**Beat: Arts**

# PLANET EARTH -GAIA- EXHIBITED AT BEAUGRENELLE PARIS

**BY ARTIST LUKE JERRAM**

PARIS, 30.09.2020, 09:34 Time

**USPA NEWS -** Gaia is a touring artwork by UK artist Luke Jerram. Measuring seven metres in diameter and created from 120dpi detailed NASA imagery of the Earth´s surface* the artwork provides the opportunity to see our planet, floating in three dimensions. The installation aims to create a sense of the Overview Effect, which was first described by author Frank White in 1987. Common features of the experience for astronauts are a feeling of awe for the planet, a profound understanding of the interconnection of all life, and a renewed sense of responsibility for taking care of the environment.

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The artwork also acts as a mirror to major events in society. In light of the current COVID-19 pandemic, the artwork may provide the viewer with a new perspective of our place on the planet; a sense that societies of the Earth are all interconnected and that we have a responsibility toward one another. After the lockdown, there has been a renewed respect for nature.

The artwork is 1.8 million times smaller than the real Earth with each centimetre of the internally lit sculpture describing 18km of the Earth´s surface. By standing 211m away from the artwork, the public will be able to see the Earth as it appears from the moon.

Over its lifetime, Gaia will be presented in a number of different ways both indoors and outdoors. Depending on which country the artwork is presented in, and whether it is presented in a museum, science centre or parkland, the experience and interpretation of the artwork may alter.

Unlike the moon, which we have been gazing at for millennia, the first time humankind got to see the Earth as a blue marble floating in space was in 1968 with NASA´s Apollo 8 mission. At this moment, our perception and understanding of our planet changed forever. Hanging in the black emptiness of space the Earth seems isolated, a precious and fragile island of life. From a distance, the Earth is just a pale blue dot.

“I hope visitors to Gaia get to see the Earth as if from space; an incredibly beautiful and precious place. An ecosystem we urgently need to look after ““ our only home.

Halfway through the Earth´s six mass extinction, we urgently need to wake up, and change our behaviour. We need to quickly make the changes necessary, to prevent run away Climate Change.

I was amazed and delighted that my Museum of the Moon artwork has been so popular. I´m fully aware that 4 million members of the public haven´t been coming to see an artwork by “˜Luke Jerram´ but rather “˜the Moon´; an object of universal appeal and cultural significance. With this Gaia Earth artwork, I´m interested in just how different the experience and interpretation is. For our entire human existence we have been gazing up at the moon and projecting all our hopes, dreams and wishes up there. Whereas it was only in 1968 that we were able to see our planet floating in space. “ Luke Jerram

Luke Jerram´s multidisciplinary practice involves the creation of sculptures, installations and live arts projects. Living in the UK but working internationally for 20 years, Jerram has created a number of extraordinary art projects which have excited and inspired people around the globe. Find out more via his main website. In 2019 Luke Jerram was elected Fellow of the Royal Astronomical Society.

Source : Atrium Beaugrenelle Paris Exhibition: September 17 to November 8, 2020.

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**Article online:**
https://www.uspa24.com/bericht-17597/planet-earth-gaia-exhibited-at-beaugrenelle-paris.html

**Editorial office and responsibility:**
V.i.S.d.P. & Sect. 6 MDStV (German Interstate Media Services Agreement): Ruby BIRD & Yasmina BEDDOU (Journalists-Director)

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Official Federal Reg. No. 7442619