

# Wu Tsang

*59th International Art Exhibition  
La Biennale di Venezia  
23 April - 27 November 2022  
The Milk of Dreams  
Curator: Cecilia Alemani*

ANTENNA SPACE

**Wu Tsang: *Of Whales*, 2022**  
Real-time video, multi-channel audio  
6 hours

# Artistic Statement

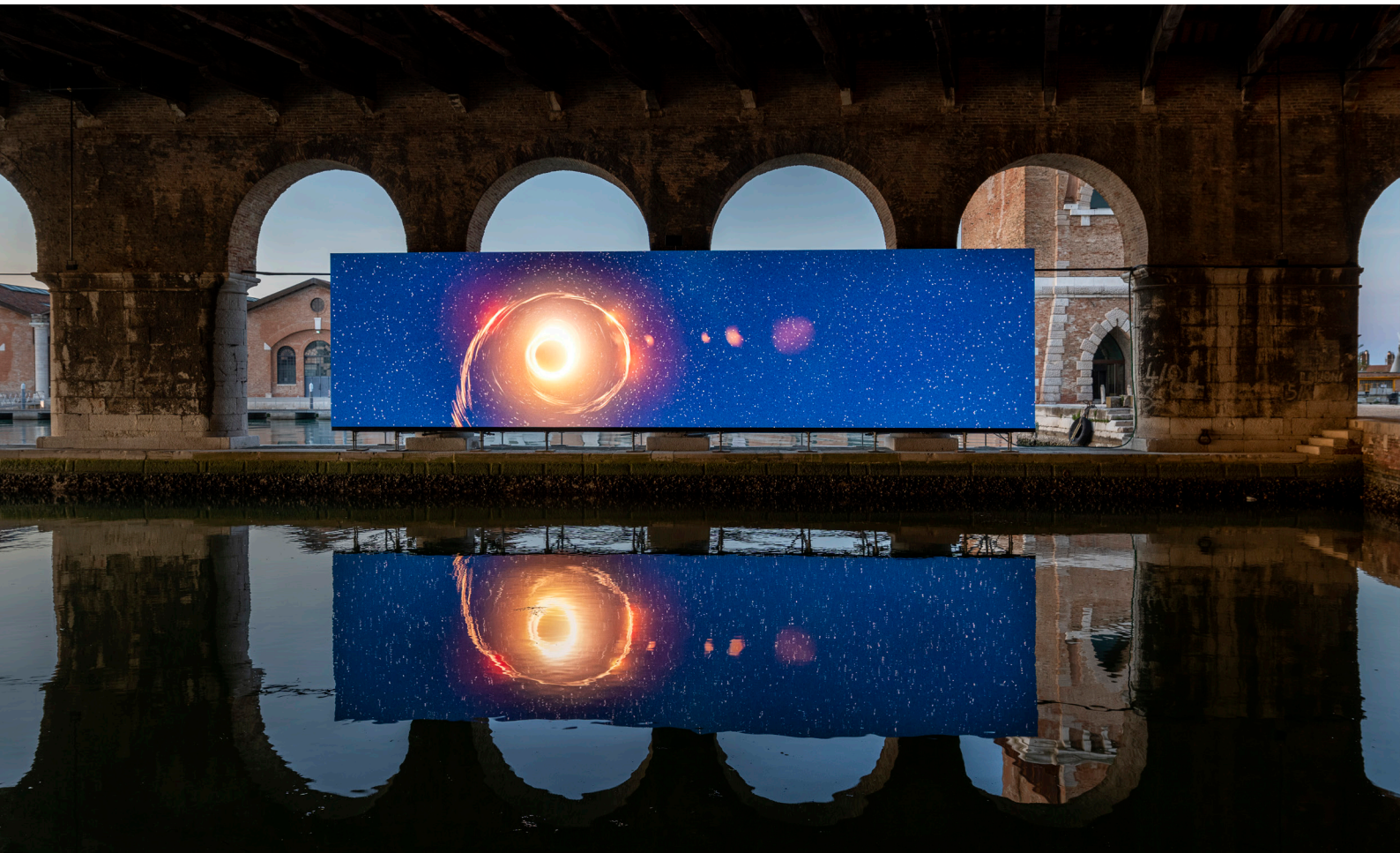
*OF WHALES* is a dynamic oceanscape-cosmos that expands my film adaptation of *MOBY DICK*, exploring surreal aspects of Melville's world mixed with the detritus of research into a postcolonial and environmental reading of the 1851 novel.

The main inspiration is a character from my film adaptation called the Sub Sub Librarian who is a Jonah-like figure – a 'tired old god' that lives inside the belly of the whale. In my version the Sub Sub is a future incarnate of the young cabin-boy Pip, who journeys to the deepest depths of the sea and through a cosmos to become the narrator of the story.

In this project, the journey of Pip/SubSub follows the diving path of a sperm whale, plunging down to non-human depths (2000+ meters) for over an hour at a time, only to resurface briefly for a breath of air and then return. The cycle of cosmos > surface > cosmos reflects the spiraling cyclical structure of the story.



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Wu Tsang, *Of Whales* (2022), installation view from *Venice Art Biennale 2022: The Milk of Dreams* Photo: Matteo De Fina

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# Wu Tsang

Wu Tsang (b. 1982, Worcester) currently lives and works in Los Angeles. Tsang received a BFA from the School of the Art Institute of Chicago in 2004 and an MFA from the University of California at Los Angeles in 2010.

Tsang is a filmmaker and performance artist who combines documentary and narrative techniques with fantastical detours into the imaginary in works that explore hidden histories, marginalized narratives, and the act of performing itself. Tsang re-imagines racialized, gendered representations beyond the visible frame to encompass the multiple and shifting perspectives through which we experience the social realm. Her films include *We hold where study* (2017), *Girl Talk* (2015), *Damelo Todo (Gimme Everything)* (2010), and *Shape of a Right Statement* (2008) among others. Her works have been featured in Gropius Bau, Berlin; MoMA, New York; Tate Modern, London; Whitney Museum of American Art, New York; Kunsthalle Münster, Münster in Westfalen, Germany; Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum, New York; Museum of Contemporary Art Chicago, Chicago; Stedelijk Museum, Amsterdam among others.

Selected solo exhibitions, performance and film screenings: *Wu Tsang: Anthem*, Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum, New York, US (2021); *Visionary Company*, Lafayette Anticipations, Paris, France (2020); *There is no nonviolent way to look at somebody*, Gropius Bau, Berlin, Germany (2019); *An Atmosphere of Messages*, Cabinet Gallery, London, UK (2019); *Diversity is Reality*, Copenhagen Contemporary, Copenhagen, Denmark (2019); *Under Cinema*, FACT, Liverpool, UK (2017); *Sustained Glass*, Antenna Space, Shanghai, China (2017); *Devotional Document (Part 1)*, Nottingham Contemporary, Nottingham, UK (2017); *Devotional*

*Document (Part 2)*, Kunsthalle Münster, Münster in Westfalen, Germany (2017); *The Luscious Land of God is Sinking*, 356 Mission Road, Los Angeles, US (2016); *A day in the life of bliss*, Julia Stoschek Collection, Düsseldorf, Germany (2015); *Wu Tsang Ft. Boychild: Untouchable*, Stedelijk Museum, Amsterdam, Netherlands (2014); *Whitney Biennial 2012: Wu Tsang*, Whitney Museum of American Art, New York, US (2012) among others.

Selected group exhibitions: *The 59th Venice Biennale: The Milk of Dreams*, Giardini della Biennale, Venice, Italy (2022); *Chrono-Contemporary*, MOCA Taipei, Taipei (2021); *1,2,3,4: Dance in Contemporary Artists' Films*, The Glucksman, University College Cork, Cork, Ireland (2020); *Singapore Biennale 2019: Every Step In The Right Direction*, Singapore Art Museum, Singapore (2019); *You: Works from the Lafayette Anticipations Collection*, City of Paris Museum of Modern Art, Paris, France (2019); *Luogo e Segni, Punta della Dogana*, Venice, Italy (2019); *Sharjah Biennial 14: Leaving the Echo Chamber*, Sharjah, UAE (2019); *Producing Futures - An Exhibition on Post-Cyber-Feminism*, Migros Museum, Zurich, Switzerland (2019); *Strange Days: Memories of the Future (in association with the New Museum, NY)*, The Strand, London, UK (2018); *A group exhibition with work by Dora García, Sharon Hayes, Emily Jacir, Mahmoud Khaled, Carlos Motta, Wu Tsang and Akram Zaatari, as well as a letter by Quinn Latimer*, Witte de With Center for Contemporary Art, Rotterdam, Netherlands (2018); *Trigger: Gender as a weapon and a tool*, New Museum, New York, US (2017); *Biennale of Moving Images*, Centre d'Art Contemporain Genève, Genève, Switzerland (2017) among others.

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