

BLENDED WORLDS

*Bridging Art and Science in the Age
of Interplanetary Imagination*

As humanity continues its journey into space, seeking answers far beyond our planet, artists are finding inspiration in the cosmos. One exciting fusion of creativity and innovation is the exhibition *Blended Worlds: Experiments in Interplanetary Imagination*, a collaboration between the City of Glendale's Library, Arts & Culture Department and NASA's Jet Propulsion Laboratory (JPL). The exhibition explores the intersection of art and science through pioneering installations and multimedia works.

The exhibition showcases artworks that use real-world scientific data from NASA missions, blending technology, nature, and imagination to create artistic experiences extending beyond Earth. *Blended Worlds* aims to foster renewed curiosity about the universe and humanity's place within it. Visitors are invited to experience planetary wonders through sound, scent, visual art, and interactive installations, embodying the expansive potential of human creativity when intersecting with science.

Blended Worlds offers an innovative approach to understanding our place in the universe, inviting visitors to experience the wonders of space through artistic creativity. By bridging the gap between art and science, the exhibition expands our understanding of both fields and highlights the infinite possibilities for human imagination in the age of space exploration. As we venture further into the cosmos, exhibitions like *Blended Worlds* remind us that the journey is not just about exploring other worlds but also about deepening our connection to the world we call home.

Blended Worlds runs from September 21, 2024, through January 4, 2025, at the Brand Library & Art Center in Glendale, California. Part of the Getty's PST ART: *Art & Science Collide* initiative, the exhibition invites visitors to experience the universe in ways deeply connected to our earthly existence.



BRUCE MAU, *Mosaic Manifesto*, from *A Love Letter to the XO Planets*. Courtesy of the artist.

How can we bring together diverse elements from our collective history to foster a transcendent, interplanetary future?

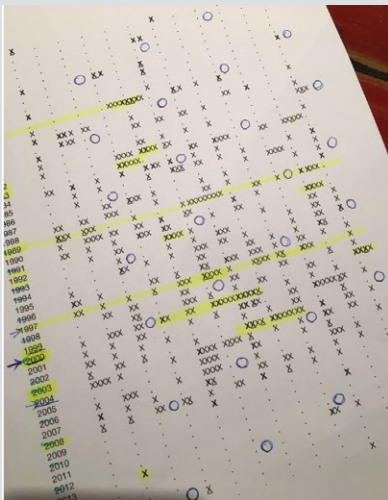
The artist writes, "For years, I've collected manifestos, and I even wrote one about what it takes to sustain a creative life. I thought about creating a new manifesto, but what's the point? There are thousands of inspiring

statements. Instead, I imagined bringing together these diverse manifestos, each one a tiny pixel coalescing into an image of a transcendent future so heartbreakingly brilliant, so utterly unlike our history of planetary destruction, that we can hardly bear to look directly at it—but this is who we really are."

MOON RIBAS, *Seismic Percussion*.
Courtesy of the artist.

How might the interiors of Earth, Mars, and myself relate to each other?

Seismic Percussion translates Earth's seismic activity into a drum score, creating a data-driven performance. For *Blended Worlds*, Ribas includes quake activity from the moon and Mars, using seismic data collected from the historic NASA Apollo moon missions as well as the more recent NASA Mars InSight lander. This performance condenses multiplanetary seismic activity into music, connecting audiences with the natural rhythms of the Earth, moon, and Mars.



MOON RIBAS, *Burial of a Sense*.
Courtesy of the artist.

What happens when you can feel an entire planet inside you?

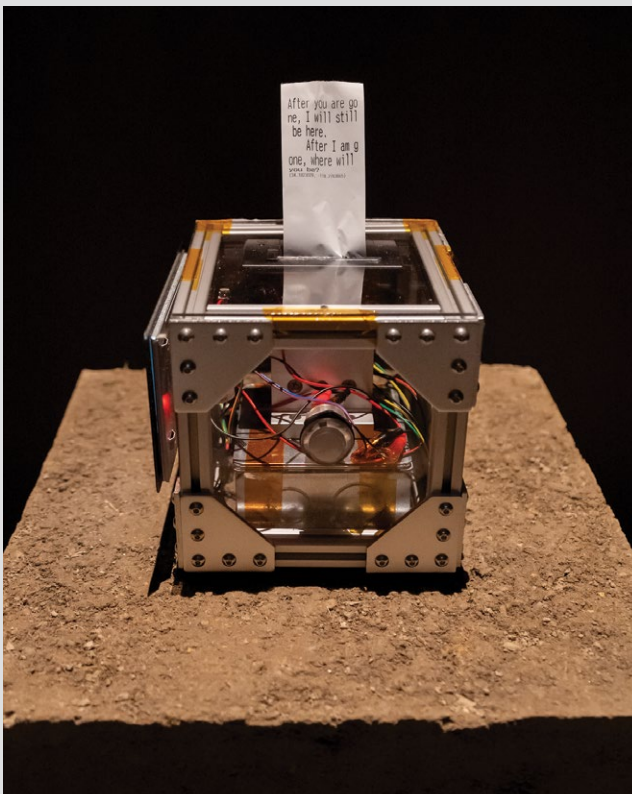
Moon Ribas implanted vibrating microchips connected to the USGS Global Seismographic Network into her body, which allowed Ribas to feel each tremor internally. This transformed her perception of Earth, making it an extension of herself. After seven years, Ribas removed the microchips and buried them ceremonially, marking a farewell to her unique planetary sense. Ribas said, "I felt like I had a new beat inside my body; I had two beats. Apart from my heartbeat, I had the Earthbeat."



DAVID B. LEVINE AND THOMAS GOTTELIER, *Astroglyphs*. Courtesy of the artist.

How might the act of discovery unite us?

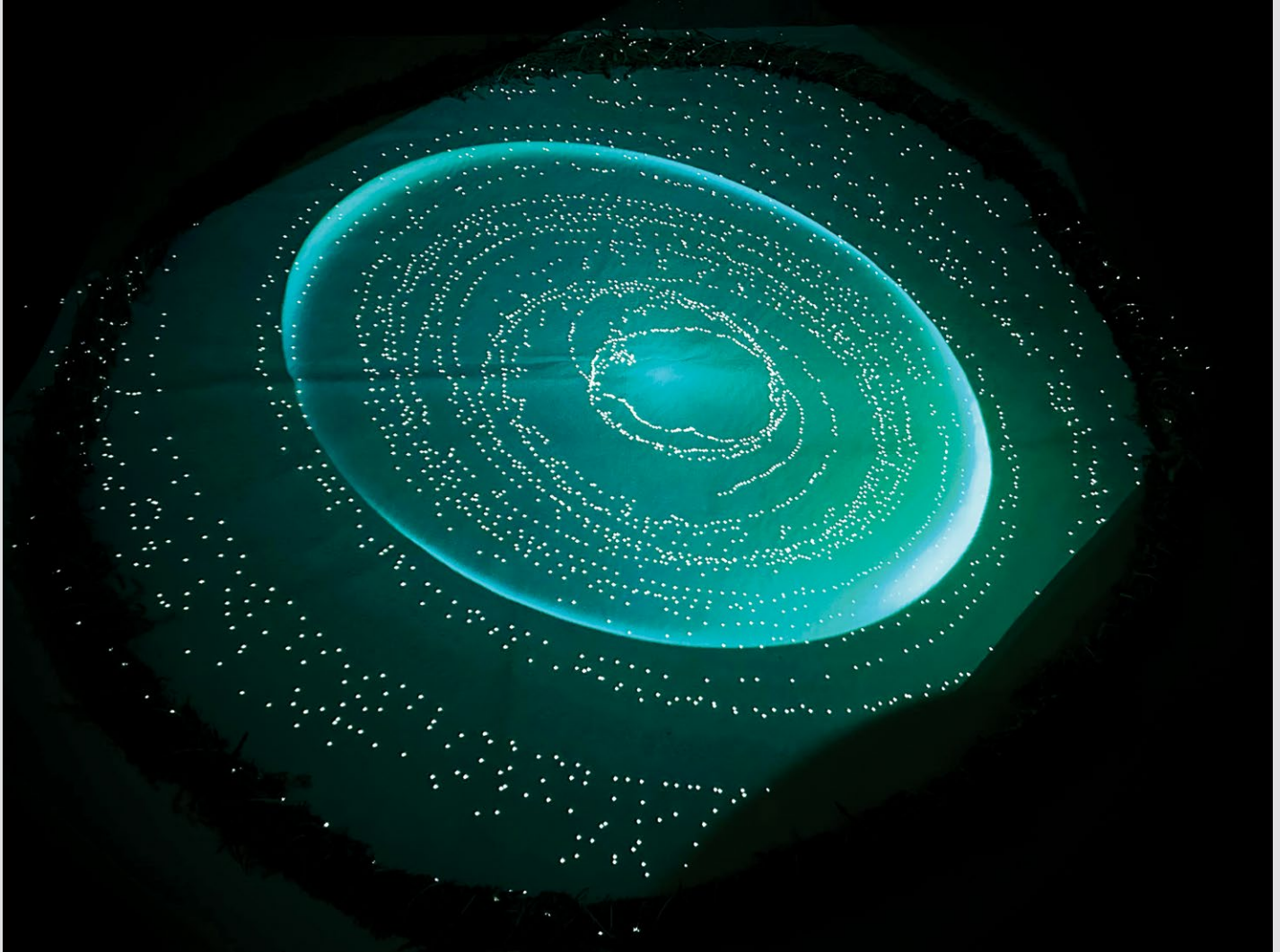
Leaving a mark on the world—a handprint on a cave wall, an arrangement of twigs, a stack of rocks—is a primal act affirming our existence. *Astroglyphs* unites the JPL community by creating marks, or astroglyphs, that researchers leave behind to catalog their presence. These imprints in soil, snow, or dust are encoded with their location and a history of previous astroglyphs. These markings are cataloged and shared, celebrating an often-overlooked process and uniting a diverse community of researchers. *Astroglyphs* is a global, ongoing project with many future locations and collaborators.



LIZBETH B. DE LA TORRE, JPL AND RAFFI JOE WARTANIAN, Glendale Poet Laureate, *Earth Speaks*. Photo by Zaw Studios.

How might we listen to Earth if it spoke to us?

Earth Speaks converts NASA Earth Science data—carbon dioxide, global temperature, and sea level—into poetry, creating a unique way to “listen” to the planet. The resulting poetry is both foreign and familiar, prompting questions about Earth’s potential as a living, communicative entity. This experiment doesn’t humanize Earth but invites humans to try understanding it, offering hope for clearer future communication if we are willing to listen, and become better listeners.



ANNETTE S. LEE, Still image from *Ancient Echoes: Soundscapes Across Worlds*.

How might water unite life?

This experiment gives physical form to the artist's Indigenous process of thanking the spirits of nature, a process called "putting down thanks." The power held in this intention is about recognizing the presence of the spiritual world and the gift of water that supports life across the universe. This piece invites you to reflect on your relationship with water and "put down thanks" in your own tradition or practice. The soundscape blends whale song, human heartbeats, and the sonified magnetic field of Jupiter's moon Europa, connecting Earth's known life with Europa's unknown possibilities.