



WORLD  
ECONOMIC  
FORUM



Arts and Culture  
Programme  
Annual Meeting  
2025



**“The Intelligent Age holds immense potential for artistic expansion, but it also demands that we fiercely protect what makes human creation so powerful.”**

In an age where artificial intelligence is reshaping every facet of our lives, the very core of what it means to be human – our creativity, imagination and emotional depth – is facing profound challenges. As machines increasingly produce art, music, literature and problem-solving solutions, we must ask: What is the role of human intuition and lived experience in the creative process? How can we navigate the delicate balance between AI’s growing capabilities and the irreplaceable qualities that define human creativity?

The Intelligent Age holds immense potential for artistic expansion, but it also demands that we fiercely protect what makes human creation so powerful. Unlike algorithms, which churn through data to produce results, human creativity springs from a place of vulnerability, identity and experience. It is shaped by the ineffable – the dreams, contradictions and uncertainties that make us who we are. It is in this complexity that we find true connection, empathy and understanding. It is where art transcends technique and becomes a mirror of the human soul.

The arts and culture programme seeks to explore these questions. How do we preserve the intrinsic value of the human touch in a world that prizes efficiency? How can we leverage AI as a tool to amplify, not overshadow, human creativity? And, perhaps most critically, how do we ensure that the arts continue to reflect the most intimate parts of our shared humanity – the struggles, joys, contradictions and aspirations – amid the rise of a technology-driven world?

Through the exhibitions on display, we invite you to explore how technology and human creativity can coexist, not as rivals, but as partners. Each can challenge and elevate the other, creating a space where both the precision of machines and the depth of human experience can thrive. In this way, we protect not only the art itself but also the very values and perspectives that make human creativity an enduring force in a world increasingly dominated by automation.

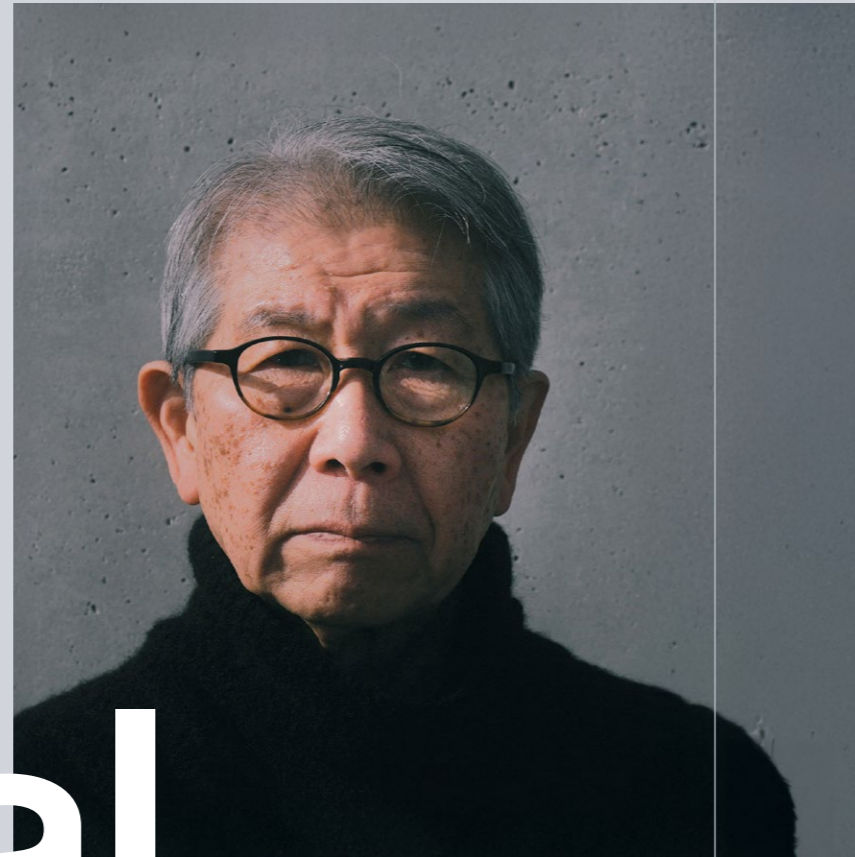
In an era where we are constantly asked to adapt to the next big thing, the arts offer us a vital space to reaffirm the importance of what it means to be human. It is in this delicate balance of the digital and the personal, the calculated and the felt, that we will ensure our humanity remains at the heart of all we create.

**Joseph Fowler**  
Head of Arts and Culture,  
World Economic Forum

(Front cover) Image: The Golden Voyager Designed by Kévin Germanier. Olympic Museum Collection, Lausanne

←  
(Opposite) Image: SPECTRAL by Sougwen Chung

Riken Yamamoto  
Diane von Furstenberg  
David Beckham



# Crystal Awards 2025



**Location:** Plenary Hall, Congress Centre  
**Date & time:** Monday, 20 January, 18.00 – 18.30  
*This is a livestreamed event*

The Crystal Award celebrates extraordinary artists and cultural leaders whose remarkable contributions are transforming the world and embodying the “spirit of Davos”.

As we approach the 31st anniversary of the Crystal Awards in 2025, it’s a moment to reflect on over three decades of inspiring achievements from more than 100 awardees, including musicians, writers, architects, actors, conductors and filmmakers.

At the Annual Meeting 2025 in Davos, we honour three exceptional cultural leaders whose work challenges conventional thinking and inspires visionary perspectives. These cultural leaders ignite our imagination and help us envision a more inclusive, empathetic and sustainable future. Their work transcends boundaries, fostering dialogue and unity across cultures and languages.

On the occasion of the 31st Annual Crystal Award, Hilde Schwab, Chair of the World Arts Forum, will present Crystal Awards to the world-renowned architect Riken Yamamoto, known for his innovative approach to sustainable design and deep commitment to social and environmental responsibility, Diane von Furstenberg, for her unwavering commitment to empowering women, advancing gender equality, and fostering education and economic independence for women around the world, and David Beckham OBE, whose efforts focus on improving the lives of vulnerable children worldwide, especially in areas affected by poverty and conflict.

## Riken Yamamoto

### Architect and Advocate for Sustainability



Riken Yamamoto is honoured with the 2025 Crystal Award for his outstanding contributions to architecture and society. His dedication to community regeneration, groundbreaking work in sustainability and thoughtful design philosophy

have had a significant impact on communities in Japan and beyond. Yamamoto's work influences the future of architectural practice, highlighting its vital role in improving human life and preserving the environment.

His influential designs, including Hotakubo Housing, Saitama Prefectural University, Jian Wai SOHO and the Yokosuka Museum of Art, reflect his belief in architecture as a catalyst for human connection and societal progress. After the 2011 earthquake in Japan, he founded the Local Area Republic Lab to support community regeneration, reinforcing his commitment to architecture as a place for healing.

Yamamoto's achievements were recognized with the Japan Art Academy Prize in 2001 and in 2024 he received the Pritzker Architecture Prize. The Pritzker jury hailed his work as a "contribution to humanity", while Tom Pritzker, Chairman of the Hyatt Foundation, described him as a "world-class philosopher", acknowledging the nuanced, thoughtful nature of his architectural philosophy.

**"Architecture is created by the people of a community and it is essential for the continuity of that community. The responsibility of an architect is to create beautiful architecture together with the people of the community. Architecture has the power to carry the proud memories of the community into the future. It would be my greatest joy to create such architecture. I am honoured to receive the Crystal Award."**

## Diane von Furstenberg

### Fashion designer, Philanthropist and Author



Diane von Furstenberg, the renowned fashion designer, philanthropist and author is receiving the 2025 Crystal Award for her exceptional contributions to empowering women through philanthropy, mentorship and social responsibility. As founder

of her eponymous brand and creator of the iconic wrap dress, she has consistently championed women's independence and strength as a leading voice in the movement for gender equality and women's rights.

Beyond her fashion contributions, Furstenberg is a passionate advocate for women. In 2010, alongside the Diller-von Furstenberg Family Foundation, she created the DVF Awards to recognize, support and amplify the voices of extraordinary women who are dedicated to transforming the lives of other women. Each year, they recognize five honorees with a grant to further their important work.

Furstenberg also serves on the board of Vital Voices Global Partnership, a non-profit organization founded in 1997. A powerful global network of female leaders, its members include more than 20,000 change-makers in 185 countries, all daring to imagine a more equitable future for all. She is also on the board of the Council of Fashion Designers of America (CFDA) after serving as its chairwoman for 13 years.

Her philanthropic work has earned numerous accolades, including the CFDA Lifetime Achievement Award and induction into the National Women's Hall of Fame. She received the Chevalier de la Légion D'Honneur from France in 2020, as well as the Commandeur de l'Ordre de la Couronne from her native Belgium in 2021. In addition to her efforts to empower women, she also spearheaded the fundraising and creation of the new Statue of Liberty museum on New York's Liberty Island.

**"I became a woman in charge because of a simple little dress that embodied confidence. Because it was a dress, I was able to share that confidence with so many women...and that was the beginning of my mission of empowering women."**

## David Beckham

### Football legend, UNICEF Goodwill Ambassador and advocate for children's rights



David Beckham is honoured with the 2025 Crystal Award in recognition of his long-term humanitarian work and unwavering commitment to improving the lives of children worldwide. Through his relentless dedication

to children's education, protection and well-being, Beckham has emerged as a powerful global leader in advocacy for the rights of vulnerable children worldwide, using his platform and resources to create lasting, positive change.

This year Beckham celebrates two decades as a UNICEF Goodwill Ambassador. He has travelled extensively, including to crisis-stricken areas where he has shone a light on the needs of children on the front lines of conflict and crisis. His work extends beyond emergency response; he is a dedicated advocate for young women and adolescent girls, supporting targeted programmes that invest in health, education, rights and gender equality. Through his work with UNICEF he has raised awareness of the importance of immunization and he is a long-time campaigner for malaria prevention.

In 2009, Beckham became a founding member of Malaria No More and has been an ambassador of the UK-based charity ever since. In 2018, he led the award-winning Malaria Must Die campaign, which reached 1 billion people ahead of the Commonwealth Heads of Government Meeting, calling for bold action to lead to a malaria-free world.

His belief in the transformative power of sport as a force for good has led him to support many programmes aimed at young people, driving grassroots initiatives that address issues such as racism, mental health and equal opportunities. His personal commitment to supporting young talent in football led to his contribution to the development of an academy system in US soccer that ensures access and inclusion.

Beckham's legacy as both a world-renowned athlete and a committed ambassador for children's rights exemplifies his profound cultural impact and influence in driving social change. His enduring dedication to improving lives around the world showcases the power of his platform to deliver influence and impact for the greater good, delivering significant global reach and positive outcomes.

**"In my 20 years as a UNICEF Goodwill Ambassador, I've had the privilege of witnessing the outstanding commitment of the organization's ambassadors, staff and supporters in their mission to protect and uplift children globally. As I accept this award, I think of the many individuals who work tirelessly in challenging circumstances to improve children's lives around the world."**

# Opening Concert



**Location:** Plenary Hall, Congress Centre  
**Date & time:** Monday, 20 January, 18.30 – 19.15  
*This is a livestreamed event*

The Opening Concert, titled “Guardians of the Glaciers”, will mark the conclusion of a three-year trilogy dedicated to raising awareness of the climate crisis and the urgent need for environmental action.

At AM23, we focused on the fragile coral ecosystems of the Northern Red Sea, highlighting the devastating impact of rising temperatures on these vital underwater cities. At AM24, we explored the unlikely but critical relationship between the Sahara desert and the Amazon rainforest, emphasizing the need to protect this invaluable ecosystem and the Indigenous peoples who safeguard it.

Now, in alignment with the UN General Assembly’s declaration of 2025 as the International Year of Glacier Preservation, the AM25 Opening Concert will turn its attention to the rapidly melting polar ice caps – an urgent and often overlooked consequence of climate change. The ongoing ice loss in Antarctica, which holds 91% of the world’s glaciers, is not only a local concern but a global crisis, contributing to rising sea levels, shifting weather patterns and accelerating biodiversity loss.

This year’s concert will combine groundbreaking AI-generated visuals, electronic composition, synthetic sounds and classical music, performed by world-class musicians and vocalists. Together, they will bring to life the beauty and fragility of polar landscapes, immersing the audience in the awe-inspiring yet vanishing wilderness of the poles.

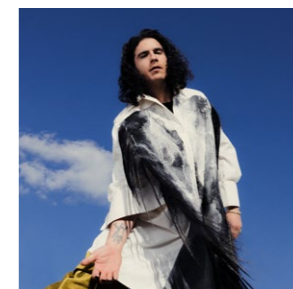
This multi-sensory experience will serve both as a celebration of our planet’s natural wonders and a call to action, urging us to confront the climate challenges head-on and take decisive steps to preservation and restoration.

As a powerful conclusion to the trilogy, the AM25 Opening Concert will reinforce the interconnectedness of Earth’s ecosystems and the need for urgent, coordinated global action. Over the past three years, the Opening Concerts at AM23, AM24 and now AM25 have each illuminated a critical aspect of our natural world – whether coral reefs, rainforests, or glaciers – underscoring the existential threats we face while celebrating the resilience and beauty of nature. These performances have become a platform not only to raise awareness but also to inspire the collective will to reclaim control of our destiny.

←  
(Opposite) Image: Refik Anadol  
Studio, 2024 Studies from Large  
Nature Model : Glacier



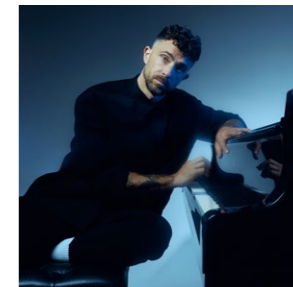
Ane Brun



Jeremy Dutcher



Danielle de Niese



Tim Allhoff



Michael Kamm



# The Music

The opening concert will showcase a groundbreaking fusion of electronic and classical music, with a specially commissioned electronic score seamlessly intertwined with newly commissioned classical compositions and existing works. This unique collaboration creates a rich dynamic soundscape that merges the timeless beauty of live orchestral instruments with the cutting-edge innovation of modern technology.

The combination of electronic elements with classical music amplifies the emotional resonance of the compositions, while introducing immersive, futuristic ambient layers. This synergy

results in an auditory experience that transcends traditional genre boundaries, blending the past with the present and allowing the organic sounds of the orchestra to coexist harmoniously with the synthetic textures of electronic sound.

By combining live, human-driven performances with machine-generated sonic landscapes, this concert redefines the concert-going experience. It reflects the evolving relationship between humanity and technology in the creative arts, offering a bold vision of how the two can collaborate to create something entirely new and captivating.



# The Musicians



A fixture on the German music scene for over two decades, **Tim Allhoff** has released 10 albums as a solo artist and collaborated widely with musicians such as Fatma Said, Lucienne Renaudin-Vary, Jeff Ballard and Robbie Williams. His work spans

various styles and forms, from solo piano to orchestral compositions, and he has composed for renowned artists such as Rachel Portman, Anastasia Kobekina and the NDR Radiophilharmonie.

Allhoff has received numerous accolades, including the prestigious German ECHO award and a nomination for the Deutsche Musikautorenpreis. As a sought-after accompanist, composer and arranger, he has contributed to a diverse range of projects. In February 2025, he will release his tenth album, a collection of works by J. S. Bach, marking his first purely classical recording.

A Steinway Artist and official ambassador for Boston Pianos, Allhoff has worked with a wide array of partners, including major ensembles such as the Orchestre de chambre de Paris and Konzerthausorchester Berlin, as well as the Warner Classics and Sony Classical labels.



**Michael Kamm** is a renowned German film composer celebrated for his emotive, genre-defying scores. With decades of experience, he has become a prominent composer in the German film industry, known for his masterful blend of orchestral

and electronic textures that amplify the emotional depth of the stories he shapes.

After studying music and composition, Kamm transitioned to film scores, quickly gaining recognition for his immersive soundtracks. His work spans a wide array of films and TV series, including high-profile projects for Netflix, Sky and Riverstone Pictures, often in collaboration with top directors such as Baran Bo Oda.

Kamm's distinctive style combines traditional orchestration with modern electronic elements, creating dynamic, atmospheric scores that enhance both the mood and narrative of a production. His versatility across genres, from thrillers to dramas, has made him a sought-after composer in both German and international cinema.



**The Morphing Chamber Orchestra**, based in Vienna, has established itself as a world class orchestra performing at leading concert halls and collaborating with internationally recognized artists and institutions that include Roberto Alagna, Aleksandra Kurzak, Renée Fleming, Andreas Scholl, Bobby McFerrin, composer Arvo Pärt, the Metropolitan Opera New York and the Sony Classical label.

Founded in 2006 by artistic director and violinist Tomasz Wabnic, The Morphing Chamber Orchestra has stayed true to the philosophy of ensemble playing. Its players are young, diverse and award-winning artists from around the world. Their outstanding qualities are paired with an acute sense of style which enables them to excel in a range of genres making them one of the most sought-after concert orchestras.

← (Opposite) Image: Refik Anadol Studio, 2024 Studies from Large Nature Model : Glacier

# Refik Anadol The Visuals



Refik Anadol's large-scale, AI-driven digital art represents a groundbreaking convergence of AI, data and environmental awareness. Harnessing the power of AI and real-time data analytics, Anadol transforms complex climate data – such as temperature

shifts, glacial retreat and ecosystem changes – into dynamic, immersive visual narratives. These data-driven artworks create a visceral connection to the climate crisis, making abstract environmental issues more tangible and emotionally compelling.

Commissioned by the World Economic Forum, this AI-generated piece enhances the opening concert by amplifying the urgency and emotional resonance of the musical compositions. As the visual artwork unfolds, it interprets and mirrors the environmental themes embedded in the music, forging a powerful synergy between sound and data.

The immersive nature of the artwork invites us to experience the environmental crisis not as distant statistics, but as a visceral, living force. This visual and sonic harmony magnifies the impact of the opening concert, creating a powerful narrative that underscores the gravity of climate change and the immediate need for action. Through the union of music and visual art, both forms come together to tell a compelling story of urgency, hope and the fragile beauty of our world.

By harnessing the transformative power of AI as a creative tool, Anadol invites us to reimagine the role of art in driving environmental awareness and inspiring collective action. His work goes beyond traditional art forms, using technology to not only represent but also actively shape our understanding of the natural world. Through his innovative approach, Anadol presents a vision of art that encourages reflection, fosters connection, and offers hope. His creations provide a powerful reminder of the potential for technology to spark meaningful change in the face of the climate crisis.

↑ Image: Refik Anadol Studio, 2024  
Studies from Large Nature Model : Glacier

→ (Opposite) Images: Original designs by Kévin Germanier

# Kévin Germanier The Costumes

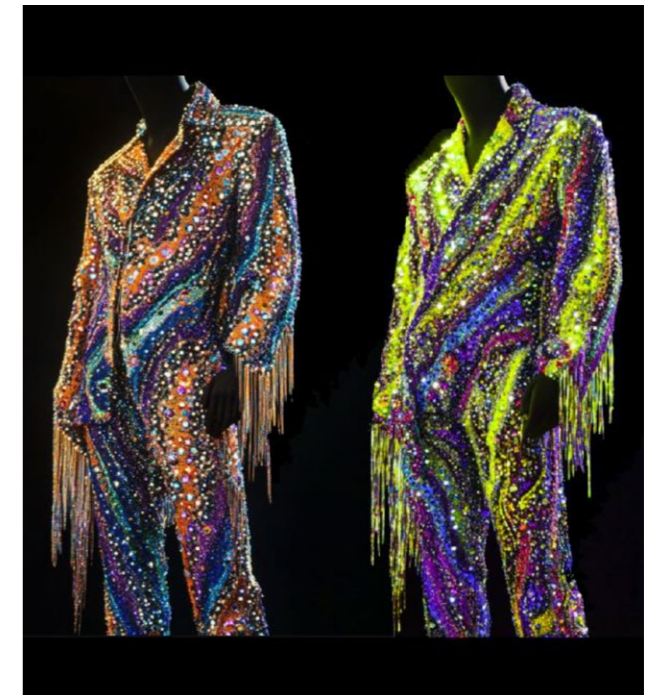


For the opening concert, Swiss fashion visionary Kévin Germanier has designed two breathtaking outfits for featured artists Ane Brun and Danielle de Niese, showcasing the immense talent and creativity that have made him a trailblazer in sustainable fashion. Drawing

inspiration from the beauty of the Northern Lights and the stark, icy landscapes of Antarctica, Germanier's designs are a striking fusion of nature's awe-inspiring colours and textures.

His creations for Brun and de Niese are not only a visual feast but also a powerful commentary on the urgency of environmental consciousness in fashion. Both made entirely from upcycled and recycled materials, these designs redefine the boundaries of what is possible with upcycled materials. Germanier's work pushes the limits of design, offering a bold vision for the future of fashion, where beauty and sustainability are inseparable.

Danielle de Niese and Ane Brun are dressed by Kévin Germanier. Jeremy Dutcher is dressed by Caroline Monnet.



→ (Opposite) Images: Original designs by Kévin Germanier

↓  
The creative hands of Swiss  
fashion designer Kévin Germanier



↓  
Artist & Researcher  
Sougwen Chung



←  
Cristina Mittermeier  
aboard Sealegacy

↓  
Fibre Artist Gary Tyler



←  
Swiss fashion designer Kévin  
Germanier.



↑  
Community creative  
workshops led by artists Jann  
Haworth and Liberty Blake



# Exhibitions

## The Art of Being Human: Creativity's Role in the Intelligent Age

As technology reshapes industries and artistic expression, the role of artists is not only to produce but also to curate, question and give meaning. Preserving traditional crafts and human-driven creativity is essential to maintaining cultural heritage and ensuring a future that balances technology with human ingenuity.

The exhibitions on display place a spotlight on social justice, gender equity, environmental activism and the boundless potential of human-machine collaboration and creativity.

↑  
Image: The Golden Voyager. Designed  
by Kévin Germanier. Olympic Museum  
Collection, Lausanne

## Work in Progress Why wait 134 years to close the gender gap?

Technology is racing ahead but the fight for gender equity is stuck in slow motion. The stark disparity in investment between tech research and development and initiatives for gender equity reveals a systemic undervaluation of diverse perspectives. While billions flow into advancing technology, efforts to ensure equal opportunities for women and marginalized groups lag far behind, perpetuating a cycle of inequality that stifles innovation and limits the potential of society.

The Global Gender Gap Report 2024 suggests that, at the current rate, it could take 134 years to close the gender gap – a timeline that starkly contrasts with technological innovation.

↓  
Image: Work in Progress

The Work in Progress Mural, co-created by pop artist Jann Haworth and collage artist Liberty Blake, is a vibrant celebration of the countless contributions women have made to cultural development worldwide.

This World Economic Forum commissioned work features eight panels showcasing 150 remarkable women, historical and contemporary, who have propelled gender equity forward, both in the spotlight and behind the scenes.

This artwork highlights both the remarkable achievements of women and the ongoing work required to achieve true gender equity, urging a critical examination of resource allocation. Investing in gender equity is not only a moral imperative but also essential for creating a more inclusive and dynamic future where all voices contribute to technological progress.





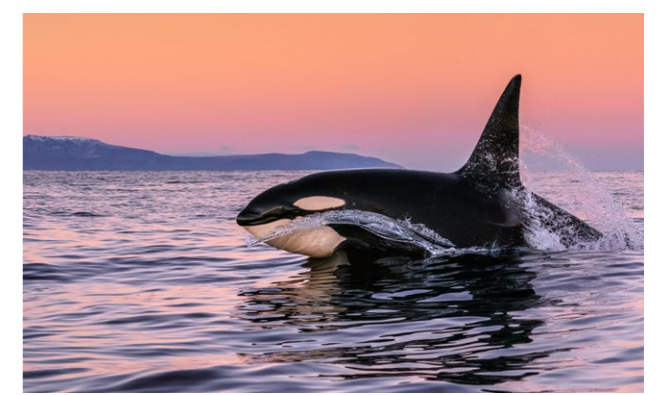
## HOPE

### Can hope change the world?

Human beings have an inherent need to connect with nature, which nurtures our physical and emotional well-being. However, as technology increasingly distracts us and pulls us away from the natural world, the urgency to protect the environment becomes ever more pressing.

Through a series of captivating images and personal narratives, from a journey spanning over 120 countries and every continent, Cristina Mittermeier, visionary photographer, marine biologist and avid conservationist, navigates the intricate relationship between humans and nature in her immersive exhibition, HOPE.

Commissioned by the World Economic Forum, HOPE is a powerful counter-narrative to hyper-consumerism and environmental exploitation. Showcasing global unity in environmental stewardship, it reminds us that we all are part of the same humanity and that, despite everything that separates and divides us, we have, deep within us, the desire for interaction, peace and harmony.



↑  
Images: Cristina Mittermeier

## SPECTRAL

### How does AI and robotics transform our understanding of creativity?

The human-machine collaboration has become a transformative force in creative, scientific and industrial fields. Machines, particularly through AI and advanced algorithms, enhance human capabilities by processing vast amounts of data, identifying patterns and generating ideas that can inspire new forms of creativity. Extending beyond mere tools; machines are now co-creators, assisting in art, music, design, and problem-solving.

Sougwen Chung's art installation, SPECTRAL, pushes the boundaries of art and technology and is an examination of the convergence of human creativity, AI and machine collaboration.

In this groundbreaking work, Chinese Canadian artist Sougwen Chung harnesses custom robotic units intricately connected to her brainwaves through an AI-driven programme she has developed. The installation

transforms her biofeedback into a dynamic canvas, utilizing an electroencephalogram (EEG) headset to measure and analyse her brain activity. This innovative process enables machines to create alternative marks, positioning Chung as a conduit for artistic expression.

Through the synergy of multi-robotic kinematics and biosensors, SPECTRAL delves into states of meditation, where the biosensors become vital connections that channel diverse expressions through a unified robotic system.

SPECTRAL challenges the conventional notion of drawing as a purely human endeavour, inviting us to explore the fascinating interplay between human intention and machine creativity. Not only does this artwork redefine artistic mark-making but also it inspires a deeper understanding of collaboration between humans and technology, opening new frontiers in the creative landscape.



↑  
Images: SPECTRAL  
by Sougwen Chung

## A Life Interrupted

### Can art set us free?



As we move further into a digital age, handcrafted art serves as a reminder of the value of human intuition, craftsmanship and the stories that only a human artist can tell, making it essential in preserving the authenticity of artistic expression.

A Life Interrupted is an exhibition by Gary Tyler, 2024 Frieze Los Angeles Impact Prize recipient, and delves deeply into social justice, addressing the systemic inequities that permeate society.

Tyler's work is at once simple and complex. The time-honoured craft of quilting combines intricate design, personal storytelling and tactile artistry, reflecting both tradition and innovation.

Through his use of mixed media, symbolic visuals and thought-provoking narratives, this exhibition serves as a catalyst for reflection and dialogue, asking fundamental questions. How do we address the legacies of injustice? What does true equality look like? And, most importantly, how can art be a vehicle for change in the pursuit of social justice?



↑  
Images: Gary Tyler

## The Golden Voyager

### How can sustainable fashion redefine our cultural legacy and responsibility?

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Swiss fashion designer Kévin Germanier is revolutionizing sustainable fashion with his innovative approach and commitment to the environment. His latest milestone? Designing over 120 costumes for the Paris Olympic Games, including the striking Golden Voyager – a tribute to NASA's iconic Golden Record, crafted entirely from upcycled materials.

Launched in 1977, the Golden Record serves as humanity's message to potential extraterrestrial life, showcasing the rich diversity of our culture through sounds and images. While it may never reach alien audiences, its impact is profound. It acts as a cultural archive and an ethical reminder of our responsibilities as caretakers of the planet, inspiring us to reflect on our shared human experience and aspirations.

Germanier's Golden Voyager captures this spirit beautifully, challenging us to consider the stories we tell and the legacies we create. His work inspires a vision of a sustainable future, urging us to dream bigger and innovate with respect for our planet.

The Golden Record also inspires modern initiatives such as the Arch Mission Foundation's "Lunar Library", which seeks to preserve human culture for future generations. In a rapidly changing digital landscape, it stands as a timeless snapshot of humanity, prompting us to reflect on what we value and wish to share.

Germanier exemplifies the potential of sustainable fashion while reaffirming our quest for exploration and connection. His work reminds us that the journeys we undertake and the stories we share resonate across time and space, forging bonds that transcend boundaries.

The Intelligent Age offers vast potential for artistic expansion, but it also requires a vigilant defence of the qualities that make human creation profound. Unlike algorithms, which calculate outcomes based on data, human creativity emerges from a place of vulnerability, identity and lived experience. It draws from the ineffable, the dreams, contradictions and uncertainties that shape us. It is through this complexity that we find connection, empathy and deeper understanding.

*The Golden Voyager is presented in collaboration with the Olympic Museum, Lausanne – Switzerland*



Image: The Golden Voyager.  
Designed by Kévin Germanier.  
Olympic Museum Collection,  
Lausanne



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# The Cultural Table



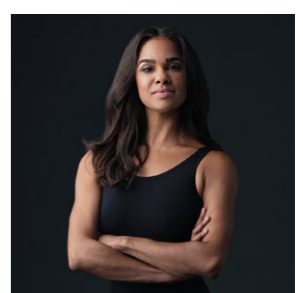
Launched in September 2023, The Cultural Table is a pioneering initiative that unites thought leaders, entrepreneurs, business executives and cultural leaders in dynamic, curated dialogues. Each Cultural Table is centred on a specific theme, guided by cultural figures who lead conversations that explore the transformative power of the arts in driving socio-economic progress, societal evolution and global change.

The Cultural Table provides an invaluable opportunity for business leaders and cultural pioneers to forge new relationships, with the goal of creating innovative partnerships that bridge the cultural and business sectors. It is a space where boundaries between industries dissolve and where art and culture become integral to reshaping the future. In these intimate gatherings, new forms of collaboration emerge – collaborations that have the potential to unlock creative solutions to some of the world's most pressing challenges.

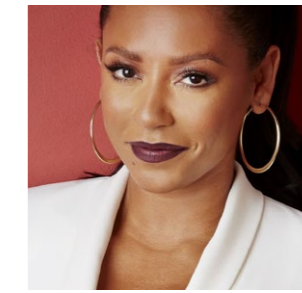
The Cultural Table at Davos, titled, Art Can Change the World, will explore the profound ability of art to challenge conventional thinking, ignite dialogue and catalyse social impact. Cultural leaders will guide us through the complexities of the Intelligent Age, offering a unique blend of empathy, creativity and a deep understanding of humanity's role in shaping the future. Through their work – as creators, curators and thought leaders – they provide fresh perspectives, transformative ideas and values that inspire us to reimagine our collective potential

The Cultural Table is more than just a gathering, it is a transformative experience that nurtures discovery, fosters collaboration and redefines the possibilities that arise when culture and business intersect. In a world where art can change individuals, individuals have the power to change the world.

### Featured speakers at The Cultural Table 2025



Misty Copeland



Melanie Brown



Tom Daley



Mohammed Saeed Harib



Cristina Mittermeier

# Meet the Cultural Leaders 2025

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Cultural leaders are true bridge-builders, connecting us in profound ways. They invite us to reflect on the human experience and they challenge us to envision a world beyond the confines of short-term thinking.

Their work empowers us to navigate the complexities of our time, illuminating the divides that separate us while fostering understanding, cooperation and unity.

Through music, visual art, literature, dance and the spoken word, these leaders energize society, translating experiences across space and time. They inspire us to reconsider our perspectives and explore new possibilities. By blending imagination with reality, they reshape the way we think and live, igniting solidarity, empathy and a drive for positive change.

Let us celebrate and support these visionary voices that inspire us to dream bigger and unite for a brighter future.



# Meet the Cultural Leaders 2025

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**Refik Anadol** is a visionary media artist and pioneer in data-driven art, redefining our perception of the world through innovative uses of AI and immersive technology. His stunning installations transform complex datasets into mesmerizing visual

narratives, inviting audiences to engage with the unseen forces shaping our environment.

A graduate of UCLA's Department of Design Media Arts, Anadol has collaborated with esteemed institutions such as the Museum of Modern Art and the Walt Disney Concert Hall. His groundbreaking projects not only earn critical acclaim but also spark essential conversations at the intersection of technology, art and society.

With a deep belief in the power of art to drive social change, Anadol's work exemplifies creativity's transformative potential. He is reshaping contemporary art and paving the way for a more interconnected and imaginative future.



**Liberty Blake** studied Foundation Art and Illustration at Sydney Place Foundation and Bath Academy of Art, later focusing on painting at WSCAD. In 1997, she relocated to Utah, where she co-directed the Art Shack at Sundance, teaching, exhibiting and producing graphic

design for the resort. It was during this period that she created her first wilderness-inspired abstract collages.

Blake's work is included in private collections across the United States, Europe and Canada. Her latest collection addresses the impact of wildfires, highlighting their increasing severity and threat.



**Jann Haworth** is a pioneering artist from the original 1960s Pop Art movement, celebrated for her advocacy of female representation in the art world. Utilizing innovative mediums, she reimagines contemporary craft and culture.

Her highly sought-after work has garnered global attention, with new pieces regularly showcased worldwide and her early creations featured in significant Pop Art retrospectives. Haworth's impact is profound. She has made substantial contributions to the Pop Art movement, developed a remarkable body of work over four decades, and has steadfastly championed the right to equal recognition for women in art.



(Opposite) Image: The Golden Voyager.  
Designed by Kévin Germanier. Olympic  
Museum Collection, Lausanne

## Meet the Cultural Leaders 2025



**Melanie Brown MBE**, aka Mel B, is a globally renowned entertainer, best known as Scary Spice of the Spice Girls. As part of the world's most successful girl band, she helped define the 1990s pop scene, selling 85 million records and creating the Girl Power movement.

After the band's split, she forged a successful career as a TV host, a judge on shows like America's Got Talent and The X Factor. She has also performed on Broadway in the hit musicals Chicago and Rent.

Beyond entertainment, Brown became a fierce advocate for survivors of abuse after publishing her best-selling memoir, *Brutally Honest*. In 2018, she was named Patron of Women's Aid and has since spoken out globally on issues of emotional abuse, becoming a powerful voice for vulnerable women. She was awarded an MBE by the late Queen Elizabeth II in 2022 for her services to women's rights. Her story of resilience – from pop stardom to overcoming personal trauma – continues to inspire millions.



**Kévin Germanier**, a Swiss fashion designer celebrated for his sustainable approach, has transitioned from a Central Saint Martins student to a Louis Vuitton junior designer, and now to CEO of his own brand, Germanier.

Since launching his label in collaboration with MatchesFashion two years ago, Germanier has created a futuristic utopia through his collections, which have been worn by the likes of Beyoncé, Lady Gaga, Taylor Swift, Kristen Stewart, Björk and Sunmi.

In 2020, he was named to Forbes' 30 Under 30 list in Europe – Arts and Culture and was a semi-finalist for the LVMH Prize in 2019, as well as a participant in the ANDAM Prize in 2018.

In 2024, he showcased his work at the World Economic Forum's Annual Meeting of the New Champions in Dalian, China, discussing the future of eco-friendly fashion and the potential of using waste materials and defective fabrics.

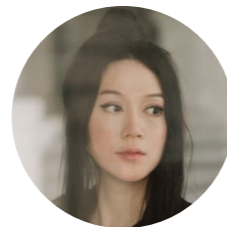
Germanier is a globally respected designer, championing circular fashion and ethical practices. With upcycling at the core of his brand, he provides a vision for the future of fashion that emphasizes sustainability and innovation.



**Cristina Mittermeier** is a visionary photographer, marine biologist and conservationist, recognized as one of the most influential conservation photographers of our time. Her work lies at the intersection of art, science and environmental advocacy, driven by a mission to

protect and rewild the ocean for the benefit of biodiversity, humanity and climate.

Mittermeier's photography has been featured in numerous prestigious publications, including National Geographic, TIME and McLean's. In 2018, she was honoured as one of National Geographic's Adventurers of the Year. In 2021 she appeared in the Disney+ *Welcome to Earth*.



**Sougwen 愷君 Chung** is a Chinese-Canadian artist and researcher, widely considered a pioneer in human-machine collaboration, who explores the mark-made-by-hand and the mark-made-by-machine as an approach to understanding the

dynamics of humans and systems. Her work MEMORY is part of the permanent collection of the Victoria and Albert Museum and is the first AI model to be collected by a major institution.

Recently, Sougwen Chung was recognized as one of four recipients of the TIME100 Impact award and named one of TIME's 100 Most Influential People in AI.

She has exhibited internationally at the Espoo Museum of Modern Art, Espoo; Vancouver Art Gallery, Vancouver; Art Basel, Miami; National Art Center, Tokyo; NTT InterCommunication Center [ICC], Tokyo, Japan; ArtScience Museum, Singapore; MIT Media Lab, Cambridge; The Drawing Center, New York; The New Museum, New York; Museum of Contemporary Art, Geneva; Mana Contemporary, New York, Tribeca Film Festival, New York; The Hospital Club, London; Mutek Festival, Montreal & Mexico City; Sonar Festival, Barcelona.

## Meet the Cultural Leaders 2025



**Harvey Mason Jr** is CEO of the Recording Academy as well as a songwriter, music and movie producer and founder of Harvey Mason Media.

Under his leadership, the Recording Academy has undergone significant transformations, including diversifying its membership, making the Grammy Awards more transparent and inclusive and expanding its role as a service organization for music creators. Mason has also played a key role in restructuring the organization for global growth. As CEO, he collaborates closely with the academy's Board of Trustees and senior management team, as well as serving as CEO of MusiCares and being involved with various music-related boards and foundations.

During his tenure, Mason achieved notable milestones, such as establishing the Songwriters & Composers Wing and the Black Music Collective, hiring the Recording Academy's first chief diversity, equity and inclusion officer, advocating for creator's rights in Washington DC, and overseeing MusiCares COVID-19 Relief's distribution of over \$30 million to music creators.

In his creative endeavours, Mason has written and produced songs for industry legends and today's biggest superstars. Everyone from Whitney Houston to Beyoncé, Elton John to Justin Timberlake, Aretha Franklin to Ariana Grande, Britney Spears to Mariah Carey, Luther Vandross to Justin Bieber, and Michael Jackson to Chris Brown have called on Mason to deliver musical hit records. Simultaneously, he has been instrumental in producing memorable music for many of the biggest musical films and TV events from the past decade. His work in films includes Bob Marley: One Love, Dreamgirls, the Pitch Perfect franchise, Respect, Shrek, SING, SING 2, Sparkle, and Straight Outta Compton. TV shows including The Wiz Live! and Jesus Christ Superstar Live In Concert also counted on his musical talent and taste.

Mason is also recognized for his philanthropic efforts, having received the Spirit of Excellence Award from the T.J. Martell Foundation and being involved with the Ronald McDonald House, the American Cancer Society and Los Angeles Children's Hospital.



**Yana Peel** is a visionary entrepreneur, cultural leader and advocate for innovation in the arts. As Co-founder and CEO of the groundbreaking platform Outset Contemporary Art Fund, she has redefined how art and philanthropy intersect, enabling creative projects

that push boundaries and spark dialogue across cultures.

With a deep commitment to social change, Peel has championed initiatives that empower artists and communities globally. Her work focuses on leveraging the transformative power of art to address pressing social issues, from climate change to human rights, making her a leading voice in the movement for cultural equity.

Peel's entrepreneurial spirit shines through her diverse ventures, including her role as a partner at the acclaimed tech company Artory, which uses blockchain technology to promote transparency and authenticity in the art market. She is also a passionate advocate for diversity and inclusion within the arts, believing that creativity thrives in environments that celebrate varied perspectives.

Through her dynamic leadership and unwavering dedication, Peel continues to inspire a new generation of artists and innovators, proving that art can be a catalyst for meaningful change. Her vision fosters a future where creativity knows no bounds and is accessible to all.

## Meet the Cultural Leaders 2025



**Gary Tyler** is a fibre artist based in Los Angeles, California, who has spent over 40 years at the intersection of art and social justice. He taught himself to quilt to support the Angola Prison Hospice programme, where he volunteered, and served for 30 years as

President of the Angola Prison drama programme, fostering community, civic responsibility and optimism.

At 16, Tyler was sentenced to death for a crime he didn't commit, leading to his 42-year imprisonment at Angola State Penitentiary in Louisiana. His case sparked international outrage. Despite the injustice he faced, his art has become a powerful source of hope.

Now residing in Los Angeles, Tyler dedicates his life to the visual and dramatic arts, using them to build community and heal the wounds of mass incarceration. He is a recipient of the Art Matters Award in 2019 and 2020, and his work is included in the Smithsonian National Museum of African American History and Culture. In 2024, he received an honorary Doctor of Fine Arts degree from the Massachusetts College of Art & Design, along with the Frieze Los Angeles Impact Prize, recognizing his significant contributions to society through art.



**Tom Daley** is the world's biggest name in diving and one of Great Britain's most successful sportspeople of all time.

Becoming European Champion by winning his first diving gold at the age of 13, the youngest person to ever do so, Daley went on to win five Olympic medals in five Olympics, representing Team GB at the 2008, 2012, 2016, 2020 and most recently the 2024 Paris Games.

When Daley won his first gold at Tokyo 2020, images of him knitting poolside circulated the globe, with his dedicated knitting Instagram account, @Madewithlovebytomdaley gaining 1 million followers overnight. Dubbed the "Tom Daley effect" by The Guardian, all eyes were on what he would knit at Paris 2024 as he brings a whole new audience to the craft.

An LGBTQ+ activist, Daley has used his platform to propel the conversation on LGBTQ+ rights. From fundraising initiatives for LGBTQ+ charities to wearing Pride badges as he stepped on to the podium in countries where it's illegal to be gay, the Commonwealth Games in 2022 saw Daley appeal to the Commonwealth Heads of Governments to better their LGBTQ+ laws by carrying a Progress Pride flag in the opening ceremony.

Daley is a multi-Sunday Times best-selling author, founder of knitting brand bytomdaley.com, three-time BBC Young Sports Personality of the Year winner and an OBE recipient.

## Meet the Cultural Leaders 2025



**Misty Copeland** is a groundbreaking ballet dancer and a powerful advocate for diversity in the arts, renowned for her trailblazing achievements in a traditionally exclusive field. As the first African American woman principal dancer for the prestigious

American Ballet Theatre, she has shattered barriers and redefined the narrative of ballet, inspiring countless aspiring dancers around the world.

Copeland is also a passionate advocate for arts education and inclusion. She founded the Misty Copeland Foundation, dedicated to providing access and resources for underserved youth to pursue their dreams in dance and the arts. Through workshops, mentorship and scholarships, her foundation empowers the next generation of artists to thrive and express themselves.

Copeland's influence extends beyond the stage; she is a bestselling author and motivational speaker, sharing her story of perseverance and resilience in her memoir, *Life in Motion*. Her journey from a challenging childhood to the pinnacle of the ballet world, is a beacon of hope, illustrating the power of determination and self-belief.

With her dynamic spirit and unwavering dedication, Copeland continues to inspire change and promote diversity within the arts, reminding us that talent knows no boundaries. Her legacy is not only in her artistry but also in her commitment to creating a more inclusive and equitable future for all.



**Mohammed Saeed Harib** is a visionary filmmaker, animator and storyteller whose creative prowess has captivated audiences worldwide. As the creator of the groundbreaking animated series, *Freej*, he has brought Arabic culture and storytelling to the forefront

of the animation industry, combining humour with rich narratives that resonate deeply with viewers of all ages.

With a passion for innovation, Harib founded UAE-based production company Lammtara, which has become a beacon for creative talent in the Middle East. His work not only entertains but also educates, fostering a greater understanding of Arab heritage and identity in a global context. Harib is dedicated to empowering the next generation of artists and animators, often mentoring young creatives and advocating for the importance of animation as a medium for cultural expression.

Beyond his contributions to film and animation, Harib is a vocal advocate for the arts, promoting the role of creativity in social development and cultural dialogue. His projects often tackle important social issues, encouraging discussions on community, identity and the power of storytelling.

With his dynamic vision and relentless drive, Harib continues to inspire and uplift through his work, paving the way for a new era of animation that celebrates diversity and creativity in the Arab world and beyond.



**Sharmeen Obaid-Chinoy** is a two-time Academy Award-winning filmmaker whose films have impacted legislative change. Since 2001, she has made over two dozen multi-award-winning films in over 16 countries. In 2022, she infused her signature style and the

verisimilitude she brings to her non-fiction projects to her narrative directorial debut for Marvel's critically acclaimed series, Ms. Marvel. The New York Times included her episodes in its annual "Best Episodes of TV" list, calling them "ingenious and surprisingly moving".

More recently, it was announced that Obaid-Chinoy will direct a Star Wars feature starring Daisy Ridley. She will also direct Paramount's Brilliance, based on the Marcus Sakey novel of the same name.

Obaid-Chinoy is also the recipient of Four Emmy Awards, a Knight International Journalism Award, two The Alfred I. duPont awards, The Robert F. Kennedy Journalism Award and the Tällberg/Eliasson Global Leadership Prize. She was named one of Time Magazine's 100 most influential people in the world and in 2013, the Canadian government awarded her a Queen Elizabeth II Diamond Jubilee Medal for her work in documentary films and the World Economic Forum honoured her with a Crystal Award at the Annual Meeting in Davos.

At the helm of SOC Films, a film and animation production company, Obaid-Chinoy continues her mission to further social consciousness and bring about meaningful legislative and societal change.

#### Crystal Award recipient 2013



**Andrea Bocelli** is a world-renowned Italian tenor and crossover artist, celebrated for his powerful voice and emotive performances. Bocelli has overcome significant challenges, including a severe football injury that led to temporary blindness.

Despite these obstacles, he has risen to international fame with albums that blend classical and popular genres.

In addition to his musical achievements, Bocelli is deeply committed to philanthropy through the Andrea Bocelli Foundation. Established in 2011, the foundation focuses on supporting vulnerable individuals, promoting education and improving access to healthcare. Through various initiatives and partnerships, the foundation aims to create opportunities for those in need, demonstrating Bocelli's dedication to making a positive impact in the world.

#### Crystal Award recipient 2015



**Deborah Rutter** is a distinguished arts administrator and advocate, best known for her role as President of the John F. Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts in Washington DC. Appointed in 2015, she has been instrumental in advancing the centre's mission

to promote and support the performing arts, fostering a diverse and inclusive cultural landscape.

Rutter began her career in the arts as an accomplished cellist before transitioning to leadership roles, including serving as CEO of the Chicago Symphony Orchestra. Her innovative programming and commitment to community engagement have earned her accolades within the arts community. With a focus on education, accessibility and artistic excellence, Rutter continues to inspire audiences and support artists across disciplines.

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(Opposite) Image credit:  
Matterhorn : Frozen Peak,  
Zermatt 2017 by Thomas Crauwels



## Meet the Cultural Leaders 2025



**Hans Ulrich Obrist** is a renowned Swiss curator, art historian and writer, celebrated for his innovative approach to contemporary art. He is a key figure in the global art scene, currently serving as Artistic Director at the Serpentine Galleries in London.

Known for his dynamic exhibitions and engaging public dialogues, he has collaborated with a diverse array of artists and thinkers, emphasizing the importance of interdisciplinary dialogue in the art world. Obrist is also recognized for his extensive interviews with artists, which have been compiled into influential publications. His commitment to curatorial experimentation and cultural exchange continues to shape the future of contemporary art.



**George Osborne** is a prominent figure in the cultural landscape of the UK, currently serving as Chair of the British Museum. Appointed in 2021, he has brought a wealth of experience from his previous roles as Chancellor of the Exchequer and as a Member of Parliament.

At the British Museum, Osborne has focused on enhancing the institution's accessibility and engagement with diverse audiences, championing initiatives that promote inclusivity and education.

Under his leadership, the museum has sought to expand its global outreach and digital presence, ensuring that its vast collections resonate with contemporary issues. Osborne's vision emphasizes the importance of cultural heritage in fostering understanding and dialogue in a rapidly changing world. His commitment to the arts and heritage reflects his belief in their vital role in society, making him a key player in shaping the future of one of the world's most esteemed cultural institutions.

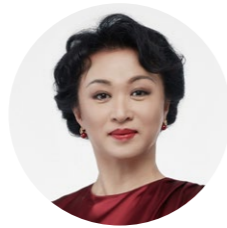


**Anant Singh** is an acclaimed filmmaker known for his compelling storytelling and deep commitment to social justice. With a career spanning over a decade, Singh has directed and produced a variety of films that shine a light on pressing societal issues, including poverty,

education and environmental sustainability. His work not only entertains but also inspires audiences to engage with critical challenges facing their communities.

Beyond filmmaking, Singh is an ardent advocate for marginalized voices, often collaborating with grassroots organizations to amplify their stories. His passion for social advocacy is evident in his documentaries and narrative films, which challenge viewers to rethink their perspectives and take action for change. Through his art, Singh continues to be a powerful force for good, using the medium of film as a catalyst for awareness and transformation.

**Crystal Award recipient 2001**



**Jin Xing** is a renowned Chinese ballerina, actress and transgender activist who has made significant strides in advocating for LGBTQ+ rights and gender equality in China. Born in 1967, Jin defied societal norms and expectations, transitioning in the late 1990s

and becoming a pioneering figure for transgender visibility in the arts.

Her career as a dancer and choreographer has garnered international acclaim, but it is her advocacy that truly sets her apart. Jin uses her platform to raise awareness about the challenges faced by transgender individuals in China, advocating for greater acceptance and understanding within society. Through her public appearances and media engagements, she emphasizes the importance of authenticity and self-expression.

Jin's unwavering commitment to social change and her courage in sharing her own journey have made her a powerful voice for marginalized communities, inspiring many to embrace their identities and strive for a more inclusive world.

**Crystal Award recipient 2020**

## Meet the Cultural Leaders 2025



**Renée Fleming** is a world-renowned soprano and a passionate advocate for mental health awareness. Celebrated for her remarkable voice and artistry in opera and concert performance, Fleming has also dedicated herself to promoting the therapeutic benefits of music.

Through her work, she highlights the profound impact that music can have on mental well-being, particularly for those facing emotional and psychological challenges.

Fleming has been involved in various initiatives aimed at destigmatizing mental health issues, often speaking openly about her own experiences and the role music has played in her life. She has collaborated with organizations such as the National Endowment for the Arts and has championed programmes that integrate music therapy into healthcare settings. Fleming's advocacy not only underscores the healing power of music but also inspires individuals to seek support and embrace creativity as a vital component of mental health.

**Crystal Award recipient 2023**



**Vik Muniz** is a Brazilian artist renowned for his innovative use of materials and techniques to create striking visual art. Beyond his artistic achievements, Muniz is a passionate advocate for social change, particularly in education and art accessibility.

He co-founded the non-profit organization, Pictures of the Future, which empowers communities through art and provides educational opportunities for underprivileged youth. Muniz's commitment to using art as a means of advocacy is exemplified in his projects that transform recycled materials into captivating works, highlighting environmental issues and the power of creativity in fostering social awareness. Through his art and activism, Muniz inspires others to recognize the potential of art as a catalyst for positive change.

**Crystal Award recipient 2013**



**Nile Rodgers** is a Rock & Roll Hall of Fame and Songwriters Hall of Fame inductee, a Grammy Lifetime Achievement awardee, Apple Music Producer-in-Residence and Songwriters Hall of Fame Chairman.

With CHIC, Rodgers pioneered a musical language with hits such as "Le Freak" and sparked hip-hop with "Good Times" and "Rapper's Delight". His work in The CHIC Organization includes writing and producing music for other artists such as Sister Sledge ("We Are Family"), Diana Ross ("I'm Coming Out"), David Bowie ("Let's Dance") and Madonna ("Like A Virgin"). His body of music has sold 500+ million albums, while his Grammy Award-winning collaborations with Daft Punk (Random Access Memories) and Beyoncé (Renaissance) reflect the vanguard of contemporary hits.

Rodgers's activism began as a teen Black Panther in New York City. He participated in LIVE AID, We Are The World and the Concert for Ukraine. After 9/11, he co-founded We Are Family Foundation, promoting cultural diversity while empowering young people who are positively changing the world.

Most recently Rodgers received the 2024 World Economic Forum's Crystal Award for his extraordinary efforts to make the world a more peaceful, equal and inclusive place through his music, his exemplary commitment to fighting systemic racism, inequality and injustice and by championing innovative youth voices to decision-making tables.

**Crystal Award recipient 2024**

# World Arts Forum

The World Arts Forum is a Swiss non-profit foundation, which was co-founded in 1991 by Klaus and Hilde Schwab to produce a World Arts Summit in Venice, Italy. The event brought together leaders from the arts, government, business and civil society in the spirit of cross-cultural understanding and global citizenship. After the success of the World Arts Summit in Venice, the World Arts Forum decided to integrate artists and the arts into the World Economic Forum Annual Meeting in Davos-Klosters, Switzerland, and into the Forum's activities more broadly. Today, its members meet biannually to provide support for arts and culture and to nominate the recipients of the Crystal Award.

## World Arts Forum Board Members:

**Hilde Schwab**  
Chairwoman and Co-Founder, World Arts Forum

**Irene Chu**  
Senior Adviser, First Eastern Investment Group

**Carol Becker**  
Professor of the Arts, Columbia University, USA

**Martin Engström**  
Founder and Executive Director, Verbier Festival

**Angélique Kidjo**  
Musician and UNICEF Goodwill Ambassador

**Platon**  
Photographer and Founder, The People's Portfolio

**Marco Fiorese**  
Co-Founder, IVITA Group, USA

**Sandy Climan**  
President, Entertainment Media Ventures, USA

## The Arts and Culture team

**Joseph Fowler**  
Head, Arts and Culture

**Natalie Hendro**  
Senior Lead, Arts and Culture

**Pascale Ferorelli**  
Lead, Arts & Culture

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(Opposite) Images: Refik Anadol Studio, 2024.  
Studies from Large Nature Model : Glacier





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COMMITTED TO  
IMPROVING THE STATE  
OF THE WORLD

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The World Economic Forum, committed to improving the state of the world, is the International Organization for Public-Private Cooperation.

The Forum engages the foremost political, business and other leaders of society to shape global, regional and industry agendas.

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