



## **SXSW ANNOUNCES KEYNOTE SESSION AND THIRD ROUND OF FEATURED SPEAKERS**

*Unfold The Universe: NASA's Webb Space Telescope Announced as Keynote Session*

*Featured Speakers Announced include Eric André, Blxst, Josh D'Amato, Tommy Dorfman, Ashley Flowers, Gottmik, Nick Jonas, Martin Luther King III, Damon Lindelof, Eva Longoria, Alexis Ohanian, Maya Penn, Austin Russell, RZA, Dan Schulman, Simran Jeet Singh, Cheryl Strayed, Jen Wong, and more*

**Austin, Texas — January 10, 2023** — South by Southwest® (SXSW®) Conference and Festivals has announced the addition of Keynote Session *Unfold The Universe: NASA's Webb Space Telescope* and the third round of Featured Speakers for the 37th edition of its annual Conference, which celebrates the convergence of technology, film, television, and music. SXSW takes place March 10 - 19, 2023 in Austin, Texas.

The Keynote Session *Unfold The Universe: NASA's Webb Space Telescope* includes NASA Goddard Communications Team Lead for the James Webb Space Telescope **Laura Betz**, Astrophysicist and James Webb Space Telescope Deputy Project Scientist for Exoplanet Science **Dr. Knicole Colón**, Planetary Scientist and James Webb Space Telescope Deputy Project Scientist for Planetary Science **Dr. Stefanie Milam** and Astrophysicist and Deputy Project Scientist for James Webb Space Telescope Science Communications **Dr. Amber Straughn**. The Session will feature a never-before-seen image from the James Webb Space Telescope.

"We are honored to host a Keynote Session featuring members of the James Webb Space Telescope team," said Hugh Forrest, Chief Programming Officer and Co-President. "They join an impressive group of Featured Speakers who have consistently strived for progress and discovery across a diverse range of industries, including healthcare, technology, transportation, food and the arts."

Author of the national bestseller *The Light We Give: How Sikh Wisdom Can Transform Your Life* and Executive Director of the Religion & Society Program at the Aspen Institute **Simran Jeet Singh** has been announced as Opening Speaker.

The SXSW Conference is organized into 25 programming tracks presented in a variety of session formats. The tracks for 2023 include 2050, Advertising & Brand Experience, Cannabis, Civic Engagement, Climate Change, Creating Film & Episodics, Culture, Design, Energy, Film & TV Industry, Food, Game Industry, Health & MedTech, Markets & Economies, Media Industry, Music & Tech, Music Careers, Psychedelics, Sports, Startups, Tech Industry, Transportation, Travel & Leisure, Workplace Revolution and XR & Metaverse. More information about SXSW programming tracks and formats can be found [here](#).

### **Newly-announced SXSW 2023 Keynote:**

- *Unfold The Universe: NASA's Webb Space Telescope:* NASA's James Webb Space Telescope, a partnership with ESA (European Space Agency) and the Canadian Space Agency (CSA), released its first full-color images and spectroscopic data on July 12, 2022. As the largest and most complex observatory ever launched into space, Webb went through a six-month period of preparation before it began science operations with 50 major deployments, careful alignment of the mirrors, and calibrating the instruments. In this session, join NASA Goddard Communications Team Lead for the James Webb Space Telescope **Laura Betz**, Astrophysicist and James Webb Space Telescope Deputy Project Scientist for Exoplanet Science **Dr. Knicole Colón**, Planetary Scientist and James Webb Space Telescope Deputy Project Scientist for Planetary Science **Dr. Stefanie Milam** and Astrophysicist and Deputy Project Scientist for James Webb Space Telescope Science Communications **Dr. Amber Straughn** as they review Webb's latest scientific discoveries, discuss how this observatory will continue to explore the uncharted territories of our cosmos, and share a never before seen image from the James Webb Space Telescope.

### **Newly-announced Featured Speakers:**

- Senior Media Analyst at *Variety* Intelligence Platform **Gavin Bridge** in conversation with Media Analyst and Correspondent for *Variety* Intelligence Platform **Heidi Chung** and President and Chief Media Analyst of *Variety* Intelligence Platform **Andrew Wallenstein**
- Founder and Host of the *Voices of VR* podcast **Kent Bye**
- Actors **Guillermo Diaz** and **Katie Lowes**, stars of the hit ABC series *Scandal*, discuss their new Shondaland Audio and iHeartPodcasts rewatch podcast *Unpacking the Toolbox*. The co-hosts will share behind the scenes stories and fun facts about the series' most memorable moments.
- Actress, writer, director, producer and founder and Creative Director of CURRAN **Tommy Dorfman**
- Creator and host of the podcast *Crime Junkie* and founder and CEO of audiochuck **Ashley Flowers** in conversation with President of audiochuck **Kevin Mills**
- Superintendent of the New York State Department of Financial Services **Adrienne A. Harris** in conversation with President and CEO of PayPal **Dan Schulman**

- Writer and co-Executive Producer of the *The Big Bang Theory* and *Young Sheldon* **Tara Hernandez** in conversation with Primetime Emmy Award-winning creator, writer, Executive Producer and Showrunner of *Lost* and *Watchmen* **Damon Lindelof** about their careers and collaborating on their upcoming Peacock series, *Mrs. Davis*.
- *New York Times* and *Wall Street Journal* bestselling author and co-founder and Senior Maverick at *Wired* **Kevin Kelly**
- Emmy-nominated director, producer, actress, entrepreneur and activist **Eva Longoria**
- Grammy-award winning rapper, businessman and activist **Killer Mike**
- Seven Seven Six Founder and former Executive Chair of Reddit **Alexis Ohanian** in conversation with Program Director for the 776 Foundation and Fellowship Program **Lissie Garvin**, activist, eco-entrepreneur and founder of Upenndo! Productions **Maya Penn**, and co-founder and CTO of Hydrova Inc **Rostam Reifschneider**
- Activist, filmmaker and musician **Boots Riley**
- Record producer, director, screenwriter, rapper and composer **RZA**
- Author of the national bestseller *The Light We Give: How Sikh Wisdom Can Transform Your Life* and Executive Director of the Religion & Society Program at the Aspen Institute **Simran Jeet Singh**
- Best-selling author **Cheryl Strayed** (*Wild: From Lost to Found on the Pacific Crest Trail*) talks about the adaptation of her bestselling book *Tiny Beautiful Things* with Creator, Executive Producer and Showrunner **Liz Tigelaar** who is adapting the book for a Hulu Original Series, produced by ABC Signature.
- CEO of Kickstarter **Everette Taylor**
- Founder and CEO of Chobani **Hamdi Ulukaya**
- COO of Reddit **Jen Wong**

### Newly-announced Featured Sessions include:

- *Autonomous Driving: More Time to Do What You Love*: The future of mobility will be electric, autonomous, entertaining and above all: exciting. There is a paradigm shift happening as the automotive industry transitions gradually to a safe autonomous driving future and a new sense of freedom is coming for both drivers and passengers sooner than you might think. In this session, join founder and CEO of ZYNC **Rana June**, founder and CEO of Luminar **Austin Russell** and Member of the Board of Management of Mercedes-Benz Group AG and CTO **Markus Schäfer** as they discuss how the software-defined car, autonomous technology and embedded entertainment content aim to give you back your most valuable resource — time — and how this lets you experience your car like never before.
- *Creating Happiness: The Art & Science of Disney Parks Storytelling*: For nearly 70 years, Disney Parks has created happiness for millions through experiences that bring Disney's beloved stories to life. Across its theme parks, hotels, cruises and adventures, Disney Parks has curated magical places around the world where a simple moment can become a treasured lifelong memory. The 'Art & Science' of storytelling is the secret to how Disney amazes its Guests and delivers memorable experiences. In this session, Disney Parks, Experiences and Products Chairman **Josh D'Amaro** will share how

Disney's storytelling techniques will build on its legacy of creativity and innovation for a world that can always use just a little more happiness.

- *Crushing: The Burden of Diabetes on Patients*: 1 in 10 Americans live with diabetes, making millions of tiny decisions to keep themselves alive. For the most resourced patients in America, the burden of diabetes still looms large over their heads — so what does that mean for patients without access to the best of the best in tools and treatments? In this session, join Colorado State Representative **Leslie Herod**, singer, songwriter, actor and member of the Grammy Award-nominated band *Jonas Brothers* **Nick Jonas**, Executive Vice President and COO of Dexcom **Jake Leach** and the Pastor of the Pattison United Methodist Church in Pattison, TX, **Rev. Mireya Martínez** as they share their perspectives that span the diabetic ecosystem to answer the question: are we doing enough?
- *Don't be a Drag, Just be a Queen*: 2022 saw a record number of anti-LGBTQ bills introduced across the country, and we've already seen one Texas lawmaker announce that he will introduce a bill to ban youth from attending drag shows next year. The heated political discourse has led to threats against Pride celebrations and drag shows around the world. We know these debates are negatively impacting LGBTQ youth — and that access to affirming spaces and representation is crucial to mental health. In this session, join drag queen, makeup artist, author and trans rights activist **Gottmik**, drag queen **Jaida Essence Hall**, attorney, activist, Adjunct Professor of Law at American University Washington College of Law and Director of Advocacy and Government Affairs for The Trevor Project **Preston Mitchum** and drag queen and model **Symone** as they discuss drag's historical roots and cultural significance today, why promoting self-expression is so important, and how we can all help create a more accepting world.
- *Have a Good Trip: Psychedelics in Film and TV*: Psychedelics are easy to stigmatize and criminalize. Case Study: the last 50 years. Enter GOOD TRIP STUDIOS, the psychedelic company with a mission to destigmatize psychedelics through entertainment and pop culture. Their movie *Have a Good Trip: Adventures in Psychedelics* was an official 2020 SXSW selection and launched as the #1 Netflix movie worldwide accumulating tens of millions of views in the first month. The documentary features A-list celebrities and artists discussing their personal psychedelic experiences and helped spark the current psychedelic renaissance. In this session, join comedian, actor and Creator and Host of *The Eric Andre Show* **Eric André**, Emmy Award-winning writer, producer and director **Donick Cary** (*Have a Good Trip*, *The Simpsons*), Global Impact Officer at MAPS (the Multidisciplinary Association for Psychedelic Studies) **Natalie Ginsberg** and Executive Producer and Showrunner of *The Eric Andre Show* **Mike Rosenstein** as they discuss how psychedelics are portrayed in media and how they have inspired artists and pop culture. They will also share exclusive clips and stories from other planets!
- *How Music, Entrepreneurship & Independence Intersect*: How can artists build careers off their music, own their intellectual property, and transcend into new ventures to build a multi-faceted company? Just ask the team behind EVGLE, a company that brings all verticals in-house spanning records, publishing, media, fashion and ventures. In this session, hear from *Billboard* R&B / Hip-Hop Rookie of the Year and multi-platinum artist,

producer and co-founder and CEO of EVGLE **Bixst**, co-founder and President of EVGLE **Victor Burnett**, co-founder and COO of EVGLE **Karl Fowlkes** and R&B/Hip Hop Reporter at *Billboard* **Heran Mamo** on how to take the necessary steps to build a successful entertainment company that transcends cultural boundaries.

- *Voting is a Civil Rights Issue*: American elections and democracy continue to be attacked in a ploy to justify rolling back civil liberties and voting rights when we should be expanding those rights and making it easier for everyone to participate in the democratic process. In this session, join Michigan Secretary of State **Jocelyn Benson**, President of the Drum Major Institute **Arndrea Waters King**, Chairman of the Board of the Drum Major Institute **Martin Luther King III**, civil rights leader **Ralph G. Neas** and founder and CEO of Tusk Philanthropies and the Mobile Voting Project **Bradley Tusk** as they share their insight into how we can expand access to voting for marginalized groups.

More Keynote Sessions for SXSW 2023 will be announced soon.

SXSW has also announced three art installations to be exhibited in its annual **Art Program** taking place March 10 - 19. The SXSW Art Program creates a platform for visual artists to connect with international leaders in the fields of music, film, and technology by showcasing innovative projects and hosting discussions during SXSW. Incorporated into the broader ecosystem of creativity at SXSW, The Art Program offers artists a unique platform to show their work within one of the most diverse, collaborative, and inventive communities in the world.

### **2023 SXSW Art Program:**

#### ***Mixanthropy* by Meichun Cai and Yiou Wang**

*Mixanthropy* is an ancient future myth of more-than-human shapeshifting bodies discussing the non-binary association between chimera and metamorphosis in culture, biology, and technology.

#### ***Quantum Jungle* by Robin Baumgarten**

*Quantum Jungle* is an interactive art installation that playfully visualizes Quantum Physics concepts on a large wall filled with 720 touch-sensitive springs and thousands of LEDs.

#### ***Ancestral Archives* in association with EY metaverse lab**

Ancestral Archives creates new connections with historically significant Black leaders of the past and future through an immersive experience combining AI-enabled chatbots and 3D virtual environments. This work is in deep collaboration between New Museum and the EY metaverse lab.

### **About SXSW**

SXSW dedicates itself to helping creative people achieve their goals. Founded in 1987 in Austin, Texas, SXSW is best known for its conference and festivals that celebrate the convergence of tech, film and television, music, education, and culture. An essential destination for global professionals, the annual March event features sessions, music, and comedy

showcases, film & TV screenings, exhibitions, professional development, and a variety of networking opportunities. SXSW proves that the most unexpected discoveries happen when diverse topics and people come together. SXSW 2023 will take place March 10 - 19, 2023 in Austin. For more information, please visit [sxsw.com](https://www.sxsw.com). To register for the event, please visit [sxsw.com/attend](https://www.sxsw.com/attend).

SXSW 2023 is sponsored by White Claw, Porsche, Itaù bank, and The Austin Chronicle.

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Editor's Note: Media Registration for SXSW is open until Wednesday, February 8, 2023. Please go to <https://www.sxsw.com/press-center/press-accreditation> to apply.

Press Contacts:  
Benjamin Perez  
Elizabeth Derczo  
Jody Arlington

[press@sxsw.com](mailto:press@sxsw.com)  
512 467-7979