Elizabeth Lloyd

I want to take you on a Space Odyssey-Oddity¹ to the fourth rock from the sun—to planet Mars. The ‘voice echo’ reflecting upon practice and pandemic will be relayed to you as a countdown sequence from lift-off to landing on the red planet, courtesy of REDDER.COM duty-free shopping on Mars.

REDDER.COM brings you this experience through a subjective exploration of how space is perceived metaphorically, spiritually, and physically.

Projects for current PhD research, ‘Articulating Space’, explore the parallels between real and imagined space.

Printmaking, both analogue and digital, evokes knowledge and human history. The act of printmaking reveals not only the image, but also the embedded techniques, revealing analogies to science, language, and the machine.

To travel into outer space, within the context of our human existence, “I am setting up shop” and building an installation to house various departments within it.

I will be travelling back to the future², setting out my stall, describing processes and practices, revealing my methodology.

‘We’re leavin’ together, But still it’s farewell, And maybe we’ll come back, To Earth, who can tell?’³

10. ‘HUMAN ARCHAEOLOGY I, II, III’

This work from 2018 became the premise and foundation for PhD research. Previous experience working with environmental colour in architecture as a context for the research question: Articulating Space.

Stretching the physical boundaries of printmaking, I began to conceive and make 3D forms from recycled cardboard, painted, printed, and pieced together—a metaphor for old and new intervention, just like space exploration itself.

Recycled cardboard incorporated a 3D aesthetic, allowing ‘space’ to co-exist within layers of information. The resulting large-scale prints present poetic pieces of human architecture. The physical scale of the cardboard shell is like a geographic island, a romantic location for human habitation, facilitating concepts of time travel, acting as a Tardis-like time machine.⁴

The concept of creating a spaceship to facilitate my own space travel began “through my making”.

9. ‘BUTTERFLY MACHINE SHELL’

‘Butterfly Machine Shell’ is a metamorphosis of myself.

The process of dunking cardboard into purpose-made gesso morphed me into a piece of human architecture. The white monochrome honeycomb structure echoed a flying spaceship and a piece of Moon architecture.

The ‘Flight Path of Butterfly Machine Shell’, which accompanies this piece, emulates a vintage Apple iMac G4 computer screen transmission of the flight path to the Moon, and was my first attempt at describing an animated screen in printed form: ‘Man, Machine and Motion’.⁶

The aesthetic crater-like, white-grey concrete finish and form of Butterfly Machine Shell also made clear the Moon as a metaphor for all that is female.

The Moon has been referred to as a female entity since antiquity. Greek mythology personified the Moon as the goddess, Selene, worshipped for her ability to pull the moon across the sky in her chariot, providing bright light to the dark sky.⁷

The idea for Butterfly Machine Shell was also influenced by Frederick Kiesler’s vision of endless architectural space and the biomorphic design for the Endless House (all ends meet continuously). It is endless like the human body—there is no beginning and no end.

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⁴ TARDIS, 1. The time machine and spacecraft used by the Doctor in the British sci-fi television series Doctor Who, which is larger on the inside than its exterior (that of a British police box) suggests, or any of the conceptually similar time machines used by other members of the Doctor’s race, the Time Lords. https://en.wiktionary.org/wiki/TARDIS
⁷ The British Museum. Selene/Luna, Details. individual; deity; personification/embroider; Roman; Greek; female. Biography. Moon goddess, sometimes associated with Artemis/Diana (q.v.). Use also for personifications of the Moon. britishmuseum.org
“Endless” is rather sensuous and more feminine in contrast to sharp-angled male architecture. All ends meet in the “Endless” as they meet in life. Life’s rhythms are cyclical, through twenty-four hours, a week, and a lifetime. They touch one another with the kiss of time.9

The significance of the colour white (a sense of elevation and transcendence) also refers to Malevich’s White on White, 1918, and to ‘his exhilaration in a manifesto one year later: “I have overcome the lining of the coloured sky… Swim in the white free abyss, infinity is before you.”10

8. ‘SPACE STATION’ (Fig. 1)

This work bridges the gap between planet Earth and outer space. It conveys a conceptual idea of living on the International Space Station (ISS), orbiting Earth.

“I see the ISS as an orbiting habitat with no bricks, an inside-out house” appearing to be without its hard shell.

‘Space Station’ is a large recycled cardboard construction made up of 16 modules reflecting the 16 pressurized modules of the actual ISS. Three moons hover above a group of sunflowers in grid formation. The grid-like dots on the moons and sunflowers refer to the historical plans of ancient cities.

‘Space Station’ was influenced by the architecture of the monastery at La Tourette, a spiritual retreat, Le Corbusier’s final building in Europe (1946). At the request of Father Marie-Alain Courtier, Corbusier “created a silent dwelling for one hundred bodies and one hundred hearts,” built to accommodate the unique and specific lifestyle of the monks.

While making Space Station, the spiritual nature, design, location, and materiality of Le Corbusier’s architecture inspired a personal and profound connection to the Moon.

The two motifs, three moon-like portals and sunflowers, are metaphors. The sunflower is a symbol of human perseverance, a ‘force of nature’ and a mathematical marvel that follows the Fibonacci sequence,11 constructed of atom-like dots representing a moon base for human habitation. The linear dots are both entry and landing pads for spacecraft and windows of ‘living chambers’ on the Moon’s surface.

When finally constructed, Space Station became a shrine to the Apollo landing by Neil Armstrong and Buzz Aldrin (1969), future space exploration, the ISS, and the Moon.

7. ‘ARTEMIS STAGE 1’ (Fig. 2)

‘Artemis Stage 1’ coincided with the acceleration of the new space race in 2019. This work was inspired by China’s space programme to the dark side of the Moon.

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11 How to count the spirals, MO MATH, 2019 https://momath.org/home/fibonacci-numbers-of-sunflower-seed-spirals/
of the Moon, NASA's Christina Koch's record-breaking time in space by a female astronaut, and ‘Artemis 1’—the first in a series of increasingly complex missions to the Moon and Mars.\textsuperscript{12}

All were key motives for creating a metaphorical interpretation of human flight, the Moon as an architectural space, and the enigmatic sense of discovering other worlds.

Human connections were developed through printing numerous screened layers. The images describe a space odyssey exploration, the illusion of being an astronaut, and existential visions of dreamworlds for human habitation.

Making visible the invisible, the bricolage of images becomes a physical experience, creating an existential reality in my mind.

**THE PANDEMIC VOICE**

*Artemis Stage 1* was the metaphorical ‘departure lounge’ from my ‘earthling’ studio.

The onset of the pandemic in 2020 left me without access to printmaking facilities, marking this piece of work as the last traditional print to be made in the studio.

I found dexterity through a digital platform. This method of working had a profound effect on my mindset, “acting like a switch”. I imagined myself as a human robot in control of my laptop, morphing into the Apollo Mission Control Panel at Cape Canaveral. The digital input and output of making gave way to an alter ego: ‘I’ became ‘I, Robot’.\textsuperscript{13}

The digital screen quickly usurped the physical; I was looking through a humanoid visor, viewing the world as a digital entity. “The digital screen felt like I was building with virtual space bricks.”

I found the luminosity of screen colour enticingly ethereal. Digital language allows sensitivity, speed, and versatility, opening new horizons of interpretation and creative thinking. This led to the making of digital prints, GIFs (animated digital images), short videos, and the preparation of ‘digital projection mapping’ for site-specific architectural pieces and even NFTs.

6. ‘MOON CUBE COMPANION’
*(6/5/4/3/2/1 were made during lockdown)*

My digital images were conceived as A3 to A0 in scale. The capacity for enlarging a digital image through software suggested new opportunities for exploring scale on a macro level. In this case, Moon Cube could potentially be realised as a man-made moon on a truly architectural scale.

Metaphors in *Moon Cube Companion* refer to connections to China, and the Chinese Space mission to the dark side of the Moon, as well as their

\textsuperscript{11} How to count the spirals, MO MATH, 2019 https://momath.org/home/fibonacci-numbers-of-sunflower-seed-spirals/
\textsuperscript{12} Artemis 1, NASA, Dunbar, Brian, 18 April 2022. https://www.nasa.gov/artemis-1
ambition to create a man-made moon to illuminate the night sky. The Chinese believe in the universal myth of the rabbit as a companion to the Chinese Princess Chang-e on the Moon.

Further inspiration came from sci-fi, and the Death Star from *Star Wars*, 1977. The Cenotaph for Newton, designed by Etienne-Louis Boullee, 1772, was another. This monumental piece of phantom architecture, a vast masonry sphere projected for ‘Isaac Newton, was illuminated by night by a fire, suspended to represent the sun, while by day it was extinguished to reveal the illusion of the firmament produced by the daylight shining through the spheres perforated walls.15

5. ‘MOON TUZI 01:01’

*Moon Tuzi* shows an architectural section of a surreal house on the Moon.

Inspired by Chinese folklore, Chang-e, Princess of the Moon and Tuzi (the Moon rabbit) prepared the elixir of life for the immortals.

This folktale was referenced during the 1969 Apollo mission, in an exchange between mission control in Houston and Michael Collins, the astronaut who remained in the lunar orbiter, while Neil Armstrong and Buzz Aldrin explored the moon’s surface. ‘Michael Collins: OK, we’ll keep a close eye out for the bunny girl.’16

The mirrored numbers of the house 01:01 refer to the angel number; the numerical value of 01 + 01 = 2 is a symbol of love’s union.

4. ‘MARS TW -1’ (TIANWEN -1)

Tianwen-1 (TW-1) was China’s first robotic interplanetary mission to Mars, launched in July 2020, arriving in orbit around Mars on 10 February 2021.

The spacecraft was named after a 2000-year-old Chinese poem, ‘Pondering on the Stars and Planets’ by Qu Yuan,17 which represents ‘Quest for Heavenly Truth’.

The mission sent an orbiter and a land rover, which touched down on Utopia Planitia, a large plain in the northern hemisphere. NASA’s *Viking* 2 Lander landed there in 1976.

In this work, three columns reach up to Mars, portrayed as circles, in red, referencing *The Red Planet*, and orange to represent iron oxide dust.

The inclusion of black and white images suggests Mars in the past, whereas the brightly coloured repeat macro image of the red planet is an expression of Mars viewed through new technology.

The swan motif is derived from a Chinese tomb pot containing an unknown liquid, celebrating the afterlife, and intends to mirror the

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14 *Star Wars*. Film. Directed by George Lucas. Lucasfilm Ltd. and distributed by 20th Century Fox. 1977.
15 Frampton, Kenneth, Modern architecture, a critical history, part 1 cultural developments and predisposing techniques 1750 to 1939. p. 15, paragraph 2.
3. ‘QUESTIONS TO HEAVEN 1’ (Fig. 3)

**Questions to Heaven:** A space odyssey.

A human story of sentiment, its composition and towering construction pieced together to form a human skyscraper, high enough to touch the heavens.

The kryptonite vision of China's (TW-1) rocket emulates a cathedral spire, making a spiritual connection to the heavens and the planet Krypton. The black-and-white planets show Mars's topography, while the macro-Mars planet provides a clearer topography as architecture.

The iconic asymmetric Bird's Nest, Beijing's National Olympic Stadium, inspired this visual graphic interpretation of Mars as a human-engineered habitat.

Ultimately, the myriad images reflect both human ambition and scientific achievement and the more human motives of life, made and led by humility and the humble heart.

2. ‘NUWA, A MARTIAN ANGEL’ (Fig. 4)

This is a metaphorical angel/shrine to a sustainable megacity on Mars (due to be designed and finished in 2100 by ABIBOO architects).

This image started out as a GIF and references the Egyptian pyramids, and the “tongue-in-cheek- cryptocurrency” Dogecoin. The rotating helicopter blades allude to time and the present, a playful caption of the Ingenuity NASA helicopter flight achieved on Mars in April 2021. The work is also intended as an emblem of hope, symbolizing advances in space flight, technology, and civilization. The gradient screens allude to the contrasting colour visions of the sunsets on Mars and Earth.

The finalised moving image is to be projected onto the surface of water to evoke the hidden lakes recently found beneath the South Pole of Mars. Selected screenshots from The Forbidden Planet have been added, suggesting human existence on another planet.

1. ‘SLEEPING VENUS ON MARS - MONT MERCOU’ (Fig. 5)

This work marks time and space from the recent NASA Perseverance mission to Mars.

NASA's Curiosity rover photographed Mont Mercou and Gale Crater on April 15, 2021. A surreal hologram-like vision of a female flower growing on Mars, its leaves are made up of four ball-shaped images of the planet. The centre of the flower is occupied by Giorgione's *Sleeping Venus*. It represents femininity flourishing within the constraints of Mars, a romantic appropriation of what could be a more peaceful future civilization on Mars (than we currently have on Earth). It is also a

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18 Global Times. 2,000-year-old bronze pot with unknown liquid unearthed in central China Xinhua Published: 2020/5/25 https://www.globaltimes.cn/content/1189401.shtml
24 Sleeping Venus (Dresden Venus), dated 1500, Gemälde Galerie Alte Meister, Dresden, Germany.
satirical contradiction to the publication *Men are from Mars, Women are from Venus*.

**LANDING: REDDER.COM**

“This is **DITTY** calling, ‘Watch the sun go down,’ after a hard day’s work with REDDER.COM.

‘DITTY’ is my new name as a humanoid, another alter-ego, an interactive human-machine-droid, existing inside the shop to facilitate and assist with all your shopping needs at REDDER.COM. It is not unlike CIMON-2, an interactive droid member within the ISS, assisting astronauts in space today.

01. **‘PIE IN THE SKY’** (Fig. 6)

A short MP4 digital animation advertising vegetables on Mars is laid out like a traditional advertising poster. These vegetables have been identified to grow under low light conditions on Mars.

The room intends to project a Utopian vision of Mars, mirroring life on Earth. The vase of chard is an appropriation of an arrangement by the florist and author, Constance Spry. Three pies, shown suspended in deep space, act like planets orbiting in a parallel universe.

The satirical connection within this vegetable and culinary poster lies in the absurdity of planets looking like *Pieminister* pies. Vegetables from Mars made into pies of the future and referencing ‘pie in the sky’ sets out an otherworldly view, to ponder whether human habitation on Mars is possible.

Metaphorical colour sequencing reflects a romantic notion of the meteorological phenomenon of the rainbow, contrasting with brightly flashing coloured Pieminister pies mimicking lights at a discotheque, resulting in the juxtaposition of natural beauty with the manmade.

02. **SEX LIFE DEAD/REVIVE WITH RED @ REDDER.COM** (Fig. 7)

This work is set out as a window display for a shop marketing sex toys. The repeated wallpaper pattern of Cranach’s ‘Adam and Eve’ emphasises mankind and the balance of Yin and Yang set inside an ovoid, symbolising the evolution of the universe and the Big Bang.

This is reimagined through a digital aesthetic and in turn, screen printed with a hologram effect to draw attention to the question ‘some physicists have suggested our reality is like a 3D projection of a two-dimensional universe’.

Three pictures hang on the wallpaper backdrop, and a 3D printed box picturing Eames’s ‘La Chaise’ stands in the foreground as a metaphorical prop.

‘Adam and Eve in Red’ is a larger appropriation of Cranach’s ‘Adam and

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26 A ‘ditty’ is a short or lighthearted song or poem (humorous or written). COBUILD Advanced English Dictionary. Copyright © HarperCollins Publishers.
28 Project CIMON 2, the new astronaut on ISS - YouTube https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=F8BZnY38zQg
31 Pieminister, https://pieminister.co.uk
36 Are we all just living in a holographic universe? Maybe! Mack, Eric. 30 January 2017, cnet.com CNET: Your guide to a better future
Eve’ printed in iron oxide pigment emulating the thin layer of dust covering the entire planet of Mars.

A second print is an appropriation of Constantin Brancusi’s bronze sculpture ‘Princess X’ (Fig. 8). Named after Princess Marie Bonaparte, the original sculpture ‘features a slightly inclined ovoid head and a long neck terminating in a full bust. Tiny ripples at the junction of the head and neck denote hair.’ The sculpture is of phallic appearance, but Brancusi stated his rationale for the sculpture in a newspaper interview in 1920: ‘My statue is of woman, all women rolled into one, ... And my material is so beautiful, with its sinuous lines that shine like pure gold and sum up in a single archetype all the female effigies on Earth.’

The appropriation of this ‘archetypal’ female effigy captured my imagination, particularly within the context of ‘SEX IS DEAD!REVIVE WITH RED’.

‘PRINCESS X ON MARS’ is another shop window prop used as a marketing tool for selling sex toys. This human shrine-like form will be one of many forms (referencing earthly human motives from planet Earth) that will line the shopping aisles on Mars, as 3D printed objects, “to have and to hold @ REDDER.COM.”

‘TOYSXSYOT’ (Fig. 7) references the iconic SpaceX Postmodernist silver Starship, funded by Elon Musk, said to have been inspired by the rocket in the 1950s sci-fi film ‘Moon Destination’.

The landing upright rocket is, of course, a metaphor for the phallus, as well as a feat of engineering and science adding a sublime and satirical context and reference to mankind. This shiny rendition of the Starship is printed in a simple black-and-white half-tone.

Around the border of the Starship are images of various Starship spaceflights, successful and unsuccessful, to mark the perseverance of this human ambition to conquer space, while simultaneously alluding to how successful your love life is. This begs the question, “Who will get there first?” and the satirical DITTY question, “Does your lovemaking need REDDER.COM?”

03. ‘THIS FEELS LIKE PLANET EARTH’

A digital animation also rendered as a triptych, made traditionally as a screen print, for a shop window display.

‘This Feels Like Planet Earth’ reflects Earth’s natural beauty. The classic science-fiction films THX 1138, 1971, Logan’s Run, 1976, Soylent Green, 1973, Silent Running, 1972, and Solaris (Solaris), 1972 are referenced here. Subjectively selected film stills are photographed and overlayed with the first photographs taken of Earth from outer space by the United States spacecraft known as DODGE. The lucid images of science and popular culture are pieced together, intended to highlight the fragility of planet Earth.

38 Journal of Art in Society, The controversies of Constantin Brancusi, Princess X and the boundaries of art, artinsociety.com
My ambition to be an astronaut is an illusion, but one I wish to hold onto. The idea of the real, fused with the romantic, with the real and the fake—all side by side—intends to evoke a melody of illusions. Capturing this dynamic and harnessing the all-powerful energies of opposites gives the imagination full rein.

I am anchored in print not only through familiarity with the medium but also through the desire to reveal the digital algorithms of a machine aesthetic and the power of the graphic image.

REDDER.COM is a surreal architectural space and psychological odyssey, exploring the environmental concepts of ‘This is Tomorrow, an Exhibit and Place.’42 All the cited exhibitions within my research to date. The Mars duty-free shop will be manned by DITTY.

DITTY “This is tomorrow…”
DITTY “Be redder than ever. Where redder than ever is better than ever, make all your redder dreams come true on Mars, today and tomorrow…”

Myself as an astronaut—my name is DITTY—‘This is me; this is you; this is us…’

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Lloyd’s artistic career began at Portsmouth and Winchester Schools of Art where she studied Fine Art Printmaking. She is currently studying a practice led Fine Art Printmaking PhD at Aberystwyth University, Wales. Her PhD study entitled ‘Articulating Space’ explores ongoing aspects of how we perceive space, metaphorically, spiritually and physically. Her interests of ‘outer space’ allow her to explore the parallels between real and imagined space. She describes her space odyssey through the eyes as an astronaut. “My image making is a type of transmission of data from outer space, a relay of metaphorical information.”

The ideas and works of artists’, Robert Rauschenberg, Richard Hamilton and Eduardo Paolozzi are key influential figures in her research as an artist.

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41 National Geographic, ‘Historic Color Portrait of Earth from Space’, Weaver, Kenneth F. p. 726
IMAGE GALLERY

Figure 1: Space Station, Installation

Figure 2: Artemis Stage 1
Figure 3: Questions to Heaven - 1

Figure 4: Nuwa, Martian Angel
Figure 5: Sleeping Venus on Mars - Mont Mercou

Figure 6: Pie in the Sky

Flourish vegetables/dandelions/micro greens/lettuce/arugula/spinach/peas/garlic/kale and onions

PIE-IN-THE-SKY
Figure 7: 3D wall of TOYXSYOT and Adam and Eve

Figure 8: Princess X on Mars