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We Talk To Artist-Musician Nahum About The Premiere Of Stories From Home

23 SEPTEMBER, 2022

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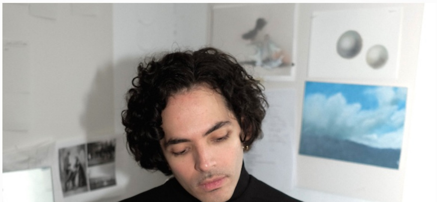
We speak to artist and musician Nahum about one of this year’s Cultural Masseur Festival highlights — the premiere of his project Stories From Home.

Born in Mexico City and currently living in Berlin, Nahum Romero is a **multidisciplinary artist, composer and musician** with work in a wide range of media that includes everything from performance to installation and more. In particular, Nahum is concerned with **art, humanities and space sciences**, and is on a mission to bridge them together through the global space organisation KOSMICA Institute ***(he’s a founding director!)***.

This month, to bring **otherworldly stories from space and beyond to our home planet** *(and home city!)*, the artist has collaborated with Hong Kong record producer-musician-artist duo **Rock Hill Street** ***(Yeung Tung and Marstn)*** for a special audiovisual project: Stories From Home, presented by the Hong Kong Arts Centre as part of the Cultural Masseur Festival.



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Combining **data gathered by satellites** and poetic narratives crafted by **artificial intelligence**, the project promises to let Earth share its stories of recent change — inspiring ecological compassion through this **combination of AI, poetry, visual arts, music and space technology**.

Stories From Home also combines **foreign and local artists**, something Hong Kong has seen little of in the past two years, with musicians Anna Fan on percussion and Scott Murphy on saxophone accompanying the audiovisual concert experience.

Ahead, Nahum delves into space, artificial intelligence, collaborating with Hong Kong talent and cross-disciplinary arts programmes…

Where do you call home?

Earth, always!

Why did you choose to premiere Stories From Home in Hong Kong?

We've been in conversation with the HKAC and Cultural Masseur to do something together for a long time. I shared the idea of this project — that combines artificial intelligence, satellite data and storytelling to give a voice to Earth. Immediately, HKAC decided to **not only support the production of the project** but also to **become part of it**. We've been working on it for over a year — and now it's a reality.

What made you decide to collaborate with Rock Hill Street?

I wanted to **join creative forces with local artists**. I was watching videos of various musicians and Rock Hill Street **immediately caught my eye**. When we spoke, I felt I didn't need to explain much to them as we were instantly in tune with each other. I believe this is a good match!

You work in many mediums — what's your favourite?

My multidisciplinary work orchestrates a wide range of media including performance, installation, video, music, and storytelling. I am too curious to stick to a specific medium and am constantly trying new ones. Yet, amongst them all, the **storytelling aspect has become more and more important in my works** as I grow older as an artist.

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In Stories From Home, we see artificial intelligence-created narratives based on real data gathered by satellites. Can you tell us more about this process and why you chose to present your project through it?

[Stories From Home] emerges from **my concern about the impact of humans on Earth**. We have reduced the planet — a "more than human" world — to just an environment, a backdrop for human drama. With this project, I want to **bring back nature to the forefront; to the heart of our stories**. What if Earth could tell us her stories based on the actual changes that have happened in the last decades?

The project started with **my team of incredibly creative artists and technologists**: Merlin Carter, a writer, artist and creative coder, Giulia Ottavia, a poet and writer, and Viktoria Dergunova, a computer scientist and remote sensing expert. Together, **we developed artificial intelligence that makes sense of years of satellite data** to write these stories. We spent months training the AI so it could write with poetic language.

What was the most surprising finding?

This project [aims] to **understand more about the Earth, through stories and not data**. In principle, I didn't want to make a project about climate change but after observing the data of around 100 different sites in the world, it is **impossible not to see those changes everywhere**. It's not that we were hunting for those climate change stories for the sake of highlighting it, but they are just the **reality of the planet**. To me, reading the resulting stories has been very revealing.

Stories From Home Audio-Visual Concert

When: Friday, 30 September, 8pm, Saturday 1 October, 8pm and Sunday, 2 October, 3pm

Where: Shouson Theatre, 1–3/F, Hong Kong Arts Centre, 2 Harbour Road, Wan Chai, Hong Kong

How Much: $280 – Circle*(3/F)*; $380 – Stall*(1/F)*. Seat selected at random by a computer.

Buy a ticket here.

Stories From Home Exhibition

When: Wednesday, 23 to Tuesday, 29 November

Where: Diana Cheung Experimental Gallery, 3/F, Hong Kong Arts Centre, 2 Harbour Road, Wan Chai, Hong Kong

How Much: Free entry

Hong Kong Arts Centre (HKAC)'s Cultural Masseur Festival*, Hong Kong Arts Centre, 2 Harbour Road, Wan Chai, Hong Kong, 2582 0200, Facebook: 文化按摩師 Cultural Masseur, Instagram: @culturalmasseur, www.culturalmasseur.hk*

Brought to you in partnership with Hong Kong Arts Centre (HKAC).

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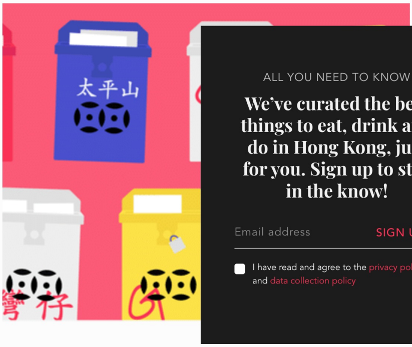
ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Team Sassy

Sassy Hong Kong is your go-to guide to the city that truly never sleeps. From al fresco bars and hole-in-the-wall restaurants, to secret shopping spots and special events, we pound the pavements in search of all the best Hong Kong has to offer. We support a strong community looking to make the most out of life in the buzzing metropolis we call home!



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