

MIT Museum Presents Exhibition *Cosmograph: Speculative Fictions for the New Space Age* by DESIGN EARTH

Four projects address critical issues about Outer Space from an artistic point of view

Cambridge, MA, September 5, 2024 – The MIT Museum announces the new exhibition *Cosmograph: Speculative Fictions for the New Space Age* by DESIGN EARTH, offering an artistic perspective on challenging issues in an era where outer space is both a frontier for human exploration and a new territory for exploitation and development by private enterprise. Exquisite large drawings and miniature 3D printed sculptures created by the artists present speculative visions of the future, which are contextualized by historical objects, such as rocket models from the MIT Museum’s collection and a meteorite from a private collection. *Cosmograph* includes four of DESIGN EARTH’s projects that deploy the imaginative powers of science fiction to both critique legacy technologies and tell new stories about our potential relationship with the cosmos.

This new exhibition is on view starting September 20, 2024 through Spring 2025 in the Martin J. (1959) and Eleanor C. Gruber Gallery of the MIT Museum. It is organized and presented at the MIT Museum in collaboration with the MIT Center for Art, Science & Technology (CAST) through a recently established partnership CAST X MITM. DESIGN EARTH is an architectural practice founded and directed by Rania Ghosn and El Hadi Jazairy.

“Bringing art and science together to explore possible futures is at the core of the MIT Museum’s vision” says MIT Museum director Michael John Gorman. “We are thrilled to present the work of DESIGN EARTH, as part of our recently launched partnership with MIT’s Center for Art, Science & Technology. Rania Ghosn and El Hadi Jazairy confront us with provocations, scenarios and speculations at a cosmic scale that invite us to reconsider our present trajectory. We look forward to presenting further ambitious artistic experiments as our collaboration with CAST continues to grow.”

Cosmograph comes at a time when space exploration—travel, settlement, and mining—is the subject of renewed enthusiasm, but also in an era of debate about the politics and values of such projects. Space—once optimistically considered the province of all humankind—is now being opened to private entrepreneurs. As decommissioned satellites litter the skies, private

expeditions to space become possible, and industries like asteroid mining emerge, new legal, ethical, and spatial design questions arise about its future.

Known for projects that probe environmental topics, the architectural practice DESIGN EARTH combines historical research with storytelling to initiate conversations in the space between technology and speculative fiction. Integrating architectural design, drawing, and science, the artists use the principles of “cosmography” to create speculative narratives for the New Space Age. A term first used by 19th-century explorer and naturalist Alexander von Humboldt, “cosmography” refers to combined knowledge from various disciplines, including geography, astronomy, and natural history.

Some of the work on view has been commissioned and included in exhibitions in venues such as the Venice Architecture Biennale (2018 and 2021), MUDAC in Lausanne, Matadero Madrid, and SFMOMA. This is the first time this body of work has been presented all together in a major museum.

Two public programs with the artists will be presented as part of the exhibition

September 28, 2024 / 1-2:30pm

Cambridge Science Festival: DESIGN EARTH in Conversation with Irene Sunwoo, John H. Bryan Chair of Architecture and Design at The Art Institute of Chicago, and an introduction by MIT CAST Executive Director Leila W. Kinney

MIT Museum admission is free for Cambridge Science Festival week (Sept. 23-29)

October 23, 2024 / 5:30-7:30pm

Artist’s Reception: Remarks by DESIGN EARTH, Michael John Gorman, The Mark R. Epstein (Class of 1963) Director, MIT Museum and Professor of the Practice of Science, Technology and Society, and Evan Ziporyn, MIT CAST Faculty Director and Kenan Sahin Distinguished Professor of Music.

More details and registration for events coming soon at mitmuseum.mit.edu

About DESIGN EARTH

DESIGN EARTH is an architectural research practice that deploys speculative projects to

foreground the climate crisis as a matter of public concern. Its work has been featured internationally—most recently at Venice Biennale, Bauhaus Museum Dessau, and Milano Triennale—and is in the New York Museum of Modern Art’s permanent collection. Rania Ghosn and El Hadi Jazairy are the authors of *Geographies of Trash* (2015); *Geostories: Another Architecture for the Environment* (3rd edition, 2022); *The Planet After Geoengineering* (2021); and *Climate Inheritance* (2023).

DESIGN EARTH has been recognized with several awards, including the United States Artists Fellowship, the Architectural League Prize for Young Architects + Designers, the Graham Foundation for Advanced Studies in the Fine Arts Awards, and the Association of Collegiate Schools of Architecture Faculty Design Awards for outstanding work in architecture and related environmental design fields as a critical endeavor.

DESIGN EARTH was founded and is directed by Rania Ghosn and El Hadi Jazairy.

Rania Ghosn (b. 1977, Beirut, Lebanon) is an Associate Professor of Architecture and Urbanism at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology.

El Hadi Jazairy (b. 1970, Algiers, Algeria) is an Associate Professor of Architecture and Director of the Master of Urban Design degree program at the University of Michigan.

About CAST X MITM

Cosmograph marks the second exhibition in the collaboration [CAST X MITM](#), a partnership between the MIT Center for Art, Science & Technology and the MIT Museum. The CAST X MITM partnership, launched in September 2023, is an ongoing series of art-science installations and programs. Programming includes open MIT class sessions and public lectures led by professors and visiting artists on topics ranging from drawing to design to music technology.

About the Center for Art, Science & Technology

The [MIT Center for Art, Science & Technology \(CAST\)](#) creates new opportunities for art, science, and technology to thrive as interrelated, mutually informing modes of exploration, knowledge, and discovery. CAST supports visiting artist residencies, art-science research

projects, faculty creative work, and curricular initiatives. Evan Ziporyn, Kenan Sahin Distinguished Professor of Music, is the faculty director, and Leila W. Kinney is the executive director.

ABOUT THE MIT MUSEUM

In October 2022, a reinvented [MIT Museum](#) opened in a new location in the heart of the Kendall Square Gateway of MIT's campus at 314 Main Street in Cambridge, MA. The museum aims to make innovation and research available to all by presenting the best of STEAM, and to "turn MIT inside-out," inviting visitors to take part in on-going research while demonstrating how science and innovation will shape the future of society.

Highlights include freshly conceived exhibitions featuring objects from the Museum's prodigious collections of over 1.5 million objects, along with loans of art and other objects; the Lee Family Exchange event space for public dialogue and conversation; the hands-on Heide Maker Hub, where audiences can experiment with putting scientific ideas into action; and an enlarged Store. Michael John Gorman is The Mark R. Epstein (Class of 1963) Director of the MIT Museum and Professor of the Practice of Science, Technology and Society, Kathryn Gunsch is Deputy Director, and Ann Neumann is the Director of Galleries and Exhibitions.

The MIT Museum is open daily 10 a.m. - 5:00 p.m. For more information, including accessibility and amenities, please visit mitmuseum.mit.edu.

Address: 314 Mass Ave, MIT Building E28, Gambrill Center, Cambridge, MA 02142.

Located next to the Kendall/MIT MBTA Red Line stop at the new Kendall Gateway to the Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT) Campus.

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