

Tomas Vu, *Blackstar 16/25/60*, Installation view at Locust Projects, photo by World Red Eye.



Blackstar 16/25/60

Tomas Vu

April 30 - July 19, 2025

“The dome is like a time capsule and a time machine. It’s analog and digital. It’s nostalgic, but also looking forward. It’s where we can dream again, but also where we’re asked to reflect.”

- Tomas Vu

**LOCUST
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Locust Projects presents *Blackstar 16/25/60*, a monumental intermedia interactive installation by artist New York- based artist, Tomas Vu. Taking its name from David Bowie’s critically-acclaimed final album, *Blackstar*, the exhibition is inspired by the cultural and artistic legacy of David Bowie and his role as a cultural “mixer,” blending genres, ideas, and influences into new forms. *Blackstar 16/24/60* is the third and final project in the artist’s Bowie-inspired trilogy that started in Berlin in 2019 with *Space Oddity 69/19/45* exploring the struggle between man and machine. In New York, *The Man Who Fell to Earth*

76/22, warned of a technocentric dystopian future where humanity is left behind. With rising sea levels looming overhead, the artist sees Miami as the perfect venue for the third and final piece of the trilogy. *Blackstar 16/25/60* will take the opposite path from the previous by imaging a world overrun by nature pulling from the artist's past works and personal archives as a harbinger of the future, but also forging a new space of possibility and potential, as both an outpost—a warning of the future to come—and a sanctuary for learning to survive in it. Through workshops and community activations, together we create a dialogue and seek to understand how we can find solace in a future where nature holds the power.

Central to the installation is a geodesic dome inspired by the work of futurist architect Buckminster Fuller, a recurrent motif in Vu's practice, serving as a platform for projection mapping and a site for continuous visitor activation and engagement. The hexagonal panels of the dome display constantly shifting collages of still images and video from Vu's extensive archive, algorithmically generated to create an evolving visual experience merging visions of past, present and future. Inside the dome, visitors can engage with a vinyl sound deck of LPs from 1967-2016, chronicling the timeline between David Bowie's first and last releases. This central unit functions as a time machine transporting visitors through sight and sound as they select tracks that shape the auditory landscape of the installation. Combined with sensors that respond to audience movement, the installation transforms into a living, responsive environment, emblematic of Bowie's ethos of collaboration and constant reinvention.

Screenings, live music, listening sessions and digital workshops, will activate the installation. These events will critically explore Bowie's continued influence on contemporary art and culture, connecting his legacy of building bridges with younger generations, as well as the boundaries between genre, and identity. Locust Art Builders: Summer Art Intensive for Teens will also draw inspiration from the show with a Digital Daydreams themed LAB, providing students with skills in new media to explore and visually build the world they imagine in a collaborative exhibition opening Saturday, July 19 from 6-8pm.

***Blackstar 16/25/60* is a Knight Digital Commission.**



Tomas Vu, *Blackstar 16/25/60*, Spring Fling: Space Oddity activation by Jay Thomas x Zjolie, photo by World Red Eye.

ABOUT THE ARTIST



Tomas Vu, Photo courtesy of Locust Projects

Vu's work has been exhibited internationally, with solo presentations at institutions including the Museum of Contemporary Art Tokyo, Museo d'Arte Contemporanea di Roma, Guangdong Museum of Art, and the Vietnam Fine Arts Museum. His work has also been featured in major group exhibitions at the Museum of Modern Art, New York; Contemporary Arts Museum Houston; and the Asia Society, New York.

Tomas Vu was born in Saigon, Vietnam in 1963 and at the age of ten moved with his family to El Paso, Texas. Vu received a BFA from the University of Texas, El Paso, and went on to earn an MFA from Yale University. He has been a professor at Columbia University School of the Arts since 1996. In 1996, Vu also helped found the Leroy Neiman Center for Print Studies. Since its inception, he has served as Director/Artistic Director of the Neiman center. He was appointed the LeRoy Neiman Professor of Visual Arts in 2000.

Through intricate prints, large-scale installations, and multidisciplinary projects, Vu's work examines the complexities of identity and the human condition, shaped by his experience as a refugee from Vietnam. His approach often blends traditional printmaking techniques with experimental forms, resulting in dynamic, layered compositions that engage with history and the subconscious.

Vu has been recognized with numerous awards, including the Guggenheim Fellowship (2002), the Joan Mitchell Foundation Fellowship (2001), and the Louis Comfort Tiffany Foundation Prize (2018).

ABOUT LOCUST PROJECTS

Founded by artists for artists in 1998, Locust Projects is Miami's longest running nonprofit alternative art space. We produce, present, and nurture ambitious and experimental new art and the exchange of ideas through commissioned exhibitions and projects, artist residencies, summer art intensives for teens, and public programs on contemporary art and curatorial practice. As a leading incubator of new art and ideas, Locust Projects emphasizes boundary-pushing creative endeavors, risk-taking and experimentation by local, national and international artists. We invest in South Florida's arts community by providing artists with project grants and empower creative careers by supporting the administrative work of being an artist through an onsite artist resource hub and access to pro bono legal services.



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