

Press release

Alex McDowell – Building the World of MINORITY REPORT
Lecture as part of the special exhibition “Things to Come” and the Berlinale Retrospective “Future Imperfect”

Sun., February 12, 2017, 6 p.m.
Deutsche Kinemathek – Museum für Film und Fernsehen

Production designer Alex McDowell created the look of Steven Spielberg’s MINORITY REPORT (USA 2002), set in a futuristic world in which crimes are no longer committed thanks to the elite “Precrime” police unit. Even before the screenplay had been written, McDowell’s coherent vision of a future world considered the effects of such preventive measures on areas such as architecture, urban planning and social interaction. This interdisciplinary creation of a fictional world provided more than just the visual backdrop for the story about John Anderton, head of the Precrime Unit; it had a significant influence on the screenplay. For Alex McDowell, this film represents both a sea change in his work as a production designer, and the birth of the concept of “world-building,” which he will illustrate in a one-hour lecture, using the example of MINORITY REPORT.

Biography

After completing studies at the London Central College of Art, in the late 1970s Alex McDowell founded a graphic design company, which created album covers for bands such as The Sex Pistols and The Clash, and artists such as Iggy Pop. With the launch of the music video channel MTV, McDowell began working as a production designer for advertisements and music videos. In the 1990s, he began working in Hollywood on films by directors such as Terry Gilliam, Steven Spielberg and Alex Proyas. For Steven Spielberg’s MINORITY REPORT (USA 2001/02), he hired several computer graphic artists to implement his ideas. Unlike many of his colleagues, McDowell does not distinguish between production design and visual effects. As one of the most accomplished proponents of the Previs technique – a kind of computer-generated 3D storyboard – Alex McDowell created one of the largest film sets ever for Spielberg’s THE TERMINAL (USA 2003/04). His method of working, in which he meticulously plans out all of the locations on a computer, down to details such as camera angles and lighting, creates a model, and then builds the set accordingly, distinguishes Alex McDowell from many production designers who use new computer techniques in order to avoid building complicated and costly physical sets.

An event held in cooperation with OSRAM GmbH, the lighting expert for many film and television productions as well as cinemas.

In English. Free admission.

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Location: Deutsche Kinemathek im Filmhaus am Potsdamer Platz, Event room, 4th floor, Potsdamer Straße 2, 10785 Berlin, www.deutsche-kinemathek.de



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Berlin, February 8, 2017

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Die Deutsche Kinemathek
wird gefördert durch



aufgrund eines Beschlusses
des Deutschen Bundestages