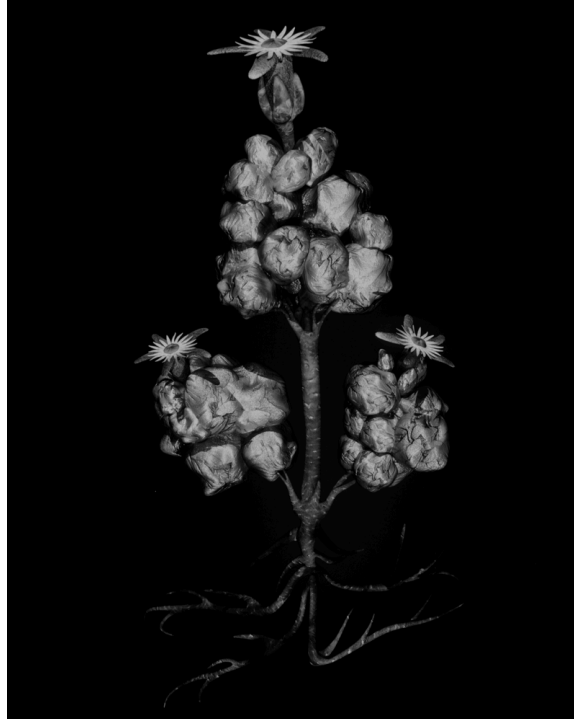


Cantor Arts Center

Animal, Vegetable, nor Mineral: Works by Miljohn Ruperto

Major survey presents the artist's expansive, collaborative practice, examining how we've come to understand and engage with the natural world, its histories, and futures.

March 12–September 14, 2026



Miljohn Ruperto and Ulrik Heltoft, *Voynich Botanical Studies*, Specimen 23v Leto (2017), Specimen 56r Jaro (2016), Specimen 90v Jaro (2013), from the series *Voynich Botanical Studies*, 2012–ongoing. Gelatin silver print on fiber-based paper. Courtesy of the artists and Micki Meng Gallery, San Francisco

(FEBRUARY 2, 2026—STANFORD, CA) – The **Cantor Arts Center** at Stanford University is pleased to present ***Animal, Vegetable, nor Mineral: Works by Miljohn Ruperto***, the first museum survey of Los Angeles-based artist **Miljohn Ruperto** (b. 1971, Manila, Philippines). Curated by **Maggie Dethloff**, **Assistant Curator of Photography and New Media**, the exhibition is organized in conjunction with the Cantor's ongoing **Asian American Art Initiative (AAAI)** and marks the institution's **second large-scale presentation of work by a contemporary Asian American artist**.

Working across a wide range of media including film, video, photography, animation, sculpture, writing, installation, and emergent technologies, Ruperto's interdisciplinary practice foregrounds the lesser known, the speculative, and the arcane, probing how knowledge is formed, mediated, and understood. ***Animal, Vegetable, nor Mineral*** brings together **thirteen major large-scale works, including a newly-commissioned virtual reality project**, to illuminate a wide-ranging, deeply collaborative, research-driven inquiry into the ways humans have made sense of their place in nature.

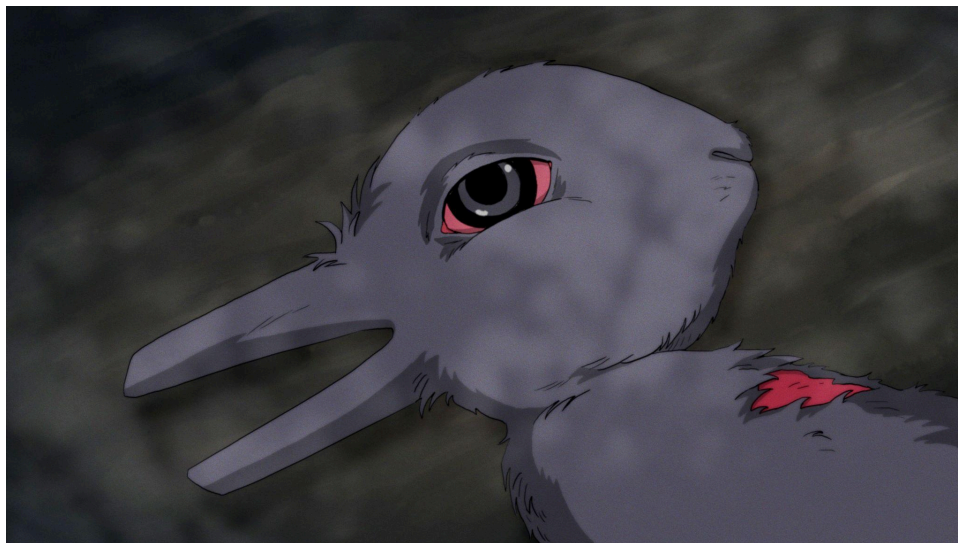
Engaging scientific, historical, and speculative modes of investigation, Ruperto frequently works with other artists, scholars, scientists, and technologists to create open-ended artworks that consider questions of ecology, labor, belief, technology, and the afterlives of colonialism. Spanning the museum's Freidenrich Gallery, ***Animal, Vegetable, nor Mineral*** invites viewers to question inherited frameworks and to consider alternative modes of relation and meaning.

The exhibition marks **Ruperto's first foray into critically considering virtual reality technologies in his practice**, as well as the Cantor's first presentation of work in virtual reality and generative artificial intelligence.

An **accompanying publication, Ruperto's first monograph, deepens understanding of his collaborative practice**, bringing together his short texts inspired by other artists' work, alongside a new essay by exhibition curator Maggie Dethloff. Significantly, the volume foregrounds Ruperto's writing for the first time as integral to his artistic practice.

The book reflects the Cantor's ongoing commitment to producing a wide range of publications that present significant new scholarship and commissioned texts by many of the most compelling artists of our time. Recent projects include a ghost story by Tuan Andrew Nguyen, the first in-depth interview with Narsiso Martinez, exhibition catalogues *Spirit House* and *Day Jobs*, brochures offering fresh perspectives on Edmonia Lewis, Ruth Asawa, and Ester Hernandez, and a publication developed for a scholarly convening with Shahzia Sikander.

Animal, Vegetable, nor Mineral is loosely organized into three thematic sections:



Miljohn Ruperto, *Janus*, 2014. 4K video (color, sound), 3:30 min., looped. Animated by Aimée de Jongh. Courtesy of the artist and Micki Meng Gallery, San Francisco

TAXONOMIES: Focuses on the categorization of nature, drawing on the traditional taxonomies of animal, vegetable, and mineral, from which the exhibition takes its title. Within, artworks both introduce and unsettle inherited structures of classification and representation, while forging new connections between scientific knowledge and urgent contemporary concerns.

Highlights include:

- ***Voynich Botanical Studies*** (2012–ongoing), created in collaboration with artist Ulrik Heltoft, renders the fictive botanical illustrations of the fifteenth-century Voynich Manuscript, an undeciphered early modern codex, as three-dimensional digital models that are then printed as gelatin silver photographs. Collapsing distinctions between fiction and documentation, each work serves as a photographic record of imaginary subjects.
- ***Fathoms (Tartarapelagic)*** (2025–26), created in collaboration with artist and theorist Daniel R. Small, employs generative artificial intelligence to imagine emergent deep-sea creatures. Drawing on discoveries from the Clarion-Clipperton Zone, a remote region of the Pacific Ocean rich in minerals used to advance AI and other technologies, the work continuously conjures luminous, one-of-a-kind forms. This marks the first artwork using generative artificial intelligence presented at the Cantor.



Miljohn Ruperto and Vishal Judgeo, *Cut Line*, 2024. Three channel 4K video (color, sound), 26 min. Courtesy of the artists and Micki Meng Gallery, San Francisco

LANDSCAPE: Centers on landscape not only as a visual genre but also as an ideological tool. Inviting viewers to reconsider their relationship to the world, these works challenge habitual ways of seeing, opening space for alternative frameworks of knowing and experience.

- The three-channel narrative video ***Cut Line*** (2024), created with artist Vishal Judgeo, explores Guyana and the multiple, overlapping stories landscapes hold. Anchored by a CGI-animated river that functions as a vessel for intersecting narratives, the work brings together Judgeo's family history, a historian's account of the region's sociopolitical context, and a journalist's reporting on an environmental disaster in the region.
- Commissioned by the Cantor, ***What God Hath Wrought (Kairos)*** (2026) is Ruperto's first virtual reality project and the third installment in his ongoing series *The Great Disappointment*, which examines 19th-century religious predictions of the apocalypse. Developed with support from the Stanford Virtual Human Interaction Lab and the Stanford Robotics Center, the work consists of three projected videos in a tri-part theater evoking a 19th-century revival tent. Three immersive virtual reality experiences forge connections between 19th-century perspectives and

contemporary values, prompting viewers to consider new ways of seeing, thinking, and relating to the world.

GEOMANCIES: A smaller, transitional section draws from the artist's *Geomancies* body of work. Referencing systems of divination, a lenticular print and two video works introduce overlapping narratives of possession and contagion, tracing different approaches used to explain and guard against the unknown. In doing so, the works reveal how these frameworks shape taxonomic ways of ordering the world, and how landscape, in turn, reflects underlying ideologies and values.

- **Ordinal (SW/NE)** (2017), a film conceived by the artist as a horror movie and created in collaboration with filmmaker Rini Yun Matea, traces the cultural and environmental histories of valley fever, with a focus on California's Central Valley.

Complementing the exhibition, the Cantor has partnered with San Francisco nonprofit art space [Minnesota Street Project Foundation](#) to present **Miljohn Ruperto: Ultimate Days**, a concurrent exhibition on view March 14–April 18, 2026, featuring two new works by the artist, extending his exploration of how we relate to the world and the possibilities for more just futures.

Commissioned by the Cantor, **Ultimate Days (Aion)**, part of Ruperto's ongoing series **The Great Disappointment**, will debut at Minnesota Street Project Foundation as a simulated camera obscura placing viewers within a recreation of the day the Millerite sect predicted the apocalypse. The presentation also includes the AI-generated film **The New Society**. Screened once daily fifteen minutes before closing, the film explores the possibilities of an emergent egalitarian future.

The Cantor will host **Ruperto in conversation with** fellow LA-based artist and collaborator **Candice Lin** on Thursday, May 7, 2026. Two works from their collaborative series *Putrefaction* (2024) are included in the exhibition.



Miljohn Ruperto, *What God Hath Wrought (Kairos)*, from the series *The Great Disappointment*, in progress. Three animations with VR (color, sound), 13 min. Courtesy of the artist and Micki Meng Gallery, San Francisco

ABOUT MILJOHN RUPERTO

Miljohn Ruperto's (b. 1971, Manila, Philippines) distinctive multimedia practice considers the elusive nature of knowledge and strives to unsettle our knowledge of nature. Working across film, video, digital animation, performance, photography, and more, Ruperto interrogates the way we conceptualize, categorize, and represent nature to understand our place in the world, chronicle its history, and imagine its future.

Ruperto received his M.F.A. from Yale University, and his B.A. in Art Practice from University of California, Berkeley. Ruperto has exhibited work internationally at Foto Arsenal Wien, Vienna (2025); ICA LA, Los Angeles (2024); MEP, Paris (2024); Jakarta Biennale (2021); Singapore Biennale (2019); Hammer Museum, Los Angeles (2018, 2012); Schinkel Pavillion, Berlin (2018); REDCAT, Los Angeles (2017); Kadist, San Francisco (2017); Whitney Biennial (2014); among others. In 2019, he participated in the Acts of Life critical research residency at NTU CCA Singapore and MCAD Manila commissioned by the Goethe-Institut. His work is in the collections of Cantor Arts Center, MoMA NY, Hammer Museum, Whitney Museum of American Art, and Kadist Art Foundation.

ABOUT THE CANTOR ARTS CENTER

Serving the Stanford campus, the Bay Area community, and visitors from around the world, the Cantor Arts Center provides an outstanding cultural experience for visitors of all ages. Founded when the university opened in 1891, the historic museum was expanded and renamed in 1999 for lead donors Iris and B. Gerald Cantor. The Cantor's collection spans 5,000 years and includes more than 40,000 works of art from around the globe. The Cantor is an established resource for teaching and research on campus. Free admission, tours, lectures, and family activities make the Cantor one of the most visited university art museums in the country.

VISIT THE MUSEUM

Cantor Arts Center
328 Lomita Drive at Museum Way
Stanford, CA
T: 650-723-4177
<https://museum.stanford.edu/>

Monday: 11 AM–6 PM
Thursday: 11 AM–8 PM
Friday: 11 AM–6 PM
Saturday & Sunday: 10 AM–5 PM
FREE ADMISSION

PRESS CONTACT

Cultural Counsel
cantor@culturalcounsel.com