

To Fail the World with an Open Heart

Night Lights Denver (NLD)

Daniels & Fisher Tower, Denver, USA

May 1 – 31, 2026

Curated by Robert Seidel

Artist List

Lillian Schwartz, Mutations (1972)

Chia Amisola, Arkipelago, Ark 1 (2026)

Patricia Detmering, l'imaginaire (2025)

Zeitguised, Murano//HUD:\$ync.DF (2026)

Natalia Stuyk, Celeste (2026)

Grischa Lichtenberger, Loss of Words (2001/2008/2026)

Lorna Mills, Step This Home (2026)

Concept

Our world is constant stress – a relentless churn of information, crisis, and change. Artists working today must navigate this turbulence knowing that any attempt to capture beauty, truth, or meaning is provisional at best. The tools we use will become obsolete. Social platforms will shift. Political ground will move beneath our feet. To make art now is to accept, from the beginning, that we will fail.

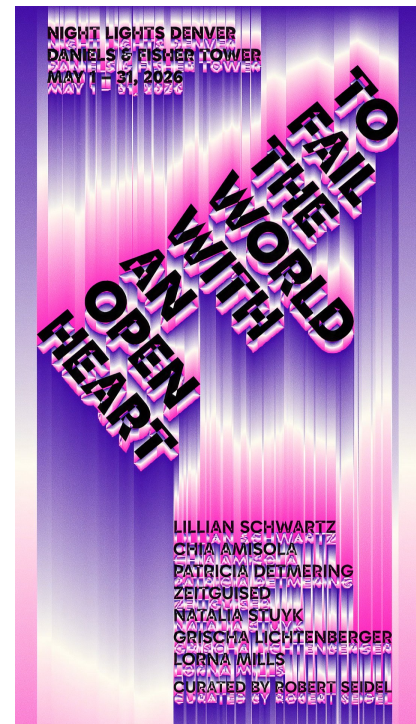
Yet failure, when approached with an open heart and an attentive mind, becomes something else entirely. It becomes a practice of attention. A commitment to the process rather than the outcome. And within that process – in the unexpected glitches of technology, the surprising tenderness of algorithmic mirrors, the unpredictable collisions between artist, medium and viewer – something emerges that resists anticipation or control.

The artists in the program “To Fail the World with an Open Heart” work at the frontier of innovation, not because they believe technology will save us, but because they understand that new techniques reveal unknown modes of perception. They explore emerging platforms, experimental hardware or software, and hybrid forms that dissolve boundaries rather than merely blur them. Their tools may be contemporary, but their gestures echo backward through time – to early cinema's wonder at moving images, to the avant-garde's disruption of narrative, to ancient human impulses to make marks, tell stories, generate atmospheres, and bear witness.

Lights Denver

Website <https://www.denvertheatredistrict.com/night-lights-past>

Instagram https://www.instagram.com/night_lights_denver



Curator Robert Seidel

Website <https://robertseidel.com>

Instagram <http://instagram.com/studiorobertseidel>

Lillian Schwartz, Mutations (1972)

Lillian Schwartz's work stands as a landmark of early computer art, produced during her pioneering tenure at Bell Labs – a collaboration between artists and scientists that fundamentally shaped the convergence of technology and artistic expression. The film is originally scored to “Mutations I” (1969) by French composer Jean-Claude Risset, among the first works to employ frequency modulation synthesis, and its visual logic mirrors this sonic experimentalism: computer-animated cellular patterns and lines interweave with crystal growth, laser traces, and refractions. Working in close collaboration with Bell Labs scientists, Schwartz developed techniques for translating mathematical algorithms into poetic explorations of color, movement, and form. The result occupies a precise historical threshold – resonating with the structural concerns of earlier avant-garde film while anticipating the digital aesthetics that would define late twentieth-century art. In a discipline that systematically restricted participation along lines of gender and accessibility, Schwartz's extensive practice constitutes as much a structural intervention as an artistic one.

Courtesy of the Collections of The Henry Ford.

Gift of the Lillian F. Schwartz & Laurens R. Schwartz Collection.

<https://www.thehenryford.org>

<https://www.instagram.com/thehenryford>

Chia Amisola, Arkipelago, Ark 1 (2026)

Chia Amisola's practice is grounded in extensive research, producing websites that function simultaneously as medium and subject of exploration. In the series “Arkipelago”, the artist turns to Philippine “second creation” mythologies – stories centering earth, domesticity, and survival amid catastrophe – drawing formal inspiration from Filipino socialist realist painters from the 1970s and 1980s such as Anita Magsaysay-Ho. The work interrogates a foundational assumption of computational culture: that rural life stands as the opposite of the digital, rather than its condition and origin. Composed of hundreds of browser windows arranged through web-based simulation and manual gestures, the series appropriates imagery sourced from extractive online platforms and advertising, reassembling them into intimate vignettes of rural livelihood. By reimagining the browser as a living ecosystem, Amisola situates herself within the legacy of 1990s net art while pressing further – exposing how these infrastructures are no longer external to social life, but constitutive of it.

<https://everythingi.love>

<https://www.instagram.com/hotemogf>

Patricia Detmering, l'imaginaire (2025)

Patricia Detmering's work moves a camera through the fractured 3D scan of a female body. Because a 3D scan consists exclusively of an infinitely thin polygon surface, the camera finds no interior anatomy – only a cave-like inversion – the hollow residue of pictorial projection. The body becomes visible not as organism but as image-space. The work draws on Jacques Lacan's concept of the Imaginary: the register in which the subject coheres around a unified body image. As the camera enters, this unity dissolves, revealing the very apparatus of the body's representation. Freed from worldly constraint, the non-material structure becomes generative: it is the absence of anatomical reality that opens new perceptual terrain. The work proposes that digital space, precisely because it is unrooted from physical reality, is uniquely equipped to expose the body image for what it always was – a construction.

<http://www.patriciadetmering.com>

https://www.instagram.com/patricia_detmering

Zeitguised, Murano//HUD:\$ync.DF (2026)

Zeitguised stages a rhythmic intervention on Denver's Daniels & Fisher Tower, built in 1910 as an American replica of Venice's St. Mark's Campanile – a structure whose own history stretches from 888 to 1513, shaped by successive reworkings and extensions. This layered architectural genealogy is central to the work's logic: that historical forms are never settled but perpetually reappropriated in the pursuit of a universal beauty. Fusing two distinct visual registers – the refractive elegance of Murano glasswork, rooted in Venice's craft tradition, and the data-driven aesthetics of a modern skeuomorphic heads-up display – the piece reimagines the tower's stone façade as a living digital interface. The passage of time is marked by deliberate refractive twitches, a kinetic homage to the tower's original function as a timekeeper. Holding the analog and the digital not in opposition but in dialogue, the work remains hyper-chromatic and diffracts the histories embedded in the structures it illuminates.

<https://www.zeitguised.com>

<https://www.instagram.com/zeitguised>

Natalia Stuyk, Celeste (2026)

Natalia Stuyk's practice engages a condition increasingly central to contemporary artistic production: the delegation of aesthetic agency to autonomous processes – agents, bots, algorithms, and generative systems that operate beyond the threshold of human cognitive processing. The work "Celeste" unfolds through this logic, producing saturated, luminous compositions in which layers of color and texture shift, recombine, and evolve through procedural rules she authors, full of aleatory moments. The work neither fully illustrates data nor resolves into a fixed structure; it persists in a state of continuous becoming. Stuyk's self-built instruments position her within a broader collapse of boundaries between image, movement, and sound – a convergence that points toward an emerging paradigm in which artistic authorship is distributed across a myriad of agents, each processing fragments of a reality too vast for a single human

mind to metabolize. To build one's own tools, in this context, is not merely a technical choice but the means of constructing new perceptual frameworks adequate to an unrepresentable world.

<https://nataliastuyk.com>

<https://www.instagram.com/nataliastuyk>

Grischa Lichtenberger, Loss of Words (2001/2008/2026)

Grischa Lichtenberger's work constructs a meditation on inscription, ephemerality, and the material residue of memory across successive temporal layers. The work originates in 2001, when Lichtenberger, then a teenager, composed love letters and poems on an electric typewriter. The texts themselves were lost – yet their negative traces survived, punched into the ink ribbon cartridge he had kept. In 2008, he discovered that the ribbon's width nearly matches that of 8mm film stock. Threaded through a projector, the ribbon's letter traces caught the lamp's light, rendering the adolescent writings visible one final time before the bulb's heat melted them – an irreversible act of dissolution. The piece operates within a tradition of media archaeology, treating obsolete technologies not as nostalgic objects but as sites of latent meaning. For its adaptation to the Daniels & Fisher Tower, these fragmented texts are projected at architectural scale, dissolving into near-abstract symbols against the Denver skyline – transforming private inscription into a transient public monument, and loss itself into a form of perpetual reinvention.

<http://grischa-lichtenberger.com>

<https://www.instagram.com/grischalichtenberger>

Lorna Mills, Step This Home (2026)

Lorna Mills is a pioneering figure in net and media art whose practice centers on the appropriation and recontextualization of found internet imagery. Working primarily with GIF animation – a compression format native to the early web that stores only the differences between successive frames of a short movie fragment – Mills exploits the format's technical logic as an aesthetic strategy, generating visual artifacts she transforms into a distinctive image language. Arranged into pulsating animated collages, these fragments resist conventional categorization, collapsing distinctions between high culture, pop, subculture, and counter-culture. Her work engages a tradition of appropriation art while remaining specific to the network conditions that produce it: the endless circulation, fragmentation, and mutation of images online. For the Daniels & Fisher Tower, Mills presents a scene reminiscent of an early 3D video game – a mythological staircase flooded by lava, vultures circling above. Against the Tower's own Italian Renaissance Revival architecture, the work reads as an elegiac monument: a civilization captured at its zenith, already casting the shadow of its decline.

<http://www.digitalmediatree.com/sallymckay/LornaMillsImageDump>

<https://www.instagram.com/lorna.mills>