

MEDIA RELEASE

University Galleries of Illinois State University is pleased to present *An Infinite and Omnivorous Sky* from January 10 through February 19, 2020. All events are free and open to the public.

Participating artists: Amy Balkin, Jen Bervin, James Bridle, William Cordova, Rohini Devasher, Ala Ebtekar, Spencer Finch, Dianna Frid, Carrie Gundersdorf, Basim Magdy, Brittany Nelson, Demetrius Oliver, Kambui Olujimi, Lisa Oppenheim, Trevor Paglen, Katie Paterson, Dario Robleto, Cauleen Smith, and Kerry Tribe.

An Infinite and Omnivorous Sky, a group exhibition about the mysteries and militarization of outer space, features twenty-nine works by artists that critically engage in poetic, scientific, and geopolitical views of the cosmos. Although the sea of celestial bodies has incited philosophizing and dreaming throughout time, the sky has also become militarized. It serves as a site of international power struggles and an omniscient point of view for surveillance via countless satellites. Our knowledge is constantly evolving with the generation of new data via Mars and moon rovers, Hubble telescope images, Voyager and New Horizons probes, and the Large Hadron Collider, among others. As the human race faces unprecedented crises due to climate change and related global unrest, the sky may hold the key to our collective survival.

The works in the exhibition prompt dialogue about the need for rigorous scientific exploration, unrestrained artistic practice, and informed political action. For example, Amy Balkin's *The Atmosphere, A Guide* is a poster-essay that, in the artist's words, "depicts various human influences on the sky and their accumulated traces, whether chemical, narrative, spatial, or political." The thirteen cotton flags in Kambui Olujimi's installation *T-Minus Ø* feature photographic collages of failed rocket launches and shuttle attempts, while Kerry Tribe's video *The Last Soviet* addresses cosmonaut Sergei Krikalev's 311 days spent on the Mir space station during the fall of the Soviet Union. Cauleen Smith's video *Space is the Place (A March for Sun Ra)* follows a rainy Chicago performance of Afrofuturist composer and musician Sun Ra's "Space is the Place" by a high school marching band, and Brittany Nelson's large-scale Bromoil photograph *Tracks 1* centers around an image the Opportunity Rover took of its own tracks in the Martian landscape. The series of nine clocks comprising Katie Paterson's *Timepieces (Solar System)* tells the time on Earth's moon and the eight planets in our solar system, while the green embroidered text spelling "THERE IS NO RETURN" in Dianna Frid's *NYT, AUG. 22, 2015, JACOB BEKENSTEIN* is excerpted from the physicist and black hole theorist's obituary in the *New York Times*.

An Infinite and Omnivorous Sky is curated by University Galleries' Director and Chief Curator Kendra Paitz. An exhibition catalog is forthcoming in Summer 2020. The exhibition, publication, and programming are supported by grants from The Andy Warhol Foundation for the Visual Arts and the Illinois Arts Council Agency. Field trip support is provided by a grant from the Town of Normal Harmon Arts Grant Program.

University Galleries is collaborating with the Illinois State University Planetarium and the Children's Discovery Museum for programming during the exhibition.

Events and programming

- Tuesday, January 28 at 6 p.m. at University Galleries
Curator-led tour of the exhibition with Kendra Paitz, University Galleries' Director and Chief Curator.
- Saturday, February 1 at 2 p.m. and 7:30 p.m. at Illinois State University Planetarium

Screening of Kambui Olujimi's *Skywriters*.

Doors open 20 minutes before showtime. Location and parking information for the ISU Planetarium follows below.

- Saturday, February 1 at 4 p.m. at University Galleries.
Artist lecture by Kambui Olujimi. The exhibition reception will directly follow this event.

Olujimi's work has been exhibited or screened at the Smithsonian Institution (Washington, D.C.); Museum of Modern Art (New York); Studio Museum in Harlem (New York); MIT List Visual Arts Center (Cambridge, Massachusetts); Sundance Film Festival (Park City, Utah); Museo Nacional Centro de Arte Reina Sofía (Madrid); and Para Site (Hong Kong), among many others.

- Saturday, February 1, from 5 to 7 p.m.
Exhibition reception at University Galleries.
- Thursday, February 6 at 9:30 a.m.; Saturday, February 8 at 2 p.m.; Tuesday, February 11 at 11 a.m.; Saturday, February 15 at 2 p.m.; and Wednesday, February 19 at 9:30 a.m. at ISU Planetarium
Additional screenings of Kambui Olujimi's *Skywriters*.
Doors open 20 minutes before showtime. Location and parking information for the ISU Planetarium follows below.
- Saturday, February 8 at 1 p.m. at University Galleries
Exhibition tour and workshop co-presented with the Children's Discovery Museum (CDM).

Participants (ages 7-10) will meet at the CDM, come to University Galleries for an exhibition tour, and return to the CDM for an exhibition-related artmaking activity. Registration is required for this free program at childrensdiscoverymuseum.net. This program is made possible by an Illinois Prairie Community Foundation—Mirza Arts and Culture grant awarded to the CDM.

- Monday, February 10 at 9 a.m.
Stroller tour at University Galleries.
- Saturday, February 15, from 12 to 1 p.m. at University Galleries
All ages artmaking workshop led by Tanya Scott, University Galleries' Curator of Education. No registration required.
- Field trip program, curator-led tours, and workshops available by appointment throughout the exhibition. Stipends are available for K-12 schools or community organizations to offset the costs of transportation. Please contact University Galleries at galleries@ilstu.edu or (309) 438-5487 to schedule an appointment.

University Galleries, a unit in the Wonsook Kim College of Fine Arts, is located at 11 Uptown Circle, Suite 103, at the corner of Beaufort and Broadway streets. Parking is available in the Uptown Station parking deck located directly above University Galleries—the first hour is free, as well as any time after 5:01 p.m.

You can find [University Galleries](#) on [Facebook](#), [Instagram](#), and [Twitter](#), and sign up to receive email updates through the [newsletter](#). Please contact galleries@illinoisstate.edu or call (309) 438-5487 if you need to arrange an accommodation to participate in any events related to these exhibitions.

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: December 12, 2019

The [Illinois State University Planetarium](#) is located under the white-domed roof at the eastern end of Felmley Hall Science Annex. Felmley Hall is located at the northeast corner of the ISU campus at the intersection of College Avenue and School Street. Free parking for weekend programs is available nearby in University parking lot F-67, located north of the planetarium on School Street. Weekday parking is available in the ISU visitor lot located behind the Bone Student Center / Braden Auditorium, with the entrance on West Locust Street.