

PLATFORM

CENTRE FOR  
PHOTOGRAPHIC  
+ DIGITAL ARTS

Circles of  
Existence  
A Solo  
Exhibition

2023 PLATFORM PHOTOGRAPHY  
AWARD WINNER

by

Taylor  
McArthur

8 MAR-  
6 APR, 2024

# Response

## — Casey Koyczan

The dreamworld is an amazing place that reflects our mindset, imagination, and lived experiences. It is a realm of wonder and sheer amazement, as well as one that presents our deepest fears. There are elements within our dreams that can't be explained, they are simply just dreams, and then there are scenarios that guide us in our waking life towards the things we desire. It can sometimes be difficult to decode and describe our dreams, let alone make artwork about them. It is fascinating when someone is able to translate their dreamworld in a way that can be appreciated by the public.

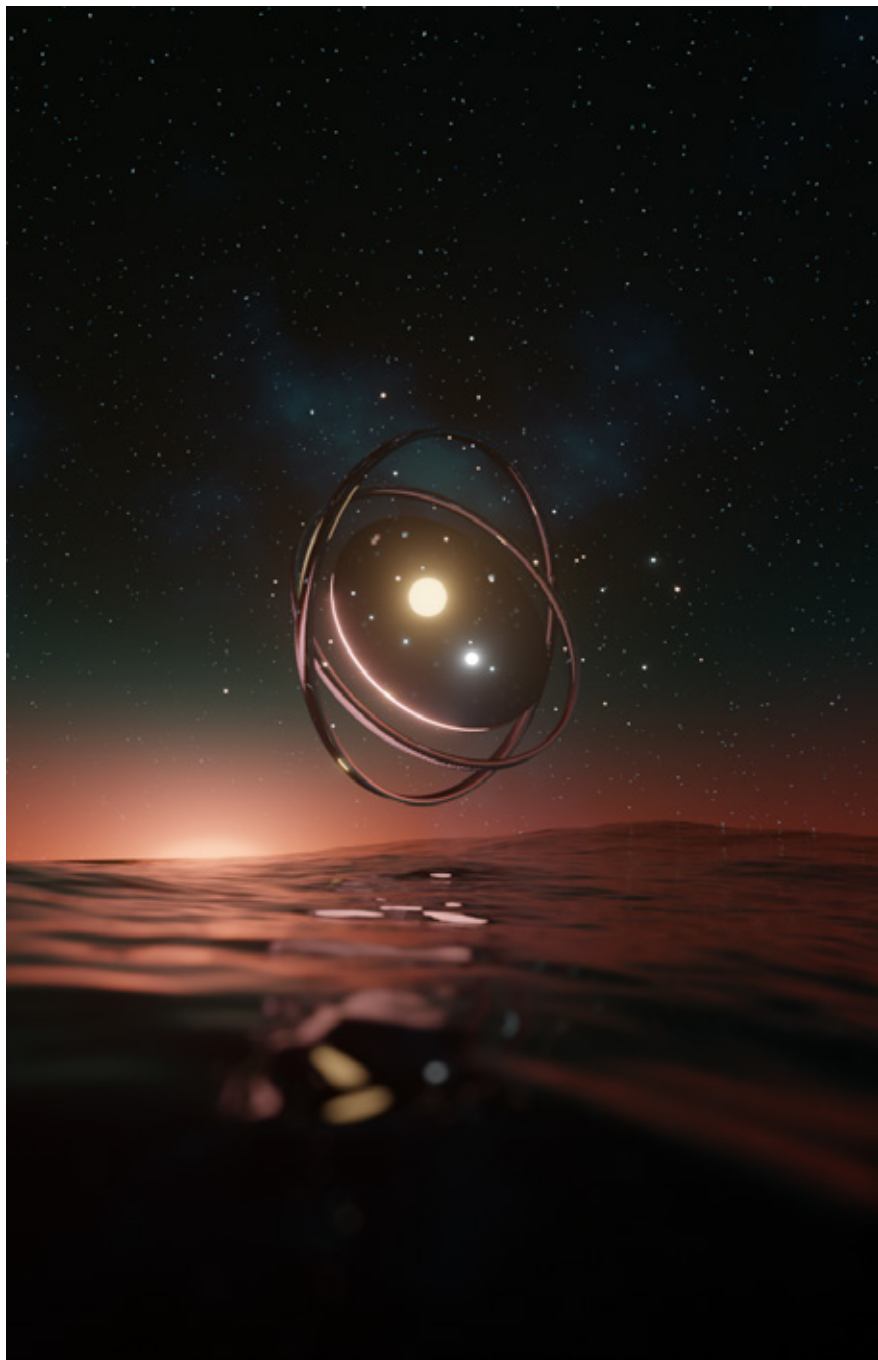
Taylor McArthur's "circles of existence" invites us into interpretations of dreamscapes that evoke emotion, mysticism, and a serene presence. Before entering into the space, you are met with a soothing sound— a pairing of wavelengths and frequencies that draw you into what feels like another dimension. The cyclical representation is continuously present through each animation, whether it be through the content or camera movement. This connection playfully ties back to the title, where our dreams and physical realms consistently influence each other every day and night. We navigate the various aspects of our minds during sleep and our lives while awake. It is admirable to see an artist who is so transparent about their subconscious that they are able to create a space for the audience to feel the atmospherics of the room and become absorbed in the audio-visual nature of their thoughts.

McArthur's use of digital tools such as 3D modelling and animation creates accurate reconstructions of her dreams which further push the surreal concepts of the subject matter and the ethereal nature of the landscapes. The weightlessness of the figures and objects, the glowing surfaces, the impossible materials, and the beautiful surroundings challenge our understanding of reality while at the same time projecting an idyllic environment. What I enjoy most about 3D software is that the limits of creation are basically endless, you can create anything you want, much like how our dreamworlds can react at any given time. I feel the artist has found a way to tap into their subconscious to manifest a very pleasant area to visit, where the door is always open and you are free to stay as long as you wish.

In this work, the visual elements flow seamlessly through three scenes that depict variations of time, seasons, the galactic relationship between the sun and the moon and their influence on us. It completely disconnects from any confines of reality or physics as we know them. The digitally created human figures within the works help the viewer imagine that they are present in these scenes, that we are actively or passively experiencing the power of the intangible within the dreamworld. The figures also assist in bringing the storytelling elements of this work to life. This allows the viewer to relate to the artist's message and intent of visually representing the influence of dreams on space, nature, and the self.

The space has been constructed so that the lighting and the placement of the video create a viewing portal resulting in the illusion of a larger space. The eye is able to push past the physical boundaries of the wall and into an extension of reality, blurring the lines between real and unreal while immersing the room in vibrant colour. This surreality recalls when a person is entranced in a daydream and their mind wanders into a different plane of existence. This can also happen when viewing an artwork that naturally guides your eye through the overall composition in a never-ending loop that starts back at the beginning where the viewer first engages with the work. Some would describe this as "getting lost in a work of art," describing the moment when we begin to delve deeper into its meaning, our field of view becomes narrowed, and we start to see things that we didn't before.

"circles of existence" provides a space for reflection and solace, creating a transformative experience that triggers the subconscious to elicit insightful and thought-provoking notions of self and connection to fellow humans and nature. The transparency of emotion present in this work allows the viewer to contemplate our own dreamworlds. Like so many dreams, it defies description and I would encourage anyone to see it in person for themselves.



ABOVE ↑  
ANIMATION STILL  
COURTESY OF THE ARTIST

# Biographies

## Taylor McArthur



(Niná wašte šiyo po a hq ska wíya/hummingbird woman)

Nakoda of Pheasant Rump Nakota First Nation. Raised in Southwestern Manitoba currently residing in Montreal, Quebec. She is a current Computation Arts Specialization undergraduate student in Concordia's Fine Arts faculty. McArthur is an award-winning digital artist working with 3D animation, video game design, and video. Her practice is informed by Indigenous Futurisms, and she seeks to situate her Indigenous culture within both the modern and a potential future vision.

## Casey Koyczan



Casey Koyczan is a Dene interdisciplinary artist from Yellowknife, NT, that uses various mediums to communicate how culture and technology can grow together in order for us to develop a better understanding of who we are, where we come from, and what we will be. He creates with whatever tools necessary to bring an idea to fruition, and specializes in sculpture, installation, 3D/VR/AR/360, video, and audio works such as music, soundscapes and film scores.

He is an international artist that has participated in many residencies, exhibits, festivals and collaborations in parts of the world such as Finland, Colombia, Chile, Mexico, The Netherlands, The USA, and the UK. He is also a musician, producer, filmmaker, actor/narrator, and advocate for future generations of artists and musicians.

He has a Multimedia Production diploma from Lethbridge College, a Bachelor of Fine Arts degree from Thompson Rivers University, and a Master of Fine Arts degree from the University of Manitoba.

PLATFORM is an artist-run centre dedicated to considering the expanded role of photography in contemporary art. We are a multidisciplinary centre that supports and showcases local, national and international artists and are committed to supporting marginalized and BIPOC voices. Through exhibitions, lectures, workshops, production facilities and publications we aim to foster and sustain a critically engaged community of artists.

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