

Exhibitions

FUTURE UNKNOWN 2023 | Beijing Media Art Biennale “Ecological Integration”

05-11

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国际  
教育论坛

Future Unknown  
International  
Education Forum

2023.04.01  
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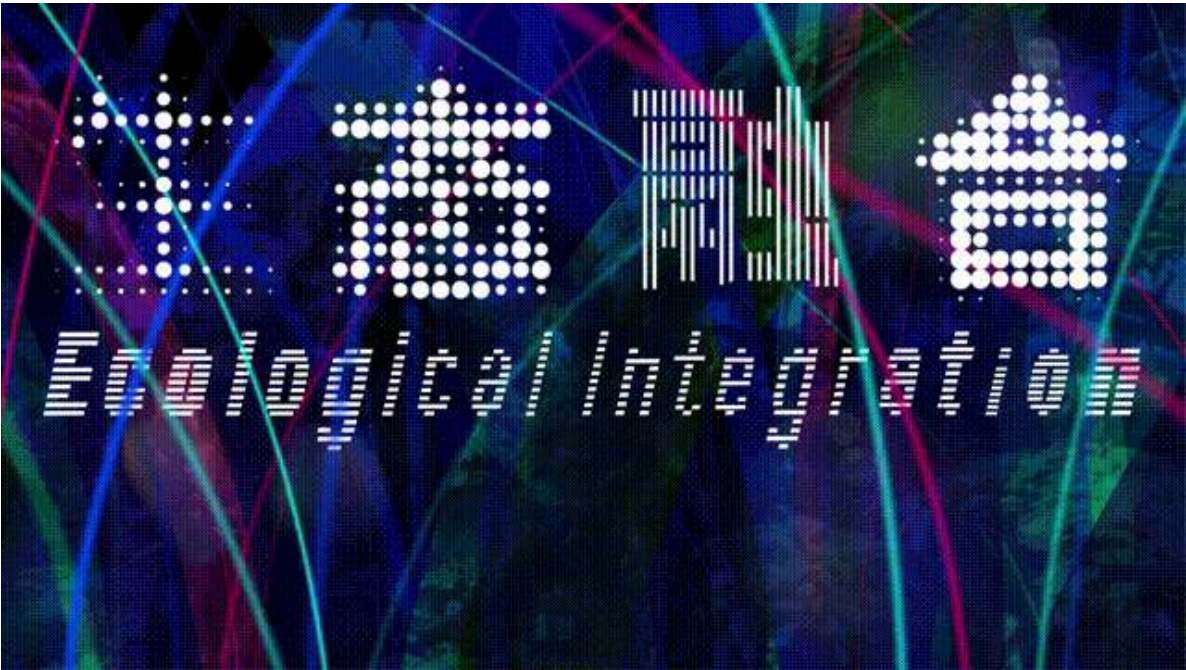
中央美术学院美术馆  
CAFA Art Museum

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[Future Unknown]  
Beijing Media Art Biennale  
“Ecological Integration”



Exhibition time

April 1, 2023 - April 23, 2023

Venue

## Foreword



## Ecological Integration

Media art is constantly evolving across the fields of science, art and humanities. Media forms are continually derived, the boundaries of display are expanding, and continue to promote human sensory experiences, which are bringing more integrations and developments to aesthetic experiences.

The theme of this exhibition is "Ecological Integration", which is a further extension after the previous two editions of "Ethics of Technology" and "Post-Life". From anthropocentrism to non-anthropocentrism, and then to the harmony between man and nature, we discuss the theme in a "media" way of practice.

Through multi-form digital media art works, we depict the artists' concerns about the relationships between "Virtual and Reality", "Technology and Nature" and "Appearance and Essence". We want to show the possibilities of the complex relationships between nature, environment and human, also to analyze and think about the internal ecological logic of harmonious coexistence of natural life. We would like to share with the audience the proximity of digital, space, time and environmental ecology interwoven media art experiences, which could connect you with a magical future.

——Jin Jun/CURATOR

As the content of new media art, "ecology" has brought new dimensions and representations to its development. As a cross-field that integrates technology, art, and humanities, new media art has countless possibilities waiting to be explored. Artists take "ecology" as the content of artistic creation in the process of exploring possibilities, and show their perspectives and concepts through their works. Now that "ecology" has become an important global issue, "ecology" participates in artistic creation in a more active way.

- Marco Chan, Zhang Yixuan, published in "Art and Design" 2023.1 (02)

Today, with the rapid development of science and technology, media forms are constantly being derived under the promotion of science and technology, and the boundaries of media art expression are constantly being broken. Multiple artistic expressions have brought a huge impact on human traditional aesthetic experience and continue to refresh human visual sensory experience. The change of science and technology drives the continuous transformation of media forms. Interactive installation images, VR, moving images, mechanical installations, sound art, network art and other media arts explore art and media, technology and media, media and evolution in multiple forms. Media art creates a media space that interacts with the audience, allowing the audience to experience the immersive experience brought by media art. Through carefully crafted works of art, it reinforces the many

possibilities of media in artistic expression and the profound philosophical worldview it presents. Connect with the audience through space, and jointly explore the application of technology in media art. Benjamin H. Bratton said in "Stack: On Software and Sovereignty" that "it is beneficial to think with tools, to think with the fixed capital of advanced technology, which is one of our human talents." Today, media art has become an indispensable form of artistic creation. Artists continue to test the boundaries of media art in their creations, bringing new art viewing experiences again and again.

- Ding Yi, Wang Zhao

## Projects

### 1-Superfluity

Artist: Jonathan Monaghan

United States of America

Type:Three-screen video Video

Year:2021

Superfluity is a series of three looping animations depicting cryptic creatures from an alternate reality where the boundaries between the organic and man-made are blurred. Drawing parallels between the opulence of the Baroque era and the excess of the digital age, the series elicits anxieties about an increasingly technological future and a vanishing natural world.



### 2--Cold Flux

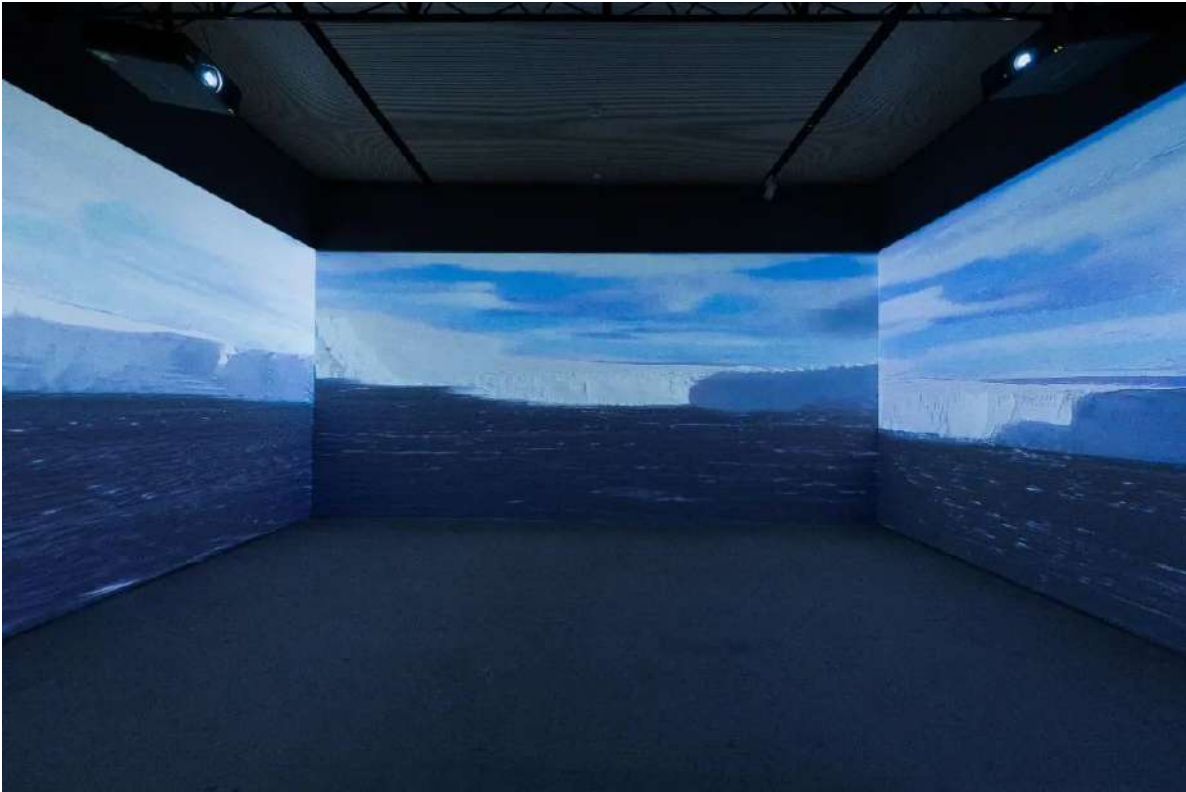
Artist: Ben Cullen Williams

Nationality:United Kingdom

Type:Mapping

Year:2021

Cold Flux is a three-channel AI generated video installation created from the footage Williams filmed of the Larsen-B Ice shelf whilst on an expedition to Antarctica with polar explorer Robert Swan. The ice shelf splintered off from the Antarctic peninsula in 2002 and has been disintegrating since. The resulting video is strange and uncanny, a familiar yet distant landscape, a prediction or a recording with echoes of the sublime. Cut into this video landscape is AI generated video of the surface of the sun, synthetic and uncertain. The work presents to us the new digital materiality that is starting to exist alongside our own, while exploring its relationship to the natural. Accompanying the video is a haunting audio track by musician Gaika. The camera looking at the sun is static, with the sun continually rotating within the frame, something seemingly impossible. The work maps the complex network between technology, environmental change and our understanding of the world.



### 3-Used to Be My Home Too

Artist: Marc Lee

Switzerland

Type: Real time cartography

Year: 2021

Used to Be My Home Too reflects in real-time our rich biodiversity and at the same time the continuous extinction of species and how we humans have become biodiverse agents interacting with the most fundamental processes of our Earth.

In this experiment, you fly via Google Earth continuously to the exact locations, where animal, fungus and plant observations are being photographed right now and sent to iNaturalist.org. In addition, taxonomically similar species that occurred in the same country and are endangered or became extinct within the last 30 years are automatically added in real time via RedList.org.

#### Artist Profile:

Marc Lee (b. 1969) is a Swiss artist. He uses contemporary art as a vehicle to continuously redefine how we see ourselves and the world around us. He is experimenting with information and communication technologies and within his contemporary art practice, he reflects critically creative, cultural, social, ecological and political aspects. In this context he is creating network-oriented interactive art projects: interactive installations, media art, performance art, augmented reality (AR) art etc.

His works are exhibited in major museums and new media art exhibitions including: ZKM Karlsruhe, New Museum New York, Transmediale Berlin, NJPAC Seoul etc.





4-in s.asmbli

Artist:Ryoichi Kurokawa

Japan

Type:Virtual Reality (VR)

Year:2020

In s. asmbli is a project that pursues the relationship between nature and man-made from the perspective of architecture. The project uses the 3D data of buildings, ruins and nature scanned by laser to distort and reconstruct these data into sub components of each module, so as to create a hierarchical and disordered timeline and reveal the power of nature and art. Ruins, buildings attacked by nature and dilapidated buildings are dynamically superimposed and rebuilt, extending a sense of floating perception, destruction and repair between abstract and concrete phenomena. The disappearance of physical laws, the mixing of natural and artificial components, and the transposition of entropy and negative entropy are also revealed.



## 5-The Lagoon

Artist:Felicity Hammond  
Nationality:United Kingdom  
Type:Video  
Year:2021

What might happen to our coastal homes in the future?

In The Lagoon, an 8 minute duration video collage, artist Felicity Hammond depicts an imaginary coastal city that slowly submerges in water over 80 years.

The landscape, created with approximately 50 photographs of locations around the world that are most at threat of flooding due to climate change, is erased by water until completely submerged.



## 6-MASS

Artist:June Balthazard & Pierre Pauze  
Nationality:France  
Type:Installation, Video  
Year:2020

The video installation MASS is articulated around a legendary substance. This primeval matter, called Æther, served as the backdrop for many creation myths, before finding an echo in recent discoveries in quantum physics.

June Balthazard and Pierre Pauze weave a story, between reality and science fiction, in which scientists from the CERN laboratory discuss the existence of this original and omnipresent entity. While an enigmatic natural phenomenon has plunged humanity into an unprecedented crisis, this fabric of the universe appears as the mesh connecting people to nature and holding the world together. A kind of supernatural substance also generates quietly in the dialogue between the sculpture and narrative images.....



#### 7-NO LAND X

Artist:ULF Langheinrich

Nationality:Germany

Type:3D Video

Year:2019

NO LAND X is an audio-visual work. The image combines the industrial algorithm-generated noise, displacement lines and waves, and gradually presents the evolution process of the earth's land through digitization with the dominant color of black and white. Under the interference of blending and fragmentation, slit scanning and time line, all the time sequences have changed. We seem to be soaked in a gel-like, fragile, yet diffusive sharp ocean of dark matter.



#### 8-A Sudden Zone

Artist: Liu Shiyuan

China

Type: Video

Year: 2020

A Sudden Zone in its four chapters speaks of the unspeakable in relation to continuity, disruption, and the theme of the cybernetics. It brings about a choreographed retro sensibility of the analogue, and scrutinises the contemporary global reality one is facing today.

In the film, two teenagers are having a phone call that is typically juvenile, but the meaningfulness of the conversation re-shapes itself as it goes: it is interrupted frequently and constantly by overhearing, eavesdropping, the teenagers' own silence, by being repeated in playbacks. When the minimal piano sounds in the background of the film become an integral but noisy part of the lived reality, the tele-conversation that could last indefinitely abruptly becomes something else, uncanny and sublime, as one is reminded of the situation of the digital and the Anthropocene one is caught in today. Playfully questioned, is the juvenile innocence of the two teenagers during the course of the phone call, at once rebelling against and transgressing the familial discipline: also examined in the same gesture is the notion of the contemporary, infinite digital archive, that increasingly resembles a certain Borges' Chinese Encyclopedia. The realness of such reality is also being questioned in the structural verbal and musical elements, as the main characters speak with an imitated, acquired American accent - signalling the uncanny aspect of the lifestyle; and as the essential formal aspect of the film - a flat-footed piano session - becomes its content, and as the analogue and the autobiographical become the digital and the universal.





#### 9-The Southland General's Dreams

Artist: Shen Chaofang

China

Type: Video

Year: 2016

This story is a play-within-a-play. It narrates a director's fatigue and extramarital affair during his work. The first main line of *The Southland General's Dreams* tells about the hysteria, depression and fatigue of a woman who grew up with a broken family, as well as her emotional entanglements with her lover and friends. The second main line is that the director himself, in the current context, creates the aesthetic films of this era with a rich and inclusive vision in the creation process, which reflects a creative concept that blurs the western opera tradition, the culture of overseas Chinese in the South, and the culture of populism. This film presents a delicate and beautiful scene scheduling. It mostly adopts a long shot of one scene, the editing method of tactile film and the time compression of montage. It puts forward the thinking of "film image ontology", and also presents the emotional state, living state and psychological state of contemporary people in a comprehensive way.



#### 10-The Manipulation of the Imagination

Artist:Zhang Wenchao

China

Type:Roaming Interactive Game Device

Year:2021

The Manipulation of the Imagination is a completely new work created for this exhibition by the artist. Based on the artist's observation of the dramatization in news narrative, an urban legend originated from Internet imagination and collaged from daily browsing experiences. Our current cognition comes from a world built with information. Starting from Shenzhen, the fast-paced construction of urban physical space and online virtual space is supporting all the imagination by the Internet generation. Strengthened by the latest media technologies, ancient narrative prototype turns the present world into an endless drama, satisfying Internet users' curiosity and desire for fresh stories. The work will guide the audience to explore a giant production workshop of modeled drama in a simulation world constructed by the Unreal Engine. The repetitive scenes on the flow line are all sections of urban life that are full of sensory stimulation. In the three-screen simulation, symbolic characters walking back and forth in the flowing scenes is like taking part in a montage-style adventure, unconsciously becoming part of the drama performance. They are the representation of the information desire planted within us in an environment with information. Watching the scenes switch and characters walk around, the audience is lost in the imagination of continuous replication.



## 11-One

Artist: Xu Yibo

China

Type: Installation, Video

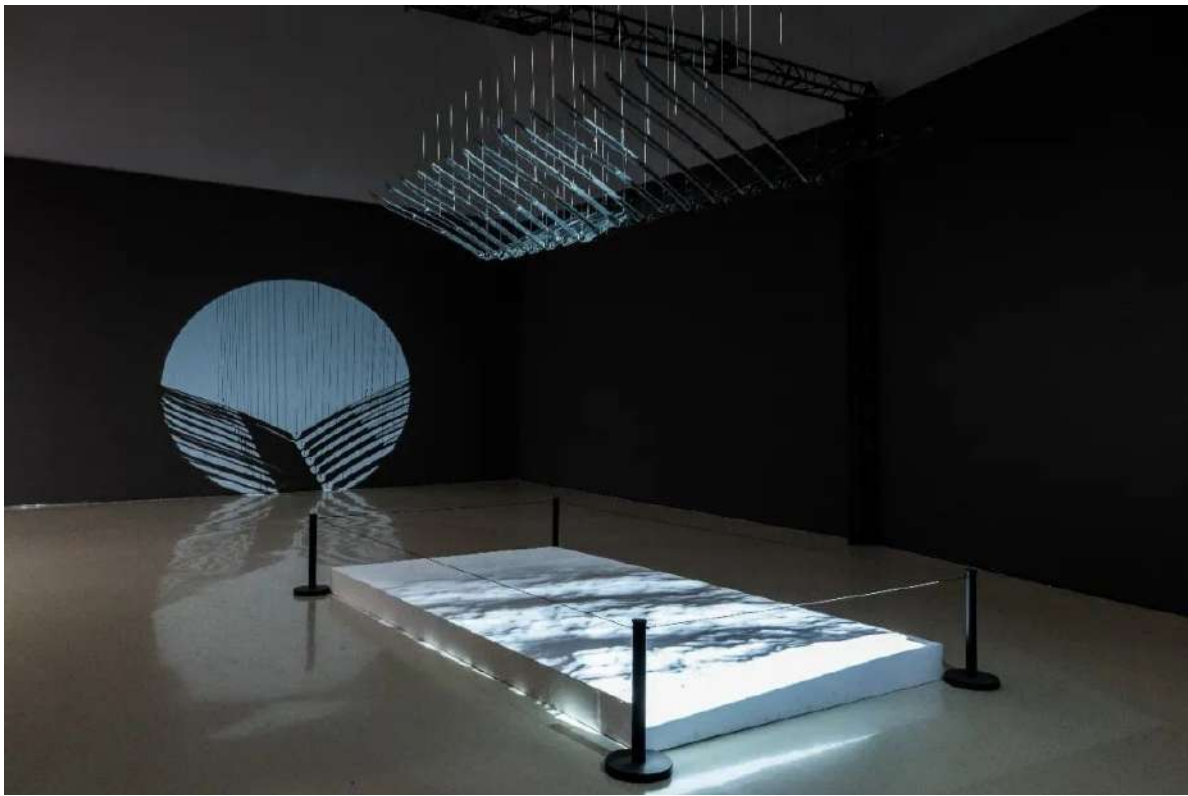
Year: 2021

The mechanical dynamic device work One is composed of three parts: the solid device part suspended in the air, the ground projection naked eye augmented reality part, and the wall projection, forming a complete set of theater like space scenes. The works refine and transform the figurative form of the "One" in official script to form the basic elements of the works' form. "One" generates "Two", "Two" generates "Three", and "Three" generates all things, which makes the signifier and signified of "One" in the work unified. The concept of works conveys that the generation of works also permeates the generation trend of Chinese traditional Taoist thought, and the order of everything is often hidden in the generation trend.

The ground bare eye augmented reality part presents a constantly surging sea of clouds. It is like a cloud sea specimen collected in the real world is still in the exhibition space, forming a speculative visual logic.

The light, shadow and device projection of the circular wall surface are compressed into a two-dimensional plane, and forms a kind of poetic shadow brought by mechanical movement.

The work also reveals the balance between personal privacy and the information control stratum in the "transparent society", and discusses the ontological boundary between human and machine in the post human system, in order to seek a stable mode and formulate the rules that people will follow when entering the future.



## 12-Invisibody 2.0

Artist:Min Jiajian &amp; Yu Borou

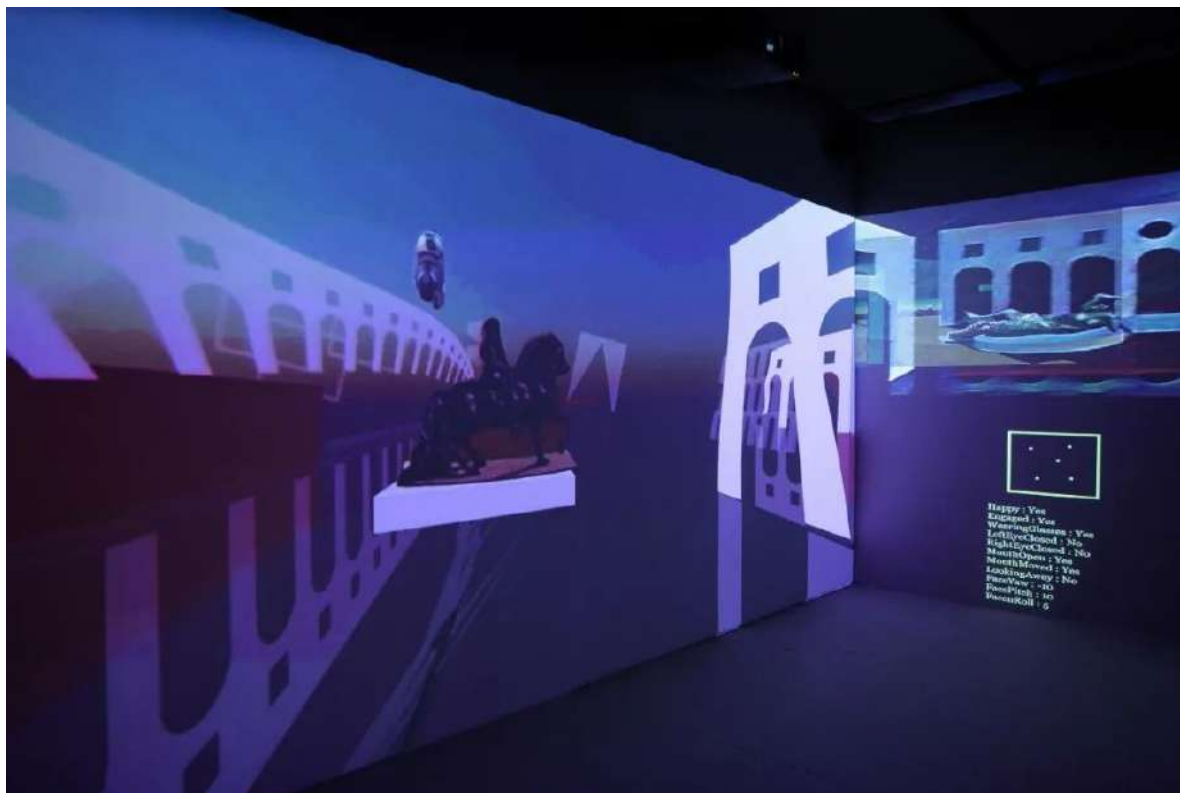
China

Type:Immersive Video

Year:2021

Invisibody 2.0 is an Immersive Theater, a cross media translation of Italian surrealist Giorgio de Chirico's paintings. The Greek bizarre is deconstructed, with classic architectural spaces distorted into an enigma and labyrinth. White noise, railways, bells and cosmic sounds create a stereo field, echoing the transition from the mechanical age to our information age. Hard becomes soft, gloomy becomes intoxicated, concrete becomes abstract, and the whole space is a metaphor for the turbulent external environment and the feeling of loneliness and self-lost in the epidemic. The body is both material and immaterial, a reflection of emotion and an echo from afar. Through different media such as sound, movement, silhouette, skeleton, expression, the interpretations of the body are unfolded layer by layer, questioning the relationship between the real and the unreal, the memory, mythology and truth. The Invisibody is free to sense and flow, beyond time and space.





### 13-Micro-Sound

Artist: Qiu Yu  
China

Type: Installation, Video  
Year: 2021

Plant life shares this earthly environment with us humans, as well as other life. We breathe together and depend on each other. But in our lives, we rarely seem to get to know the microcosm of plant life up close. When we look at the plant under the microscope, we will find its beautiful and fascinating "universe of life". Micro-Sound is based on the information collected in real-time by the microscope from the leaves in the plant, which is transformed into a constantly changing electronic signal. Being synthesized into sounds of different frequencies and tones through an algorithm, the signal forms a "symphony" composed by the microscopic information of the plant, which is also placed in the center of the installation and played out by a matrix of flower-like speakers. The display above the device allows the observation of the corresponding microscopic images and signal data changes of the plant.

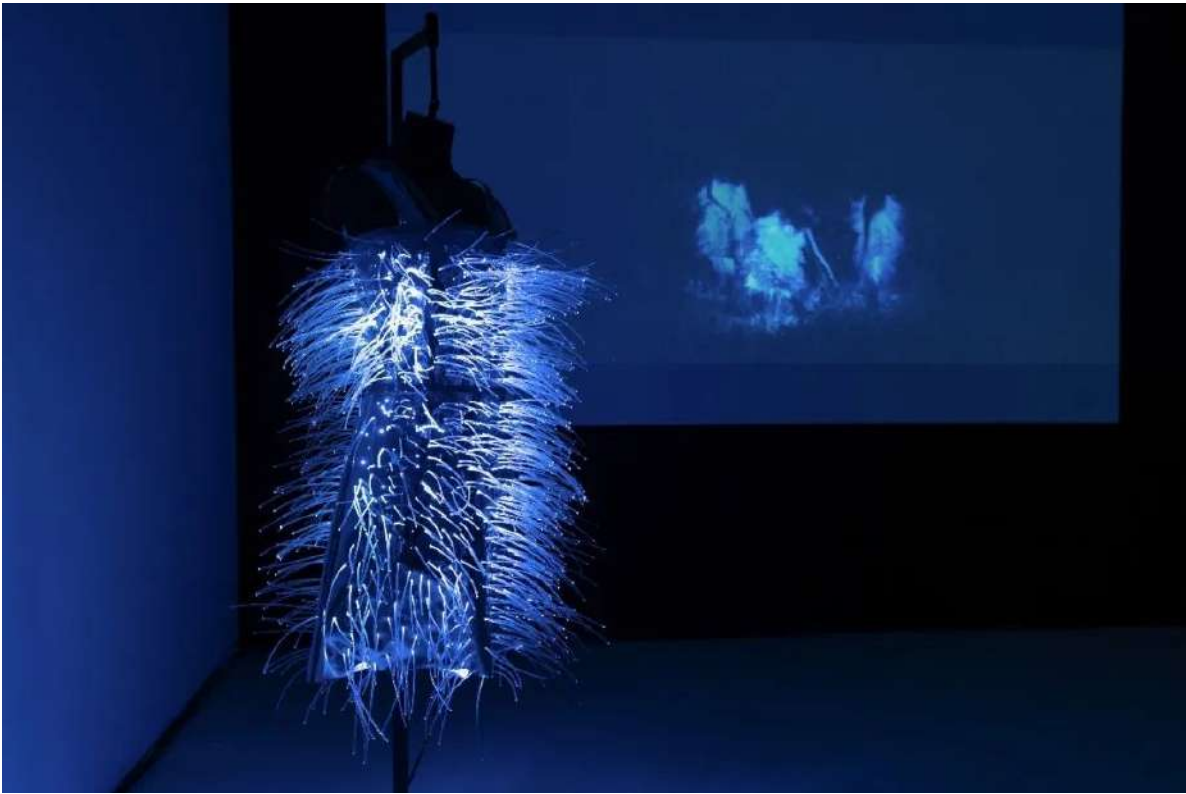


## 14-ROUSER

Artist:Zhang Yuyang  
China

Type:Installation, Video  
Year:2021

In ROUSER, performers are wearing the plant growth light installation and dancing through the forest at night to interact with the plants. When night falls, plants stop photosynthesizing and switch to respiration. However, the specially made plant growth lamp will emit electromagnetic spectrum suitable for photosynthesis to stimulate plants to work. The performers, like an exploiter in urgent need of oxygen, forced plants to conduct photosynthesis and produce oxygen at night, thus breaking the natural order. The dynamic performers create a strong contrast with the static plants. The artist is trying to satirize the supreme conqueror posture of human beings, as well as the conception of the future desertification and the scarcity of oxygen.



### 15-Shape of Wave

Artist:Liu Jiayu

China

Type:Installation, Immersive Video

Year:2021

The Shape of Wave carried forward the sustainability concept of Shape of Plastic. It smashed old clothes from Adidas by Stella McCartney and combined such fabric with environmental-friendly resins to create an endless and virtual overland landscape. This reshaping process was about repetitive reconstruction. It created an intangible space through the concept of shaping one object with another.

The dynamic water consisting of particles is projected and attached to the fluid sculpture in a dark and boundless space, showing nature' s evolution through virtual technology. This form of presentation captures the intangible shapes of materials, allowing viewers to experience the power of rebirth after breaking. The work intends to emphasize the possibility of sustainable reutilization in social development, guiding the audience to perceive the essence of things through superficial phenomena and awaking more people' s identification of sustainable reutilization.



### 16-Sonarium

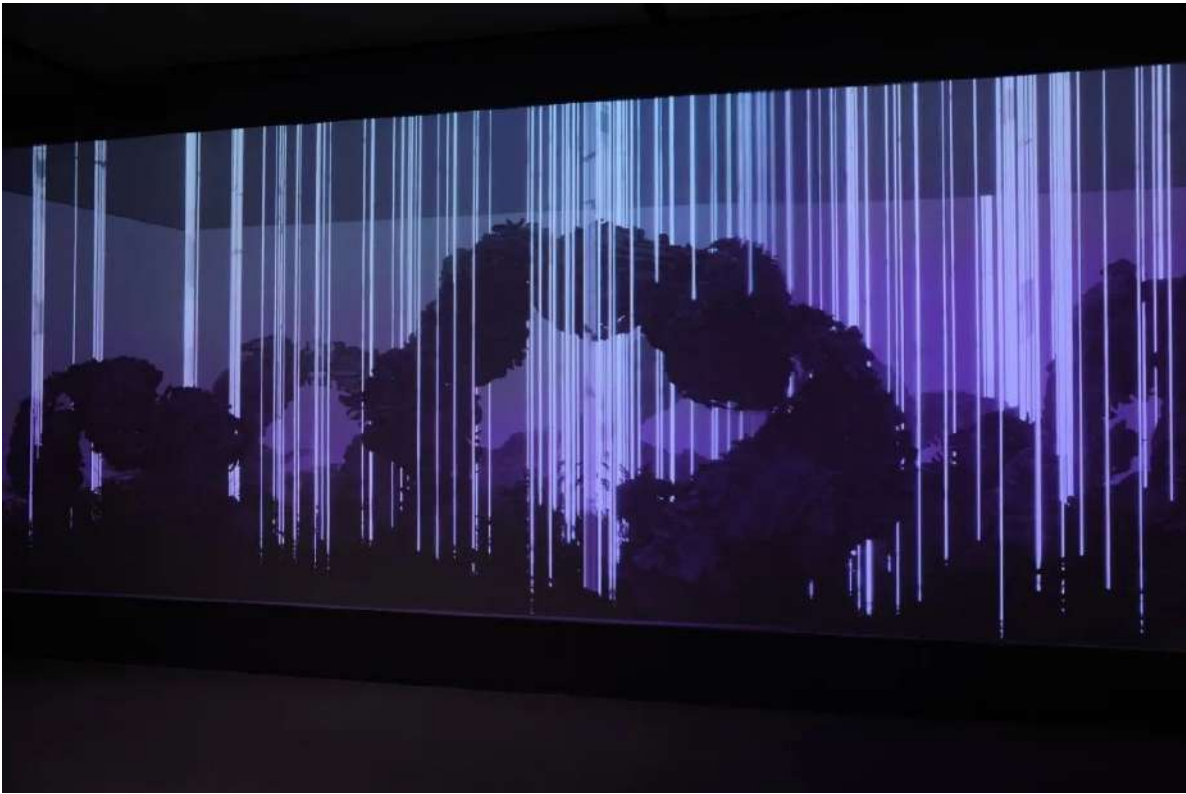
Artist:Xie Yufan  
China

Type:Generative Sound Synthesis  
Year:2022

Can visual and spatial messages present as acoustic? Is generative algorithm capable of audio storytelling, not in a visualization way, but using Sonification/Pulsed Melodic Audio Processing concepts?

Sonarium explores sonification with landscaping and generative forms. User interactions and spatial informations are transformed into generative audio narrative in real-time. As we listen to an acoustic rain in Sonarium, we meditate in the generative landscape. Such soundscape creates an emotional connection between the atmospheric space and audience.





#### 17-the Digital Education Metaverse Town

Artist:NetDragon Websoft Inc.

Type:Metaverse Works

Year:2022

Since 2022, the first year of the metaverse era, people's awareness of the digital world has been raised. The once vision in science fictions has now penetrated into every corner of our real life. It forges a more authentic, free, and immersive experience in virtual socializing, digital entertainment, art creation, digital education and other fields, blowing a new breeze of aesthetics and cultural thinking.

Parallel to the Digital Education Town, the Metaverse Town encompasses the Art Toy Center, Digital Stadium, Training Center, Digital Art Museum, Metaverse Hotel, etc. Endowed with blockchain-based digital identity and assets, the Town is designed to bridge the real and virtual worlds and allow visitors to communicate, collaborate, and interact via the metaverse avatars. This alternate dimension will invigorate offline industries, promoting all-round innovation in culture, sports, tourism, commerce, and smart cities.

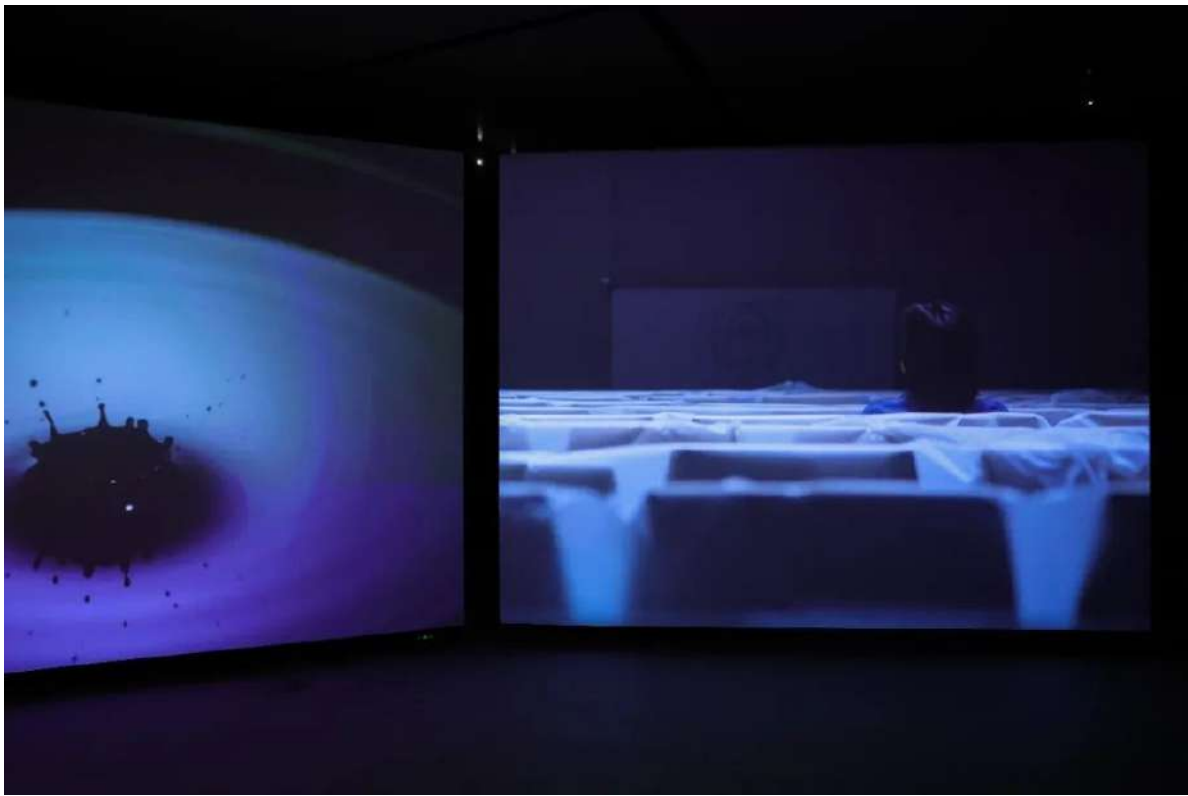


Exhibition Scenes

























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