

Yet, it Moves!

May 12 — Dec 31, 2023 | Copenhagen Contemporary, Denmark

Nothing remains stagnant. Even the things we perceive as unchanging are in a constant state of motion—within us, above us, and all around us. Motion is a fundamental principle underlying everything in the universe, from the smallest atomic particles to the human body and the vast expanse of the stars. For over two years, a select group of artists has collaborated with renowned research institutions worldwide. The culmination of their efforts is a collection of spectacular artworks that explore the theme of motion as an omnipresent phenomenon, heightening our awareness of the intricate patterns of movement in which we are all intertwined.

Art in Motion The exhibition features the works of esteemed artists including Ryoji Ikeda, Jakob Kudsk Steensen, Jenna Sutela, Ligia Bouton, Helene Nymann, Nina Nowak, Jens Settergren, Black Quantum Futurism, Cecilia Bengolea, Cecilie Waagner Falkenstrøm, and Nora Turato. Since 2021, these artists have engaged in dialogue with researchers from four scientific research partners involved in the exhibition: DARK at the Niels Bohr Institute, University of Copenhagen; Arts at CERN in Geneva; the Interacting Minds Centre at Aarhus University; and ModLab (Digital Humanities Laboratory) at the University of California, Davis. This fusion of artistic and scientific minds has given birth to captivating artworks that span fields such as astrophysics, quantum physics, brain and cognitive sciences, anthropology, technology, and performance studies.

"At CC, we are thrilled to invite the public into the enchanting realm where science and art converge. Both art and science are driven by a shared curiosity to comprehend the world and our place within it. Art has the power to make abstract scientific concepts more accessible and relatable by giving tangible form to the vast expanse of the universe and the microscopic movements of subatomic particles," says Marie Laurberg, Director of CC.

Commencing with a grand opening party on May 11, the exhibition will continuously evolve throughout its duration, incorporating new works and fostering conversations. From the expansive halls of CC, the exhibition will spill out into the urban landscape, encompassing the inner city, Copenhagen Airport, the Nørrebro borough, the Inner Harbour, and Søndermarken Park—spaces traversed by Copenhageners on a daily basis.

A New Space for Reflection Inspires Pioneering Art "Yet, it Moves!" explores the interconnected whole of which we are a part. Glimpses of this greater, ever-moving whole manifest in spectacular artworks that give shape and form to complex phenomena like black holes, star formation, and gravitational waves. These works span the macro scale of the expanding universe to the micro scale of atomic explosions and particles. Other pieces focus on the movement patterns of the human body—how they harmonize with the cyclical rhythms of the universe and how each movement is interlinked with everything that surrounds us.

In CC's largest hall, world-renowned Japanese artist and composer Ryoji Ikeda will present his monumental trilogy, "dataverse 1/2/3," for the first time in Scandinavia. Through three monumental video projections, Ikeda orchestrates a sensory explosion of images and sounds, utilizing open-source data on motion obtained from scientific institutions such as CERN, NASA, and the Human Genome Project. This immense audiovisual installation represents three realms: the microscopic natural world of atoms, molecules, DNA, and cells that eludes human sight; the human world we inhabit on Earth, with our brains, bodies, organisms, cities, climates, internet, air traffic, and satellites; and finally, the macroscopic world—from our planet to the solar system, galaxies, the observable universe, and potential multiverses.

It's astonishing to contemplate that all life traces its origins back to a singular point in the earliest moments of the universe, interconnected by perpetual movement. Explosions of elements occur ceaselessly throughout the cosmos, with massive stars erupting and giving rise to the heavy particles and elements that compose our very being and everything around us.

In her piece "Pond Brain," Finnish artist Jenna Sutela invites us to experience the human brain as a vibrant pond teeming with processes and pathways of communication. Accompanied by a soundscape of processed recordings of cosmic motion, the artwork establishes a profound connection between humanity and the vastness of the universe.

Through 3D animations, virtual reality (VR), augmented reality (AR), soundscapes, and immersive installations, celebrated Danish artist Jakob Kudsk Steensen offers poetic interpretations of often overlooked natural phenomena. Collaborating with biologists, composers, and writers, Kudsk Steensen's large-scale installation for "Yet, it Moves!" reflects his fascination with time, wetlands, and the diverse states of water—from liquid to crystal. This work delves into the intricate life forms thriving within a glacier in Switzerland, poetically capturing the slow movement of nature within these rare and waning ice formations.

Croatian artist Nora Turato delves into the ephemeral nature of language. For "Yet, it Moves!", Turato presents a new three-part creation: a live performance at CC, a film documenting the performance, and a poster campaign that will grace the streets of Copenhagen. In this series, Turato explores the connection between spoken language, neuronal connections, and the movement of the human body. Through concise and synthetic sentences, the posters describe how the brain intertwines bodily impulses and words, generating movement within the body and in others around us.

The project takes its name from a statement attributed to Galileo, who was compelled by the Catholic Church to renounce the idea that the Earth revolves around the sun, thereby challenging Earth's central position in the universe. Galileo valiantly defended his theory, famously declaring, "Yet, it moves!" This statement acknowledges the universally accepted truth that, regardless of human perception, the Earth remains in motion as part of the grander cosmic dance, influencing our lives and the world we inhabit each day.