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2023

GALLERY 3
NIEUWE INSTITUUT
ROTTERDAM

COLONIAL ENDURANCE

DETECTING THE ALGORITHM
OF VIOLENCE IN INFRASTRUCTURES

EXHIBITION BOOKLET

Curated by TOK /
Anna Bitkina and Maria Veits



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COLONIAL ENDURANCE

DETECTING THE ALGORITHM OF VIOLENCE IN INFRASTRUCTURES

The exhibition project “Colonial Endurance. Detecting the Algorithm of Violence in Infrastructures” explores persistent mechanisms of exploitation, suppression and discrimination deeply rooted within infrastructural and architectural systems — both historical and present. The project focuses on decolonial analysis of built environments and industrial infrastructures that have reinforced dependency and hierarchy between Western Europe and its colonies as well as between Russia and the countries that used to be a part of the Russian Empire and the USSR. Additionally, it investigates how alternative principles of care, horizontality and knowledge exchange can be integrated into contemporary spatial and infrastructural visionary policies.

The exhibition showcases recurring strategies of occupation and colonisation that are often seamlessly ingrained within construction processes and appear as instruments of suppression of another territory, context, culture, locality, etc. Detecting this so-called algorithm of violence in various geographic and time contexts, the exhibition examines how remnants of colonial processes and imperialist vision continue to endure through architectural and industrial heritage as well as within ecological landscapes. Research-driven artistic projects at the exhibition call for a critical reevaluation of this persistence, as much of it was established on principles of intrusion towards both people and nature. The idea of looking at the colonial heritage through its industrial aspect that includes extraction, processing, transportation and other infrastructures is stimulated



by the intention to understand which alternative models of economic, political and infrastructural relations should come instead of them.

The ongoing military and energetic crisis in Europe demands additional cognitive tools to study the complexity of Russian imperialism and Soviet and post-Soviet colonialism alongside the already well researched notion of accelerated global capitalism and Western compromise. By including examples of Russian inner colonialism and its enduring colonial relations with the countries that were once a part of the Soviet Union the exhibition expands the scholarship of forms of contemporary coloniality. Due to interdependent, and often traumatic, economic and political history many of these countries are still connected or bear remnants of partially operational or neglected industrial heritage and communication infrastructures. Studying these connections through their architectural embodiment contributes to the knowledge of different histories, formats, mutations and consequences of imperialism, colonialism, and militarism. The exhibition also detects manifestations of the post-colonial conditions of the countries affected by European colonialism and its impact on global politics and the environment.

In their investigative projects artists challenge and undermine the social structures and institutions aimed at organising our lives and imagine architectural structures and conditions which could potentially host useful mechanisms for future common and non-violent spatial propositions. The project “Colonial Endurance” serves as a platform for discovering and stimulating loopholes in the predetermined social reality, which is based on principles of violence and inequality. Collectively and individually, the exhibition participants develop artistic and scientific tools that could break systemic algorithmic violence.

The exhibition is a part of the bigger project that started with a durational online laboratory, during which most of the exhibition projects have been elaborated with help of artists, experts and researchers. The laboratory and exhibition results will be presented in the form of an open digital archive at the end of 2023.

**SELINE
BAUMGARTNER**

IN A MOMENT OF TENDERNESS

Interactive installation. 2023

Colonial and military violence has an enduring traumatic impact on both humanity and nature, leaving scars that persist for generations. Inherited trauma is ingrained in the very fabric of our existence, embedded within our DNA code and imprinted as a lasting element of genetic memory. Without genuine acknowledgment and healing, this trauma festers collectively, perpetuating cycles of violence and oppression.

The interactive installation *In a Moment of Tenderness* by Seline Baumgartner, provides a safe and nurturing space to confront and alleviate trauma, by engaging in the empowering, self-healing act of humming. Humming has long been regarded as a therapeutic practice, promoting rejuvenation, introspection and renewal. In highly controlled contexts and in situations of censorship, it may become a form of resistance, a means to assert one's presence and maintain a sense of autonomy.

The project takes the form of a collaboration with displaced and traumatized individuals in





Switzerland, focusing on the therapeutic use of humming sounds, frequencies and vibrations to cope with fear. A collection of these humming sounds is incorporated into the soundtrack composed for the installation, creating a harmonious and transformative experience.

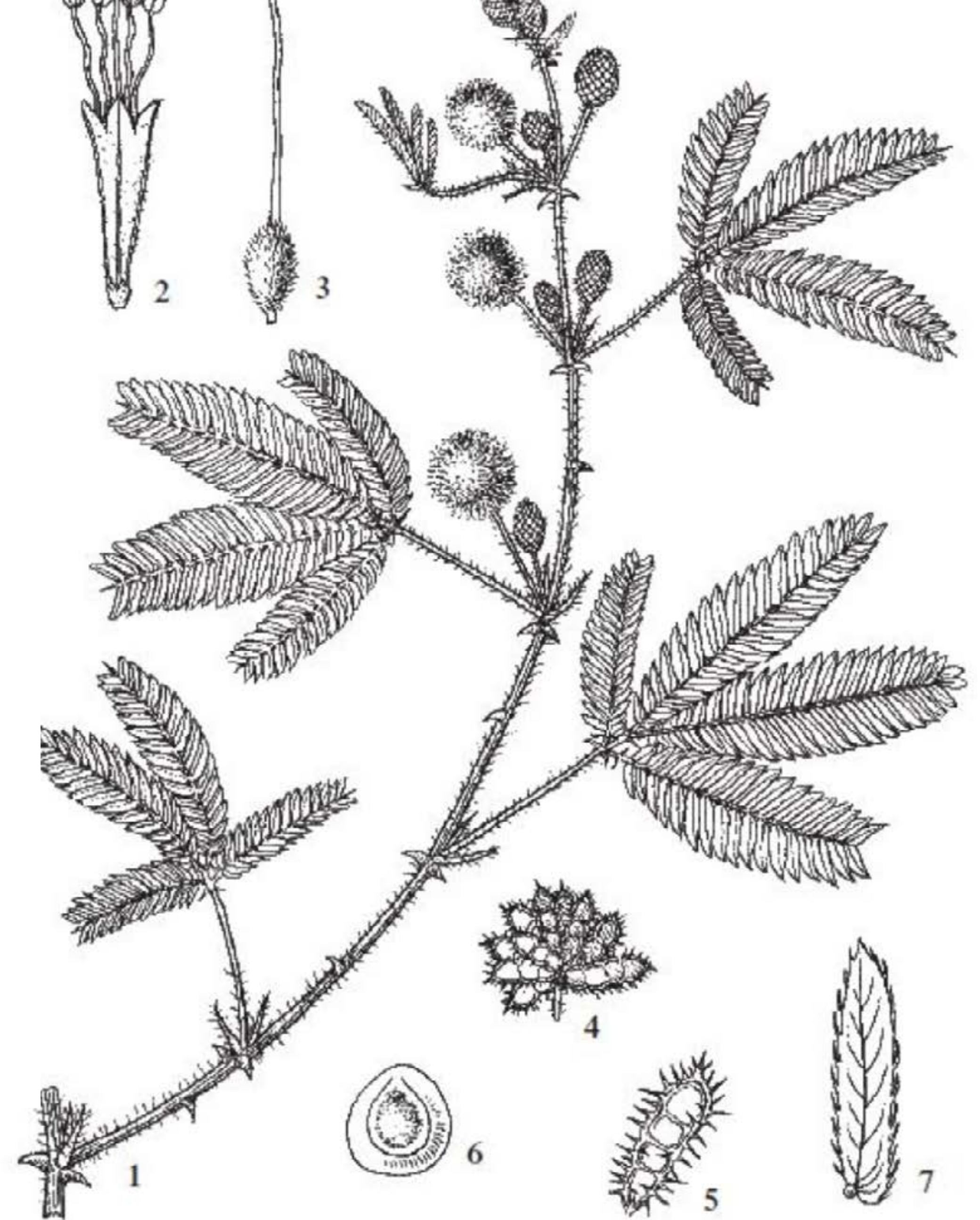
A suspended structure constructed with natural fiber rope forms a cone shape within the exhibition space, inviting guests to enter and find refuge within its perimeters. Rocks collected by the workshop participants anchor the ropes and symbolize personal strength. Viewers are encouraged to wear large baskets on their heads, creating a sheltered space to engage in the practice of humming and accompanying movements. This interactive installation provides an opportunity for self-reflection and connection, allowing the exploration of sources of strength and a shared experience of healing. Can we collectively create moments of radical hope?

Take a seat, take a basket (as a head cover) and hum with us.



Seline Baumgartner is an artist and researcher formerly based in Brooklyn, New York, and currently living in Zurich. Through her collaborative and multi-disciplinary practice, Baumgartner carefully observes the patterns and grammar of individuality and group dynamics. She is interested in artistic approaches that have the potential to contribute to healing processes.

Seline Baumgartner holds a master's degree in Fine Arts from the ZHdK in Zurich (2021). Her solo exhibitions include *Time to Lose*, Kunst und Bau, Tanzhaus Zürich (2023); *Apart from us, la cápsula*, Zürich (2022); *Next to the Sink* with Vicky Shick, Danspace Project, NYC (2019); *Let it Linger* with Vicky Shick, The Kitchen, NYC (2017); *Nothing Else*, Tanzhaus NRW, Düsseldorf (2016); *Nothing Else*, Centre Culturel Suisse, Paris, (2015); *As Everything Fades*, 83 Pitt Street, NYC (2015); *Time to Lose*, Art Cube, Artist Studios, Jerusalem (2015); In 2013-2014, artist-in-residence at LMCC Workspace and the Skowhegan School of Painting and Sculpture. In 2014 she was the laureate of the Dr. Georg and Josi Guggenheim Foundation's Award and her videos are part of collections such as Kunsthaus in Zurich, Aargauer Kunsthaus in Aarau and Goetz Collection in Munich. Her work has been published in Artforum Magazine, New York Times, Kunstbulletin and Journal le Phare, Paris.



**DENISE
BERTSCHI**

CONFIDENTIAL

3-screen video installation with soundtrack,
10 min. 2018

The 3-screen video installation *Confidential* is a part of the artists' wider series titled *Neutrality as an Agent*, collated and produced over the course of Bertschi's numerous trips to South Africa to research the role of Switzerland in Apartheid South Africa. Drawing on archives, architecture and the urban fabric of Johannesburg and Pretoria, she brings to light traces of history and delves into the self-serving ways (Swiss) neutrality is put to use in extractive economies of the Swiss-South African gold trade.

At the National Archives of South Africa, she discovered two archive boxes with correspondence from the 1950s concerning the gold trade dealings of the Société de Banque Suisse (SBS; now UBS) and the South African Apartheid state. She thereupon chose to pay a personal visit to the site, where these letters were written. The video *Confidential* (2018) thus constitutes a cartographic spatialisation





of six buildings in Pretoria and Johannesburg's former Central Business District (CBD), which at the time of the veritable "goldrush" seemed destined to become an entirely white "African New York City." We glimpse glass and concrete facades, and the old signs of businesses that have long since relocated or been abandoned for good — but above all, we sense the striking absence of a history carefully buried behind the official version of the past.

● Denise Bertschi

Denise Bertschi is a doctoral researcher and artist at Arts of Sciences Laboratory at EPFL Lausanne. Her artistic research is located at the intersection of visual culture, architecture and history. She critically investigates not only archives, but landscapes, the built environment and their colonial entanglements, specifically as related to Switzerland's role in extra-european expansion. Her academic and artistic work takes the form of video installations, book publications and films and raises questions around cultural myths, such as Swiss neutrality.

In 2020, Denise Bertschi was awarded the Manor Art Prize at the Aargauer Kunsthaus. In 2019 and 2022, she was awarded the Most Beautiful Swiss Book award for her monographs. Her work is widely exhibited at the CCS Centre Culturel Suisse in Paris, the Swiss National Museum in Zürich, the Fotomuseum Winterthur, Artsonje in Seoul, Artivist in Johannesburg and the LACA Los Angeles. She was previously a Getty Research Summer Fellow (Los Angeles) and artist in residence with Pro Helvetia and La Becque. She has published several monographs entitled *State Fiction. The Gaze of the Swiss Neutral Mission in the Korean DMZ* (Centre de la Photographie Genève, 2021), *Strata. Mining Silence* (Aargauer Kunsthaus, 2020) and her latest book, the co-edited volume *Unearthing Traces. Dismantling the imperialist entanglements of archives, landscapes and the built environment* (EPFL Press, 2023).



TANJA ENGELBERTS

DEAD RIVER

We Form, 4 panels of 42 x 100 cm, ceramic
glazed with Rhône river clay
We Exhale, video, 19'28" (loop), 4K / 16:9, color
2023

Over the course of the early 20th century and culminating in the 1950s, commercial trade on the Rhône River necessitated the construction of canals, flood dikes, the establishment of nuclear power plants and chemical industries. The installation of this infrastructure transformed the once powerful and untamed river into a hydraulic object, complicating any strict distinctions between nature and technology. Inspired by Bruno Latour's Parliament of Things, in which he argues that law and politics should not only be organized around people, but between all things and life, Tanja Engelberts examines the river from an animistic point of view. She imagines what it might be like to be a fast-flowing river, slowly gathering artifacts over the course of the 600 kilometers of its trajectory.

The Rhône originates in the glaciers of Switzerland and flows with a fast current through the south of France and out into the Mediterranean Sea. It accumulates sediment and chemicals as it moves through the Rhône Valley, carrying fluoroalkyl (PFAS), radionuclides, plastic waste and pesticides. The river's sediment carries a hidden history, preserving Roman artifacts





dating back 2000 years. Engelberts used clay sourced along the riverbanks to create ceramic relief landscapes. She did this by pressing clay into laser cut wooden panels, which resulted in the emergence of photographic reliefs, an abstract landscape rendered in ceramic. The clay's unpredictability during the firing process speaks to the unruliness of the material itself, attesting to the river's essence and vitality.

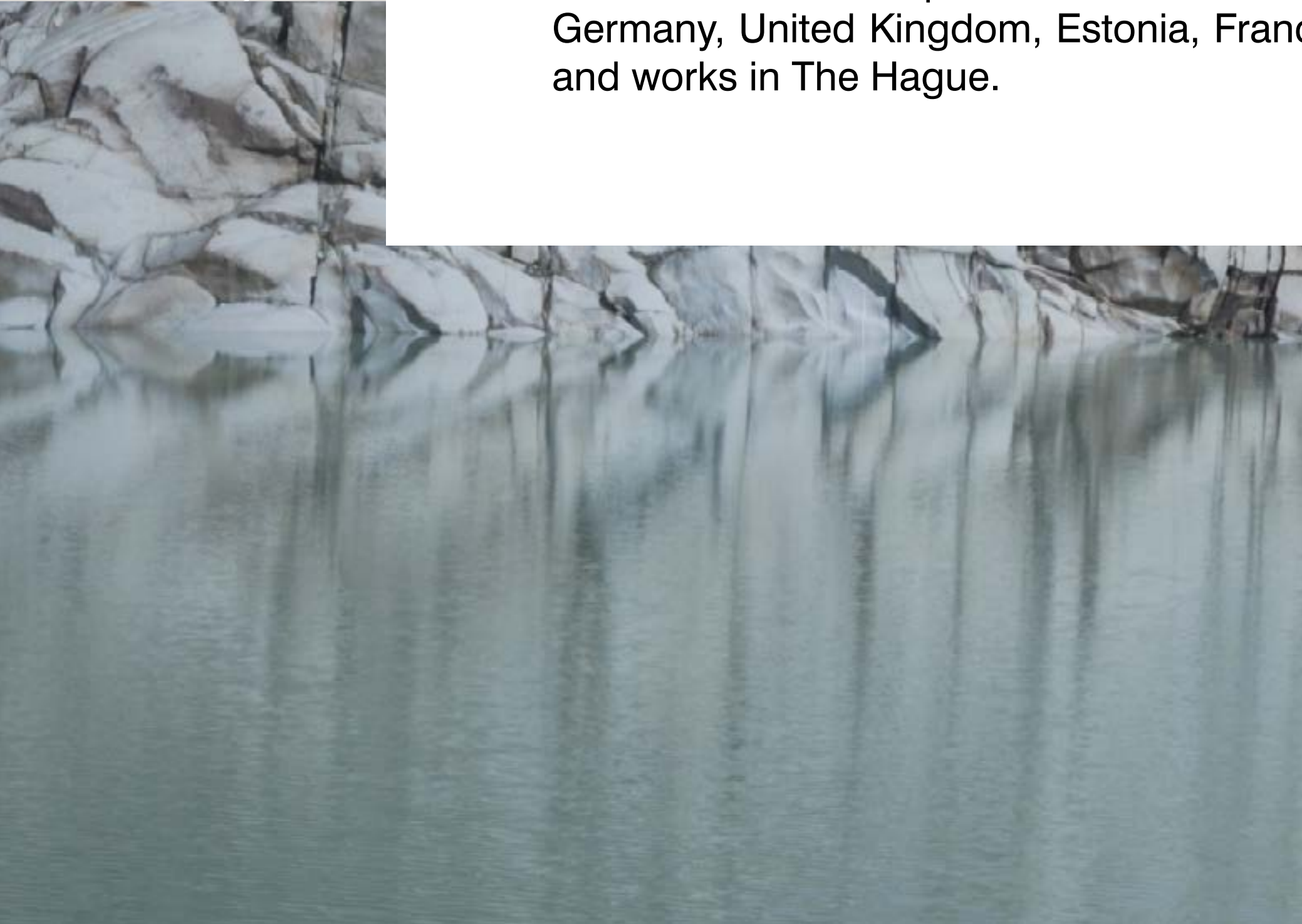
For the video work *We Exhale*, Engelberts collaborated with sound artist Liz Harris to produce delicate soundscapes from ambient noise combined with field recordings. Together,

they created a poetic reflection on the ways in which a poisoned river might exhale. As organic materials decompose in the water, the river releases carbon dioxide. The otherworldly sound embodies the river's voice, transitioning from resignation to a foreboding crescendo. Harris's unique sensitivity takes listeners on an inner quest, counteracting the realistic visuals of nuclear reactors and dammed water with the river's inner monologue.



● Tanja Engelberts

Tanja Engelberts was born in 1987 in Deventer, The Netherlands. In 2021, she completed a two-year residency at the Rijksakademie van Beeldende Kunsten, Amsterdam. She has worked on several projects related to the fossil fuel industry and has examined how energy production shapes our contemporary landscape. Other residencies include: The Banff Center for Arts and Creativity (CA), The Ucross Foundation (USA), IK Foundation (NL) and Öro Residence (FI). Works are included in the collections of De Nederlandsche Bank (NL), De Brauw (NL) and Clifford Chance (UK). Her work has been published and exhibited in the Netherlands, Germany, United Kingdom, Estonia, France and Japan. She lives and works in The Hague.



CAMILLE KAISER

A COLLECTION OF IMAGES ABOUT A COLLECTION OF IMAGES

Installation. Wooden plinths, glass, photographic prints (various sizes), archival postcards (various sizes), golden weights. 2023

“On the morning of 14 May 1962, two months before Algeria was to gain its independence, a unit of French gendarmes escorted eleven wooden crates to a military quayside in Algiers and placed them on a naval transport bound for Marseille. From Marseille the cases were loaded onto a train for Paris, where on 23 May they were brought to the Louvre. The museum’s curators examined the contents of the crates that had been so carefully transported from Algeria and discovered over 300 works of art, including work by such celebrated French artists as Monet, Renoir, Gauguin, Pissarro, Degas, Courbet, and Delacroix (...) With the impending referendum on Algerian self-determination only weeks away, tensions in the streets of Algiers had reached a fever pitch and French administrators in Algeria had sent the collection to the metropole in a panic. But the artwork no longer belonged to France (...) The fate of Algeria’s artwork would be debated between diplomatic officials, museum administrators, and various local actors on both sides of the Mediterranean for more than seven years until





the French government agreed to repatriate nearly the entire collection (...) Today the collection remains on display at Algeria's National Museum of Fine Arts where it comprises part of the largest collection of European art on the African continent."

Andrew Bellisari, "The Art of Decolonization: The Battle for Algeria's French Art, 1962-70"
Journal of Contemporary History 2017,
Vol. 52(3) 625-645

In May 2023, I visited the Musée des Beaux-Arts in Algiers for the first time. Inspired by the curation of both the African and European art collections, the installation reflects on the history of these museum displays. The layout presents a new series of images created from photographs taken during my visit, in addition to archival documents linked to the museum's history, in an attempt to map the traces and provenance of this specific collection of artworks.



- Camille Kaiser

Camille Kaiser is an artist-researcher based in Geneva, Switzerland. Her artistic practice takes the form of long-term research projects, navigating family and state archival documents made in Switzerland, France and Algeria between the mid 1950s and early 1960s. Crucially, this time period marks the period of transition from the colonial occupation of Algeria to its independence.

Her filmic and installation works explore legacies of intimate archives and their relation to institutional archives of a similar place and time, using fiction as an artistic and political strategy to redirect attention and rewrite patterns of collective use.

Kaiser's recent solo exhibition "small gestures, grand gestures" took place at the Aargauer Kunsthaus as part of the Kiefer Hablitzel Special Prize 2022. She has previously exhibited at the Kunst Halle Sankt Gallen, Centre d'Art Neuchâtel, Stadtgalerie Bern, FMAC Genève, Centre d'art contemporain Genève, Display Berlin, among others.

In the upcoming months, Kaiser will pursue her research with residencies in Paris at La cité internationale des arts (supported by the city of Geneva) and in Johannesburg with Pro Helvetia.

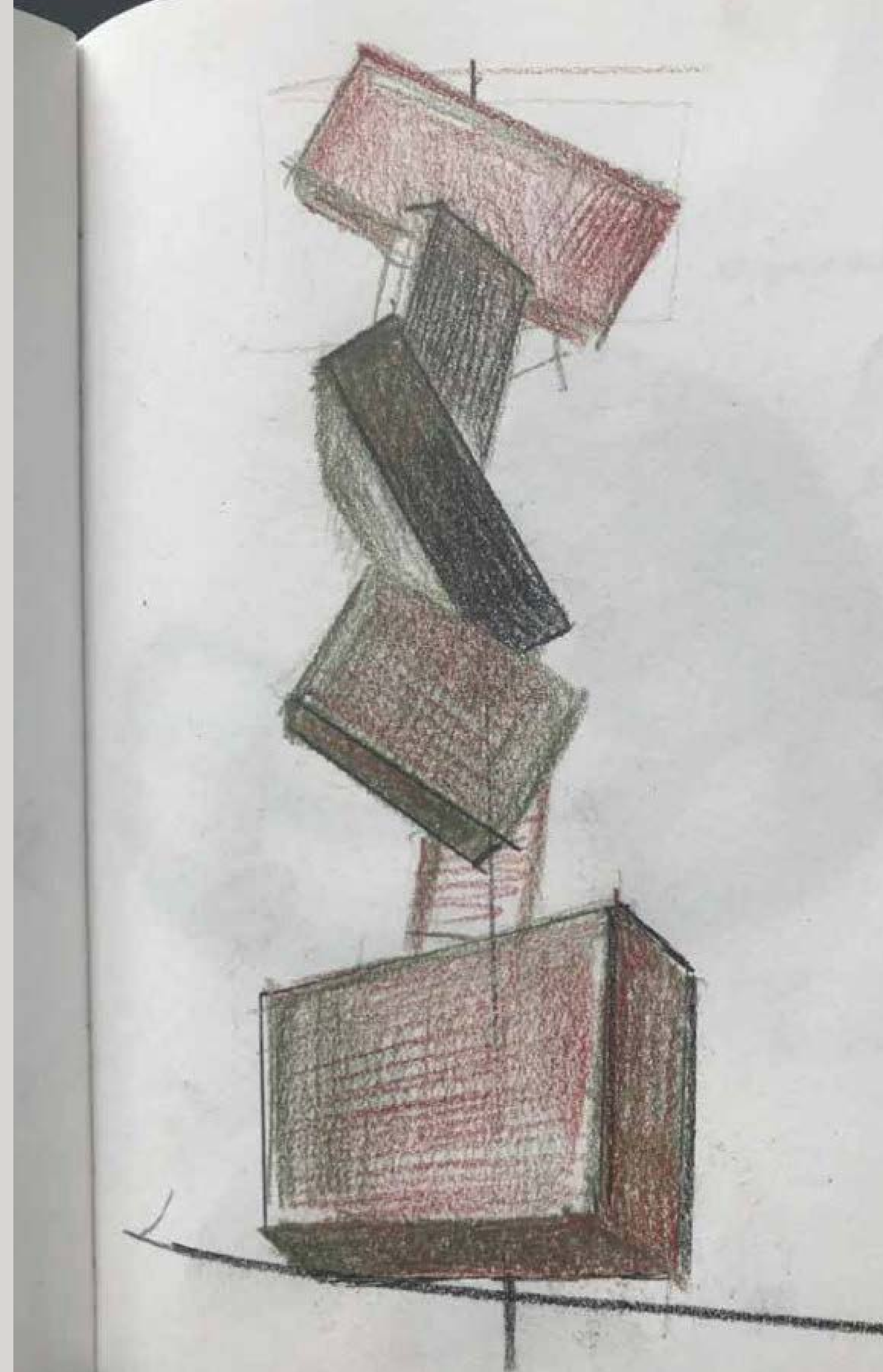


**ALEXANDER
MOROZOV**

PERFORMING MEMORY

Installation. 2023

The installation *Performing Memory* examines the cultural values that have been displaced from Ukraine's territory, beginning with the Soviet era and extending into the present context. One of the most significant cultural treasures of Ukraine is the frescoes and mosaics of Saint Michael's Golden-Domed Monastery. Due to the relocation of the capital of Soviet Ukraine from Kharkiv to Kyiv in 1934, the Soviet authorities decided to destroy Saint Michael's Golden-Domed Monastery to make space for an administrative building. The frescoes and mosaics, created in the 12th century by Constantinopolitan masters, were removed from their original foundation and transferred to another base. Through the example of these masterpieces of ancient Russian art, we can observe the complex circulation and connection of Ukraine's cultural heritage with its contemporary political history. For instance, the mosaic *St. Demetrius of Thessaloniki* was removed and sent to the Tretyakov Gallery in Moscow. The gallery had planned an exhibition on the occasion of the anniversary of the monument of ancient Russian literature, *The Tale of Igor's Campaign*. However, the exhibition did not take place, and the artifacts remain in Moscow to this day.



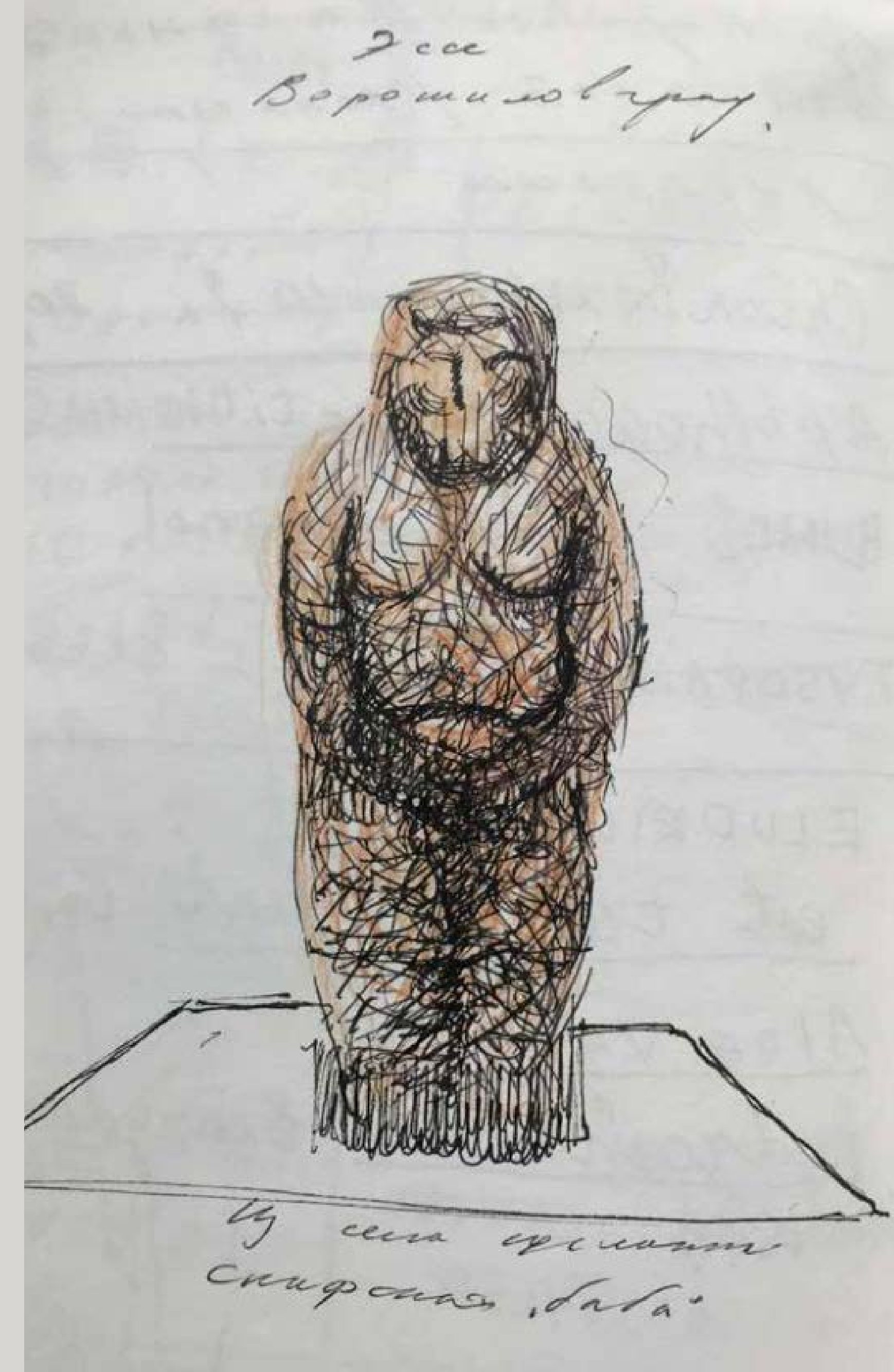
A small part of the frescoes remained in Kyiv and were exhibited in the Saint Sophia Cathedral, which was turned into a museum. During World War II, the treasures of Saint Michael's Golden-Domed Monastery, including the mosaic and twenty-seven frescoes, were looted and taken to Germany. In 1947–49, some of the frescoes returned to the Saint Sophia Museum, but many fragments of frescoes ended up in Moscow, Leningrad (now Saint Petersburg), and Novgorod.

The installation *Performing Memory* depicts a devastated landscape of Ukrainian cultural heritage, consisting of blocks representing artworks. The works that were looted from Ukraine are represented in a series of hollowed out sculptures, based on the dimensions of looted paintings and cultural artifacts. These blocks and volumes are used to create a model of a potential museum of Ukraine's heritage. By documenting potential scenarios of future art history, this proposed model formalizes the lost cultural landscape.

Besides the artifacts taken out during the Soviet period, the installation also includes works that were looted in the autumn of 2022 from the collection of the Kherson Regional Art Museum suffered. Key pieces for the cultural

identity of Ukrainians, such as the folk icon *Christ the Winegrower*, described in the museum's collection as Communion and painted by an unknown artist from Cherkasy Oblast, were taken to Crimea. The looted collection of the Kherson museum collection includes famous works by Ivan Aivazovsky, Ivan Kramskoy, Peter Lely, August von Bayer, Vasily Polenov, Mikhail Shibanov, Mikhail Vrubel, Pavel Gavryluk, and thousands of other pieces.

Numerous cultural institutions were affected by the armed conflict, such as the Kharkiv Art Museum, the Kharkiv State Scientific Library named after Korolenko, the Kharkiv Theater of Opera and Ballet named after Lysenko, the Chernihiv Oblast Art Museum, the Mariupol Local Lore Museum, the Memorial House of Hryhoriy Skovoroda, the Sumska Theological Seminary, the Sviatohirsk Lavra, the Vorontsov Palace in Odessa, and many others. The volumes of destruction have catastrophically increased with each passing day.

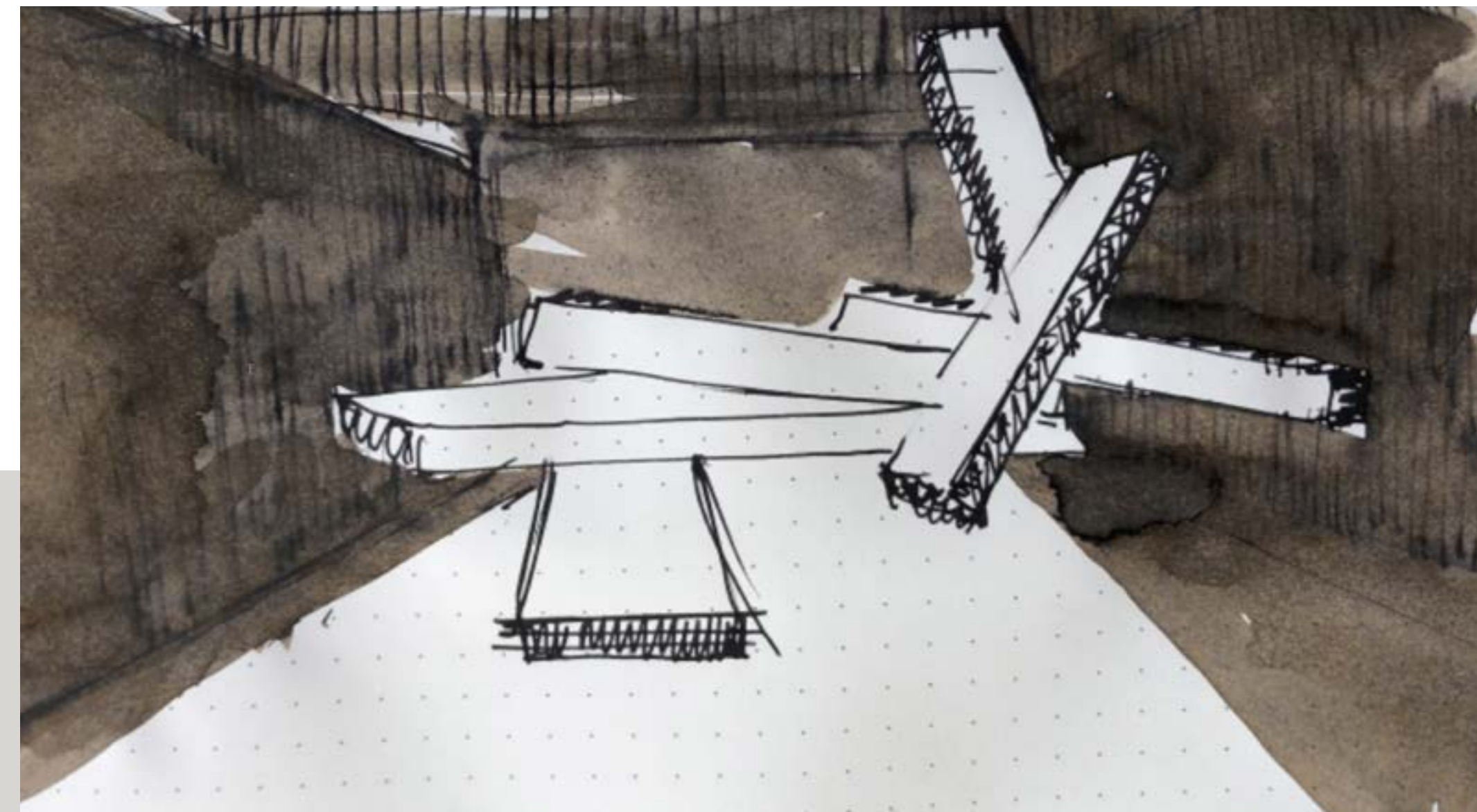


Alexander Morozov is a Russian artist of Ukrainian origin. In 2002, he graduated from the St Petersburg Academy of Arts — Ilya Repin Institute for Painting, Sculpture and Architecture. He is a graduate of the PRO ARTE Foundation's School for Young Artists (2001).

Alexander Morozov is interested in art that eschews formal boundaries, to become philosophy, anthropology, sociology and even life. Many of his works are dedicated to the traumatic consequences of Stalinist policies and the phenomenon of erased memory around the implementation of this regime.

After 2017, most of his projects have been related to the study of state violence. In the installation at the 3rd Ural Industrial Biennale, "Registration. Between Contemplation and Action" the artist recreated the room of an NKVD worker in the Iset Hotel (the former NKVD hostel). In 2019, the artist created a sonic installation at the Museum-Apartment of Russian historian Lev Gumilyov. In the same year, he created a multi-channel immersive sound installation Railway Opera comprising sounds and noises in the museum's Stolypin carriage.

He has participated in the 11th Krasnoyarsk Museum Biennale (2015), the 3rd Ural Industrial Biennale of Contemporary Art (2015), the 6th Moscow Biennale of Contemporary Art (2015), and the parallel and public programmes for Manifesta 10, the European Biennale of Contemporary Art (2014, St Petersburg). Nominee for the Art award International Strabag Prize (Austria, 2013), the Sergey Kuryokhin Prize (St Petersburg, 2013), Kandinsky Prize in the category Project of the Year (2019). He was the winner of the Sergey Kuryokhin Prize (2019) in the Best Visual Project category. He is a member of the "Parasite" group. He lives and works in Paris.



**MBENE MWAMBENE
WITH NELLO NOVELA**

THE TAXI DRIVER NIGHT

Performance at Wildwuchs Festival in Basel.
May 2023

This stage performance encompasses poetry reading and music. Mbene meets Nello with a guitar and sets off on a journey. Like in a taxi from Kitwe in Zambia to Maputo in Mozambique, the conversations are politically organic. The narrative is both improvised and planned. Mbene and Nello immerse themselves in an exploration of resistance of black male bodies against colonialism through poetry reading, voice rhythm, songs and storytelling. Mbene selects and puts together a series of poems from his various works from the past 10 years into a single performance. He also reads new poems inspired by physical and mental exploration of black bodies through western religion, capitalism, colonialism and slavery. The performance is a spiritual, ritualistic, and political commentary which explores Mbene`s personal journey into the aforementioned topics. Through his performance, Mbene cultivates pain, freedom of being, happiness, healing of black bodies and self-enlightenment (not in the western way). He weaves his personal stories from Malawi to Zambia to Switzerland against a gaze of colonialism, capitalism, western religion and slavery.

Performance: The Taxi Driver Night at Wildwuchs Festival in Basel
Date: 30.05.2023





In the performance, Mbene talks about how his ancestors escaped from Arab slavers, the physical exploitation of the earth and topography through colonialism, the economization of black bodies, the fetishization of black male bodies and the brutal use of religion to conquer ancestral spirituality and cultural appropriation as a means of perpetual exploitation of blackness. The Taxi Driver Night is an ongoing performance work and has featured other music artists in previous shows in Bern, Zurich and Basel.

Warning: Not suitable for fragile white people because we cannot offer psychological help due to colonialism





● Mbene
Mwambene

● Nello
Novela

Mbene Mwambene is a Switzerland based Zambia-Malawian and the first African to be granted the privilege by white people, to study for a Masters in Expanded Theatre at Bern University of Arts. His work is mainly focused on postcolonial themes within and outside theatrical settings. Since 2015 he has been directing and acting in pieces like *Animal Farm*, *Black Gravity Black Healing*, *Foot und Chocola*, *Die Fürchterlichen Fünf*, *The Story of the Tiger*, *Zuflucht*, *Enjoy Racism*, *Tavuka*, *Der Prophet Ngunza*, and many more across Germany, Switzerland, Zambia, South Africa, Luxembourg, Japan, Austria, Malawi, Liechtenstein and Hong Kong. He recently authored, directed and performed *The Whispers* (Schlachthaus Theater) which has been performed in Switzerland, Germany and Canada. In 2022, Mbene featured *The Swamps* (Gessnerallee) and also directed *Why are you here* (Warum bist du hier) at Maxim Theatre (2022, Zurich).

For the recent project *Mawazo* (Bern, Locarno and Basel in CH), Mwambene collaborated with Ivana Di Salvo who is a Swiss-based Italian author, director and performer. He is currently showing Bern Book piece (Bühnen Bern, Bern) and also co-directed a youth club theatre piece, *S`Labe* (2023) at Schauspielhaus in Zurich.

He is also directing *Zuritopia* (Maxim Theatre, Zurich 2023), and will soon be directing and performing in *The Island: Sweetlands* (Gessnerallee-Zurich, 2023) and *Die Schwarzen Brüder* (Theater Basel, 2023).

Nello became familiar with traditional music and dance from an early age, playing guitar, percussion and Balafons in ceremonies. He performed in the Beijing International Dance Festival. In 2017, he did an Asian tour with “Cie Zeitsprung” (CH) in Taiwan, Hong Kong, China, Philippines. In 2001, after performing in the National Radio, clubs, festivals and TV-shows in his native, Mozambique, Nello moved to South Africa.

From 2004, Nello studied music at the Rotterdam Conservatory of Music and Dance (Codarts) where he took guitar and vocal lessons to develop his musical knowledge. He quickly became part of the world/jazz scene in the Netherlands. He joined his family band called NecoNovellas in Rotterdam. In 2008, Nello played at several famous venues and festivals like North Sea Jazz Festival, Ancienne Belgique, le Trianon, Mundial Festival, Mexico Ollinkan Festival, Sofia World Music Festival, Kosice Jazz Festival and many more. In 2008, he went solo and built up his own mixed style of electric and acoustic music and body rhythms. He is influenced by various types of music including pop, rock, jazz, funk, afrobeat, reggae and more.

**YELENA
POPOVA**

THREADS OF EXTRACTION

Jacquard woven blanket, cotton 220x160cm.
Limited edition of 30. 2023

The jacquard woven throw presented in this exhibition reflects on the complex history of natural resource extraction, particularly gas and oil, in the Middle East. Drawing inspiration from the visual language of traditional oriental carpets, this textile piece invites viewers to contemplate the lasting impact of colonialism and the enduring legacies of resource exploitation. In a region where the extraction of natural materials has played a significant role in shaping social, political, and economic dynamics, *Threads of Extraction* offers a unique lens through which to examine the intricacies of postcolonial endurance. Through the jacquard weaving technique, the throw embodies a juxtaposition of opulence and exploitation. Vibrant colors and intricate patterning reminiscent of traditional oriental carpets refer to the rich cultural heritage of the region. Yet, woven within these motifs are subtle reminders of the dark undercurrents of resource extraction — representations of gas pipelines, oil rigs, and the hidden costs of these industries as well as the conflicts sparked by competition for these natural resources. By appropriating the visual language of oriental carpets, the piece highlights the deep entanglement of historical and contemporary forces, inviting reflection on enduring echoes of colonialism in the region. Ultimately, this jacquard woven throw serves as a visual testament

to the resilience and agency of communities impacted by resource extraction. It calls for a critical examination of the complex relationships between the global demand for natural resources, regional dynamics, and the pursuit of social and environmental justice in a postcolonial context.



Yelena Popova was born in the USSR and lives and works in Nottingham where she has a studio at Primary. She graduated with an MA in Painting from the Royal College of Art in 2011. Yelena recently designed large tapestries for Meta Office in London, Cambridge University and a stage curtain for community center Solway Hall in Whitehaven. Her work is influenced by Russian Constructivism and examines industrial development and the landscape of contemporary capitalism. Her recent jacquard tapestries reflect on different means of energy production and borrows from the language of scientific diagrams and patterns.

Group shows include: Matter as Actor, Lisson Gallery London (2023), Time to Embrace, Ural Biennale, (2021); Slow Painting, curated by Martin Herbert for Hayward touring (2019), Perpetual Uncertainty, curated by Ele Carpenter (2017), Future Light curated by Maria Lind for Vienna Biennale (2015). Her works are held in public and private collections including: Saatchi, Zabudowicz, Nottingham Castle, RCA Collection, Art Council of England Collection, Government Art Collection, LWL Museum, Münster.



**FLORA
REZNIK**

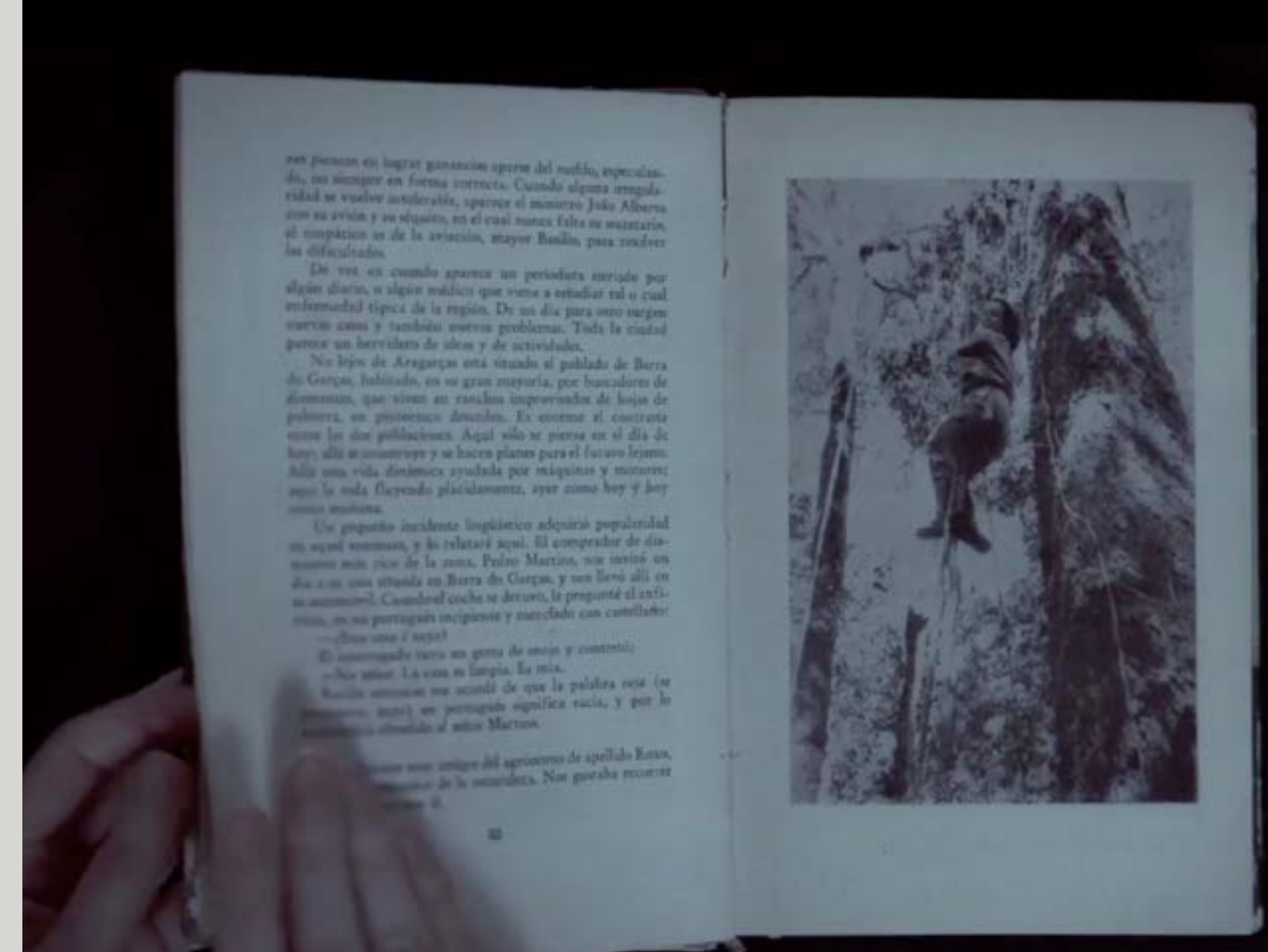
NEW WORLDERS

Rubber tyres, stenographic machine, archival photography, graphic plexiglass print, rubber objects, 2-channel video, HD, 31'42'', video 2 min (loop). 2023

New Worlders is an artistic research project where historical, field, scientific and testimonial research combine with speculation and fantasy. It takes the form of a dialogue between a young researcher and her dead explorer aunt, with the two protagonists 100 years apart and so speaking to each other from disparate times. The researcher sets out to retrace the steps of her great aunt, Maria Reznik, who in the 1940s left her job as a stenographer (a fast typing technology used to transcribe speech in shorthand, usually in court reports), and became one of the first white women to explore the Southern Amazon. She joined the Roncador-Xingu Expedition, a State initiative known for mapping the interior of Brazil and for “pacifying” the indigenous peoples, which led to decimation of the population and devastation of the environment. The researcher is guided by the entries in her aunt’s diary, written as a means to process the urgency of the events she had witnessed. She also keeps a hand drawn map of the river Rio das Mortes, with blank patches indicating “virgin land, yet to be penetrated”. In this river of the dead, she hopes to ascertain and examine her aunt’s reasons for partaking in the colonization of this territory.

Book title: “Por tierra de Indios”, Maria Reznik on the photograph.
Still from the short film “New Worlders” by Flora Reznik.

Still from the short film “What ever happened down Rio das Mortes?”
by Flora Reznik.





As the researcher moves deeper into the jungle, she encounters an interspecies alliance with an endemic fungus that affects rubber trees. This expands upon and explores the Brazilian eco-socialist struggle for a way of doing politics that decenters the human.

Through the use of speculative fiction and a revisitation of the classic adventure-explorer narrative, *New Worlders* replaces the notion of the hero's conquest of nature with a wide range of voices – both human and non-human, voices that resist being tamed. This is an epistemological proposition to consider the intelligence of the forest. It also hints towards a solution to the problems posed by the ongoing devastation of the Amazon jungle.

This is an ongoing project. During the period of the exhibition, Flora will be doing field research in the Southern Amazon for the first time. While preserving the fictional angle, her embodied experience in the area will expand, allowing her to continue crafting the story.

Mind map concept: Flora Reznik
Mind map design: The Oddkin

Video credits:

“What ever happened down Rio das Mortes?”

by Flora Reznik

With: Pinar Karaaslan and Lauren Maxwell

Sound: Jorrit van Rijn

Light: Jorrit van Rijn and Flora Reznik

Camera: Flora Reznik

Make up: Marissa Coster

Special thanks to Henry Vega, Tanja Busking, Mink Pinstter

3D render by Martin Menso. Still from the short film “*New Worlders*” by Flora Reznik.

Flora Reznik is a visual artist, researcher, curator and filmmaker born in Buenos Aires, Argentina and currently based in The Netherlands. Her practice is shaped by artistic research: thorough theoretical inquiry nourishes her particular approach. Her projects are non-medium bound and often incorporate various forms including video, text and performance in the context of installations, interdisciplinary events, publications or films.

With a background in Philosophy (Universidad de Buenos Aires), Flora Reznik co-founded the Contemporary Arts Magazine CIA, directed by Roberto Jacoby. She later studied at ArtScience Interfaculty at the Royal Academy of Art. She has exhibited her work in various visual art festivals and museums in The Netherlands (Belvedere Museum, Fiber Festival, Noorderlicht Internationaal Fotofestival, Art Rotterdam, among others) and abroad (NART, Estonia, Acefala Galeria, Buenos Aires). Her first feature documentary film, *Pervomaisk*, premiered in the Buenos Aires Independent Film Festival (2018) and obtained a prize from the Argentinian National Fund for the Arts. She is the initiator and creative director of event and publication series *Unknown Grounds*, produced by VHDG and published by Onomatopee Projects.



SASHAPASHA

KANAVA

Installation. Embroidery on canvas, 1000 x 75cm, embroidery on navy cap, 30x30cm. Found objects, variable sizes. Video, 10'48". Sculptures made of tyres, metal wire. 2016-2023

KANAVA is a long-term research project initiated by SASHAPASHA in 2016. It is focused on the memory and history of the Gulag, the Soviet forced-labor camp system established in 1929. The project takes its name from the White Sea-Baltic Canal in northern Karelia, Russia, the first project completed by the USSR's forced labor system, a system aimed at internal colonization and land development. The Finnish word "Kanava" emphasizes the significant presence of Finns, a major minority in Karelia, among the victims of the Gulag during Stalin's purges.

Beginning at the Belomorkanal in Karelia, the project extends across vast territories of the former USSR, tracing the expansion of the Gulag system. Objects collected by the artists during expeditions in the canal area are displayed on a long table, blurring the boundaries between reality and fiction, personal memories, and history. These objects include remnants from abandoned barracks, workers' houses, factories, and school buildings, representing a mix of Soviet artifacts





and everyday items including a ball of red thread, alluding to Karelian embroidery and serving as a metaphorical tool in navigating the labyrinthine history of the Gulag.

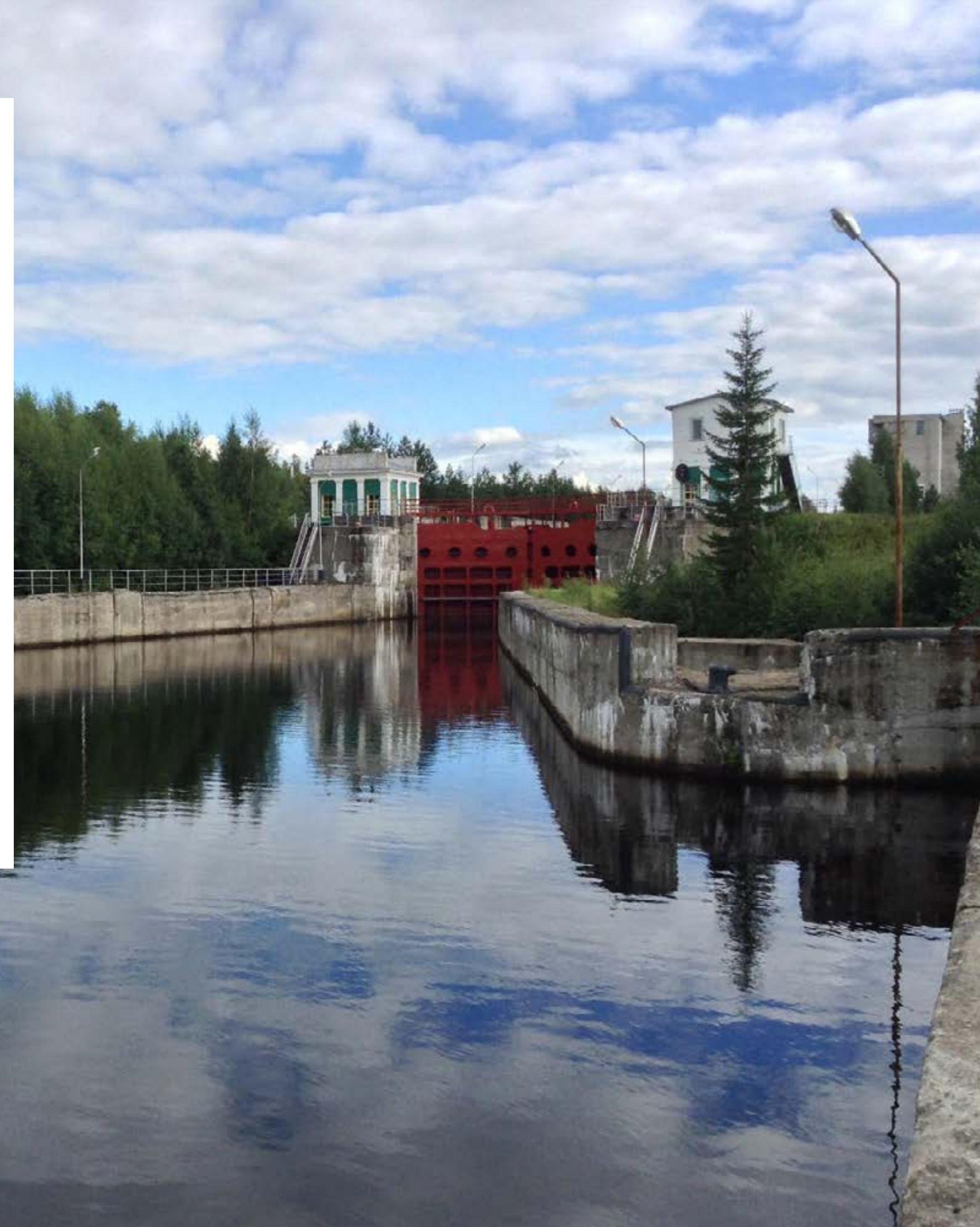
The project also incorporates a video installation featuring hand-carved swans made from rubber tyres, a frequent decorative element found in the region. The swan holds cultural significance in the beliefs of the northern Karelians, and its presence alludes to the transformation of natural habitats due to the construction of the canal. This installation draws from the perspective shift of Russian writer Mikhail Prishvin in his books *In the Land of Unfrightened Birds* and *The Tsar's Road*. In the first book, written before the revolution, Prishvin expresses admiration for the untouched beauty of nature. However, in *The Tsar's Road*, written after the construction of the canal, Prishvin glorifies human triumph over nature and justifies the repressive Stalinist regime, portraying the Chekist as a superhuman figure. The artwork parallels the writer's drastic change in perspective and the substitution of the sacred swan with a rubber representation, symbolizing the folklore-inspired communal housing known as "zhEK-art." This concept is situated within the context of post-industrial landscapes shaped by the enduring legacy of communist-era construction.

Through its various components, *KANAVA* explores the historical legacy and human experiences within the Gulag system, weaving together narratives of resilience, loss, and the complex relationship between humans and nature



SASHAPASHA is a Helsinki-based artistic duo formed in 2009 in St. Petersburg by Sasha Rotts and Pavel Rotts. The artists work in various media: installation, performance, painting, embroidery, sculpture, sound art and video art. The duo works with personal and collective memory, in addition to microhistory. They explore the legacy of the Soviets in contemporary culture and the historical trauma of the Gulag system.

In Finland, the duo's projects were presented in such places as Lappeenranta Art Museum and Joensuu Art Museum in festivals such as the Mänttä Art Festival, in exhibitions such as the Ars-Häme Summer Exhibition, and in galleries such as HUUTO, Stoa, Exhibition Laboratory, Acusmata and others. Many of the duo's site-specific projects have been realised in international artist residencies such as Zarya AIR, Vladivostok, Russia; PolArt residency, Norilsk, Russia; Utö residency, Åland Islands, Finland and NART, Narva, Estonia.



**DANA
SAVIĆ**

OBJECTS OF DISPLACEMENT

3-channel video installation, 01'27'', 01'33'',
01'29'', loop. 2023

Over time, numerous ethnographic objects from previous colonies ended up in Western museums. And yet much of their contextual background remained unexplained. Objects of Displacement sheds light on this absence of information regarding provenance, the meaning and purpose of the objects, as well as the details about the process in which the objects were removed from their original context.

As a case study, Dana explored one museum in particular; the Mission Museum in Steyl, a village in the south of The Netherlands. Over the course of a century missionaries in Steyl strived to convert people overseas to the Christian faith. The museum opened its doors in 1931 as an attempt to materialize the somewhat immaterial process of conversion. Since 1931, the exhibition set up has not changed. The museum became a so-called “time capsule”, making visitors of today walk through the same narrative as people did a century ago; a narrative shaped solely by the ones who “collected” (the missionaries). Nowadays, the museum has commenced their first provenance research, a step in the right direction.





Nevertheless, the mission museum in Steyl still lacks the necessary information for the visitor to gain knowledge of a more comprehensive narrative. This puts the museum in a difficult position in relation to contemporary discussions around ownership and restitution of cultural heritage.

Objects of Displacement aims to highlight the absence of information behind the ethnographical objects of the Mission Museum in Steyl by placing them in front of a green screen. The green screen, a tool often used in the film industry, removes any

background and therefore decontextualizes the objects. As the objects stand against the green screen, their narrative takes on a new shape, confronting the viewer with the void, making them acknowledge what is absent. By acknowledging missing information, the project seeks to raise awareness around the biased viewpoint of many museums and encourages the viewer to critically reflect upon such museum collections.



Dana Savic (1997) is a designer based in Brussels and graduated Cum Laude from the Design Academy Eindhoven in 2022. Fundamental to her research-based approach is the importance of physical and sensual experience. In Savic's work, narration is an important element that evokes empathy and understanding of issues that are normally invisible or hard to grasp as an outsider. Through materializing a story, a hidden narrative comes to light, a narrative that can change people's perspective on landscapes, materials and objects. Besides the attention to storytelling, her work often carries a philosophical and questioning layer, questioning the world we live in. Dana's practice takes shape through various mediums such as objects, narration, photography and film.



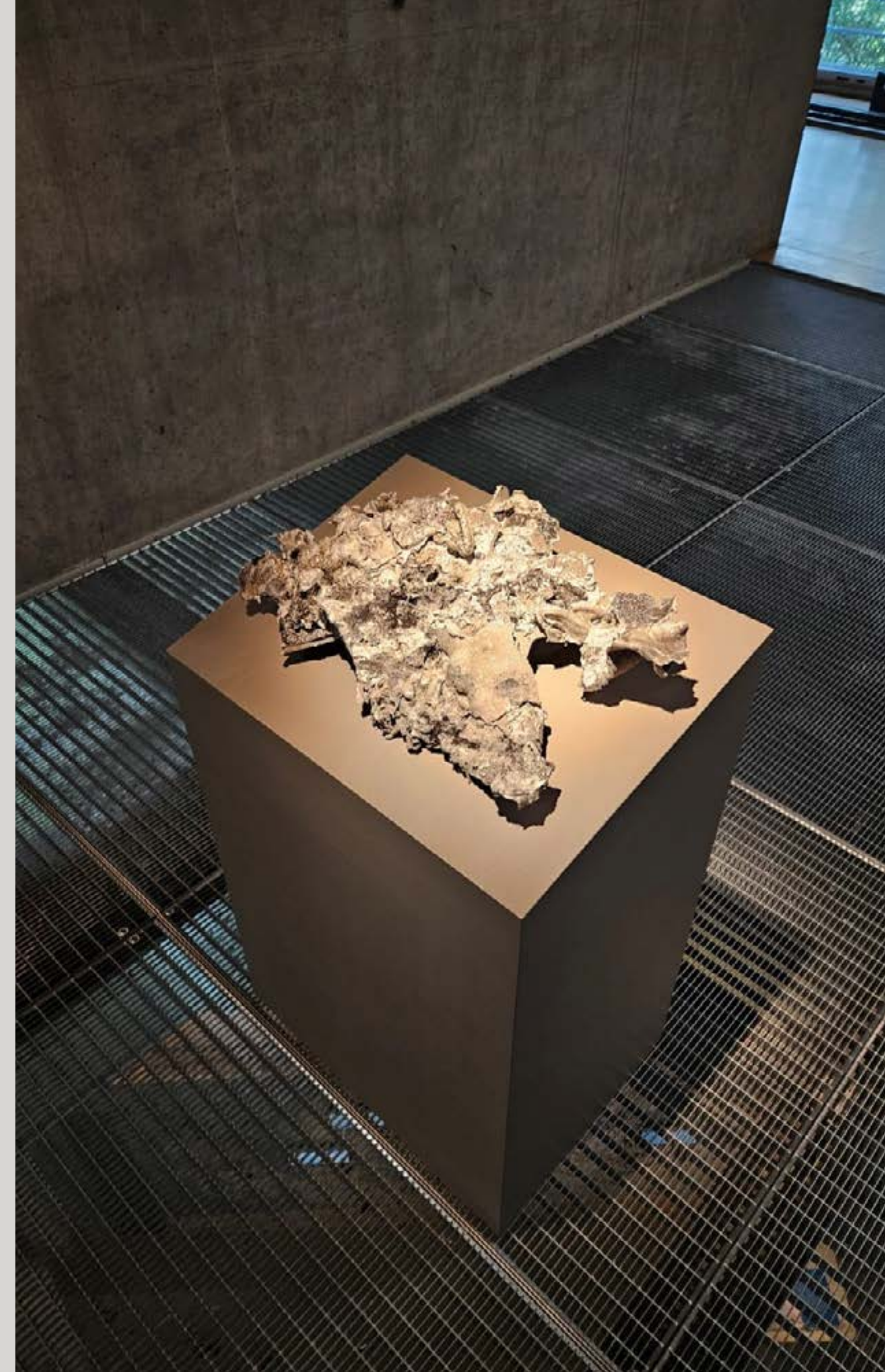
MAKAR TERESHIN

FALLOUT ZONES / FALLING BACK TO EARTH

Installation. Two landscape photographs 60x80, seven 10X15 archival photographs, reproduction of maps, a fragment of a Soyuz rocket booster on a pedestal. 2023

This project builds on Makar Tereshin's long-term fieldwork in Northern Russia and Central Kazakhstan. Its ethnographic focus is the fallout zones of the Baikonur and Plesetsk cosmodromes, where rocket boosters are discarded after launches to Low Earth Orbit. The zones have become vast, national inlands effectively turned into scrap yards and littered with space debris from the 1950s onwards. For the communities who live in the vicinity of the cosmodromes' infrastructure, it presents a profoundly ambiguous landscape, one which simultaneously threatens their health and well-being through invisible pollution, and offers a means to sustain their households by salvaging space debris or making health claims to the state.

The establishment of the Soviet space programme was one of many examples of an accelerated modernisation agenda by the Soviet Union. Vast steppes and boreal forests once deemed unproductive and uninhabited became subject to colonial expansion and violent modernisation that physically and discursively reinforced the rhetoric of "emptiness". The development of the northernmost Cosmodrome Plesetsk was seen as part of a broader idea of "mastering the North" associated



with decades of state industrialisation, militarisation of the Arctic borderlands and the reinforcement of state control of people and resources in the circumpolar North. Accounts of the early days of Baikonur Cosmodrome provided by the Soviet chief space engineers depict Kazakh steppe as both empty land and sparsely inhabited terrain. These observations recall and reinforce the rhetoric of emptiness that has been continuously utilized by the Soviet state to promote large-scale industrial and agricultural modernisation of Kazakhstan since the 1920s. For numerous residents of Kazakhstan, the continuous operation of the Cosmodrome, an extraterritorial enclave leased by the Russian state, is just one instance in a long history of violent attempts to transform Kazakhstan's livelihoods and environment — from the destruction of Kazakh pastoralism during the 1920s collectivisation campaigns, mass famine, forced industrialisation fuelled by proliferation of GULAG labor camps and exile to nuclear testing.

Shifting the focus of space exploration back down to earth demonstrates that outer space's frontiers are also firmly grounded within geopolitical borders. Space infrastructure is typically built on lands that are geographically

and politically marginal — or made so through processes of ruination and wastelanding. The Soviet military-industrial and agricultural projects were clearing the land for new forms of appropriation. The emerging Soviet space programme turned emptiness into a resource for further expansion and exploitation. At the same time, the project challenges the simple writing off of places and people by examining how people are at once marginalized and able to act upon the conditions they encounter, as they salvage and make a living from such debris. Archival images were provided by members of salvaging brigades who worked in the Arkhangelsk region and the Republic of Komi in the 2000s.

Archival photographs are courtesy of Yurii Sumarokov, Albert Loginov, Sergey Konnikov, Yurii Karaban', Pavel Nasonov, Vasiliy Anfimov.



- Makar Tereshin

Makar Tereshin is a social anthropologist and documentary photographer. He is a PhD candidate at University College London, where he is part of the ETHNO-ISS project. The research team is undertaking an ethnography of the International Space Station and its terrestrial participants. Makar's research interests lie in material culture studies, environmental and visual anthropology with a particular ethnographic focus on Russia and Kazakhstan. Currently, he is working on a project exploring the political ecology of the Russian space programme in Central Kazakhstan. Makar's research is supported by the London Arts and Humanities Partnership.



KATERINA VERBA

SPROUTING TO PARADISE

Installation. Ceramic water pipe, wool, wood, algae, echinodermata, glass. 2023

When asked why she uses so little water for household chores, my Crimean Tatar great-grandmother, Hache, would respond, “Why waste more when I can make do with less?” Crimean Tatars, the indigenous Muslim people of Crimea, shaped by the ethno-genesis of various populations that resided here at different times, held a deep reverence for water, emphasizing its conservation even in times of plenty. They valued water greatly and established an extensive irrigation network across the peninsula. In the arid Crimea, every drop of water was cherished, and streams were integrated into communal water supply and irrigation systems: networks of ceramic pipes transported the spring water over several kilometers, culminating in the distinct architectural beauty of Crimean Tatar fountains, known as cheshme.

The Crimean Tatars regarded building fountains as a virtuous act, often inscribing them with Quranic quotes and the builder’s name. The architectural design of each fountain was unique, reflecting the value and individuality of the water source, ensuring no two structures were alike.



Открыта вода в трубах!



Образцы керамики глиняной трубы Солдата в коллекции крымскотатарской Музея культурно-исторической галереи



2011

Согласно современным геологическим наблюдениям, водозаборы проводились за счет подземных слоев. Известь образует карстовые структуры (вода размягчает горные породы) что исключает сбор воды традиционными системами колодцев. Используется система кувалов, подземных водозаборных не извлекли. (данные М.Г. Крамаровского) Выводные воды источники, фонтаны, почти не сохранились - разрушены или пересохли. По словам местных стариков, пригика - на горе Агарлыкчи (исток подземных источников) открыли горнодобывающий карьер.

In May 1944, the entire Crimean Tatar population, including Hache and her children, were forcibly deported from Crimea. It is said to be the fastest operation of mass eviction in world history. After that, the neglected fountains and irrigation systems began to deteriorate and were filled with garbage, destroyed, and overgrown with plants. The new mainland settlers, to whom the Soviet authorities handed over the homes of the indigenous population, lacked water management knowledge. In the 1950s, when the water problem and drought became particularly acute, the construction of the unified North Crimean Canal was initiated, bringing water from the Dnipro River.

In 2014, following Crimea's incorporation into Russia, Ukraine responded by cutting off the water supply from the Dnieper through the canal. The peninsula once again faced water shortages. In 2022, during the so-called "special military operation" by Russia in Ukraine, Russian raiding squads and airborne troops unblocked the North Crimean Canal, restoring the water supply to the peninsula. In June 2023, the Kahovka Hydroelectric Power Station was destroyed—water from the Kahovka reservoir

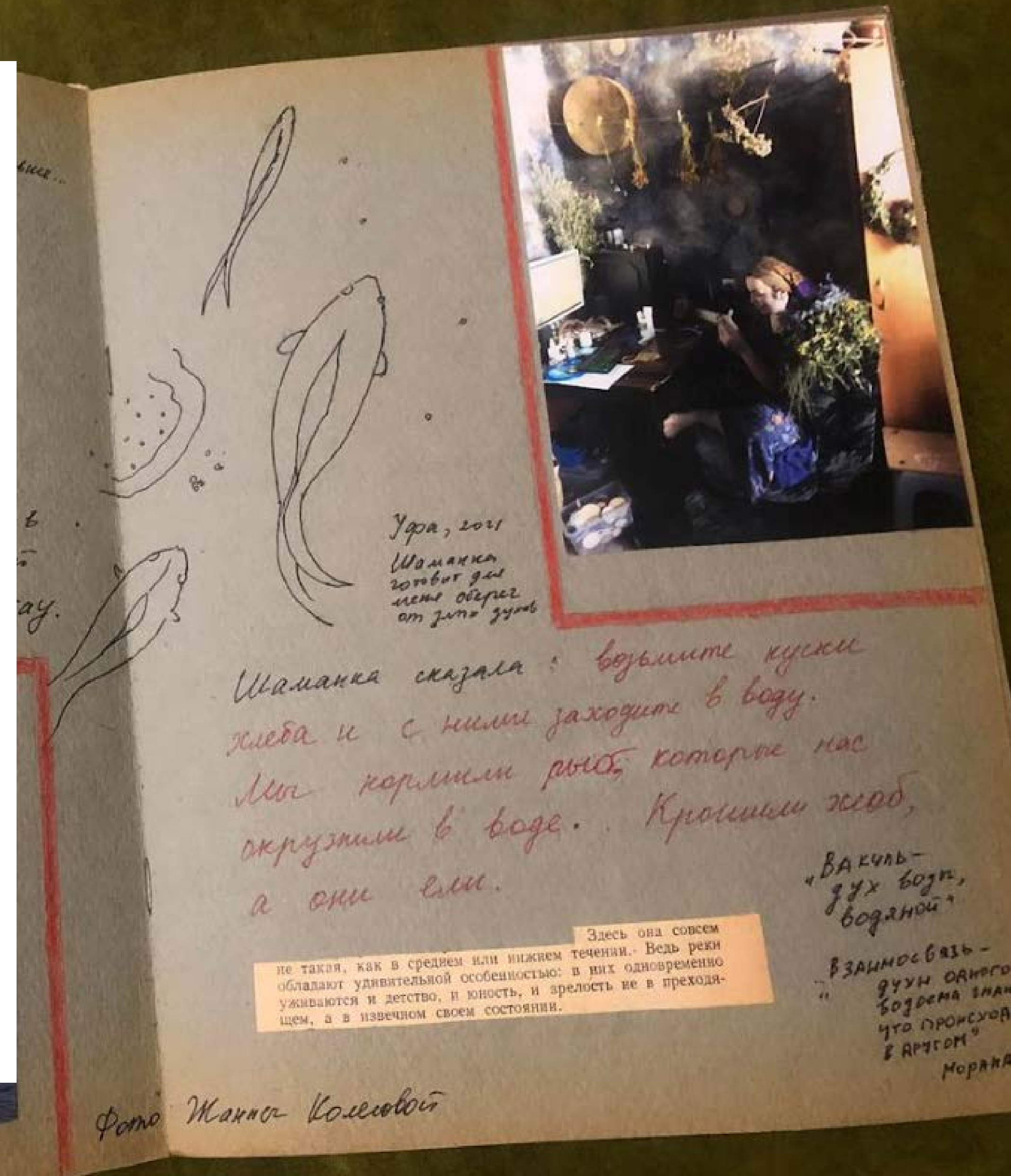
on the Dnipro River nourished the canal. Neither Russia nor Ukraine took responsibility for the destruction of the dam. Hydrologists predict that if the water from the reservoir stops flowing into the North Crimean Canal, it will dry up. Currently, the majority of fountains in Crimea are inactive, are in ruins, or are not recognized as architectural or historical monuments. Local activists are trying to preserve their names and locations.

In my installation, I used an artifact—a fragment of an old ceramic water pipe—that I found during my research on water usage culture in Crimea. Drawings made with algae collected from moist rocks reflect the hidden history of the Crimean Tatar people, which has the ability to manifest even over time. Nature, which indigenous people relied on for survival in different territories, becomes an ally in the imagined hope that small hydraulic structures will sprout again on the ruins and fragments of what we have today. The echinodermata succulent, also known as the "stone flower," is planted on Crimean Tatar Muslim graves in the peninsula's arid climate. This flower, as a symbol of growth and vitality, represents an indelible memory for the people.

Katerina Verba is an artist and curator based in Novorossiysk. Her work revolves around identities — gender, national, ethnic, territorial — and she presents her exploratory and artistic practices through installations and collective exhibitions.

Katerina completed her studies at the Art and Graphics Faculty of Kuban State University, specializing as an artist-pedagogue in 2013. She further pursued a course in Art of Quick Response at the Krasnodar Institute of Contemporary Art (ZIP Group) in 2017. Additionally, she received training at the School of Curators, Researchers, and Organizers at the Typography Center of Contemporary Art in Krasnodar in 2019. In 2020, Katerina graduated from the Second Curatorial School of the Nemoskva project, supported by the GCAC, focusing on the theme of “Care and Criticism in Curatorial Work.” She also participated in the research laboratory Space 1520 at the Garage Museum of Contemporary Art in Moscow in 2022.

Katerina Verba’s interests encompass identity, decoloniality, ecology, collective practices, educational processes, memory, the phenomenon of silence, therapeutic practices in art, and inclusion. She was a nominee for the Sergey Kuryokhin Contemporary Art Award in the category Art in Public Space in 2019.



**WILLIMANN/
ARAI**

THE GIFT EXERCISE / INVITATION 8: NITROGEN

Diazotypes, text. 2023

The history of human intervention in the biological nitrogen cycle illustrates the duality of modernity and speaks to the indivisibility of modernity from its shadow side, colonialism. In this history, nitrogen, an element essential for the reproduction of life and for biological growth, becomes, paradoxically, an agent of destruction. Over the centuries, a variety of technologies and infrastructures have emerged to enable the extraction, processing and production of nitrogen compounds, all of which Willimann/Arai examine in their image research.

The text is printed on a coated paper that was used for an image-copying process based on nitrogen compounds called diazotype. This precursor technology to today's copying machines facilitated the production of printed matter on a large scale. According to the advertising slogan, the technology made copying faster and cheaper. However, documents reproduced by the diazotype process are not permanently durable — they fade over time when exposed to daylight.





Willmann/Arai are interested in this technology precisely because of its impermanence, which exposes these products of technological progress as ethereal and unsustainable — and thus, in a metaphorical sense, it explores the modern ideology of unlimited growth that facilitates them.

The artists have deconstructed the reproduction process of the diazotype copying machine and re-appropriated it in a time-consuming, hand-crafted fashion and with the use of

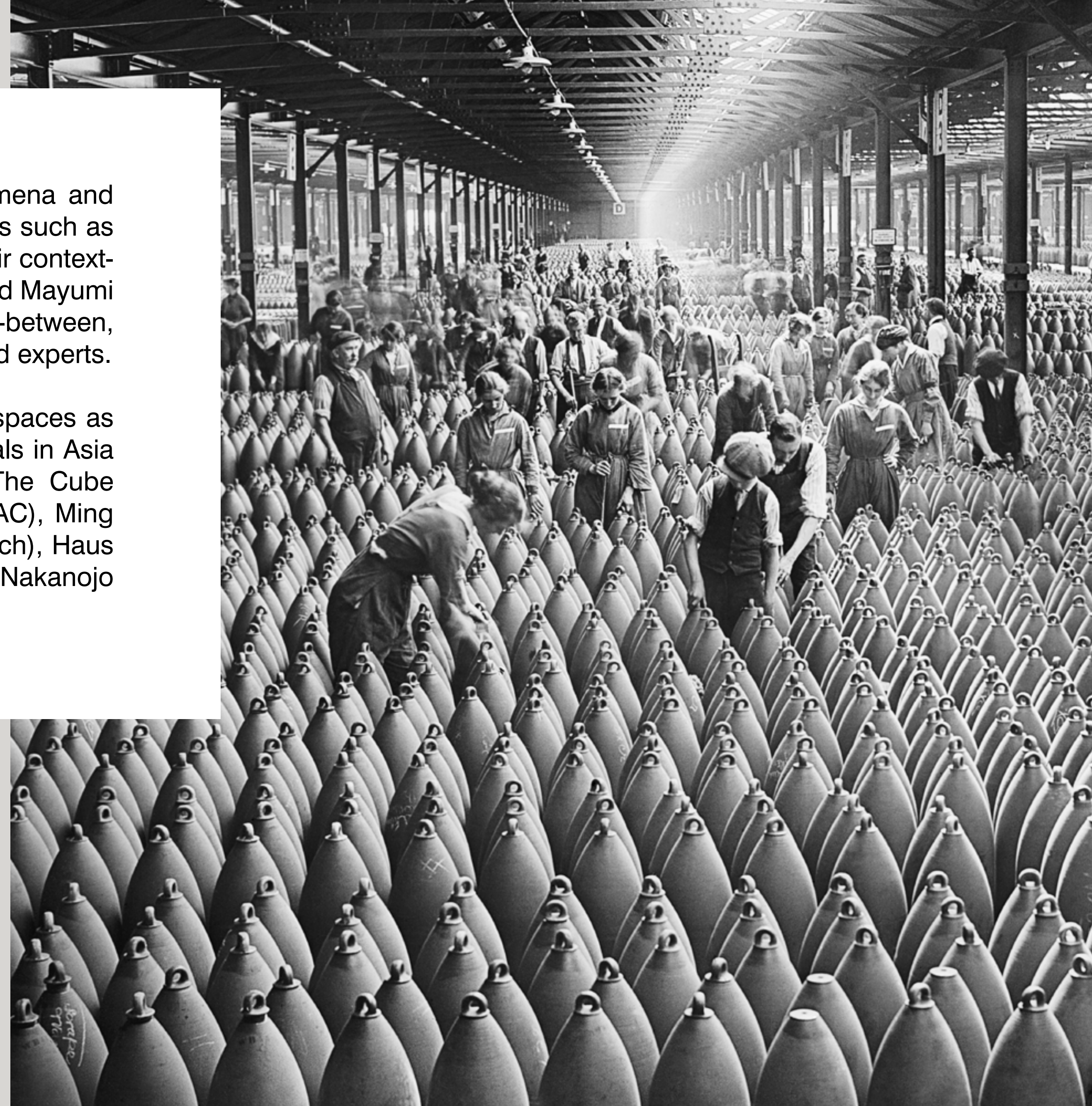
sustainable resources: the images were transferred to stencils, exposed to sunlight, and then developed with the help of naturally occurring ammonia vapors from excrement in a chicken barn near Zurich, Switzerland. This manual process leads to inevitable imperfections in the prints, resulting in the singularity of each copy, which contrasts with the uniformity of machine-produced prints.



- Willimann/
Arai

Willimann/Arai (Zurich/Tokyo) are interested in phenomena and subjects that question or overcome modern dichotomies such as Nature/Culture, East/West, and the Local/Foreign. In their context-specific and research-based projects, Nina Willimann and Mayumi Arai create arrangements and narratives that explore the in-between, often in collaboration with visitors, local communities and experts.

The work of Willimann/Arai has been presented in Off-spaces as well as in the frame of renowned institutions and festivals in Asia and Switzerland, a.o. in Taipei Fine Arts Museum, The Cube Space (Taipei) Taipei Contemporary Arts Museum (TCAC), Ming Contemporary Art Museum (Shanghai), Helmhaus (Zurich), Haus Konstruktiv (Zurich), Ausstellungsraum Klingental (Basel), Nakanojo Biennale (Nakanojo/JP).



EXHIBITION EVENTS

Opening: July 27, 17.00

18.00 — Walk through the exhibition with the exhibition artists and curators

18:30 — Performance by Mbene Mwambene at Het Nieuwe Café

Collateral event: September 14, 19.00

Nieuwe Instituut Auditorium

Architect **Ola Hassanain**

(Sudan/The Netherlands),

writer and journalist **Owen Hatherley** (UK) and architect and researcher

Lesia Topolnyk (Ukraine/The Netherlands).

The invited speakers focus on political repercussions and manifestations of architecture. They will respond to the works presented at the exhibition and speak about how their practices and projects are connected to colonial endurance and the future principles of infrastructural relations and connections.

LABORATORY AND ONLINE ARCHIVE

The exhibition is an integral part of a larger project Colonial Endurance. It aims at discovering and stimulating loopholes in the predetermined social reality, which is based on principles of violence and inequality. Collectively and individually, the project participants develop artistic and scientific tools that could examine and undermine cycles of systemic violence. The project commenced with a comprehensive online laboratory. Collaborating closely with artists, experts, and researchers, the laboratory operated as a platform for the development of most part of exhibition works. The laboratory and exhibition results will be compiled into an open digital archive, accessible to the public by the end of 2023.

Online archive and laboratory contributors include **Aysel Akhundova, Ofri Cnaani, Nikolay Erofeev, Alice Hertzog, Owen Hatherley, Ola Hassanian, Sasha Huber, Samia Henni, Georgy Mamedov, Uriel Orlow, Nikolay Smirnov, Lesia Topolnyk, Anton Valkovsky**

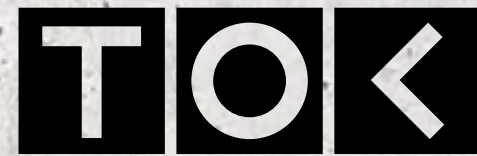
TOK

TOK is a nomadic, international curatorial collective founded in 2010 by Anna Bitkina and Maria Veits. Their practice is rooted in historical analysis and political imagination, generating multidimensional projects that explore the causes and consequences of mutating political realities. Often working outside of conventional art spaces, TOK infiltrates social structures, bringing to light their insidious logics and effects, subjecting them to public discourse in order to revisit the roles and power of social institutions and redraft their potential future. TOK's investigations encompass local governance, public space, media, educational and legal systems (with a specific emphasis on excluded histories), communities and experiences, the politics of built environments, and imposed hierarchies across different societies and geographies. TOK's activities involve curating exhibitions, socially-oriented art projects, educational events, and publications. Their current curatorial focus includes examining the relationships between the state and the body to uncover remnants of systemic colonial violence embedded in social structures.

NIEUWE INSTITUUT

Nieuwe Instituut is the Netherlands' national museum for architecture, design and digital culture. Located in the city of architecture, Rotterdam, in the Museum Park with Kunsthal Rotterdam and Depot Boijmans Van Beuningen as neighbours, Nieuwe Instituut has various exhibition spaces, a museum shop, a museum café (with the city's loveliest terrace), an auditorium, educational spaces and a garden. Nieuwe Instituut focuses on important social developments, such as the housing shortage, the energy transition, the rise of artificial intelligence, mobility, and the use of public space.

In addition to its own programming, the Nieuwe Instituut offers a platform for third-party initiatives from the field of art and design in its building in Rotterdam's Museum Park. Since the beginning of 2020, pop-up exhibitions in the Gallery 3 space have given individual makers and organisations the opportunity to show their work to a wider audience in a museum setting.



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**Nieuwe
Instituut**

Colonial Endurance.
Detecting the Algorithm of Violence
in Infrastructures.
27 July–8 October, 2023

Curated by TOK
Exhibition design: Arghavan Khaefi
Graphic design: Elena Karimova

Gallery 3
Nieuwe Instituut
Museumpark 25

The exhibition opening hours are:
Tue — Wed 10.00–17.00
Thu 10.00–21.00
Fri — Sun 10.00–17.00

nieuweinstituut.nl
tok-spb.org

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