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Human and Beyond – Exploring the Light Art Museum's exhibition *More Than Human*

GÁBOR WÁGNER

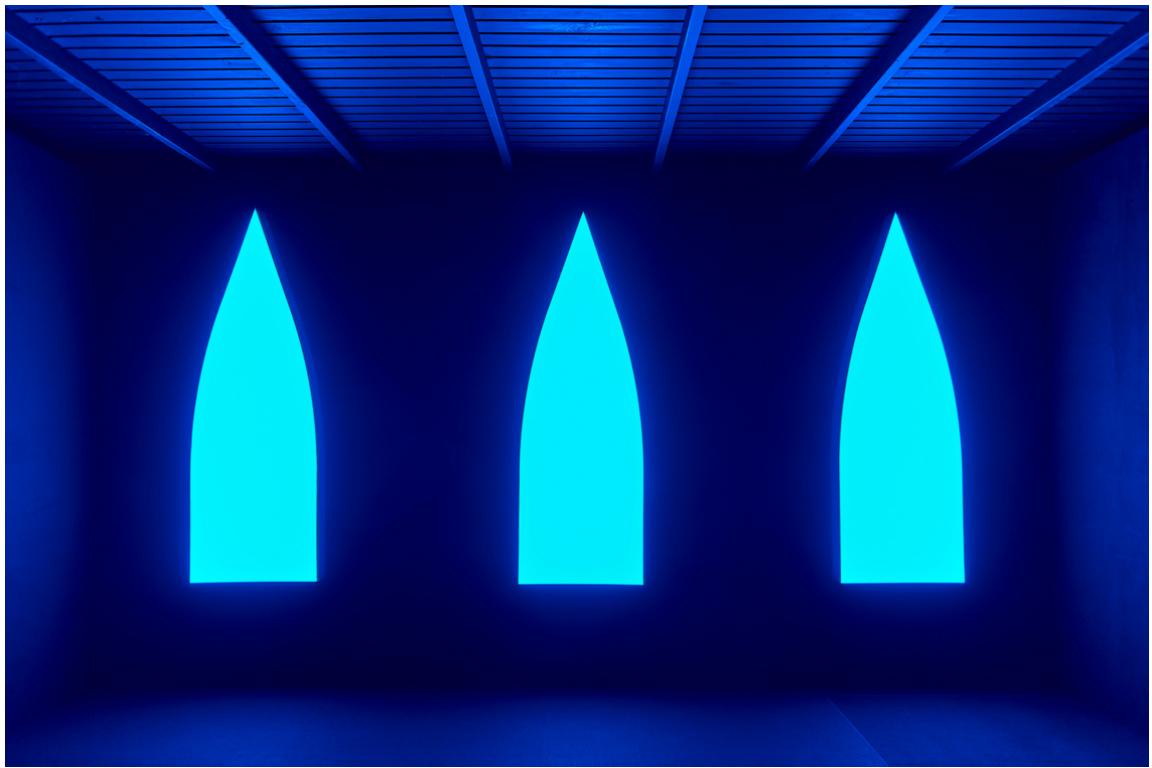
The Light Art Museum's fourth exhibition, *More Than Human*, has opened and, as always, visitors are in for a unique experience: visual art meets natural science, with light acting as the channel between the two. The exhibition starts from the idea that humans tend to place themselves at the centre, seeing themselves as the most important, the alpha and omega of the universe. But this is a harmful and mistaken notion. The LAM's exhibition, however, is not about sounding the alarm, as it highlights positive aspects alongside the negatives.

Neither master, nor virus

Sometimes things coincide in unexpected ways, as it happened to me recently. I began reading the second volume of British sci-fi author Adrian Tchaikovsky's *Children of Time* series (*Children of Ruin*) on the very day that I went to see the **new, fourth exhibition** of the Light Art Museum (LAM), titled *More Than Human*. The sentence below appears at the beginning of the novel, which, in the moment of reading it – just two hours before entering the LAM – I had no idea would echo in the exhibition, **as if the exhibition's concept were partly derived from it**:

Advance science as far as you like, the human mind continued to place itself at the centre of the universe.

This is also partly the starting point of the exhibition *More Than Human*: however much humans may think they are **the pinnacle of creation**, the essence of everything, the truth is far from it.

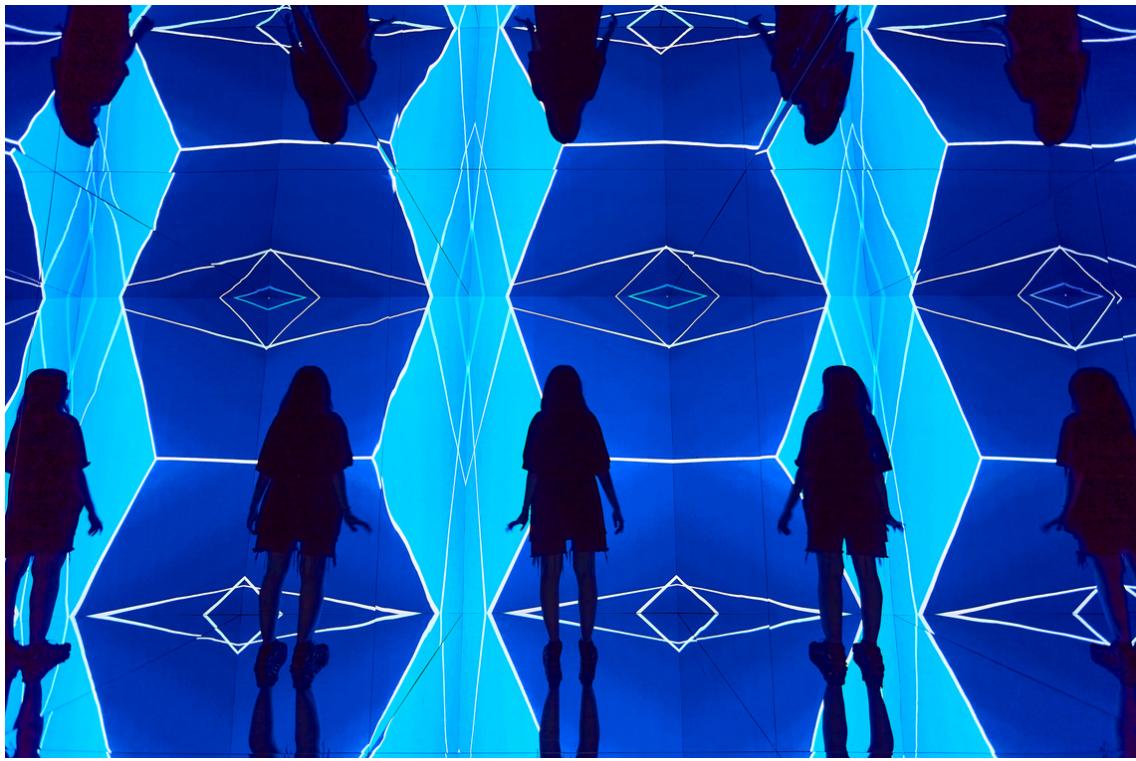


Pamela Rosenkranz: *Alien Blue Window* (2021) (Photo: Light Art Museum)

But just as **humans are not the masters of the universe, nor are they its virus**. Humanoids are simply one lifeform among many, prone to overestimating themselves and their role in the cosmos. While this can cause catastrophe, there are more and more voices working against such thinking. **The LAM exhibition has gathered almost forty works along these lines**, displayed across two floors of the former market hall building.

All corners of the globe

The museum, which is anything but ordinary, spans two levels as well as its zeppelin-shaped balloon space in between are shrouded in a **mysterious semi-darkness that only heightens the curiosity of visitors eager for an artistic experience**. Almost every artwork is large in scale, or at least requires a large space around it, and nearly all are **based on serious scientific research or results**. The works are highly diverse, ranging from spectacular installations and video pieces to unusual sculptures, moving and still images created using artificial intelligence, as well as immersive works – and there are even one or two that are **half-way between experiment and artwork**.



Guillaume Marmin: *Linescapes* (2025) (Photo: Light Art Museum)

An example of this is **Andrea Shin Ling's** *Living Studies, Picoplanktonics*, which consists of several sealed aquariums with 3D-printed living structures that **contain ancient microorganisms known as cyanobacteria**. It is thanks to these bacteria that oxygen was produced on Earth 2.4 billion years ago. Now, in the aquariums, they consume carbon dioxide from the atmosphere and, as a result, produce oxygen and mineral substances that strengthen the structure they inhabit, all **without taking resources from nature**. And with this, we reach an important point of the exhibition: they do not only want to sound the alarm bells or frighten us by merely sending the message that “oh, we are all going to die”, but they also **highlight thought-provoking, environmentally friendly solutions to the problems and the damage caused**.

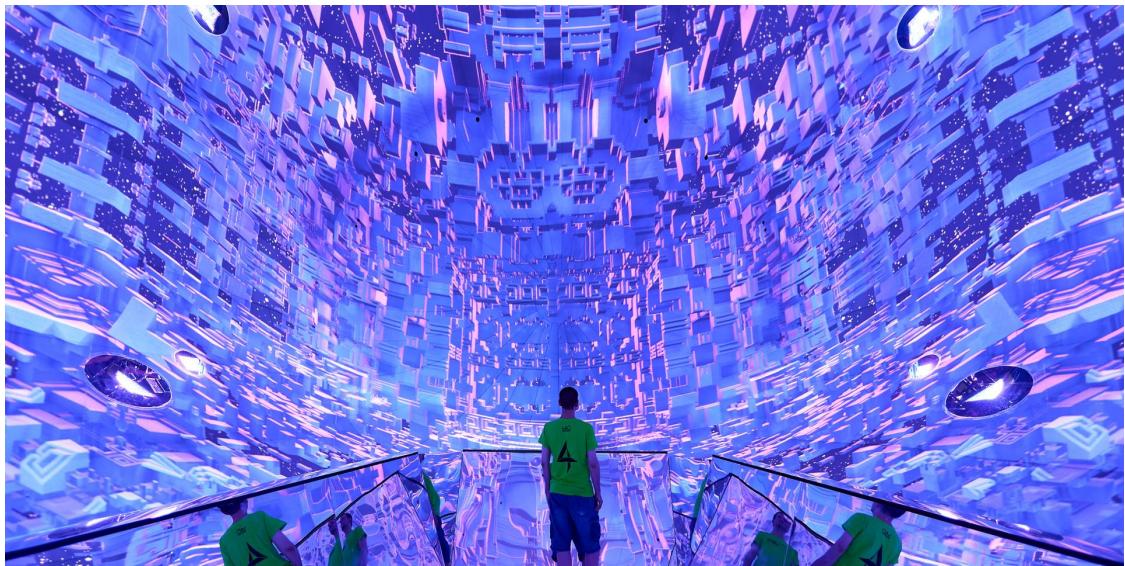


fuse*: *Mimicry* (2025) (Photo: Light Art Museum)

The artistic presentation of modes, worlds, perceptions and forms of existence beyond the human also includes the fact that **some artists look into the future**, into the very distant future. They provide answers to **what kinds of plants, animals, or living beings** that cannot even be squeezed into these two categories **will populate the Earth**, perhaps at a time when there will no longer be the faintest trace of humankind on the planet.

Impacts, studies

Also very exciting are those works that are **built on the deception of our senses**, simply yet brilliantly demonstrating how perception can differ from what we are used to. They show **how many different forms of perception exist** beyond our own and that perhaps ours is not even the most advanced. Some of the exhibited works make you feel dizzy, as if you had fallen under the influence of some mind-altering substance. And this is hardly an exaggeration, since that is precisely the aim of the exhibition: while you are there, your consciousness is altered by the works, and once you leave the LAM, **the package of experiences imprinted in your mind will make you think deeply**. It will make you think further. To achieve all this, artists and artworks have arrived from all over the world, while there are a few Hungarian artists among them as well.

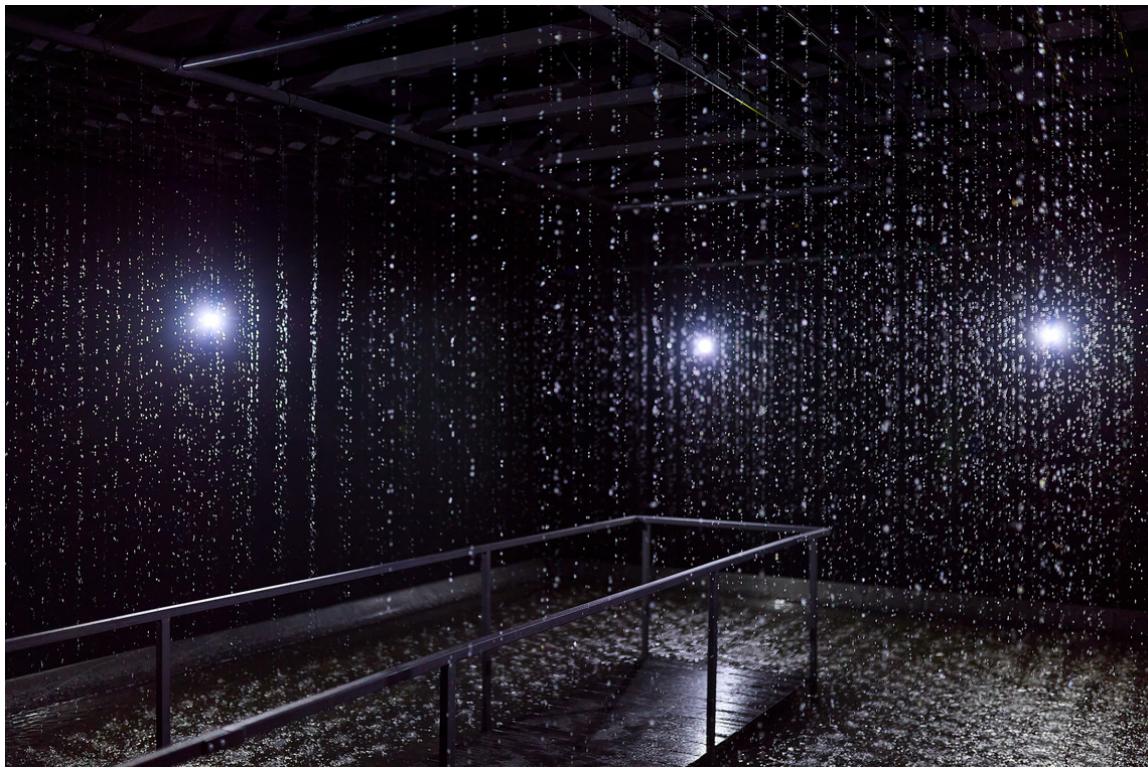


Viktor Vicsek & Rodrigo Guzman: *Saeculum* (2025) (Photo: Light Art Museum)

A large number of works were made specifically here, for this exhibition, and virtually all of the displayed projects were made in the past twenty years, although there are **a few pioneering artists**, such as **Otto Piene** and **Anthony McCall**. Star names include the Icelandic-Danish artist **Ólafur Elíasson**, the Argentinian **Tomás Saraceno**, and renowned British techno musician **Mark Pritchard**, who collaborated with Australian visual artist **Jonny Niesche** to create one of the exhibition's most exciting spaces. It is impossible to convey this in a single photograph, just like it is impossible to capture Tony Oursler's *Talking Lamp* in an image, a work that even ticks the horror box of the exhibition, although it was most likely not the underlying intention.



Ólafur Elíasson: *Your welcome reflected* (2003) (Photo: Light Art Museum)



Yasuhiro Chida: *Space of Moment* (2002–2025) (Photo: Light Art Museum)

I left my absolute favourite among my personal favourites last: **Yasuhiro Chida's *Space of Moment*** is about **frozen time**, or rather about non-existent, erased time. The artist has created a space where, although the rain is falling and we also perceive the water as moving, the illusion is perfect, because at the same time we see it as standing still. Standing still while pouring. It falls, and yet it remains in one place. **It is a wonderful experience to witness this extraordinary space** and to walk into its centre. Perhaps this work expresses the essence of the museum more than any other: light is capable of anything when it falls into the right hands.