

OCTOBER 15, 2025

Angelenos Are Invited to Experience A Constellation of Virtual Reality, Meditation and Remembrance Shaped by 6,000 Years of African Traditions at The Music Center Presents Black Planetarium: Uncharted Anthologies

Opening October 23, the L.A. Debut of Kidus Hailesilassie's Free VR Experience Will Be First Exhibition to Be Shown in the New Digital Arts Space at The Music Center

LOS ANGELES (October 15, 2025) -- Blending virtual reality with immersive storytelling, collective movement and shared listening, the newest work by L.A.-based Ethiopian American artist Kidus Hailesilassie will transport Angelenos and visitors into 6,000 years of knowledge and traditions generated from the African continent. **The Music Center Presents Black Planetarium: Uncharted Anthologies** opens October 23,



2025, through December 14, 2025, at the new Digital Arts Space at The Music Center, located on Jerry Moss Plaza. The free visionary exhibit, open Thursdays through Sundays, invites visitors into a meditative space that encourages moments of active listening and collective rest, bringing to life in Downtown L.A. centuries of African language and dance. The multimodal experience weaves together 6,500 pictographs, ideographs, syllabaries, alphabets and iconographs from 20 African languages into a singular cosmic performance inspired by Adowa, a dance practiced by Ashanti communities in Ghana.

Visitors who step inside the Digital Arts Space will put on VR headsets to experience a sensory-rich performance by L.A.-based dancer Hvrmony Adams, with Kumasi-based Vida Osei narrating the dance's origin story in the Twi language to honor the dance's ancestral lineage. The venue will be adorned with African fabrics and textiles. At the top of each hour, the *Black Planetarium* experience extends onto the adjacent Jerry Moss Plaza, where a five-minute pre-produced meditation session will be shown on the plaza's LED screens, inviting participants to pause, breathe and reflect beneath the open sky.

"This free exhibition is not only a visual and auditory feast, but also a space for rest, reflection and deep connection. Given all the trauma Angelenos have endured throughout the year, beginning with the wildfires and continuing with civic unrest, *The Music Center Presents Black Planetarium: Uncharted Anthologies* provides a welcoming respite to reflect and recharge," said Rachel S. Moore, president and CEO of The Music Center. "Kidus Hailesilassie's intricate fusion of African language, dance and storytelling is the ideal vessel to invite audiences to pause, listen and imagine new narratives as well as experience the new Digital Arts Space at L.A.'s performing arts center."

Black Planetarium is the recipient of the 2025 ARS Electronica S+T+ARTS Prize Africa Award of Distinction. It made its world premiere at the 2025 Tribeca Film Festival; Hailesilassie was among 11 visionary artists selected to showcase their groundbreaking storytelling projects at the festival's Immersive program. During its production, it received the Black Public Media and IDA Pare Lorentz grant and fellowship and was supported by the MIT Open Documentary Lab, IDFA, the Geneva International Film Festival and Forum des images. In January 2026, *Black Planetarium* will be shown at the Beijing International Arts Biennale.

Based in Los Angeles, Hailesilassie is an Ethiopian American spatial artist and futurist whose work bridges film, installation and media art. Drawing on his architectural background, he explores spatial improvisation deeply rooted in Afro-diasporic and Black expressive modalities. His practice engages with themes of collective memory and speculative futures. He is an Onassis ONX Studio artist member and a current fellow at the Royal Shakespeare Company (RSC) and the Brooklyn Academy of Music (BAM).

"Moving across research, moving image, installation, sound, textiles and virtual reality, *Black Planetarium: Uncharted Anthologies* becomes both vessel and constellation: a rehearsal for other worlds, an archive carried by breath and movement. It unfolds as a living call and response, where ancestral memory and improvised performance converge," said Kidus Hailesilassie. "Simultaneously, it is an active invitation for dialogue between the continent and diaspora communities, offering a platform to collectively engage in re-wording: using imagination as a method of remembering when historical archives have been distorted and erased. I find both meditation and performance to be forms of public thinking, living archives that bring together moments for community reflection and reconnection."

The Music Center Presents Black Planetarium: Uncharted Anthologies is the latest public art installation presented by **The Music Center's Digital Innovation Initiative (DII)**, which was designed to explore and create free digital and virtual reality experiences. DII launched its first exhibit, *We ARE Here: A Celebration of Legacy*, offering Angelenos the opportunity to learn--through AR and with hands-on artistic experiences in Gloria Molina Grand Park--about the legacies of Black, Indigenous and People of Color (BIPOC) communities and individuals who have contributed to Los Angeles County's rich diversity. Additional DII exhibitions have included *Our Common Home*, which addressed issues of climate change by integrating participants' live facial expressions and physical movements into digital artworks created in real time and projected on Jerry Moss Plaza's LED screens; and *BLKNWS*, an immersive installation by acclaimed L.A. artist and filmmaker Kahlil Joseph that challenged, inspired and redefined Angelenos' understanding of news from a Black lens and transformed Jerry Moss Plaza into a garden-themed outdoor oasis.

The Music Center Presents Black Planetarium: Uncharted Anthologies is made possible in part by grants from the City of Los Angeles Department of Cultural Affairs and Sony Pictures Entertainment.

For more information about *The Music Center Presents Black Planetarium: Uncharted Anthologies*, visit musiccenter.org/blackplanetarium

CALENDAR LISTING

WHAT:

The Music Center Presents Black Planetarium: Uncharted Anthologies

L.A.-based Ethiopian American artist Kidus Hailesilassie curates a sensory-rich installation, by blending virtual reality with immersive storytelling, collective movement and shared listening that will engage Angelenos and visitors of all ages. As the first exhibit to be launched at the new Digital Arts Space at The Music Center, the free visionary experience will bring centuries of African language, storytelling and dance to life in Downtown L.A. The two-month free exhibition will also include brief pre-recorded meditation sessions, open to the public, that will be displayed on the LED screens of Jerry Moss Plaza at The Music Center.

The Music Center Presents Black Planetarium: Uncharted Anthologies is an exhibition conceived by The Music Center's Digital Innovation Initiative, which was designed to explore and create free digital and virtual reality experiences.

WHEN:

October 23 - December 14, 2025

WHERE:

Digital Arts Space at The Music Center

135 N. Grand Avenue
Los Angeles, CA 90012

MORE INFO:

ABOUT THE MUSIC CENTER

As L.A.'s performing arts center, The Music Center convenes artists, communities and ideas with the goal of deepening the cultural lives of every resident in Los Angeles County. The \$80 million non-profit performing arts organization has two divisions: TMC Arts and TMC Ops. TMC Arts, The Music Center's programming engine, provides year-round programming inside The Music Center's four theatres, on Jerry Moss Plaza, outside at Gloria Molina Grand Park--a 12-acre adjacent green space--in schools and other locations all over Los Angeles County. TMC Arts presents world-class dance with *Glorya Kaufman Presents Dance at The Music Center*, free and low-cost public concerts and events, live and digital K-12 arts education programs, workshops, performances, interactive experiences and special events. TMC Ops manages the theatres, the Plaza and Gloria Molina Grand Park, which comprise \$3 billion in county assets, on behalf of the County of Los Angeles. The Music Center is also home to four renowned resident companies--Center Theatre Group, Los Angeles Master Chorale, LA Opera and LA Phil. For more information, visit musiccenter.org. Follow The Music Center on social media @MusicCenterLA.

#

© Music Center. All Rights Reserved.