

# ALIENARIUM 5

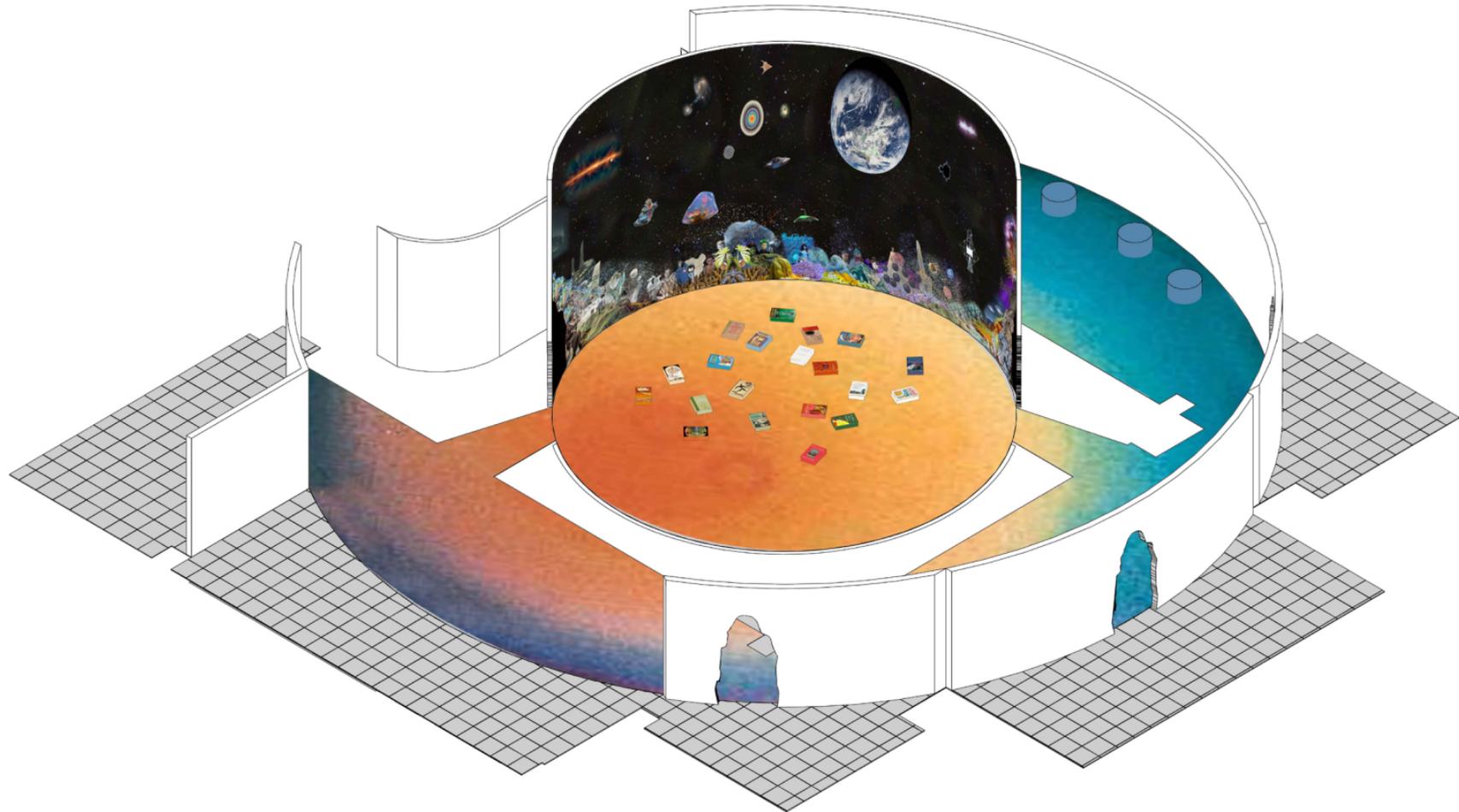


ALIENARIUM 5

DOMINIQUE  
GONZALEZ-  
FOERSTER

14 APRIL -  
4 SEPTEMBER  
2022

SERPENTINE



# WHAT IF ALIENS

*What if aliens were in love with us?*

*Alienarium 5* is a speculative environment that invites us to imagine possible encounters with extraterrestrials. The exhibition is a culmination of Dominique Gonzalez-Foerster's decades-long interest in science fiction, and her continued research into deep space and alien life.

Gonzalez-Foerster is an experimental artist. Engaging with the exhibition as a medium, her spatial inventions and investigations probe the notion of display, as well as how an image or scene is experienced. Drawing on a wide range of references from music, literature, film, architecture and pop culture, the artist creates densely layered environments that transport viewers into alternative narrative, temporal and psychological dimensions.

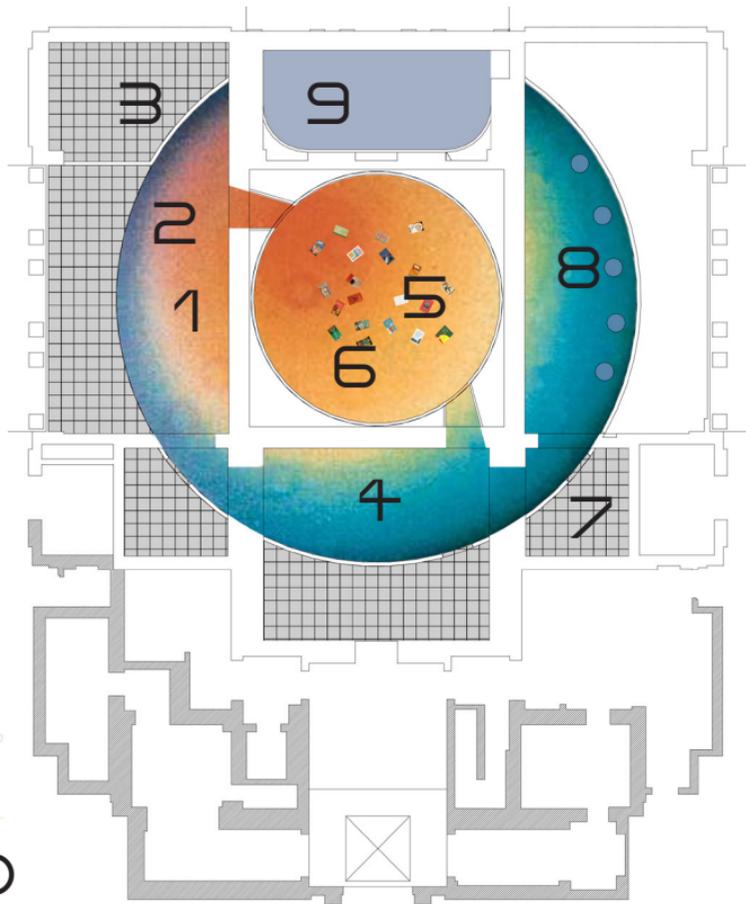
Compelled by historically experimental modes of presentation such as the panorama, Gonzalez-Foerster creates uncanny environments that unsettle the familiar and the expected. From her 'Chambres', an early series of highly-stylised fictional or personal interior spaces defined by a certain colour and mood, to her 'Apparitions' – ongoing live and holographic conjurings of fictional and non-fictional characters – Gonzalez-Foerster shapeshifts between diverse media. The artist's distinctive form of speculative visual fiction connects feeling and thought to that which we can see, smell, hear and touch, in an exploratory process of world-building.

# WERE IN LOVE WITH US?

For *Alienarium 5*, Gonzalez-Foerster has collaborated with Paul B. Preciado (writer and philosopher), Martial Galfione (architect), Julien Perez (musician), Barnabé Fillion (parfumeur), Mélanie Gerbeaux (hair and makeup artist) and Ivan Murit (artist and designer) to transform the Serpentine into a spectacular and otherworldly vision. A multi-user VR piece contemplates new forms of connection through alien embodiment, while an immersive 360-degree collage titled *Metapanorama* uses outer space as a framework to bring humans, nonhumans and extraterrestrials together. With live apparitions appearing at various points during the exhibition, *Alienarium 5* blurs the lines between past and present, and between what is real and imagined.

Connecting to Serpentine's historical role as a tea house and site of rendezvous – as well as to past exhibitions by spiritualist artists Emma Kunz (1892–1963) and Hilma af Klint (1862–1944) – *Alienarium 5* serves as a meeting point for friends from the past, the present and a time not yet named. Welcoming visitors into a world of expanded possibility the exhibition is, in the artist's words, 'a mutant place contributing to the invention of new technologies of consciousness. It is an anti-*War of the Worlds* vision.'

*Alienarium 5* is a proposal for freedom and interspecies connection. It is an experimental place in which to discover new forms of love and to encounter possible visitors from outer space.



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# ALIENARIUM 5 NEON

Dominique Gonzalez-Foerster with John Morgan studio,  
*Alienarium 5 (Neon)*, 2022. Neon

Following on from previous projects such as *Moment Ginza* at the Centre National d'Art Contemporain de Grenoble (France, 1998) and *Splendide Hotel* at the Palacio de Cristal, Reina Sofía (Madrid, 2015), *Alienarium 5 (Neon)* continues Gonzalez-Foerster's practice of turning exhibition titles into neon signage. The title of this exhibition references Kurt Vonnegut's (1922–2007) anti-war science-fiction novel, *Slaughterhouse-Five* (1969).

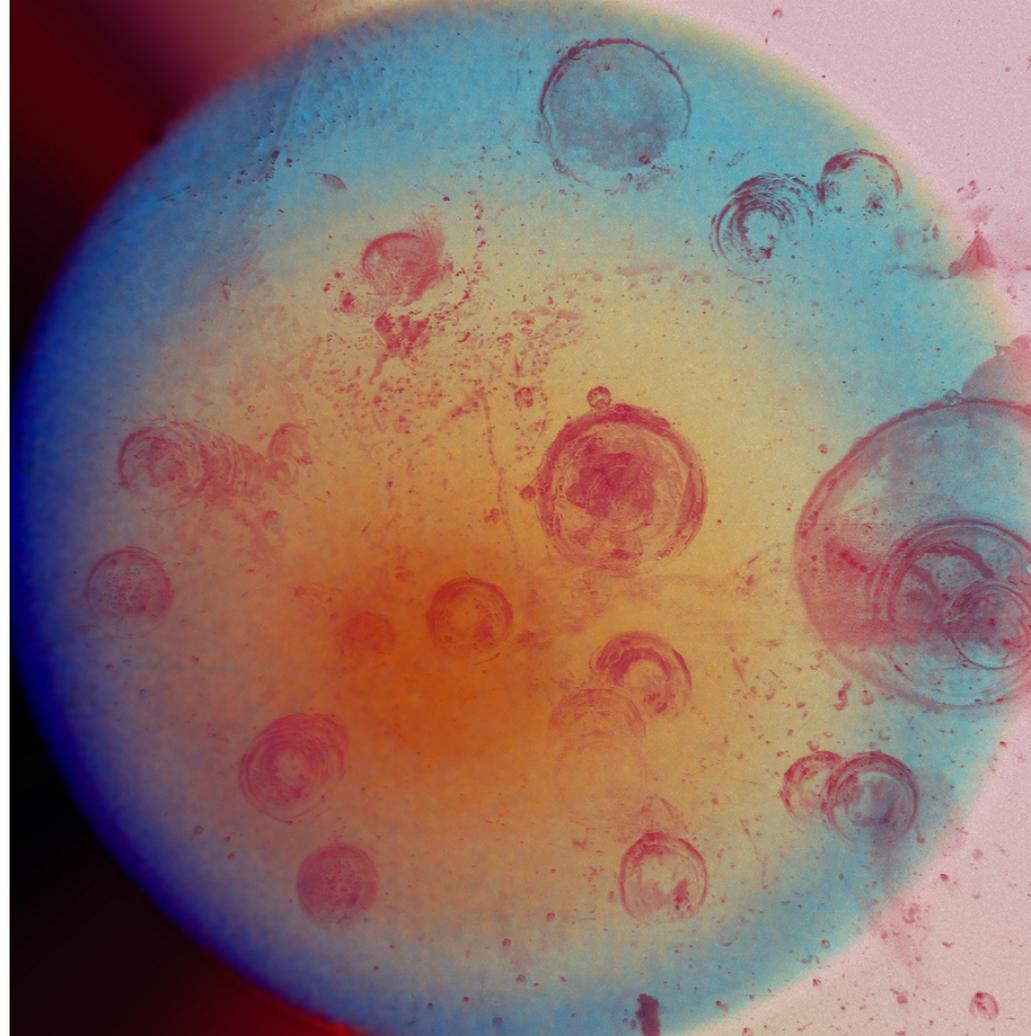


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# PLANET CARPET

Dominique Gonzalez-Foerster,  
*Planet Carpet (Uranus)*, 2022. Printed carpet.  
Generative pattern: Ivan Murit

*Planet Carpet (Uranus)* is the ground upon which you walk. Based on a picture of the planet Uranus rendered in artificial colours, the work is site-specific and connects the various environments that make up *Alienarium 5*. *Planet Carpet (Uranus)* relates in pattern and tone to the *Metapanorama* and initiates an interconnected mode of being. Flow with *Planet Carpet (Uranus)*. Let it move you and take you on a journey.



# LA PLANÈTE CLOSE

Dominique Gonzalez-Foerster, Mélanie Gerbeaux and  
Barnabé Fillion (Arpa Studios), *La planète close (vision)*, 2021.

Partition and small opening, artificial hair, scent  
Courtesy of the artist and Galerie Chantal Crousel, Paris

*It's not easy to find the closed planet in the universe. Sometimes it's  
at the edge of our galaxy or well beyond the milky way... DGF*

A giant head with sprawling hair and a mysterious smell sits hidden somewhere within *Alienarium 5*, waiting to be discovered. Inspired by Marcel Duchamp's (1887–1968) late work *Étant donnés* (1946–66) – a three-dimensional tableau visible only through a pair of peep-holes – Gonzalez-Foerster has concealed *La planète close* (The closed planet) in its own *chambre* (room). One of a cycle of three 'visions' made by Gonzalez-Foerster in 2021, *La planète close* is a nocturnal work that appears between sleep and dreams. The concealed mode of display incites desire, offering just a seductive glimpse and only the possibility of approach.



# ALIENFLOWERS HOLORIUM

Dominique Gonzalez-Foerster and Barnabé Fillion  
(Arpa Studios), *Alienflowers (holorium)*, 2022.  
Scent. Produced in collaboration with Mane

*Alienflowers (holorium)* are invisible and can be found growing in different parts of *Alienarium 5*, but mainly in the holorium and next to *La chambre humaine (bed)*. Deriving nourishment from interactions with other species, the fragrant *Alienflowers (holorium)* also receive nutrients from the sunlight that streams through the oculus. Developed together with Barnabé Fillion, *Alienflowers (holorium)* blossom through associative scent engagements.





# ALIENARIUM 5 BIBLIOGRAPHY

Dominique Gonzalez-Foerster, *Alienarium 5 (Bibliography)*, 2022. Cushions

*I keep reading all the time, wanting to write and fantasising  
about the idea of writing a book. DGF*

*Alienarium 5 (Bibliography)* continues Gonzalez-Foerster's experiments in introducing books into her exhibitions and in creating new types of reading spaces.

Books referenced: Emily Dickinson, *Poems*, 1890; Annie Besant and C.W. Leadbeater, *Thought-Forms*, 1901; Murray Constantine, *Proud Man*, 1934; John Wyndham, *The Chrysalids*, 1955; Stanisław Lem, *Solaris*, 1961; Brian Aldiss, *Hothouse*, 1962; Philip K. Dick, *Martian Time-Slip*, 1964; Ursula K. Le Guin, *Planet of Exile*, 1966; Anna Kavan, *Ice*, 1967; Joanna Russ, *Picnic on Paradise*, 1968; John Brunner, *Stand on Zanzibar*, 1968; John Brunner, *The Dramaturges Of Yan*, 1972; Clarice Lispector, *Água Viva*, 1973; Joanna Russ, *The Female Man*, 1975; Doris Lessing, *Canopus In Argos: Archives, The Marriage Between Zones Three, Four, And Five (As Narrated by the Chroniclers of Zone Three)*, 1980; Octavia E. Butler, *Wild Seed*, 1980; Narayan Sanyal, *Nakshatraloker Debatatma*, 1987; Joanna Russ, *To Write Like a Woman (Essays In Feminism and Science Fiction)*, 1995; Jeff Noon, *Pollen*, 1995; Lynn Margulis, *Symbiotic Planet: A New Look at Evolution*, 1998; Christopher Benfey, *A Summer of Hummingbirds*, 2009; Edogawa Ranpo, *Strange Tale of Panorama Island*, 2010; Carl Zimmer, *A Planet of Viruses*, 2011; Anna Lowenhaupt Tsing, *The Mushroom at the End of the World – On The Possibility Of Life In Capitalist Ruins*, 2015; Precious Okoyomon, *Ajebota*, 2016; Rita Indiana, *Tentacle*, 2018, Paul B. Preciado, *An Apartment on Uranus*, 2020.



# META-

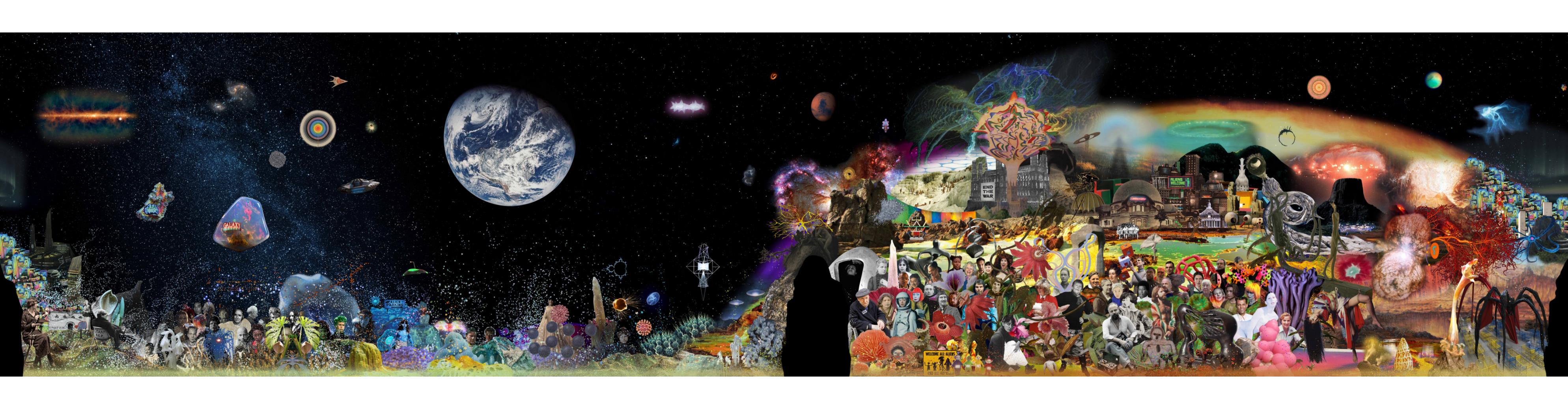
Dominique Gonzalez-Foerster with Martial Galfione  
and Mike Gaughan, *Metapanorama*, 2022.

360-degree collage and sound environment.

Soundscape: Julien Perez. Generative pattern: Ivan Murit

*This giant Metapanorama collage wouldn't exist without the presence of hundreds of human and non-human protagonists and their photographers, and an endless number of artworks, films and books. I'm immensely grateful to all!*

DGF



# PANORAMA

*Metapanorama* is a 360-degree assembly of beings – human and non-human – places, plants and artworks. Floating around the Earth they are gathered somewhere in outer space. On a satellite or a meteorite, perhaps? Or some minor planet?

Within this dimension non-living figures such as artist Georgia O’Keeffe (1887–1986) and choreographer and dancer Loie Fuller (1862–1928) commune with living artists like Precious Okoyomon and Arca. In this realm, fictional and non-fictional characters unite as a band of outsiders against a backdrop where works by Maria Martins (1894–1973), Gustav Metzger (1926–2017) and Odilon Redon (1840–1916) come to life.

Building upon *Volcanic Excursion (A Vision)* – Gonzalez-Foerster’s first 360-degree panorama based on a night-time vision and made for her solo exhibition at Secession (Vienna, 2019) – *Metapanorama* considers the possibilities of connection in outer space. With an immersive soundscape made in collaboration with musician Julien Perez, *Metapanorama* projects visitors into the cosmos.

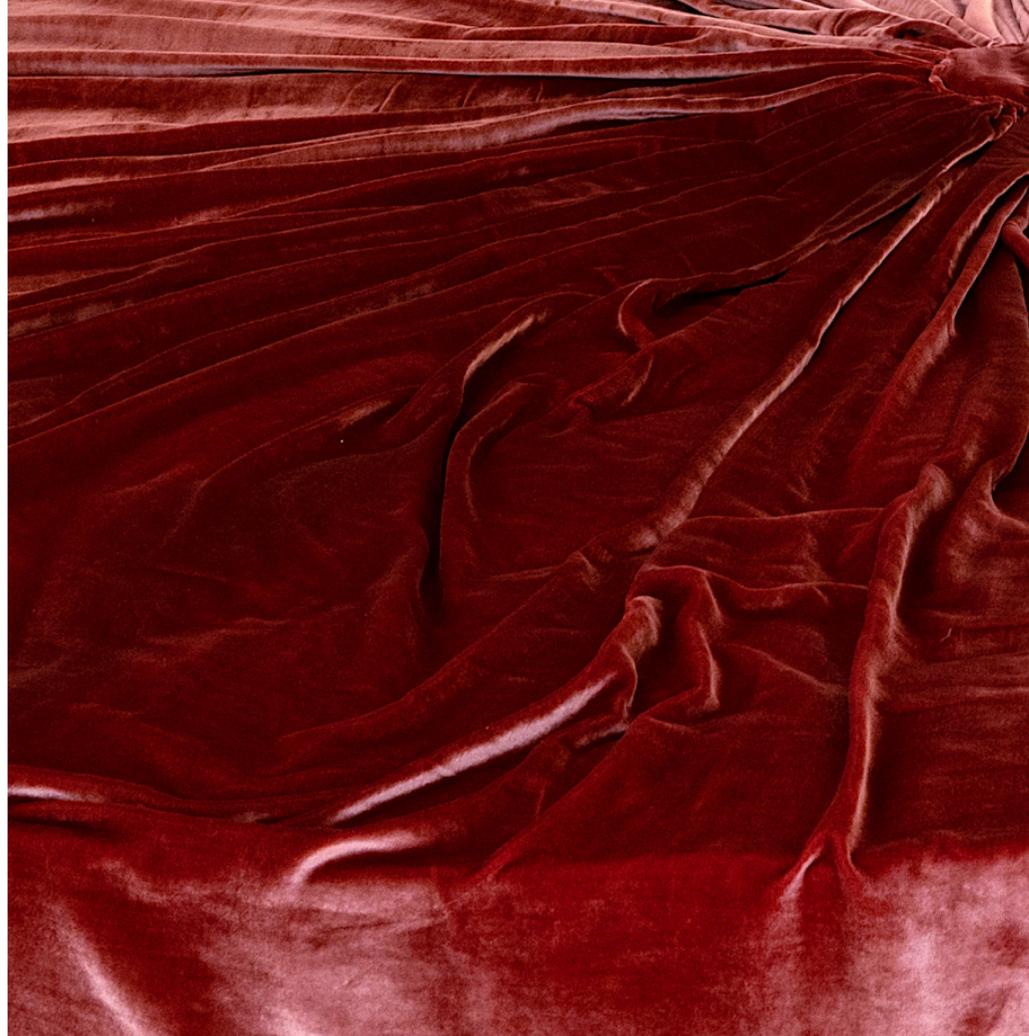


# LA CHAMBRE HUMAINE

Dominique Gonzalez-Foerster, *La chambre humaine (bed)*, 2021. Bed and velvet cover

Courtesy of the artist and Galerie Chantal Crousel

*La chambre humaine (bed)* (The human room) exists in the space of sleep and dreams: a vital place for rumination and artistic epiphany. Inviting visitors to lie down and rest, the bed is where fertile concerns, attachments and apparitions are formed. Another one of Gonzalez-Foerster's cycle of three 'visions', *La chambre humaine (bed)* gains a planetary dimension when transplanted into this alien dream. Surrounded by invisible *Alienflowers*, it carries visitors into the realm of fantasy.





# ALIENARIUM

Dominique Gonzalez-Foerster, *Alienarium*, 2022.  
Multi-user VR, 10 mins. Soundscape: Julien Perez

*Alienarium* is a multi-user VR experience that initiates an embodied consideration of extraterrestrial life. Produced by VIVE Arts and developed by Lucid Realities, *Alienarium* follows on from *Endodrome*, Gonzalez-Foerster's VR piece presented at the Venice Biennale (2019).

Visitors are invited to explore in and through one of five distinct extraterrestrial bodies, transporting them out of their own human experience. Encounters with other alien beings expand understandings of connection, asking how we might relate to one another when untethered from our physical forms.

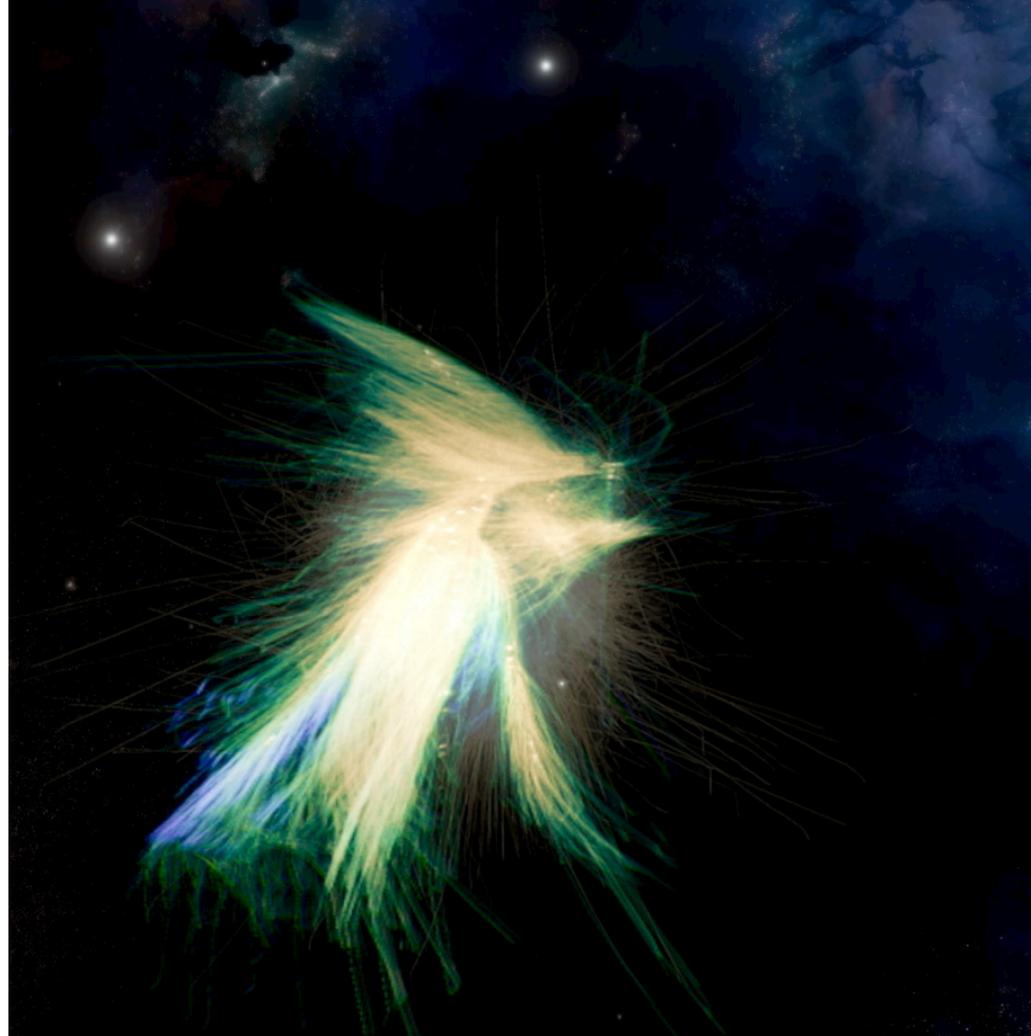
# HOLORAMA 5

Dominique Gonzalez-Foerster, *Holorama 5 (LoieFullerforever)*, 2022.  
14:30 mins. Music: Julien Perez/Exotourisme

In a galactic cabaret on the outskirts of the galaxy, extraterrestrials sing and dance flamenco, powered by a soundtrack by Exotourisme.

Viewable to all creatures from the park outside Serpentine, *Holorama 5 (LoieFullerforever)* employs diverse media and the notion of performativity to create an alien apparition. Part of Gonzalez-Foerster's ongoing series of 'Apparitions' – fictional and non-fictional characters conjured by the artist after extensive research and study – *Holorama 5 (LoieFullerforever)* explores the idea of alien life as it intersects with artistic creation.

Originally conceived as live, singular occurrences, Gonzalez-Foerster's 'Apparitions' of characters such as novelist and poet Emily Brontë (1818–1848), director Werner Herzog's daydreaming protagonist Fitzcarraldo and opera singer Maria Callas (1923–1977), focus on moments of intense artistic creation. Later developed into durational holographic illusions, the 'Apparitions' have appeared in projects including *Marienbad électrique* at Palais Garnier (Paris, 2019) and *The Infinite Mix* at 180 The Strand, organised by Hayward Gallery (London, 2016).



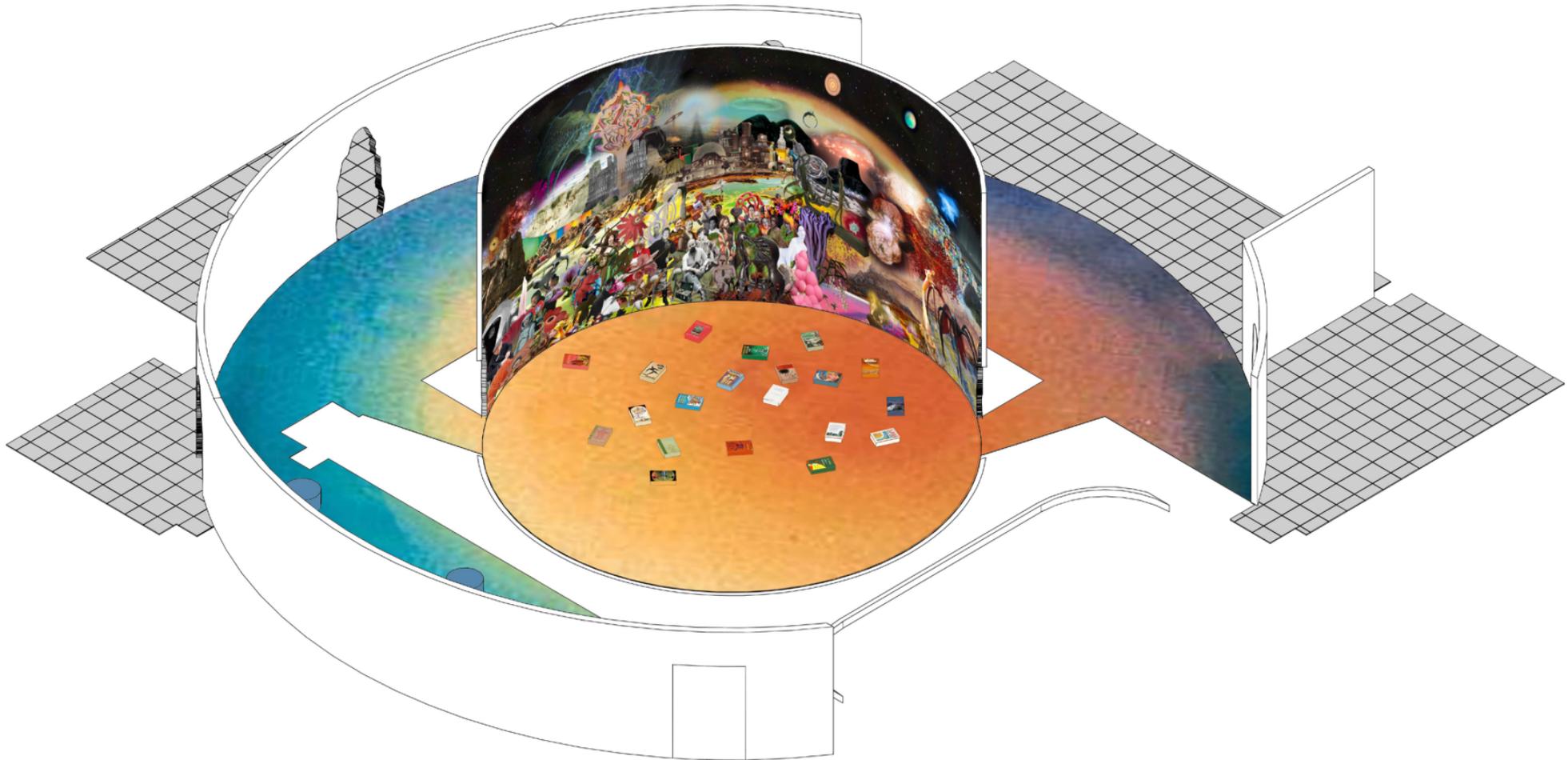


# IN REMEMBRANCE OF THE COMING ALIEN

Dominique Gonzalez-Foerster and Paul B. Preciado, *In remembrance of the coming alien (Alienor)*, 2022. Painted steel statue

*Alienor* is a statue made in remembrance of the coming alien. Situated in the park outside the Serpentine, *Alienor* resonates with other statues in Kensington Gardens and Hyde Park, including *The Arch* (1979–1980) by Henry Moore (1898–1986), *Peter Pan* (1912) by Sir George Frampton (1860–1928) and *Serenity* (2009) by Simon Gudgeon. Developed in collaboration with writer and philosopher Paul B. Preciado, *Alienor* forms part of an open and continued conversation about extraterrestrials.

The work is a queer and critical version of architect Le Corbusier's (1887–1965) anthropomorphic scale of proportions, *The Modulor* (1946) – and a nod to the historical figure of Eleanor of Aquitaine (*Alienor d'Aquitaine*) who reigned as the queen of France from 1137 to 1152 and the queen of England from 1154 to 1189. *Alienor* is a portal, a site of transmission and an invitation to engage across time and space.



# DGF

Dominique Gonzalez-Foerster (b. in 1965 in Strasbourg, France) metabolises cinematographic, literary, architectural, musical and pop references to create spaces that investigate the implicit neutrality of artistic practice and display.

Gonzalez-Foerster's work consists of short films, concerts, exhibitions and activations to explore the essences of objects and their context. The artist's multifaceted oeuvre ranges from collected fragments of modernist buildings in Brazil to an immersive light and sound environment speculating on climate catastrophe and the imagination of future life forms.

The artist builds multifaceted worlds that oscillate between finite and infinite, the empirical and the dramaturgical. Elliptical texts, carefully drafted or selected by the artist, often support the understanding of these abstract environments, fluctuating between fiction and non-fiction whilst rooting themselves in the complexity of memory.

Beginning with her participation in the 1992 *Exhibit A: Eight Artists from Europe and America* and in Serpentine's *Poetry Marathon* in 2009, Gonzalez-Foerster has worked closely with Serpentine for many years. In this time, she has appeared together with writer Enrique Vila-Matas for *Park Nights* (2010), was involved in the *Garden Marathon* (2011), *Memory Marathon* (2012), *Transformation Marathon* (2015), *GUEST, GHOST HOST: MACHINE Marathon* (2017), and has done a live concert and EP Release of *Exotourisme* (2018) for which she also collaborated with musician Julien Perez.

Gonzalez-Foerster is the recipient of the 2002 Marcel Duchamp Award and has been exhibited worldwide, including at the Venice Biennale (Italy, 1990, 1993, 1999, 2003, 2019); Documenta 11, (Kassel, Germany, 2002); the Dia Art Foundation, (New York, USA, 2009); the LUMA Foundation (Arles, France, 2012); Manifesta 10 (Saint Petersburg, Russia, 2014); Museo Nacional Centro de Arte Reina Sofía (Madrid, 2014); Centre Pompidou (Paris, 2015); and Secession (Vienna, 2019). The artist was commissioned for the Turbine Hall at Tate Modern, London in 2008–2009.

# LIVE PROGRAMME

Live Apparitions in the gallery on

Friday 27 May, 7–9pm  
Saturday 28 May, 4–6pm  
Sunday 29 May, 12–2pm

A second weekend of Live Apparitions will take place, dates to be confirmed.

A concert to celebrate the launch of the latest EP by Exotourisme – a musical project by Dominique Gonzalez-Foerster and Julien Perez - will take place at 180 The Strand, dates to be confirmed.

Saturday Talks

Alienarium 5  
by Dominique Gonzalez-Foerster

Free talks will take place on select Saturdays during the exhibition to explore the works in greater depth, and to facilitate discussion around key themes.

Saturday 30 April, 3pm  
Claude Adjil, Exhibition Curator

Saturday 14 May, 3pm  
Kate Wong, Assistant Curator

Check [serpentinegalleries.org](http://serpentinegalleries.org) and sign up for our Newsletter for further Live Programme updates

Exhibition curated by  
Claude Adjil, Curator at Large  
and Hans Ulrich Obrist, Artistic Director  
with Kate Wong, Assistant Curator

With special gratitude to Mike Gaughan,  
Gallery Manager

Research Assistance  
Adèle Koechlin

Exhibition Plans and Drawings  
Martial Galfione

VR Production  
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VR Development  
Chloé Jarry, Alexandrine Stehelin, Fabien  
Bouchard, Julien Daniel-Moliner, Côme  
Jalibert and Clélie Chassignet, Lucid Realities

Exhibition Production  
Sebastien Mizermont, Virtual Lightning Box  
Anthony Williams and Oliver Chambers,  
Beyond Surface Ltd.  
Charlotte Bell and Damian Gasparro,  
Omni Colour  
Mark Deveney, Pxl  
Nigel Schofield, MDM Props  
Sarah Smith, ADi  
Stephen Hughes, Delta Live

Design John Morgan studio

Print Pureprint

The artist would like to extend a special thanks  
to Paul B. Preciado, Martial Galfione, Julien Perez,  
Mélanie Gerbeaux, Barnabé Fillion, Ivan Murit,  
John Morgan, Joi Bittle, Ryo Minuit, Enrique  
Vila-Matas, Anna Lena Vaney, Elisa Nuyten and  
Sean Bidder.

303 Gallery, Galería Albarrán Bourdais,  
Galerie Chantal Crousel, Corvi-Mora, Esther  
Schipper and Jan Mot.

Claude Adjil, Hans Ulrich Obrist, Bettina Korek  
and Mike Gaughan.

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# BLOOMBERG CONNECTS

*Alienarium 5* is a vision that extends beyond the walls of Serpentine.

Download the free arts and culture app, Bloomberg Connects, to access an audio guide that can accompany your walk in and out of Hyde Park and Kensington Gardens. The audio guide includes an introduction to *Dominique Gonzalez-Foerster: Alienarium 5* by curator Claude Adjil and a soundtrack made by the artist with musician Julien Perez.

Scan the QR code using your phone, or search 'Bloomberg Connects' in Google Play or the App Store. At Serpentine, visitors can join our free public WiFi.

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