

THE ONE-STRAW REVOLUTION

An Exhibition as Ecology

Artists: Edgar Cael · Kyriaki Goni ·
· Eliana Otta · Citra Sasmita · Himali Singh Soin ·
· Bik Van der Pol · Nora Severios · Irene Kopelman ·
· Uriel Orlow · Denise Ferreira da Silva + Arjuna Neuman ·
Curator: iLiana Fokianaki

FRAMER
LAB/MED

Exhibition Dates

11 Feb—
19 May 2024

Opening Event

10 FEB
2024

Curator

iLiana Fokianaki

Exhibition Design

Katharina Sook Wilting
& Tal

Artists: Edgar Calel · Kyriaki Goni ·

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THE ONE-STRAW REVOLUTION

INTRODUCTION

BY JOSIEN PIETERSE AND ASHLEY MAUM

Framer Framed is proud to present *The One-Straw Revolution* curated by iLiana Fokianaki. We have closely followed and collaborated with Fokianaki in her role as founder and director of State of Concept Athens. There, she has staged an impressive programme guided by her research into the nation state and other formations of power, tracing their geopolitical and cultural influences.

For *The One-Straw Revolution*, we are excited to partner with Fokianaki on developing an aspect of her curatorial practice informed by the concept of 'permaculture' and, more broadly, notions of sustainability and permanence. The participating artists explore personal histories, human and non-human relationships, community relations, and institutional practice. These topics are engaged with the ever-increasing threat of the climate crisis pressing in at their edges. The works in the exhibition notably expose the overlapping nature of the climate crisis with issues around migration, loss of community and cultural identity, and colonial inheritance in its different forms.

In its programme, Framer Framed continually examines the colonial past and its ongoing impact in the present, on understandings of history, identity and neocolonial power relations. We firmly believe that the climate crisis and colonialism are inextricably linked. This relation has been explored in several projects at Framer Framed, including the most recent exhibitions *Charging Myths*, *Tanah Merdeka* and *Performing Colonial Toxicity* (2023).

In an earlier example, the exhibition *On the Nature of Botanical Gardens* (2020), curated by Sadiha Boonstra, laid bare the colonial mindset as it claimed to 'discover' the plant world. Botanical gardens extract and categorise plant specimens from around the world – enclosing them within their walls. At the same time, they completely leave out other species that are not deemed interesting to Western natural science or are not economically profitable. This creates a colonially driven division by

selectively including certain species, while completely excluding others. In the process, cultural, ancestral memory and Indigenous knowledge are unjustly appropriated, excluded if not completely erased.

The structural depletion of the earth, especially by the West, and the oppression of peoples and ecologies with colonial motive are strongly related. The continuous exploitation of the earth's resources without adequate measures to replenish or preserve them has resulted in widespread environmental degradation, including deforestation, soil erosion, and the pollution of air and water. There is, in short, a need to be mindful of the colonial roots of the unequal impacts of climate change – who is most vulnerable and who can adapt. And, at the same time, an importance in centring the experiences of Indigenous, feminist and other marginalised perspectives as we attempt these adaptations.

This exhibition delivers no dogmatic declaration of a world which should be but offers glimpses into worlds that already are. Importantly, the works demonstrate artistic strategies to respond to environmental crisis, moving beyond the potentially paralysing nature of such an existential threat. In an effort to foster this capability among young practitioners, Framer Framed initiated with artist and educator Dorine van Meel the temporary master's programme *Planetary Poetics* at the Sandberg Institute from 2023-2025. As we see presented in *The One-Straw Revolution*, the *Planetary Poetics* programme focuses on the need to formulate critical and imaginative positions toward the ecological crisis through constellations of co-resistance.

Across projects, we explore how we can learn from and with, and embrace alternative visions for this planet, beyond relations of property and extermination. As the chances of a global transition seem to slip further from realm of possibility and as we look across the world to see abuses of power, unjust wars – *The One-Straw Revolution* reminds us to look for seeds of transformation in this very same world, and in daily, tangible practices of opposition to power and its status quo.

Towards a Perma-Future

BY ILIANA FOKIANAKI

The search for a more sustainable development in the 'developed' world has, so far, been focusing too much on hardware updates, such as new technologies, economic incentives, policies and regulations, and too little on software revisions, that is cultural transformations affecting our ways of knowing, learning, valuing and acting together. The cultural software is, nevertheless, at least as much part of the fundamental infrastructure of a society as its material hardware.

– Sacha Kagan¹

In the summer of 2021, wildfires ravaged the suburbs of Athens. I could not leave my flat because various agents burning in abandoned factories had made the air dangerously toxic. My days were spent indoors with my dog, glued in front of a screen, seeing the fire devour everything. The heat – with fans humming in the apartment, and air pollution preventing us from using air-conditioning – left us both helpless and still. How ironic that a wildfire was forcing us to be more ecological. I had been working on the research platform The Bureau of Care for two years, but suddenly realised the weighty presence of the elephant in the room: it was unrealistic to discuss care, without considering environmental care as the principal umbrella under which we think all aspects of the ethics and politics of care.

Wildfires have been a phenomenon in various corners of the world for decades, but these last years are the worst on record. Global agribusiness already accounts for the destruction of virgin forests, and 11% of global greenhouse gas emissions. Together with fossil fuel, transport and construction, these are the most disruptive human activities. And yet, we live in a world where wanting less fossil fuel, less extraction, and less destruction is still considered somehow an 'activist' or 'radical' position, rather than an existential demand, a planetary practice for all. The Western, so-called 'developed' world should bear the brunt of this disaster, since 'first gear' economies and their societies pollute more. Unfortunately, the burden of climate disaster is not shared equally, and

even more tragically in the West, climate change deniers have sowed seeds of doubt against the urgency to change our cultural software. In these past decades, an ever-growing part of society believes that there is very little that we can do to change the current predicament we are in. Or that climate change is not as bad as it is portrayed to be. Additionally — and even more worryingly — there is a part of society that believes that climate change is fake news.

In the 1970s, scientists, thinkers, activists and cultural practitioners were already aware of the climate crisis and how fossil fuels and industrial farming contributed to our current ecological collapse. They raised questions about sustainability and began looking for methodologies that distinguished them from the *modus operandi* of the turbo-capitalist globalised world that was already forming by the mid-80s. Revisiting texts from that period, it was shocking to see how accurate predictions were and how many cultural practitioners were examining methods of averting climate disasters. Various seminal texts, research and methodologies were published on how to operate in non-intrusive and non-polluting ways on both micro and macro scales. One of these is *The One-Straw Revolution: An Introduction to Natural Farming* (1975), a groundbreaking book on ecological thought and practice, written by Masanobu Fukuoka, a Japanese farmer and philosopher. The title refers to the technique of scattering straw in a field post-harvest, following his philosophy of cultivating the earth with minimal waste and respect for preserving ecosystem balance. The method, absent of pesticides and fertilisers, focusing on minimal waste, still holds the solution for the radical challenges in the global system of food production and distribution; an issue that has only grown more urgent today. His methodologies propose a long-term approach, putting prolonged and thoughtful observation ahead of extractive and thoughtless labour, by looking at and learning from plants and animals and all their intersecting behaviours. His work is one of many that prompted scientists and scholars to coin the term ‘permaculture’ a portmanteau of ‘permanent culture — a philosophy and practice that emphasises working in harmony with and not against the ecosystems that we are a part of and dependent upon.

Permaculture was coined by scientists David Holmgren and Bill Mollison in 1978², their work aligning with Indigenous and traditional knowledge, rooted in local cultures, customs and practices. What drew me to investigate it more, was the concept of organising through rewilding, through

respect and a profound care and tenderness for non-human animals and flora, embracing interspecies coexistence that supports symbiosis rather than antagonism. Could we apply its working methods in the cultural realm, and consider a permanent culture as one that is sustainable for the future to come? But how can we think of culture and permanence in a world that is currently collapsing?

The One-Straw Revolution exhibition is inspired by the main principles of such strands of ecological thought and practice, that propagate a way of being that heeds the existential threat posed by the climate crisis. The works presented explore questions regarding ‘permanence’ and sustainability, deriving from a desire to connect with philosophies and practices operating counter to neoliberal and capitalist models. The exhibition is structured around the permaculture zone system, with a focus on zone 0: the human and her settlement, while addressing the spatial philosophy of permaculture, with a convivial criticality: less anthropocentric on the one hand, more critical of the so far human interventions that brought us where we are today.

Some of the works presented focus on human detachment from nature, highlighting the need to rewrite the way we understand our species in relation to the world. Bik Van der Pol’s contribution revisits their work with the Strenkali, a community along the river in Surabaya, Indonesia, who are fighting for their citizenship rights and making living near the river sustainable. The 2015 work is in dialogue with a recent piece developed in Norway and attempts to trace how Western subjects interact with the world — in particular, how we mine, excavate and otherwise exploit the land on which we exist. Nora Severios traces her ties to the land, specifically the mountains, through a recalibration of her own identity. She attempts to familiarise herself with the plant wisdom of her ancestors while examining the cliché of the Kurds as mountain dwellers, farmers and foragers.

Himali Singh Soin, addresses the mountain as a living organism, a witness of toxic destruction and exploitation by power systems. By using a real-life spy story in the Indian Himalayas as a canvas for speculations and reflections about nuclear culture, porosity, leakages, toxicity and love, spiritual-scientific entanglements, environmental catastrophe and post-nation states. Irene Kopelman equally explores the relationship between power structures and plant life, specifically focusing on

the Cinchona tree, which was used to create quinine, a drug used to treat malaria, and was transported throughout the colonies. She traces the roots of this tree and the entanglement of power systems with its expansion. Uriel Orlow is focusing on a different plant, *Artemisia afra*, which is also used for treating malaria. He presents not only its past but its present and future, through non-extractive relationships to natural resources as well as local and sustainable healthcare solutions and forms of solidarity, in countries such as the Democratic Republic of Congo, whose colonial and postcolonial economies have been dominated by various forms of extraction. Denise Ferreira da Silva & Arjuna Neuman's film essay (the third in a series of four that discuss the repetitive elements: air, earth, fire, water) questions how colonial, capital, hetero-patriarchal structures of power, perpetuate categorisation and difference, to break material ties to other humans, more-than-humans and deeper implicated bonds with our planet and beyond.

The legacies and cosmologies of Indigenous communities in South America, still guardians and protectors of any possibilities for a future, are apparent through the work of both Edgar Calel and Eliana Otta. Their works in this exhibition address the lives of communities that are closely connected to nature and have been affected by its destruction. The Guatemalan artist Calel reflects on his ancestry, connection to the environment, and pays tribute to the Indigenous communities of Guatemala's midwestern highlands, evoking memories of his family. Similarly, Otta, continues her work with the Indigenous Nuevo Amanecer Hawai community, based near the town of Satipo, in the Peruvian Amazon. Sharing life with them is a tribute to the deceased leaders of the community, celebrating their legacy and impact on the younger generations that continue to uphold their way of life. Both practices highlight non-human centric cosmologies and interspecies kinship.

Kyriaki Goni discusses the devastating effects of overtourism leading to the collapse of delicate ecosystems in Greece's the Aegean Sea. Proposing current neoliberal systems of cheap and fast holidays, as contributors to our ecological collapse. A fictional, near-future tale of a girl tracking the decline of bees in the Aegean archipelago, a real-life threat in my native Greece, aims to highlight the irresponsible harm we all do to the balance of nature through tourism. Similarly, Citra Sasmita's work revisits her native Bali. The once abundant connection with nature, described through traditional forms of art, poetry and liter-

ature, is evident in large paintings filled with female figures emerging from trees and flames. She employs the visual language of tradition and mythology, and signifiers of the binary nature/female, expressing her thoughts on contemporary societal questions that refer to gender equality in her native Bali.

The exhibition focuses on thought and practice that aspire for human and non-human intersectionality and the desire to build on ancient traditions and mandates of a non-proprietary culture of land and life. *The One-Straw Revolution* aims to connect a sustainable past with a sustainable future, ancestors with descendants. It focuses on the legacy of knowledge systems that have been thriving despite of and separate from heteronormative patriarchal Western hegemonies and colonial and neocolonial violence. Through artistic practices that call for degrowth, it explores examples and imaginaries of sustainable futures. As one of the works declares: the aim is for a world to be drafted where subjectivity is unbound from the mind alone but rebound to the world. The works are spatially composed so that we re-think our habitat, our home and our immediate surroundings differently.

The One-Straw Revolution proposes that we consider an exhibition as a form of an alternative ecology, in which artworks contribute to shaping a shared perma-future: a future where we exist otherwise as humans in the world. Departing from our catastrophic implication in the Pyrocene and by re-considering our role as fellow ecosystem contributors. In a world slowly heading towards collapse, to be able to imagine and contemplate such a future, through a new cultural software that changes our ways of knowing, learning and being on the planet, can ignite the sparks of a revolution.

1.
Sasha Kagan: *Toward Global (Environ)Mental Change – Transformative Art and Cultures of Sustainability*, Heinrich Böll Stiftung (2012), p. 14

2.
Bill Mollison: *Introduction to Permaculture*, Tagari Publications (1991), p. 6



The One-Straw Revolution, Framer Framed (2024)



Edgar Calel - Music for Our Grandmothers and Grandfathers (2023)



ARTISTS/ WORKS



Edgar Calel - *Music for Our Grandmothers and Grandfathers* (2023)

EDGAR CALEL

Qi Q'ojom ri Qatit Qa Mama' / Música para nuestras abuelas y abuelos / Music for Our Grandmothers and Grandfathers (2023)

Stones and radios
Variable dimensions

I open my eyes, the darkness of dawn fades, and the first rays of sunlight pierce the thick fog. I offer, then, to you grandfathers and grandmothers the smell of incense, tobacco, pine, and copal; as thanks for life and memory. I thank you once, twice, and three times.

Words have limits, that is why I bring music to share my feelings with you, my ancestors who are no longer in this dimension of matter.

Edgar Calel (Guatemala) uses various media, to explore the complexities of the Indigenous experience, through the lens of Mayan Kaqchikel cosmovision, spirituality, rituals, community practices and beliefs, in juxtaposition with the systematic racism and exclusion faced by Guatemala's Indigenous people. Notable solo exhibitions include at SculptureCenter, New York (2023) and at Proyectos Ultravioleta, Guatemala City (2021). Additionally, Calel has also participated in numerous international group exhibitions and participated in artistic residencies like the 35th São Paulo Biennial, Brazil (2023); Liverpool Biennial, Liverpool (2023) and the 14th Gwangju Biennial, South Korea (2023). His works



Kyriaki Goni - *Telling the Bees* (2024)

are part of the permanent collections of the National Collection of the Netherlands, Hammer Museum, USA, Tate Modern, UK and Museo Nacional Centro de Arte Reina Sofía, Spain among others.

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KYRIAKI GONI

Telling the Bees (2024)

Installation

Variable dimensions

In the distant future, on an island amidst the environmentally ravaged Aegean Sea, a woman is gifted an ancient bee basket *smarologos* (σμαρολόγος). Using materials from her surroundings, she meticulously restores the bee basket and sets out on a quest for the last surviving bee swarm within the archipelago.

Bees, one of Earth's most resilient inhabitants, are vital for preserving ecological equilibrium. They bear witness to the devastating effects of the ongoing climate crisis, ultimately leading to their disappearance. Is resistance against neoliberal extractive practices, particularly those linked to the pervasive influence of tourism in the Aegean, that has obliterated other human activities and professions of island life. The bee basket serves as a symbolic catalyst for asserting potential perma-futures.

Kyriaki Goni's (Greece) multimedia installations critically and poetically touch upon political, affective and environmental aspects of Big Tech. Listening to the

deep past, she explores extractive practices on bodies, landscapes, other forms of intelligence, alternative networks and infrastructures, and possible futures. Her installations seek to connect the local with the (inter)planetary, the fictional with the scientific.

Recent solo shows include *The Breeder* Gallery, Athens, *Blenheim Walk* Gallery, Leeds and *SixtyEight Art Institute*, Copenhagen among others. Goni holds a bachelor's and a master's degree in social and cultural anthropology, as well as in fine and digital arts.

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ELIANA OTTA

To Beatriz and the Sacred Hole (2023)

Textile prints & audio

140 cm x 95 cm & 156 cm x 134 cm

Sounds, voices and memories from visits to the Peruvian Indigenous Community Nuevo Amanecer Hawaii, where I met the family of Mauro Pío, a leader assassinated in 2013 by employees of a wood-felling company. Beatriz, his daughter, shared stories about her father and hosted us each time we visited the land that the community protects.

This narration follows up on *Virtual Sanctuary for Fertilizing Mourning*, a project Eliana Otta has been working on since 2021 focusing on intimate relationships with more-than-human beings, traditional plant healing and soothing dreams.



The One-Straw Revolution, Framer Framed (2024)



Eliana Otta - *To Beatriz and the Sacred Hole* (2023)

The Peruvian artist **Eliana Otta** is currently focusing on what she calls ‘fertilising mourning’: collective mourning as a decolonial and regenerative practice capable of dismantling hierarchical binarisms, like the opposition between life and death. She has a master’s degree in cultural studies and completed a PhD program at the Academy of Fine Arts, Vienna. She creates spaces for sharing intimacy, trust and curiosity, often combining pedagogical, curatorial and editorial work. She is a former resident of Gapado AiR, Capacete, Sommerakademie im Zentrum Paul Klee, among others. She co-founded the artists collective Bisagra in Lima, the ecofeminist collective Mouries in Athens and coordinated the curatorial team that made the permanent exhibition

at Lugar de la Memoria, la Tolerancia y la Inclusión Social in Lima.

NORA SEVERIOS

Keeping Up With the Kurds (2023)

Sheep wool, pine resin, bamboo, madder, log wood
Variable dimensions
170 cm x 50 cm x 10 cm

The fragile stilt objects are inspired by felted wool coats ‘kepeneks’ (worn by semi-nomadic shepherds in Kurdish Regions) as well as shepherds from southern France walking on stilts



Nora Severios - *Keeping Up With the Kurds* (2023)

through mud and high water, practised until the 19th century. The wool coats function as a house, while the material provides protection and transmittance between the carrying body and the surroundings. The third stilt allows the shepherd some rest and balance. With the title *Keeping up with the Kurds* the artist compares her heritage and identity with watching a reality show.

***Samtfußrübling und Salbei* (2023)**

Pencil drawing on paper
30 cm x 22 cm

The pencil drawings with the title *Samtfußrübling und Salbei* depict upturned stems of *Flammulina velutipes* and *Salvia officinalis*, that develop into figures consisting almost entirely of legs. The medicinal fungi and herbs are bare without their leaves or caps. They move through a vast landscape like shepherds on stilts; the four drawings join together symbiotically.

Plants, mushrooms, and animals attempt to form a symbiosis in both pieces. **Nora Severios'** works oscillate between resilience and fragility. Her tendency to create works that express a delicate balance between gravity and suspension, control and taming, demonstrates her curiosity for the process-based act of creation in art.

Based in Austria, where her works are part of the Federal Artothek; Severios has been awarded the Mentoring-Program-Kunst alumni scholarship of

the Academy of Fine Arts Vienna (2022) and the Kunsthalle Wien Prize (2021). She graduated from the Vienna Academy of Fine Arts, spent a year at ASFA Athens, as well as residences in Beirut and Los Angeles.

Exhibitions include SZIPE's parallel Exhibition, *Shenzhen* (2022), *Hand-spells. Kunsthalle Wien Prize* (2021), *The Use of Landscape and Galeria Posibilia* (2021).

IRENE KOPELMAN

***A Tree With Complementary Colours* (2023)**

Colour pencil on paper
297 mm x 420 mm

This series of drawings by Irene Kopelman follows a summer spent at the Galapagos as a guest at the Darwin Research Station. Kopelman collaborated with restoration ecologist Heinke Jäger, where she spent several days in a field full of *Cinchona* trees, sketching and reflecting on their invasive nature. Native to the Andean region of South America, *Cinchona* was introduced elsewhere by European colonisers to India and Indonesia for quinine production, a malaria treatment. In the Galapagos, it became highly invasive, affecting local ecosystems. Long before European colonisation of South America, Indigenous Andean peoples used *Cinchona* bark medicinally, as seen in preserved artefacts from the Moche civilization (100–800 CE). Plant invasion is a consequence of the aftermath of coloni-



Irene Kopelman - *A Tree With Complementary Colours* (2023)

sation and climate catastrophes. It serves as a reminder of the link between colonial violence and environmental disaster.

Irene Kopelman (born in Argentina) is a visual artist whose practice involves working with complex scientific topics. Her approach to art combines artistic exploration with scientific fieldwork, resulting in a diverse body of work through various collaborations with institutions. She has used artistic production to gain knowledge and understanding about the world around us, combining an interdisciplinary approach and a long-term commitment to environmental issues. In 2002, Kopelman was artist-in-residence at the Rijksakademie van beeldende Kunsten in Amsterdam.

She has participated in numerous solo and group exhibitions. She currently divides her time between Amsterdam, Argentina and the regions where her work and research take her.



Uriel Orlow - *Learning from Artemisia* (2022)

URIEL ORLOW

Learning from Artemisia (2022)

Video installation and wood supports
314 cm x 400 cm x 30 cm

Malaria continues to be a major public health issue, with drug-resistant parasites causing deaths every few minutes. Artemisia afra, a plant used in traditional Chinese medicine, was discovered in the '70s to effectively treat and prevent malaria. It can be taken as an infusion and is locally sustainable, but it's not recommended by the World Health Organisation, which appears to favour the pharmaceutical industry. Uriel Orlow worked with a women's cooperative in Lumata, Democratic Republic of Congo to grow Artemisia afra, which funds a collective health insurance for themselves and their families.

However, due to lack of support, few people know about this home-grown treatment.

Uriel Orlow, a Swiss-born artist with a diasporic background, lives between Lisbon, London and Zurich. His research-based, process-oriented practice is often in dialogue with other disciplines. Projects engage with residues of colonialism, spatial manifestations of memory, social and ecological justice, blind spots of representation and plants as political actors. His multimedia installations focus on specific locations, micro-histories and forms of haunting. He has exhibited his work at major international survey exhibitions, including the Venice Biennale, Manifesta, and biennials in Berlin, Dakar, Kochi, and more. He is the 2023 recipient of the Swiss Grand Prix for Art/Prix Meret Oppenheim.



Citra Sasmita - *Memorabilia from Far Away Land* (2022)

CITRA SASMITA

Memorabilia from Far Away Land (2022)

Painting on textile
165 cm x 300 cm

Enigma (2022)

Painting on textile
104 cm x 220 cm

Citra Sasmita's work focuses on unravelling the myths and misconceptions of Balinese art and culture. She is also deeply invested in questioning a woman's place in the social hierarchy and seeks to upend the normative construct of gender using the visual language of tradition and mythology, to comment on contemporary societal questions that refer to gender equality and our relationship to nature. Sasmita draws inspiration from the Kamasan Balinese painting tradition and its symbolic language. Her works showcase a geography of female figures, surrounded by flora in flames and other natural elements, playfully composed in an expression of what she calls pansexual energy. While rooted in mythological thinking with specific Hindu and Balinese references, the scenes are equally part of the process of imagining a secular and empowered mythology for a post-patriarchal future for women in the region and beyond.

Citra Sasmita is a contemporary artist from Bali, who is a self-taught painter, that initially pursued literature at Udayana University and studied physics at Ganesha University of Education. She has been painting for more than a decade. One of her long-term projects, *Timur Merah Project; Harbor of*

Restless Spirits was presented in Garden of Six Seasons, Para Site Hong Kong. Notable achievements include winning the Gold Award at UOB Painting of The Year 2017, participation in the 2023 São Paulo Biennial, Brazil, Biennale Yogyakarta in 2019 and her solo show *Ode To The Sun*, at Yeo Workshop, Gillman Barracks Singapore in 2020.

HIMALI SINGH SOIN

Static Range (2022)

Print on paper, envelopes
Variable dimensions

Nanda Devi, the goddess of happiness, is the patron mountain of the Indian Himalayas. During the Cold War in 1965, the CIA collaborated with the Indian Intelligence Bureau to site a nuclear-powered surveillance device on the mountain to intercept Chinese nuclear missile data. *Static Range* is a multidisciplinary and multi-limbed project using a real-life spy story in the Indian Himalayas as a canvas for speculations and reflections about nuclear culture, porosity, leakages, toxicity and love, spiritual-scientific entanglements, environmental catastrophe and post-nation states. This series of transmissions that make up the 'static range', include an animated stamp, letters, music, embroidery, healing, planting and a performance installation.



Himali Singh Soin - *An Affirmation* (2022)

An Affirmation (2022)

Video installation, 15 min

An Affirmation is the second in a series of films developed for the body of *Static Range* and takes the form of a letter written by 'mountain' and addressed to 'my friend, the atom.' Soin filmed on the periphery of Sellafield, a decommissioned nuclear plant nestled in the picturesque Lake District in northwest England. As the mountain laments the decay of its familial bonds with the surrounding environment, the effects of radioactivity begin to glitch the landscape. As the mountain tells the atom, 'This letter holds many elsewheres together.'

Himali Singh Soin is a writer and artist based between London and Delhi. She uses metaphors from outer space and the natural environment to construct imaginary cosmologies of interferences, entanglements, deep voids, debris, delays, alienation, distance and intimacy. In doing this, she thinks through ecological loss, and the loss of home, seeking shelter somewhere in the radicality of love. Her speculations are performed in audio-visual, immersive environments.



Denise Ferreira da Silva & Arjuna Neuman - *Soot Breath // Corpus Infinitum* (2020-2022)

DENISE FERREIRA DA SILVA & ARJUNA NEUMAN

Soot Breath // Corpus Infinitum (2020-2022)

Video installation, 39 min

In *Soot Breath // Corpus Infinitum*, a film devoted to tenderness, Denise Ferreira da Silva and Arjuna Neuman ask: Can tenderness dissolve total violence? Can tears displace total extraction? To achieve this, they reimagine the human and its subject-formation away from predatory desire and lethal abstraction, away from the mind and eyes and noble senses, away from total extraction and its articulations as ethnogra-

phy, border regimes, slavery, sexual abuse, trade and mining.

They instead turn to skin, resonance, and tenderness as the raw material for our reimagined earthy sensibility.

Denise Ferreira da Silva is an artist and philosopher. Her work reflects and speculates on themes crucial to contemporary philosophy, aesthetics, political theory, black thought, feminist thought, and historical materialism. She is the author of *Toward a Global Idea of Race* (2007), *Unpayable Debt* (2022) amongst many other publications.



Bik Van der Pol - *Jogo Kali / Guarding the River* (2015)

Arjuna Neuman was born on an airplane, which is why he has so many passports. He is an artist, filmmaker, and writer and co-founder of www.archiveofbelonging.org – a resource database for migrants and refugees. Neuman uses the essay as a multi-perspective and intrinsically future-oriented guiding form that underpins his experimental research and creative approach.

Denise Ferreira da Silva and Arjuna Neuman's collaboration includes the film *Serpent Rain* (2016), *4 Waters-Deep Implicancy* (2018), *Soot Breath // Corpus Infinitum* (2020-2022), *Ancestral Clouds* (2023). Their films have

been exhibited at major art venues, such as MACBA (Barcelona), Kunsthalle Wien, (Vienna) the Pompidou Centre (Paris), Whitechapel Gallery, The 56th Venice Biennale, The Haus Der Kulturen Der Welt (Berlin), Centre for Contemporary Art (Glasgow) and more.

BIK VAN DER POL

Jogo Kali / Guarding the River (2015)

Banner, 8 m x 2 m

Video, 14 minutes

The Strenkali, the riverside communities that stretch 15-20 km along the river in Surabaya, Indonesia are undocumented residents. They continuously face threats of eviction from the riverside areas and have formed Paguyuban Warga Strenkali Surabaya, the Surabaya Riverside Residents Association, to facilitate their political struggle. They are fighting for their rights to be citizens and improve their living conditions and make the river sustainable. During the 16th Jakarta Biennale (2015), Bik Van der Pol collaborated with Strenkali residents to highlight their current circumstances, aspirations, and obstacles. Together, they produced two copies of their existing banner, which depicted the chronology of their struggle to safeguard the river and its inhabitants, incorporating the expression 'ideas you believe to be absurd eventually lead to success' in Javanese.

To Gather on a Mountain (2023)

Video installation, 20 min

In May 2023, Bik Van der Pol led a group of participants on a hike up Mount Løvstakken in Norway to reflect on how we engage with the world and what we take from it and give back in return. The gathering on a mountain brought together the knowledge and experience of a diverse group of indi-

viduals with the aim of thinking about mankind's responsibility towards the planet that we share with other living beings, and determining how our collective future should look like. Bik Van der Pol ask: What is the 'public good', and who benefits from the actions that are supposed to be 'good'? How do we assess the consequences?

Liesbeth Bik and Jos van der Pol

are artists who work together as **Bik Van der Pol** since 1995. Their practice aims to understand and articulate the ways in which art can create space for speculation and imagination within the public realm. Setting the conditions for encounter, Bik Van der Pol's working process allows for the continuous reconfiguration of place, history and public. Their practice is site-specific and collaborative, and includes publishing, writing, and curatorial work. They see dialogue as a mode of transfer, where the element of 'passing through' is vital, as it is temporal and implies action and the development of new forms of discourse. Their practice is both a catalyst and a result of this method.



CURATOR

iLiana Fokianaki is a curator, theorist and educator based in Bern, Athens and Rotterdam and the new Director of Kunsthalle Bern, starting spring 2024. Her research focuses on formations of power and how they manifest under the influence of geopolitics, national identity and cultural and anthropological histories, with a special interest in the ethics and politics of care.

In 2013 she founded State of Concept Athens, the first non-profit institution of its kind in Greece, which she directs to this day. State of Concept has worked with artists such as Forensic Architecture, Kader Attia, Sanja Ivekovic, Laure Prouvost, Jonas Staal, Metahaven and others, while collaborating with international curators such as Antonia Alampi, WhW and Nick Aikens.

Fokianaki has curated exhibitions for Reina Sofia Museum Madrid, KADIST Foundation, La Colonie Paris, e-flux New York, Museum of Contemporary Art Ljubljana (MG+MSUM), Galerija Nova Zagreb and others, and has curated public programs for Vera List Center for Art and Politics, Het Nieuwe Instituut among others.

Her books *GOSSIPS-womXn gather* and *The Bureau of Care: A Handbook*, will be published by Archive Books in 2024.

EXHIBITION DESIGN

We build a place to hide, a house, a fortress, a monument, a memento, a marker in nature. The combination of excitement and exhaustion carries a lack of patience to it, we cannot wait for the satisfaction of having built this. One of the archetypes of construction is the art of stacking building blocks. These structures, built by the brick or bale of our earliest architectural memories, resonate with an innocent longing for a home – and a garden.

Katharina Sook Wilting is a multidisciplinary designer and art director with a focus on space and objects as a means to challenge entrenched perspectives, shifting attitudes and activate the audience. Viewing the world through her Korean-German identity, she addresses topics such as Asian diaspora, cultural heritage, critical race theory, and intersectional feminism. Katharina also showcases her versatility as a creative, through her writing and work as a journalist. With a deep commitment to collaborative approaches in all her work, she aims to build diverse and collective networks of like-minded allies.

Tal is an Amsterdam-based designer and visual artist using graphic design, 3D, video, sculpture and spatial installation. Across her work there is a deep owe to the ancient. By rendering history with poetics and humour through the vernacular of contemporary culture, commerce and trend forecasting she hopes to create new imagery intertwined with the rich lineage of the past. Through this approach, Tal's work strives to resonate in the present, serve as a marker for the future, while still delicately blurring its sense in time.

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