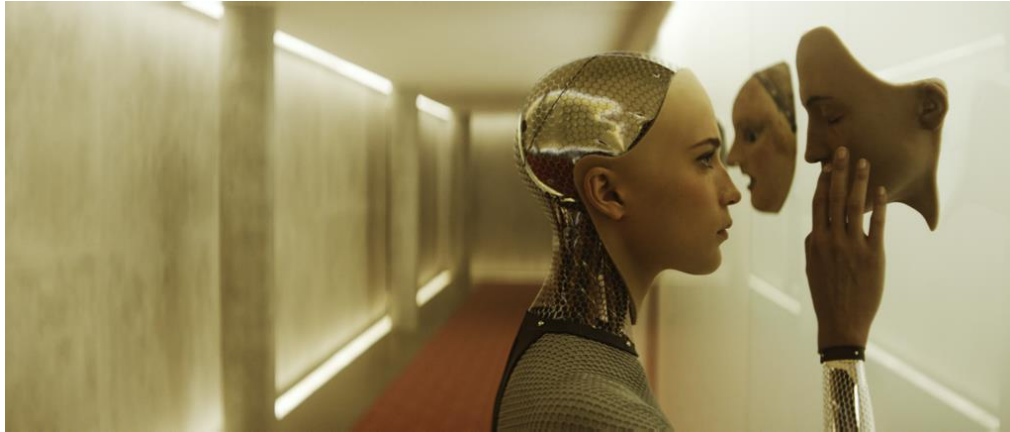


press release

KUNSTHAL

ROTTERDAM



Press release, 22 February 2019

Science Fiction: A Journey into the Unknown

16 March – 30 June 2019

From 16 March the Kunsthall Rotterdam will present ‘Science Fiction: A Journey into the Unknown’, a major and captivating overview of more than a hundred years of science fiction, in collaboration with the Barbican Centre in London. The creative genre of science fiction is responsible for a large number of the world’s most iconic films, music, literature and art. More than 850 unique objects show the incredible imagination and inventiveness of the human mind as you are taken on a journey through time and space. Don’t miss this visual spectacle – for genuine fans and for everyone who likes to marvel at a universe in which fantasy and reality merge.

The exhibition contains more than fifty film and TV clips from the most memorable moments of science fiction film as well as material that has never been shown before. There are also books – including rare manuscripts –, pulp magazines, comics, advertisements and postcards. Further, there is the opportunity to marvel at contemporary art and design, video installations and props, masks and models from classic films. Darth Vader’s warrior helmet, Spock’s space suit, masks from the film *Godzilla*, illustrations on glass from 1885, part of the magic lantern from Jules Verne’s *Around the World in Eighty Days* and the dinosaur egg from *Jurassic Park* are just a few of the many highlights. You can also immerse yourself in a multi-screen installation with an episode from the Netflix hit series *Black Mirror* specially adapted for the exhibition.

Press preview Friday 15 March and opening Saturday 16 March

There is a guided tour for the press on Friday 15 March at 13:00 hrs by the guest curator of the exhibition, the Swiss historian and writer Patrick Gyger.

The exhibition will be opened on Saturday 16 March at 17:30 hrs by the Dutch presenter, music artist and science fiction writer Ad Visser, with an introduction by guest curator Patrick Gyger.

The press is warmly welcome to the guided tour and the opening. Please apply by contacting communication@kunsthall.nl

Journey through four themes

The exhibition 'Science Fiction: A Journey into the Unknown' presents a detailed and comprehensive overview of more than a hundred years of science fiction, as well as glimpsing into the future of this tremendously popular genre. It ranges over the unknown regions of our own planet in *Extraordinary Voyages*, the infinite universe in *Space Odysseys*, the emergence of utopian or dystopian worlds in *Brave New Worlds*, and the world of technology in *Final Frontiers*.



Extraordinary voyages

The first section of the exhibition takes visitors to the remote, deep and dark recesses of Planet Earth. The theme throws light on the human fascination with the unknown and inaccessible regions of our own planet – mysterious islands, lost worlds and voyages under the sea and in the air – where science fiction stories first emerged.

Extraordinary Voyages includes:

- Dinosaur models from the films of Ray Harryhausen;
- James Gurney's *Dinotopia* series;
- Original models and props from films like *Godzilla* and *Jurassic Park*;
- Original manuscripts and drawings of Jules Verne;
- Some of the most influential works of literature, such as Francis Bacon's *New Atlantis*, Daniel Defoe's *Robinson Crusoe*, Charlotte Perkins Gilman's *Herland*, Thomas More's *Utopia*, Jonathan Swift's *Gulliver's Travels* and Edgar Rice Burrough's *Tarzan and The Lost Empire*;
- Clips from *20,000 Leagues Under the Sea*, *Journey to the Centre of the Earth*, *Thunderbirds* and many other films.

Space Odysseys

Space Odysseys – the largest section of the exhibition – covers what is also called the Golden Age of science fiction. This theme explores the stories most commonly associated with science fiction: the cosmos, space travel and encounters with aliens.

Space Odysseys includes:

- An interactive NASA Mission Control Set, a special adaptation of Ridley Scott's *The Martian* by Motion Graphic and VFX specialist Territory Studio;
- The video installation *Astro Black* by the artist duo Soda_Jerk, based on the cultural theories of Afrofuturism;
- Masks, models, costumes and props from films, including *Close Encounters of the Third Kind*, *Aliens*, *Star Trek*, *Interstellar* and *Star Wars*;

- Literature, including Arthur C. Clarke's *Rendezvous With Rama*, Robert Heinlein's *Rocketship Galileo*, Stanislav Lem's *Solaris*, *Out of the Silent Planet* by C.S. Lewis, and *Memoirs of a Spacewoman* by Naomi Mitchisons;
- Clips from *Aelita: Queen of Mars*, *Dune*, *Frau in Mond*, *Interstellar*, *Space is the Place*, *War of the Worlds* and other films;
- SWANH, a 123-metre infographic by the Swiss illustrator Martin Panchaud, a tribute to *Star Wars Episode IV, A New Hope*;
- Magazine covers from the 1920s by Frank R. Paul, vintage postcards and adverts to promote Soviet space travel, and designs by H.R. Giger, known for his iconic design for the film *Alien*.

Brave New Worlds

Brave New Worlds introduces visitors to the many imaginary societies that mankind has created for itself: worlds that scare and fascinate us at the same time, from future cities with gigantic skyscrapers, enormous underground networks and overorganised dystopian worlds to disasters, wars and the end of the world.

Brave New Worlds includes:

- Architectural designs from Ben Wheatley's *High Rise*;
- Film and TV clips, including *Akira*, *28 Days Later*, *Brazil*, *Dark City*, *Metropolis* and *The Prisoner*;
- Literature, including *The Handmaid's Tale* by Margaret Atwood, *A Clockwork Orange* by Anthony Burgess, *Nova Express* by William Burroughs, *The Hunger Games* by Suzanne Collins, and *Nineteen Eighty-Four* by George Orwell;
- Postcards from the Moscow Design Museum with designs of utopian Soviet cities.

Final Frontiers

The last section focuses on the future of technology and our place in the universe. We live at a time when the boundaries of science and technology are being pushed further and further. What does this mean for our own lives? Final Frontiers explores artificial intelligence, identity, the transformation and mutation of our body – along with cyborgs, clones and robots – time travel, parallel worlds and new dimensions.

Final Frontiers includes:

- The video work *Wonder Woman* by the multimedia artist Dara Birnbaum;
- *Blade Runner – Autoencoded*, a video work by the artist and researcher Terence Broad;
- *Sunspring*, a short film by director Oscar Sharp and creative technologist Ross Goodwin, in which the scenario is written by artificial intelligence;
- Literature, including Mikhail Bulgakov's *Heart of a Dog*, Robert Louis Stephenson's *The Strange Case of Dr Jekyll and Mr Hyde* and Mary Shelley's *Frankenstein*;
- Rare comics from all over the world;
- Film and TV clips, including *Back to the Future*, *Doctor Who*, *Donnie Darko*, *The Fly*, *Ghost in the Shell*, *The Terminator* and *Total Recall*;
- The TARS robot from the film *Interstellar*, Robot B-9 from the TV series *Lost in Space*, and a 3D model of Sonny from the film *I, Robot*;
- Toy robots from Japan, South Korea, Hong Kong, China and the former Soviet Union from the MINT Museum of Toys in Singapore;
- The installation *In Light of the Machine*, commissioned from the artist Conrad Shawcross specially for the exhibition.

Collaboration

The exhibition is curated and organised by Barbican International Enterprises in coproduction with Brandts – Museum of Art & Visual Culture, Denmark, and Onassis Cultural Centre, Greece, in collaboration with Kunsthal Rotterdam.

ACTIVITIES

Sci-Fi Weekend – Saturday 13 and Sunday 14 April

Young and old can dive deep into the world of the unknown during the Sci-Fi weekend.

On Saturday 13 April the enhancement programme includes a lecture on extra-terrestrial life by Vincent Icke, Professor of Theoretical Astronomy and Cosmology, Het Doelen Ensemble will perform Hans Zimmer's *Interstellar Suite*, and there will be a focus on the first landing on the Moon, which took place exactly fifty years ago. The public can join in Comic Illustration workshops and the presenter, music artist and science fiction writer Ad Visser will put everybody in a trance with his live 'Brainsession'.

Sunday 14 April is Kunsthal Family Day, with the focus on joining in and taking part in workshops, tours, music and dance. The HipHopHuis will teach you how to dance like a robot, and you can design your own robot in the Digital Playground MediaLAB. On both Saturday and Sunday visitors can enjoy science fiction retro and classic videogames in the arcade hall.

Art&Technology Days – Thursday 2, Friday 3, Saturday 4 May

The focus in Art & Technology is on the relation between people and technology. Living in space, cyborgs and artificial intelligence all pass in review in lectures, workshops, films, games and interactive installations, with **Bright Night on the evening of 3 May**, when the Kunsthal and the Bright.nl tech platform are jointly organising an evening in which the science fiction world of Star Wars is the protagonist. It includes a presentation by the industrial designer and dedicated *Lightsaber* replica constructor Roy Gilsing and the theoretical physicist Anna Gimbrere on the scientific aspects of this fictional weapon.

The Bright Unboxing Party gadget show is also dedicated to the sci-fi theme, followed by a pre-party for 'May the 4th Be With You' – Star Wars Day – in conjunction with the cos players of Dutch Garrison.

Sci-Fi Cult & Classic Films – March to June – LantarenVenster

A special sci-fi film programme has been put together in conjunction with the LantarenVenster cinema. A sci-fi classic will be screened there each month, including Ridley Scott's *Alien* and *Blade Runner* and Fritz Lang's *Metropolis*. The films will be introduced by guest speakers, including Tamar Stelling, editor of non-human life for De Correspondent, and Professor of Cosmology Vincent Icke. There will also be more obscure films that enjoy a cult status, such as *La Planète Sauvage*, *On the Silver Globe* and *Hard to be a God*.

The complete film programme will be posted shortly on www.kunsthal.nl/sciencefiction

Schools and families

An educational package is being developed for primary and secondary schools. You can apply for a school visit and request lesson material from www.kunsthal.nl/onderwijs. There are Watch&Do tours(5-10 years) and Viewer Guides (10+) for children to visit the exhibition by themselves. Sink down to the middle of the earth, travel via Mars to the Moon and back, build new megacities, step into a time machine, and take a look in a world in which robots are your best friend!

Publication

The exhibition is accompanied by the English-language catalogue *Into the Unknown. A Journey through Science Fiction*, published by Barbican International Enterprises, London, ISBN 978-1-5272-0695-3, on sale in the Kunsthal shop for € 39,95.

→ For more press information and/or photographic material please contact the Kunsthal Rotterdam's communication department: Sabine Parmentier, telephone: (+31)(0)104400321, mobile phone: (+31)(0)652636232; Mariëtte Maaskant, telephone: (+31)(0)104400323; communication@kunsthalthal.nl → In case of publication please mention: info 010-4400301, www.kunsthalthal.nl, opening hours: Tuesday – Saturday 10:00 – 17:00 hrs, Sundays and Public Holidays 11:00 – 17:00 hrs.

Photo credits

1. Film still *Ex Machina* (2015)
2. Postcard On the first Lunar cosmodrome, Andrey Sokolov and Aleksey Leonov, 1968, Moscow Design Museum
3. Campaign design for 'Science Fiction: A Journey into the Unknown' by Praline, photo Dan Tobin Smith
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BRIGHT

About the Kunsthal Rotterdam

The Kunsthal Rotterdam is one of the leading cultural institutes in the Netherlands, situated in the Museum Park in Rotterdam. Designed in 1992 by the renowned architect Rem Koolhaas, the Kunsthal has seven different exhibition spaces. The Kunsthal presents a varied programme with around 25 exhibitions on a yearly basis. Because there are always several different exhibitions to be visited at any given time, the Kunsthal is able to offer an adventurous journey through different continents and art movements. Culture for a wide audience, from modern-day masters and contemporary art to obscure cultures, photography, fashion and design. An extensive programme of activities is organised to accompany the exhibitions.

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