

barbican

Into the Unknown

Tour Pack

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1 Introduction



Photography by Dan Tobin Smith, design by Praline

Into the Unknown: A Journey through Science Fiction is a genre-defining exploration of one of popular culture's most celebrated realms. This unprecedented show encompasses literature, contemporary art, film, music, comic books and video games to present a new, global perspective on Science Fiction.

Curated by Swiss historian and writer **Patrick Gyger**, this festival-style exhibition explores Science Fiction as an experimental genre, delving into its storytelling roots to discover how its visionary creators captured imaginations around the world to become one of the most popular and enjoyable narratives today. Featuring work never before shown in the UK, the show places rare and iconic pieces alongside familiar, well-loved classics, next to new contemporary art commissions, hoping to surprise and challenge visitors' perception of the genre.

The exhibition includes over 200 books from around the world, including original manuscripts and typescripts, contemporary art commissions and existing art works, over 50 film and TV clips, featuring some of the most memorable cinematic moments in Science Fiction as well as rare, unseen footage, pulp magazines, adverts, concept art, film props, comics, video games and robots.

Into the Unknown showcases works from major collections, national archives, film studios and private collections around the world. On display for the first time are works from philanthropist and Microsoft co-founder, **Paul G. Allen**. Other lenders include **The Ray & Diana Harryhausen Foundation, Warner Bros. Corporate Archive** and the personal archives of **SFX artist Patrick Tatopoulos**. All these works are brought to life with an immersive exhibition design by **Ab Rogers Design (ARD)**.

As the exhibition this tour pack is divided into 4 chapters: Extraordinary Voyages, Space Odysseys, Brave New Worlds and Final Frontiers. Each chapter is accompanied by a selection of artworks. At the end of the tour pack you will find 12 special artist works and a selection of installation shots from the Barbican display.

Quick Facts

Hire fees	Upon application
Duration	3 months +
Dimensions	approx 1,000 –1,500 m ²
Number of staff travelling for install/de-install	7 staff for 14 day install and 7 day de-install (Venue to cover cost of flights, accommodation, per diem, visas).
Transport	We request that one way (incoming) transport is covered by the venue. Transport for the exhibition is part sea, part air freight (estimated 7 x 40ft Hicube sea containers and 25cbm, palletised and crated, chargeable weight 4175kg).

Venues

Venue	Country	Dates
Barbican Centre, London	UK	3 Jun–1 Sep 2017
Onassis Cultural Center	Greece	9 Oct 2017–14 Jan 2018
Brandts Museum, Odense	Denmark	27 Sep 2018–24 Feb 2019
Kunsthall Rotterdam	Netherlands	23 Mar–30 Jun 2019

2 Extraordinary Voyages



Photography by Dan Tobin Smith, design by Praline

The origins of science fiction can be found in the imaginative potential of unexplored lands and undiscovered people. In remote islands lay the possibility of discovering preserved cultures: minuscule people, tribes adoring gigantic apes, even dinosaurs collaborating with humans. Such marvellous lands could also be found in lost worlds: the dark corners of the earth, forbidden valleys or towards the poles.

As the appeal of exploring uncharted lands began to wane, from the 18th century new worlds could be found by plunging into the depths of a hollow earth. On the other side of the terrestrial crust, an inner solar system was imagined with inhabitants living in vast galleries of caves, populated by prehistoric creatures.

Forgotten monsters could also reside in the depths of the sea, perhaps awoken from their maritime slumber with an atomic explosion. Plunging into the abyss provided an entire underworld of possibilities: secrets to be revealed and discoveries to be made; perhaps even the ruins of Atlantis could be glimpsed when travelling twenty thousand leagues under the sea.

Towards the end of the 19th century, science fiction's exploration of the planet began to move upwards, into the air, with expeditions in balloons and flying machines providing the plot for countless novels. Advertisements, playing cards and magazines in the early 20th century came to be filled with images of colourful airships engaging in explorations of the sky, leisure activities or the practices of war.

2 Extraordinary Voyages



Ray Harryhausen
Illustrations for films *Mysterious Island* (1961) and *The 7th Voyage of Sinbad* (1958)
Charcoal and pencil on illustration board



James Gurney
Waterfall City: Afternoon Light, 2001
Oil on canvas mounted to panel



Film Clip
Journey to the Center of the Earth (1959)



Book cabinet
Jules Verne, *L'Île mystérieuse* [*Mysterious Island*]



Cabinet of curiosity



Jean-Marc Deschamps
Train Lunaire [*Lunar Train*], 2002-5
Composite, plastic, fiberglass, paper

3 Space Odysseys



Photography by Dan Tobin Smith, design by Praline

The early 20th century conquest of the sky led naturally on to the moon, a first step for mankind. Fostered by the desire for discovery and politicised in the technological competition between nations in the Space Race, travels to the stars came to be a pivotal theme in classic science fiction.

Stories abound of space stations and generation starships; of heroes who embark mighty spacecrafts to save entire galaxies or planets terraformed to house a new branch of mankind. Light-years away, civilisations are erected far from the cradle of humanity, marred by countless star wars to dispose of a tyrant or secure a mysterious spice.

Exploration of the cosmos provided numerous unknown threats, from engineering challenges to unexpected psychological side-effects. But the biggest problem lay in whom homo sapiens might encounter: sentient or not, alien life forms could travel from there to here. Extraterrestrials could be hidden amongst us or on board their mothership looming above our cities, prone to kill or exploit us – as we ourselves have done too often when in presence of beings deemed different.

In contemporary science fiction, space adventures are often reinterpreted, encapsulating a nostalgia for the possibility of escape from our own planet and the potential to imagine a cosmic new future for human civilisation

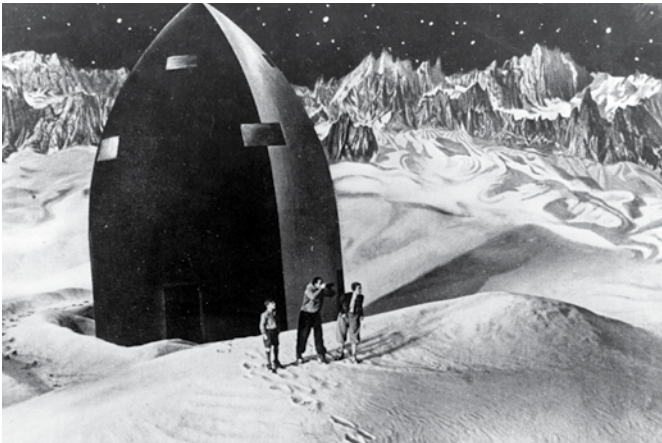
3 Space Odysseys



Ray Harryhausen
 Three worker Selenites; Original latex models for *First Men in the Moon* (1964)
 c.1963



H.R. Giger
Alien III / Necronom, 2005
 Resin



Film clip
Frau Im Mond (1929)



Concept artwork from the film *District 9* (2009)



Territory Studio, NASA Mission Control, new interactive commission, 2017
 Promotional space suit from the film *Destination Moon* (1950)



Stars Gallery, includes artworks by Alex Schomburg, Chris Foss, Fred Freeman, James B. Settles, Malcolm Smith

4 Brave New Worlds



Photography by Dan Tobin Smith, design by Praline

With the earth proving frustratingly small and the cosmos incredibly vast, science fiction has often reverted to environments that can be built and controlled. The megalopolis is reimagined in science fiction as the epitome of civilisation, a supercity traversed by lanes in the sky and dotted with megastructures.

Some of science fiction's most iconic stories have explored the social impact of urban megastructures. The high rise can be alienating, creating conformity and totalitarianism. Supervised by a Big Brother, made docile by drugs or violent games, oppressed inhabitants might be forced to wear uniforms and become identified only by a number. Even a utopian vision of the modern metropolis may at best turn into a melancholic and neo-noir version of itself.

Science fiction also rejoices in having Earth destroyed. The end of the world (as we know it) is often picturesque, filled with decrepit symbols of the pride of our civilisation. Overpopulation, pollution, disease, and war are all viable options for eradicating the Old World. Even when nature is responsible for an apocalypse, mankind is usually traceable to the origin of the situation.

When everything is gone, the post-apocalyptic world provides the possibility for simpler beginnings, unfamiliar lands to explore and fight for, and new societies to be built from scratch on spaces once again made blank. Such new beginnings often imagine a better world, but one that may also, at some point, once again know a dreadful fate.

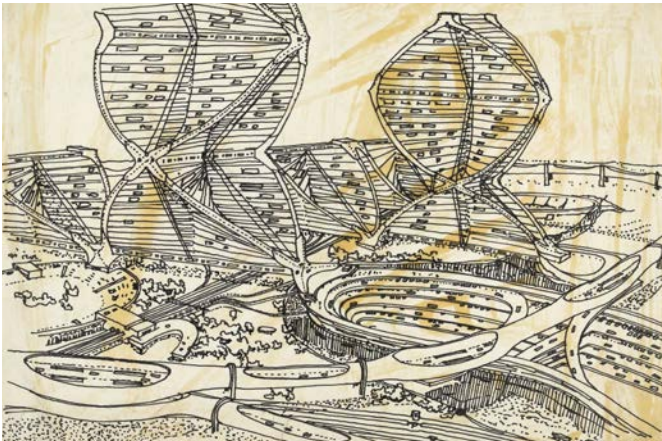
4 Brave New Worlds



Daniel Dociu
Urban Tectonics, 2013
 Digital



Chanéac
Ville alligator, 1968
 Ink, felt and gouache on paper



Kisho Kurokawa
Ville en hélice, Tokyo, Japon [Helix City plan for Tokyo], 1961



Selection of science fiction pulps and comics



Kenneth Fagg
Undersea Cities, 1953
 Tempera on paper



Guillem H. Pongiluppi
Barcelona Smoke & Neons: La Sagrada Familia, 2015
 Digital

5 Final Frontiers



Photography by Dan Tobin Smith, design by Praline

Extending beyond a geographical terrain, science fiction has explored the complex landscape of the body and the many ways in which we might perceive a sense of self. Inside and beyond the body lie spaces to be mapped and mastered; a highly complex machinery, the human body can be transformed, enhanced, mutated, cloned or selected before birth. Armies of mutated beings can be created and artificial doubles appear with their questionable feelings, opening the vistas of an uncanny valley where identity and consciousness are at stake. As the place of humanity in the universe is challenged, so too can be the fabric of the universe itself.

Disorientating worlds within can be found in the mind through drugs, arcane apparatuses or psychic powers. Dreams and memories can be recorded, suppressed, implanted or hacked, and complex mental patterns used to prevent future events. Science fiction's simulated brains lead to cyberspaces: landscapes inside which fluorescent motorcycles can be raced and confused protagonists ponder about the boundaries of reality.

So too can dimensional rifts occur: doors to parallel worlds open up, distances are abolished through teleportation, and time is twisted and turned into a vast tapestry. Its threads can be followed like forking paths – preferably in a phonebox or a DeLorean – producing endless distortions, paradoxes and alternative histories, some of them filled with familiar appliances and airships to be used in new extraordinary voyages.

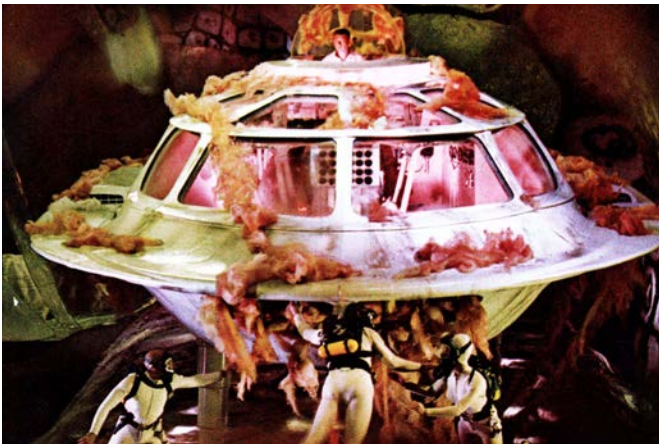
5 Final Frontiers



Double Negative
Installation based on the film *Ex Machina* (2015), 2017
Multi-media installation



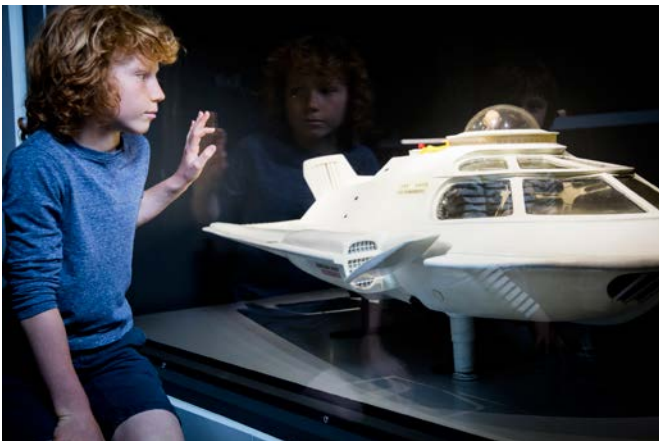
Toy robots from China, Hong Kong, Japan, South Korea, the former Soviet Union and Taiwan
c. 1950-70
Mixed media



Film Clip
Fantastic Voyage (1966)



Selection of books



Proteus submarine filming miniature from the film *Fantastic Voyage* (1966)
Fiberglass, paint, plastic



Science and Invention, September 1925
Illustration by Emsh (Ed Emshwiller) for *Galaxy Science Fiction*, September 1954

6 Highlights

Afronauts postulates an alternative history of the 1960s Space Race between the Soviet Union and the United States, inspired by the short-lived Zambian space programme. *Afronauts* follows a group of exiles in the Zambian desert who are rushing to launch their rocket first, which is to be manned by 17-year-old astronaut Matha Mwamba.

Frances Bodomo, *Afronauts*, 2014
Video, 14 mins



Informed by cultural theories of Afrofuturism, Soda_Jerk's on-going episodic video installation **Astro Black** uses sampling and collage to create new networks of meanings and associations in the intersections of science fiction, social and political history and African-American music culture.

Soda_Jerk, *Astro Black*, 2007-10
Digital video, 25 min 24 seconds



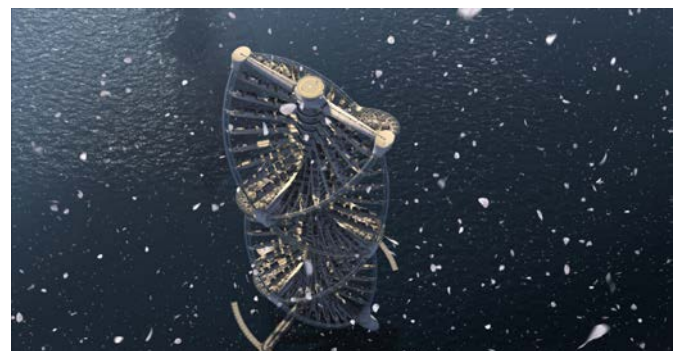
In Dara Birnbaum's **Technology/Transformation: Wonder Woman**, the popular syndicated television programme derived from the eponymous comic book character Wonder Woman is deconstructed mainly through the repetition of particular moments of one episode of the TV series. Birnbaum defines this female icon as a powerful subject as well as a sexualised object.

Dara Birnbaum, *Technology/Transformation: Wonder Woman*
1978-9, Video, 5 min 50 seconds



Filmed in contemporary Tokyo, Pierre-Jean Giloux's sublime and dreamlike video **Invisible Cities # Part 1 # Metabolism** considers the Metabolist principle of the building as a tree, where the structural element of the trunk is permanent, whilst the housing units are ephemeral leaves.

Pierre-Jean Giloux, *Invisible Cities # Part 1 # Metabolism*
2015, Video, 11 min 4 seconds



6 Highlights

Set in a future Africa 35 years after WWII, **Pumzi** ('breath' in Swahili) depicts a post-apocalyptic world in which the scarcity of water has extinguished life above ground, forcing survivors to live in closely monitored subterranean communities controlled by a governing body known as 'The Council'.

Wanuri Kahiu, *Pumzi*
2009, Video, 21 mins



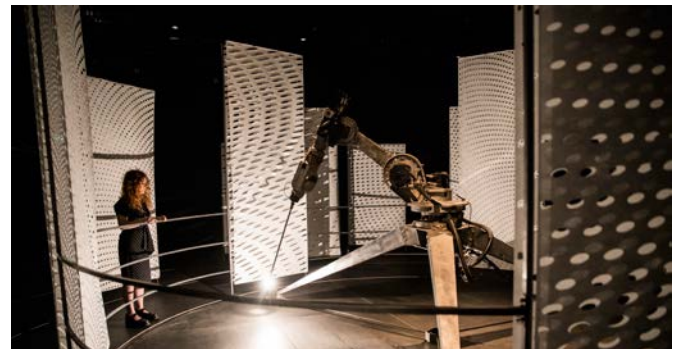
Larissa Sansour's **In the Future They Ate From the Finest Porcelain** tells the story of a fictional 'narrative resistance' group which attempts to implant the existence of a fictional civilisation in history by burying fragments of pottery in the ground. The video explores the construction of national identity and historical fact as a blend of myth and fiction whose legitimacy is predicated upon the existence of material fact.

Larissa Sansour/Soren Lind
In the Future They Ate From the Finest Porcelain
2016, Video, 29 mins



Newly commissioned for this exhibition, **In Light of The Machine** proposes a relationship between cosmology and technology. The slow-moving, seemingly sentient mechanism at the centre of the work illuminates a series of perforated monolithic structures as if communicating a form of notation or code, whilst also resembling a starlit sky in negative.

Conrad Shawcross, *In Light of The Machine*
2017, Mixed media



The new commission presented here is based on an episode from the first series of Charlie Brooker's **Black Mirror**, *15 Million Merits*, in which people live in a hyper artificial environment where they must generate credits through playing videogames powered by cycling in order to audition for a Reality TV-style talent contest.

Created by Charlie Brooker, Konnie Huq, Euros Lyn and Annabel Jones, edited by Gus Herdman
Black Mirror: 15 Million Merits
2017



6 Highlights

Isaac Julien's **Encore II: (Radioactive)** is inspired by a character from the writings of Octavia E. Butler (1947-2006), an American science fiction writer best known for her recurring exploration of genetic manipulation, contamination and hybridity.

Isaac Julien, *Encore II: (Radioactive)*
2004, Betacam transfer to HD file, 3 min 26 seconds



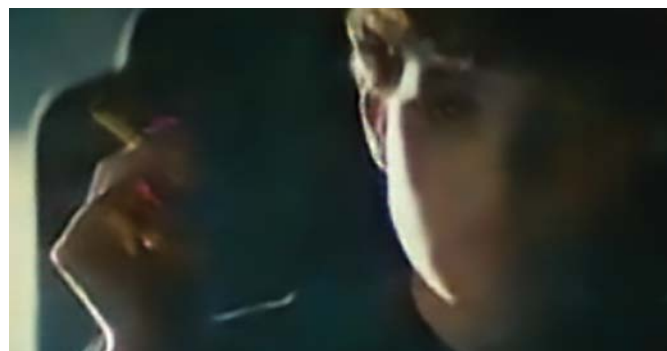
Trevor Paglen's **ORBITAL REFLECTOR (DIAMOND VARIATION)** forms part of the ongoing Nonfunctional Satellite series, which was developed in collaboration with aerospace engineers to imagine what orbital structures might look like if they were designed to be visible from the earth's surface by the unaided eye.

Trevor Paglen, *ORBITAL REFLECTOR (DIAMOND VARIATION)*
Freestanding Model for Inflatable Spacecraft
2017, Aluminium, stainless steel, acrylic



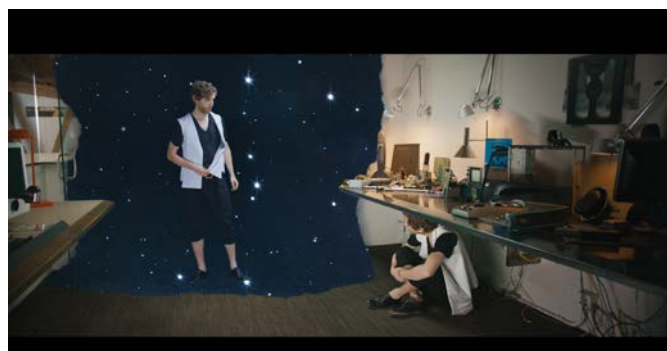
Blade Runner – Autoencoded was created by Terence Broad using a trained autoencoder, an artificial neural network programmed to reconstruct and re-sequence every frame from Ridley Scott's *Blade Runner* (1982). Broad's film uses a simple mathematical model to replicate the original, raising key questions around authorship and authenticity.

Terence Broad, *Blade Runner - Autoencoded*
2016, Video, 1 hour 57 min 37 seconds



Sunspring is a short film conceived by director Oscar Sharp in collaboration with creative technologist Ross Goodwin. The screen play is written entirely by artificial intelligence, an LSTM (long short-term memory) recurrent neural network trained on science fiction films including *Alien* (1979), *Tron* (1982), *Moon* (2009) and *Star Trek*.

Oscar Sharp, *Sunspring*
2016, Video, 9 mins

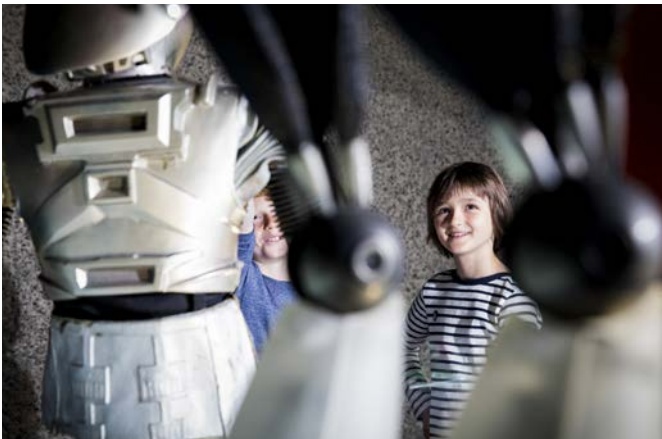


7 Installation Shots



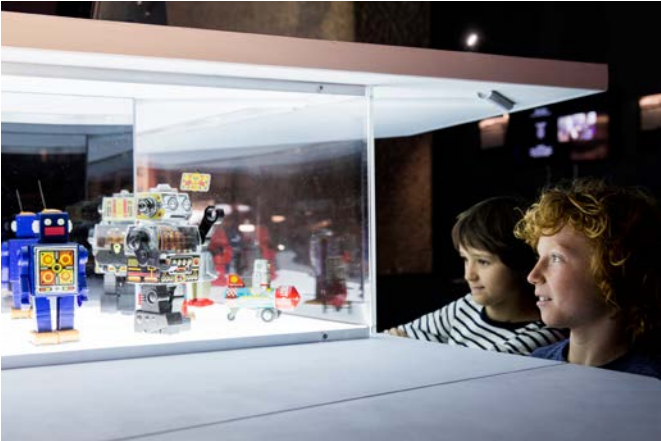
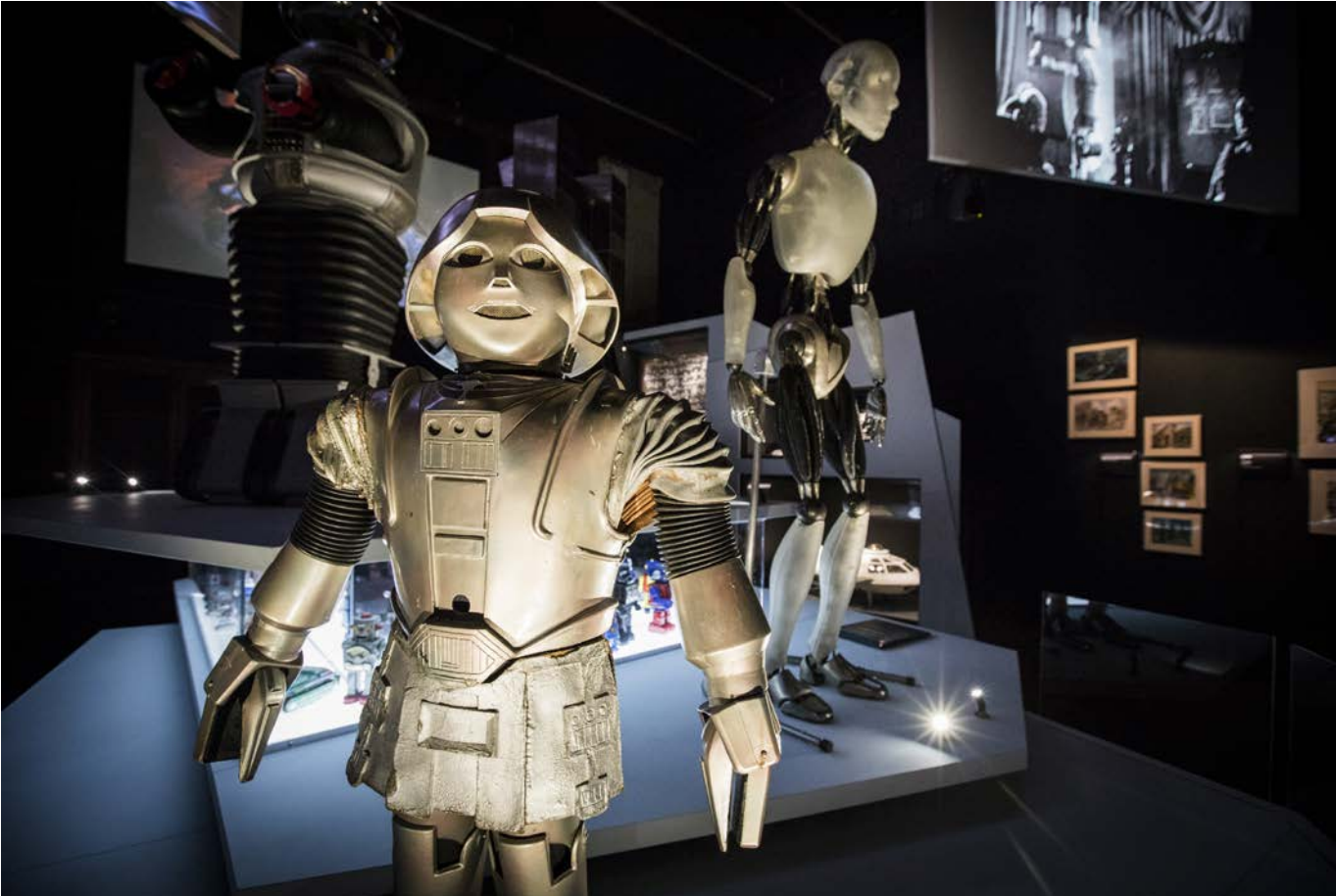
© 2017 Tristan Fewings, Getty Images

7 Installation Shots



© 2017 Tristan Fewings, Getty Images

7 Installation Shots



7 Sample Marketing

Into the Unknown
A Journey through Science Fiction

★★★★★
'an unmissable snapshot of this vibrant genre'
City A.M.

★★★★
'The Barbican has turned into sci-fi heaven'
Londonist

★★★★
'The Barbican goes boldly to a galaxy far, far away – and the result is a true sci-fi journey'
Evening Standard

'will delight sci-fi connoisseur and novice alike'
Daily Telegraph

Until 1 Sep 2017
The genre-defining exhibition of art, design, film & literature

Book now
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Curated by Barbican International Enterprises with co-production partners, Brands – Museum of Art & Visual Culture, Denmark, and Onassis Cultural Centre-Athens, Greece

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Photography by Dan Sells, South, Durrant by Huber

Into the Unknown
A Journey through Science Fiction

★★★★★ City AM

★★★★ Time Out

★★★★ SFX Magazine

★★★★
'The Barbican has turned into sci-fi heaven'
Londonist

★★★★
'a true sci-fi journey'
Evening Standard

Final weeks
Must end
1 Sep

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