

The Afrofuturist Village

Masiyaleti Mbewe

Under the Future Africa Visions in Time touring exhibition, The Afrofuturist Village by Zambian queer futurist writer, photographer, and activist Masiyaleti Mbewe, is an ongoing exhibition that uses various mediums (text, video, and photography) to examine the different identities, diverse cultures, and languages that might exist in the Afrofuture.

This exhibition focuses on using space as one of the central themes, such as how Black people occupy space, and how we can re-imagine non-monolithic ideas of Blackness in the future. The exhibition also questions why “space is the place” and theorises a future that does not require a Black exodus into outer space, but rather imagines a world that sustains Blackness on this earth.

The Afrofuturist Village establishes how the concept of Afrofuturism can be applied to the African experience. By linking the various histories of African languages, post-colonial narratives, and the desire to reconnect, re-establish and renew, The Afrofuturist Village practically explores theories of space transcendence to promote inclusivity in Afrofuturism.

The exhibition utilises braille for the blind and visually impaired, and sign language interpretations for deaf and hard-of-hearing communities to make the exhibition and its core message more inclusive and accessible to *all* Black people.

Lastly, The Afrofuturist Village is the groundwork for more expansive future exhibitions—The Afrofuturist Town, The Afrofuturist City, and eventually, The Afrofuturist Metropolis.

A selection of images from The Afrofuturist Village

- Title of Work: Asteria
- Shot on a Nikon D7000
- 1/4 (First Edition)
- Year: 2018

Caption: Inclusive Futures

Black people living with disabilities should not be an afterthought when we imagine the future. Asteria represents this future.



- Title of Work: Tove the Guardian
- Shot on a Nikon D7000
- 3/4 (First Edition)
- Year: 2018

Caption: Non-Monolithic Futures

Black people living with albinism, vitiligo, and other skin conditions that affect the production of pigment in Black people are not tokenized or fetishized in the Afrofuture. Tove represents the shift of these perspectives that pigeonhole Blackness as a set of specific things that cannot exist beyond colonial imaginaries. Blackness is diverse.



- Title of Work: Masi and Anxiety
- Shot on a Nikon D7000
- 2/4 (First Edition)
- Year: 2018

Caption: Mental Futures

In the Afrofuture, the re-examination of traditional African rituals is explored to provide healing for Black womxn, men, and non-binary people. Emerging new technologies facilitated by Black innovation are used to treat anxiety, depression, and other mental illnesses.



- Title of Work: Gender on the Moon
- Shot on a Nikon D7000
- 2/4 (First Edition)
- Year: 2018

Caption: Future Genders

All gender identities are celebrated in the Afrofuture; the imagined future is a safe space for all members of the LGBTQAI+ community.



- Title of Work: Diana's Landing
- Shot on a Nikon D7000
- 2/4 (First Edition)
- Year: 2018

Caption: Future Womxnhood

Black womxn are unapologetic; they are protected, they are loved, and they are celebrated.

