

Michael Najjar | Biography

Michael Najjar (b.1966, in Germany) is an internationally renowned artist, explorer and future astronaut. His work spans photography, video, digital image-making, sculpture and writing. He is known for working closely at the intersection of art, science, and technology, dealing in complex and critical ways with the technological developments that are defining and drastically changing the early 21st century.

In 1993, Najjar graduated from the Berlin bildo Academy of Media Arts. Throughout his entire career, he has explored the potential of the technical image by subjecting it to a constant reconstruction of time and space, placing the relationship between reality and simulation at the center of his image constructions. His large-format photographic works and immersive videos are generated from a highly complex digital collage of various elements and image sources, unfolding their visionary power through both their captivating aesthetics and conceptual profoundness. Najjar creates pictures that think beyond what the eye can see.

Najjar's works are grouped in thematic series. His extensive body of work addresses the challenges, and the possibilities, that rapid technological transformation imposes on humanity. Transformation of global megacities through increasingly dense information networks, the alteration of the human body by means of biogenetic interventions, the virtualization of financial markets through intelligent algorithms, the influence of the latest space technologies on our future in space, and our planetary future in times of climate change and geoengineering. Najjar's multidimensional practice frequently leads him to cross-field collaborations with scientists, researchers, and engineers.

The performative aspect has also become a fundamental part of Najjar's work process. For decades now, Najjar has undertaken journeys and expeditions around the globe. His projects often stem from remote fieldwork in liminal locations, often difficult to access. He has climbed seven-thousand-metre-high peaks, scaled skyscrapers, trekked on erupting volcanoes, crossed glaciers, descended into ice caves, traversed deserts, and taken comprehensive astronaut training with the intention of becoming first artist to fly into space. To create his images, Najjar exposes his body to extreme experiences and tests his mental and physical limits in the context of challenging natural or technological environments.

In the last 25 years, Najjar's work has been the subject of solo and group exhibitions at prominent institutions worldwide, including: Akademie der Künste, Berlin; Alfred Ehrhardt Foundation, Berlin; Museum Ludwig, Cologne; Kunsthalle Hamburg / Galerie der Gegenwart, Hamburg; Deichtorhallen, Hamburg; ZKM, Karlsruhe; Marta Herford; Edith Russ Haus für Medienkunst, Oldenburg; Ars Electronica Center, Linz; Kunstmuseum Wolfsburg; Saatchi Gallery, London; Science Museum, London; Centre pour l'image contemporaine, Geneva; Joan Miró Foundation, Barcelona; Fundación La Caixa, Madrid and Barcelona; Centro de Arte Contemporaneo, Málaga; Museo Es Baluard, Palma de Mallorca; Museo DA2 (Domus Artium 2002), Salamanca; 9th Havana Biennale, Havana; Museum of Contemporary Art, Belgrade; Tampere Art Museum, Tampere; New Media Art Institute, Amsterdam; GEM Museum of Contemporary Art, The Hague; 10th Venice Architecture Biennale, Venice; FORMA International Centre for Photography, Milan; 7th International Moscow Biennale, Moscow; Museum of Art, Tucson; Ballroom Marfa; National Air and Space Museum, Washington; Auckland Art Gallery Toi o Tamaki, Auckland; National Gallery of Victoria, Melbourne; National Museum of Science, Taipei; Jut Art Museum, Taipei; Central Academy of Fine Arts, Beijing; Ullens Center for Contemporary Art, Beijing; ZheJiang Art Museum, Hangzhou; Sifang Art Museum, Nanjing; ArtScience Museum, Singapore; and the National Museum of Modern and Contemporary Art, Seoul.

Work by the artist is held in museum collections, as well as in corporate and private collections worldwide. Numerous international publications are dedicated to his work.