

Meow Wolf Launches In Denver, Taking Visitors (Finally) To Convergence Station

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Sandra Wang, creative director for Meow Wolf Denver's Ossuary. Sept. 13, 2021.

Kevin J. Beaty/Denverite

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It's been four years of construction surrounded by plenty of mystery, but Meow Wolf's third outpost will finally open Friday in Denver.

But what can visitors expect when they walk in?

Step into the lobby of Denver's strangest new attraction and the adventure begins. Meow Wolf's Convergence Station offers an interactive galactic experience like few others. It's essentially a four-story art project mixed with immersive theme park designs and world-building.

Sponsor Message

From the transit-like lobby, visitors then decide for themselves on which of the four different worlds to travel to.

Do they head to the grimy metropolis of C Street or the calming natural world of Numina? How about the frozen space castle on Eemia or the catacombs of Ossuary? All roads lead to dozens of hidden rooms, intertemporal passageways and many new clues.



Kevin J. Beaty/Denverite
A bodega inside Meow Wolf Denver: Convergence Station. Sept. 13, 2021.



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Meow Wolf Denver: Convergence Station. Sept. 13, 2021.

Back in 2008, Meow Wolf's premise seemed simple enough when it was first created: create a space for artists to go above and beyond the typical gallery show, and make it an immersive experience. That became the group's calling card when it opened its first attraction in 2016 — in Santa Fe, New Mexico — called "House of Eternal Return." Following that, Meow Wolf's eclectic supermarket attraction "Omega Mart" debuted earlier this year in Las Vegas.

Over 300 artists contributed to Meow Wolf's Denver outpost. Of them, Meow Wolf says 20 percent identify as LGBTQ, 51 percent are women, and 38 percent are People of Color.

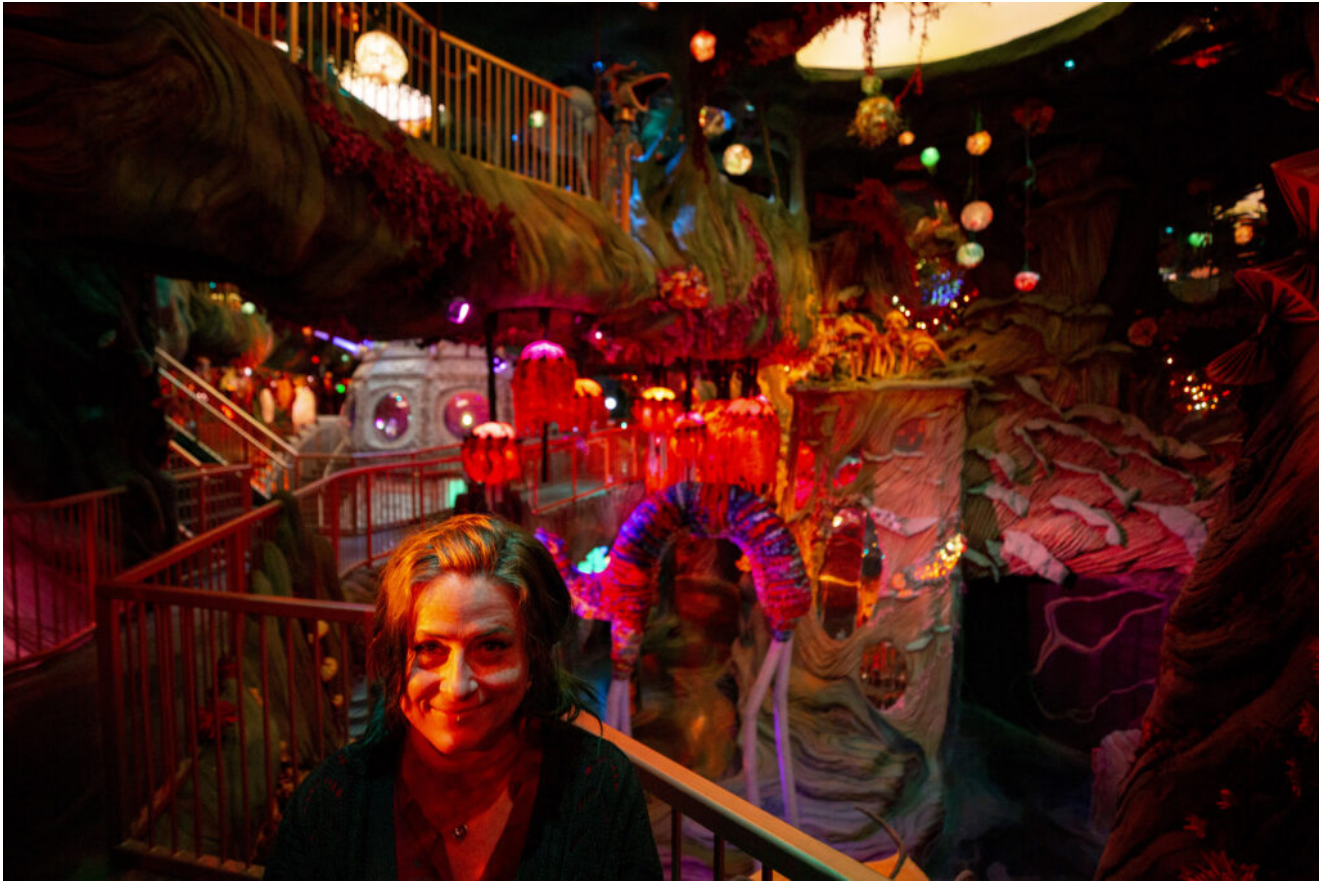
But Meow Wolf has had its share of controversy, too. A gender discrimination lawsuit by former Denver director Zoë Williams and charges of wage theft at its New Mexico location have soured some artists' view of the company. But there are still many artists excited to share their work on Meow Wolf's Denver spaceship, and the company says it has made a concerted attempt to better include the residents and history of its surrounding Sun Valley neighborhood in its work.

Andrea Thurber and her five-person artist collective Church of Many are just some of the over 100 Colorado artists whose work is now on display at Meow Wolf. The group's piece "Ruptured Time" is a meditation on memory, one of Convergence Station's central themes.



Kevin J. Beaty/Denverite

The entrance to a pizza parlor at Meow Wolf Denver: Convergence Station. Sept. 13, 2021.



Kevin J. Beaty/Denverite

Caity Kennedy, one of Meow Wolf's original founders, stands inside the collective's new Denver location. Sept. 13, 2021.

“It is meant to be a mix of a vintage living room and a brain,” Thurber said. “So what it is is a place to experience the simultaneous creation and degradation of memory. It's based on dementia and how brains interpret memory after they've been kind of degraded.”

The role of memory in Meow Wolf pays tribute to the past and plays with the idea of “What if?” Writer Erika Wurth partnered with artist Therin Zimmerman to imagine a colorful, futuristic Indigenous planet in “Help Save My World.” The piece acknowledges the 1864 Sand Creek Massacre, where U.S. soldiers killed more than 200 Cheyenne and Arapaho people in what is now southeastern Colorado. It also looks toward Denver's present-day indigenous community for inspiration.

“It's based on the idea of indigenous futurism, which is sort of inspired by afrofuturism,” Wurth said. “And ultimately the idea is with this piece, what would happen if, during the invasion, Colorado natives were allowed maybe to go to a different planet by some being and live on unfettered and uninterrupted.”

Inside Meow Wolf, not far from “Help Save My World,” lies “Mongovoo,” a meditative cave designed by a Denver-based Mongolian family of artists including Jennifer Tsogo. The space is meant to cleanse visitors of negative energy.



Kevin J. Beaty/Denverite

Artist Scott Hildebrant inside his hallway at Meow Wolf Denver: Convergence Station. Sept. 13, 2021.

“It's the first time for all Mongolians to, you know, [work] on this large scale. So, it's definitely a really big honor to represent our culture,” Tsogo said.

The list of references and tributes to Denver's past is long at Meow Wolf.

At other points in Convergence Station events and people from the city's past are remembered: An old RTD bus and the musical group Wheelchair Sports Camp pay respect to the Gang of 19, a group that fought for accessibility rights for disabled people in America. And nearby, a group of artists created the piece “Aquakota” in tribute to Denver artist Colin Ward who died in 2018.

Other artists at Meow Wolf pay tribute to Denver's gone but not forgotten local landmarks like the Denver Drumstick and the Cinderella City Mall.

Joanna Garner, Meow Wolf Denver's senior story creative director, said the idea of telling a story — Denver's past, its possible future — is what sets Meow Wolf apart from the host of other art museums or visual museums.

“There's all these opportunities for people to get deep into the world and the characters and uncover a deeper story and hopefully continue to engage in this exhibition and other exhibitions.”



Kevin J. Beaty/Denverite
An old RTD bus inside Meow Wolf Denver: Convergence Station. Sept. 13, 2021.

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