



CUBE FEST 2021

Presented by the Institute for Creativity, Arts, and Technology (ICAT) and the Moss Arts Center

SOUND OF SPACE: An Interactive Afrofuturist Experience

Cube, Moss Arts Center

Friday, August 20, 12-9 PM

Friday, August 21, 12-9 PM

Sunday, August 22, 12-6 PM

Sound of Space: An Interactive Afrofuturist Experience was the mid-term performance by students in Dr. Tyechia Thompson's English Special Topics course, *Afrofuturism to Vibranium and Beyond*. It debuted in the Cube at the Moss Arts Center on March 7, 2019, in collaboration with Al Evangelista and Dr. Devair Jeffries's course, *Improvised and Devised Performance*.

Sound of Space introduced students and audiences to an immersive Afrofuturist-audio experience and pushed the boundaries of literary analysis. Students applied their knowledge of Afrofuturism to create the mixtape tracks heard in the installation.

How to Watch/Listen

Visitors are encouraged to float freely to the different corners of the Cube and in the cyclorama. The cyclorama is the centerpiece of the exhibit and serves as the meditative home base. The sounds from the students' mixtape tracks emanate from the corners of the Cube and are grouped into four themes that are played on loop during the performance: funk, flow, testimony, and transport.

Themes in the Cube (clockwise)

Funk
Flow
Testimony
Transport

The four themes are representative not only of the students' mixtape tracks as a whole but also of the different themes within Afrofuturist discourse. "Funk" focuses on the Afrofuturist connection between creator and consumer, in which a liberating communal dance welcomes all (as is the case with Parliament Funkadelic's *We Got the Funk*). The "funk" corner of the Cube also contains a looped montage of various funk, dance, and Motown musicians, including Michael Jackson and Parliament Funkadelic.

"Flow" focuses on the rhythm and transformation of the self. The "flow" corner also features an aromatherapy diffuser with a lavender scent, encouraging the audience members to close their eyes and tune into their other senses.

In "Testimony," students expressed, confessed, and preached their experiences with various forms of oppression, which reflects Sun Ra's testimony of his experience in *Space Is the Place*. The "testimony" corner also features a large plant pot adorned with African mud cloth, stones, cowrie shells, and a variety of other textures created by artist Brian Evans to encourage rootedness and participation in the cathartic cleansing of testifying.

"Transport" focuses on the African diaspora, *Sankofa* (a word in the Twi language and a Ghanaian Adinkra symbol meaning "go back and get it," but also the title of a Haile Gerima film about abduction in the transatlantic slave trade). A montage of alien imagery is featured in the "transport" corner.

The *Sound of Space* performance serves as a useful model for exploring embodiment through sound and performance in the humanities classroom. Encouraging students to think multimodally and asking them to reinvent and improvise with their own work supports an Afrofuturist pedagogy. By asking students to adapt their work in a performance setting, students are prompted to form a more intimate and embodied relationship with the creative works studied. Rather than passively quoting from these works, students are asked to envision how these works and their own can be presented to engage a live audience. In doing so, they behave as Afrofuturist creators, many of whom are live performers.

For more information about the course, see [Afrofuturist Intellectual Mixtapes: A Classroom Case Study](#)

Featured Student Tracks

Spacer.....	Safe Space and The Invitation
Grim Reaper.....	Ignorance Is Bliss and A Revelation
Lauren Garretson.....	Labyrinth and Black Bitches R the Future
Future She.....	Space less and Space is where you find it
Starg*rl.....	In the Beginning and Confetti
TSaunds.....	Xe3 and Remove the Plastic

Student Collaborations:

Spacer and Grim Reaper.....	Perihelion
Future She and TSaunds.....	lost in the interstellar womb
Starg*rl and Lauren Garretson.....	Fat Gyals

Samples include:

Aphex Twin.....	Window Licker
Beastie Boys.....	Intergalactic
Drexciya.....	Bang Bang
Edgar Allan Poe.....	The Conqueror Worm
Erykah Badu.....	On and On
FKA twigs.....	How's That
Frank Ocean.....	Self Control
Grimes and Janelle Monáe.....	Fly
Jackson 5.....	Can You Feel It?
Janelle Monáe.....	Dirty Computer
Janelle Monáe.....	Jane's Dream
Janelle Monáe.....	Make Me Free
Janelle Monáe.....	PYNK
John Coltrane.....	Giant Steps
LifeisaKiki.....	Magical Black Bitches
Marilyn Manson.....	Wrapped in Plastic
Maya Angelou.....	God Loves Me
Nalo Hopkinson.....	Ganger (ball lightning)
NASA.....	Pluto
NASA.....	Pulsars
Outkast.....	ATLiens
Parliament Funkadelic.....	We Got the Funk
Phat Girlz.....	film
Rick and Morty.....	Human Music
Rihanna.....	Take a Bow
Stevie Wonder.....	Saturn
Sun Ra.....	Space Is the Place film
Sun Ra.....	The Possibility of Altered Destiny
Sun Ra.....	God Is More Than Love Will Ever Be
Tales of Dr. Funkenstein.....	film
Tracy K. Smith.....	It & Co.
Welcome to Night Vale Podcast.....	Opening Theme
YR Media.....	Memoirs From Invisible Black Women

Explore Cube Fest 2021!

This year the festival reimagines “spatialization,” offering tantalizing virtual samplings of five projects featuring America’s leading Afrofuturist composers and performers, as well as a rich, in-person multi-sensorial installation in the Cube, *Sounds of Space*, that illustrates the unique venue’s capacity for 360-degree environments. It’s a chance to enjoy the astonishing creative breadth of artists marrying technology with ideas both new and ancient. Everything is offered free, so sample, enjoy, visit the installation, and jump on the mothership!

[Cube Fest](#) is a collaboration between the Institute for Creativity, Arts, and Technology (ICAT) and the Moss Arts Center.