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Cover photo:  
detail of *Planet of People* digital simulation still, 2021  
© Julijonas Urbonas and Studio Pointer\*.  
Courtesy Lithuanian Space Agency.

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Art Review

## A review of Planet of People (Lithuanian Space Agency, Biennale Architettura 2021)

VITTORIA MASCELLARO<sup>1\*</sup> & ELISABETTA PAGELLA<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>1,2</sup>NABA DEPARTMENT OF VISUAL ARTS AND CURATORIAL STUDIES, VIA C. DARWIN 20, 20143 MILANO, ITALY

\*CORRESPONDING AUTHOR: VITTORIA\_MASCELLARO@STUDENTI.NABA.IT

### Abstract.

Julijonas Urbonas presents his project *Planet of people*, brought by the Lithuanian Space Agency in the Lithuanian Pavilion, and is curated by Jan Boelen.

KEYWORDS: ART, VENICE, BIENNALE, LITHUANIA, URBONAS

LSA is an organisation focused on spatial architecture and gravitational aesthetics. The team investigates the position of human beings in the universe and therefore at the entrance of the church a machine allows the visitor to take a ticket to go into space. "Say goodbye to your relatives", the artist jokes. Everybody enters a scanner and has to strike a pose in order to visualize each body's position as animated simulations to create *Planet of People*.

Anything could happen. In the pandemic age Urbonas analyses the different possibilities of extraterrestrial imagination. A new way of life, the artist has thought not only about people, but also about the objects for this third-dimensional world. *The Barany Chair*, *Airtime*, *Oneiric Hotel*, *Cerebral Spinner*, *Euthanasia Coaster*, *Emetic Spatula* and *Hypergravitational Piano* turn on a circular structure made of recycled plastic of a strange texture.

LSA è un'organizzazione focalizzata sull'architettura spaziale e sull'estetica gravitazionale. Il team indaga la posizione degli esseri umani nell'universo e quindi all'ingresso della chiesa una macchina permette al visitatore di prendere un biglietto per entrare nello spazio. "Saluta i tuoi parenti", scherza l'artista. Tutti entrano in uno scanner e devono mettersi in posa per visualizzare la posizione di ogni corpo come simulazioni animate per creare *Planet of People*.

Tutto potrebbe succedere. In un'epoca di pandemia Urbonas analizza le diverse possibilità dell'immaginazione extraterrestre. Un nuovo modo di vivere; per questo mondo tridimensionale l'artista ha pensato non solo alle persone ma anche agli oggetti. *The Barany Chair*, *Airtime*, *Oneiric Hotel*, *Cerebral Spinner*, *Euthanasia Coaster*, *Emetic Spatula* e *Hypergravitational Piano* girano su una struttura circolare fatta di plastica riciclata di una strana forma.

Figure 1.  
Portrait of Julijonas Urbonas, 2019.

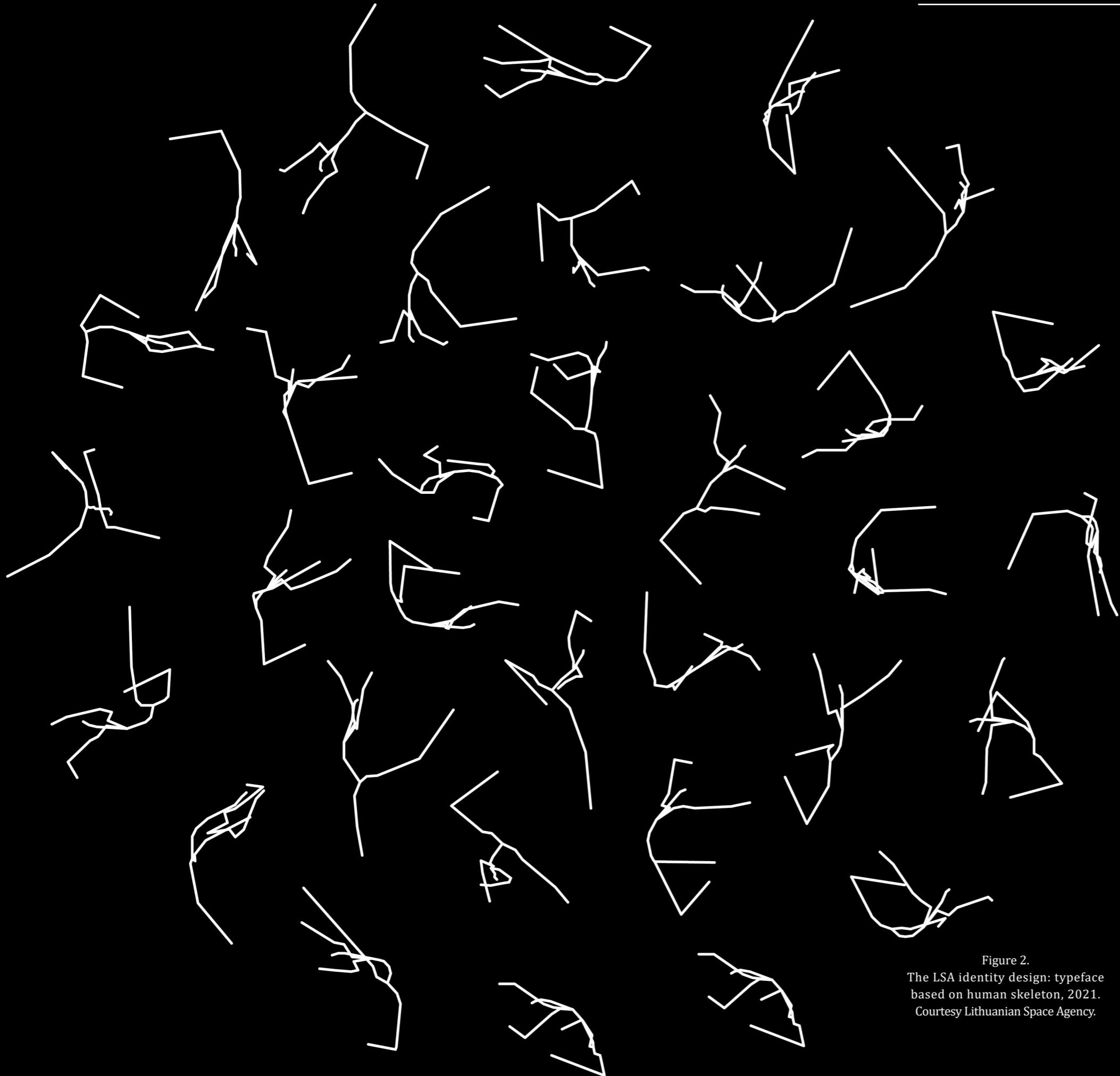
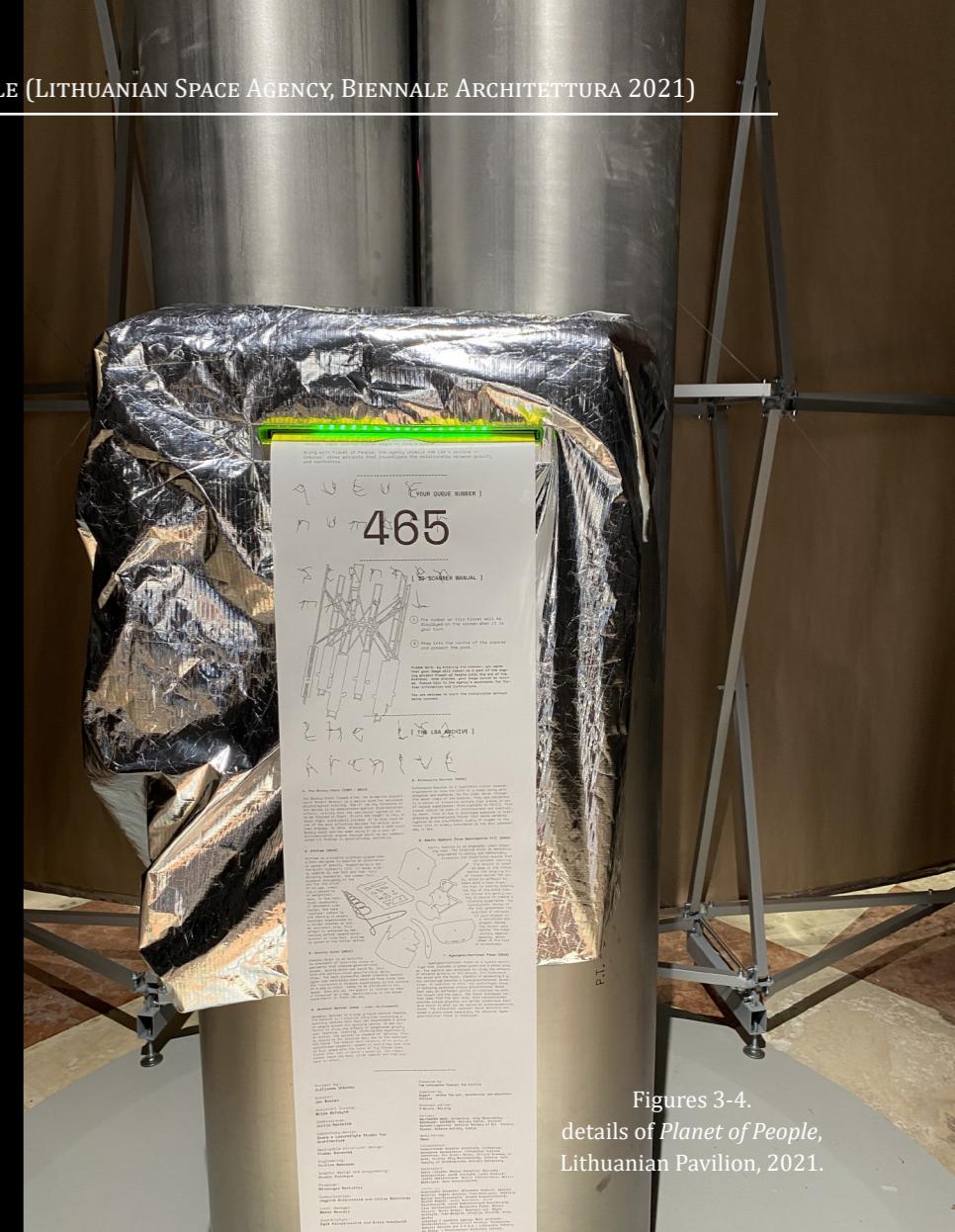


Figure 2.  
The LSA identity design: typeface  
based on human skeleton, 2021.  
Courtesy Lithuanian Space Agency.



Figures 3-4.  
details of *Planet of People*,  
Lithuanian Pavilion, 2021.



This new material is also used in two other works of art displayed in the exhibition. Indeed in the middle of the room these monoliths attract the attention as they seem to resemble structures made of marble, typical of the Palladian church.

**Faith and science produce an ambiguous narrative.**  
The artist and the curator discovered a strange connection between the artwork and the exhibition space. As a matter of fact the church is dedicated to damned people, who had previously been burned there. It is believed that after their death their souls would go through physical space in order to reach a spiritual dimension. This is similar to that of the LSA project and how the exhibition allows you to leave Earth to explore a possible alternative world. Believing in this new possibility is thanks to the fact that in the second space age, science represents the truth.

*Instead of sending humans to colonise other planets, what if we catapult them into space to form a new planet, "a planet made of people"?*

Visit the exhibition could give a possible answer.

*"Take a large population of humans, strip them of all social, racial, cultural, sexual, political and economic constructs and bring them together so that they stay in close proximity for a substantial amount of time. That would be the ultimate revision of human architecture."*

Julijonas Urbonas, the founder of the Lithuanian Space Agency.

#### Pavilion of Lithuania at the 17th International Architecture Exhibition of La Biennale di Venezia

The Lithuanian Space Agency presents *Planet of People*

Commissioner: Julija Reklaitė, Rupert

Curator: Jan Boelen

Exhibitor: Julijonas Urbonas

Venue: Chiesa di Santa Maria dei Derelitti (Ospedaletto)  
Barbaria delle Tole, 6691, 30122 Venezia VE, Italy  
22 May-21 November 2021.

Questo nuovo materiale entra a far parte della mostra espositiva grazie ad altre due opere. Infatti al centro della sala due monoliti attirano l'attenzione come due pezzi di marmo tipici della chiesa Palladiana.

**Fede e scienza producono una narrativa ambigua.**  
L'artista e il curatore hanno scoperto una strana connessione tra la mostra e il luogo. La chiesa, infatti, è dedicata ai dannati, che furono bruciati all'interno del luogo religioso. Si crede che dopo la morte le loro anime attraversano lo spazio fisico per raggiungere una dimensione spirituale. Allo stesso modo le persone coinvolte nel progetto di LSA potrebbero lasciare la Terra per esplorare un mondo alternativo. Credere in questa nuova possibilità è possibile grazie al fatto che nella seconda era spaziale, la scienza rappresenta la verità.

*Invece di inviare umani a colonizzare altri pianeti, cosa succederebbe se li catapultassimo nello spazio per formare un nuovo pianeta, "un pianeta fatto di persone"?*

Visitare la mostra potrebbe dare una possibile risposta.

*"Prendete una vasta popolazione di esseri umani, privateli di tutti i costrutti sociali, razziali, culturali, sessuali, politici ed economici e riuniteli in modo che rimangano vicini per un periodo di tempo considerevole. Sarebbe la revisione definitiva dell'architettura umana".*

Julijonas Urbonas, il fondatore di Lithuanian Space Agency.



Figure 5.

Julijonas Urbonas at the Lithuanian Pavilion, 2021.