

# Press Release Berlin, April 20, 2021

## Press Contact

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### **KW Institute for Contemporary Art launches *KW Digital* and its inaugural exhibition *The Last Museum***

KW Institute for Contemporary Art is pleased to announce the launch of *KW Digital*. This new program consolidates our commitment to exploring the cultural implications of digital change through creative and critical means. Following Nadim Samman's appointment as Curator for Digital Sphere, and in time for our 30th Anniversary, *KW Digital* opens with the *The Last Museum* (30 April – 6 June, 2021), a web-site-specific exhibition. Further outputs in 2021 include the online program *Open Secret* (2 July – 19 December 2021) and the formalization of our enhanced online mediation program initiated at the start of COVID-19.

#### **KW Digital**

We understand that the digital is not just online or onscreen—but increasingly conditions analog or 'real' space (through new social and economic formations). For this reason, we consider the continuum between digital and physical domains to be a key issue in contemporary culture.

Embracing digital change, we understand that our program should not place the digital in a subordinate role to the physical (or vice versa). It is clear that audiences constantly move between (and across) modes. In order to address this condition, *KW Digital's* enhanced offer also includes the permanent addition of a magazine-style page to our website, accessible to better communicate the full breadth of our programming to an online audience, covering exhibitions and events, mediation, and web-native content.

In summer, *KW Digital* launches its second major online program *Open Secret*, which is supported by Kulturstiftung des Bundes as part of *dive in – Program for Digital Interactions*. Bringing together a host of new artistic and literary commissions, the project theme asks what role technology's hidden dimensions play in our apparently 'open society'.

## The Last Museum

Nora Al-Badri, Nicole Foreshew, Juliana Cerqueira Leite, Jakrawal Nilthamrong, Zohra Opoku, Charles Stankievech  
30 April – 6 June 2021  
Curator: Nadim Samman

*The Last Museum* simultaneously unfolds across six continents and the virtual realm. Principally accessed through [www.kw-berlin.de/thelastmuseum](http://www.kw-berlin.de/thelastmuseum), the exhibition features all-new commissions that blur the line between cinema and sculpture, while exploring the potential of web-site-specificity.

*The Last Museum's* site is a layered reality or (to borrow a term from computational engineering) a 'stack'. This stack encompasses land, sculpture, code-user experience, metadata and still more softer specificities. In this respect, each artwork is a vector that intersects with the web-site's various layers. Each artist was commissioned to author a sculptural group, to be installed at a physical site of their own choosing. The choice was only limited by a request that it be associated with communications infrastructure. Final locations ended up highlighting both technical and more esoteric resources for connectivity. They included a notorious hacker space in Berlin, Indigenous land in rural Australia, a popular electronics mall in downtown São Paulo, a Cosmic Ray Research Station in the Rocky Mountains, a half-built mortuary in Accra, Ghana, and burning fields in Chiang Mai, Thailand. Each sculptural intervention was videoed by the artists and the resulting clips were handed over to a coder, before being brought together by a digital way-finding protocol. The outcome, debuting as a pop-up window on the KW start page, is a website experience that unfolds as an interactive sequence of objects and places, navigable using bespoke tools. At times, these tools amount to additional (digital) artworks.

Zohra Opoku and Nora Al-Badri deploy sign systems that were once undecipherable (in the form of Ancient Egyptian Hieroglyphics). Charles Stankievech (in addition to Al-Badri) also makes use of Mesopotamian Cuneiform. Closer to home, The Wiradjuri artist Nicole Foreshew highlights Indigenous communications that resist the colonial gaze—through her work with 'message sticks'. *The Last Museum* imagines information transmission across the historical *longue durée*, dramatizing points of intersection with emerging technologies, (body) politics, and the global economy. As it does so, a leitmotif of displacement, limbo, loss, and undeath plays out.

*The Last Museum* will tour as a 'pop-up exhibition' on partner institution's websites. Each touring iteration will acquire a new chapter—with an additional artist/site from the host institution's country added to the navigable sequence. *The Last Museum* is hosted by Polyeco Contemporary Art Initiative (PCAI) website from September 14 to October 16, 2021. Additional partners will be announced in due course.

KW Institute for Contemporary Art is institutionally supported by the Senate Department for Culture and Europe, Berlin.

*The Last Museum* is produced in collaboration with Polyeco Contemporary Art Initiative (PCAI), Athens

Media Partner: ARTE

