

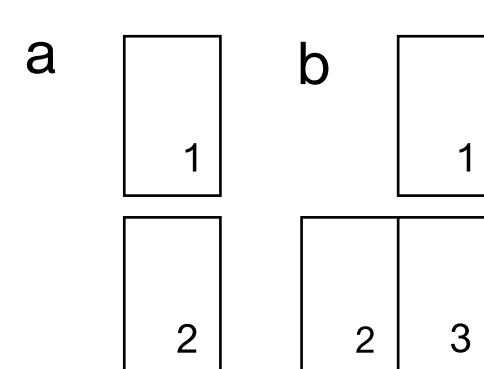
A close-up portrait of a woman with reddish-brown hair, looking directly at the camera. Her face is partially obscured by intricate, brown paper cutouts of leaves and branches, creating a layered, artistic effect. The background is a soft, light blue-grey color.

FUTURES IN PROGRESS

BIOPHILIA

FUTURES IN PROGRESS

This document allows for viewing both in single page format (a) and as a double page spread (b), the latter being the option recommended by the editors.





TREND GUIDE 01: BIOPHILIA

04 Editor's Note

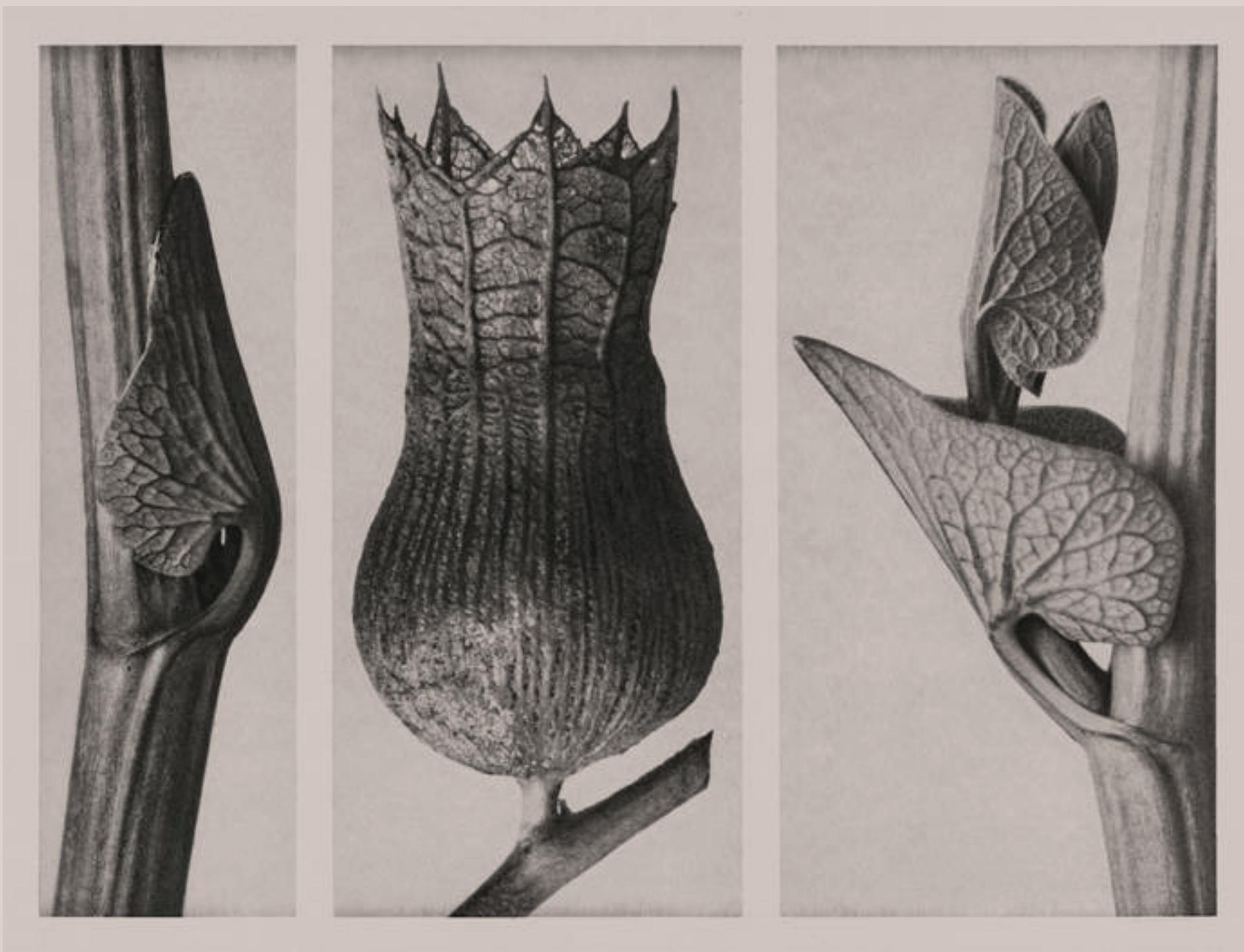
08 Scene

14 Case Studies

EDITOR'S NOTE

In general, the lockdown has provided a useful opportunity, among other things, to appreciate the value of a side nature that's been gradually marginalised by our contemporary –and especially urban– lifestyle. Deprived of freedom of movement and unable to visit the countryside and breathe fresh air, we've found access to our green environment through written and audiovisual content.

The lockdown, in our case, has allowed us to examine what brought us to this point. We revisited the essay *Biophilia* (1984), by the American biologist Edward Osborne Wilson, in which he states that humans are innately and emotionally drawn to nature.



The term “biophilia” means, literally, “love of life”, this is, love of all living things that make life possible and are part of nature. At this point we wonder: can art explain this connection in its essence?

Searching for the answer we've found ourselves led to what has become FUTURES IN PROGRESS' first line of investigation.



This is a field in which artists from all over the globe and from all disciplines have been generating a discourse that allows us to understand and evaluate the greatness of the environment we belong to as a species. Their work is a balm in a society that is increasingly built from concrete and asphalt. This research turned out to be a process of healing and hope during times of lockdown and uncertainty, and at the same time, has allowed us to understand and decode this powerful “biophilic call” we are experiencing.

We present “BIOPHILIA” - a work named after Wilson’s concept because we believe it combines accuracy and broad-mindedness with diverse, artistic and vital sensitivities.

From the beginning, our goal has been to curate a series of works that emerge from the will of documenting, questioning, and embellishing the interaction of our lives with nature. The result is this careful selection of 8 artists who combine science, beauty, reflection, and aesthetics and are able to reproduce the biophilic effect in all its dimensions.

We hope this exploration may serve to deliver an optimistic message of the future; a future in which humankind has the ability and responsibility to protect an environment of which we represent only a small part. The artists we have chosen, with their works and projects, are responsible for reminding us of this, always.



“Nature holds the key to our aesthetic, intellectual, cognitive and even spiritual satisfaction.”

Edward O. Wilson



THE BIOPHILIC CALL

Humankind has been a part of - and by extension in contact with - nature from the very beginning of our existence. We are the children of planet Earth, a creature among the millions that inhabit it, and to which all of us owe our survival. From its origins, our relationship with nature has been profound and honest, those distant times when women and men would move through striking landscapes, going deep into thick forests and traversing craggy mountains in search of a safe place to feel safety and happiness. Our ancestors, who lived in the African savannah, naturally migrated to environments with more diversity of flora and fauna in order to have more food, water, resources and shelter.



In modern times, it was the psychologist and philosopher Erich Fromm who coined the term “biophilia” for the first time in his book *The Anatomy of Human Destructiveness* (1973) to explain the fundamental connection that human beings have with nature. But it was the biologist Edward Osborne Wilson who would popularise the term in the 1980s in his book *Biophilia* (1984), the core concept of which is that the urge to bond with nature and evolve as individuals is in our DNA. Wilson argues passionately

that our happiness and psychological welfare are linked to our relationship with nature. He believed that humankind must be closely identified with nature through coexistence, as in the past.

Human beings feel the urge to reconnect with the natural environment because they know they can learn from it; it calms, heals, and inspires them, and this connection is what makes them respect and protect it. Protection is, of course, more necessary today than ever before. The great advances of the past century have meant that people increasingly move away from nature, ignoring it out of necessity or habit. People live in cities more than ever before and It is expected that by 2050, 70% of the global population - 6.4 billion people - will be city dwellers.



To Wilson, when humankind is relegated to an environment that is man-made and deprived of the “beauty and mystery” of nature, our minds move towards “simpler and tougher settings” that affect our mental health.



Today we know that natural stimuli cause physiologic and psychological responses in our bodies that allow us to react best in each situation. Throughout its history, the human neurological system has evolved to respond to the fractal geometry of nature, that is, the complex shapes that repeat themselves at different scales in snowflakes, the venations of leaves, rivers, or the branches of trees. When our brains have to deal with the cubist and simpler shapes out of scale that define our urban environment, they are forced to make an effort to filter the essential from the non-essential information, and somehow our brains become more tense.

It is no coincidence that many of the natural features we consider aesthetically pleasing and for which we are willing to pay more were crucial to our species

earlier survival. The urban environment, dominated by asphalt and concrete, provides little evidence (water, vegetation, or animals to eat) that informs our brains that everything is ok, that they can relax.



The moment our society accepts it doesn't belong to its surrounding ecology, it is in some way accepting that it's not ready for a world that, at the moment, society is ruining. The human being is just one of the many components of the vast ecological reality. Following this idea, philosopher Timothy Morton argues quite clearly in his last book *Being Ecological* (2018) that every life form on the planet is connected, forming an extensive network of interconnections that penetrates every dimension of life.

“Appealing to nature gives us an idea of the distance we still have to cover to achieve real progress in the environmental issue.”

Timothy Morton

There is nothing like engaging with nature to reduce the stress of modern life and promote physical and mental wellbeing. The biophilic call is reaching a growing segment of the population, who are turning towards places full of green and hope in search of their own essence.

In these biophilic times, the human species must take its environmental consciousness further than the Anthropocene, for the sake of its own survival. In being conscious of this, and in the striking beauty of nature, lie thousands of approaches the artistic universe develops following biophilia.

This is Biophilia; this is the art of nature.



^A ELLEN RUTT

^B LINDA TEGG

CASE

^C KAROLINE HJORTH AND
RIITTA IKONEN

^D DRA. ALEXANDRA DAISY
GINSBERG

The background of the entire page is a soft, monochromatic photograph. It features several palm fronds in the foreground, some in sharp focus and others blurred. In the background, a calm body of water stretches across the horizon under a pale sky. The overall aesthetic is serene and tropical.

É TAMARA DEAN

ƒ JULIAN CHARRIERE

STUDIES

Ḡ ZHENG BO

ʰ MAJA PETRIC

A

ELLEN

RUTT



Ellen Rutt is a multi-disciplinary artist who uses an abstract vocabulary of layered shapes and primary colours that she applies to mixed-media paintings, murals, installations and wearables.

Originally from Michigan and based in Detroit, we could define Rutt as an eco-urban artist for the unique combination of her aesthetics and her ideas her work shows. Her pop-style and exciting mis-en-scène contrasts with the image of Detroit: Industrial, excessive, worn out and economically liquidated.

The environmental awareness and the urgency of climate action drive her works. In them she sparks the conversation between materials and movement, between places and processes.

ELLEN RUTT

ELLEN RUTT

ELLEN RUTT



There is one project that stands out in our search of biophilia. *Nothing is Separate: A Collaboration with Nature*, is an experimental, travelling installation created as part of Temple Children's artist residency in Hilo, Hawai'i. By creating intuitive compositions of painted, repurposed wooden shapes and costumes at several of the island's majestic, distinct and isolated terrains, Rutt focuses on how we are simultaneously celebrating the sacredness of the natural world, while also engaging in practices that knowingly or unknowingly contribute to its destruction. The artist seems to question if this is the essence of the connection between humans and nature.

A

ELENN RUTT

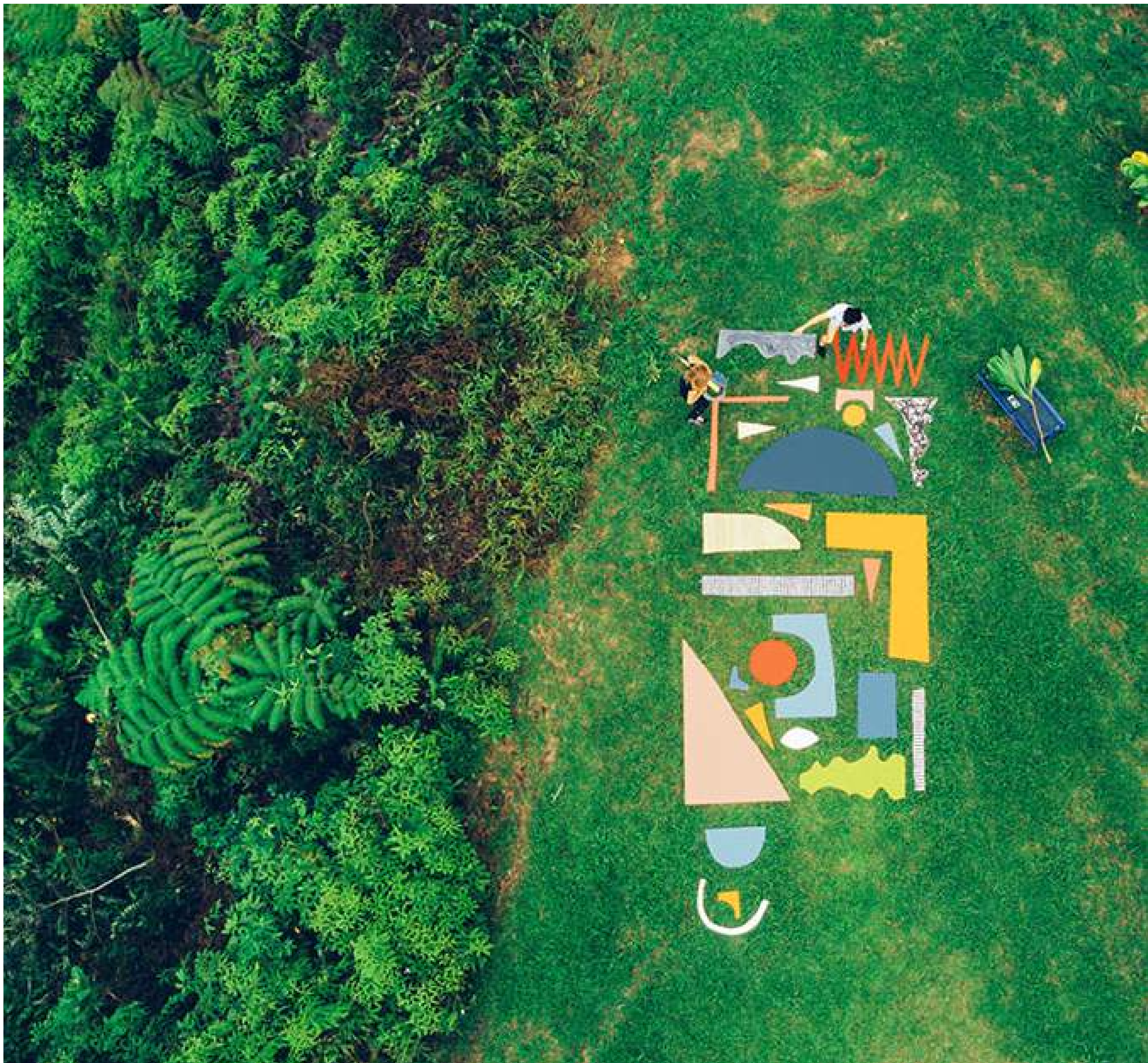
ELENN RUTT

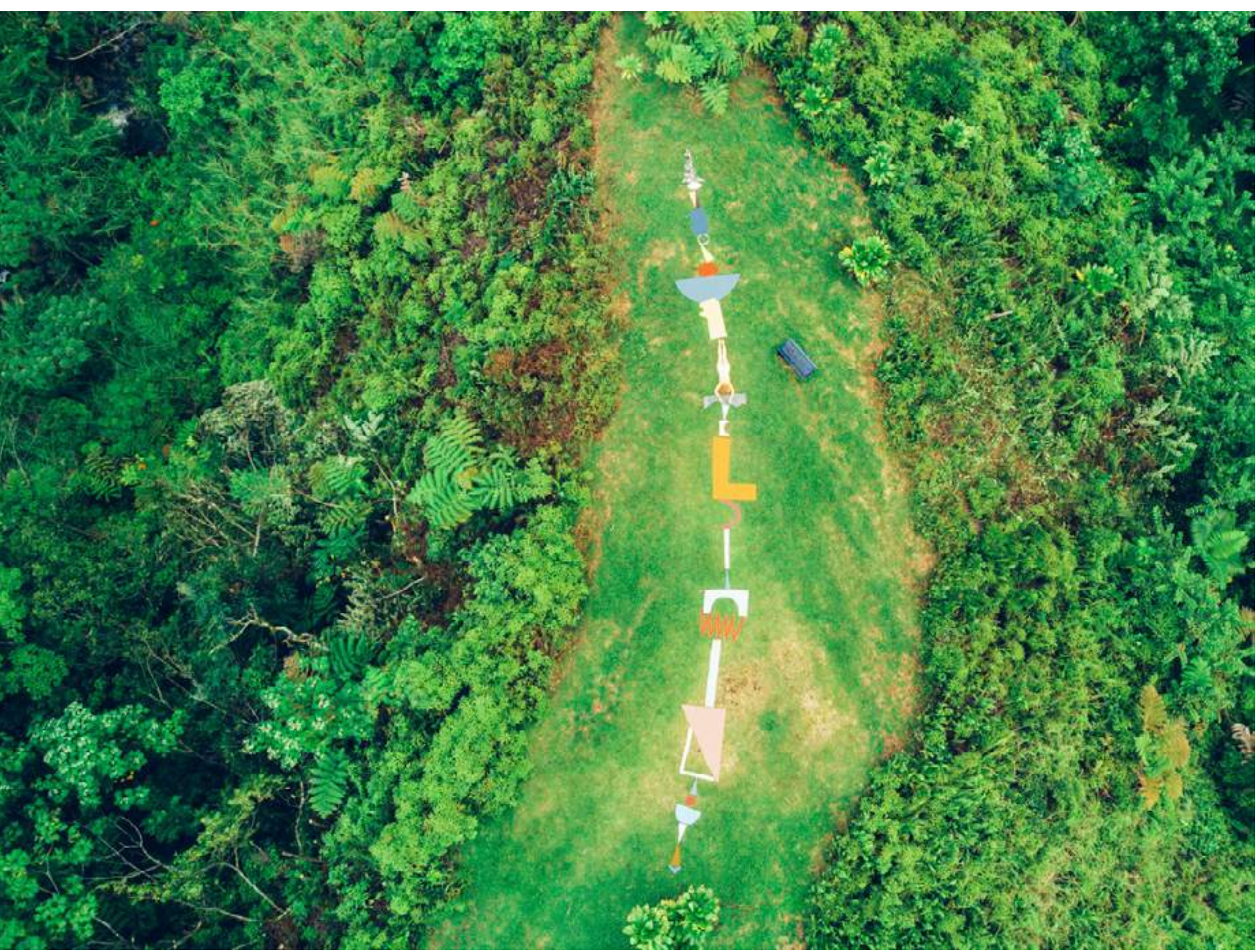
ELENN RUTT





The bright colours create beautiful contrasts with the vegetation, especially with the dark volcanic rocks, and at the same time signal our attraction to aesthetics, which sometimes twists an enthusiastic message. The concept and the contemporary objects delicately approach nature, a naked environment that seems at ease with this new company.





B

LINDA

TEGG





Linda Tegg is an Australian artist based in Chicago and whose work exists somewhere on the border between nature and culture. She works with installations, photography, performances and video. Her works have something “restorative” about them in the broader sense, because she shows her wish to repatriate other beings (animals or plants) to where they once belonged. Can we restore a disappearance?

Can we restore a presence to rethink our relationship with nature?

B

LINDA TEGG

LINDA TEGG

LINDA TEGG



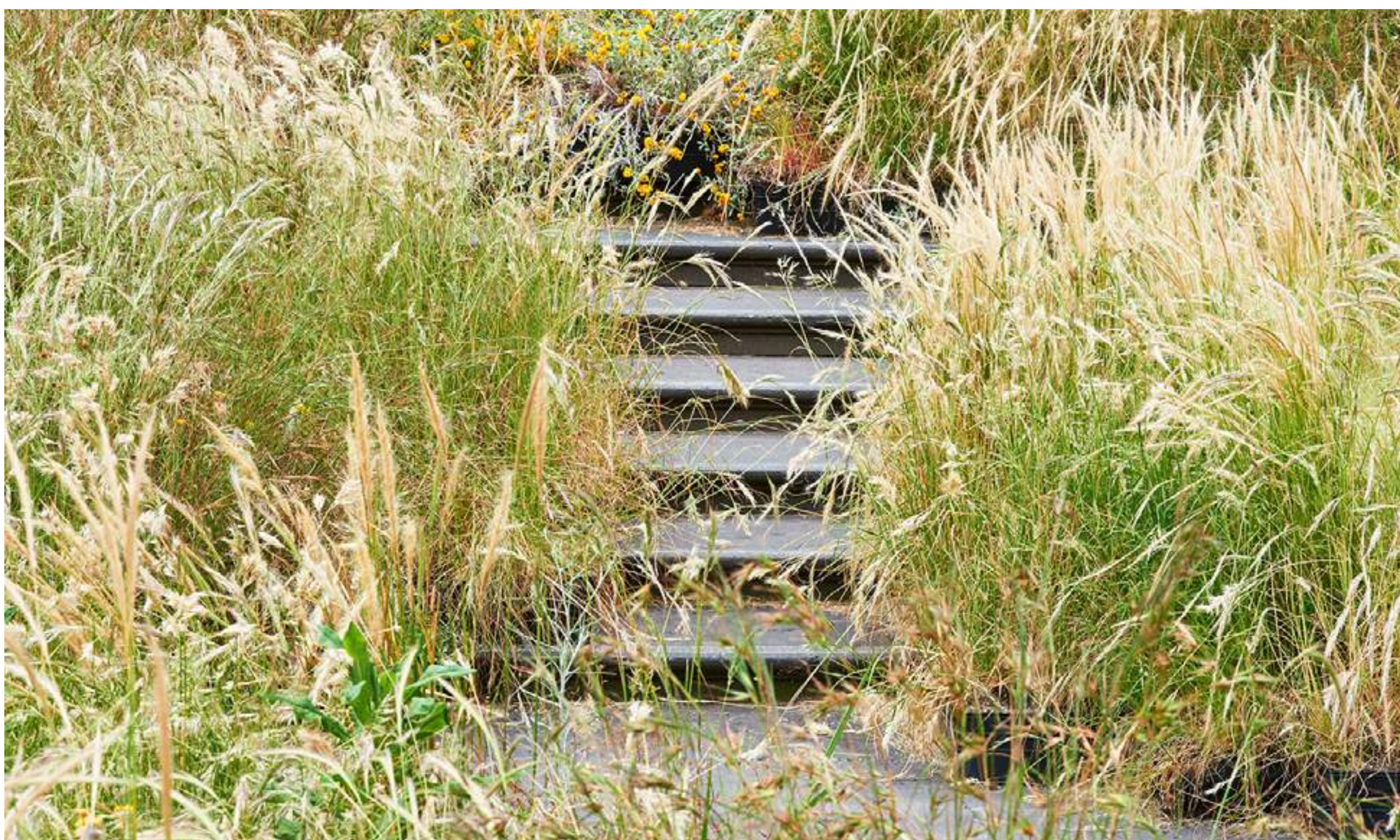






This concept was visualised in her work *Grasslands*, an ephemeral installation *a priori* that now has been made permanent in the esplanade of the Victoria State Library. The project's basis was the cultivation of 15,000 plants of 60 indigenous species that were once part of the area's landscape. After detailed research into the site's biodiversity, Tegg delivered a message that shifts between poetry and politics; past and present.

We would like to highlight her project *Grasslands repair* created for the Venice Biennale in collaboration with the architects Louise Wright y Mauro Baracco for the Australian architecture pavilion.



LINDA TEGG

With this work, Tegg tries to focus the attention towards the deterioration suffered by the meadows of the western plain on the Victoria State (Australia). Due to massive urbanisation, today it occupies just 1% of the space is dominated in the mid-18th century.

LINDA TEGG



LINDA TEGG

C

KAROLINE
HJORTH AND

RIITTA
IKONEN



The collaborative project *Eyes as Big as Plates*, by the Norwegian artist Karoline Hjorth and the Finnish artist Riitta Ikonen, has been in constant evolution since its beginning in 2011. It started with the intention of exploring and reinventing a series of Nordic popular figures, but has now evolved into a continual global search for modern humans that belong to nature. The images are powerful and present the subjects in different natural environments,

creating the feeling that artists want to absorb their experience and intelligence and defend them, when the elderly are perhaps not being valued as they should.







They are the main case of study in this hybrid project that interweaves photography, sculpture, character design, installations, art books and the creation of elaborate costumes.



They document older people from everywhere, whose vitality defies the qualities that dominate most of our society. These pictures capture the magic, the poetry and often the folkloric.



We perceive a touching sparkle in the protagonists' faces that doesn't soothe their spirit of resistance and their curiosity for what is to come, but they are connected to reality.





We understand this piece as an encouragement to rediscover a demographic group, the elderly, and aims to generate new perspectives on who we are and where we belong from other points of view. Despite the disconnection from nature imposed by modern society, Hjorth and Ikonen's project reminds us, serenely and silently, how exceptional the beauty around us is and how much it absorbs us.



A homonymous book about the project has been published. In its 176 pages, the book features portraits, field notes, essays and behind-the-scenes stories. It's been designed by Greger Ulf Nilson and published by Forlaget Press.

D



A scenic landscape featuring a large, calm body of water in the middle ground. In the background, a range of mountains is visible under a soft, hazy sky. The foreground consists of several large, light-colored rocks and some sparse, low-lying vegetation. The overall atmosphere is serene and natural.

DRA.
ALEXANDRA
DAISY
GINSBERG

This British artist explores the powerful link between nature and humans, investigating how this changes owing to the progress in the field of design and technology. She is the perfect exponent of critical design, Ginsberg examines the human impulses with an essential goal: to better the world. She studied architecture and design interaction and has spent much time engaging with the field of synthetic biology, and today she

is convinced that design has understood the ability it has to create natural and biological processes.



We highlight her project *Resurrecting the Sublime* (2019) in collaboration with the doctor Christina Agapakis from the biotechnology company Ginkgo Bioworkd and the smell researcher and artist Sissel Tolaas. Together they've resurrected the smell of an extinct flower, the *Hibiscadelphus wilderianus* Rock. It was indigenous to the slopes of Mount Haleakala, on Maui, Hawaii. Colonial cattle ranching decimated its forest habitat, and the last tree was found dying in 1912.



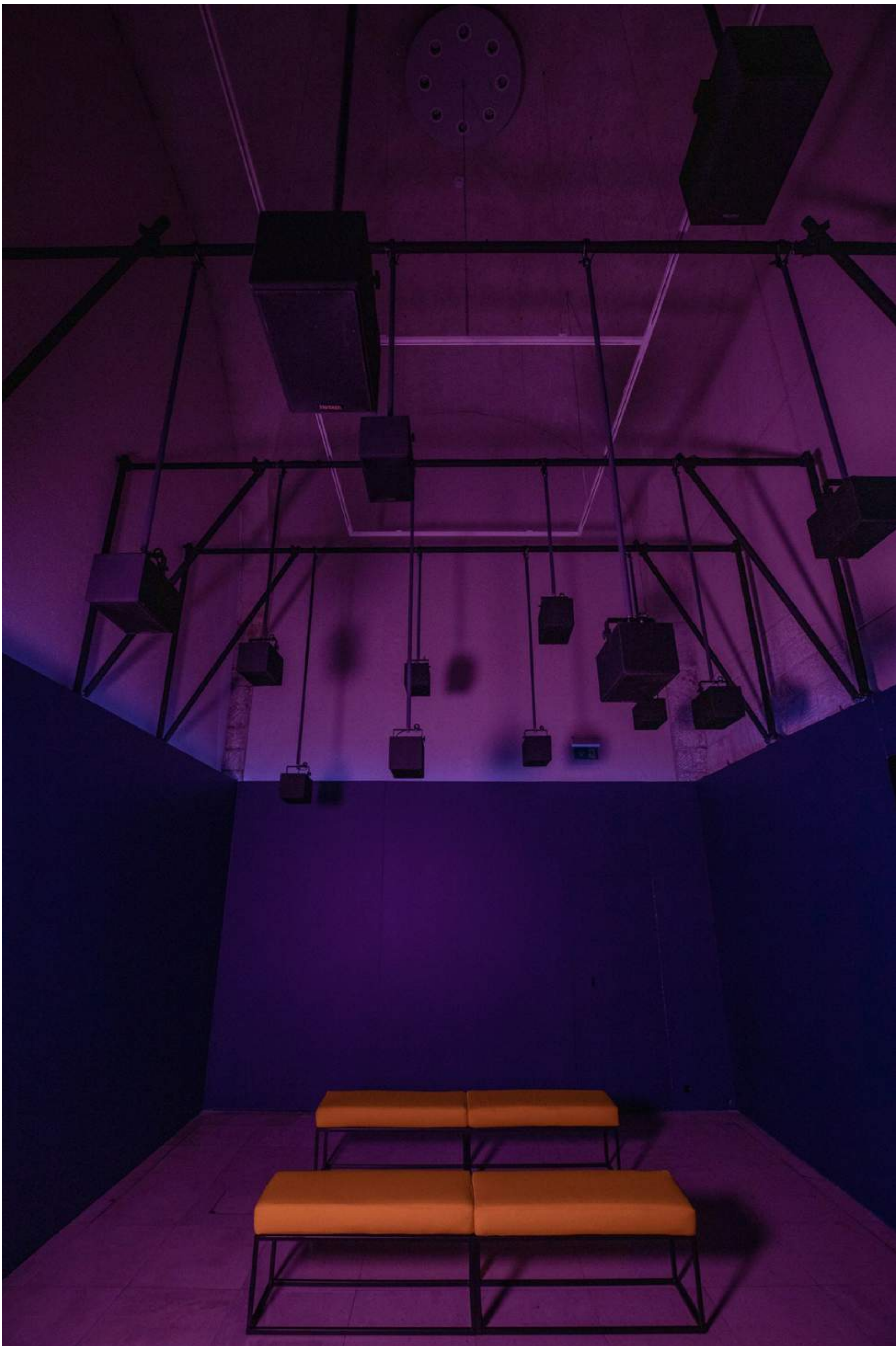






Machine auguries (2019) is a multi-channel sound installation that shows how light and sound pollution from our 24-hour urban lifestyle affects birds, modifying their singing and questioning how the city might sound with changing, homogenising, or diminishing bird populations. In the installation artificial birds reproduce a natural dawn chorus, generated using machine learning.





Dr. Ginsber offers a critical perspective and ironically, she is able to establish, through her work, a brilliant and inspiring frame of complex relationships between humans and nature, between technology and culture and between scientists and artists.

E

TAMARA

DEAN



Tamara Dean grew up surrounded by greenery in Australia, and it makes sense that nature has become the main stage of her work. It's not merely for aesthetic reasons; she delivers severe criticism and calls for urgent reflection. Dean is interested in understanding the role of instinct and ritual of our lives, and how nature can shape them.



In projects like *In our Nature, Instinctual* or *The Edge*, we find photographs that portray situations in the wild but, at the same time, gives it an oneiric twist. They are images that somehow never stop celebrating being alive-surrounded by a majestic and undomesticated environment.



As human beings, we are as vulnerable in nature, and can almost disappear. In her work, she shows her ability to capture this idea and deliver it visually.

What will become of us if we keep moving away from nature and eradicating it? This topic is omnipresent in Dean's work, which intensifies in her last piece, *Endangered* (2019). It consists of a series of photographs that show the aquatic environment in which human bodies mimic the moves of the animals that live there.

With this work, Dean exposes her wish to reformulate the notion we have of ourselves as human beings; as mammals we belong to a sensitive ecosystem and we are as vulnerable to the effect of climate urgency as any other live form. Therefore, she places us where climate change will be more obvious: the oceans.

We feel attracted by the light and haze that these images radiate because they lend them an unexpected energy. We receive a clear message: we are not above nature, we simply inhabit it and we have the need to do everything that is in our hands to avoid ruining it.







F

JULIAN

CHARRIERE



Julian Charriere aims to turn around the romantic conception that establishes a separation between mankind and the world around us. His projects usually take place in remote locations where, like an heroic archaeologist, he recovers moments of the past to try and understand the future while reflecting on the present. This Swiss artist based in Berlin uses sculpture, video, photography and installations to reflect upon questions about time, perception, about what we can learn from a place and how we react to the world. It's obvious that his work displays an environmental interest



but he doesn't
address it
as discourse
against climate
change. He is
a postmodern
explorer who
wanders the
world in pursuit

of the perennial fractures
between human civilisation
and nature. Charriere explores
it poetically and with a
cinematographic point of view.

Our attention is drawn to *Blue Fossil Entropic Stories*, a series of photographs that document a seemingly hopeless battle in which he confronts an iceberg with a gas torch, like a contemporary David against Goliath. Somehow it represents human time pitched against geological time.



All We Ever Wanted Was Everything and Everywhere is an installation and an exhibition of the same name. A large diving bell is hanging from the ceiling while what seems like a chandelier but is a sculpture made of plastic bags full of water from the Pacific Ocean balances it. It represents the unstable balance

that exists between human creativity and the forces of nature (these types of bells were one of the first instruments used to explore the sea).



In most of his work, Julian Charriere brings the realms of environmental science and cultural history together and pushes us to a post-apocalyptic scenario in which humankind inexorably disrupts the environment.





G

ZHENG

BO



Zheng Bo is a Chinese artist and graduate in Computer Science, whose trajectory has evolved from a perspective centred on the human being to a broader approach that unites all species.

Although nowadays he is based in Hong-Kong, Bo grew up in Beijing and has been a close witness of the social, ecological and environmental problems that the rapid growth in his country has brought with it.

His work is a wake-up call to transform human communities into communities formed by different species. It explores nature becoming the space that



encourages radical thinking and experimentation in search of an equal future for everyone.

With his project *Pteridophilia* (2016 - ongoing) he is exploring the relationship between equals in different species, especially between humans and ferns, which are very common in Asian cuisine. An intimate relationship that explores topics like sexual pleasure, control and submission, for example portraying a young boy making love to a fern “birds nest” (*Asplenium nidus*) that he will later eat. A provocative work that reflects on the importance of our fantasies, and projects our need to merge with other life forms,





generate new post-humanist narratives and renew our politics of life. With this work the artist presents the natural world with sensuality, vulnerability and an effeminacy of space that opposes the predominant masculine fantasy, in which what is natural is used to reinforce sexist heteronormativity.



From it emerges the gay ecology, which differentiates what's natural from what it isn't and explores alternatives easier to relate to nature. In 2020, Zheng Bo will participate in an artistic residency at the Gropius Bau in Berlin, where he will collaborate with scientists to understand, speculate and imagine how plants could be politically active.

G

ZHENG BO

ZHENG BO

ZHENG BO





“I usually think that people who lived 100 years ago would not understand my projects and would think they are outrageous because they weren’t as isolated from nature as we are.”

Zheng Bo





MAJA

PETRIC

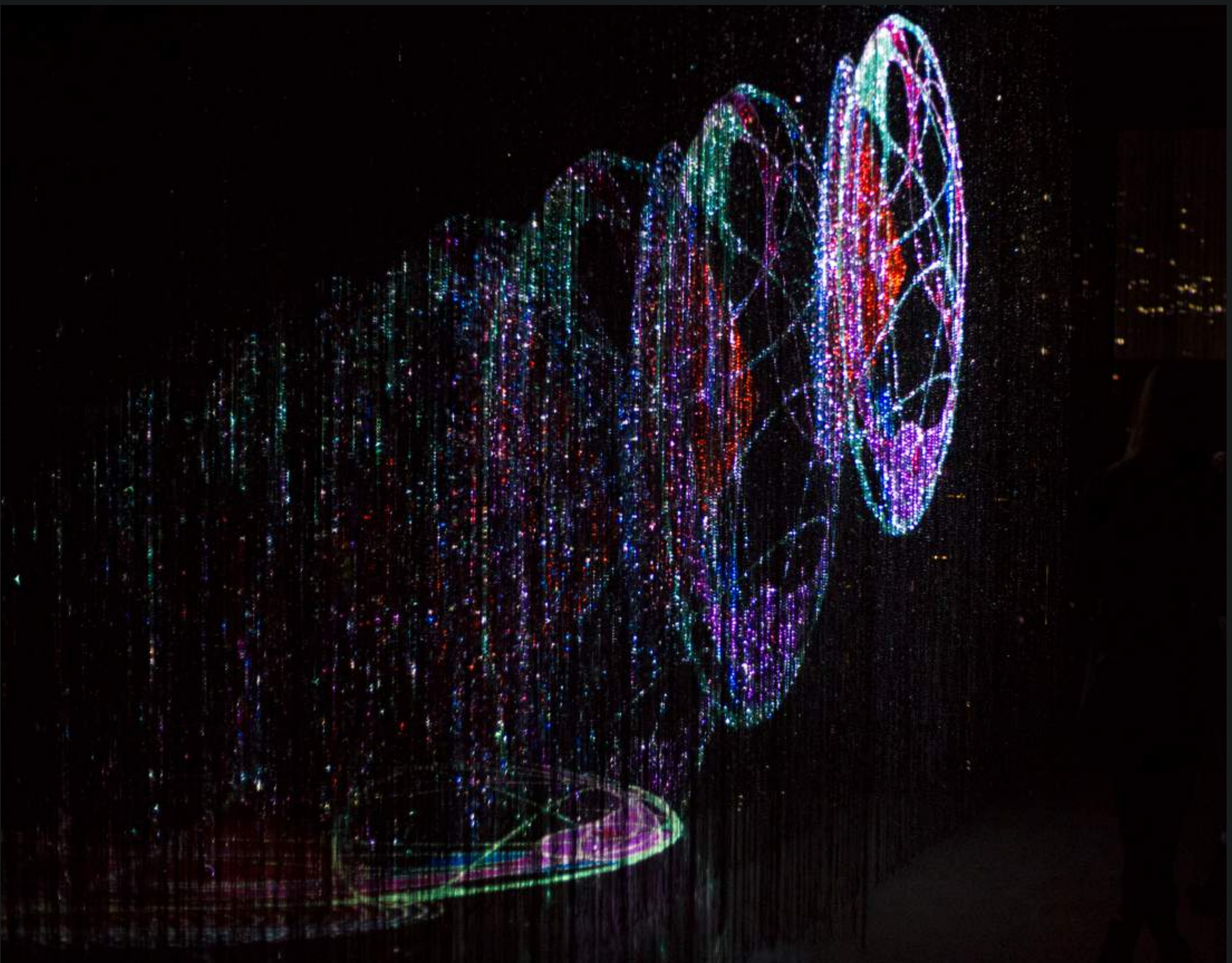


This Croatian artist's trajectory is bathed by the same light that soaks the spatial and immersive installations she creates, which seem like a science fiction dream. Meja Petrić uses light to design and outline spaces because she knows that people react to it instinctively. Beyond analysing the possibilities of light from her artistic perspective, Petrić has been exploring it for years from a more scientific and technical perspective. An artist who, in her installations,

pursues “the sublime”, being aware that the audience will never be able to find a definition for that and the only way to find an explanation will be through their own experience.

II

MAJA PETRIC



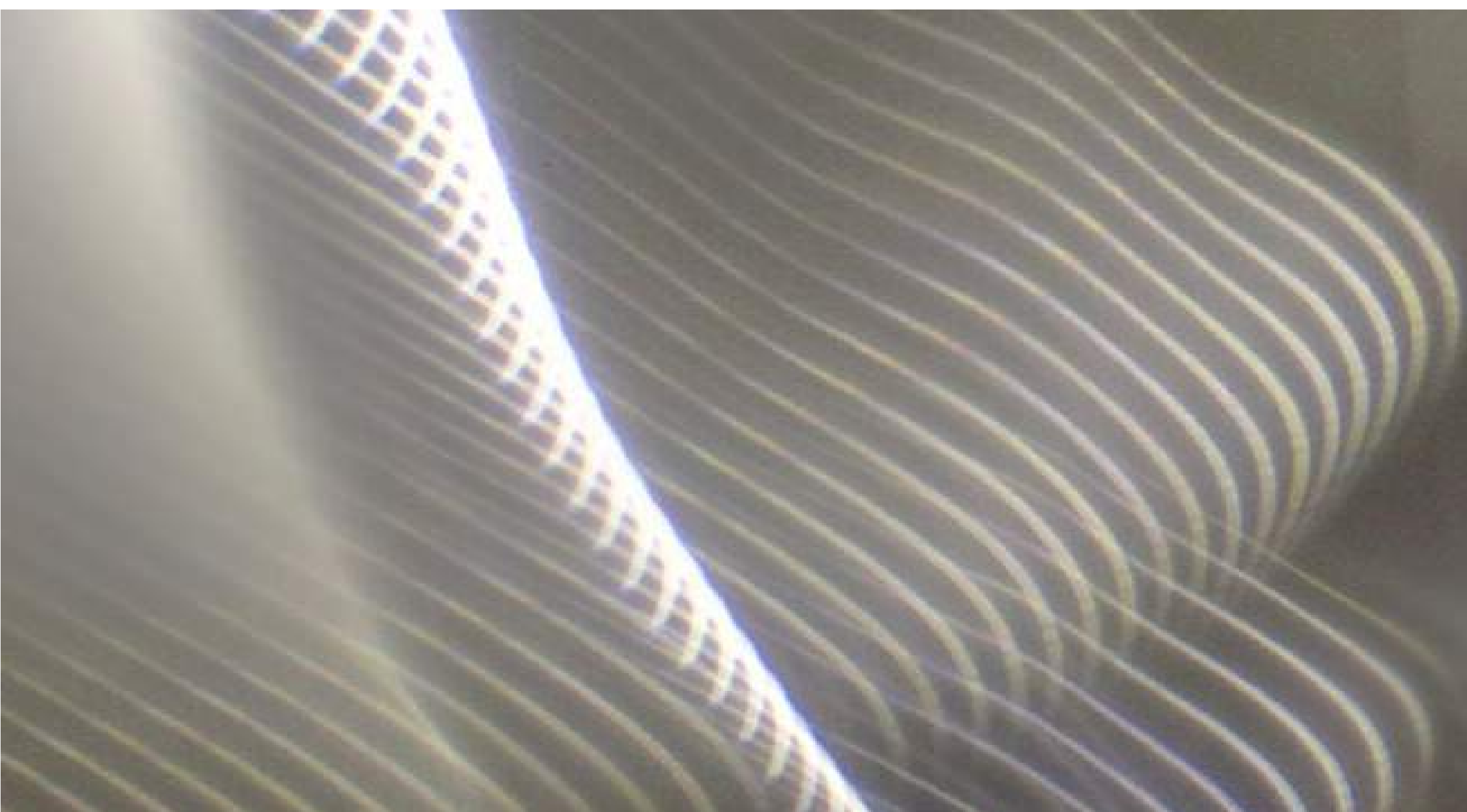
MAJA PETRIC

MAJA PETRIC

Petrić studies the human experience and with her work links humans to their instinctive connection to the environment.



She is highly interested in filtering the feelings that occur when body and mind connect with nature and sunlight. All through her almost twenty-year-old career, she's sought many answers in projects like *Outside-In*, where she turns a dark, dirty New York suburban pedestrian tunnel into a sort of cave that simulates sunlight

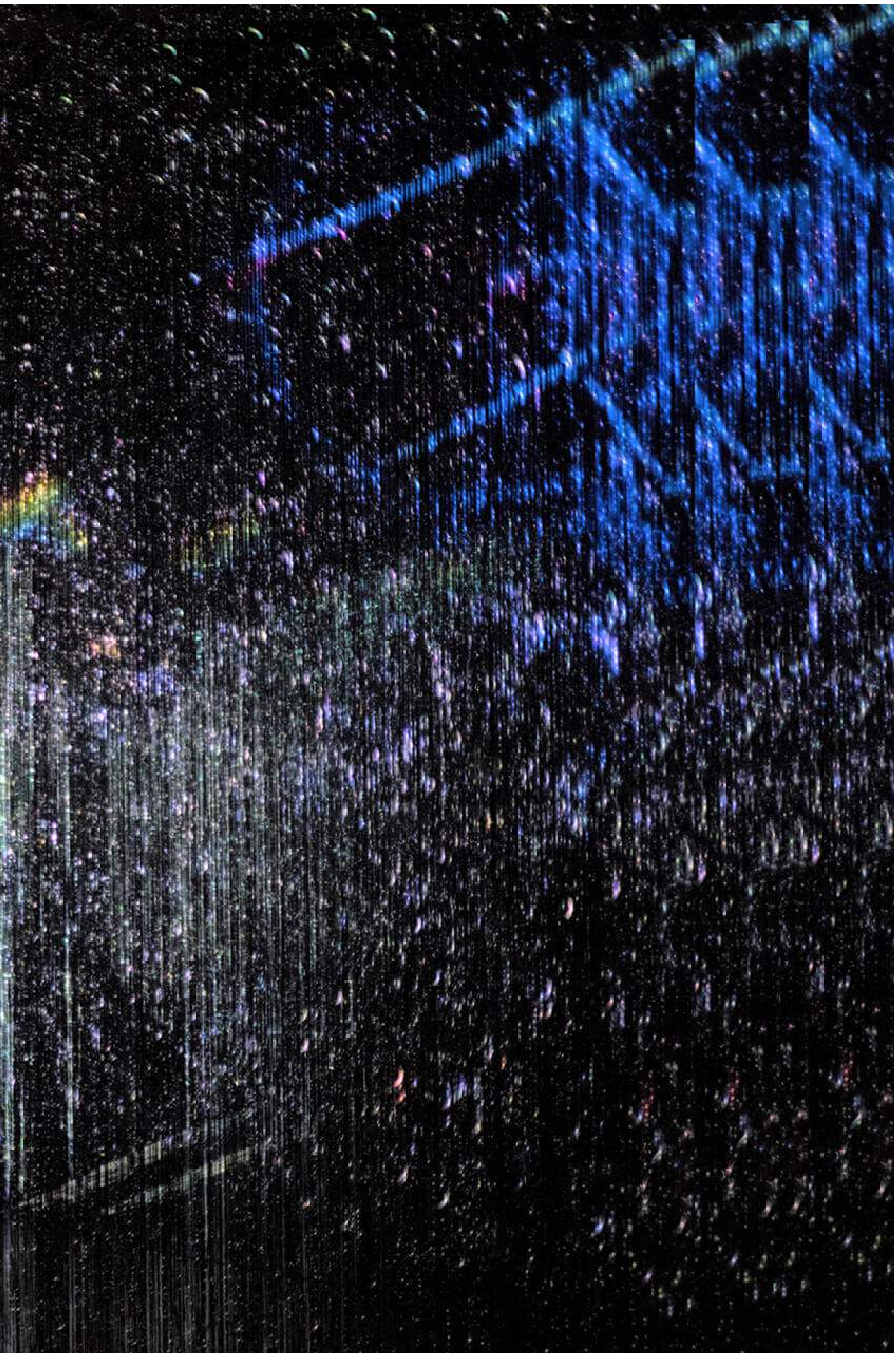


that changes throughout the day between fake cracks on the walls and ceiling. *Reduced Landscapes*, in which she proposes a series of boxes of dynamic lights that represent environments of different landscapes, the perception of which changes depending on the angle from which we observe it, and generates abstract and impressionist experiences of nature.



Aiming to evoke nature's sublimation and reveal the connections between the human being and everything around it, this Seattle based artist uses light, sound and cutting-edge technology such as Artificial Intelligence, Smile technology and robotics to transform her artistic perception of space.





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Dra. Alexandra Daisy Ginsberg, Tamara, Julian Charriere
Dean, Zheng Bo, Maja Petric

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Ellen Rutt
Photo and video by Emad Rashidi
- B
Linda Tegg ^a
Photography by Matthew Stanton
Linda Tegg ^b
Photography Rory Gardiner
Collaborator: Louise Wright y Mauro Barocco
- C
Karoline Hjorth & Riita Ikonen
- D
Dra.Alexandra Daisy Ginsberg ^a
Credit: Christina Agapakis, Alexandra Daisy Ginsberg, Sissel Tolaas,
with support from IFF Inc. and Ginkgo Bioworks.
Photograph: Pierre Grasset.
Dra.Alexandra Daisy Ginsberg ^b
Commissioned by Somerset House and A/D/O by MINI.
With additional support from Faculty and The Adonyeva Foundation
- E
Tamara Dean ^a
Tamara Dean ^b
Tamara Dean ^c
Represented by Martin Browne Contemporary.
- F
Julian Charriere ^a
Julian Charriere ^b
All We Ever Wanted Was Everything and Everywhere, 2018
Exhibition: As We Used to Float, Berlinische Galerie,
Berlin, Germany, 2018, Image by Jens Ziehe

G

Zheng Bo ^a

Pteridophilia

Supported by Kyoto City University of Arts Art Gallery, the 11th Taipei Biennial, Villa Vassilieff and Pernod Ricard Fellowship, and TheCube Project Space.

Zheng Bo ^b

Plant Sex Workshop

Performance programme of the 58th Venice Biennale, 2019

Supported by Delfina Foundation and Arts Council England

H

Maja Petric ^a

We Are All Made of Light

Installation Art: Maja Petrić

Light Art: Maja Petrić

Interactive Art: Maja Petrić

Artificial Intelligence: Mihai Jalobeanu

Software: Mihai Jalobeanu

Spatial Sound: James Wenlock

Spatial Sound Advisor: Daniel Peterson

Lighting: Kenrick Fischer and Jessica Roxann Jones

Multimedia Control: Kenrick Fischer

Fabrication: Daniel Gurney and Jessica Roxann Jones

Project Manager: Jessica Roxann Jones

This project is made possible through the support of MadArt

Maja Petric ^b

Skies

Maja Petric ^c

Reduced landscapes

A

Ellen Rutt, *Nothing is separate: A collaboration with the Nature*, 2019. [P. 20, 23]

B

Linda Tegg, *Grasslands*, 2014. [P. 30,31]

Linda Tegg, *Repair*, 2018 [P.24-29]

C

Karoline Hjorth & Riita Ikonen, *Eyes as big as Plates*, 2011. [P. 32-41]

D

Dra.Alexandra Daisy Ginsberg, *Resurrecting the Sublime*, 2019. [P. 42-49]

Dra.Alexandra Daisy Ginsberg, *Machine Auguries*, 2019. [P. 50, 51]

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Tamara Dean, *In our Nature*, 2018 [P. 52–53, 56–57]

Tamara Dean, *Endangered 2*, 2018. [P. 55]

Tamara Dean, *Endangered 1*, 2018. [P. 58, 59].

F

Julian Charriere, *The Blue Fossil Entropic Stories III*, 2013. [P. 60, 61]

Julian Charriere, *The Blue Fossil Entropic Stories, Detail*, 2013. [P. 63]

Julian Charriere, *All We Ever Wanted Was Everything and Everywhere*. Exhibition: *As We Used to Float*, 2018. [P. 64-67]

G

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H

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Maja Petric, *Skies*, 2013 [P. 82]

Maja Petric, *Reduced Landscapes*, 2015 [P. 82,83]

Maja Petric, *We Are All Made of Light*, 2019 [P. 84, 85]

Edward O. Wilson. *Biophilia*, 1984. [P. 5,7,8,9,11]
Erich Fromm, *The anatomy of Human Destructiveness*, 1973 [P.9]
Timothy Morton, *El pensamiento ecológico*, 2018 [P.12]

Salva López. [P. 20–23, 40, 45, 46]
Karl Bloosfeldt. Via Rawpixel. [P. 10, 15]
Megan Rogers. Via Rawpixel
Ernst Haeckel. Via Rawpixel
Robert John Thornton. Via Rawpixel
Maria Sibylla Merian. Via Rawpixel

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SPECIAL ISSUE 01: BIOPHILIA

FUTURES
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