humans” who also inhabit the world. A post-apocalyptic narrative from the point of view of aquatic plants is told in an algae tank.

The works in the last room provide impulses for imagining worlds that are fair, diverse, and vibrant. Artists merge ecology, indigenous sciences, and cosmologies in the digital space. They call upon us to contribute to ensuring that a fair future does not remain science fiction.



Exhibition in the Theseus Temple

This year's exhibition in the Theseus Temple, which opens on April 20, complements *Science Fiction(s)*. At this public location in the Volksgarten in Vienna, the Pakistani-American artist Saks Afridi addresses the following question with his *SpaceMosque* installation: what would it be like if all our prayers came true?

SpaceMosque

Saks Afridi

An exhibition in the context of *Science Fiction(s)*

Theseus Temple, Volksgarten Vienna

20 April to 8 October 2023

Exhibition design & education stations

The scenography of the designers and film architects Johannes Mücke and KAWA, who developed the spaceship architecture for the film *Rubikon* (Austria 2022), presents the works in atmospheric spaces. The use of cloth and metal scaffolding awakes associations with cinematic science fiction worlds.

On a specially designed website, an interactive "galaxy" enables navigation through the themes of the exhibition (sciencefictions.weltmuseumwien.at). Liechtenecker GmbH was responsible for the technical implementation and design of the website, Geofront for the 3D visualization.

Integrated into the exhibition design are various educational stations that invite visitors to partake in activities. You can create your own superheroes, continue science fiction narratives, or choose sounds to communicate with non-human beings.



Artists:

Alesia und Farlan Quetawki, A:shiwi (Zuni), Zuni Pueblo, Zuni Reservation, USA
Andy Everson, K'ómok and Kwakwaka'wakw, Comox, British Columbia, Canada
Cara Romero, enrolled citizen of the Chemehuevi, Santa Fe & Chemehuevi Valley Indian Reservation, USA
Denilson Baniwa with Paulino Fluxus, Baniwa, Nitrói, Rio de Janeiro, Brazil
Denilson Baniwa, Baniwa, Niterói, Rio de Janeiro, Brazil
Ekow Nimako, Fante (Ghana), Toronto, Canada
Elizabeth LaPensée, Anishinaabe, Métis and Irish, Great Lakes region, Michigan and northern Ontario (Sault Ste. Marie), USA and Canada
Fara Peluso and Hüma Utku in research collaboration with María Antonia González Valerio, Italy, Turkey, Mexico
George Nuku, Maori/Scottish/German, France
Halil Altındere, Istanbul, Turkey
Jaider Esbell (1979–2021), Macuxi, born in Normandia, Terra Indígena Raposa Serra do Sol, Brazil
Kadu Xukuru, Xukuru People, Escada, Pernambuco, Brazil
Leeroy New, Manila, Philippines
Nicholas Galanin, Lingít and Unangaʼ, Lingít Aani, Sitka, Alaska, USA
Owerá & Angry Duo, Owerá hails from the Guarani of Mbyá, Krukutu, São Paulo, Brazil
Rebecca Gloria-Jean Baird, Cree and Métis, Toronto, Canada
Rigo 23 in collaboration with Simona Gomez Lopez, Monserrat Lopez Blanco and Santiago Marcial, San Francisco, USA
Rory Wakemup, Anishinaabe, Dakota (adopted) and Irish, St. Paul, USA
Ryan Singer, Diné (Navajo), Tuba City and Albuquerque, USA
Saks Afridi, born in Peshawar, Pakistan, lives in New York, USA
Sérgio Yanomami, Yanomami, Yanomami territory, Amazon, Brazil
Superflux, UK
Tyson Mowarin, Ngarluma, Ngariuma Country, Australia
Uýra, Manaus, Amazon, Brazil
Wilfred Ukpog, Nigeria

Curatorial team:

Stella Asimwe, education
Claudia Augustat, curator at Weltmuseum Wien
Jonathan Fine, Director of Weltmuseum Wien
Ute Marxreiter, guest curator
Tobias Mörike, curator at Weltmuseum Wien



Exhibition design:

Agentur KAWA Kohlbecker & Associates, Workshop for Architecture GmbH

Catalogue:

Science Fiction(s)

If There Where a Tomorrow

Ed. by Stella Asimwe, Claudia Augustat, Jonathan Fine, Ute Marxreiter and Tobias Mörike
German and English, bilingual edition

112 pages

€ 25

Available at our museum shops and online.

PRESS PHOTOGRAPHS

In the press section on our website, you can download press texts and press photos for current reporting on special exhibitions and projects at the Weltmuseum Wien free of charge.

<https://www.weltmuseumwien.at/en/press/>

Nicholas Galanin

Things Are Looking Native, Native's Looking Whiter

2012

Giclée print

© Nicholas Galanin, courtesy of the artist and Peter Blum Gallery, New York



Andy Everson

Tenacity

2019

Giclée print

Weltmuseum Wien

© Andy Everson



Cara Romero

The Zenith

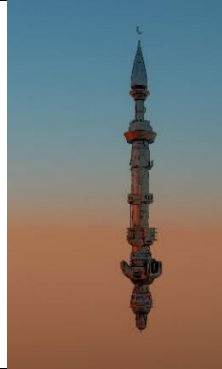
2022

Photography print on Legacy Platine paper
Weltmuseum Wien, acquired with the generous support from Weltmuseum Wien Friends and John D. Marshall

© Cara Romero



Saks Afridi
SpaceMosque/Sighting 1
2018
Collage
© Saks Afridi



Wilfred Ukpog
Still from the video FUTURE – WORLD – EXV
Courtesy of the artist
© Wilfred Ukpog



Uýra
Poder de Tajá
2021
Photograph
© Uýra Sodoma, photo: Hick Duarte



Ryan Singer
(De)Colonized Ewok
2019
Acrylic on canvas
Courtesy of the Museum of Northern Arizona and
the artists (C2860)



Ekow Nimako / @ekownimako

Kumbi Saleh 3020 CE

2019

LEGO® pieces

© The Aga Khan Museum, 2020.1.1

photo: Samuel Engelking



Kadu Xukuru

A dança dos cabocos

2020

Collage

© Kadu Xukuru



Jaider Esbell (1979–2021)

Curando buracos de garimpo

2020

Acrylic on canvas

© Galeria Jaider Esbell de Arte, Indígena Contemporânea, photo: Daniel Jabra



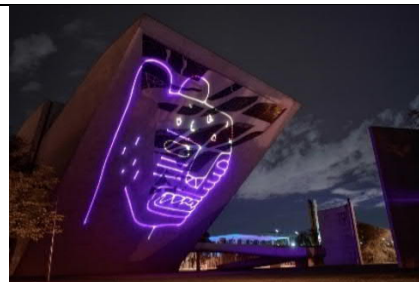
Denilson Baniwa with Paulino Fluxus

Petroglifos pra um antigo-futuro

2020

Photos of a laser projection; Giclée print

© Artists Collection, photo: Minoti



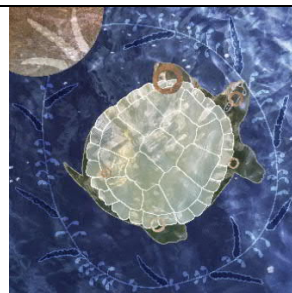
Elizabeth LaPensée

Along the River of Spacetime

2020

Video and VR application

Courtesy of the artist





OPENING TIMES, TICKETS, ENTRANCE FEES

www.weltmuseumwien.at/en/information/

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION REGARDING YOUR VISIT

Guided tours, bookings and reservations for events

+43 1 534 30 - 5150

kulturvermittlung@weltmuseumwien.at

Information, questions and suggestions

+43 1 534 30 - 5052

info@weltmuseumwien.at

EXHIBITION PROGRAMMES AND EVENTS

All events can be found online in the [event calendar](#) of the Weltmuseum Wien.

SOCIAL MEDIA

Follow the Weltmuseum Wien on [Facebook](#) and [Instagram](#).

JOURNALIST ACCREDITATION

Journalists visiting the KHM-Museumsverband for professional purposes are entitled to free admission to its exhibitions and locations. For this purpose, you need to register via presse@weltmuseumwien.at at least two working days in advance.

We request that, in addition to mentioning your medium, you also specify the date of your visit and attach a scan of your valid press pass. Many thanks for your understanding!

PRESS CONTACT

Nina Auinger-Sutterlüty, MAS

Head of Communications

KHM-Museumsverband

T +43 1 525 24 -4021

presse@weltmuseumwien.at