

Aspen Art Museum

For immediate release:

Werner Herzog Joins Aspen Art Museum's Inaugural AIR Festival as a Bluhm-Kaul Keynote Speaker



Film still from Werner Herzog's *Into the Inferno*, 2016.

ASPEN, Colorado (June 24, 2025) – The Aspen Art Museum today announced that filmmaker **Werner Herzog** will join the Museum's inaugural **AIR** festival as a **Bluhm-Kaul Keynote** speaker, alongside previously announced keynote speakers **Francis Kéré** and **Maya Lin**. AIR is the Museum's landmark 10-year initiative centering artists as leaders, which culminates annually with dedicated summer programming. This year's event comprises a closed-door retreat for artists and thinkers followed by a public festival. Running from **July 29 to August 1**, the public festival of AIR 2025 will feature keynotes, commissions, and performances from major international artists including **Matthew Barney**, **André 3000**, **Paul Chan**, **Cannupa Hanska Luger**, **Jota Mombaça**, **Mimi Park**, and **Apichatpong Weerasethakul** in collaboration with **Rafiq Bhatia**.

Registration for AIR 2025 opens today. Explore the full schedule and reserve your spot today at airaspen.org.

Drawing from the philosophical ideas underpinning his forthcoming book ***The Future of Truth***, Herzog's keynote examines how his idea of "ecstatic truth"—a poetic form of insight that transcends factual accuracy—can endure in a world increasingly shaped by artificial intelligence, deepfakes, and digital illusion. Reflecting on over six decades of experience directing in some of the world's most challenging environments, Herzog will consider how film

can serve as a vessel for awe, endurance, metaphysical inquiry, and empathy in a world increasingly shaped by uncertainty. Building upon the festival's theme, ***Life As No One Knows It***, Herzog's keynote investigates how art can redefine humanity in a time of tremendous upheaval.

Herzog's keynote address will be on July 30 at 2pm in the Aspen Institute's Paepcke Auditorium.

"Werner Herzog is one of the most singular voices in cinema and culture—utterly fearless, wildly imaginative, and deeply human," said **Nancy and Bob Magoon Artistic Director and CEO Nicola Lees**. "His work doesn't just challenge how we see the world; it dares us to feel more, to think more expansively, and to embrace the unknown. It's an absolute honor to celebrate his vision as part of our inaugural festival this summer."

AIR 2025's **Bluhm-Kaul Keynotes** will feature a series of lectures by preeminent figures across art, architecture, and film that focus on the future from unique perspectives and experiences. They are presented in collaboration with Serpentine's artistic director **Hans Ulrich Obrist**.

About AIR

AIR, the Aspen Art Museum's new flagship initiative, is designed to explore the role of art in addressing the profound challenges of our time through interdisciplinary collaborations, conversations, and site-specific artworks and performances. Established as a year-round program dedicated to commissioning and artistic research, AIR culminates each summer in a series of convenings and programming. AIR 2025 is presented in partnership with Serpentine; the Aspen Institute Arts Program; the Doris Duke Foundation—as a part of their Creative Labor, Creative Conditions campaign; the Robert Rauschenberg Foundation; and the City of Aspen's Wheeler Opera House, with Anderson Ranch, Aspen Center for Environmental Studies (ACES), Aspen Center for Physics, Aspen Music Festival and School (AMFS), Red Brick Center for the Arts, and Jazz Aspen Snowmass, Aspen Words, and Aspen Film.

The full schedule for AIR 2025 and registration details are now available. Join us in shaping new futures with artists at the helm. Sign up at airaspen.org for updates and exclusive event details.

The AIR 2025 festival program will begin with the inaugural AIR Retreat, a private artist-led gathering of thirty-five leading experts from the arts, humanities, sciences, industry, and policy. The retreat will focus on developing frameworks for artists and thinkers to inform the design of new technological tools. The first edition, held from July 26 to 28, 2025, is conceived by the AIR curatorial team in collaboration with artists Paul Chan and Aria Dean, poet and technology researcher Zoë Hitzig, and writer Evan Calder Williams. It is convened in partnership with the Aspen Institute and the Doris Duke Foundation, and *flux* Journal will subsequently feature writings that emerge from the conversations. Participants include Nabil Ahmed, Sophia Al-Maria, J. Bob Alotta, Peter Born, Alice Bucknell, Emmelyn Butterfield-Rosen, Paul Chan, Aria Dean,

Jynne Dilling, Álvaro Enrigue, José Esparza Chong Cuy, Dana Farouki, Ashley Ferro-Murray, Cannupa Hanska Luger, Zoë Hitzig, Lily Hu, Tung-Hui Hu, Angie Kim, Jaron Lanier, Aimé Iglesias Lukin, Okwui Okpokwasili, Philip Ording, Nelly Pinkrah, Samora Pinderhughes, Isabel Quinzaños Alonso, Lucy Raven, Anil Seth, P. Staff, Martine Syms, Adrián Villar Rojas, Sara Imari Walker, Jamieson Webster, Evan Calder Williams, and Brian Kuan Wood, among others.

AIR is founded by Nicola Lees, Nancy and Bob Magoon Artistic Director and CEO. *Life as No One Knows It* is curated by Vic Brooks, AIR Curator at Large; Nicola Lees, Nancy and Bob Magoon Artistic Director and CEO; Daniel Merritt, Chief Curator; and Claude Adjil, Curator at Large, with Anisa Jackson and Eliza Ryan, Curators at Large; Stella Bottai, Senior Curator at Large; Simone Krug, Curator; and Mariana Fernández, AIR Editor and Project Curator. The Bluhm-Kaul Keynotes are curated in collaboration with Hans Ulrich Obrist.

AIR 2025 has been developed in dialogue with the AIR Artist Council—Paul Chan, Aria Dean, and Zoë Hitzig—and with the generous insights of AIR Advisors Alia Al Senussi, Sarah Broughton, Sarah Brown, José Esparza Chong Cuy, Jynne Dilling, Dana Farouki, Ashley Ferro-Murray, Rachel Shechtman, Evan Calder Williams, and Sarah Workneh.

About Lugano, AIR Founding Partner

Lugano is an international jewelry brand renowned for its one-of-a-kind wearable works of art. Drawing initial inspiration from the gem rather than design, Lugano's expert artisans craft each piece with exceptional attention to detail and the highest standards. With a passion for building relationships and giving back, Lugano is committed to supporting its communities through various philanthropic initiatives across the US and UK, creating a lasting social impact. For more information and locations, visit luganodiamonds.com.

About AIR Founding Circle

Leading Support is provided by the Arison Arts Foundation, Barbara Bluhm-Kaul and Don Kaul, De Sole Family Foundation, Idit and Moti Ferder, Lewis Family Foundation, Katie and Amnon Rodan, and Steve Tisch and Jamie Tisch. **Major Support** is provided by Deborah Beckmann and Jacob Kotzubei, Rona and Jeff Citrin, Sherry and Joe Felson, Nicola and Jeff Marcus, Gael Neeson | Edlis Neeson Foundation, Charlie Pohlada and the Pohlada Family, Allison and Dan Rose, Laurie M. Tisch Illumination Fund, and Mary and Harold Zlot. **Generous Support** is provided by Sarah Broughton and John Rowland, Marcy and Leo Edelstein, Etkin Family Foundation, Christy Ferer, Sally and Steve Hansen, Nancy Magoon, Erin and Paul Pariser, and Gayle Stoffel.

The **Bluhm-Kaul Keynotes** are made possible through a major gift from Barbara Bluhm-Kaul and Don Kaul.

The Tisch Program Series—a dynamic selection of commissions, performances, and dialogues presented throughout the week—are made possible through a generous gift from Steve Tisch and Jamie Tisch.

Matthew Barney's performance *TACTICAL parallax* is made possible through major support provided by Gael Neeson | Edlis Neeson Foundation.

About Aspen Art Museum

Accredited by the American Alliance of Museums in 1979, Aspen Art Museum is an artist-founded, non-collecting institution dedicated to supporting artists in the development of bold ideas to shape our museum and the field of art today. Aspen Art Museum is both a platform and a place, highly attuned to the advancement of the vital ecosystem of art and the critical discourse surrounding it within the context and community of Aspen and beyond. In July 2017, Aspen Art Museum received the United States National Medal for Museum and Library Services for its educational outreach to rural communities in Colorado's Roaring Fork Valley and its learning partnerships with civic and cultural partners within a 100-mile radius of the museum's Aspen location. It is the only accredited art museum on the Colorado Western Slope.

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