

PORTFOLIO · SELECTED WORKS

Elena Bajo

*Some intelligences don't speak; they photosynthesize,
root, and remember across geological time.*

Portfolio · Selected Works

Spanish-American transdisciplinary artist, choreographer, and educator

John Simon Guggenheim Memorial Foundation Fellow

Fine Arts / Choreography

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Elena Bajo

Transdisciplinary artist, choreographer, and educator · Madrid / New York

Some intelligences don't speak; they photosynthesize, root, and remember across geological time.

Elena Bajo (b. Madrid) is a Spanish-American transdisciplinary artist, choreographer, and educator, and a 2026 John Simon Guggenheim Fellow in Fine Arts / Choreography. She composes with plants, minerals, bodies, and algorithmic or more-than-human intelligences held in sustained relation, treating matter as archive — stone, root, ash, and woven fibre as containers of time, memory, and the subjugated knowledges the human record has erased.

Her Fellowship project, *The Quantum Leaf Speaks in Ancient Tongues*, carries matrilineal Celtic botanical knowledge into contact with speculative computation through choreographic scores, Jacquard weaving, and sculptural installation — movement performed alongside plants rather than about them, with the body as the instrument through which vegetal signal becomes legible. Underwriting the work is quantum entanglement taken as compositional law: what has once been in relation never fully separates, and keeps acting across distance and time.

She founded S.L.A.B., an eco-space in Wonder Valley, California, conceived

around absence and ecological relation. Recent projects — SHIH: Thirteen Moons — Artemisia / Wallada at C3A Centro de Creación Contemporánea, Córdoba, and SPOIL at Marble House Project, Vermont — carry directly into the Fellowship and are generating material toward her first monograph, gathering her writings and poetry.

Bajo studied Art at University of the Arts London, Pharmacology at Universidad Complutense Madrid, Architecture at ESARQ-UIC Barcelona, and Laban/Bartenieff movement technique at TanzFabrik Berlin. She coordinates Integrative Art Studies at the Saas-Fee Summer Institute of Art (New York / Paris), and has taught at Goldsmiths, RISD, and Sheffield Hallam University. Her work has been presented at Manifesta 15 Barcelona, the Lyon Biennial, Performa Biennial New York, Socrates Sculpture Park, La Casa Encendida, Centro Botín, and Matadero Madrid, with press in Frieze, Artforum, Hyperallergic, and The New York Times.

Artist Statement

Elena Bajo · Madrid / New York

What does it mean to know through a plant? Not to know about one — to receive knowledge by way of it. I begin from the assumption that an Artemisia root system, the hallucinogenic grammar of a Datura, the bioelectric flicker a leaf sends before it is touched, are not figures of speech. They are ways of holding information that predate writing and survive it.

Matter is my archive. Stone, ash, seed, rusted iron, woven fibre, a page of a medieval manuscript — each has been present at events no human record kept, and each carries that presence forward. What the archive discarded, the material retained. I work to make those retentions perceptible: to let what was silenced arrive as form, sound, scent, and weight rather than as citation.

I call the guiding principle Relational Intelligence. Intelligence, in my work, is never held by one body. It is what appears between plants, minerals, human participants, and algorithmic or more-than-human intelligences when they are kept in sustained relation instead of studied apart. Quantum entanglement gives me the compositional law for this: what has once been in relation never fully separates, and keeps acting on its counterpart across distance and time. When I bring such elements back into contact, the encounter releases a spark — a brief opening onto memory the material has carried without speaking.

My lineage is matrilineal and Celtic, reaching back through a Galician grandmother who handled plants as both medicine and oracle, and through the women who carried that knowledge and were burned for it. This is subjugated

knowledge in the exact sense: coherent systems of understanding that were not refuted but suppressed. I do not reconstruct them as heritage. I reactivate them as method.

Choreography is how the knowledge enters a body. Working alongside plants over weeks — attending to their rhythm, their chemistry, their hours — participants arrive at scores no single author wrote. I call these anarchoreographies: movement composed by the relational field rather than issued to it. The dancer is not illustrating a plant. The dancer is the instrument through which vegetal time becomes audible at human scale.

SHIH: Thirteen Moons — Artemisia / Wallada, made at C3A Córdoba, gathered thirteen assemblages around the erased thirteen-moon calendar and the suppressed cosmologies of Andalusian and Celtic women, a living plant's electrical activity composed into sound. SPOIL, made at Marble House Project with yarrow and 450-million-year-old marble, followed a slower exchange: the plant drawing calcium from quarry stone into its own tissue, stone becoming plant and plant becoming stone. Neither work was decided by me, and neither ends when I leave. Both feed The Quantum Leaf Speaks in Ancient Tongues, where these lines converge and the seeds are the protocol continuing without me.

I am not giving these intelligences a voice. I am building the conditions under which we can finally hear that they never stopped speaking.

Elena Bajo

Transdisciplinary artist, choreographer, and educator · Madrid / New York

Elena Bajo (b. Madrid) is a Spanish-American transdisciplinary artist, choreographer, and educator working across sculpture, installation, choreography, moving image, sound, Jacquard textile, and text. She is a 2026 John Simon Guggenheim Fellow in Fine Arts / Choreography.

Her practice proceeds from Relational Intelligence: the awareness that surfaces when plants, minerals, human bodies, and algorithmic or more-than-human intelligences are held in sustained relation rather than sorted into separate categories. Organisms and inherited materials are treated as epistemic agents and primary authors of form — containers of time, memory, and subjugated knowledge, witnesses to a deep time human perception cannot register unaided.

Quantum entanglement operates here as artistic law rather than illustration: what has once been in relation never fully separates, and continues to act upon its counterpart outside chronology or distance. Bringing such elements back into contact — a stone and the plant that grew through it, a manuscript and the body that reads it aloud — releases what she calls sculptural sparks: brief openings onto memory that matter has carried silently.

This lineage is matrilineal and Celtic, transmitted through a Galician grandmother who taught her the curative and divinatory properties of plants, and through a dancer mother who turned the cracks in Madrid

pavements into choreographic maps. Bajo works these inheritances into anarchoreographies — scores authored not by a single hand but by the relational field arising among participants, plants, objects, and living systems.

Her Guggenheim project, *The Quantum Leaf Speaks in Ancient Tongues*, brings Celtic matrilineal plant knowledge into contact with speculative computation through Jacquard-woven tapestries, an ancestral codex, sculptural installation, and choreographic performance. The body is the central instrument: participants rehearse over weeks with the plants themselves, so that vegetal rhythm, bioelectric signal, and lunar time enter movement directly and the score is arrived at in relation rather than imposed.

Two recent projects opened that threshold. At C3A Centro de Creación Contemporánea, Córdoba, SHIH: *Thirteen Moons* — Artemisia / Wallada composed thirteen assemblages of plaster, red clay, brick, oak, copper, and manganese glass around the erased thirteen-moon lunar calendar and the suppressed cosmologies of Andalusian and Celtic women, with a living plant's electrical activity translated into sound. At Marble House Project, Vermont, *SPOIL* was made with yarrow and 450-million-year-old Ordovician marble — the plant drawing calcium out of the quarry stone into its own tissue, stone becoming plant and plant becoming stone, an exchange no one decided and no one can stop. Both feed the Fellowship, and both are

generating material toward her first monograph and a volume of her writings and poetry.

She founded S.L.A.B., an eco-space in Wonder Valley, California, held around absence and ecological relation. Bajo studied Art at University of the Arts London, Pharmacology at Universidad Complutense Madrid, Architecture at ESARQ-UIC Barcelona, and Laban/Bartenieff movement technique at TanzFabrik Berlin. She coordinates Integrative Art Studies at the Saas-Fee Summer Institute of Art (New York / Paris), and has taught at Goldsmiths, Rhode Island School of Design, and Sheffield Hallam University.

Her work has been presented at Manifesta 15 Barcelona, the Lyon Biennial, Performa Biennial New York, ARTIUM Museum, Kunsthalle São Paulo, Socrates Sculpture Park, La Casa Encendida, Frieze London, NADA New York, Centro Botín, Matadero Madrid, C3A Córdoba, and Parallel Oaxaca / Mexico City. Support includes the Guggenheim Fellowship, C3A Córdoba, Marble House Project, LMCC Governors Island, SkulpturenPark Wesenberg / Gabarrón Residency, the Botín Foundation International Visual Arts Award, the Audemars Piguet Award at ARCOmadrid, the Rauschenberg Foundation Emergency Grant, and the Foundation for Contemporary Arts Emergency Grant. Her work has been written about in Frieze, Artforum, Hyperallergic, and The New York Times, among other international publications.

Elena Bajo

2026 Guggenheim Fellow Fine Arts / Choreography Email: <mailto:elenabajo@gmail.com> Web: www.elenabajo.com

Education

Laban Bartenieff Movement TanzFabrik Center for Contemporary Dance Berlin

Fellowship Skowhegan School of Painting and Sculpture Maine US

Master Fine Arts Central Saint Martins, London UK

Master Genetic Architecture from ESARQ, Barcelona ES

Selected Solo Exhibitions and Performances

2024 Elena Bajo Freya's Grove (Eternal Return) SkulpturenPark Wesenberg | Gabarron Res DE

2022 Elena Bajo Dance of the Opium Poppy CRA Matadero Madrid ES (Performance)

2018 Elena Bajo C- Room Priska Pasquer Gallery Cologne DE

2018 Elena Bajo A Poem in Seven Movements Elizabeth Foundation for the Arts EFA NY US (Performance)

2017 Elena Bajo The Owl of Minerva only Flies at Dusk (Urania's Mirror) Parallel Oaxaca Mexico DF MX

2017 Elena Bajo All Tangled Up in a Fading Star ArcoMadrid Audemars Piguet Award Madrid ES

2016 Elena Bajo Throwing Car Parts from a Cliff before Sunrise Garcia Galeria Madrid ES

2015 Elena Bajo Isle of Innocence After Fordlandia Kunsthalle São Paulo BR(c)

2015 Elena Bajo Time is the Form of the Object Annex14 Zurich CH

2015 Elena Bajo and Michal Budny ArcoMadrid Annex14 Madrid ES

2014 Elena Bajo With Entheogenic Intent (Burn the Witch) 18th Street Arts Center LA US (c) (+Perf)

2014 Elena Bajo Timeless Considerations Stacion - Center for Contemporary Art Prishtina Kosovo (+Perf)

2014 Elena Bajo A Universe comes into Being ARTIUM Basque Museum-Vitoria-Gasteiz ES (c) (+Perf)

Selected Group Exhibitions and Performances

2025 Cloud Seven (Not) All is Gold Curated by Emmanuel Lambion Brussels BE

2025 The Wrong Biennial Curated by Bounding Box BE

2025 Freya's Grove Eternal Return Gabarron Museum Murcia ES

2025 An Ocean of White Xavier Fiol Gallery Palma de Mallorca ES

2025 The Slime Knows Curated by Erratum Brasserie Atlas Brussels Be

2025 Nuwa's Garden A Poco Venice CA US

2025 Thresholds, Doors, Portals curated Ariane Suthavong Cloud Seven Brussels BE

2025 As it Unfolds Curated by Fitsum Shebeshe NADA New York US

2024 Manifesta Biennial 15 Barcelona (+Performance) (c) ES

2024 Ex-Machina Deus: Manmade Nexus Gallery Philippines

2024 Unconscious Waves Barro Gallery East Hampton NY US

2024 Manifesta 15 Biennial Barcelona ES

2024 Unconscious Waves Barro EH NY US

2024 Carta Canta Umberto di Marino Gallery Casa di Marino Naples IT

2023 Datura Rituals SkowheganPerforms Socrates Sculpture Park NY US (Performance)

2023 Pluriverse Priska Pasquer Gallery Paris FR

2022 Biotopias Las Palmas de Gran Canaria Canary Islands ES

2022 Love Letters to a Surrogate (Swept Away) Guild Hall East Hampton NY US (c) (+Performance)

2022 Getting Lost in the Woods Twin Gallery Madrid ES (c)

2021 Sleep and Altered States of Consciousness Rosa-Luxemburg Platz Kunstverein Berlin DE (c)

2021 The Swamp Thing: Critic(s) and Poetic(s) Casa Encendida Madrid ES (c)

2018 LAMAG, Los Angeles Municipal Gallery Los Angeles CA US (c)

2018 The Pleiades (Anarchoreographies) Blue Project Foundation Barcelona ES (Performance)

2018 Itinerarios XXIV Visual Arts Grants Botin oundation Centro Botin Santander ES (c)

2016 Aun 44th Salon Nacional de Artistas Co-curated by Inti Guerrero et all Pereira CO (c) (Performance)

2016 Take Up your Space Kai 10 Arthena Foundation, Dusseldorf, DE (Performance)

2015 Joshua Treenial Curated by Koan Jeff Baysa Joshua Tree CA US

2015 Mythologies 3rd Mardin Biennial Mardin Turkey

2014 If I Can't Dance It's not my Revolution Cantor Fitzgerald Gallery Haverford College Phil US (c)

2011 A Script for a Form PERFORMA 11 Biennial New York US (Performance)

2009 Also Roses University of Trash Sculpture Center NY US

Residencies, Grants and Awards

2026 Guggenheim Memorial Foundation Fellowship (Fine Arts / Choreography) NY US
2026 C3A Contemporary Art Center Fellowship Artist Residency Cordoba ES
2026 Marble Project House Artist Residency Vermont US
2025 CPR Curatorial Program for Artists Research Fellowship NY US
2025 Finalist MATCH Mediterranean As the Climate Hotspot Isadora Duncan Res Center Athens GR
2024 Creative Capital Second Round Shortlisted NY US
2024 SkulpturenPark Wesenberg | Gabarron Residency DE
2023 LMCC Residency Arts Center Governors Island NY US
2022 Rauschenberg Medical Emergency Grant NY US
2022 Neustart Kunstfonds Berlin DE
2022 NARS Foundation Studio Relief Residency Brooklyn NY US
2021 Foundation for Contemporary Arts Emergency Grant New York NY US
2022 CRA Artistic Residencies Matadero Madrid ES
2021 Stipendium Kulturprojekte Berlin DE
2021 EKWC Sunday Morning Ceramic Residency Oisterwijk 2021, NL;
2021 A/EC Visual Arts Grant ES
2020 Hopper Prize Visual Arts US
2019 New York Foundation for Contemporary Art Award NY US
2018 Botin Foundation International Visual Arts Award Santander ES
2017 Audemars Piguet Award, ArcoMadrid ES

Lectures, Talks Artist in Residency, Teaching

Saas-Fee Summer Institute of Art Paris FR; Berlin DE; New York, LA US;
Goldsmith's College London UK
Rhode Island School of Design RISD Providence US
Sheffield Hallam University Sheffield UK

Art Positions

Coordinator Integrative Art Studies, Saas-Fee Summer Institute of Art, NY, US

Publications

2024 You should have seen it Skowhegan Art ZINE NY US
2023 Datura Soil of History I Write what you Write Curated by Ersi Varveri Gijs Waterschoot Syros GR
2023 Spanish Women Artists Contemporary Art Institute IAC Madrid ES
2021 This is Jackalope Art Magazine Madrid ES 2021 Women Artists from Madrid, Spain Madrid ES
2020 Siegfried Contemporary London UK
2018 Elena Bajo Kuenstler Kritisches Lexikon der Gegenwartskunst Neu-Isenburg DE
2018 Itineraries Botin Foundation Santander ES
2017 The Pleiades Revista Sin Objeto Fine Arts Cuenca University Cuenca ES
2017 On Violence E.R.O.S. Press London UK
2014 With Entheogenic Intent (Burn the Witch) Published by 18th Street Arts Center LA CA US
2013 The Absence of Work Artist Book Published by Taube Edition Berlin DE
2013 La Femme Radical Commissioned by Octavio Zaya Atlantica Arts Journal ES
2012 The Factory of Forms Artist Book Published by Onomatopée Eindhoven NL
2011 On Uncertain Terms Artist Book Published by s/t Berlin DE

Selected Bibliography

NordKurier Cosmic Coincidences The NY artist Elena Bajo in Wesenberg by Maria Hafer DE August 2024
Cultbytes Unconscious Waves NY by Anna Mikaela Ekstrand US June 2024
Handelsblatt Art in the Age of the Fifth Industrial Revolution by Christiane Fricke DE January 2024
Whitehot Magazine Pluriverse by Joseph Nechvatal US Sept 2023
LPA Culture Parque Doramas Call to Ecology Las Palmas GC ES October 2022
SpainSNews.com Biotopias curated by PSJM ES October 2022
Diario Las Palmas Parque Doramas Call to Ecology Las Palmas GC ES October 2022
27 East Swept Away is an Organic Love Letter from West Coast to East by Annette Hinkle NY US Sept
2022 ArtForum Winds of Change June-August US 2021
Handelsblatt Magazine NFT: The Genie is out of the bottle Dr Christiane Fricke July 8 2021
WhiteHot Magazine The Abyss of Uncertainty James Salomon US November 2020
Neo 2 Ineditos 2020 Maria Munoz ES October 2020
Art Forum International Signs are Everywhere Christina Catherine Martinez US June 10 2020
Hyperallergic 120 Artists Create a "Drive-by-Art Exhibition Throughout LA" Natalie Haddad May 27 2020
New York Times "A Drive by Art Show Turns Lawns and Garages into Galle" Stacey Stowe NY US May 11 2020

Smithsonian Magazine BDA exhibit provides Socially Distanced Dose of Culture Alex Fox US May 14 20
Los Angeles Magazine For 2 weekends Drive-By-Art Turns the City i by Car Marissa Gluck LA US May 20
El Cultural Artistas No Contaminantes Luisa Espino ES December 2019
Neo2 I want to Know Now by Mit Borrás ES May 10th 2019
ABC Art Culture Spain Itinerarios Centro Botín ES March 2018
ArtViewer Elena Bajo The Owl of Minerva Only Flies at Dusk August 2017
Architectural Digest Spain Rehearsal for a Degradation by Patxi Eguiluz and C Copertone ES Dec 2016
Terremoto Aun 44th Salon Nacional de Artistas Pereira, Colombia by Ericka Florez Mexico October 2016
Frieze Magazine Elena Bajo Throwing Car Parts from a Cliff before Sunrise November 1 2016

SPOIL

Marble House Project · Dorset, Vermont · 2026 · CURATOR Ed Morris

In collaboration with Yarrow and Marble



Yarrow (Achillea millefolium), Ordovician marble, UV light

A protocol for Relational Intelligence between geological, botanical, and human matter. Yarrow draws calcium from marble into its own tissue — stone becoming plant, plant becoming stone.

SPOIL

performative installation

Marble House Project · Dorset, Vermont · 2026 · CURATOR Ed Morris

In collaboration with Yarrow and Marble



Ordovician marble, yarrow (Achillea millefolium), marble dust in glass

Plant and stone as witnesses to deep time — matter listening to matter across geological duration.

SPOIL

print / text sheet

Marble House Project · Dorset, Vermont · 2026 · CURATOR Ed Morris
In collaboration with Yarrow, Marble, and Elena Bajo

hand, blue.		A collaboration between Yarrow, Marble, and Elena Bajo	
July 10, 2026 -- Ice House Studio -- Marble House Project		SPOIL  @elenabajo Elena Bajo — 2026 Guggenheim Fellow Marble House Project -- Dorset VT	
She was mid-sentence when she saw it — my right hand, blue.		spoil (n.) Old Fr. espoille, L. spoliare — to strip, to despoil. In quarry industry: material extracted and discarded as having no commercial value. What cannot be sold. What is left at the edge of the pit. In quantum physics: the state before observation collapses superposition. In this work: both simultaneously.	
Not bruised, not cold. Blue the way the yarrow oil runs when you press the flower too long against the paper.		marble (n.) L. marmor, Gk. marmaros — shining stone. Metamorphic limestone recrystallised under extreme pressure and heat. These stones: 450–500 million years old, compressed marine bodies from the floor of the vanished Iapetus Ocean.	
I hadn't told her yet about the drawings. I hadn't told her about the dreams. I hadn't told her about the marble — the piece of spoil on the working table with its one blue side, the side the quarry turned away from.		yarrow (n.) Achillea millefolium. OE gearwe. Named for Achilles, who used it to stanch the wounds of soldiers. Present with the human dead for 60,000 years. Growing in quarry cracks, drawing calcium from marble into its own tissue.	
She just stopped talking. Looked at my right hand, blue.		The yarrow growing in the quarry crack is drawing calcium from the marble into its own tissue — the stone slowly becoming plant, the plant slowly becoming stone — and this exchange, which no one decided and no one can stop, is the work.	
The bone remembers what the skin forgets. The body has always known this blue.		This work began before I arrived. It will continue after I leave. The seeds are the protocol continuing without me. In the next development: AI interprets vibrational energies of marble and yarrow.	
I hadn't told her yet about the threshold. I hadn't told her about the thirteen moons. I hadn't told her about the women who carried this plant in their hands and were burned for it.			
At dusk they glow blue.			
She knows which side of the skin she wants to be on.			
The piece had entered my body before I finished making it. That is what SPOIL is.			
A collaboration between Yarrow, Marble, and Elena Bajo			

“The yarrow growing in the quarry crack is drawing calcium from the marble into its own tissue — the stone slowly becoming plant, the plant slowly becoming stone.”
Two-colour print on paper · field notes, glossary, and quantum-phyto codex · Ice House Studio, July 2026
SPOIL extends into print as a quantum-phyto codex: a field of notes, glossary, poetic testimony, and material score generated in relation with Yarrow, Marble, quarry residue, and blue-hand perception at Marble House Project. The print functions as both document and continuation of the work's protocol.

SHIH: Thirteen Moons

Artemisia / Wallada

C3A Centro de Creación Contemporánea · Córdoba · 2026 · CURATOR Jesús Alcaide

In collaboration with Artemisia, Wallada, and stone



*Sculptural installation · plaster, red clay, brick, oak, copper, manganese glass, live olive, Artemisia; video, audio (bulerías), scent
13 bodies in fractal pattern mirroring C3A's hexagonal geometry — recovering the erased 13-month lunar calendar and the ancestral botanical knowledge of Andalusian and Celtic women.
Guggenheim Fellowship project, 2026.*

SHIH: Thirteen Moons

details

C3A Centro de Creación Contemporánea · Córdoba · 2026 · CURATOR Jesús Alcaide

In collaboration with Artemisia, Wallada, and stone



Left: Assemblage · glass, oxidised stone, live olive branch, plaster base

Right: Score and 480-million-year-old sandstone (from Wallada's Córdoba)

Matter carrying script: stone, glass, and living branch composed as an instrument for reading lunar time.

SHIH: Thirteen Moons

Artemisia / Wallada (video)

C3A Centro de Creación Contemporánea · Córdoba · 2026 · CURATOR Jesús Alcaide

In collaboration with Artemisia, Wallada, and movement



<https://vimeo.com/1207746534>

Single-channel video · colour, sound (bulerías) · documentation of the Thirteen Moons choreography

Documentation of the 13-body choreography traced across C3A's hexagonal geometry — the erased 13-month lunar calendar re-performed through Artemisia, stone, and the recovered voice of Wallada bint al-Mustakfi.

Words Buried in Your Petals (Datura Dreams)

Datura Dreams #2

Priska Pasquer · Paris · 2023

In collaboration with Datura Stramonium and algorithmic intelligence



Plant dye on woven cotton · Jacquard loom · embedded seeds, leaves, flowers, branches and roots · 138 x 360 cm

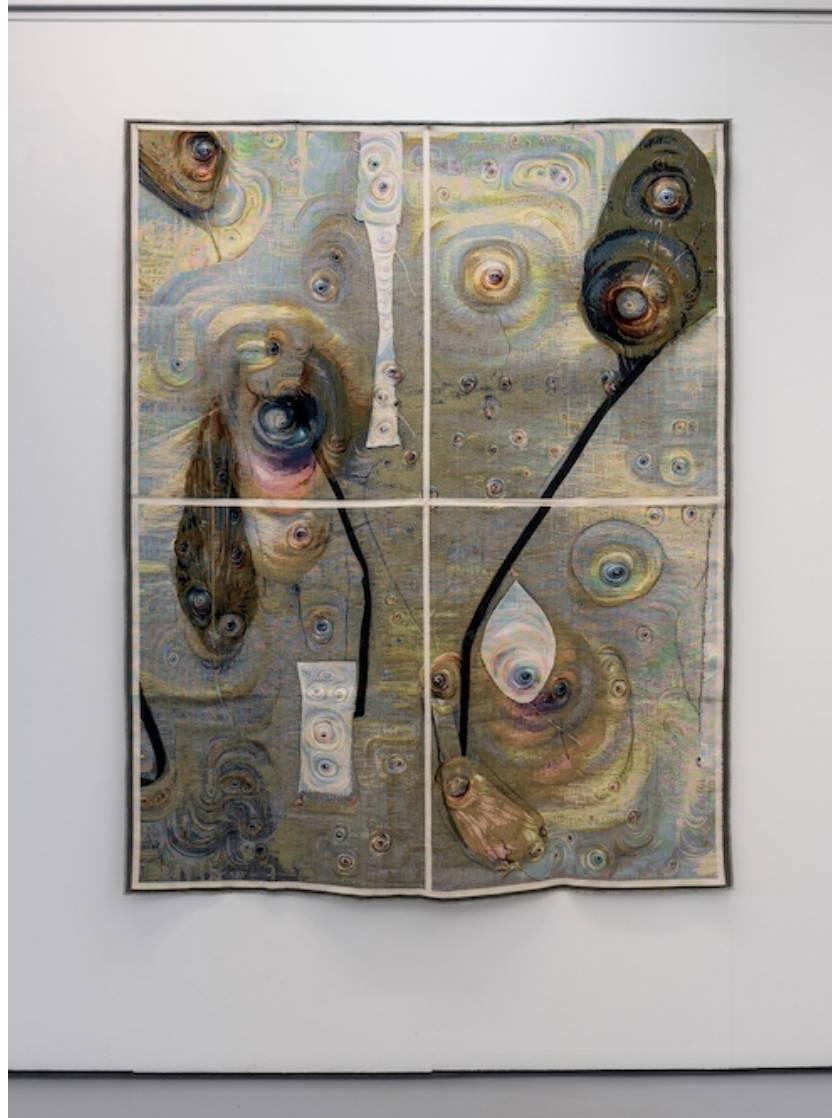
What is not erased, grows. What is embroidered, remains. Wallada bint al-Mustakfi's embroidered verses reframed as method — subjugated knowledge held in matter, refused by erasure.

Words Buried in Your Petals (Datura Dreams)

Datura Dreams #3

Priska Pasquer · Paris · 2023

In collaboration with Datura Stramonium and algorithmic intelligence



Plant dye on woven cotton · Jacquard loom · embedded seeds, leaves, flowers, branches and roots · 127 × 184 cm

Machinic intelligence as interlocutor: analog botanical collage under Datura influence → neural-network hallucination → 19th-century Jacquard loom with living plant matter embedded in the weave.

Words Buried in Your Petals (Datura Dreams Studies)

studio installation

LMCC Art Center, Governors Island · New York · 2023

In collaboration with Datura Stramonium and collected matter



Works on paper and canvas, botanical pigments, dried plant matter, collected specimens

The studio opened as an ecology: pigment, seed, and specimen laid out as an evolving archive of plant intelligence.

Words Buried in Your Petals (Datura Rituals)

Skowhegan Performs, Socrates Sculpture Park · New York · 2023

In collaboration with Datura Stramonium and participating dancers



<https://vimeo.com/916372704>

Choreographic performance in collaboration with Datura stramonium

Participants microdosed Datura tincture for two weeks, channeling plant intelligence through choreographed gesture — performed at dusk under the plant's flowering hour.

A Growing Wave Breaks in the Shore of Time

(Tomorrow I Was a Plant)

Manifesta 15 Barcelona · 2024 · The Swamp Thing V2 · CURATOR Nuria Montclús

In collaboration with Papaver somniferum, geological matter, and machinic intelligence



Glazed ceramic poppy heads, soil, asphalt rubble, Papaver somniferum stems, Jacquard tapestry

Spheres rise from earth and rubble; Papaver somniferum stems emerge from their mass; a Datura-processed tapestry hangs as backdrop. Medicinal plants as narrators of their own ecologies — alive to deep time.

A Growing Wave Breaks in the Shore of Time

installation view

Manifesta 15 Barcelona · 2024 · The Swamp Thing V2 · CURATOR Nuria Montclús

In collaboration with Papaver somniferum, geological matter, and machinic intelligence



Glazed ceramic, soil, asphalt rubble, Papaver somniferum stems, Jacquard tapestry, video

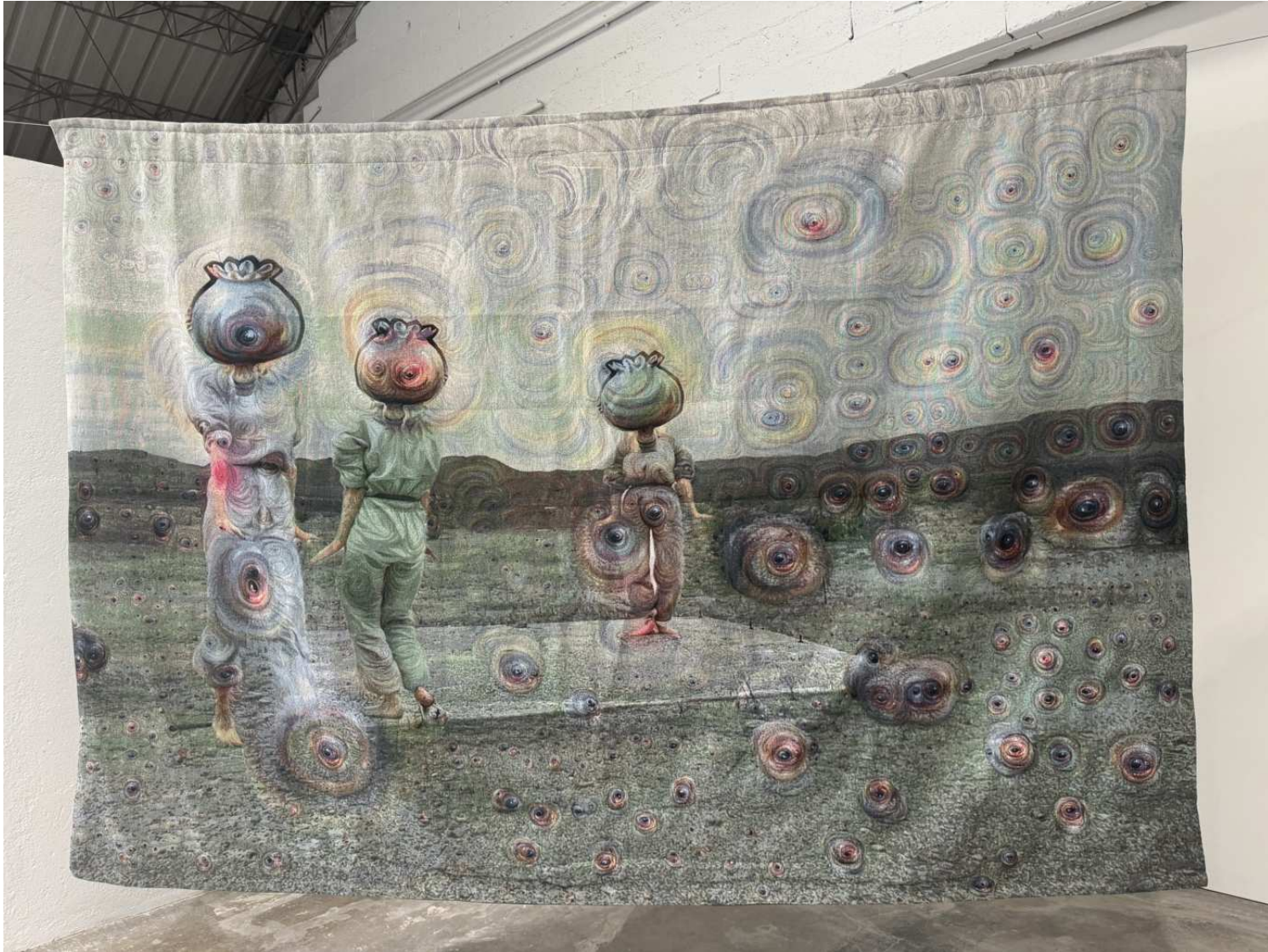
Seen from the opposite shore of the room: the excavated ground reads as a wave arrested mid-break, geological and botanical time folded into a single field.

A Growing Wave Breaks in the Shore of Time

tapestry and spheres

Manifesta 15 Barcelona · 2024 · The Swamp Thing V2 · CURATOR Nuria Montclús

In collaboration with Papaver somniferum, geological matter, and machinic intelligence



Datura-processed Jacquard tapestry with glazed ceramic spheres

The woven backdrop as a second ecology — hallucinated botanical figures presiding over the ceramic poppy heads below.

Poppy Studies

detail

Manifesta 15 Barcelona · 2024 · The Swamp Thing V2 · CURATOR Nuria Montclús

In collaboration with Papaver somniferum, geological matter, and machinic intelligence



Glazed ceramic (Papaver somniferum seed heads), acrylic and plant dye on canvas, rubble, stone, soil, live vegetation
A single seed head enlarged to the scale of a body — the plant's reproductive architecture made monumental.

The Dance of the Opium Poppies

Matadero Madrid Contemporary Art Center · 2022–2024 · The Swamp Thing V2 · CURATOR Nuria Montclús / Manifesta 15 Barcelona · 2024

In collaboration with Papaver somniferum and participating dancers



<https://vimeo.com/993071468>

Anarchoreographic performance within A Growing Wave Breaks in the Shore of Time (Tomorrow I Was a Plant)

A two-week Anarchoreographic score channeling poppy alkaloid intelligence through the body — Celtic animist tradition met by pharmacological deep listening.

Freya's Grove (Eternal Return)

SkulpturenPark Wesenberg / Gabarrón Residency · Germany · 2024

In collaboration with Elm, Linden, and Morning Glory



Site-specific performative sculpture · elm sprout, reclaimed concrete, reclaimed glass, linden branches, lake stones, sand, water

An elm found sprouting from concrete — germinal image of the work. Seven linden trees, sacred to Freya in Norse cosmology, hold the site as temporal archive.

Freya's Grove (Eternal Return)

elm sapling in concrete

SkulpturenPark Wesenberg / Gabarrón Residency · Germany · 2024

In collaboration with Elm, Linden, and Morning Glory



Elm sprout, reclaimed concrete, reclaimed glass, linden branches, lake stones

Botanical resistance to concrete: roots navigating cracks, plant intelligence composing pathways through the dead grid of extractivism.

Freya's Grove (Eternal Return) Non-Site

Museo Cristóbal Gabarrón · Mula, Murcia · 2025

In collaboration with Elm, Linden, and Morning Glory



Watercolour with local water, sandstone, elm leaf

The grove displaced into the museum as Non-Site: the forest held as sediment, water, and a single travelled leaf.

Freya's Grove (Eternal Return) Non-Site

detail

Museo Cristóbal Gabarrón · Mula, Murcia · 2025

In collaboration with Elm, Linden, and Morning Glory



*Sandstone from the Mula River (Murcia, Spain) and elm leaf collected in Wesenberg (Germany)
Two geographies set on one plinth — stone and leaf as mutual witnesses across the distance they were carried.*

Elena Bajo
PORTFOLIO

E L E N A B A J O

Manifesta 15

Barcelona A Growing Wave Breaks in the Shore of Time

The Swamp Thing V2 Curated by Nuria Montclus

Performative Sculpture Installation, Painting, Video
Documentation of Performance

Date

Sept 5 - Nov 24 2024

[More](#)

[Exhibition Brochure](#)

A Growing Wave breaks in the Shore of Time (Tomorrow I was a plant) 2020-2021/2024 Performative installation

Elena Bajo's works investigate the ecological, political and social dimensions that permeate our daily lives in order to conceptualize, through them, strategies for resistance and for the resetting of the current man-nature relationship. A Growing Wave Breaks on the Shore of Time (Tomorrow I was a Plant) investigates the possibility of turning medicinal plants into narrators of their own conception of history. In the context of this project, the artist has carried out different works that are related to each other, and among those we present in the exhibition. The installation Poppy Studies Installing reflects the results of his field research into ancestral uses and representations of the rubble throughout history. Mixed within the piece, we also find A Plant Manifesto, some ceramic heads in the form of capsules from this same plant, with which the artist proposes the realization of a performance in which the participants connect with them through their intake and come to feel and act as such.

Finally, in The Dance of the Opium Poppies we find a possible image of this fusion between human being and rubble, reinterpreted in this case by Google's artificial intelligence and the way in which it considers the psychedelic effects to be produced in the brain after the intake of a psychoactive substance such as opium from this plant.



















The Dance of the Opium Poppies 2021

MataderoMadrid Center for Contemporary Art Madrid ES

Video Documentation <https://vimeo.com/753822653>

Public Performance / Workshop / Installation Performative Sculpture

An immersive workshop generated by A Poppy Plant Manifesto text written by the artist was given to local dancers participants, that included daily session / ritual of ingesting orally microdosage of a tincture with a very low content of Poppy alkaloids, in a liquid form. The movement sessions and public performances were executed with the open point of access from the plant into the human body. In a gesture of trust from both sides in the act of channeling, the participant's body acted as a vessel for the plant to communicate in the first person. After a period of research in the local and universal cosmological histories and ecology of plants a Choreography and dance is generated from a movement workshop, after interpretation of Plants Manifesto with local dancers. For 2 consecutive weeks choreographer and participants eat, drink and surround themselves with the Poppy Plant, in an attempt to try to communicate with the plant by channeling its effects through body movements. Dancers Participants: Astrid Bramming, Mado Dallery, Lauren Runions.













PROJECT TITLE

(Seven States of Superposition: Ginkgo's Quantum Archive)

PROJECT STATEMENT

This artist's book operates at the intersection of quantum biology, forensic archival practice, and somatic notation. It is not a herbarium in the traditional sense, but a **quantum navigation device** that traces the presence of a single species—*Ginkgo biloba*, a 270-million-year-old "living fossil"—through eight geological and temporal strata of Paris.

The work refuses botanical representation (no images of trees, no pressed leaves). Instead, it employs a methodology of **material forensics**: eight soil samples collected from the base of historic ginkgo trees across Paris, from Jurassic substrate (Jardin des Plantes, 1795) to post-industrial remediation soil (Parc André Citroën, 1992). The earth itself—limestone dust, coal residue, Roman sediment, industrial ash—is pressed directly into archival blotting paper, transforming each page into a **tactile geological index**.

Quantum Botany Framework

Recent research demonstrates that plants operate under quantum mechanical principles. The 2007 Engel study revealed that photosynthesis utilizes **quantum coherence**: energy particles explore all possible pathways simultaneously to find the optimal route to reaction centers. The ginkgo, having survived five mass extinctions, is an expert at navigating probability fields. This book visualizes that hidden intelligence.

Additionally, plants possess **cryptochromes**—proteins that create quantum "radical pairs" (entangled electron spins) allowing them to sense Earth's magnetic fields. The ginkgo

navigates deep time using this quantum compass. The book's transparent overlays and vector line drawings represent this invisible magnetic grid.

Speculative Computation Layer

After pressing, each soil sample was photographed and analyzed by computer vision algorithms trained to detect mineral density distributions. The AI treats the soil not as solid matter but as a **probability cloud**—where might particles have been, where might they move next? These algorithmic "hallucinations" are translated into single continuous vector lines hand-drawn onto glassine paper overlays covering the soil.

The result: an interface between two non-human intelligences—the **Deep Time memory of Carbon** (270 million years of geological data) and the **Latent Space speed of Silicon** (predictive machine learning). The book becomes an **external hard drive** for vegetal consciousness.

Temporal Superposition

Drawing from Karen Barad's **Agential Realism**, phenomena do not pre-exist observation—they emerge through "intra-action." By pressing Jurassic soil into 2025 paper, the object physically exists in multiple eras simultaneously. Only when a reader opens the book (the act of observation) does history **collapse** into tangible reality—the quantum observer effect applied to archival practice.

Astronomical Context

All samples were collected December 8-11, 2025, during the waning phase following the rare **lunar occultation of the Pleiades** (December 3-4). The nearly-full Cold Moon passed directly through the Pleiades star cluster—a celestial alignment occurring every 18.6 years. This

cosmic entanglement mirrors the book's theme: distant bodies affecting each other across vast distances, non-local connections across time.

Choreographic Activation

The AI-drawn lines function as **movement scores**. Each vector path dictates somatic instructions: trace the line with your finger, walk its pattern across a room, let your spine curve where the line bends. The book transforms data into embodied knowledge, inviting performers to physicalize the tension between geological slowness (Deep Time) and digital speed (Latent Space).

Divination Technology

Finally, the book operates as an **oracular device**. A reader asks a question, opens to a random spread (quantum collapse via observer choice), and interprets the AI line and divinatory text as oracular response: smooth curves suggest flow, sharp angles indicate obstacles, dense clusters demand focus. This mirrors I-Ching methodology—reading patterns in material chaos to navigate uncertainty.

Material Honesty

The covers are salvaged **sheetrock** (drywall) from gallery de-installations—construction debris repurposed as protective housing. This raw materiality references the book's theme: remediation, renewal, survival. Like the ginkgo, which regenerated after devastation (Hiroshima's atomic ginkgo resprouted within months), the book transforms waste into archive.

The eight black A3 cardboards are layered with translucent glassine overlays housing single-line AI drawings, creating a **palimpsest of quantum readings** stacked across time. Each soil page is flanked by blank verso (void/pause), creating rhythm and meditation space.

Conclusion

This work constitutes the first volume of ongoing research into **agential ecology in the Anthropocene**—how non-human systems (plants, algorithms, minerals) encode memory and navigate futures. It proposes the artist's book not as static object but as **active technology**: a quantum instrument for reading time, a somatic score for embodied knowing, a divination tool for ecological futures.

ARTIST BIO

Elena Bajo is a transdisciplinary artist and researcher whose practice explores the intersection of plant consciousness, artificial intelligence, and ecological futures. Her work combines sculpture, installation, performance, and archival research to investigate how non-human systems—botanical, algorithmic, and mineralogical—encode memory and agency.

Her research integrates ethnobotany, quantum physics, textile art, and AI as collaborative tools for understanding plant-human entanglement in the Anthropocene.

Current interests include cryptochromes and plant magnetoreception, Karen Barad's agential realism, Celtic ancestral knowledge recovery, and the development of hybrid human-botanical-algorithmic notation systems. She is committed to artistic practice as a form of ecological diplomacy and deep-time activism.

THE "OBSERVER" LOG (The Human Data)

- • Include a "Data Sheet" at the very back.
- • **Fields to write:**

- • OBSERVER ID: [Your Name]
- • COLLAPSE TIME: [Time you closed the book]
- • ENTANGLEMENT STATUS: Active

It acknowledges that the book is a machine waiting for a human operator.

Process → Completed algorithmic layering → Movement instruction → Divination application

TECHNICAL SPECIFICATIONS

Dimensions: 21 × 29.7 × 5.5 cm (A4 closed with sheetrock covers)

Materials:

- 8 black A3 cardboards (folded/bound as spreads)
- Archival blotting paper (A5, alum-treated)
- Pressed soil samples from 8 Paris sites
- Acid-free glassine paper overlays (A5)
- Single continuous AI-interpreted vector lines (0.3mm black technical pen)
- Salvaged sheetrock covers (A4 size, treated)
- Wide black cloth tape hinge binding



Technique: Mixed media—forensic soil pressing, computer vision analysis, hand-drawn vector interpretation, bookbinding with articulated hinges, archival conservation presentation

Edition: Unique artist's book + archival housing



Close-up of book spread showing soil impressions with flowing vector line overlays—emphasizes the technical precision and organic flow



Showing the oracle/divination methodology—> Oracle divination spread: Random revealing algorithmic patterns as prophecy Oracle divination showing multiple vector interpretations arranged for random selection—demonstrates the I-Ching methodology and speculative divination aspect



Freya's Grove (Eternal Return), 2024

SkulpturenPark Wesenberg | Gabarron Residency

Performative Sculpture Measurements: 400cmX400cmX90cm

Materials: Elm tree sprout plant growing out of a concrete block found in the back of Cornelia Nagel's Studio, surrounded by four pieces of reclaimed green glass found in the Park, seven linden trees, Morning Glory Plant branches, lake stones, sand, leaves, Water. [More](#)

"Bajo is immersed in her creative process in the studio of the Gabarrón Museum Sculpture Park in Wesenberg, Germany. Her research focuses on geo-aesthetic entanglement and the creation of a film and a sculptural choreography, whose narrative is generated at the moment when Elena discovers in her studio a strange flower that has grown from the cement floor without soil or water. This work is part of her proposal entitled 'Eternal Return'.

The proposal 'Eternal Return' explores the intersections between art, ecology and cosmology through a narrative that intertwines natural and cultural elements. Elena investigates in the studio the relationships between these elements using various forms of artistic expression such as sculptural choreography, performance, painting, poetry and video.

During her residency, Elena collaborates with multiple non-human life forms and explores themes such as agential realism and cosmology, creating a work that reflects the deep connection between living beings and their environment. Her process includes the use of natural and found materials, as well as research into Celtic and Germanic cultures.

The project 'Eternal Return' as artistic research could be understood as a meditation on the future of our planet and the possible narratives that can emerge from collaboration between species, developing the vision of a future in which coexistence and co-evolution are central to creation.

As the artist behind "Freya's Grove," the centerpiece of my "Eternal Return" project – a multifaceted exploration of the intertwining cosmological narratives placed in the verdant expanse of the Wesenberg SkulpturenPark, where the liminal realms of the Waldgeister and the Noumenos converge, I have woven together the threads of my own ancestral lineage with the rich tapestry of Celtic and Germanic cosmologies. Nestled beneath the verdant canopy of seven towering linden trees, this performative sculptural work stands as a testament to the cyclical nature of existence and points at the cosmic cycle and metaphysical connection to the natural world.

At the heart of the installation is an Ulm tree sprout, emerging defiantly from a concrete block. This arboreal emissary from the underworld stands as a bridge between the realms of life and death, embodying the perpetual motion of the Ouroboros, the serpent that eternally consumes its own tail. In this way, the Ulm tree serves as a conduit for the Vegetal Narratives encoded within its molecular structures, guiding the artist's creative process and inviting the viewer to attune to the Phytosapience of this sentient, intelligent being. This Ulm tree, is a poignant reminder of the perpetual motion that underpins the very fabric of our universe.

Surrounding the Ulm tree are four reclaimed glass panels, carefully arranged on the ground to create a series of pathways for the viewer to navigate. As one moves through the installation, the interplay of light and shadow cast by the glass creates a mesmerizing, ethereal effect, evoking the enigmatic presence of the Waldgeister – the enigmatic forest spirits of Germanic folklore who dwell in the liminal spaces between the physical and the metaphysical. Yet, the translucent and reflective qualities of the glass panels also allude to the Noumenos, the essential, unknowable reality that lies beyond the realm of human perception, inviting the viewer to engage with the work also on a profoundly contemplative level.

The choice to situate "Freya's Grove" in the shade of the seven linden trees is a deliberate one, rooted in the deep symbolism of this sacred tree. In both Celtic and

Germanic traditions, as a conduit to the divine female, the linden was revered as a tree of protection, fertility, and truth – qualities embodied by the goddess Freya, who was believed to dwell among its heart-shaped leaves and fragrant blossoms. The linden, in a sense, serves as a living guardian of the cycle of life and death that the Ulm tree so poignantly represents and as a reminder of the sacred geometry and celestial symbolism that underpin these ancestral cosmologies, while also gesturing towards a deep engagement with plant intelligence and the agency of the more-than-human.

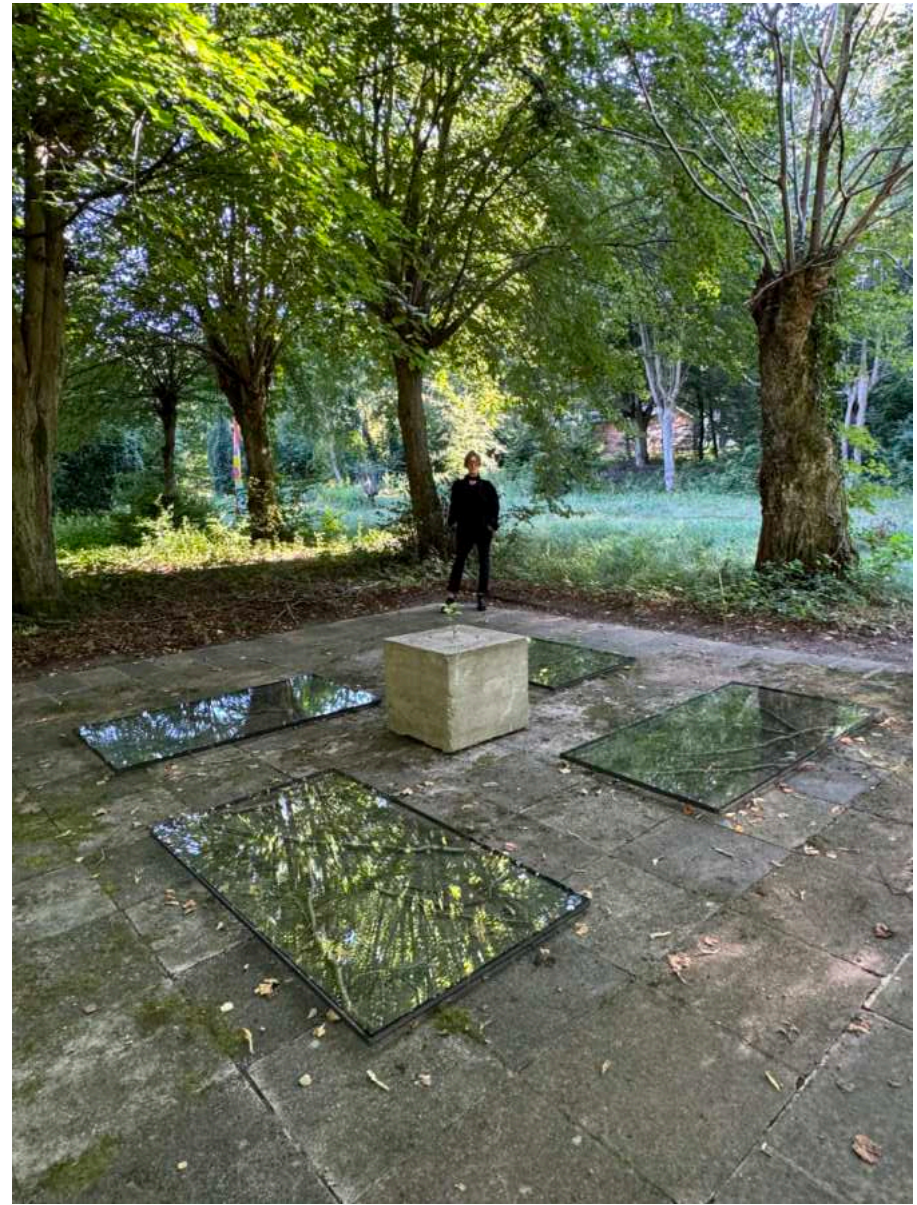
As one navigates the pathways between the glass panels, one can engage with the work on a deeply embodied level, activating the sculptural choreography and becoming an integral part of the eternal return. This interactive element is crucial to the work, as it encourages a Transcorporeal communion – a blurring of the boundaries between human and more-than-human bodies, fostering a profound connection to the rhythms and cycles that underpin our existence.

Beyond the physical sculptural work, my "Eternal Return" project also includes a

speculative film that envisions Wesenberg in the year 4001, the story starts in my studio in NY where I suddenly notice a strange plant growing out of the cement floor with no soil or water and during dreams I become a hybrid plant-human with powers to time travel as well as a large-scale wall painting – both of which serve to expand the conceptual and experiential scope of the overall installation. Together, these elements weave a tapestry of past, present, and future, an invitation to consider our own place within the grand cosmic narrative, and the Phytosapience, ancestral wisdom potential, in shaping the emergent ecologies of a more-than-human Chthulucene
Futurism.

As the seasons change and the light shifts across the surface of "Freya's Grove," the work will continue to transform, one can experience these changes of this perpetual cycle that lies at the heart of the project. Freya's Grove wants to stand as a point of access to the enduring power of Ancestral Phytomancy, and a potent reminder of our deep, cosmological connection to the more than human world – a connection that may hold the keys to navigating the uncharted territories of our Multispecies Worldings and hybrid futures.





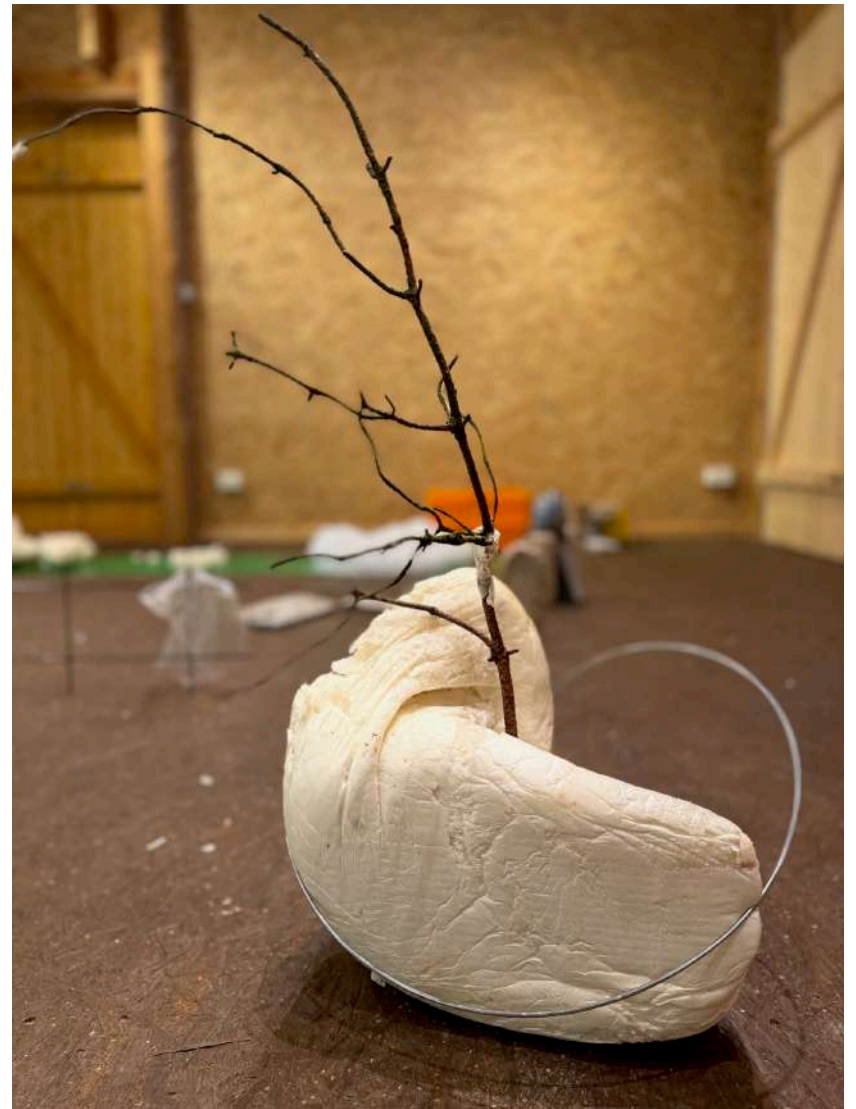
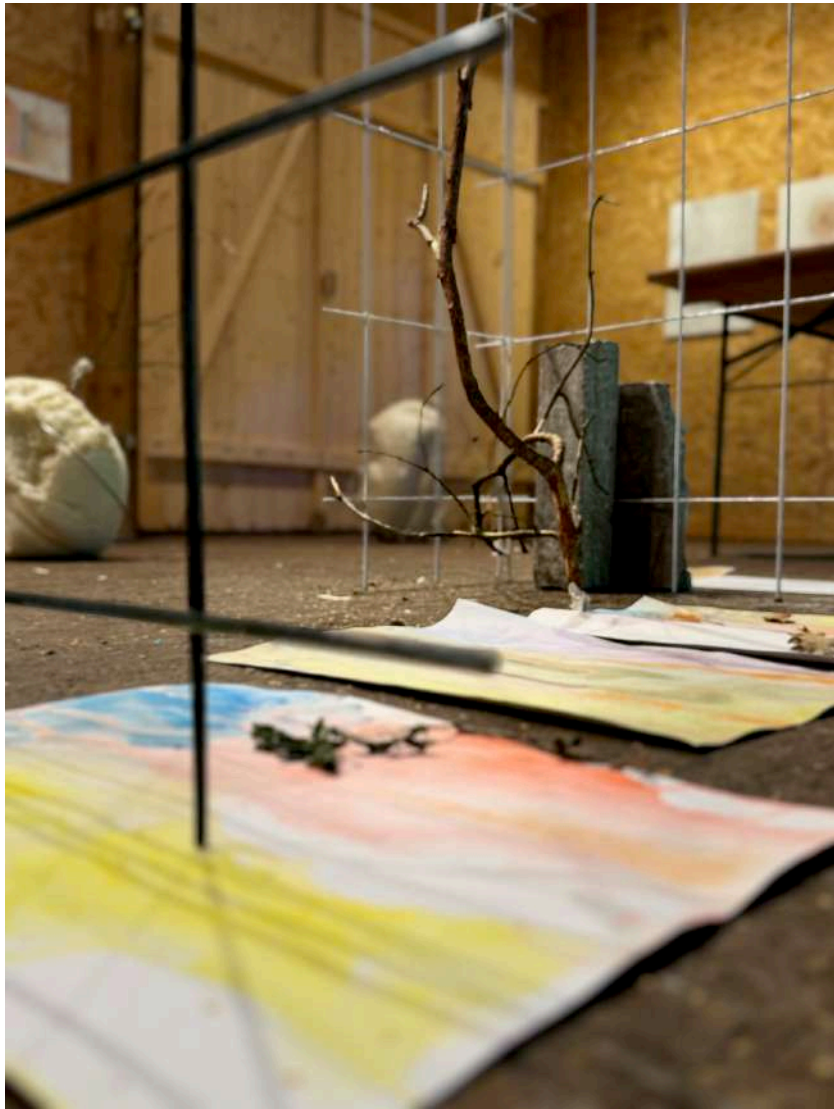
ElElena Bajo, *Freya's Grove (Eternal Return)*, 2024 **SkulpturenPark Wesenberg|Gabarron Residency**, Installation View, Performative Sculpture, Reclaimed concrete block, glasses, inadvertent of Elm Tree, Linden trees, Morning Glory Plant branches, lake stones, sand, leaves. [More](#)



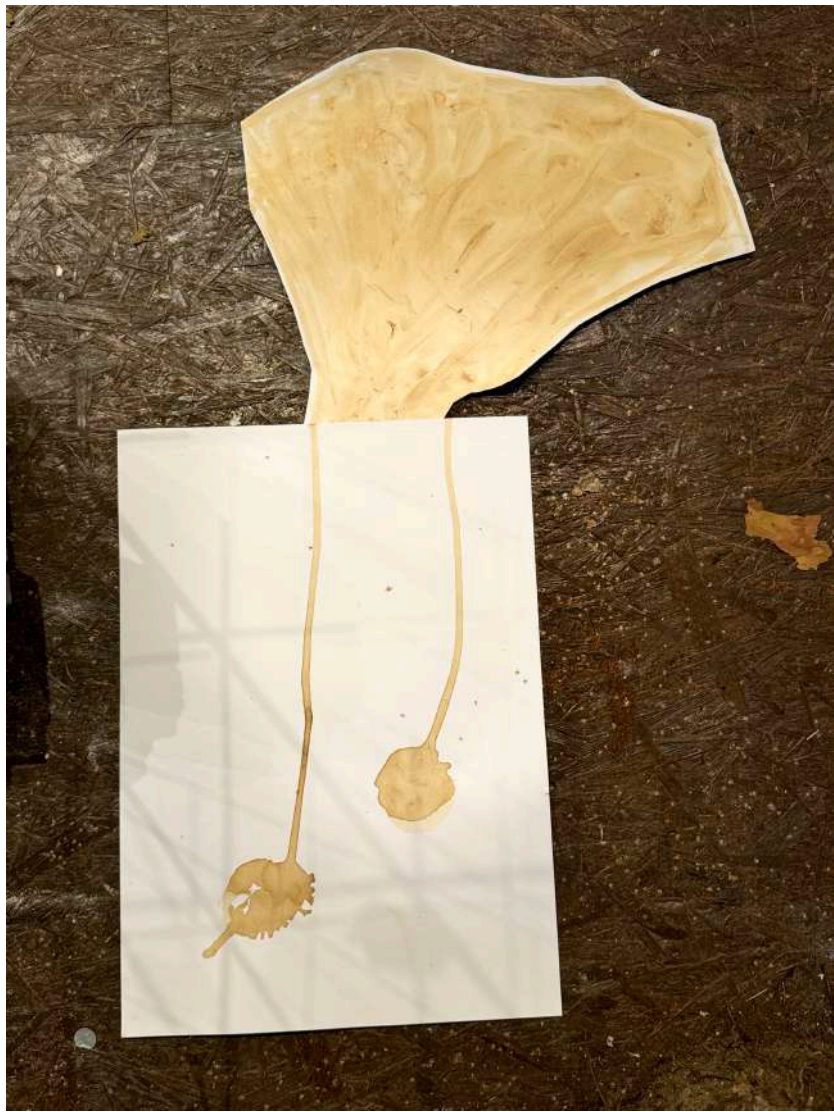












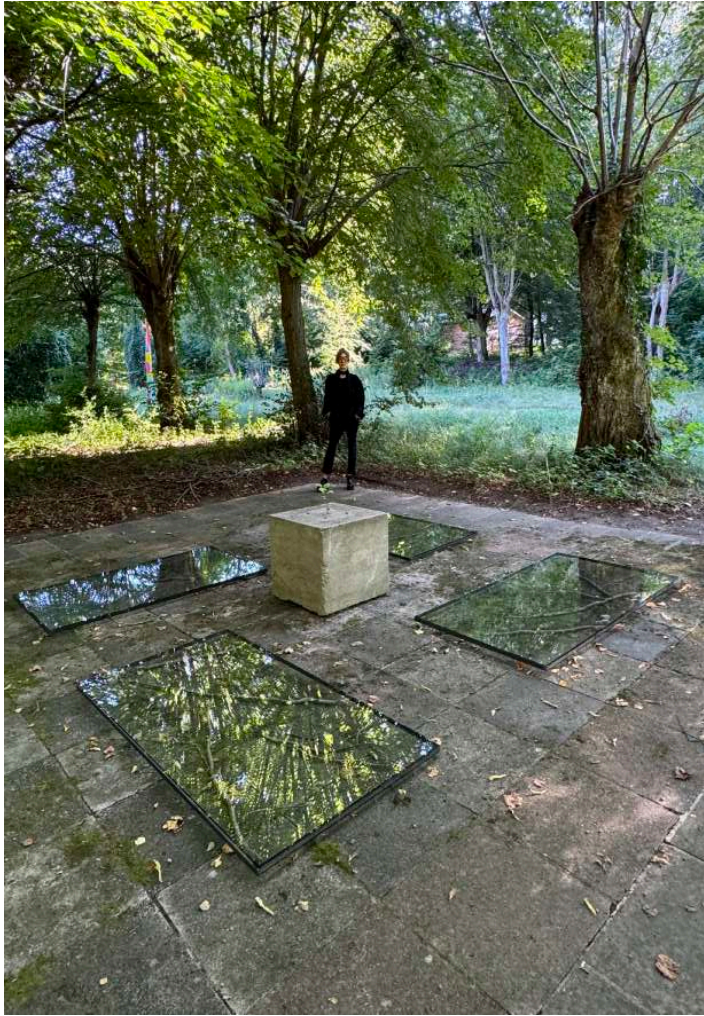
Elena Bajo

Freya's Grove: Eternal Return / La arboleda de Freya: Eterno retorno

Residencia en Skulpturenpark Wesenberg / Residency at Skulpturenpark Wesenberg

Wesenberg, Alemania / Wesenberg, Germany

2024





Instalación Freya's Grove: Eternal Return
Wesenberg, Alemania / Wesenberg, Germany
2024

Elena Bajo

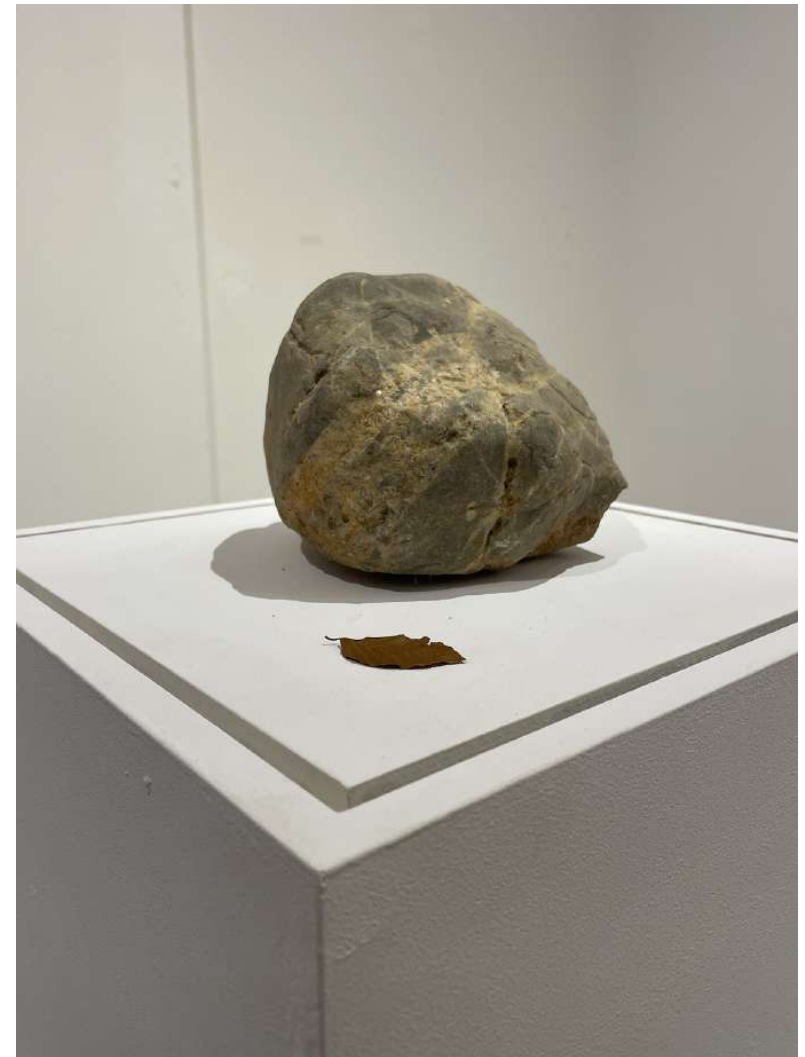
Freya's Grove: Eternal Return (Non-Site)

Acuarelas con agua local, piedra arenisca del río Mula /

Watercolours with local water, sandstone from the Mula river.

Sala 1, Museo Cristóbal Gabarrón (Mula, Murcia)

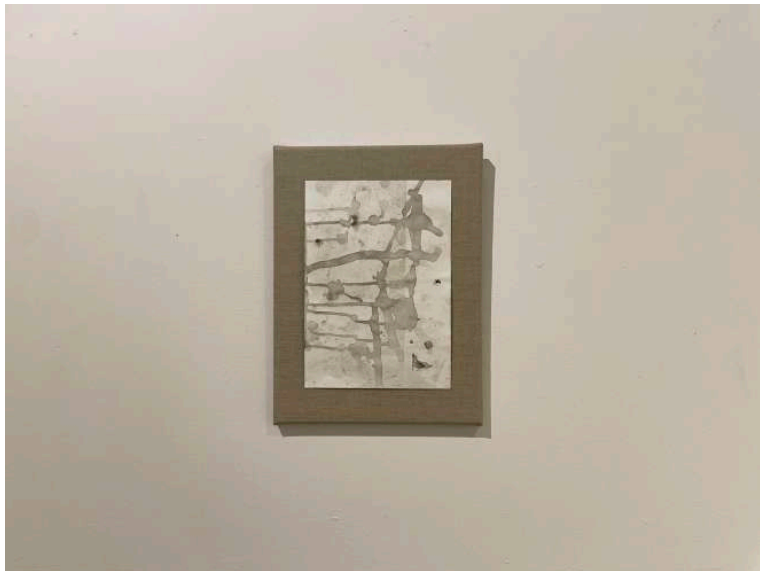
2025



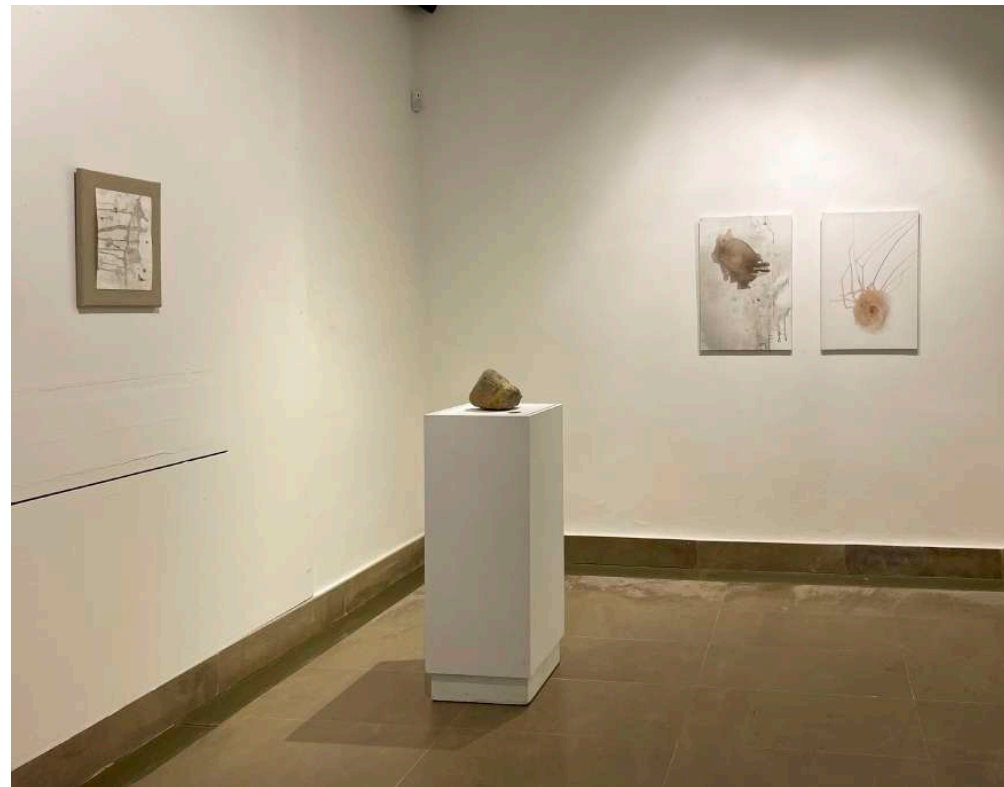
Piedra arenisca y hoja de olmo / Sandstone with elm leaf.

Piedra del río Mula (Murcia, España) y hoja de olmo recolectada en Wesenberg,
Alemania /

Stone from the Mula River (Murcia, Spain) and elm leaf collected in Wesenberg,
Germany.
2025



32



33



Serie acureles Freya's Grove (Eternal Return) I-XII

Acuarelas con agua del lago, influenciadas por Morning Glory /

Watercolours with water influenced by Morning Glory

Residencia en Skulpturenpark Wesenberg, Alemania / Residency at Skulpturenpark

Wesenberg, Germany

2024

Elena Bajo: Transmaterial Territories and Ancestral Plant Collaborations

In Elena Bajo's recent trajectory, the textile-based series *Words Buried in Your Petals (Datura Dreams)* (2023), presented at the group show *We Want to live in a Pluriverse* at Priska Pasquer Gallery, Paris advances a compelling dialogue between algorithmic process, plant agency, and altered states that draws deeply from her matrilineal Celtic-Druid heritage (NorthWest Spain, Leon and Galicia). Bajo's method is as much a ritual as a workflow: under the influence of *Datura* plant (*Datura Stramonium*), she assembles fragments of found textiles (remnants leftovers from surplus fashion factories), which are then photographed and processed through Google Deep Dream, a generative AI that hallucinates new patterns atop the artist's own. The resulting textiles—woven on a Jacquard loom, itself a proto-digital device—are embedded with seeds, leaves, and roots, their surfaces swirling with psychedelic whorls and ocular forms that echo the ancestral herbological knowledge passed down through generations of Galician *meigas* (Celtic-Druid cosmology). These works emerge from what she describes as "Kosmo-Druid ancestral methods," honoring the plant-based healing traditions of her grandmother's lineage from Northwest Spain.

The materiality of these pieces is deliberately uncomfortable in its beauty, rooted in a deep respect for ancestral plant wisdom that characterizes the *Terra de Meigas* (Land of the Witches, Female Power) tradition of Galicia. Each work in the series—ranging from 79 x 58 in to 360 x 138 in—employs plant dye on woven cotton textile, with botanical elements physically embedded into the fabric matrix in a manner that honors the Celtic druidic understanding of plants as sentient beings capable of transmitting knowledge. The artist's use of the nineteenth-century Jacquard loom is particularly pointed, appropriating what she describes as "an early

algorithmic method of weaving" for these quasi-sculptures that blur the boundaries between textile, painting, and digital art while maintaining connection to the matriarchal transmission of power through craft knowledge. This "software surrealism" emerges from what Karen Barad terms "transmateriality"—the entanglement of human, plant, and digital-machine consciousness into new hybrid forms that echo the syncretistic practices of Galician – Druid healing.

Choreographic Memories and Urban Plant Encounters

The embodied knowledge that informs Bajo's practice extends beyond the studio to include formative memories of movement through urban landscapes guided by her mother, a dancer who transformed daily walks to school into choreographic explorations. These early experiences of following "a choreography guided by the broken cracks tiles of the sidewalk under the falling down of white flowers from 'pan y quesillo' trees" established a foundational understanding of how plants participate in urban choreographies and how cracked pavement can become a score for movement. The *Robinia pseudoacacia* (commonly known as the false acacia or "pan y quesillo" tree in Spain) creates seasonal performances through its drooping white flower clusters that fall onto sidewalks, creating ephemeral patterns that guided childhood steps and later informed her understanding of how non-human agents participate in choreographic composition.

This integration of plant presence into movement practice reflects the deeper Celtic understanding of landscape as animate and participatory, where the falling of acacia blossoms becomes part of a larger conversation between human movement and plant expression. The broken tiles of Spanish sidewalks, rather than representing urban decay, become surfaces that invite specific gestures and rhythms, transforming utilitarian infrastructure into potential choreographic notation. This childhood experience of reading the urban environment for its

movement possibilities later manifested in Bajo's mature work as an understanding of how plants and built environments collaborate to create embodied knowledge systems that operate outside conventional pedagogies.

Botanical Choreographies and Entheogenic Practices

Earlier works such as *Poppy Studies* and *Dance of the Opium Poppies* (2021), shown at Matadero Madrid and included in "A Growing Wave Breaks in the Shore of Time" at Manifesta 15, 2024 extend Bajo's exploration of plant consciousness through what she terms "choreographic scripts and scores" generated by local medicinal flora. These projects position plants as "narrators of their own history" and alternative sources of knowledge for reconnecting humanity with post-nature, drawing directly from the ethnobotanical traditions of her Celtic-druidic heritage where plants were understood as teachers and guides. The artist's background in pharmacology from the Complutense University in Madrid provides a scientific foundation for her exploration of plant systems and their unique forms of consciousness, bridging ancestral knowledge with contemporary understanding

The Madrid residency project materialized what Bajo describes as "Eco-Anarchoreographies," using non-hierarchical trajectories as tools to articulate subjectivity and collectivity while creating spaces in constant flux that mirror the fluid, boundary-crossing nature of traditional *meiga* practices and that resonates her mother's open urban choreography. Using autochthonous medicinal flora from Madrid, ethnographic sources, and the region's ancestral archaeo-botanical mythologies, she created a series of body choreographies and material elements that challenged conventional hierarchies between human and plant intelligence. This approach aligns with the Galician tradition where *meigas* were understood as intermediaries between human and plant realms, using their "deep knowledge about the use of medicinal herbs and other remedies for diseases of body and soul".

Decentered Networks and Ancestral Transmission

Bajo's participation in Manifesta 15 Barcelona (2024) as part of *A Growing Wave Breaks in the Shore of Time* situates her work within broader investigations of social and ecological transformation that honor ancestral ways of knowing. Her practice consistently explores what she calls "anarchoreographies," using non-hierarchical trajectories that echo the decentralized intelligence systems found in both Celtic druidic traditions and contemporary understanding of plant communication networks and integration of entheogenic practices, AI collaboration, and textile craft positions her within a growing field of artists exploring post-human creativity and interspecies collaboration while maintaining deep roots in matriarchal knowledge transmission.

The technical sophistication of the *Datura Dreams* series, combined with its conceptual rigor, marks a significant development in Bajo's exploration of what she terms "worldbuild-ing" or "multiverse-ing"—a multiplicity of coexisting realities that challenges Western binary thinking while honoring the Druid understanding of multiple worlds and dimensions (materialized as cumulative layers in the process of artmaking). By embedding actual plant matter into AI-generated textile patterns, she creates objects that exist simultaneously as artifacts of digital culture and living ecosystems, capable of continued transformation through growth and decay in ways that mirror the cyclical understanding of life and death found in Druid tradition (see Elena Bajo Freya's Grove (the Eternal Return) 2024)

Critical Positioning and Ancestral Futures

Across these projects, Bajo's practice emerges as a porous, transmaterial experiment that honors the wisdom of her grandmother's herbological tradition while engaging with

contemporary questions about artificial intelligence and more-than-human ontologies. Her work operates within what the Druid cosmology understood as the interconnectedness of all living beings, where plants serve as teachers and guides rather than passive materials. The integration of childhood memories of movement through landscapes marked by falling acacia blossoms creates a personal mythology that connects individual experience to larger patterns of plant-human collaboration.

The artist's engagement with AI technology through Google Deep Dream represents not a departure from but an extension of ancestral practices that recognized non-human intelligences as collaborators in knowledge creation. Where traditional *meigas* worked with plant spirits and natural forces to create healing and transformation, Bajo collaborates with plant consciousness, altered human states, and machine learning algorithms to generate textile works that embody multiple forms of intelligence operating in concert (or dissent ☺). This approach reflects a relational multi-cosmological understanding that knowledge emerges from the intersection of multiple realms rather than from single sources of authority, creating artworks that serve as bridges between ancestral knowledge and contemporary technological possibility.

Words Buried in your Petals (Datura Rituals, Datura Dreams) 2023 Textiles, Crystal Sculptures, Performative Poem
We don't want to live in a Universe, We want to live in a Pluriverse! 2023 Priska Pasquer Gallery Paris FR

The Madrid and New York based artist Elena Bajo uses generative AI to create her work *Words Buried in Your Petals (Datura Dreams)*. Two works make up this project and will be exhibited at the gallery. The first is *An Exhortation of the Cheater, 2023*. These uncomfortably beautiful textiles are woven with a Jacquard loom—an early algorithmic method of weaving, invented in the nineteenth century, that Bajo has appropriated for these quasi-sculptures. "Under the self-induced hallucinogenic effects of the indigenous plant Datura, Bajo first fabricates her work by hand, assembling abstract fragments of found textiles into preliminary works. These are then digitally photographed, and the data thus produced is fed into Google Deep Dream, which outputs them in a new form: as anamorphic, suspended, textile works that are composed of a multiplicity of multicolored whorls or eyes. This **Software Surrealism** (Warren Neidich, Press Release, Sept 2023, Paris, FR) is the result of the twenty-first century transmateriality (as Karan Barad has described that concept in her book *Transmaterialities*) of human, animal, and digital-machinic consciousness." (Anuradha Vikram. *Elena Bajo, LMCC Governors Island, NY 2023*). Bajo's work is a psychedelic experiment that poses the question: Can one induce a "trip" in a machine? The second work is entitled *A Space to Reign (2013–23)* and is composed of hand-crafted *Datura Stramonium* seeds cast in 24 karat gold situated beneath a divinatory crystal ball. The crystal ball contains a variety of other materials—glass, mirror, ceramic fragments, light, plant parts, fabric scraps and soil—through which the seeds can be inspected. Situated at three locations in the gallery, these divinatory sculptures operate as central nodes in networks of aesthetic and shamanistic forecasting. A planned performative reading of a poem written by Bajo entitled *"Devil's Trumpet a Predicament of the Fool"* will reactivate the installation. (Warren Neidich, Press Release, Sept 2023, Paris, FR).

Elena Bajo's *Words Buried in Your Petals (Datura Dreams)* operates through a decentered creative process that mirrors the distributed intelligence of slime molds, where multiple forms of consciousness collaborate without hierarchical control. Under the hallucinogenic influence of *Datura Stramonium*, Bajo creates first textile assemblages by hand, which are then photographed and processed through Google Deep Dream's neural networks. This AI system transforms the images through distributed pathways rather than centralized control, embodying what Karen Barad calls "transmateriality"—the entanglement of human, plant, and digital-machine consciousness. The process demonstrates distributed cognition, where creativity extends across motoric experience and environmental interactions, allowing multiple forms of awareness to interact and generate emergent outcomes. The resulting artworks embody a genuinely decentered intelligence through their material composition and ongoing potential for transformation. Bajo embeds seeds, leaves, flowers, and roots directly into the woven cotton textiles created on Jacquard looms—early algorithmic weaving systems that mirror biological network structures. The final pieces emerge from complex interactions between her altered consciousness, the AI's pattern recognition capabilities, and the physical properties of plant materials embedded in the fabric. Like slime molds that achieve robust resilience through regeneration and rerouting, these textiles create hybrid intelligences that transcend boundaries between human, plant, and machine cognition. The artworks thus demonstrate how sophisticated outcomes can emerge from the coordination of multiple agents without centralized control, producing collective behavior where cooperation between different forms of consciousness generates solutions unavailable to individual components.

Datura Rituals: Movement Workshop and Dance performance hosted by Skowhegan Performs 2023 Socrates Sculpture Park NY US

Participants Workshop 5 Performers: Nadia Benes, Ariel Kleinberg, Ari La Mora, Mary Rogers, Lindsay Ryan. Length: 15min 3secs

Link: https://drive.google.com/file/d/1pV7DoXthfMC5_iLdHQQgDHZVhh6LTT_z/view

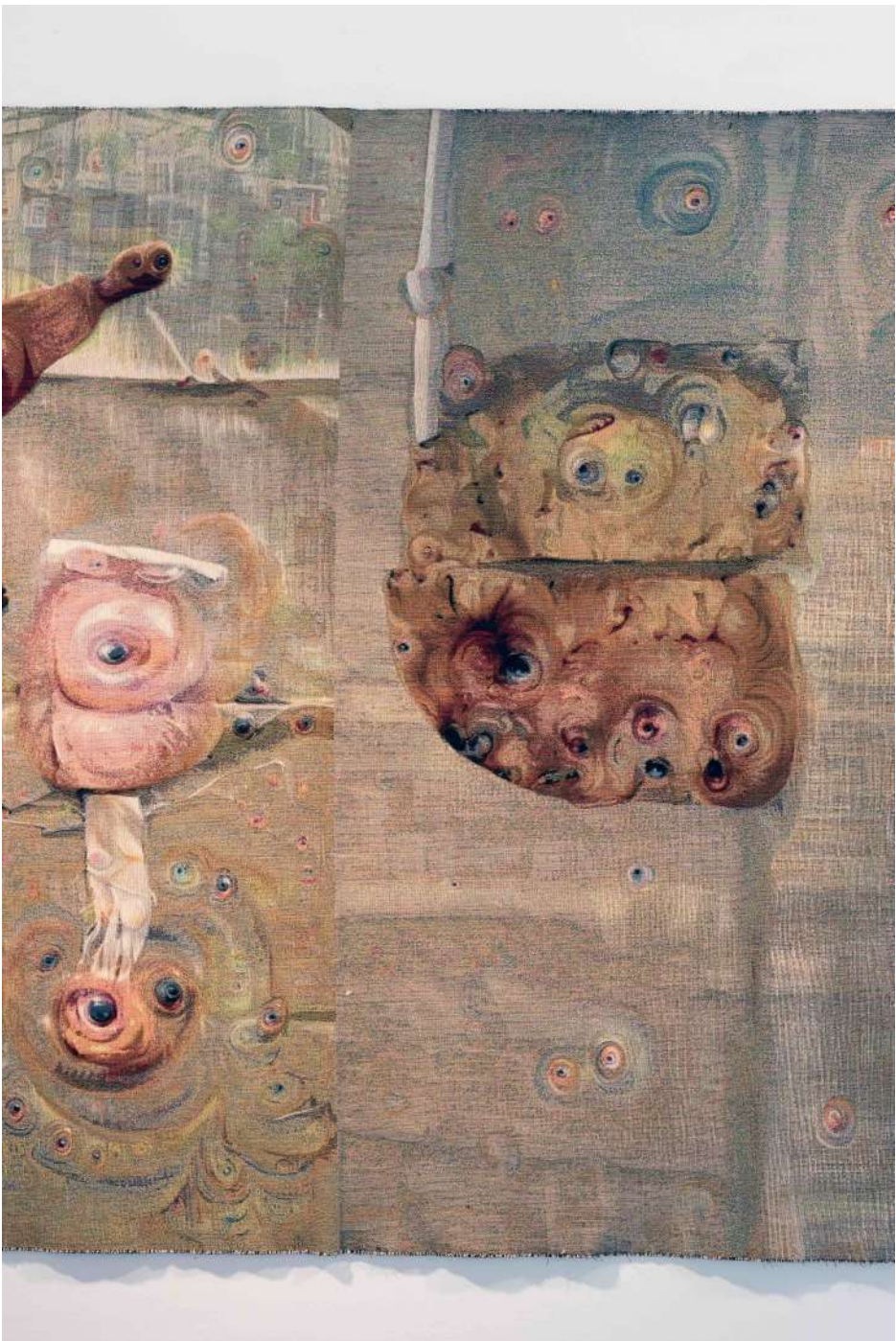
From the point of view of psychoactive plants and their seeds, the proposed dance performance would be a unique and transformative experience. Drawing from the artist's own ancestral Celtic, North West of the Iberian Peninsula, dance traditions as well as mental and emotional states of mind induced by specific psychoactive plants or seeds, the performance will explore how these altered states of consciousness shift and stretch the boundaries of dance and movement and our connection to nature. The performance, although rooted in ancestral forms, will not remain traditional but acknowledging the presence of these plants - often associated with shamanic rituals and rites of passage - will lend an atmosphere of timelessness and spacelessness, deep time and space. As psychotropic plants and seeds have long been a part of the human experience, so too can the process of transformation that they make possible. Circadian rhythms rule humans and plants alike, under the planetary influence of the moon *Datura* flowers bloom at dusk and close at sunset. In this proposed dance performance, the dancers, and audience members, who are encouraged to participate, will experience a kind of shared journey toward a transcendent state of being. Through explorations of intense rhythms and movements created and inspired by the effects of the Plant Teacher from the altered state of mind, we can all witness the powerful and transformative effects of plants. By engaging with our Plant allies, we can open up to unknown and unexplored possibilities and experience a journey into our relationship with nature.

Following a workshop guided by the *Anarchoreographic Method", Elena Bajo's interdisciplinary approach, the dancers work with improvised and choreographed movements generated by a text-poem from her Plant's Manifesto, and determined beforehand in close collaboration with the artist-choreographer, in the context of her ecological project Words Buried inside Your Petals (*Datura* Dreams) for Skowhegan Performs at Socrates Sculpture Park in New York. This project explores plant systems as narrators of their ecologies from an eco-feminist, non-binary, psychoactive perspective, focusing on ancestral botanical knowledge, the entheogenic use of medicinal plants, and the history of consciousness, which is materialized in a series of choreographies of body and material elements, performative sculptures, video, and text-poems.





We don't want to live in a Universe, We want to live in a Pluriverse exhibition view, Elena Bajo, Buried in Your Petals (Datura Dreams) #2, 2023, plant dye on woven cotton textile, jacquard loom, seeds, leaves, flowers, branches, roots, 138 x 360 cm, © Elena Bajo, courtesy PRISKA PASQUER GALLERY



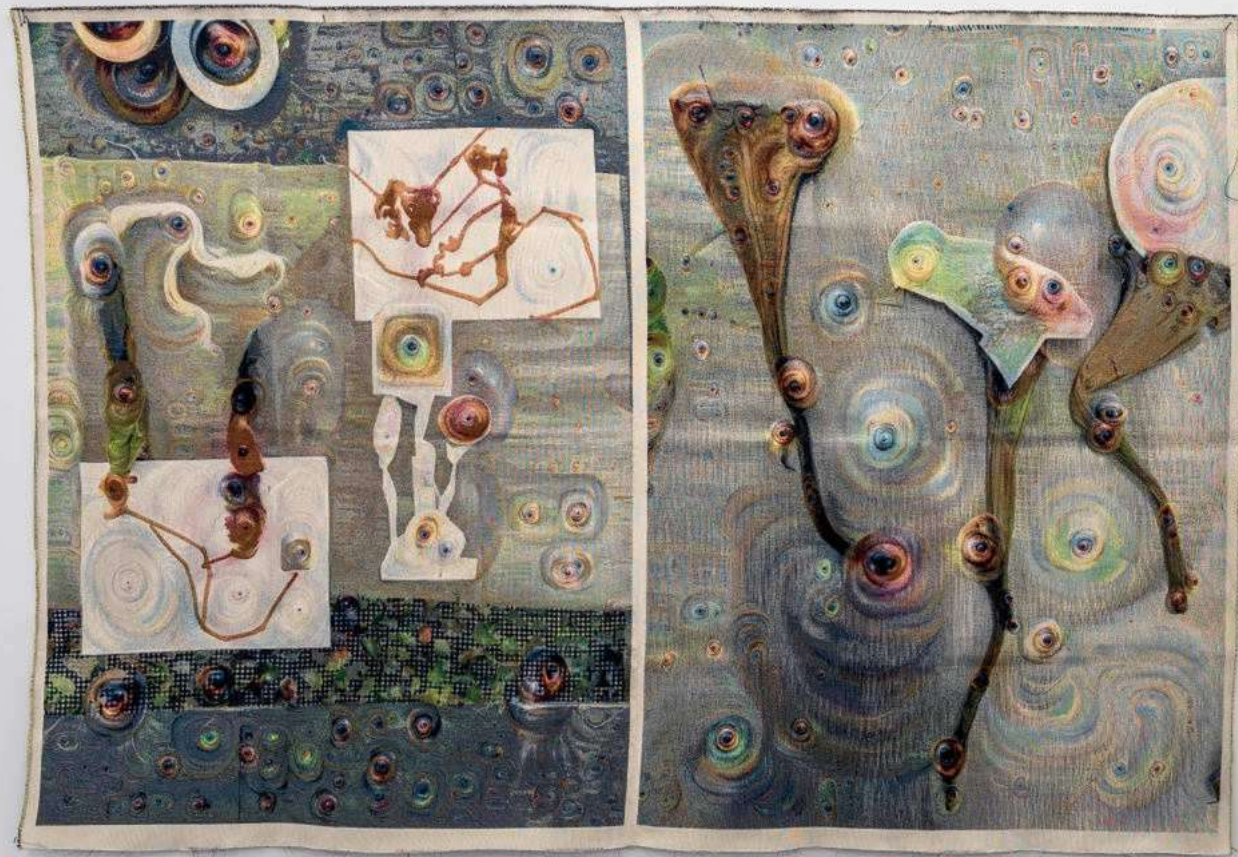


Elena Bajo's artworks align with "As It Unfolds" at Nada Curated by Fitsum Shebese by exploring human transformation through a blend of organic and digital processes (Software Surrealism Warren Neidich, Pluriverse). Her use of Datura and AI technology bridges ancestral knowledge with modern innovation, reflecting the exhibition's focus on layered histories and speculative futures. These textile Works and the sculpture "A Space to Reign" embody the cyclical nature of becoming, highlighting the tension between permanence and impermanence.

We don't want to live in a Universe, We want to live in a Pluriverse, exhibition view, Elena Bajo, *Buried in Your Petals (Datura Dreams) #3*, 2023, plant dye on woven cotton textile, jacquard loom, seeds, leaves, flowers, branches, roots, 127 x 184 cm, © Elena Bajo, courtesy PRISKA PASQUER GALLERY



We don't want to live in a Universe, We want to live in a Pluriverse, © Elena Bajo, courtesy PRISKA PASQUER GALLERY



We don't want to live in a Universe, We want to live in a Pluriverse, exhibition view, Elena Bajo, *Buried in Your Petals (Datura Dreams) #4*, 2023, plant dye on woven cotton textile, jacquard loom, seeds, leaves, flowers, branches, roots, 127 x 184 cm, © Elena Bajo, courtesy PRISKA PASQUER GALLERY



We don't want to live in a Universe, We want to live in a Pluriverse, © Elena Bajo, courtesy PRISKA PASQUER GALLERY



We don't want to live in a Universe, We want to live in a Pluriverse, exhibition view, Elena Bajo, *Buried in Your Petals (Datura Dreams)*, 2023, plant dye on woven cotton textile, jacquard loom, seeds, leaves, flowers, branches, roots, 119, 4 x 91,4 cm, © Elena Bajo, courtesy PRISKA PASQUER GALLERY



We don't want to live in a Universe, We want to live in a Pluriverse, exhibition view, Elena Bajo, *Buried in Your Petals (Datura Dreams) #5*, 2023, plant dye on woven cotton textile, jacquard loom, seeds, leaves, flowers, branches, roots, 119, 4 x 91,4 cm, © Elena Bajo, courtesy PRISKA PASQUER GALLERY

ELENA BAJO

A Space to Reign

2013–23

hand-crafted Datura

Stramonium seeds cast in 24
karat gold, divinatory crystal
ball, glass, mirror, ceramic
fragments, light, plant parts,
fabric scraps and soil
24 x 13 x 10 cm





We don't want to live in a Universe, We want to live in a Pluriverse, Elena Bajo, A Space to Reign #2, hand-crafted Datura Stramonium seeds cast in 24 karat gold, divinatory crystal ball, glass, light, plant parts, fabric scraps and soil, 40 x 16 x 14,5 cm, © Elena Bajo, courtesy PRISKA PASQUER GALLERY

Words Buried in your Petals (Datura Rituals) 2023

Socrates Sculpture Park NY US

Video Documentation https://drive.google.com/file/d/1pV7DoXthfMC5_iLdHQQgDHZVhh6LTT_z/view

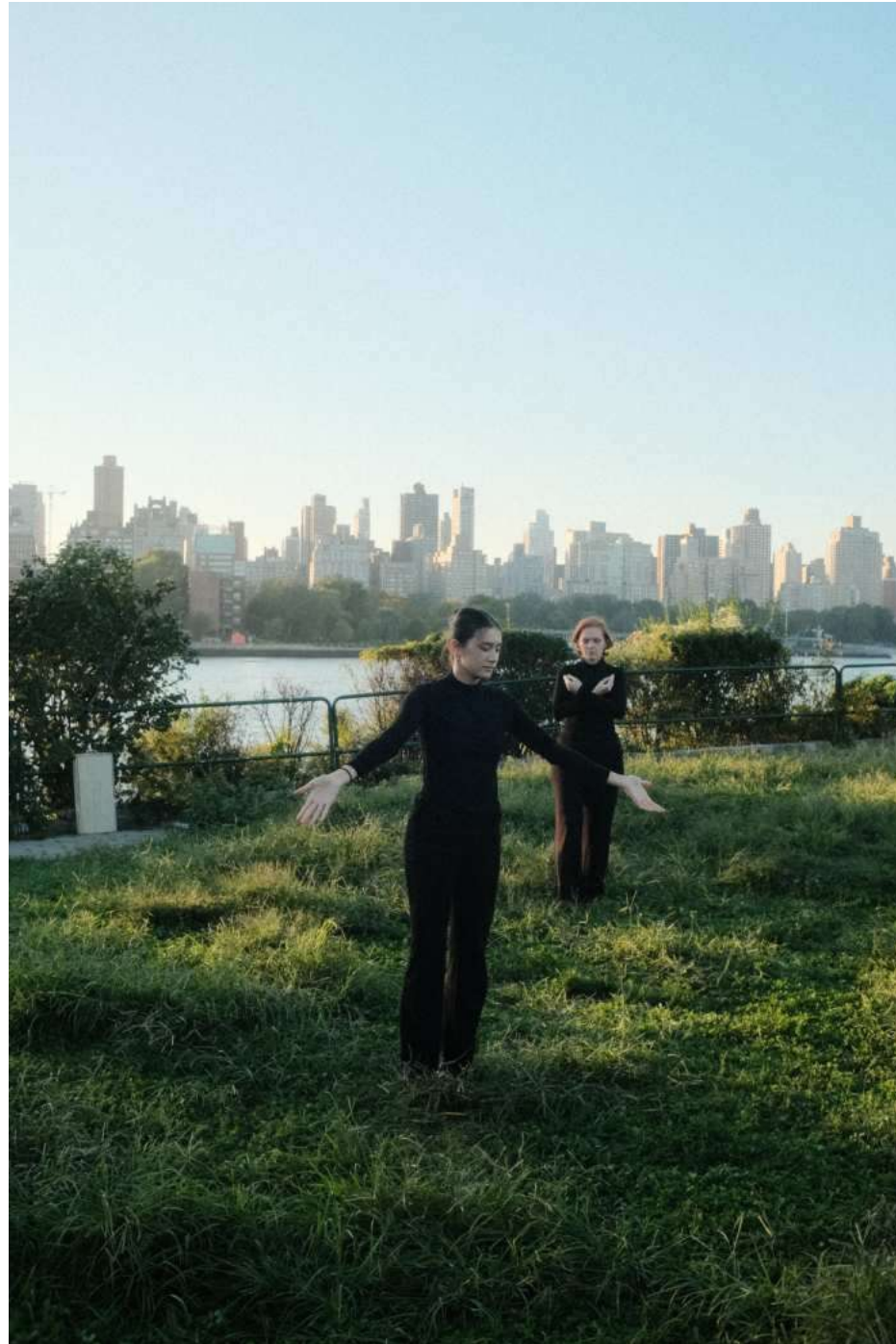
Duration: 15 min 3 secs Choreography is made in collaboration with Plant (Datura Stramonium) Public Performance / Workshop / Installation Performative Sculpture
Dancers participants: Nadia Benes, Ariel Kleinberg, Ari La Mora, Mary Rogers, Lindsay Ryan.

Under the General theme of Transformation and having as a point of departure psychoactive plants and their seeds, the proposed dance performance would be a completely unique and transformative experience. Drawing from the artist's own Celtic ancestry in the North West of the Iberian Peninsula, dance traditions as well as mental and emotional states of mind induced by specific psychotropic plants, the performance explores how altered states of consciousness shift and stretch the boundaries of dance and movement and our connection to nature. The performance, although rooted in ancestral forms, will not remain traditional but acknowledging the presence of these plants - often associated with shamanic rituals and rites of passage - will lend an atmosphere of timelessness and spacelessness, as well as being transported to the realm of deep time and space. As psychotropic plants and seeds have long been a part of the human experience, so too can the process of transformation that they make possible. Circadian rhythms rule humans and plants alike, under the planetary influence of the moon Datura flowers bloom at dusk and close at sunset. In this proposed dance performance, the dancers, and audience members, who are encouraged to participate, will experience a kind of shared journey toward a transcendent state of being. Through explorations of intense rhythms and movements created and inspired by the effects of the Plant Teacher from the altered state of mind, we can all witness the powerful and transformative effects of plants. By engaging with our Plant allies, we can open up to unknown and unexplored possibilities and experience alternative journeys into our relationship with nature. Following a workshop guided by the "Anarchoreographic Method", Elena Bajo's interdisciplinary approach, the dancers work with improvised and choreographed movements generated by a text-poem from her Plant's Manifesto, and determined before hand in close collaboration with the artist-choreographer.















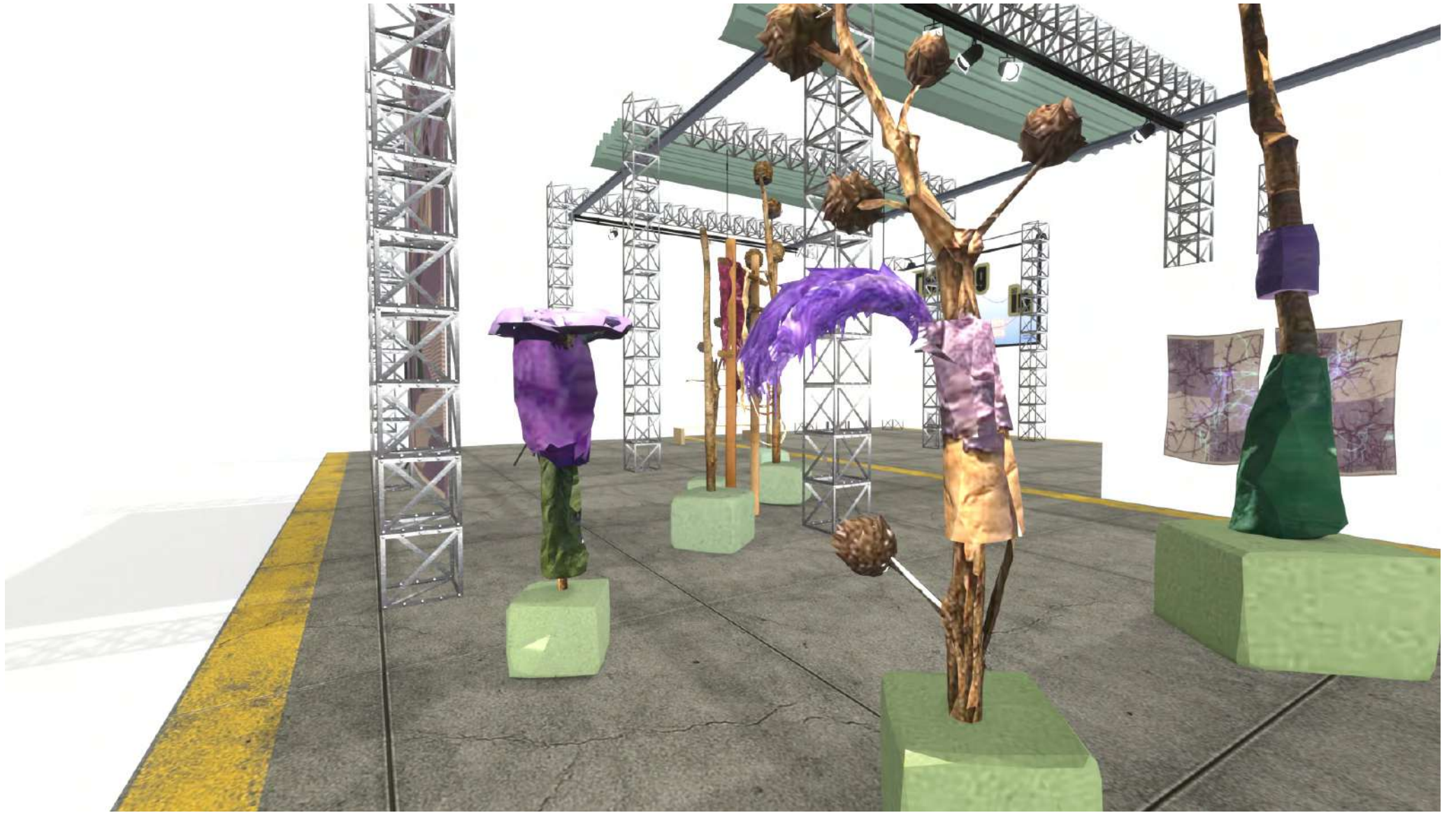
Datura Dreams (Encoded) Wrong Biennial Curated by Bounding Box 2025

Datura Dreams (Encoded) unfolds as a speculative system linking plants, algorithms and weaving technologies. The project imagines a living cybernetic ecosystem in which plant signals, AI processes and textile patterns exist in continuous dialogue. Bio-electrical signals from *Artemisia* (mugwort) and *Datura* are captured by sensors and translated by an algorithm into projected wave patterns and weaving instructions for a Jacquard loom. The Jacquard loom, one of the earliest programmable machines and often considered the first computer, binds code and cloth. The installation is a study of translation from leaf to voltage, from voltage to number, from number to image and textile and back again through light and attention. Rather than a functioning interface, the work presents the material traces of this imagined network. Elena refers to “quantum entanglement” as a way to describe connections that feel non-local—a way to think about how things relate across distance and difference, how plants, people and machines might form part of one process even on different scales.



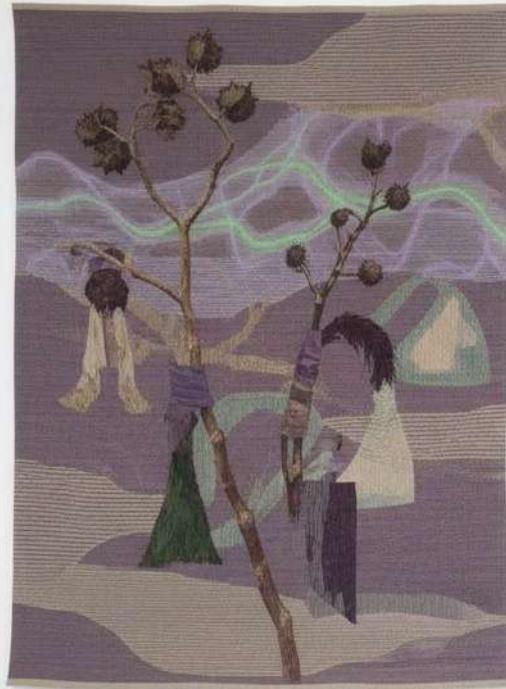


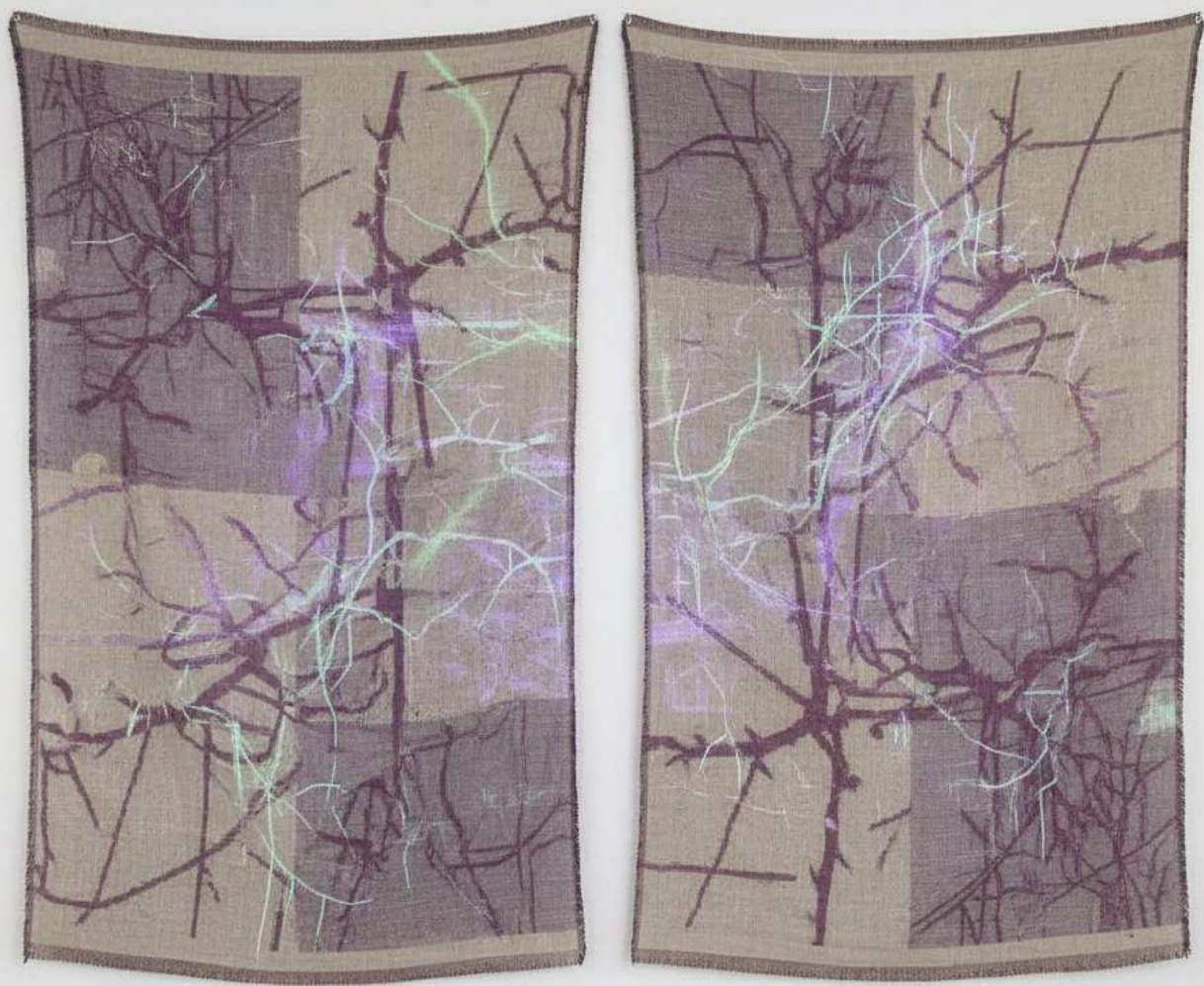
















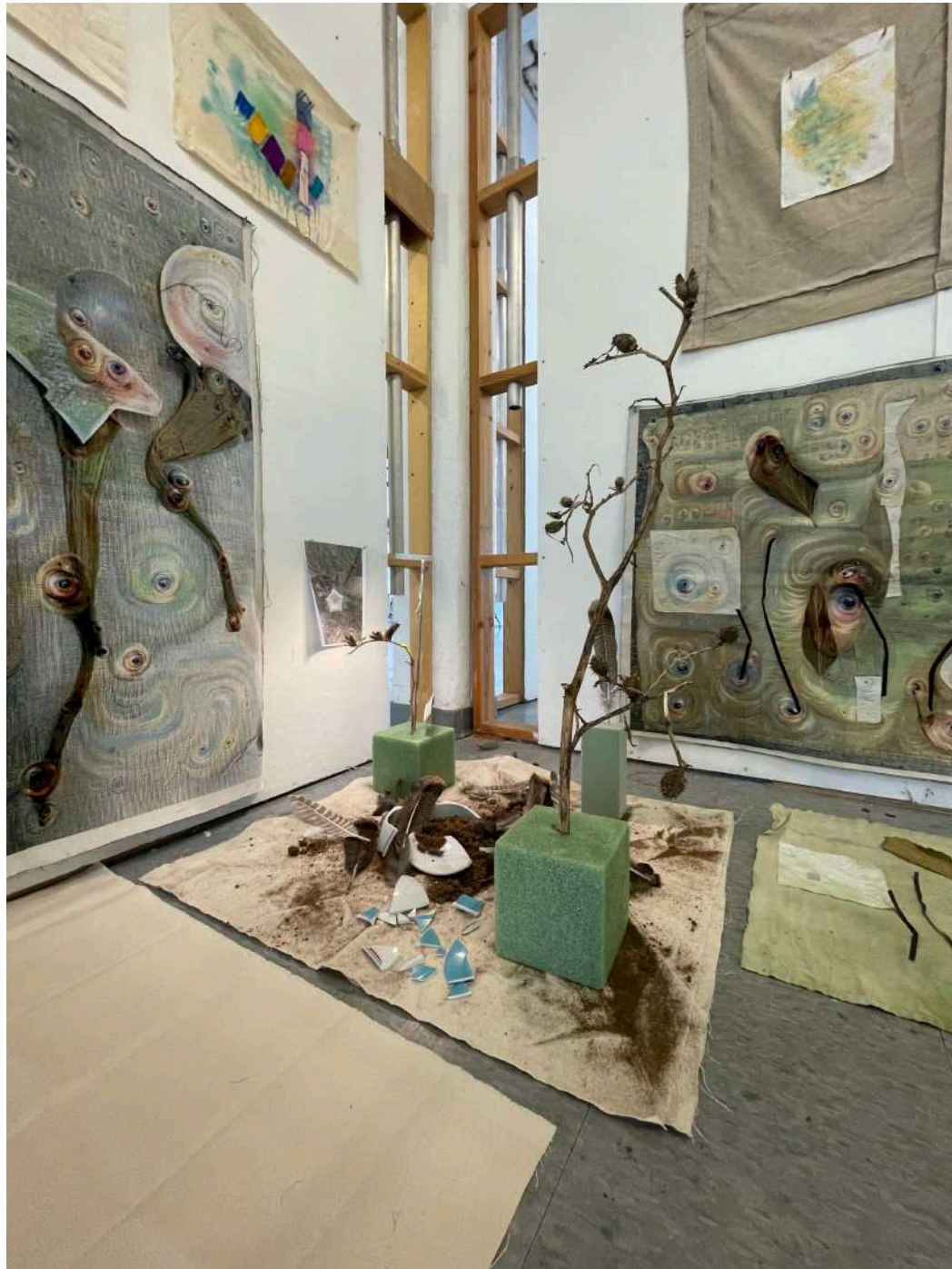




Fabric Collages, compositions, watercolors on fabric in collaboration with plants and water









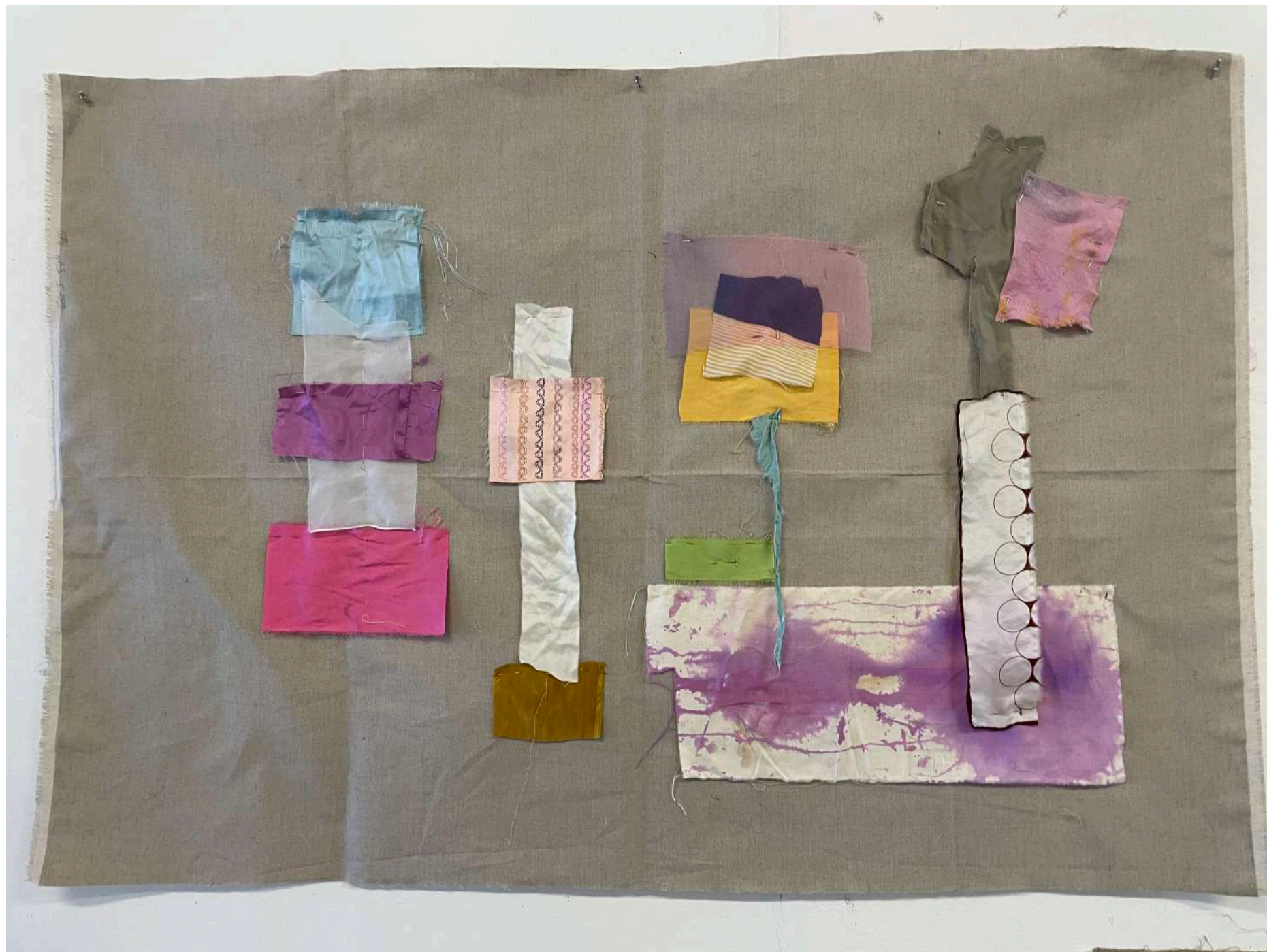








































SOIL OF HISTORY

Curated by Ersi Varveri, Gijs Waterschoot, SYROS, GR 2021

POEM AND Datura Drawing engraved on rocks and ceramic tiles on Syros 'Lady Geology', geological landscape.

The "Soil a history" poem is carved on a marble tile that is approx. 50cm x 50cm, the poem itself is 25cm wide and 20 cm high inches in front of the main 'cathedral' of the Cyclades

SOIL OF HISTORY

1.

VENOM BRANCHING OUT TO THE SKY
A DESIRE TO DREAM
SPOONFUL OF MEDICAMENT
STREAMED BITTER TASTE

2.

CIRCLES OF DORMANT AND LOUD
A DREAM TO FORGET
AWAKEN FROM MUTE
OUT OF THE LOOP AGAIN

3.

SOIL OF HISTORY
A SHAMAN TO SING
USE ME AS IF I PROMISE NOT TO TELL
WORDS BURIED IN OUR PETALS

4.

TOXIC GREEN SCENT
A DOUBT TO SAY
SHUT YOUR MOUTH
BREATH OF DEATH





3.
SON OF HILBERT
A SHIPMAN TO JIM
H/IC FIC ALIF I FICABLE
H/IC TO TELL
WAS FICABLE IN THE
FICABLE

A photograph of a stone path made of irregular, flat stones in various shades of grey, pink, and brown. The stones are set in a dark, textured mortar. One large, light grey stone in the foreground has a poem engraved on it in a simple, white, sans-serif font. The poem is written in all caps and is arranged in six lines. The lighting is natural, casting soft shadows on the stones.

3.
SOIL OF HISTORY
A SHAMAN TO SING
USE ME AS IF I PROMISE
NOT TO TELL
WORDS BURIED IN OUR
PETALS

The Flower who came from the Stars 2022

BIOTOPIAS3 Parque Doramas Social Art Center Las Palmas GC ES

Video Documentation <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=JOxURskzL78>

Public Performance / Workshop / Installation Performative Sculpture

For "Biotopias 3" Bajo has created "The flower that came from a star", a delicate piece that blends sculptural installation, poetry, dance and performance. She is interested in different ways of reconnecting and creating awareness, generating a space for access, a "portal" to the narratives of the history of place through natural entities and their relationship with humans: plants, minerals, elements such as water, air and earth, and phenomena such as volcanos, energies in which changes occur. We are aware of these changes through traces, geological markers of deep time and deep space. Elena Bajo takes a poet look at how these elements converge in a "witness to the past that contains all our imaginable futures". Deep traces in the space and time of these mysterious islands, the Canary Islands, that lead us to imagine the past and rediscover what we once were. The piece is based on a poem written by the artist and based on the plant *Cytisus Canariensis*; the poem was engraved on five large basaltic rocks. It works as the script that activates a performance by three dancers based on a choreography created by Bajo following her **Anarchoreographic Method*.

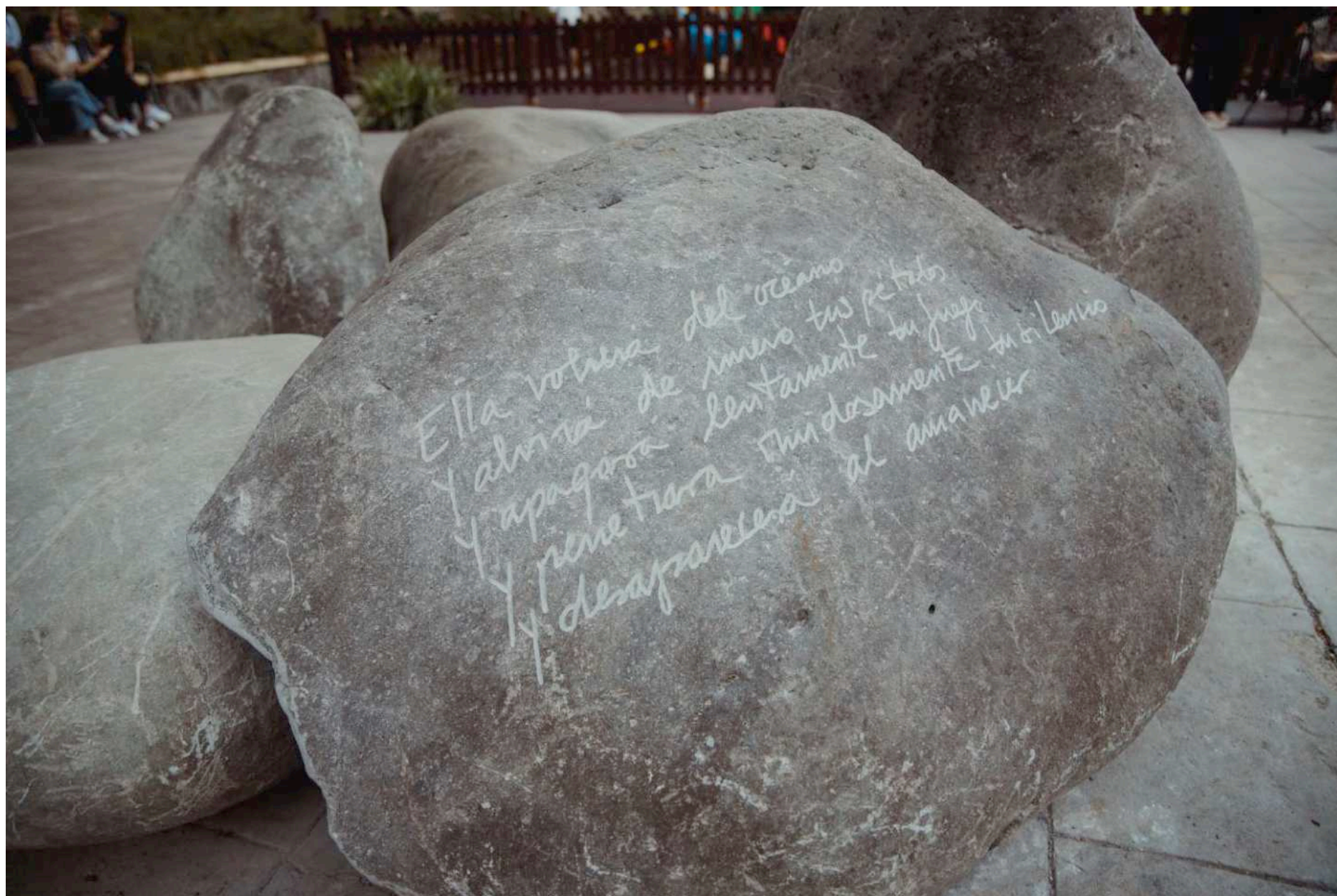




mentar de futuro una después
un cuerpo se iluminan y se elevan
Vosotros el espacio, y el tiempo se desmenuza
Diciendo que morir por amor es inevitable

de la





Ella volaría del océano
Y aliviaría de nuevo tus pétalos
Y apagaría lentamente tu fuego
Y penetraría enidosamente tu silencio
Y desaparecería al amanecer





I Also Breathe (One and Two), 2020 POEM, Performative Sculpture, acrylic, marker on paper, Oak Wood, Feathers shed naturally by Wild Turkeys molting

Roaming Strutting Spitting

The rhythm of the poem is the trajectory of the form
a solved riddle...?
falling oak shed feathers
fractured and raced
Daphne lost her limbs
lines of flight
branching out to you
a bird is a bird is a bird
parallel garden universe
a car mirrors
a dance of circles
red-pinky scores
night gaze
a tree is a tree is a tree
a game of seven wild
a song of pecks six
a step of green five
a chase of leaves four
a chess match game three
a race of hiding two
a death of some-one

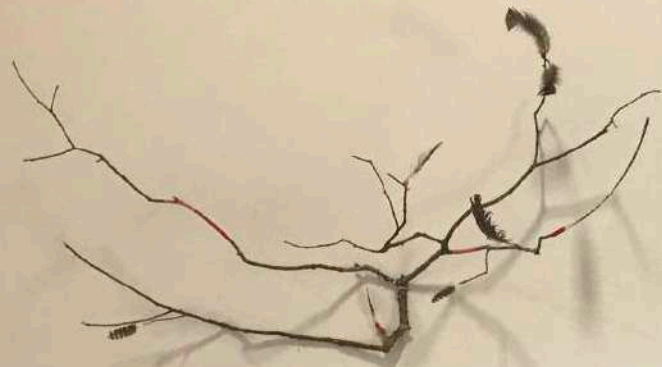
a song is a song is a song
seeds of gust winds win
yellow dream awakes
Dandelion breathes a sunrise
the heart stops
before the light reaches the finish line
a won battle of none
the house takes it all

Elena Bajo November 2021

I Also Breathe

With you by my side
I Breathe
Rhythms and Dreams
Are you or am I?
Early sunrise
you Rise
sunset whispers you to
sleep
bathing in silver light
lazy petals touch a
sucking moth's mouth
the dance starts.

Elena Bajo November 2021



Two sculptures by the artist, made of dark, thin, branching material, possibly wood or metal, mounted on a light-colored wall. The sculptures are composed of several thin, dark branches that spread out in various directions. Some of the branches have small, bright red segments or tips. There are also some dark, feathery or brush-like elements attached to the branches. The sculptures cast soft shadows on the wall behind them.

"I ALSO BREATHE"
WITH YOU BY MY SIDE
I BREATHE
RHYTHMS AND DREAMS
ARE YOU OR AM I?
EARLY SUNRISE
YOU RISE
SUNSET WHISPERS YOU TO
SLEEP
BATHING IN SILVER LIGHT
LAZY PETALS TOUCH A
SUCKING MOTHER'S MOUTH
THE DANCE STARTS.

Hybrid Breaths: Post-Human Choreographies in Elena Bajo's "I Also Breath (One & Two)"

Overview

Elena Bajo's pandemic-era performative sculpture "I Also Breath (One & Two)" (2020) stages an encounter between oak branches, shed wild-turkey feathers, acrylic color, and poetic score to imagine a trans-species body that breathes through vegetal and avian rhythms. Framed by Donna Haraway's companion-species ethics and Jane Bennett's vital materialism, the work exemplifies post-human aesthetics that treat matter and movement as co-authors of meaning.

Entangled Poetics

In Long Island lockdown isolation, Bajo observed flocks of wild turkeys roosting nightly high in oak limbs—a behavioral strategy against nocturnal predators^[1]. She harvested only feathers naturally dropped during their arboreal ascent and paired them with fallen oak branches to "graft" a breathing score: the sway of branches in wind sets the tempo, while each displaced feather marks a choreographic waypoint in the birds' twilight climb^[2]. The sculpture's taped flashes of iridescent acrylic echo turkey plumage, tracking routes of avian-arboreal contact in three-dimensional color space.

Philosophically, the piece rehearses Donna Haraway's notion of *companion species*: beings who "meet and break bread together but not without some indigestion," generating worlds through situated co-labor^[3]. Turkeys, trees, and artist co-compose a living archive whose agency is distributed across species lines—precisely the "intra-action" Haraway insists resists human exceptionalism^[4].

Jane Bennett's *Vibrant Matter* amplifies this reading. Her call to recognize the "active participation of non-human forces in events" reframes Bajo's oak wood and molted feathers as protagonists rather than props^[5]. Bennett's vital materiality surfaces in the breathing motif: wood fibers exhale moisture; feathers insulate and aerodynamically script flight paths; acrylic pigments off-gas and shimmer. Each material pulses with what Bennett names "thing-power," a quasi-agency that unsettles the boundary between inert object and lively subject^[6].

By literally grafting oak joints—an arboricultural technique of conjoining disparate limbs—Bajo performs a "heterografting" of temporalities: circadian avian roost cycles splice into arboreal photosynthetic breaths, producing a hybrid kinetic organism. This echoes Bennett's assemblages, wherein heterogeneous actors align momentarily to generate emergent effects^[5].

Post-Human Breathing

The title's inclusive "Also" signals a solidaristic respiration: *I* (human) breathe alongside *oak* (plant) and *turkey* (animal). Such coalition gestures toward a post-human ecology in which survival depends on sensing and syncing with more-than-human rhythms. Bajo's poems, recited during activation performances, translate feather-fall trajectories into syllabic cadences, collapsing linguistic breath with arboreal sway.

Haraway insists that ethical response-ability arises from "staying with the trouble" of multispecies entanglement^[3]. Bajo materializes that trouble: fragile taped seams reveal graft scars, feather shafts tremble, acrylic colors fade—signs of an open system always becoming. Bennett would call this a politics "less devoted to condemning individuals than to discerning the web of forces" shaping events^[5]. Here, the artwork itself is a micro-political training ground, sensitizing viewers to follow the angle of a feather or the creak of a limb as meaningful cues.

Conclusion

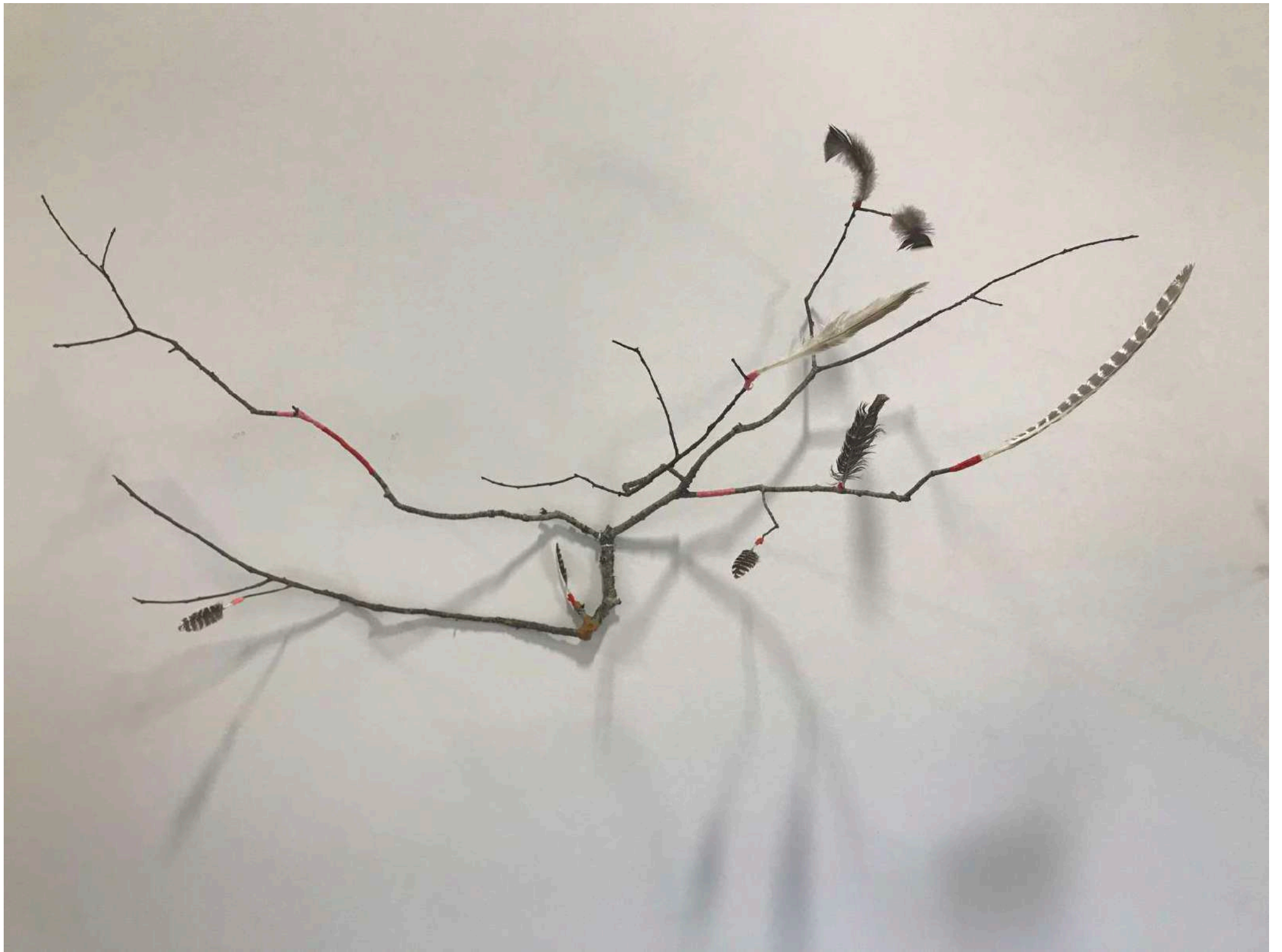
"I Also Breath (One & Two)" enacts a choreographic commons where oak, turkey, pigment, and poet cross-pollinate vital processes. Guided by Haraway's companion-species framework and Bennett's vibrant materiality, Bajo's pandemic meditation invites us to inhale with the oak, exhale with the turkey, and feel, however briefly, the post-human pulse of hybrid breath.

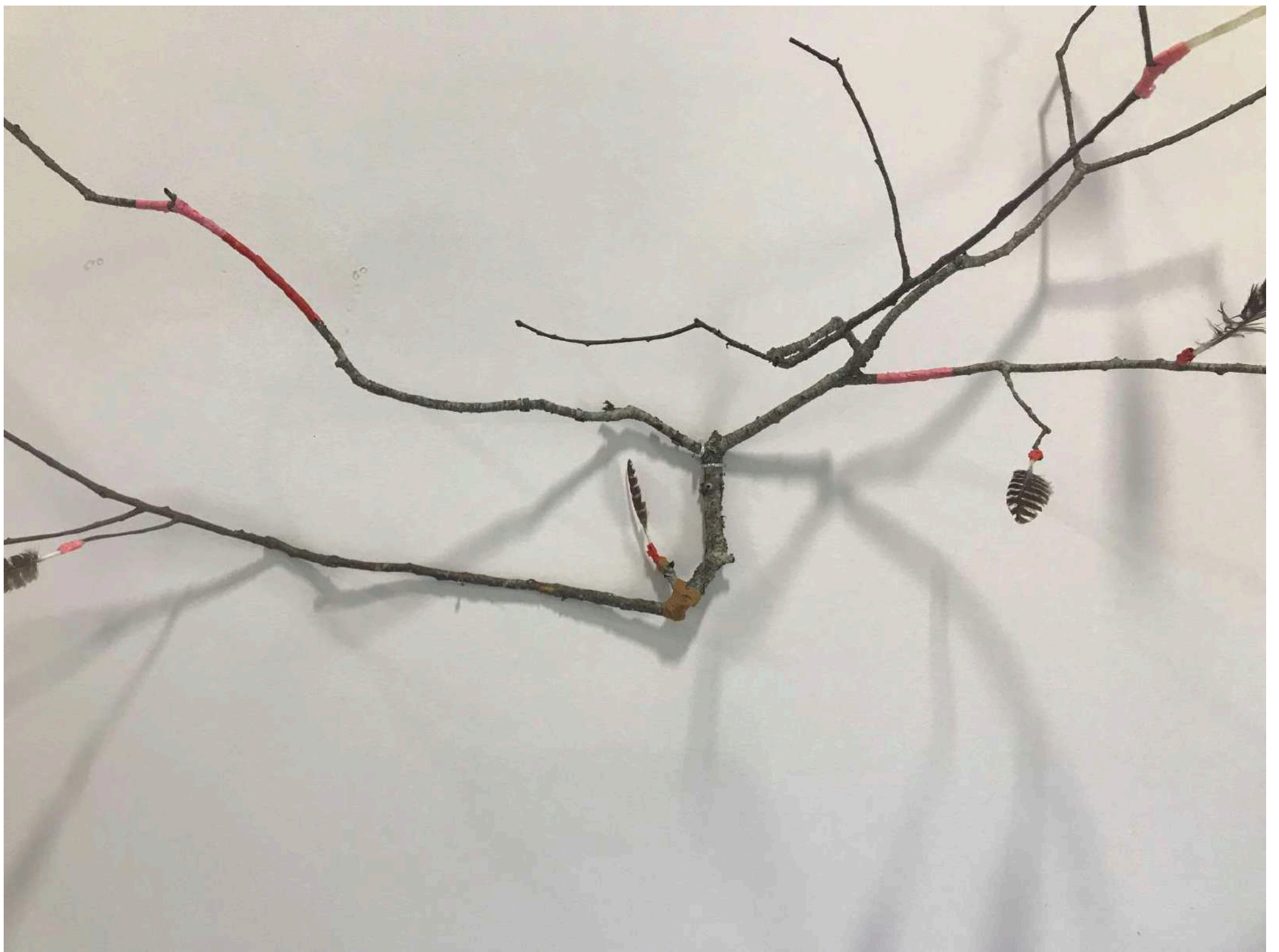
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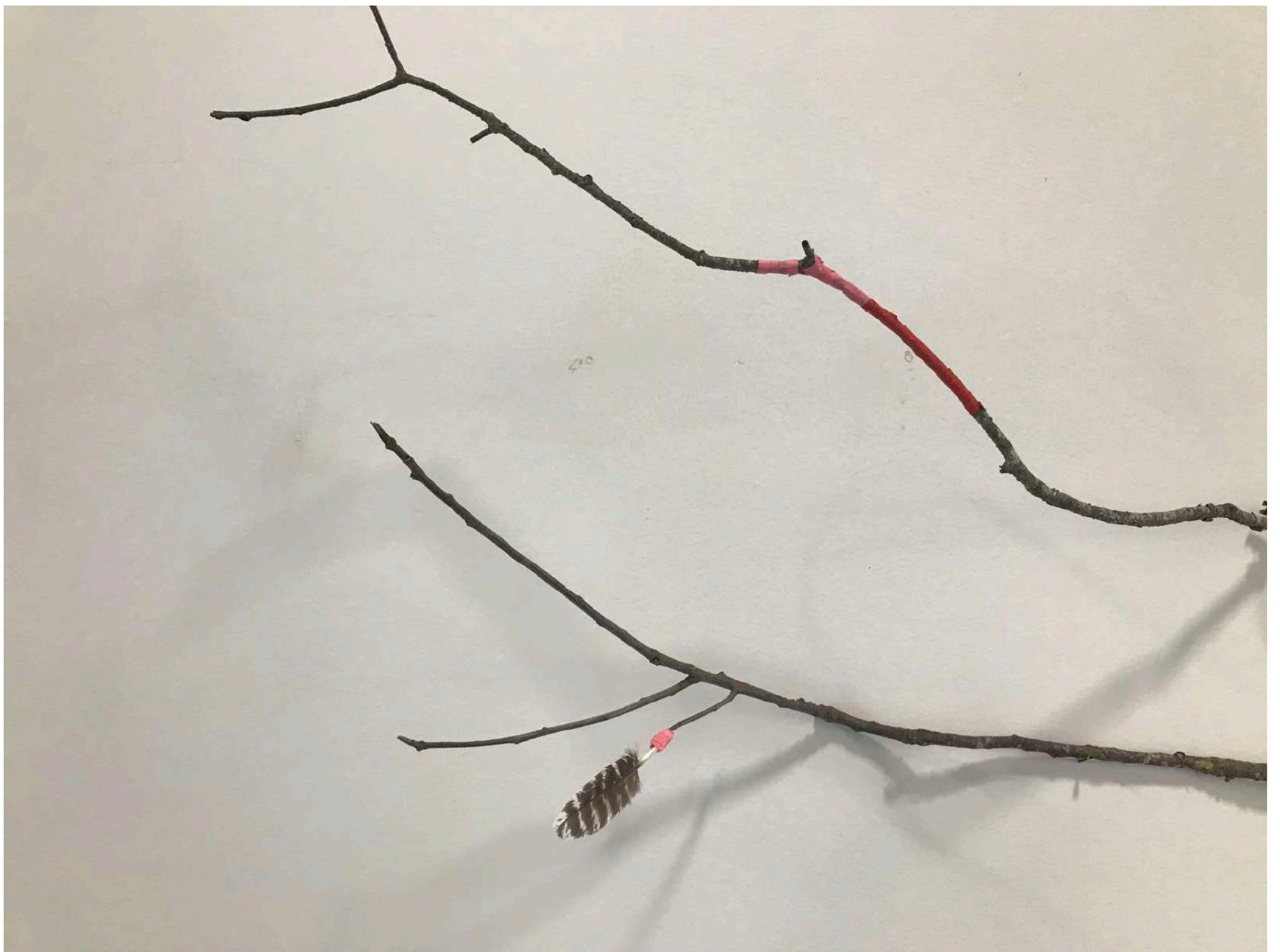
1. <https://animal-world.com/where-do-turkeys-sleep/>
2. <https://www.elenabajo.com>
3. <https://www.uoc.edu/uocpapers/6/dt/eng/haraway.html>
4. <https://go.gale.com/ps/i.do?aty=open-web-entry&id=GALE|A204930586&issn=14497751&it=r&linkaccess=abs&p=AONE&sid=googleScholar&sw=w&userGroupName=anon~2979b291&v=2.1>
5. <https://dukeupress.edu/vibrant-matter>
6. <https://read.dukeupress.edu/books/book/1346/Vibrant-MatterA-Political-Ecology-of-Things>

















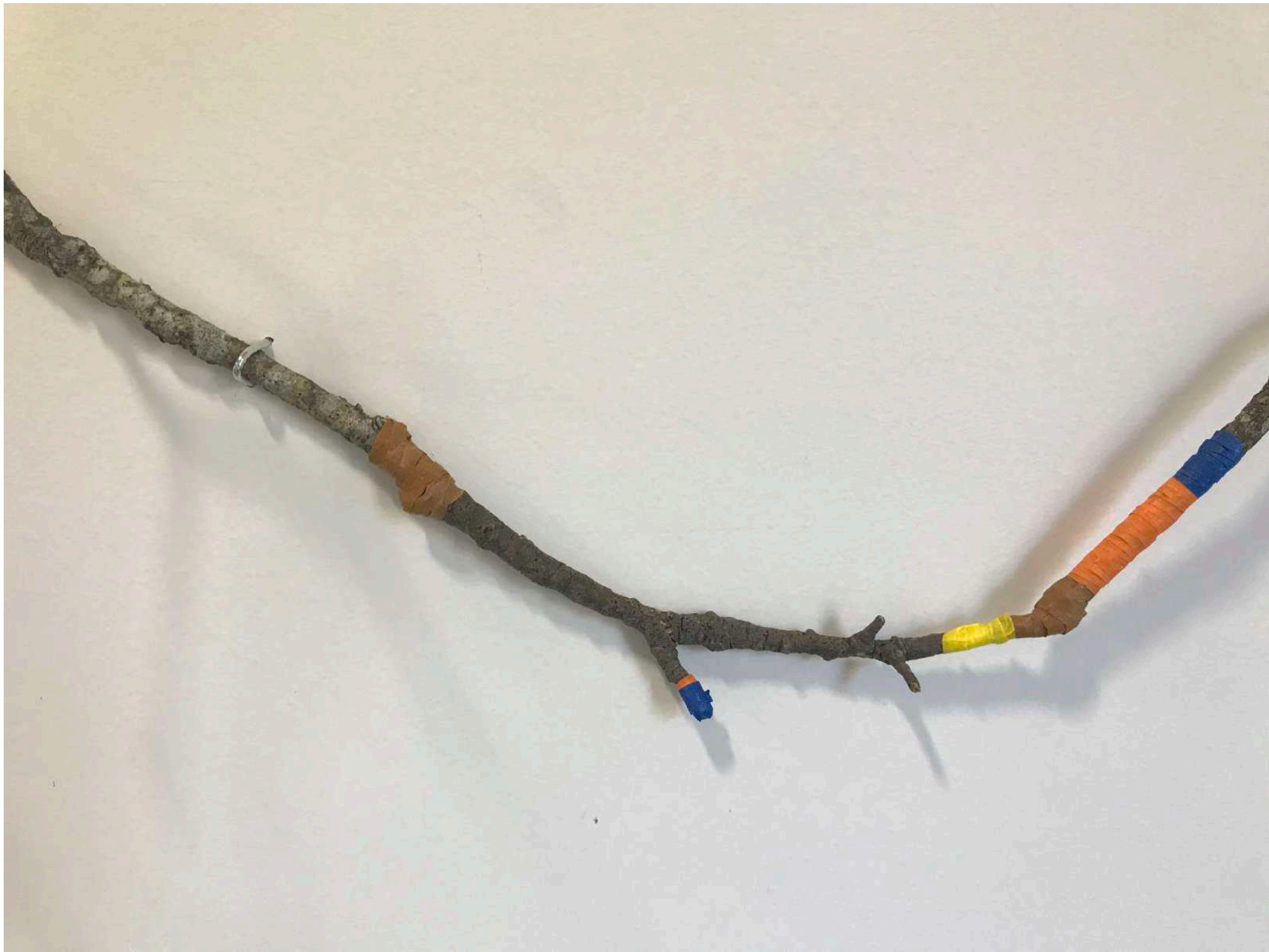




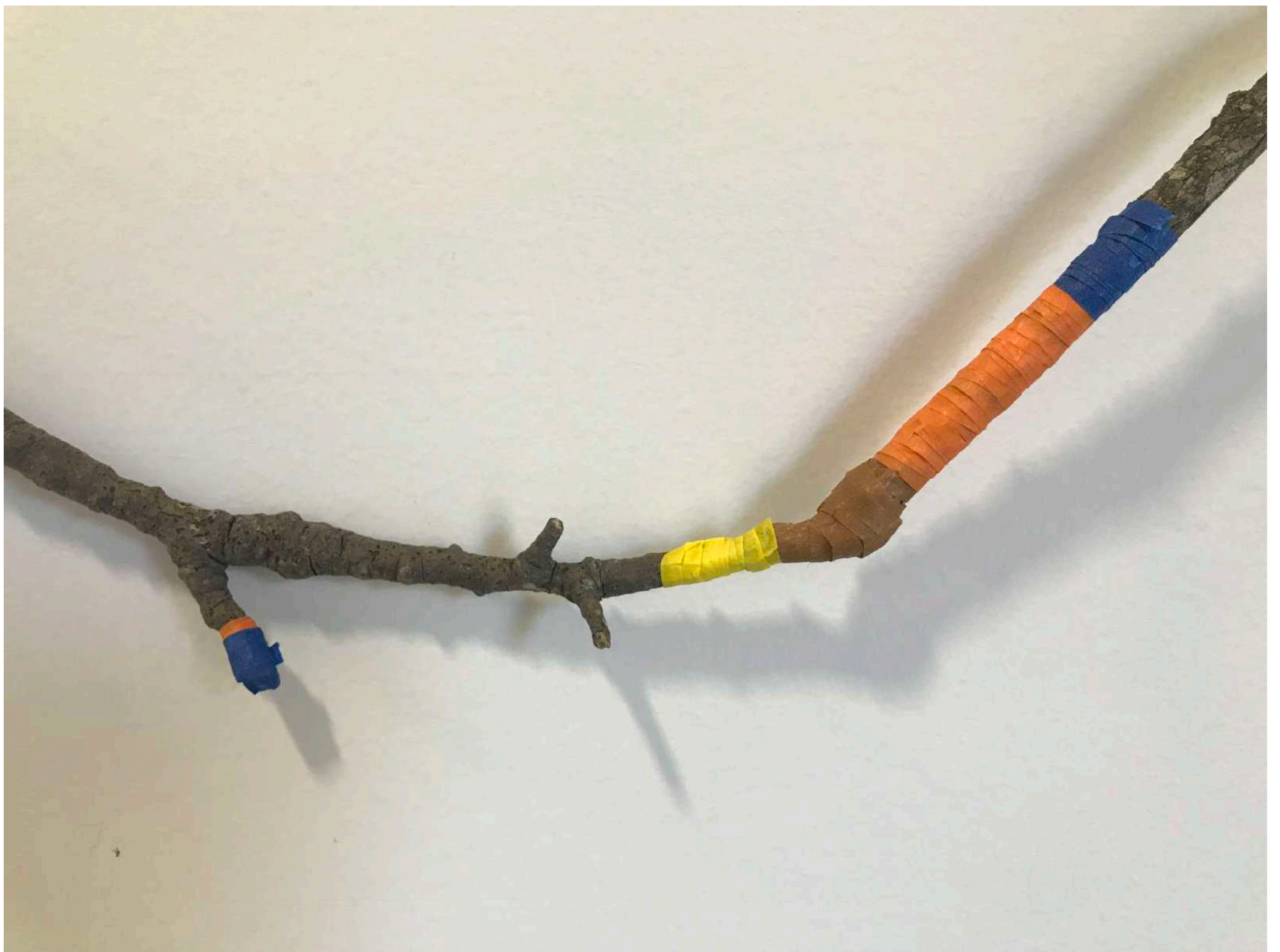






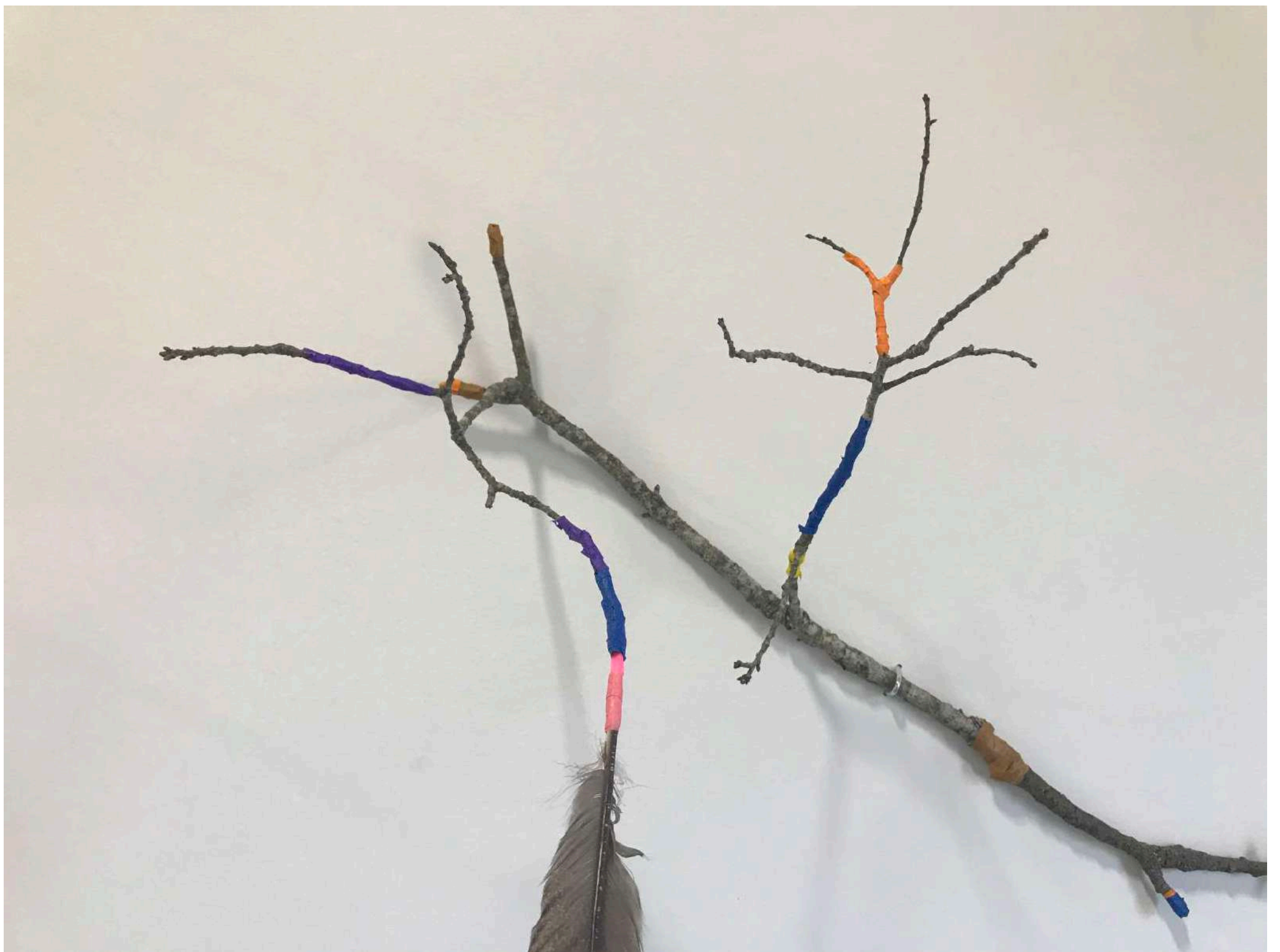












The Pleiades

La cosa del pantano: crítica(s) y poética(s) desde

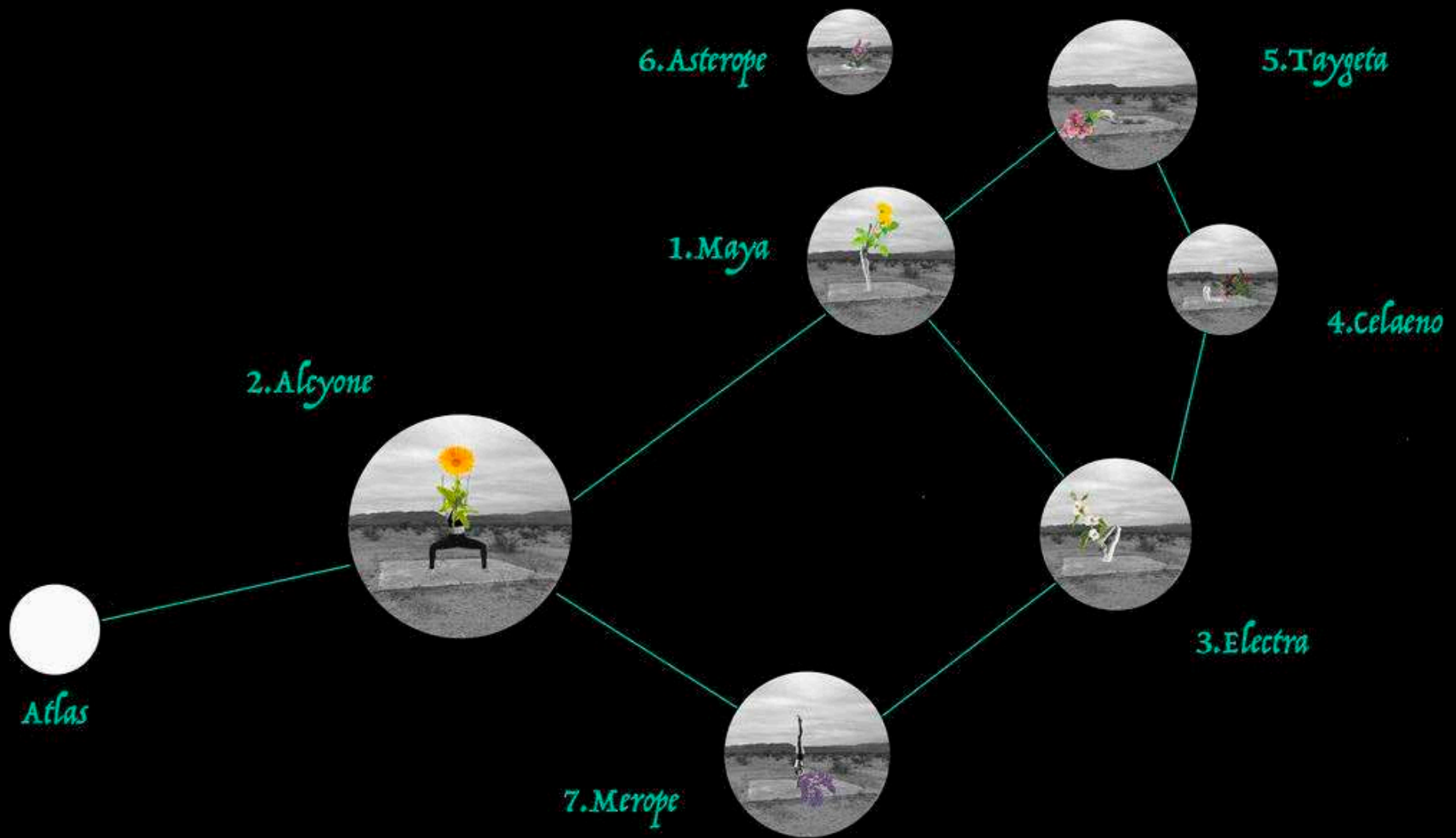
la aberración Curated by Núria Montclús Carazo

La Casa Encendida Madrid ES 2020

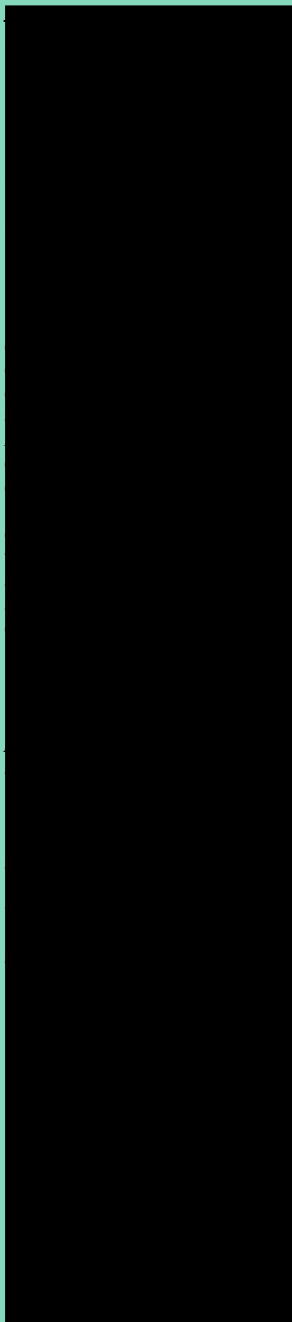
Elena Bajo

Madrid, 1976





Works



Elena Bajo
(Madrid, 1976)

The Pleiades
2016–2020

Performance, 3D rendering and ceiling projection with sound. Adaptation of the activation for La Casa Encendida, in sculptural-performative format with mirrors and print on vinyl
Dimensions variable
Courtesy of the artist and García Galería

Pages 25 – 28

Elena Bajo investigates the ecological, political and social dimensions that permeate our daily lives. Using anarchist thought as an aesthetic-organising principle, her works are interdisciplinary bodies where new forms of eco-resistance emerge and the current relationship between humankind and the environment can be “reset”.

The Pleiades is based on the inclusion of this constellation in the narratives of different cultural traditions. Integrated into mythologies (including scientific discourse) and folklore, this cluster of stars—and the very construction of astral groupings—is an example of the human will to decipher and communicate with nature. In *The Pleiades*, Bajo weaves a new fiction set in a near-yet-uncertain future where some of those traditional tales are combined with different ways of relating with the environment, revealing the social, political and economic aspects of the mutations that human beings have effected in their natural surroundings.

The result is an “anarcho-performative” work that can be activated by the individual actions of visitors as they are immersed in the ceiling projection, or by a group of guest performers who, together, act out a text/score/script that the artist reworks for each new presentation of the piece. This living text (see pp. 29–35)

combines digital and analogue resources from her research with the archive/memory of past performances. On this occasion, the proposed activation is a hybrid of the aforementioned mechanisms, the sculptural-performative possibilities of the mirror, and printed images of the power-moves of the Manifesto distributed throughout the exhibition space. These elements serve as a “choreographic score” on a 1:1 scale for potential activators; at the same time, they give rise to new relational games through which a simulation-activation is achieved.

MANIFESTO: THE PLEIADES – ANARCHOREOGRAPHIES
– A POEM IN SEVEN MOVEMENTS
Elena Bajo

BUILDING A GARDEN (work in progress):

AREA UNDER RESTORA- TION: DO NOT ENTER.

BECOMING A PLANT – GROWING FROM INSIDE –
Re-connecting to Nature – The body as a Plant – ACTING
at molecular level – Since molecular colonisation occurs by way of a miniaturisation/molarisation of its logistics, **machinic capitalism** manages to seep into our psychic territories, intervening in the “basic functioning of the perceptive, sensorial, affective, cognitive, linguistic behaviours” (Guattari, 2009, 262). The means of disengagement from molarisation and the suspension of singularisation or change alternative might be molecular by experimentation, THE GARDEN AS A PLACE OF POTENTIAL / POLITICAL TRANSFORMATION (as opposed to molar strategies that perpetuate the “same” habits of thought and action, regularities). The garden and its movements; through experimental actions a series of relational singularities could emerge in the in between of established situations. Chance and contingency. These spaces are packed with molecular potential, where a growing number of futures are present, none of which can be predicted.

WORKSHOP ANARCHOREOGRAPHIES

Generate your individual POWER MOVES THAT WILL BECOME PART OF THE COLLECTIVE ANARCHOREOGRAPHY, THE SEVENTH MOVE.

PERFORMANCE AT LA CASA ENCENDIDA: THE PLEIADES – ANARCHOREOGRAPHIES – A POEM IN SEVEN MOVEMENTS, 2020

Is a project at the intersection of sculpture, performance and text. Body movement, chance and muscle memory are explored undertaking eco-anarchism (Ecosophy, Guattari's *The Three Ecologies*) as an artistic strategy by implementing elements of **disentanglement, affects and intimacy** as a point of dissidence and disruption on contemporary neoliberal choreographies. It engages ideas of nature and the body as a socio-political entity questioning its relationship to ecologies of capital. The movement is the process; is the poem. The dance is what happens in between movements. Non-hierarchical trajectories are used as a tool to articulate a sense of subjectivity and collectivity and the creation of a space in constant flux. Seven power moves for a collective dream.

THINK ABOUT MAKING A POEM WITH 7 MOVEMENTS THAT WILL EMPOWER. THINK ABOUT HOW AND WHICH MOVEMENTS CAN BE USED AS TOOLS TO REACH OUT TO PEOPLE... CAN CERTAIN SCALES OF “INTIMACY” ACT AS A WEAPON, A WEAPON FOR DISSIDENCE IN THE SYSTEM BUT ALSO A WEAPON TO BECOME AVAILABLE TO THE COLLECTIVE, FROM THE PRIVATE/PERSONAL INTO THE PUBLIC/COLLECTIVE? HOW CAN WE REACH OUT, COMMUNICATE AND DANCE TOGETHER...?

THE CONCEPT OF SEVEN MOVES CAME FROM THE MYTH OF THE PLEIADES – A SYMBOLIC REFERENCE THAT PUTS TOGETHER IMAGINATION AND NATURE – IS A UTOPIAN IMAGINARY SPACE, INCLUSIVE, SEVEN SISTERS SYMBOLIZING SEVEN POWERS, **SEVEN MOVES. THESE SEVEN MOVES WILL BE MADE AVAILABLE TO EVERYBODY WHO WANTS TO SHARE THE POWER OF DANCING TOGETHER, IT CAN BE ANOTHER PERFORMER BUT ALSO THE AUDIENCE. THE MOVES ARE TOOLS TO BE USED TO COMMUNICATE, the language of MOVEMENT, WHICH IS DECODED SO EVERYBODY CAN USE IT.**

SUBJECTS NON HIERARCHICAL, ANARCHIST RULES, ANARCHIST LEADS, PARADOX, GENDERED/UNGENDERED, BEYOND GENDER, SELF ORGANIZING PRACTICES, ECOSOPHIST – Félix Guattari's concept of the three ecologies – the conceptual, environmental and social: SOCIAL, MENTAL, MYTH, POWER DISTRIBUTION, SEVEN MASTER MOVES... ANARCHIST GESTURES...?

POSITION/INTENTION: A SPACE IN FLUX, A WORK IN PROGRESS, CHOREOGRAPHY AS PROCESS FOR A CERTAIN EXTENSION OF TIME. AUDIENCE AND PERFORMERS CAN PLAY TOGETHER. IT IS IMPORTANT TO CONSIDER FOR GENERATION OF COLLECTIVE CHOREOGRAPHY REPETITION, MIMICKING, MASTER MOVES, MOVEMENT+STILLNESS, CONTACT IMPROV. WE WILL USE AS A REFERENCE **RUDOLF LABAN BODY-SPACE RELATIONSHIPS** TO MAKE SENSE WITH INTENTION. KINESPHERE: PERSONAL SPACE, A SPACE WITHIN ONE'S OWN REACH, totality of movement available from any given bodily stance. The “sphere around the body whose periphery can be reached by easily extended limbs from that place which is our point of support or stance”. “We never, of course, leave our movement sphere, but carry it always with us, like an aura, fluid and malleable, in so far as it can only be established by the dancer's motion” (2009, 111).

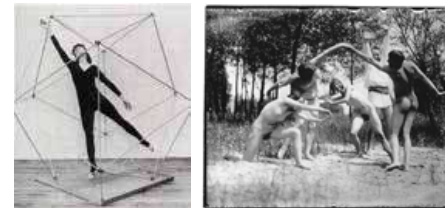
Thus the kinesphere can grow malleable, insofar as it can only be established by the dancer's motion (2009, 111). Thus the kinesphere can expand and shrink in size, depending on whether the dancer is using fully extended limbs. Likewise, it can be more disc-like than spherical in shape depending on whether the width of movement is limited. So while the potential kinesphere might be visualisable as a perfect sphere, the actual sphere is established by actual movement, or as Bergson puts it, “by real motion that deposits space beneath itself”.

HOW DO WE SHARE OR NOT OUR PERSONAL SPACES??
HOW CAN WE DANCE OUTSIDE OUR KINESPHERE?

FOR THE DANCERS: A POEM IN SEVEN MOVEMENTS – SYMBOLS FOR EACH ONE OF THE PLEIADES AND WHAT THEY REPRESENT

The Pleiades (Shift of Consciousness – Decoding)

- Anarchoreographies.
- Anarchoecologies.
- Chorographies, trajectories linked to topographies.



Anarchoreography: Non-hierarchical trajectories used as a tool to articulate a sense of subjectivity and collectivity and the creation of a space in constant flux.

Three dimensions of choreography

1. **Choreography as notation** (writing);
2. **Choreography as a social model** (moving together); and
3. **Choreography as a language** (communicating). Design of movement in time and space (Klein, 2011)...?

–One of the first choreographic processes modelling software programmes is called “Let's dance”. In these so called “Web Service Choreographies” (see also Weske, 2012), choreography refers to the interaction of different processes, which are controlled by different process owners and not one authority (these are called “Web Service Orchestrations”). In these digital contexts choreography often is related to bottom-up, self-organising practices of collaboration.

-MUSCLE MEMORY: Writing does not only mean forming words or signs, but leaving **traces**. Choreographies leave traces in bodies and thus are memorized or inscribed into the body –which is also immanent in the etymology of “choreography”: the compound refers to the antique Greek words *chorós* (round dance space in antique theatre or, in its alternative meaning, as ritualised round dance), respectively *choreia* (a unification of dance, music and words) and *graphein* (writing, in-scribing). Not only dance scientists, but also phenomenologists and cognitive scientists research and discuss questions concerning the bodily memory in interdisciplinary ways. They acknowledge that cognitive and bodily memory are not independent, but whereas the cognitive memory deletes constantly, the body doesn't forget (Van Imschoot, 2010; Koch et al., 2012).

-CHOREOGRAPHY AS A TOOL FOR READING AND THINKING: When we discuss notation and writing, we implicitly touch also the reading of what has been written or the interpretation of what has been noted. Choreography thus also is a tool for reading and thinking: bodily thinking as a way of revealing and interpreting what the body has memorized, which comes from your whole body and might therefore not be rational or logical. In this sense, bodily movement, even a walk, can help the "flow" of ideas. This points to the use of dance as a research method that through movement makes accessible embodied knowing (Biehl-Missal, 2015; Hujala et al.).

**THE DANCER IS A POINTER,
IT IS A STILL IMAGE THAT REFLECTS ON
THE MOMENTARY LOCATION OF THE WORK IN ITS
MOVEMENT TRAJECTORY,
THROUGH PAST-PRESENT-FUTURE EVENTS THE
DANCER REFLECTS ON
THE STEPS-MOVEMENT OF THIS TRAJECTORY, IT FOLLOWS
A SECRET CHOREOGRAPHY THAT FOLLOWS A
SECRET POLITICAL MANIFESTO,
THE DANCER'S MOVES REVERBERATES,
THE MANIFESTO IS
THE SCORE FOR THE MOVES,
FOR THE CHOREOGRAPHY,
FOR THE NEW SCRIPT**

All forms are political. There are no art forms without political meaning (A. Negri).

The interpretation of the present is based on a philosophical kinetics originating from three axioms. First, that we are moving in a world that is moving itself; second, that the self-movements of the world include our own self-movements and affect them; and third, that in modernity the self-movements of the world originate from our self-movements, which are cumulatively added to world movement. From these axioms, it is possible to more or less entirely develop a relationship between an old world, a modern world and a postmodern world (Peter Sloterdijk, "Mobilization of the Planet from the Spirit of Self-Intensification").

True anarchy is the moment when all premeditated projects are abandoned, be they political, social or even artistic, and chance comes in as a determining factor. Oscillating between chance and change, this artwork opens a vast field of possible meaning, or, in the words of John Cage: "As far as consistency of thought goes, I prefer inconsistency" (Marlene Rigler, Elena Bajo "The Absence of Work", Platform3, Munich, 2013).

MORE ABOUT THE PROCESS at LA CASA ENCENDIDA

The Anarchoreographic approach is informed by techniques used in the Theatre of the Oppressed, Soma (an anarchist Therapy) and the own artist's methods, where chance, memory and movement are used as tools to articulate the personal and the political.

Taking a political text as a point of departure, a cumulative **MANIFESTO** that the artist carries over on each project, movement will be used as a tool to interpret these texts by the participants, and we will play with prompts addressed to the individual interpretations and speculations, and to the collective ones. These movements will be un-rehearsed collectively. We will focus on developing muscle memory and we will dance the images generated by these scores. We will play with these scores generated by the texts, and we will use them to create new scripts. Movements and images will generate new texts and these new texts will be interpreted again and they will serve as new prompts, new scores to generate new movement and then new scripts and so on...

Theatre of Absence. The ecology of the bodies moving individually and collectively, creating individual and collective choreographies. Choreography and movement are explored and speculated through as political strategies.

Participants will be invited to read a manifesto and will interpret and create their own individual scripts, compositions and choreographies. A series of performance-sculptures; will be performed in the space. The performance is open to chance, and based in a non-hierarchical, anarchic structure; the surrealists believed that if we can open ourselves up to "chance" we can see the world in new ways and gain insights into the world and ourselves. The absent histories, actions and dreams will be embodied and present in the movement through sound, movement and space. All these layers of encryption and decoding in this cacophony of voices and dance will play multiple levels of disembodied presence.

This will produce a re-choreographed, re-scripted, re-sculpted political structure to re-imagine new situations that will reveal the space and time processes, will contain elements and traces, will expose the flow of material, a ceaseless flow of material aggregation and visualization of the production of its own production, a series of process-pieces that are generated by the "order of anarchy" approach addressed as series of *anarco-sculptures* (compositions), *anarco-chronisms* (events), *anarco-graphisms* (trajectories).

The resulting work is becoming and unfinished, it's about the process. A becoming performance sculpture consists then of a series of site-specific performative events, "drifting assemblages" and "drifting images", historically linked to the "Anti-Form" from the sixties by Robert Morris, in which the sculptural work "holds the potential to take a different shape each

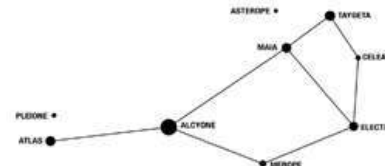
time it is presented, based on the arbitrary behaviour of the material from which it is composed".

Concepts of disjointed timelines and simultaneous lines of thought, collapsing narrative into a collection of material fragments and overlapping movements. Then in the space we will negotiate our own role and the audience's role...? Is the audience performing? are the performers becoming the audience? or maybe there is not such separation between the two? we all move together...?

The Pleiades

(/ˈplai.ədiːz/ or /ˈpli.ədiːz/, also known as the Seven Sisters and Messier 45) are an open star cluster containing middle-aged, hot B-type stars located in the constellation of Taurus. It is among the nearest star clusters to Earth and it is the cluster most obvious to the naked eye in the night sky.

<https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Pleiades>



Who are the Pleiades?

In Greek mythology, **the Pleiades** were the seven daughters of **Atlas**, a Titan commanded by the god **Zeus** to hold up the **Earth** which held up the sky, and the **Oceanid Pleione**, protectress of sailing. The sisters were **Maia, Electra, Alcyone, Taygete, Asterope, Celaeno** and **Merope**.



The **Pleiades** star cluster is visible from virtually every place that humanity inhabits on Earth's globe. It can be seen from as far north as the North Pole, and farther south than the southernmost tip of South America. It looks like a tiny misty dipper of stars. The cluster contains hundreds of stars, of which only a handful are commonly visible to the unaided eye. The stars in the Pleiades are thought to have formed together around 100 million years ago, making them 1/50th the age of our sun, and they lie some 130 parsecs (425 light years) away. The high visibility of the Pleiades star cluster in the night sky has guaranteed it a special place in many cultures, both ancient and modern. The heliacal rising of the Pleiades often marks important calendar points for ancient peoples. Visible in both the Northern and Southern hemispheres, **the Pleiades have had an enormous impact on human cultures across the globe**. In addition to making celestial observations, dozens of cultures have also used the Pleiades appearance as a **sign to follow for earthy action: suspended between the autumnal equinox and the winter solstice, the sight of the Pleiades signalled that it was time to slaughter livestock for the winter and think morbid thoughts. South American and African cultures also regarded the Pleiades as a signal for the harvest**, and the Aztecs amazingly **based their entire calendar** on the movements of this star cluster.

-REFERENCE TO GENERATE YOUR PLANT POWER MOVES – THINK YOUR POWER COMES FROM A PLANT – YOU BECOME THAT PLANT

The Pleiades: The Seven Sisters – Myths and chakras – ARE A REFERENCE. They work as SOURCES TO ACTIVATE your INNER POWERS into POWER MOVES – The Seven Sisters mythology of the Pleiades from Ancient Greece – Connecting the Pleiades with our 7 chakras and electromagnetic template – 7 Archetypes of the Divine Feminine for Spiritual Feminine Leaders Today.

1: Maia the Midwife



"We Indians are like plants. How can we live without our soil, without our land?"

Muladhara Chakra (Root Chakra)

Medicinal plants/shamanic: Dandelion root.

Maia is the Goddess of Midwifery in Greek mythology. She is the eldest of the Seven Sisters. Maia is connected with the Root Chakra and the Earth. She is the grandmother of magic and helps us bring to light what is within.

The Root Chakra is your energetic connection to your home: the Earth. It's what connects your spirit to the planet and what grounds you in the present moment.

Tadasana (Mountain Pose)

Practice this pose with conscious awareness, sending your energy down through your feet – all the way into the Earth's core.

2: Alcyone the Queen



"Capitalism steals our past, steals our present, steals our future."

Svadhishthana Chakra (Sacral Chakra)

Medicinal plants/shamanic: Calendula.

The central star of the Pleiades, and also the brightest star in the cluster, Alcyone is connected with our wombs and Sacral Chakra. Alcyone is the Queen and the Mother. She guides us to claim our sovereignty on the path of the sacred co-creation. The Sacral Chakra enhances your ability to feel in this world; it's also what houses your innate sexual energy.

Utkata Konasana (Goddess Pose)

This posture can stimulate the Sacral Chakra by activating strength in your lower abdomen, hips, groin and legs; the longer you hold this pose, the more intense the heat in these areas will grow. (In fact, this pose is sometimes called Fiery Angle Pose.)

3: Electra the Activator



"We do exist. I want to say to the world that we are alive and we want to be respected as a people."

Manipura Chakra (Navel Chakra)

Medicinal plants/shamanic: Marshmallow root.

Electra is the Activator. She is full of energy. She awakens our power of manifestation, alchemy and feminine magic. She awakens with her light what we desire to create in the world. She is connected with our Solar Plexus Chakra and teaches us about our electric body and the power of our will.

The solar plexus, located below your sternum but above your navel, is your power centre: The Manipura Chakra fuels your will to act.

Paripurna Navasana (Full Boat Pose)

This pose brings energy and circulation to your navel and solar plexus, working to boost circulation and help you recharge, and reconnect with, this energy centre.

4: Celaeno the Oracle



"I believe it (water) signifies life. I would go into the river and I would feel what the river was telling me. I knew it was going to be difficult but I also knew we were going to triumph because the river told me so." (Berta Cáceres)

Anahata Chakra (Heart Chakra)

Medicinal plants/shamanic: Hawthorn berries.

Celaeno is the wild woman. She is passion and love, deep magnetic power and energy. She is the oracle who holds the power of divination, intuition and heart-knowing. Celaeno is associated with the heart, with love, mystery, passion and secrets.

Anahata fuels your ability to give and receive love. It serves as your main emotional centre, which magnetically feels, and responds accordingly to, your every thought.

Ustrasana (Camel Pose)

This posture—and backbends in general—can help you expand your chest area, gently re-opening your heart centre so that you are able to express and feel love again.

5: Taygeta the Storyteller



"If the rise of the Pleiades has indicated the start of the rains for thousands of years and now is no longer a reliable signal, this is probably alarming of a drastic situation on Earth (of climate change)."

Visuddha Chakra (Throat Chakra)

Medicinal plants/shamanic: Red clover blossom.

Taygeta is the storyteller. She is the wise woman weaving the word wisdom, songs and chants to ignite the primal knowing within our hearts and souls. Taygeta is the goddess of the Pleiades that teaches us about the power of our voice, breath, sound and communication.

Visuddha is the energy centre of communication and expression. It allows you to connect with your life's purpose and express it to the world.

Matsyasana (Fish Pose)

This pose stretches and stimulates your neck and throat muscles –and the glands that regulate metabolism and hormonal levels.

6: Asterope the Visionary



"Let us re-enact the story but consider anthropological collaborations with cultural industries beneficial to indigenous futures, because they fill in the deplorable void of bureaucratic indifference within a nation-state that prioritizes profit over the wellbeing of its disenfranchised subjects. There is at least a risk that there will be no more human history unless humanity undertakes radical reconsideration of itself."

Ajna Chakra (Third Eye Chakra)

Medicinal plants/shamanic: Lilac, eyebright, jasmine, mint.

Asterope is the starry one, the visionary and the artist. The goddess Asterope shows us about the power of our vision, our mind and our thoughts and is connected with our Third Eye Chakra. She sees within her mind the collective knowing of the stars, the sacred geometry of the universe and the patterns of conscious creation. She shares her visions and helps us develop our enhanced artistic, intuitive and clairvoyant skills.

The space between your eyebrows—a.k.a. the third eye—is your centre of intuition and insight. During times of change, you may experience a lack of clarity or trust in yourself, resulting in disconnection from your third eye centre.

Paschimottanasana (Seated Forward Bend)

The practice of folding forward can help still your mind, as folding into yourself is naturally introspective.

7: Merope the Priestess



"We are not watching the world from without. We are not separate from it."

Sahasrara Chakra (Crown Chakra)

Medicinal plants/shamanic: Lavender flowers and lotus.

Merope is the Mother Priestess, who brings forth the sacred feminine wisdom teachings to the collective consciousness on Earth. Merope is the goddess of the Pleiades connected with the Crown Chakra (Third Eye Chakra). She is the queen bee and teaches us of the high priestess path of the Pleiades, connected to the ancient Greek and Sumerian priestess temples and sacred bee practices.

This energy centre helps you connect with the divine, enabling you to feel higher states of consciousness.

Salamba Sirsasana (Supported Headstand)

Your Crown Chakra is located above your head but originates from the crown. It can be stimulated through meditation and certain postures that create a light sense of pressure in that region.

All Tangled Up in a Fading Star

Conde Duque Contemporary Art Center Madrid ES 2021

Audemas Piguet Award ArcoMadrid Madrid ES 2018

Throwing Car Parts from a Cliff at Sunset Garcia Galleria Madrid 2017

Medium Performative Sculpture | Installation | Video Materials: Concrete, polyurethane, reclaimed plastics from urban waters

Dimensions or Duration Installation 9 feet x 15 feet x 20 feet |

Video The Land is a Mirror of the Stars

<https://vimeo.com/183676592>

Video: 15 min 31 sec

Description The work is triggered by news of a whale found dead in a beach of an island in Holland, who died because of intestinal blockage produced by the ingestion of 50 kgs of plastic found in her bloated stomach. Elena Bajo investigates the ecological impact of neoliberal policies in a world with economic, political, social, and individual crises. *All Tangled Up in a Fading Star* exemplifies the impossibility of coexistence between human-made and natural cycles. Mixing reality and speculation, the "now" and a future of uncertainty, Elena Bajo's sculptures are filled with plastic and the fossil waste that makes them up. The straight lines of the cube are fragmented by petroleum-derived materials, which break the structure and try to get out. Thus, pollution is the conditioning factor that leads pure forms to derive into other corrupted, artificial, and foul ones.

The Land is Mirror of the Stars Video Color 15 min 31 sec HD

<https://vimeo.com/183676592>

The work is triggered by news of a whale found dead in a beach of an island in Holland, who died because of intestinal blockage produced by the ingestion of 50 kgs of plastic found in her bloated stomach.

The Land is a Mirror of the Stars investigates, through both real propositions and imaginary speculations, the articulation of negative spaces left/inherited by post-Fordist capitalism's social forms and now executed by neoliberal strategies. Mixed historical and literary texts, ethereal participatory elements and indigenous cosmologies. It proposes an extended exploration on global environmental, social and political issues as the base to address local, ancient knowledge, mythology, ethnobotany and cosmology. Having as a reference the activist Berta Cáceres, who was killed at her home in Honduras by extractivist companies, the video points at the consequences of the destruction of the natural habitats in the Amazonian Forest when describing the cycle that goes from the star constellations to the yearly harvest. Elena Bajo investigates the ecological impact of neoliberal policies in a world with economic, political, social, and individual crises.









The Owl of Minerva only Flies at Dusk (Urania's Mirror)

Title of work *The Owl of Minerva only Flies at Dusk (Urania's Mirror)* (Installation View)
Venue Botin Center for Contemporary Art Santander ES Date 2018 Medium
Performative Sculpture | Mix Media | Textiles | Video, Materials: Dye on Fabric,
concrete, metal, LED test, Datura Stramonium, Fan feather machine Dimensions or
Duration Installation Variable | Video 7min 47secs

Video *The Owl of Minerva only Flies at Dusk Urania's Mirror*

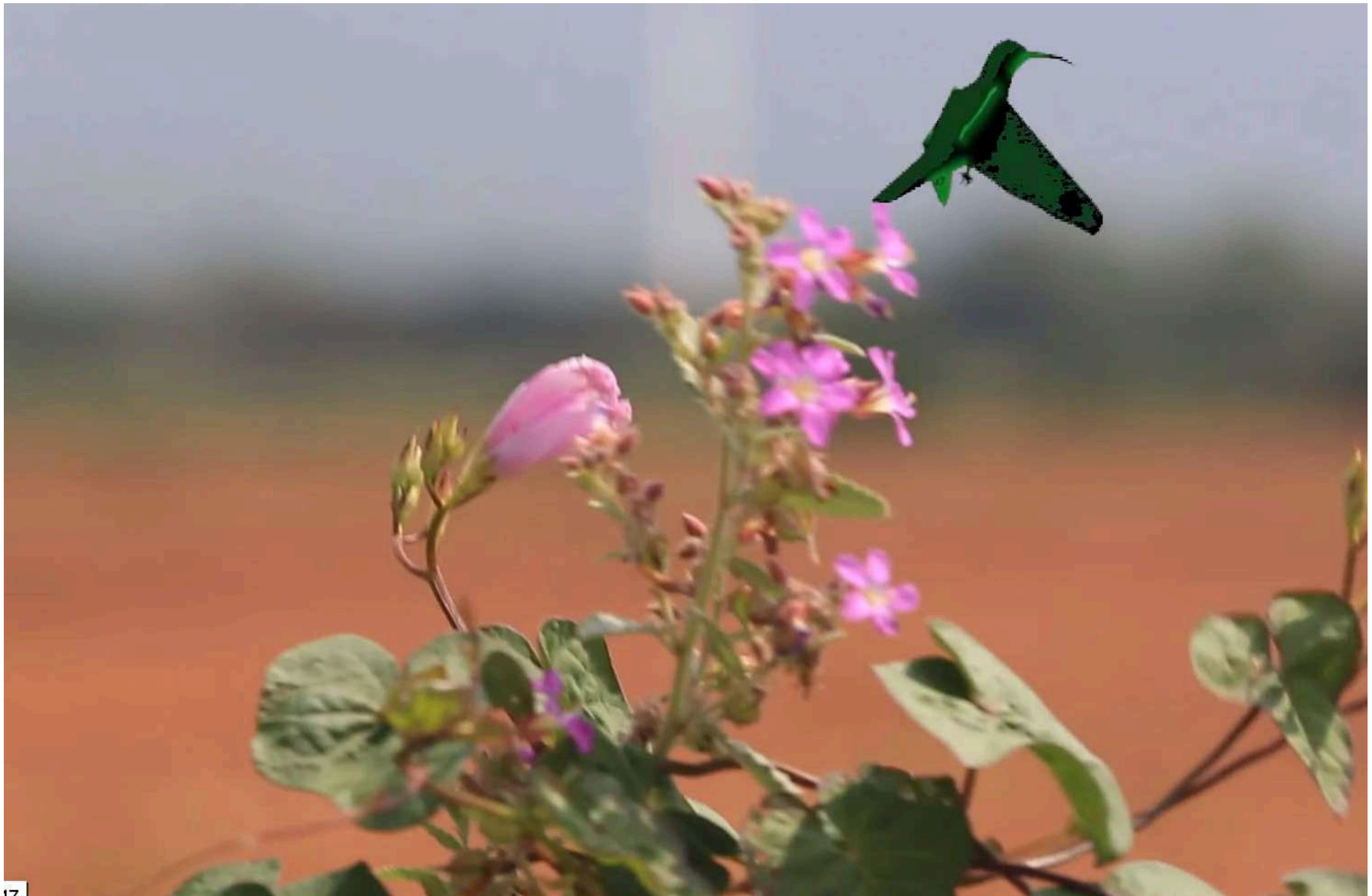
<https://vimeo.com/259844408>

Description The Owl of Minerva only flies at Dusk (Urania's Mirror) is an interdisciplinary project that investigates environmental, social and political impact that economies of exploitation, in specific the transnational corporations doing business with eolic energy, "green grabbing", have on the land and communities of the Zapotec people in the Isthmus of Tehuantepec in Oaxaca State, Mexico. This research reflects on the exhausted conditions of the present in which local natural resources, human and animal rights are 'owned' by multinational corporations, neoliberal governments, and organized crime. Considering the ancient and contemporary cosmology of the Zapotec in Oaxaca ("The People of the Clouds") and

their strategies and commitment to resist the threats to their territory, Urania's Mirror presents an installation of sculptural objects and a moving-image video with original footage and animation , as an analogy of how cosmological knowledge relates to nature, where natural goods (and common goods), earth, air, fire, animals, plants, are extensions of People themselves and any damage to these elements is a direct damage to People's lives and a crime to their community. includes a dystopic narrative, in which a divergent group of femme radical drone blowers, from the PIA (Peripheral Intelligence Agency) in their role of new cosmic shamans, use their power to take over some parts of the system, and deliver "blows" of powdered customized hallucinogenic drugs, generated through data, code, and algorithms reversal hacking, to get users into altered states of mind that allow them to unclutter and "disentangle the future" as per Franco "Bifo" Berardi, explains the transition from Resistance into Disentanglement and points at "...the spell of semiocapitalism (financial abstraction, specters of the mediascape) captures the social body and delivers it over to the economic code, where experience is subjected to the power of simulation and standardization. But I also wish to search for and to imagine possible lines of escape. These can only be found in those places of the unconscious where the multilayered spell of semiocapital is ripped apart in order for a creative unconscious to resurface". A musical sound component synchronizes the body's vibration to that of the Earth's.

IMAGE 10





TOXIC SECRETS

Priska Pasquer Gallery C-Room Cologne Germany 2018

Toxic Secrets Oikos, -Eco Pharmacological research. A concept that analyses unexpected perspectives on pharmaceutical and plastic pollutants in tap water that comes from legal and illegal drugs flushed down the toilet or from discarded industrial wastewater. She interprets the detection of such toxic residues, such as microplastics, or endocrine disruptors since they resemble the molecular structure of hormones affecting seriously the ecology of aquatic environments and animals, plants and humans, by the means of laboratory reagents as a starting point for speculations about their possible role in future archeological research or shamanistic research, or in utopian scenarios of drugs' recycling and hydroponics. It is presented as paintings, sculptures, and assemblages composed of reclaimed plastics, tap water washed fabrics and metal pipes from city waterways in a spatial installation. In a performance geared towards the communicating architecture of the exhibition room.

ELENA BAJO

Toxic Secrets Oikos: Ecopharmacological Fabulations in the Ecocene

Elena Bajo's *Toxic Secrets Oikos* (2018), presented at Priska Pasquer Gallery, emerges as a radical entanglement of ecological critique, posthumanist philosophy, and material activism. This project interrogates the neoliberal toxicity permeating the "common"—the shared water, air, and bodies—through a multispecies lens that bridges art, science, and speculative fabulation. By transforming pharmaceutical and plastic pollutants into aesthetic and conceptual materials, Bajo constructs an *ecopharmacological* framework that reimagines contamination as both forensic evidence and shamanic residue of the Anthropocene's unraveling, while gesturing toward the emergent **Ecocene**—an epoch defined by ecological processes superseding human agency (Ecocene, term first coined in 2015 by Rachel Armstrong as a counterpoint to Anthropocene, arguing that the latter concept perpetuated harmful anthropocentric narratives. She proposed the Ecocene "as a framework to reimagine human-nature relationships through regenerative design and mutualistic ethics, emphasizing decentralized, ecological modes of thinking and acting.")

Ecocentric Materiality: From Waste to Relational Agency

At the core of *Toxic Secrets Oikos* lies an **ecocentric ethos** that rejects anthropocentric hierarchies, instead positioning plastics, hormones, and chemical reagents as vibrant actants in a more-than-human assemblage. The sculptures—reclaimed urban plastics fused with tap water-washed fabrics and metal pipes—embody Jane Bennett's concept of "vibrant matter," where nonhuman entities exert "thing-power" through their persistent presence in ecological networks. Bajo's use of endocrine-disrupting chemicals like **estradiol** (from birth control pills and naturally present in urine), **oxycodone** (opioid derivatives) and **2C-B** (2,5 dimethoxy-4-bromophenethylamine, a psychoactive drug of the 2C family) materializes the "metabolic intimacy" described in Anna Tsing's *The Mushroom at the End of the World*⁶: like Tsing's matsutake mushrooms thriving in capitalist ruins, these pollutants become symbiotic partners

in ecological storytelling, their chromatic reactions (pinks, oranges, greens) mapping toxicity as a lived experience.

The project's performative dimension—performers draped in reagent-coded garments connected to water pipes—echoes Donna Haraway's call for "staying with the trouble" By ritualizing the circulation of contaminated water through human and nonhuman bodies, Bajo stages what Haraway terms **sympoietic** collaborations, where agency distributes across species and systems. This mirrors the "low-trophic" ethics proposed in Mihnea Tănăsescu's *Ecocene Politics*, which advocates for mutualistic relationships that acknowledge the "tangled temporalities" of industrial byproducts and biological processes. The psychedelic hues of 2C-B reagents, juxtaposed with opioid-derived purples, transform the gallery into a *pharmakon* space—both poison and cure—where pollutants become **oracles of neoliberal excess**.

Neoliberal Toxicity: Big Pharma and the Metabolic Rift

Toxic Secrets exposes the **neoliberal outsourcing of toxicity**, where industrial production externalizes harm to marginalized ecosystems and bodies. The installation's reclaimed plastics, sourced from urban waterways, materialize the "metabolic rift" of capitalism, a concept critiqued in Marxist ecology for describing how industrial systems sever natural cycles. Bajo's spatial arrangements—metal pipes snaking through the gallery—mirror the hydraulic circulatory systems of cities that concentrate contaminants in low-income neighborhoods, as documented in UNEP reports on environmentally persistent pharmaceutical pollutants (EPPPs). This aligns with critiques of "green capitalism" that mask continued extraction under sustainability narratives, a paradox Bajo exposes by rendering pollution's invisibility hyper-visible through chemical reactions.

The work's focus on **Big Pharma's externalized costs**—where oxycodone molecules designed to relieve human pain mutate into aquatic disruptors—reveals the absurdity of profit-driven healthcare systems. Bajo's color-coded reagents (purple/yellow for oxycodone,

pink/orange for estradiol, and green for 2C-B, a psychoactive drug) function as **ecological forensics**, literalizing Bruno Latour's notion of "matters of concern." These chromatic markers become a shamanic lexicon, decoding the "unintentional design" (Tsing) of pharmaceutical capitalism's waste streams.

Posthumanist Relationality: Learning from Decentered Models

In the Ecocene, as Tănăsescu argues, humans must abandon the illusion of control and instead cultivate "relational intelligence" with ecological processes. *Toxic Secrets* operationalizes this through its **performative hydrology**: performing bodies, tethered to water pipes, become conduits for contaminated flows, blurring boundaries between human and infrastructure. This echoes Haraway's concept of **tentacular thinking**, where beings are enmeshed in "string figures" of mutual becoming. The work's use of tap water—a "common" resource infiltrated by legal/illegal drugs—reframes pollution as a collective, multispecies inheritance, demanding response-ability rather than blame.

Bajo's speculative scenarios for drug recycling and hydroponics resonate with Tsing's exploration of "latent commons"—spaces where life persists despite capitalist destruction. By envisioning pollutants as future archaeological artifacts or substrates for regenerative systems, *Toxic Secrets* practices what Haraway calls **speculative fabulation**, crafting narratives that "make room for unexpected collaborations". The project's participatory "hydroponic rituals," where visitors analyze water samples, enact a form of **citizen science as care work**, fostering what Bennett terms "perceptual openness" to nonhuman vitality.

Conclusion: Composting the Pharmakon

Toxic Secrets Oikos reconfigures environmental art as ecological praxis, weaving chemical reactions, posthumanist theory, and industrial critique into a multispecies tapestry. By treating

pollutants as co-authors rather than waste, Bajo's work amplifies the Ecocene's central tenet: survival demands learning from the very toxins we've unleashed. In this *pharmakonic* space—where poison and remedy coexist—the project proposes a restorative ethics of **mutualism**, composting neoliberalism's ruins into fertile ground for more-than-human futures.

As the Ecocene beckons, Bajo's work stands as a testament to art's capacity to "stay with the trouble," not as passive witness but as active sympoietician, spinning string figures of resistance and renewal from the threads of toxicity we've all inherited.

Pharmateriakon: Neologistic Frameworks for Ecological-Artistic Praxis

Building upon Elena Bajo's *Toxic Secrets* and its engagement with pharmaceutical pollutants as both forensic evidence and shamanic residue, this lexicon proposes hybrid terminologies that merge ecological critique, posthumanist theory, and material poetics. Drawing from neologisms, portmanteaus, and ecopharmacovigilance these terms aim to articulate the complex interplay between industrial toxicity, artistic remediation, and more-than-human relationality.

Conceptual Hybrids Lexicon

1. Ecomateriakon

(Ecology + Material + Pharmakon)

A substance or artwork that simultaneously poisons and heals ecological systems, embodying Stiegler's concept of the pharmakon as both "curse and cure". Example: Bajo's endocrine-disruptor-reactive sculptures, which visualize contamination while proposing hydroponic recycling.

2. Symbiomateria

(Symbiosis + Material)

Textiles or sculptures that foreground interspecies dependencies, echoing Tsing's *The Mushroom at the End of the World*. Applicable to works using microbially degraded plastics that host algal colonies.

3. Vibranecrosis

(Vibrant Matter + Necrosis)

The paradoxical vitality of decaying industrial materials, as seen in Bajo's artworks. Rooted in Bennett's "vibrant matter" and necropolitical critiques of neoliberal toxicity.

4. Hydروpoietics

(Hydroponic + Poiesis)

Artistic practices that reimagine wastewater as a medium for regenerative creation. Reflects Bajo's speculative drug recycling scenarios and ecopharmacovigilance principles

5. Metabolique

(Metabolic + Critique)

A performative critique of industrial metabolisms, such as Bajo's hydraulic systems pumping contaminated water through models' bodies. Aligns with Marxist ecological "metabolic rift" theories

6. Myceliarchy

(Mycelium + Hierarchy)

Decentralized governance models inspired by fungal networks, challenging anthropocentric systems. Resonates with Tsing's emphasis on nonhuman collaborations

7. ChemoChroma

(Chemical + Chromatic)

The use of pollutant-reactive color shifts as ecological forensics, as in Bajo's reagent-embedded textiles. Cites Bromocresol green's pH-sensitive transformations

8. Phantomacy

(Phantom + Pharmacon)

The spectral persistence of pharmaceuticals in watersheds, materialized through artistic interventions. Evokes Derrida's *pharmakon* and Bajo's hormone-disruptor mappings.

9. Anthropolimpsest

(Anthropocene + Palimpsest)

Layered artworks revealing industrial violence's stratigraphic traces, akin to Bajo's distressed plastics-as-archives.

10. Hyperobjectile

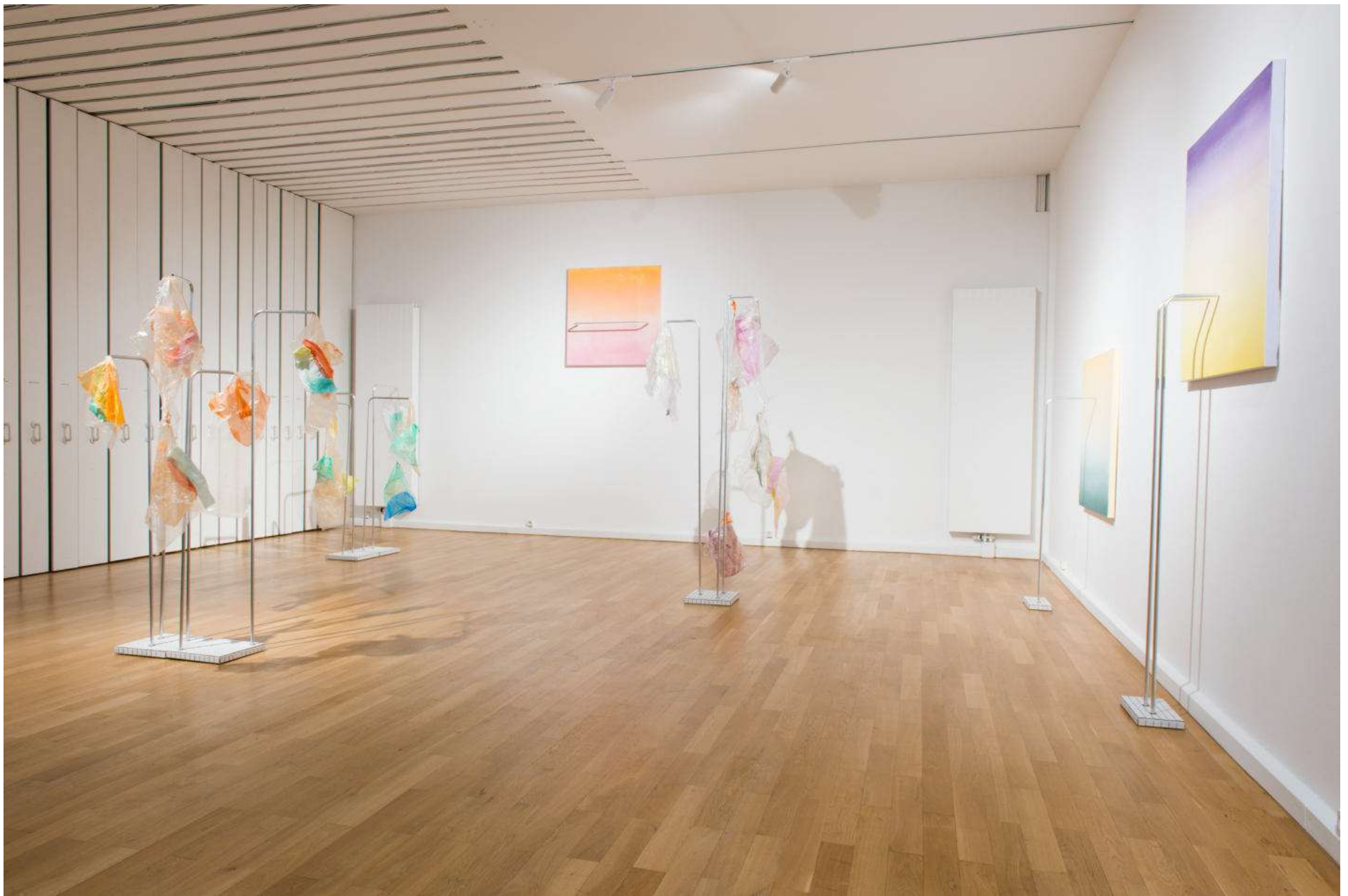
(Hyperobject + Textile)

Garments or installations embodying Morton's "hyperobjects"—entities like microplastics that transcend human scales.

The lexicon bridges Bajo's material practice with cultural memory, offering a linguistic scaffold that interrogate extractive industries' toxic legacies while proposing regenerative futures.



TRIPLE EXPANSION, © Elena Bajo, courtesy PRISKA PASQUER GALLERY



TRIPLE EXPANSION, © Elena Bajo, courtesy PRISKA PASQUER GALLERY



TRIPLE EXPANSION, © Elena Bajo, courtesy PRISKA PASQUER GALLERY



ELENA BAJO

Estrogen #2

2018

Mixed media, acrylic, dye,
plastic, aluminum, ceramic

177 x 100 x 100 cm

EB006



ELENA BAJO

2C-B #2

2018

Mixed media, acrylic, dye,
plastic, aluminum, ceramic

148,5 x 140 x 100 cm



ELENA BAJO

Oxycodone #2

2018

Mixed media, acrylic, dye,
plastic, aluminum, ceramic

202 x 100 x 80 cm

EB005







ELENA BAJO

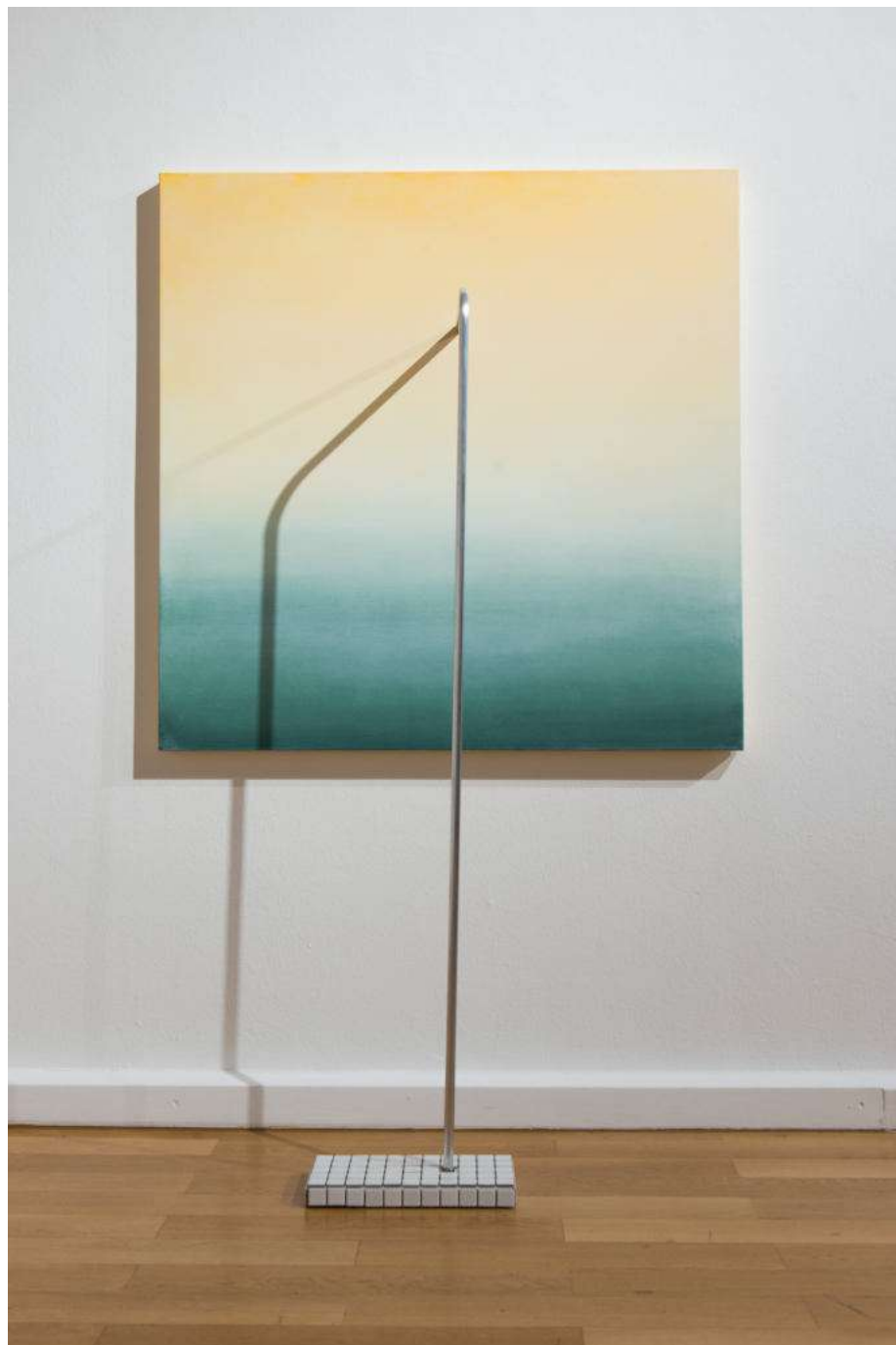
Estrogen #1

2018

Acrylic on canvas, metal,
ceramic

100 x 100 x 20,5 cm

EB002



ELENA BAJO

2C-B #1

2018

Acrylic on canvas, metal,
ceramic

164,5 x 100 x 42 cm

EB003



ELENA BAJO

Oxycodone #1

2018

Acrylic on canvas, metal,
ceramic

236 x 100 x 29 cm

EB004



ELENA BAJO

Untitled

2018

Archival ink on canvas,
aluminum, wood, ceramic

585 x 392 x 15 cm

unique

ISLE OF INNOCENCE (AFTER FORDLANDIA)

Kunsthalle São Paulo Sao Paulo, Brazil 2015

Curated by Marina Coelho

Celebrating three years of activities, KUNSTHALLE São Paulo invites Spanish artist Elena Bajo (*1976 Madrid) to present her first solo exhibition in Brazil. Adopting a conceptual approach, the artist focuses on social issues and artistic processes and conditions. Her research-oriented practice unfolds in the use of a wide variety of media such as sculpture, installation, painting, performance, film, text and also participatory projects and own publications.

For the project in Brazil, the artist chose to address capitalism political systems by comparing material labor of production lines of the past and immaterial labor of today. After a wide research of digital archives, Elena Bajo visited Fordlândia, the city founded by Henry Ford in the Amazon in the 1930s, for the industrial productions of latex, used in Ford cars' tires. The city was all prefabricated as a typical American town, reaching the number of 5000 inhabitants, who lived according to the American way of life. The project failed because of series of reasons but mainly due to lack of knowledge of Seringueira's handling (the tree from which latex is extracted) and the city was abandoned. What remains today are just ruins and some residents, who have occupied the American villa's houses, previously built for Ford's directive class, and tell the stories of how diseases were proliferating among trees and workers.

Transferring the logic of Fordist production to current immaterial labor, produced by Internet users, the artist speculates how corporations play Ford's role today. At that time, Ford manufactured a completely artificial environment in the Amazon, imposing control over workers' lifestyle and shopping habits, by even offering them facilities in the purchase of Ford products, which were actually manufactured by them. In the same way, nowadays companies, hired by big corporations, collect and analyse data from the Internet, not only to exercise control on habits and preferences of users, but also to develop products that will be finally consumed by them. Without realizing it, while using browsers and social medias, the cognitariat (term used by Franco Berardi to define the worker under cognitive capitalism system) is constantly producing information that generates products that are offered to us in the digital environment.

Making an allusion to both, the artificial environment created by Ford, and the digital environment of today, Elena Bajo creates the exhibition «Isle of Innocence», an installation with a window case character, composed of seven works: an environment to be experienced from a distance by the observer.

The first work, which links the entire installation, is the floor painting. Produced by the dripping of white latex paint, the work refers not only to the human gesture that imprints the individuality, but also to the latex bleeding from the Seringueira tree. Furthermore, by creating a white environment, the artist brings in the idea of "clean rooms", referring to aseptic environments – the hospital in Fordlândia was the first one in Brazil where a skin transplant was conducted – such as the clean rooms where micro electronic components for computers and phones are assembled and manufactured and also to the production of latex products used in bacteria absent environments, such as surgical gloves and condoms.

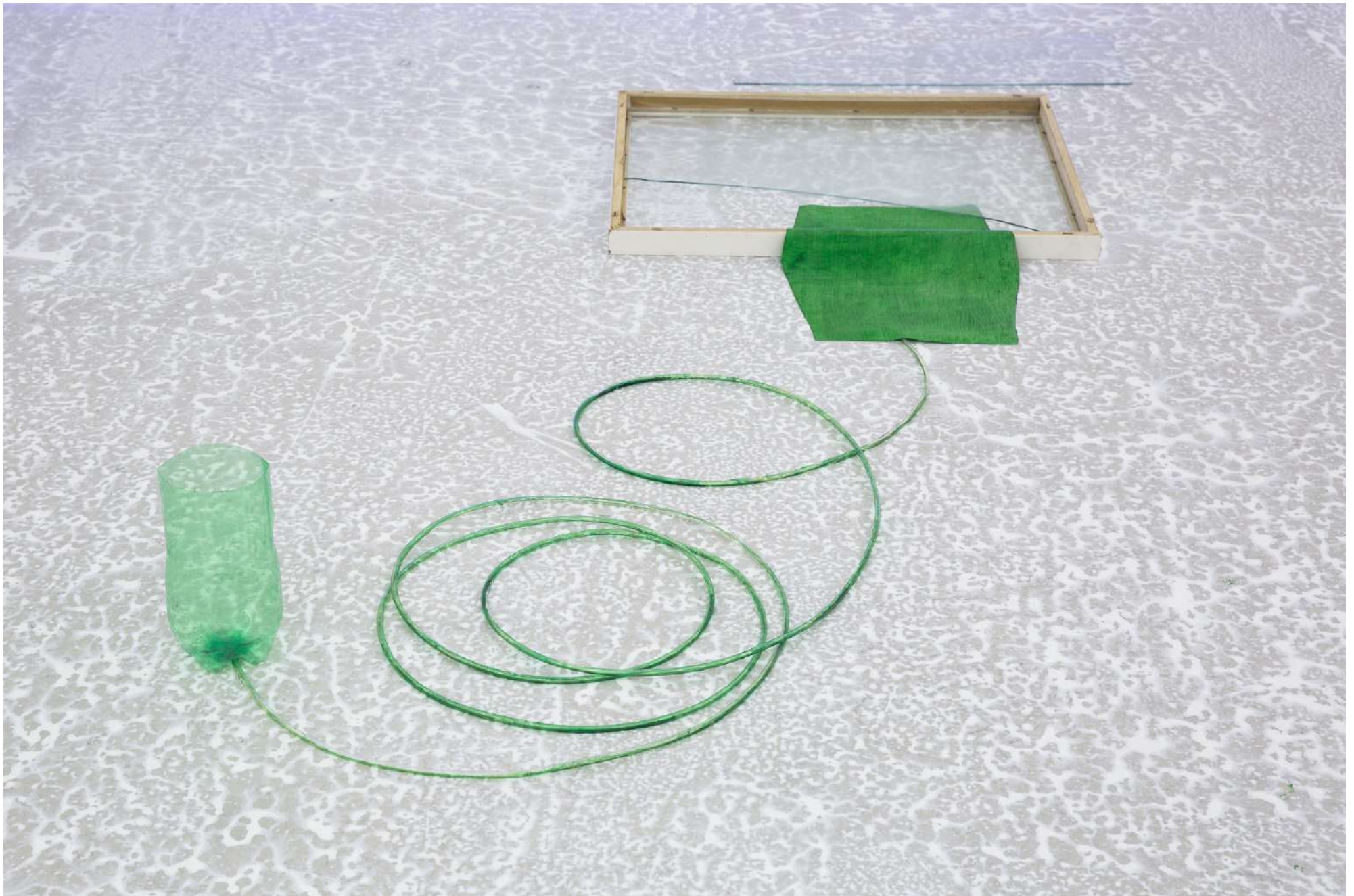
In the right corner of the installation, lies a work made up of ceramic and rubber molds used in the manufacture of surgical gloves – one has been mass produced and the other individually crafted – that also suggests the hands of the workers, human parts becoming machine parts and also products, their lives, and individualities. Closer to the center, in the front, there are a number of left-overs from artistic molds made in latex brought from the workshop of a craftsman, where the production system is individualized, made one by one, and opposite to mass production. Behind this artwork, the artist made an assemblage with plastic materials and artificial latex, pointing to the lack of awareness and irresponsible attitude when replacing the production of natural latex by the artificially produced one, which is highly pollutant.

In the back of the space, leaning on the wall, there is a series of seven used wooden white frames with glass, left empty, without any images. They are lit and connected by a blue LED strip, resembling computer screens. These frames can both refer to the disappearance of the individual in the material labor production line of former factories, or to the immaterial labor performed nowadays by Internet users. On the left side of the installation, there is a work composed of amorphous objects made of Styrofoam, an artificial derivative of latex also highly pollutant, which, arranged on top of white tiles and under a suspended metal rod, suggest some of the manufacturing processes in a Fordist factory.

And last but not least, right outside the main installation, a rolling text LED screen displays the sentence "LOVE AND DO NOT MULTIPLY," taken from the title of a book by the Brazilian anarchist Maria Lacerda de Moura. Considered one of the pioneers of feminism in Brazil in the early twentieth century, Maria Lacerda de Moura discussed women status from the perspective of class struggle and defended big taboos of the time, such as the right to sexual pleasure and conscious motherhood. This work, as well as the title of the exhibition, point to the absurdity of the rules that Ford imposed to their workers. "Isle of Innocence" was a place in an island in the Tapajós river, 8 miles from Fordlândia, created by the Ford factory workers to escape Ford prohibition on alcohol consumption and sex, for their nightlife amusement, where they could consume alcoholic beverages in the company of prostitutes coming from Belém and Santarém. Similarly, the artist reflects on our technological reality of today, and questions where is our "Isle of Innocence". Where could we make our own consumption decisions, and not be subjected to the unnoticed control and surveillance imposed on us? For Elena Bajo, to disconnect is the way to not multiply.

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The Pleiades (Anarchoreographies) 2018

Blue Project Foundation Barcelona ES

Video documentation <https://vimeo.com/275551704>

Public Performance / Workshop / Installation Performative Sculpture

Following an "Anarchoreographic Method" Elena Bajo's interdisciplinary approach, selected participants will be required to do both improvised and choreographed movements to be determined before hand in close collaboration with the artist. The Pleiades is a star cumulus belonging to a constellation, an imagined and mythicised space that emerged from the human desire to communicate with nature and make sense of it. A space related to dreams, based on a scale and time that go beyond the human ones, a space of projection. The performance is generated by a Manifesto, a cut up text-score-script created by the artist from digital and analogue sources and interpreted by invited performers. Elena Bajo's interdisciplinary approach, Anarchoreographies are non-hierarchical trajectories used as a tool to articulate a sense of subjectivity and collectivity and the creation of a space in constant flux where the boundaries between the audience and performers are blurred. An exploration at the intersection of body movement, chance and muscle memory, undertaking anarchism as artistic strategy, by implementing elements of disentanglement and affects, as a point of dissidence and disruption on contemporary neoliberal choreographies. The performance activates an installation of sculptures, found local rocks in the area around the site. The public is also invited to take part, simply changing their vertical position of spectator to a horizontal space of shared imagination.



Elena Bajo
Time is the Form of the Object

8.5. - 6.6.2015

Opening 7.5.2015, 18h

Introduction Franz Krähenbühl, art historian

annex14 | Raum für aktuelle Kunst

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Öffnungszeiten: Mi-Fr 12-18h, Sa 12-16h, oder nach Vereinbarung

8.5. - 6.6.2015

The gallery annex14 is delighted to introduce the Spanish artist Elena Bajo to Switzerland for the first time with a solo exhibition. Born in Spain in 1976, Bajo now lives in Berlin and Los Angeles. Taking a conceptual approach, Elena Bajo focuses on social themes and artistic processes and conditions. Her research-oriented way of thinking and acting leads to an open handling of a wide variety of media, such as performance, film, text, sculpture, installation, painting and also participatory projects and own publications.

The point of departure for the exhibition in Zurich is the work Power Object 7 Breath of Quaoar, 2014, a wooden latticed structure stabilised with a number of balloons and propped up against the wall. The work was originally carried out on-site in Santa Monica, California as part of a project while she was an artist lab resident at the 18th Street Arts Center there. It was inspired by the mythology and shamanism of the native inhabitants. Elena Bajo examined their notion that objects, dreams, song and dance have within them a force for change in which she discovered an artistic potential for herself by means of which she analyses fixed structures of the present and reconsiders them afresh. Here, as in many of Elena Bajo's projects, the idea is to give space and visibility to what is absent, invisible. In this specific case, it is the resistant potential that could well accrue to magical thinking in an enlightened society.

The above-mentioned work is typical of the artist insofar as it shows a kind of order that is free of hierarchy. It is no accident that Elena Bajo has coined the term "anarcho-escultura" (anarchist sculptor) for herself. This can be understood in relation both to aesthetic form and content. It also points up her fascination with anarchism, among other things, the exclusion from historiography of the women in that movement. Consequently, cultural history is an important focus of her work. The sources for her artistic projects are mostly artefacts of past cultures which she sources both from analogue and digital archives and from her own fieldwork. Working scientifically and intuitively, she explores traces of cultural history, such as found objects, rituals,

everyday items and materials, as bearers of information. In this she is always guided by the question of how looking at the past can clear the way to utopian thinking.

The ready-made and chance are major tools in Elena Bajo's artistic process, while her fundamental interest in concepts of life and the world reveals an in-depth understanding of historical, social, political and economic processes. Out of opposition to a world which today is predominantly determined by economic rules, Elena Bajo's preoccupation with marginalised or forgotten cultural and social phenomena has resulted in a visual idiom that encourages a new way of dealing with concepts like structure and anarchy.

To achieve the latter, an excursion into art-alien areas is sometimes sufficient, as in the installation Is our Future a thing of the Past? (2015), which refers to the Big Bang and the cosmological redshift (used in astrophysics as an indicator of distance and indirectly to measure the age of cosmic objects). A more than 15-metre-long silk ribbon runs throughout the gallery space measuring it anew, relating temporality to architectural elements and imbuing the distances and intermediary spaces with rhythm as a dynamic quality of form. Through her thinking and her artistic practice, Elena Bajo opens up spaces and scenarios in which materials, ideas and shapes enter into new and unexpected relations. Her constant quest for indeterminateness and ambiguity gives rise to an individual poetics of resistance

Elisabeth Gerber

Elena Bajo, (*1976, E), lives and works in Los Angeles and Berlin. Recent solo exhibitions in Stacion Contemporary Art Prishtina, Kosovo; Artium Vitoria-Gasteiz; 18th st Arts Center, Santa Monica, CA; Garcia Galeria, Madrid; D+T Project, Brussels; Platform3, Munich; Jan Van Eyck Academie, Maastricht. Forthcoming Kunsthalle, Sao Paulo; annex14, Zürich.



Installation View annex14, Elena Bajo, 'Is our Future a thing of the past', 2015
lacquer on silk mesh, 80 x 1555 cm



Installation View annex14, Elena Bajo, 'Is our Future a thing of the past', 2015
lacquer on silk mesh, 80 x 1555 cm



Elena Bajo, Installation View annex14



Elena Bajo

'A matter of Time', 2015, asphalt, 61 x 64 x 10 cm

'A matter of Time', 2015, asphalt, 2 parts, 77 x 38 x 10 cm



Elena Bajo, 'Power Object 7 Breath of Quaoar', 2014/15
Acrylic on wood (5 grids), rubber balloons, 240 x 150 x 140 cm



Elena Bajo, 'Femme radicale (Flag)', 2015
acrylic on canvas, 26.5 x 8 x 1 cm (folded)

Ninety Six Percent of the Invisible
or Not Made of Matter, 2015
Soundpiece (8hrs)