



# **RIIKKA TAURIAINEN PORTFOLIO**



*In her installations, videos and performances she is interested in ecology, gender issues, knowledge production and language. She navigates on the boundaries between art and science, between fact and fiction. Her group of artworks entitled “Hydrocommons” operates in a post-humanist realm of ideas. It explores water phenomena and the extent to which our kinship to other bodies can be understood as a deeply materialistic relationality.*



## Riikka Tauriainen

\*1979 in Oulu, Northern Finland (FI), lives and works in Zurich. She studied in Tallinn (Estonian Academy of Arts, BA photography), Essen (Folkwang University of the Arts, communication design), Berlin (Berlin Weissensee School of Art, Fine Arts / Sculpture) and Zurich (Zurich University of the Arts, MA Fine Arts). She taught among others at the Zurich University of the Arts and is currently teaching at the Bern University of the Arts and the ETH Zurich.

Her work has been exhibited transnationally, including Bâtiment d'art contemporain in Geneva, Siemens Sanat in Istanbul, Center for Contemporary Art in Plovdiv Bulgaria, NGbK Berlin, Shedhalle in Zurich, Swiss

Art Awards in Basel. She participated in biennials in Safiental, Turkey and Croatia, as well as «Artist in Residence» programs in Genoa, Italy or Anyang, South Korea.

She presented her latest works in 2022 at the ZF Art Foundation in the Zeppelin Museum Friedrichshafen, Germany and at the RADIUS CCA, Netherlands. In 2023, she was the winner of the cantonal work grant at Haus Konstruktiv in Zurich and exhibited at the Kunststiftung Basel H. Geiger in Basel as part of the „Experimental Ecology“ project. Further exhibitions will take place in 2024 at the Kunstmuseum St. Gallen and the Museum Rehmann in Laufenburg. In summer 2024, Tauriainen will curate the environmental biennial „Art li“ in Finland.

# Plankton Imaginary

«Plankton Imaginary» was the result of the collaboration between artist Riikka Tauriainen and environmental scientist Meike Vogt. The project focuses on plankton ecosystems: the pair embarked on a journey together to understand and reflect on the social and imaginary aspects of plankton, beyond the scientific realm. Through workshops and field trips to the Mediterranean coast, and by using community science instruments to record plankton, the project aims to increase knowledge and understanding of plankton, and to challenge anthropocentric thinking, through physical and multisensory interaction. The cooperation between Tauriainen, an artist with experience working with ecosystems, and Vogt, a scientist specializing in marine biogeochemistry and macroecology, allowed for the fusion of artistic and scientific perspectives in their representation of the contribution plankton ecosystems make to life on our planet.

Martina Huber and Gianni Jetzer, curators

Video production

Script: Meike Vogt, Riikka Tauriainen,  
Ruby Rose Bader

Editor: Laura Rodríguez

Sound design and composition: Kay Zhang  
Camera: Riikka Tauriainen, Meike Vogt,  
Marta Musso

Microscope: Meike Vogt, Marta Musso  
Field recordings Lerici, Italy: Riikka  
Tauriainen

Voice-over: tracy september

Colourist: Laura Rodríguez

Filmed at Lerici, Italy

Installation:

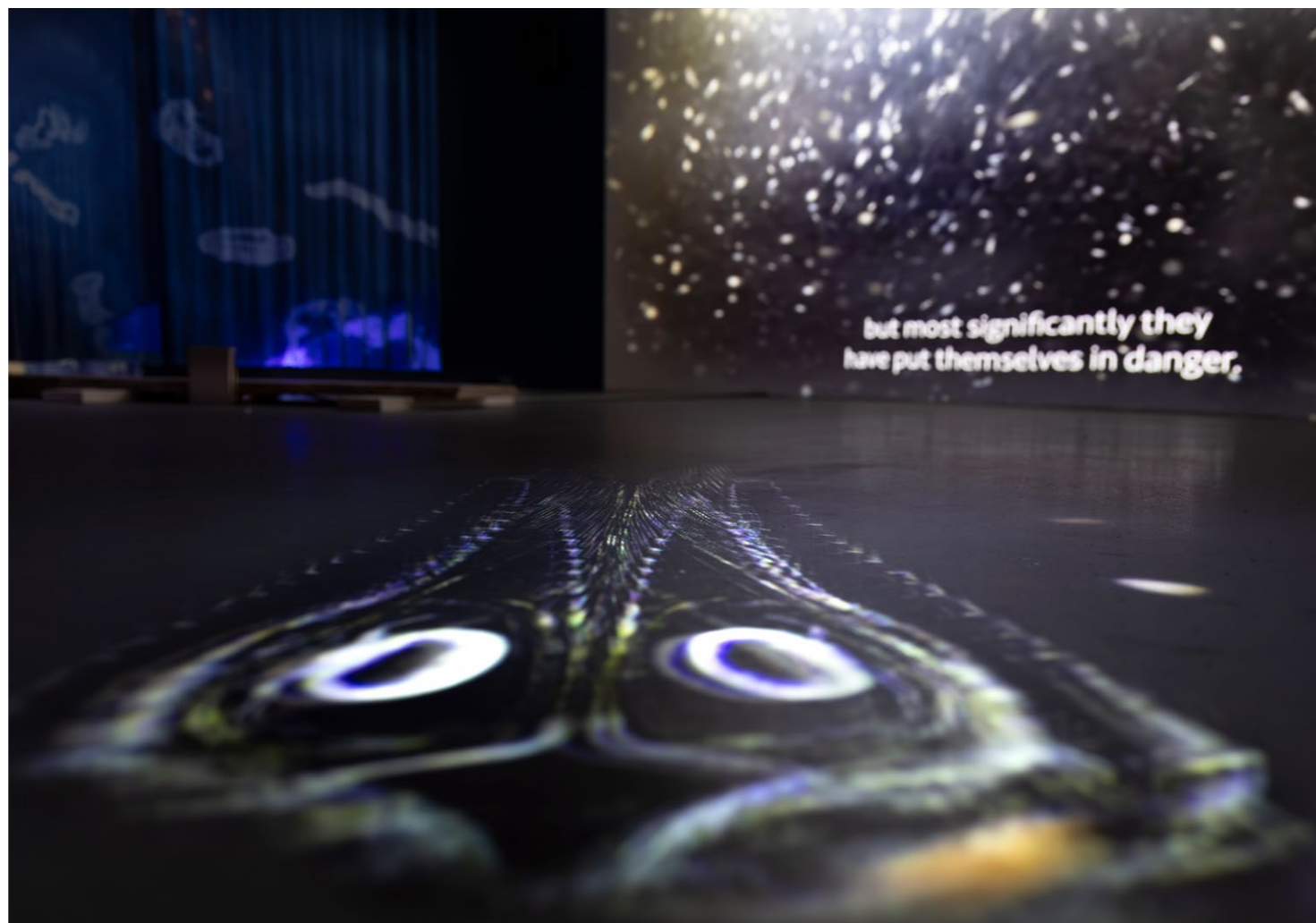
Interactive technology, visual projections  
and sound design: Melo Chua

Glass blowing: Joris schwob

Assistance, textiles: Ruby Rose Bader

Link to video preview:

Request for password at  
mail@riikkatairinen.net



Plankton Imaginary

Two-channel video installation, multi-channel sound, 12:05 min. and 12:27 min., loop, hand-dyed textiles with wooden panels, interactive sound and light, PET sculptures with zooplankton cultures (*Artemia*) in glass by Riikka Tauriainen and Meike Vogt  
Photos: Nicole Strube / KBH.G  
**EXPERIMENTAL ECOLOGY**  
Kulturstiftung Basel H. Geiger | KBH.G, Basel  
Switzerland, 2023



Plankton Imaginary by Riikka Tauriainen and Meike Vogt, installation view from KBH.G, Basel Switzerland, Photo: Nicole Strube





# Ecotone Encounters

«Ecotone Encounters» is part of the series of works «Hydrocommons» and is based on the idea of fluidity of bodies and the connectedness of all more-than-human actors.

The video-based installation «Ecotone Encounters» was created during a residency at Lake Constance last summer and exhibited from October to December 2022 at Friedrichshafen Germany. Riikka Tauriainen researched Ecotones, the transition areas between neighbouring but different ecosystems. She explored the shore regions and the lakebed. She dived into the lake and listened to the voice of the lake. During her research at the Institute of Lake Research (ISF) she discovered the microcosm of phytoplankton and zooplankton, an entire world in a drop of water.

Global plankton ecosystems comprise a diverse range of organisms, from bacteria to jellyfish, that provide essential ecosystem services to planetary societies. As anthropogenic climate change impacts these systems, plankton communities will experience substantial habitat shifts and changes in community composition, with unknown implications for ecosystem functions. Without them, there would be neither photosynthesis nor the oxygen that makes possible an earth hospitable to humans. They bind 100 million tons of carbon dioxide from the atmosphere on a daily basis and produce 50% of the oxygen in the air that we breathe.

«We're drawn into the water which, in the installation, unfolds like a landscape. A landscape not created through seeing and spatial distance, as is usually the case with landscape as a historical construct. Here the underwater landscape is created mainly through sound, through aural involvement and physical stimulus. Over and over, albeit intermittently, there is a trickling and splashing, a gurgling and swirling of vortices. A distorted, horridly clanking, polyphonic cyborg voice narrates. Then, there are transitions featuring the celestial singing of faeries; waves, and tooting.»

Quotation from «Lake Encounters. Riikka Tauriainen's Strategies for Becoming Landscape» by Yvonne Volkart

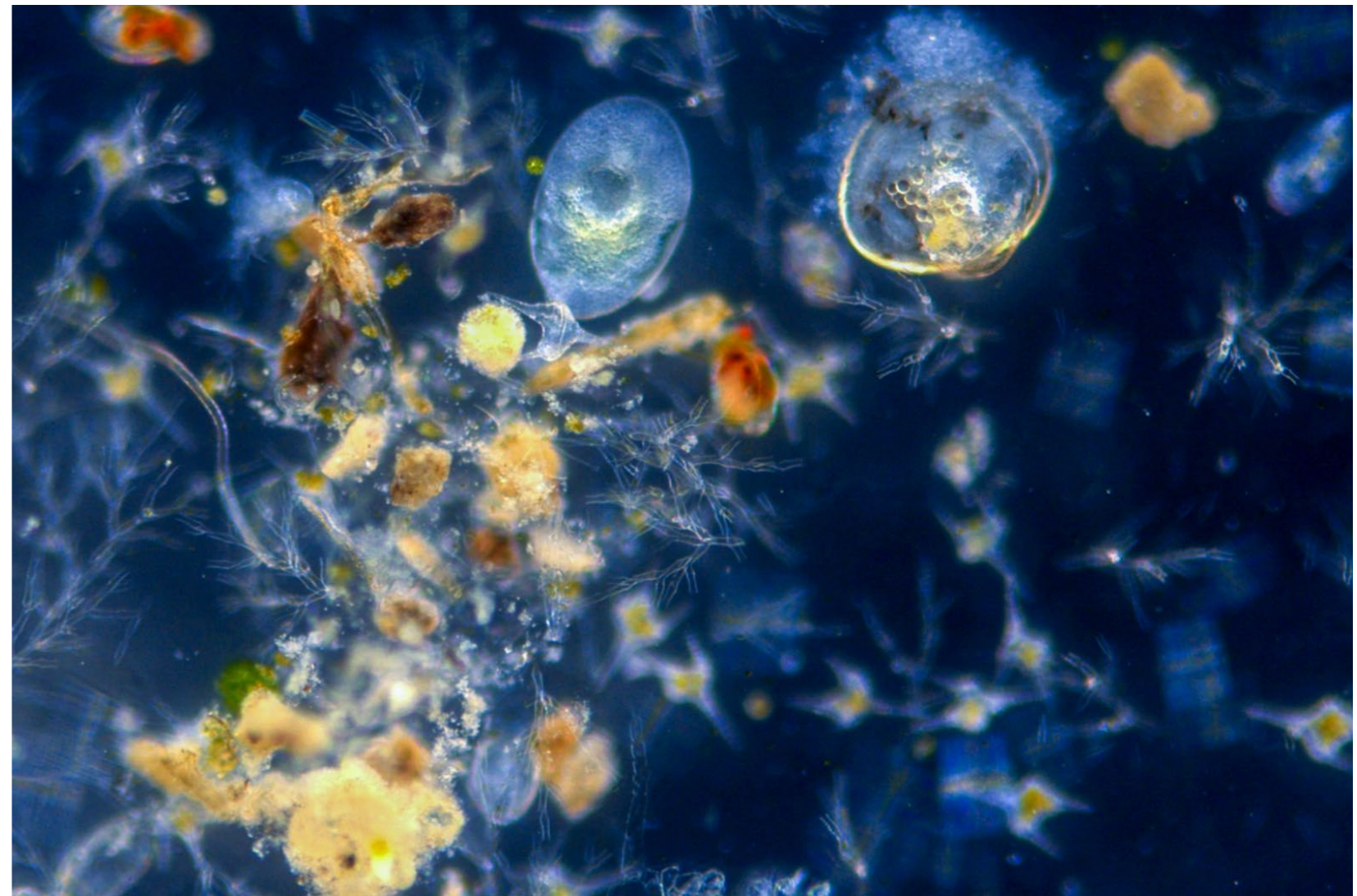


*«A relationship with others is also a relationship with ourselves, our environment and our past.»*

## Ecotone Encounters

Single-channel video installation, multi-channel sound 14:07 min., loop  
3 loudspeakers, subwoofer, green light, 3 wooden plinths, cast ceramics,  
with found objects collected from the lakeshore, such as stones, driftwood,  
shells, glass, metal, straws, plastic, etc.

ZF Art Foundation in the Zeppelin Museum Friedrichshafen, Germany, 2022

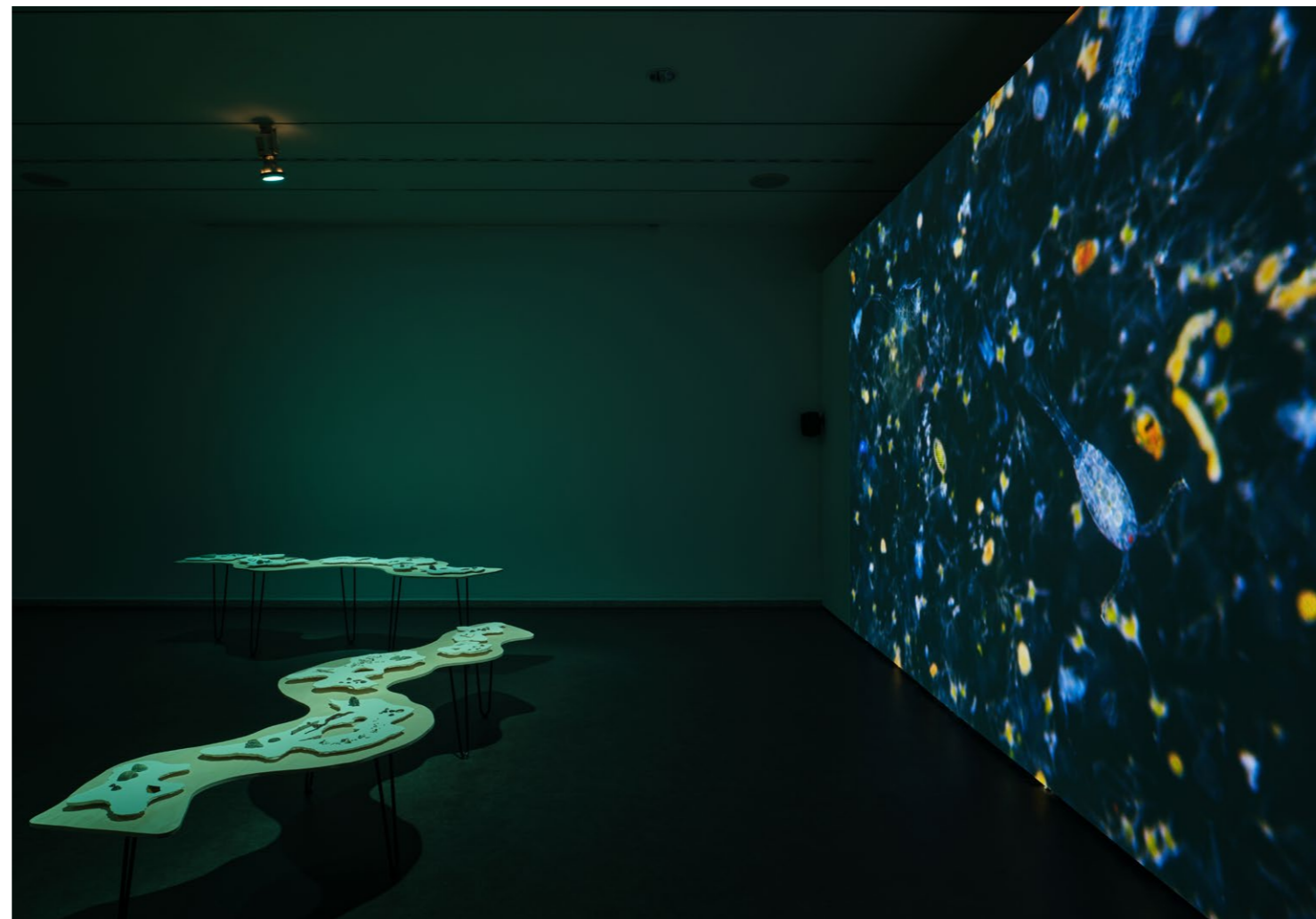




Script: Riikka Tauriainen  
Editor: Laura Rodríguez  
Music: Kay Zhang  
Camera: Riikka Tauriainen  
Field recordings: Riikka Tauriainen  
Sound Design: Kay Zhang  
Voice-over Riikka Tauriainen and Kay Zhang  
Colour correction: Laura Rodríguez

Research support by ISF Institute for Lake  
Research, LUBW: Brigitte Engesser, Dr.  
Thorsten Rennebarth, Dr. Petra Teiber-  
Sießegger, Andrea Waldinger, Dr. Martin  
Wessels, Kirstin Zang

Filmed on location at Lake Constance and  
at the ISF, Langenargen, Germany 2022

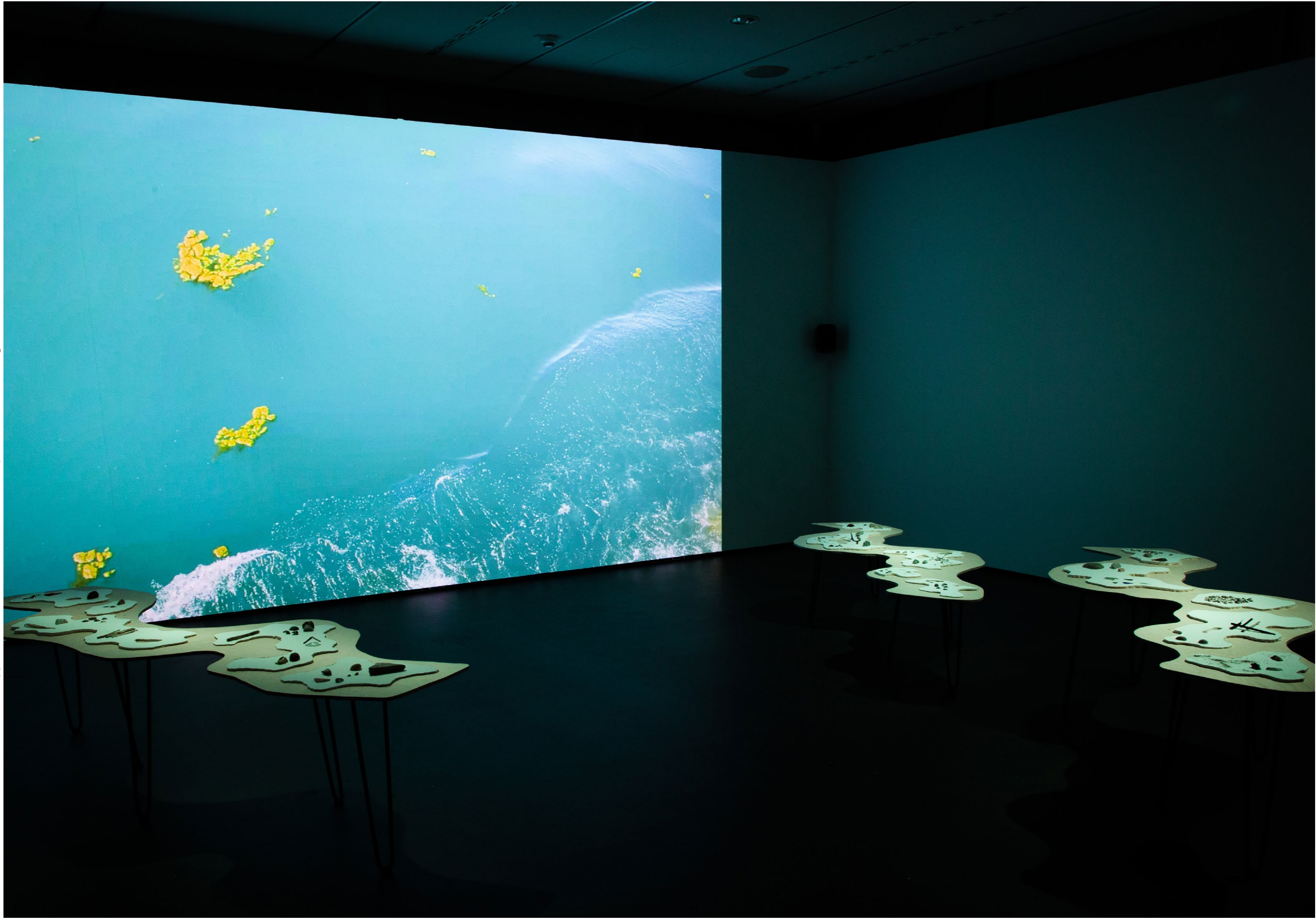


Link to video preview:  
Request for password at  
[mail@riikkatairinen.net](mailto:mail@riikkatairinen.net)

Ecotone Encounters  
Installation view from Zeppelin Museum  
Friedrichshafen, Germany, 2022  
Photo: Rafael Krötz



Ecotone Encounters, installation view from Zeppelin Museum Friedrichshafen, Germany, Photo: Laura Rodriguez





# River Oracle

What kinds of tools can we incorporate into a situated more-than-human practice?

The collaborative project «River Oracle» by Paloma Ayala, Melody Chua, Anne-Laure Franchette, Riikka Tauriainen und Kay Zhang is envisioned as an artistic-feminist research and tool to develop methods around practices for working with oracles and to speculate on what kind of meaning a shift in antropocentric thinking can have.

«River Oracle» is intended as a situational tool for self-reflection as well as for raising awareness of ecological and political issues. Sounds were collected from different places connected to the Rhine: in the riverbed, in hydroelectric power plants, in the harbor and in boats. These sounds are transformed into a composition reflected in a sound installation representing the Oracle. In the space there are cyanotype textiles imbued with stories of the Rhine.

«River Oracle» was part of group exhibitions at RADIUS - Center for Contemporary Art and Ecology «Underland Chapter 1 EMOTIONS ARE OCEANS» in Delft, The Netherlands and «Protozone 7 – Zones of Kinship, Love, & Playbour» at the Shedhalle in Zürich.

Link to documentation:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=a1GzSSbo2Dg>

video credit: Laura Rodriguez and River Oracle

*River Oracle*, installation view from Radius CCA, Delft. Photos: Gunner Meier and Laura Rodriguez



River Oracle

Printed Cyanotypes with activated sound and piezo microphones, headphones on printed beanbags, RADIUS CCA Delft, Netherlands, 2022  
Shedhalle Zürich, 2022



River Oracle, installation view from Shedhalle, Zurich. Photo: Carla Schleiffer





# Confluencas

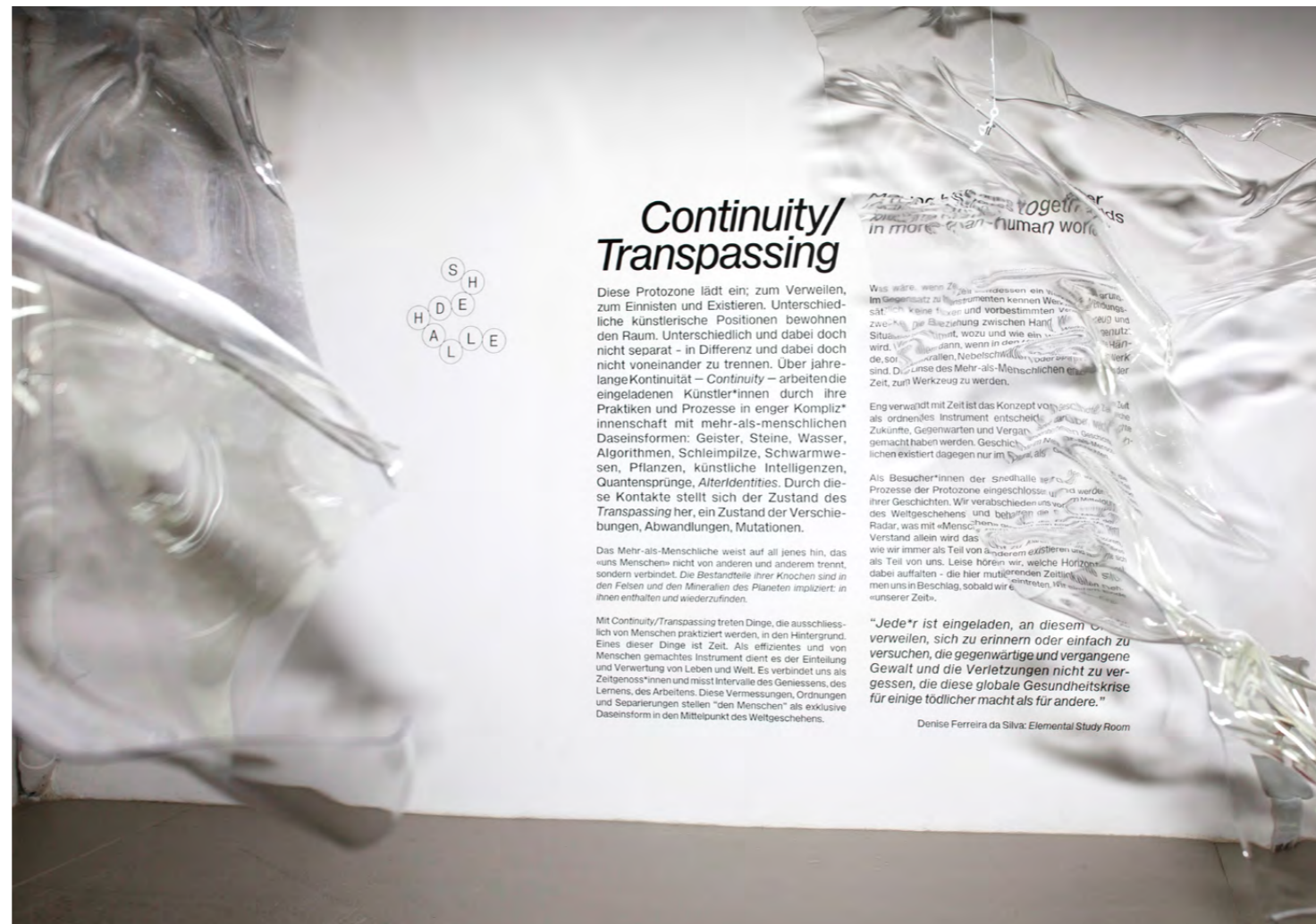
Riikka Tauriainen creates an immersive space of memory and future: she weaves connections through the exhibition «Protozone 2 – Continuity / Transpassing». Floating reliefs made of transparent PET hang from the ceiling of the room. The objects capture the shape of an undulating water surface. At the same time, they are reminiscent of digital renderings, liquid screens, bodies or partitions for protective devices.

The space-filling elements interact closely; with the plastic surface of the reliefs, images are distorted as light refracts on the PET and draws a play of light throughout the room – mirrored sunlight or projections. «Confluencas» thinks in a fictional world between solid and fluid matter.

Tauriainen plays with opposites between the natural and the toxic, threat and well-being, human and non-human, inside and outside and between the intimate and the foreign, mixing these ambivalences and frictions while blurring the boundaries between into flow.

I explore the relationship of our bodies with the world around them. I refer to sources in queer feminist literature, such as the author Astrida Neimanis and her concept about «hydrofeminism». This theory is based on the idea of the fluidity of our bodies and offers it as a force for emancipation: “Water, in other words, flows through and across difference.” (Astrida Neimanis). The focus of the work is materialist: how do ecofeminist and postcolonial practices approach critical materialism? How do we deal with toxic material? How does the foreign become the familiar?

Video walk through the exhibition  
[riikkatauriainen.net/video/confluencas.mp4](http://riikkatauriainen.net/video/confluencas.mp4)



Confluencas  
Installation,  
21 PET-elements, à 1250 x 2050 mm  
PROTOZONE 2 – CONTINUITY / TRANSPASSING  
Shedhalle, Zurich Switzerland, 2021





Concluencas  
Installation,  
PET-elements, à 1250 x 2050 mm  
In the back «Cemitério das Âncoras» by Veronika Spierenburg  
Fotos: Sandro Livio Straub  
**WERKSCHAU, Haus Konstruktiv, Zurich Switzerland, 2021**



# Mein Körper ist Moor, Mündung, Ökosystem

«Mein Körper ist Moor, Mündung, Ökosystem» deals with the coexistence of humans and the environment and entangles the coexistence of sensitive and resilient bodies.

In her work, Riikka Tauriainen explores the relationship between science and «nature» in the past, the present and the possible future. Poetic and multi-layered, Tauriainen allows visitors to dive into a world of new perspectives. By giving the non-human a stage and withdrawing from the work as an individual, the human is given an absent role. Tauriainen uses an aesthetic that is seductive and surreal, borrowing from natural phenomena. She develops a space to reflect - on the human ecosystem, on buildings as bodies with their fluid boundaries and how they relate to each other.

*«My body is marshland,  
estuary, ecosystem, that it is  
riven through with tributaries  
of companion species,  
nestling in my gut, extending  
through my fingers, pooling  
at my feet.»*

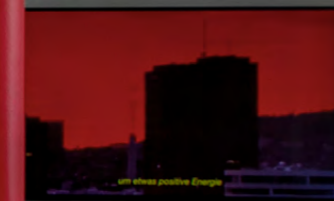
*Astrida Neimanis*



Mein Körper ist Moor, Mündung, Ökosystem  
Neonröhren, Ø 8mm, 3 Transformatoren  
165 cm x 210 cm  
KUNSTSTIPENDIEN DER STADT ZÜRICH  
Helmhaus, Zurich Switzerland, 2021



Mein Körper ist  
Moon  
Mündungs  
Ökosystem





# Underpressure

Oxyd moved into the basement of the former Kornhaus Winterthur in 2020. The space shows signs of wear and tear, soot and dust on the ceiling and dead pipes. The wide supporting columns characterise the location - they silently and reliably support the rooms above with uncanny strength and withstand the pressure from above for many decades.

The title UNDERPRESSURE refers to the process of pressure equalisation, in which the same pressure is created in two or more separate spaces filled with the same medium. With the site-specific installation Esther Mathis and Riikka Tauriainen create a room, which is able to reverse or dissolve the perceived physical attributes - pressure from above, resistance from below. The installation is reinforced by Kay Zhang's soundscape, conceived for the exhibition.

Zhang collected and processed sounds that underpin the space: rippling pipes, rustling ventilation ducts, cracking pipes and the artists' working noises. Together with distorted and multi-layered acoustic sounds, spacious landscapes are interwoven with the mirrored space.

The exhibition subtly breaks up architectural dimensions. Wavy lights are drawn on the walls - reminiscent of a sea floating above our heads. Delicate plants grow from the ceiling and reinforce the twisted feeling of the room. Traces from the past are made visible and dialogues are conducted with associations of historical narratives, enabling new perspectives on time, materials, physical contexts, natural and artificial spaces.

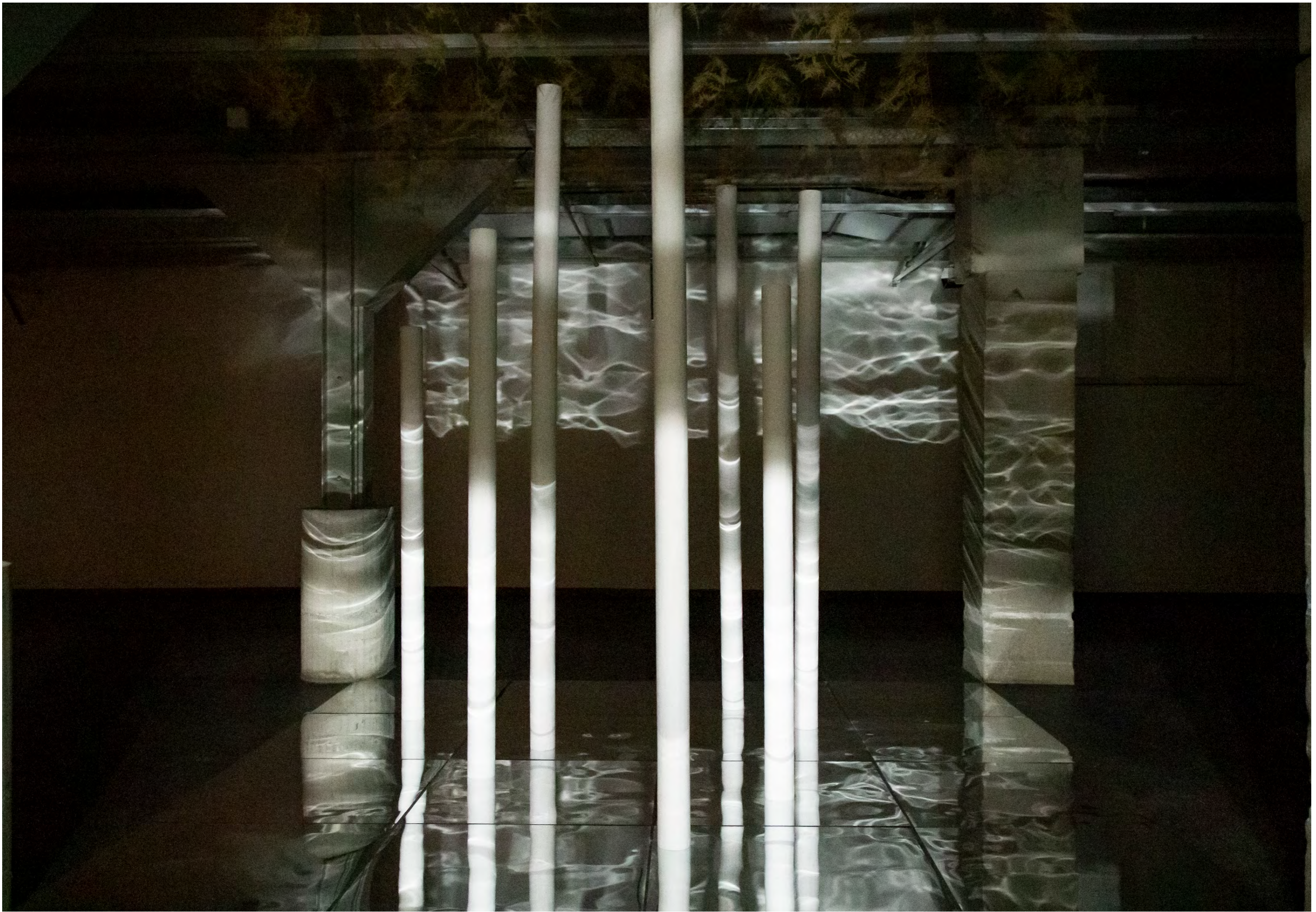
Video walk through the exhibition  
[riikkatauriainen.net/video/underpressure.mov](http://riikkatauriainen.net/video/underpressure.mov)



Underpressure  
Site-specific installation with light, mirrors, plaster columns, asparagus plants and sound by Esther Mathis and Riikka Tauriainen  
Sound: Kay Zhang  
oxyd, Winterthur, Switzerland, 2021









# From sensible pools and snail connections

The margins in a snail body are mediated by slime. Slime is a vibrant matter (J. Bennett) with tangled molecules, both a liquid and a solid depending on its relational description, that creates a sticky infrastructure. The fascinating water body of the snail *Achatinella Apexfulva*, or for the matter any snail or mollusk, inspired a long conversation in which the artists Jeanne Jacob, Riikka Tauriainen and Paloma Ayala, came together to explore the manifold of nodes or points of connection that the body of a snail spawns in us, when thinking about and beyond the limits of a body. This process-based performative video explores slime as binding matter and snails as nodes of connective tissue. The host-habitat of the video work was the exhibition «Intimacy of Strangers» by Riikka Tauriainen, and her concepts developed within the practice of *tentacular thinking* (D. Haraway).

The three artists shared several texts, stories and personal accounts in order to create this work. The authors or sources are: Gloria Anzaldúa, Donna Haraway, Maria Puig della Bellacasa, Mary Douglas, Susan Leigh Star, Virginie Despentes, Jane Bennett, Thom van Dooren, Kate Rigby, Ursula K. Le Guin, Paul B. Preciado, Ellen Bass, Elizabeth Bishop and Karen Barad.

**Written, filmed, recorded and performed:**

Paloma Ayala, Jeanne Jacob  
and Riikka Tauriainen

**Video editing:** Jeanne Jacob

**Sound editing:** Riikka Tauriainen

**Subtitles:** Paloma Ayala

Filmed on location at the exhibition  
«Intimacy of Strangers» by Riikka Tauriainen  
sic! Elephanthouse Luzern, 2021

Link to video preview:  
*Request for password at*  
[mail@riikkatairinen.net](mailto:mail@riikkatairinen.net)

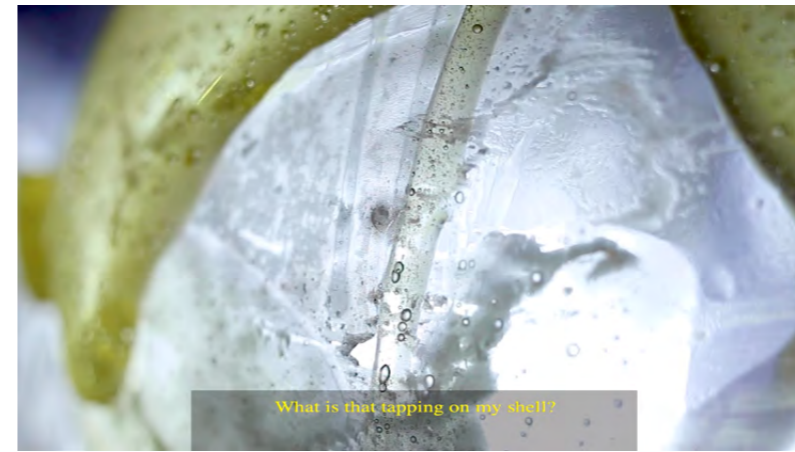
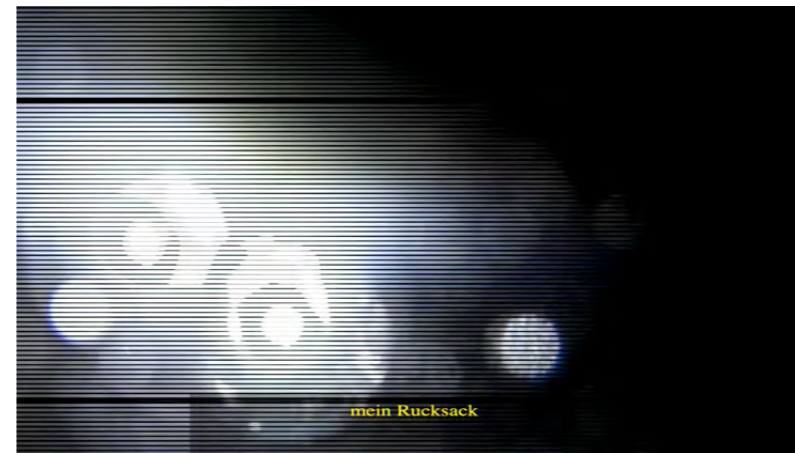
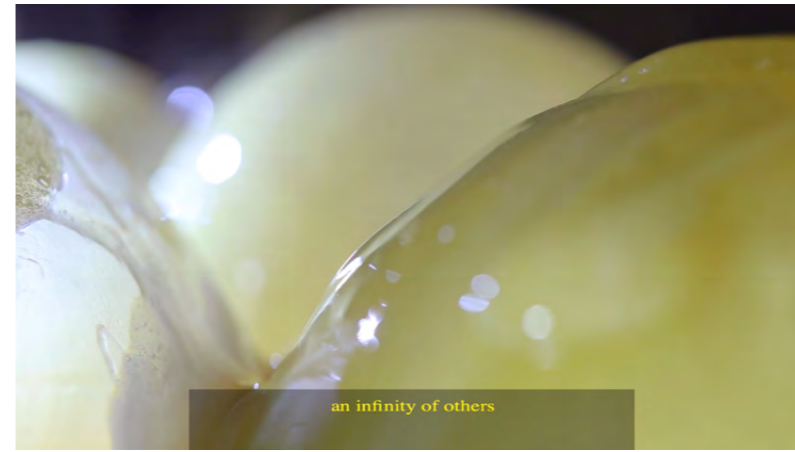
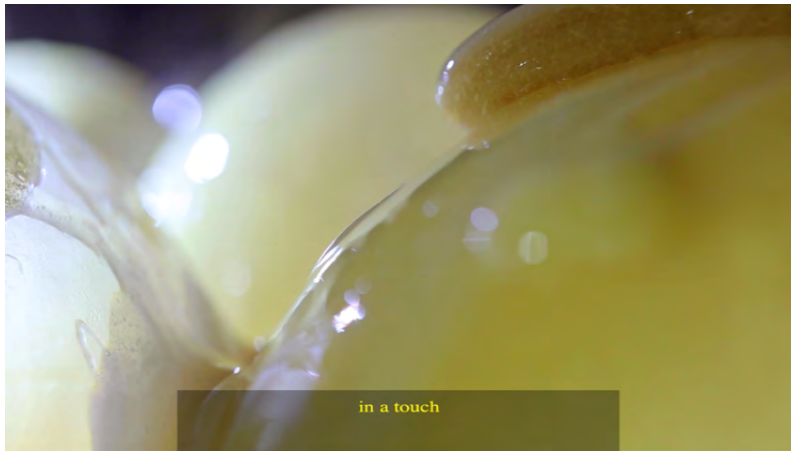
*«Amongst the many endangered snails that I saw that day, one in particular stood out: *Achatinella apexfulva*, a single snail living in a terrarium all on its own. On its own because this tiny being is now thought to be all that is left of its species... »*

*From sensible pools and  
snail connections*



From sensible pools and snail connections  
Video, hd/4k, 12:13 min, color, sound  
by Paloma Ayala, Anne-Laure Franchette,  
and Riikka Tauriainen  
sic! Elephanthouse Lucerne Switzerland, 2021





From sensible pools and snail connections, screenshots



# River Oracle - online cards

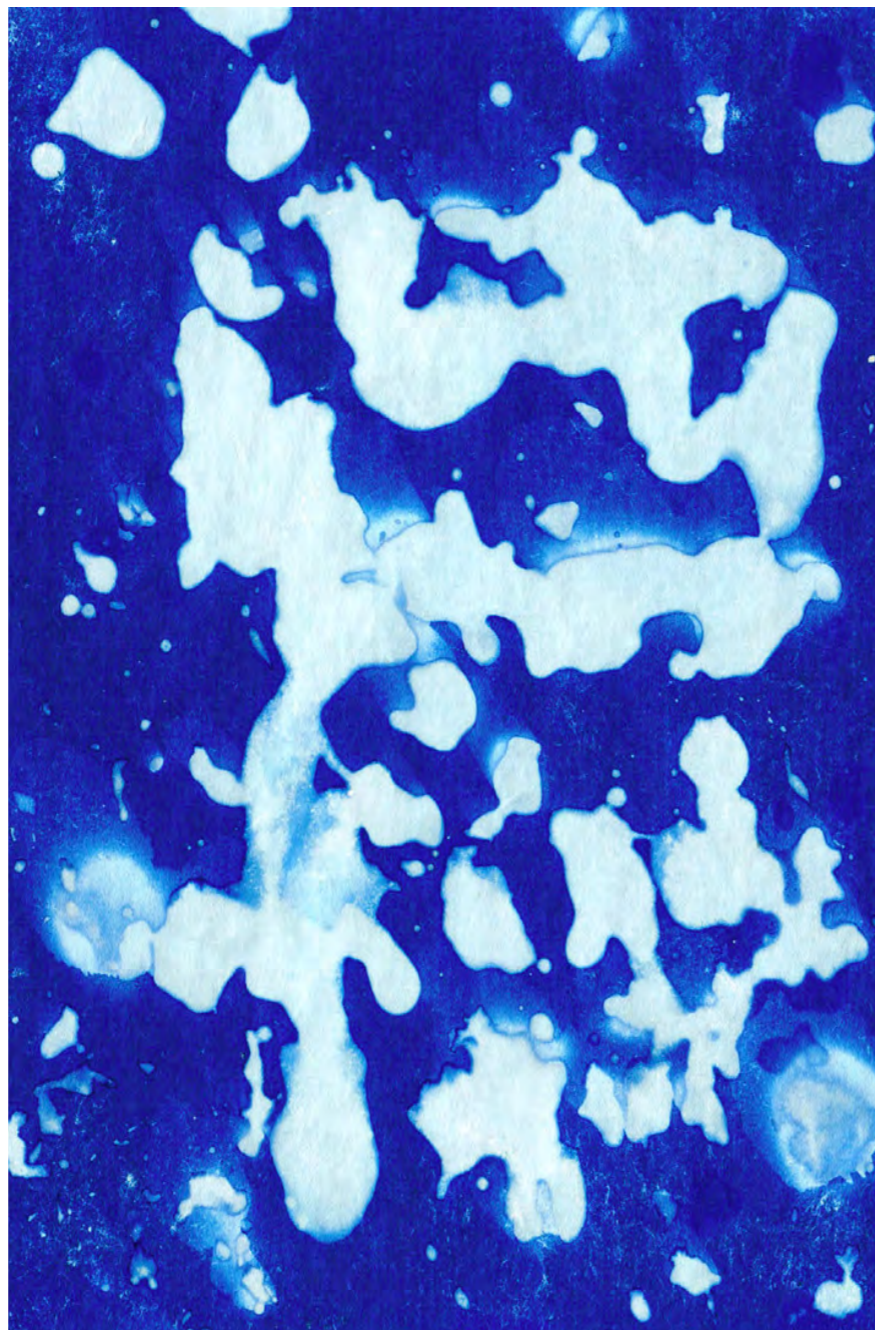
As water, we all owe ourselves to other bodies of water. As water, we all eventually pass our waters on. Even while in constant motion, water is also a planetary archive of meaning and matter. To drink a glass of water is to ingest the ghosts of bodies that haunt that water.

The cards are trying to find their way into material reality through you. We are not particularly interested in thinking about the oracle as a tool to predict your future. What we actually want is for you to connect with your present, with a sense of deep knowledge, in order to embrace (self-) awareness. The cards are printed by water and infused with stories created by an encounter of artists in the riverine ecology of the Rhein.

The cards are cyanotypes, created within the frame of the sun and water printing workshops proposed by Anne-Laure Franchette, during the collective retreat «Silhouettes of Potatoes, Herbs, and Fire», organized as a spatial research for the Hochrhein Triennale. This experience gathered 10 women during the summer of 2020 at Kaiserstuhl and Hohentengen, Swiss and German border towns located along the shores of the Rhein River.

«River Oracle» is an Online Project developed by Paloma Ayala, Anne-Laure Franchette, and Riikka Tauriainen within the frame of Tauriainen's exhibition «Intimacy of Strangers» at sic! Elephanthouse Luzern, 2021.

Read your fortune here!  
You can access «River Oracle» online from the following link  
(view for computer):  
[www.riikkatauriainen.net/river\\_oracle](http://www.riikkatauriainen.net/river_oracle)



*«Permit yourself gentleness and stillness as you work through this spread. The first card tells you about standpoints from which to observe the problem; the second guides action; the third is to prompt change. »*

*River Oracle*



River Oracle

21 cyanotypes and webpage for oracle reading by Paloma Ayala, Anne-Laure Franchette, and Riikka Tauriainen  
sic! Elephanthouse, Lucerne Switzerland, 2021



# Intimacy of Strangers

The solo exhibition «Intimacy of Strangers» reflects upon the memory of water, this planetary archive, in a fictional world. What human traces do we leave in nature? How can new bodies emerge from the toxic and the natural? How does the unknown become the intimate?

Riikka Tauriainen creates a space of memory and future: the video footage in sic! Elephanthouse shows life underwater: swimming jellyfish, squid, and waves breaking tirelessly on rocks of the shore. The video projection is projected through a floating relief made of transparent PET. The objects capture the shape of an undulating water surface and at the same time they remind us of digital renderings, liquid screens or bodies. The space-filling elements interact closely; the plastic surface of the reliefs distorts the images, the light from the projection refracts on the PET and draws a play of light throughout the space - mirrored sunlight or digital animation.

Tauriainen references various queer feminist authors, including Astrida Neimanis, who coined the term «hydrofeminism». This approach points to the fluidity of bodies and proposes to understand water as a unifying element. Neimanis asks, «What sort of ethics and politics could I cultivate if I were to acknowledge that the unknowability of the other nonetheless courses through me—just as I do through her?»

In her installation, Tauriainen interplays with the threatening and the comfortable, the human and the non-human and the intimate and the other. Tauriainen mixes these frictions and makes the boundaries between them flow. In doing so, Tauriainen opens up a space for questions: what would our world look like if we were socialised as Bodies of Water with our environment in this hydro-logic?

Video walk through the exhibition

[riikkatauriainen.net/video/intimacy\\_docu.mp4](http://riikkatauriainen.net/video/intimacy_docu.mp4)

[riikkatauriainen.net/video/intimacy\\_PET.mp4](http://riikkatauriainen.net/video/intimacy_PET.mp4)



Intimacy of Strangers

Video installation with 3 PET-elements,  
à 1250 x 2050 mm, curtain (dyed in blue and  
gray), 4000 mm x 3500 mm, projected text (loop)

Soundscape : Emre Sarigöl

sic! Elephanthouse, Lucerne Switzerland, 2020







# Aequorea Victoria

«Aequorea Victoria» is an installation consisting of a 20-meter-long curtain made of hand-dyed polyamide fabric.

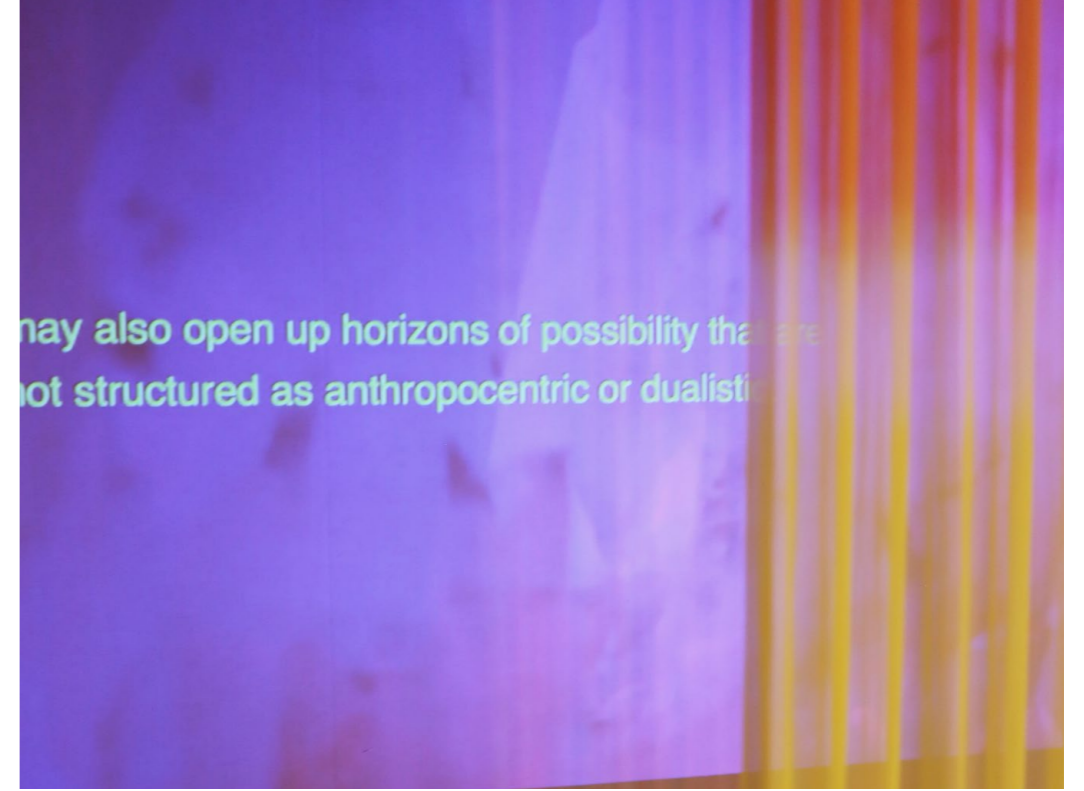
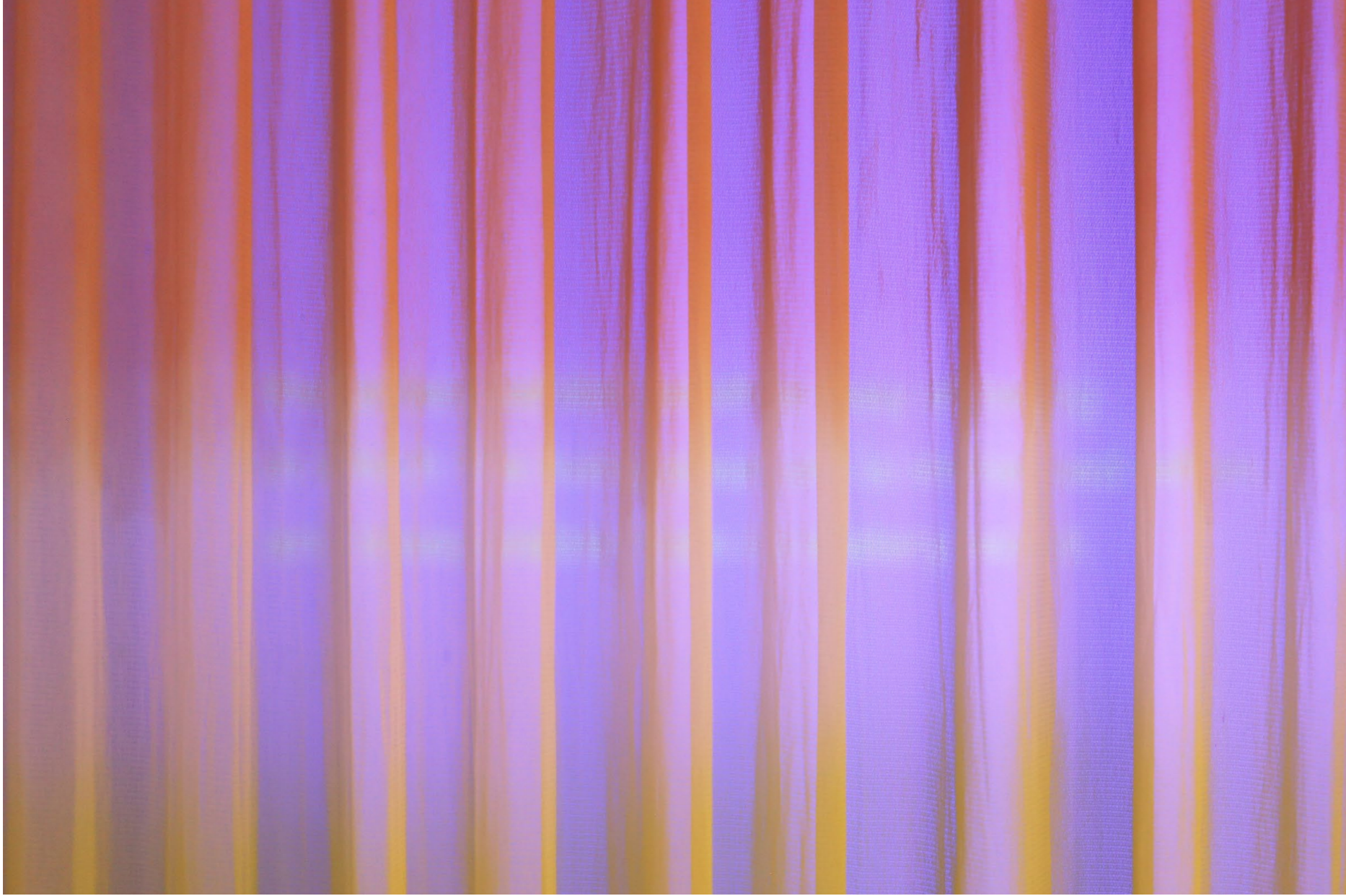
In the translucent and extreme lightness of the material as well as in the white stripe, which creates a fluoridating light in the center of the curtain, the installation refers to the jellyfish *Aequorea Victoria*. In 1962, the green fluorescent protein (GFP) was detected in the *Aequorea Victoria*, which fluoresces green under blue or ultraviolet light (bioluminescence). In cell and molecular biology, the GFP gene is frequently used as a reporter of expression. GFP can be introduced into animals or other species through transgenic techniques, and conserved in their genome and that of their offspring. To date, GFP has been expressed in many species, including bacteria, viruses, yeasts, fungi, fish and mammals, including in human cells.



Aequorea Victoria  
Polyamid, Blue/UV-Licht, 300 cm x 800 cm  
Swiss Art Awards, Basel Switzerland, 2019



Aequorea Victoria and video *What Is It Like to Be a Jellyfish?*, installation views from Swiss Art Awards





# It's a relief to hear the rain...

«It's a relief to hear the rain. It's the sound of billions of drops, all equal, all equally committed to falling, like a sudden outbreak of democracy. Water, when it hits the ground, instantly becomes a puddle or rivulet or flood», the English writer Alice Oswald continues her poem. From the cloud, just before it hits the ground, a drop becomes singular. What a short life this individuality has, how little different one is from the other, comparing to how much it has in common – especially after turning into a forceful flood. Yet, as a metaphor for within human power relations, the proclaimed flood and outbreak of real democracy, could never mean simple sameness or harmony.

Collaboratively Caroline Baur, Vanessa Heer, Tina Reden and Riikka Tauriainen developed the water-related sound installation which creates organic polyrhythms: partly by chance, partly controlled, the drops form assemblages, which diverge into the rhythmic to move into resonance with one another over and over again. But in just as many moments there is no noticeable relation, the relationality returns in cycles. The drop sounds are gathered in the three oversized graze baskets, harvested, peeled and woven in collective work: Lost skills of our great-grandparents, relearned D.I.Y.

The installation depends on a continuous flow of water. A constant involvement is needed in order to keep the cycle up. As much as modern sound technology is used, the simple objects like the baskets move slightly away of their assigned functionality. Temporalities between a nostalgic past and a seemingly alternativeless present break open to active forming of our future communities.

Link to audio  
[soundcloud.com/vava\\_san/its-a-relief-to-hear-the-rain](https://soundcloud.com/vava_san/its-a-relief-to-hear-the-rain)



It's a relief to hear the rain. It's the sound of billions of drops, all equal, all equally committed to falling, like a sudden outbreak of democracy  
Installation with graze baskets, funnels, recycled objects, water, sound by Caroline Ann Baur, Vanessa Heer, Tina Reden and Riikka Tauriainen  
Reaktor, Zurich Switzerland, 2019







# Hydrocommons: Watery Bodies and Fluid Exchange

It took us millions of years to get a little drier. As humans, we are containers carrying our moisture within us, but this moisture is also constantly escaping as vapours or urine. Our porosity makes us vulnerable: when we overflow and when we lose our water. We are creatures of tonicity through and through. Not only “we” seemingly solid, dry people, but all life forms. With such thoughts, I move within a post-humanistic world of ideas. Also, aquatic affinities should not be understood romantically or in a backward looking way, that’s not the point, but rather in a profoundly materialistic relationality connected to living as well as dead matter.

I began thinking about the aesthetic consumption of watery worlds as being problematic. Underwater divers produce extremely attractive pictures. Jellyfish turn into a pure art of nature. However, with the right camera and good light one can just as easily aestheticize floating plastic bags. In this video, there is only plastic waste. In Genoa, where I filmed these images, the mountains of garbage strewn along the beaches confronted me.

I’m interested in reflecting on my own anthropocentrism by thinking through the perspectives of jellyfish and aquatic creatures. I’m trying to understand how we are not coherent creatures that are not just acting on their own accord, but rather ask how to think-with, live-with, and be-with other planetary organisms.

Link to video preview:  
*Request for password at*  
[mail@riikkatairianen.net](mailto:mail@riikkatairianen.net)



Concert with Emre Sarigöl at Raum::Station Zurich

*«I am a singular, dynamic  
whorl dissolving in a complex,  
fluid circulation.»*

*Astrida Neimanis*

#### Hydrocommons

Installation with 5 videos (1 video projection, 3 monitors, 1 tablet), stereo loudspeakers, headphones, green fluorescent lamp, curtain, iris foil. music: Emre Sargiöl, voice: Kate Baur-Bridgman

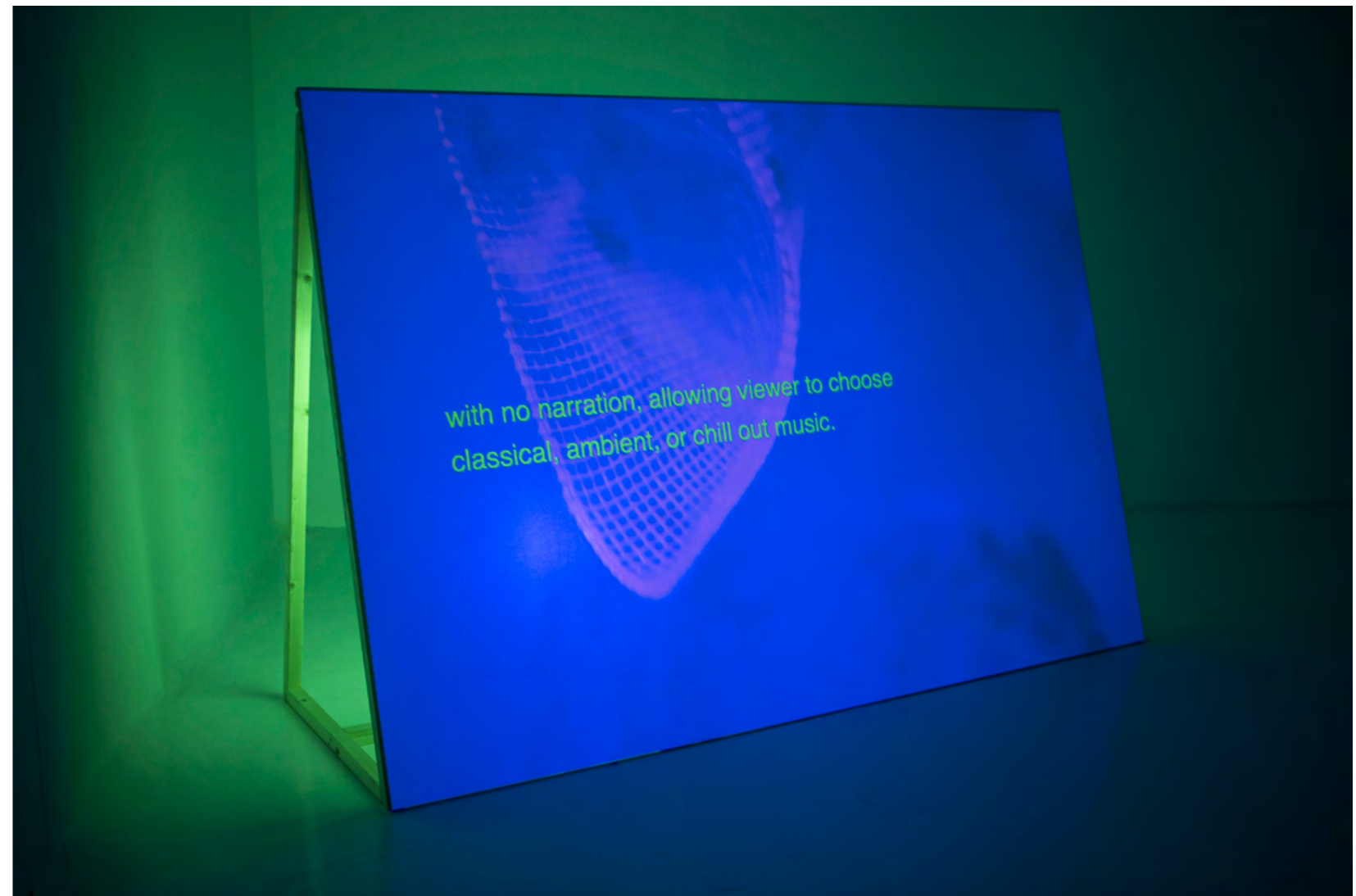
**Raum::Station, Zurich Switzerland, 2018**

**Gessnerallee, Zurich Switzerland, 2018**

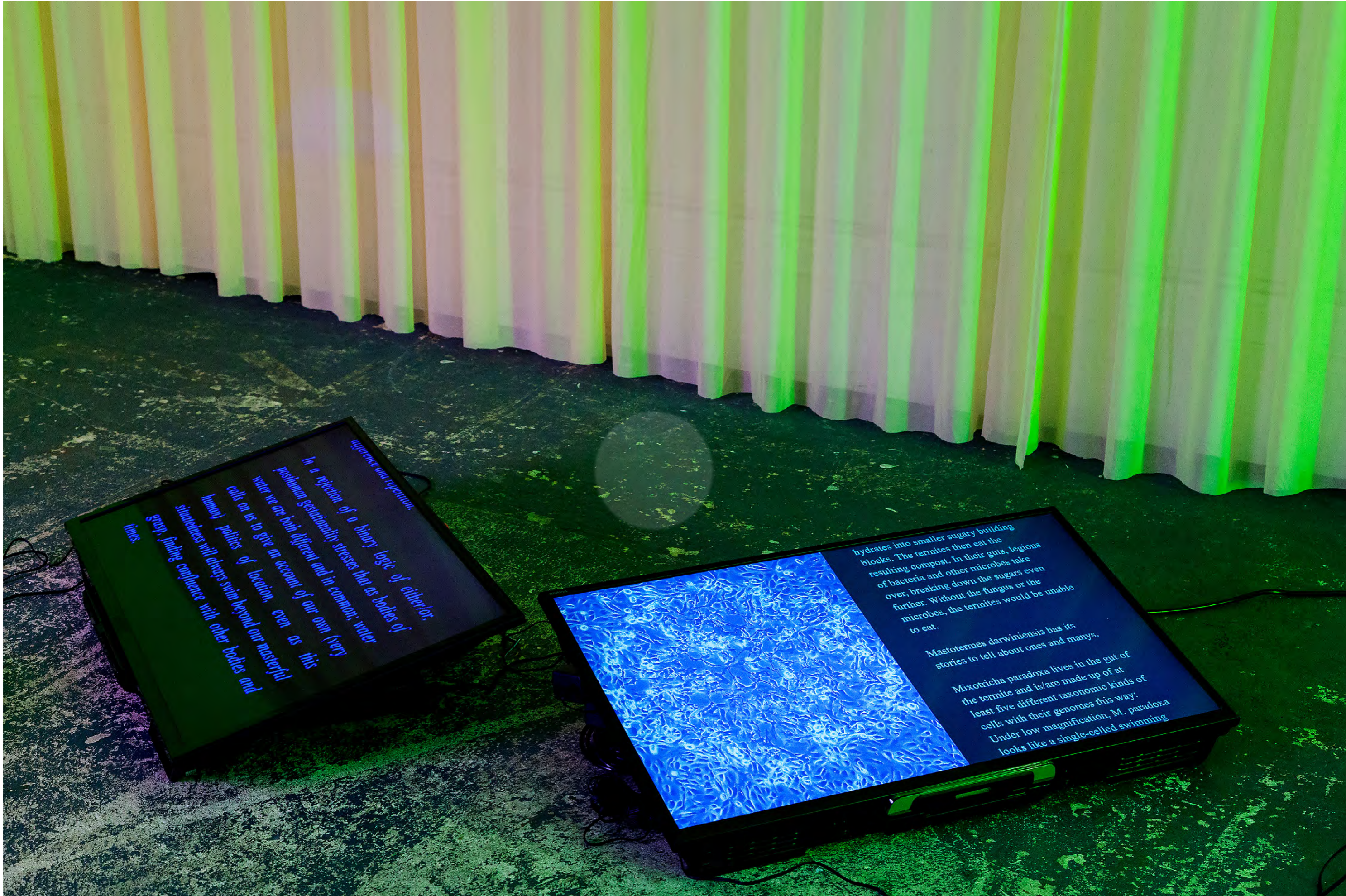
**SA, Helmhaus, Zurich Switzerland, 2019**

**Swiss Art Awards, Basel Switzerland, 2019**

installation view from Helmhaus Zurich







*...reference our reputation.*  
*In a rejection of a binary logic of either/or,*  
*posthuman gestationality stresses that as bodies of*  
*water we are both different and in common; water*  
*calls on us to give an account of our own (very*  
*human) politics of location, even as this*  
*simultaneous will always swim beyond our masterful*  
*gasp, finding congruence with other bodies and*  
*lines.*

hydrates into smaller sugary building blocks. The termites then eat the resulting compost. In their guts, legions of bacteria and other microbes take over, breaking down the sugars even further. Without the fungus or the microbes, the termites would be unable to eat.

Mastotermes darwiniensis has its stories to tell about ones and manys.

Mixotricha paradoxa lives in the gut of the termite and is/are made up of at least five different taxonomic kinds of cells with their genomes this way: Under low magnification, M. paradoxa looks like a single-celled swimming



# On Feminotopias

The lecture performance «On Feminotopias» is an insight into my research on feminotopias and Flora Tristan, a French-Peruvian writer, pre-Marxian socialists, founder of the Workers' Union and women's rights activist of the 19th century. The research looks into women's travel writing in the colonial era, their resistance to or complicity with the imperial voice, as well as the relationships between colonialism and capitalism in patriarchal society.

The performance explores the question of how can and is history written outside of conventional historiography; how can voices outside it be heard. The focus of the performance is on feminocentric utopias (Mary-Louise Pratt), the desire to leave the heroic story (Ursula K. Le Guin), as well as the need to overcome ignorance that we are the heirs of operations of cultural and social extermination.

«On Feminotopias» is an ongoing project that also functions as a platform for sharing thoughts and ideas in collective processes with other artists and thinkers. The aim is later to develop a digital archive to gather stories, projects, tools, research materials and references on feminist societies and utopias.

Recently, the question of whiteness has come to the fore in feminist debates and remains a central theme in postcolonial feminism and intersectionality. Because racism is so deeply rooted in Western societies through colonial processes - often taking unconscious and institutionalised forms - anti-racist strategies require working through often unacknowledged assumptions, prejudices and practices on an individual and personal level. Postcolonial feminism also seeks to illuminate the tendency of Western feminist thought to apply its claims to women around the world. In this way, postcolonial feminism seeks to explain perceived weaknesses within both postcolonial theory and Western feminism.

*«Reclaiming the past is not a matter of resurrecting it as it was, it is rather a matter of reactivating it, and first of all, of smelling the smoke in our nostrils.»*

*Isabelle Stengers*



On Feminotopias  
performance  
**REFRAMING WORLDS**  
(Mobility and Gender in a Postcolonial,  
Feminist Perspective)  
NGbK, Berlin Germany, 2018  
Les Complices, Zurich, Switzerland, 2020







# Ghosts, Nodes, Webs and Pathways

The 13-minute video installation invites us on a journey through time - a dialogue from the future, a science fiction story - inspired and quoted by Karen Barad, Donna Haraway, Marion Bradley, Ursula K. Le Guin, Octavia Butler, Jacques Derrida, Luce Irigaray and Elizabeth Grosz.

The film shows alternating animations that illustrate processes in quantum physics and a view of the Milky Way, a shot of ESA's Gaia mission of April 2017, which takes our galaxy 5 million years to the future. Space, time and matter enter into an interaction through voices and sound textures and question the narratives of sciences and their discourses.

*«Time can't be fixed.  
There is no inheritance without  
a call to responsibility. The  
being of what we are is first of  
all inheritance.»*

*Karen Barad*

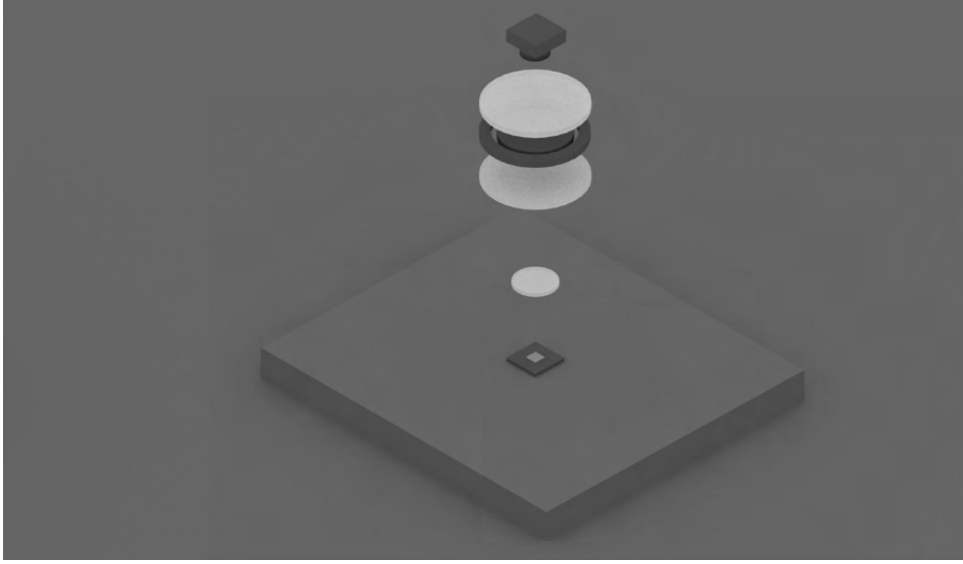
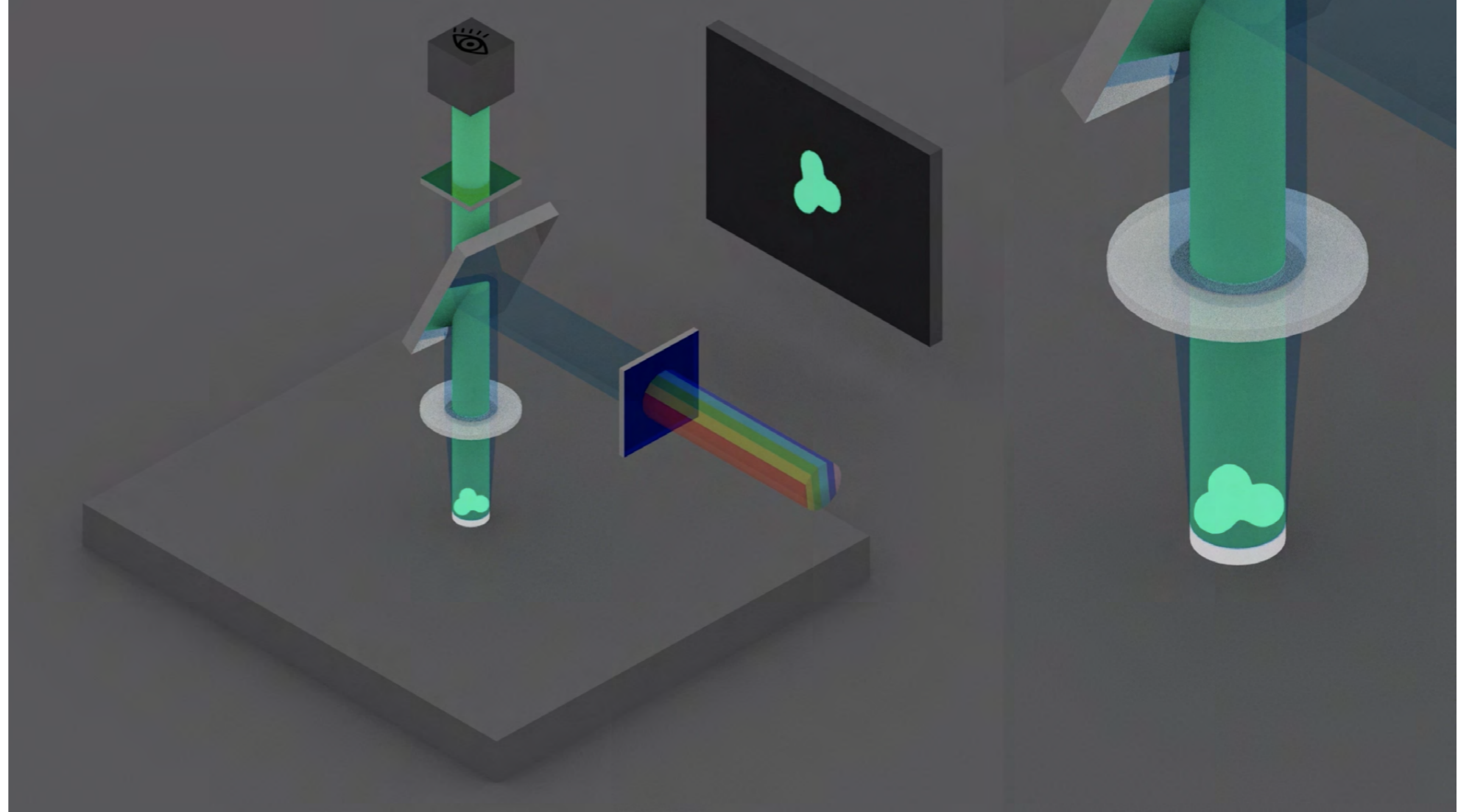


Ghosts, Nodes, Webs and Pathways  
video installation and poster  
voice: Kate Baur-Bridgman  
SA, Helmhaus, Zurich Switzerland, 2017  
Wip Konsthall, Stockholm, Sweden, 2017  
Studio Zurigo, Genoa Italy, 2018  
nextex, St. Gallen Switzerland, 2018  
ZeM, Potsdam Germany, 2018

Link to video preview:  
Request for password at  
[mail@riikkatairinen.net](mailto:mail@riikkatairinen.net)



video stills: Ghosts, Nodes, Webs and Pathways





Electrons,  
molecules,  
brittlestars,  
jellyfish,  
coral reefs,  
dogs,  
rocks,  
icebergs,  
plants,  
asteroids,  
snowflakes  
and bees

In «Electrons, molecules, brittlestars, jellyfish, coral reefs, dogs, rocks, icebergs, plants, asteroids, snowflakes and bees», natural sciences and physics correlates with philosophy and feminism. Referring to Karen Barad's interpretation of quantum field theory, Isaac Newton's laws of motion, and Elizabeth Grosz's feminist theory, themes such as time, space and matter, but also the relationship between concept and content, description and reality are rethought.

The work uses sound, recordings from lectures and computer-generated voices to unfold new ways to intra-act with each other, with matter, with materials, with nature and with discourses.



*«Shifting the focus from questions of correspondence between descriptions and reality to matters of practices, doings, and actions.»*

*Karen Barad*



Electrons, molecules, brittlestars, jellyfish,  
coral reefs, dogs, rocks, icebergs, plants, asteroids,  
snowflakes and bees  
performance  
*Tribschenhorn, Lucerne Switzerland, 2016*  
*Gessnerallee/ZHdK, Zurich Switzerland, 2016*



# Ignore All Signs

In »Ignore All Signs« mathematical formulas of paradoxes are drawn on the windows of the art space Corner Collage Zurich as part of »No-where? Now-here! The Molecular Books of Life – Colleges of Unreason«, an idea-driven group exhibition about the practices of writing and the book on one page.

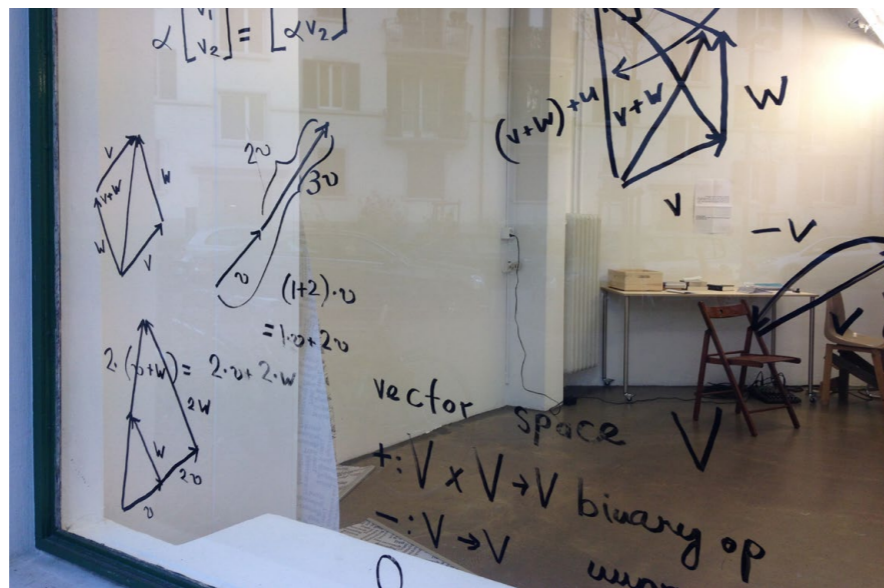
Consider a system in a state A, which is the quantum state of some measurement operator. Say the system under free time evolution will decay with a certain probability into state B. If measurements are made periodically, with some finite interval between each one, at each measurement, the wave function collapses to an eigenstate of the measurement operator. Between the measurements, the system evolves away from this eigenstate into a superposition state of the states A and B. When the superposition state is measured, it will again collapse, either back into state A as in the first measurement, or away into state B. However, its probability of collapsing into state B, after a very short amount of time  $t$ , is proportional to  $t^2$ , since probabilities are proportional to squared amplitudes, and amplitudes behave linearly. Thus, in the limit of a large number of short intervals, with a measurement at the end of every interval, the probability of making the transition to B goes to zero.

«Between the measurements, the system evolves away from this eigenstate into a superposition state of the states A and B. When the superposition state is measured, it will again collapse, either back into state A as in the first measurement, or away into state B.»

Ignore All Signs  
drawings on window  
Corner Collage, Zurich Switzerland, 2016



flags: Petra Elena Köhle & Nicolas Vermot Petit-Outehenin



textiles: Denise Bertschi



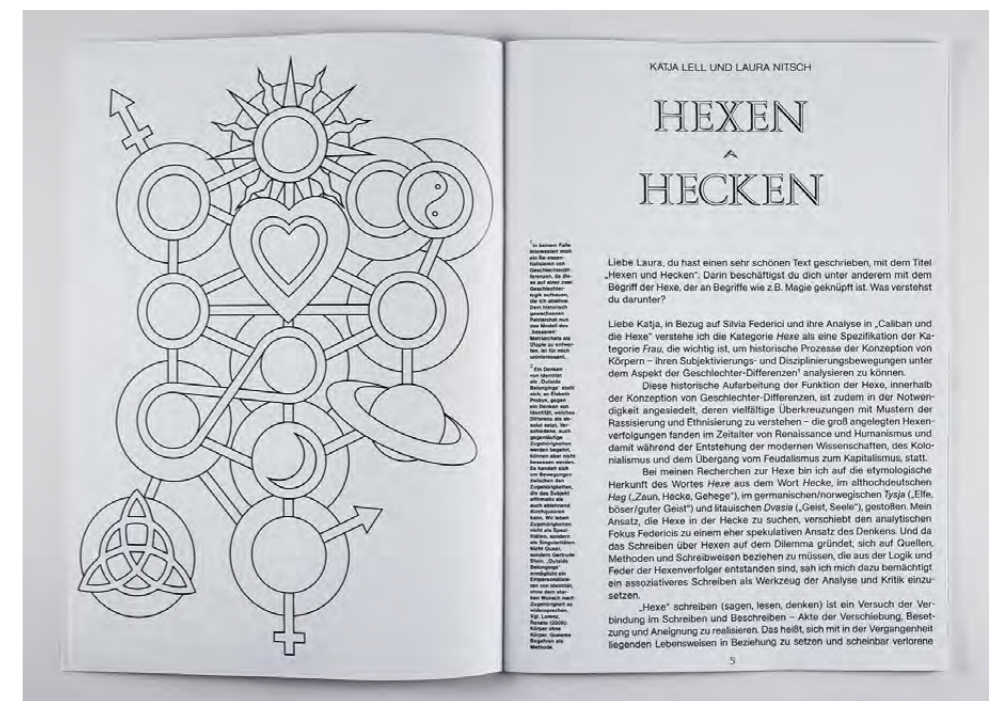
# Subnatural Voices

«Subnatural Voices» is a collective project with contributions from Sophia Compton, Yoel Curiger, Helen Eugster, Gritli Faulhaber, Lucia Graf, Lara Holenweger, Andreas Jäggi, Katja Lell, Tina Reden, Lionne Saluz, Milena Sentobe, Yannik Steiner, Caroline Ann Baur, Helvetia Leal, Alper Yagciouglu and Riikka Tauriainen.

The exhibition «Subnatural Voices» has been developed through an examination of the little known history of the persecution of so-called witches in different European countries, as well as with a capitalism-critical, queer-feminist perspective on the contemporary updating of magical practices. Alongside individual contributions from the participants, the exhibition consisted of discursive formats such as a multi-media multi-hour performance, a festive «Witches Dinner», an interactive walk into the Allmend on Walpurgis Night, three film screenings and a reading for the release of the publication.

According to Silvia Federici, the witch trials were an important part of Marx's «original accumulation». She explores the question of what could make these women so dangerous that they had to be so brutally tortured and murdered in a genocide-like manner. She assumes that it was less the fear of the magical practices for which they were accused, but rather the fear of their ways of life that deviated from Christian-Protestantism and the related economic norms. For this reason, magic – «not in the supernatural sense but as an experiential and experimental art» (Stengers) - is an interesting field for us. At the same time it should not be overlooked that spirituality, magic, or alternative healing are (pop) cultural phenomena, which bring about their own usability. We explore ourselves in this conflicted area of discourse.

The exhibition «Subnatural Voices» was developed during the seminar «Queer Spirits» by Riikka Tauriainen.



Subnatural Voices  
exhibition, performances, dinner, screenings, talks, wedding, publication  
Raum\*Station, Zurich Switzerland, 2016



# Contact Zone

For this show, Riikka Tauriainen has developed a line of research about the link between humans and natural resources, focusing in particular on the Arctic region. «Contact Zone» (Imagining the presentness of the past – nomadism and economies of the Arctic), whose title echoes a notion developed by the linguist Marie-Louise Pratt to do with exchange zones between different cultures, mixes a romantic vision of exploration with a—concomitant—vision of the use of resources. Based on three axes, the installation focuses on the construction of narratives and the relation to myths in back-and-forth interplays between past and future which question links with the present. From the Arctic expedition led by the British explorer John Franklin in 1845, which was meant to open up the Northwest Passage via Canada, but which disappeared in unexplained circumstances, and caused the death of all members of the team, all that remained were rumours, suspicions, and Inuit reports which mention cannibalism as a means of survival, and the narratives of Franklin's early expedition, shedding a little light... to the discovery of one of the vessels in 2014.

Constructing the vision of an idealized North was the aim of the film *The Romance of the Far Fur Country*, produced by the Hudson Bay Company in 1919, which shows the life of furproducing trappers in their north Canadian environment. Devised as a promotional film which was not meant to look like one, it was three years ahead of the film *Nanook of the North*, historically regarded as the first documentary film (although it too had a screenplay). The installation also includes elements of Marion Bradley's *The Climbing Wave*, a short story written in the 1950s, which echoes still topical ideas like the Gaia hypothesis and degrowth, in which science is no longer turned towards progress at any price, but made—sensibly—available to man.

Bénédicte le Pimpec and Isaline Vuille



Contact Zone (Imagining the presentness of the past – nomadism and economies of the Arctic)

Installation: wooden scaffolding with glass and inkjet prints on paper, wall drawing, charcoal, variable dimensions

**DARKER AND DARKER GROWS THE LANDSCAPE (la possibilité d'une île)**

**LE COMMUN Bâtiment d'art contemporain Genève, Switzerland, 2015**







# A Case of Mistaken Identity

History, as it is said, is also a scaffold that carries the present. But what happens if you take away this scaffold? This is exactly how the pedagogical principle of «scaffolding» works: The teacher builds the students a scaffold of knowledge. The result of learning happens only when the teacher tears away the scaffold again and the student learns how to stand by him or her self. Riikka Tauriainen translated this principle of pedagogy in her large-scale installation for «Geschichte in Geschichten» («History in Stories»): a scaffold in which the Finnish artist weaves written materials that she decides to bring closer to us. A narrative, constructed in space. Tauriainen establishes a connection between the New York City born dancer Helen Tamiris and the early feminist movement in Russia. Or she quotes – with a wooden structure reminiscent of Vladimir Tatlin's tower – early Soviet utopianism, with its avantgarde concepts for new forms of life. Or is it about the attempts of the dance pioneer Rudolf von Laban to record human movements?

But what do we learn when Riikka Tauriainen tears down this narrative frame? Maybe that (hi)story – much like body movements – can not only be recorded in linear and hierarchical ways. But rather that always different major and minor (hi)stories happen simultaneously – Tauriainen refers to Gilles Deleuze and Félix Guattari, as described in «Toward a Minor Literature» with the example of Franz Kafka. It is not a clear choreography, as in classical ballet, but rather à la Rudolf von Laban, free and expressive. Which does not mean that you do not want to try the notation: an architectural dance in space.

Daniel Morgenthaler



A Case of Mistaken Identity  
wooden frame with glass and digital prints, size variable  
**KUNSTANKÄUFE DER STADT ZÜRICH 2011–2018**  
**Helmhaus, Zurich Switzerland, 2018**  
**GESCHICHTE IN GESCHICHTEN**  
**Helmhaus, Zurich Switzerland, 2015**  
– Courtesy of City of Zurich









# Singing the Words Wrong

In «Singing the Words Wrong», Riikka Tauriainen, Jacky Poloni and Romy Rügger conjoin performatively various stories and histories: the three artists living in Zurich will use New Age texts that help you deal with panic; they quote excerpts from the archive of the Gosteli foundation, dealing with women's work in politics and art; and they tell the story of nihilist Vera Pavlovna, protagonist of the 1860 novel «What Is To Be Done?».

[link to audio documentation](#)



Singing the Words Wrong  
performance  
Helmhaus, Zurich Switzerland, 2015



# Cosmic Tones for Mental Therapy

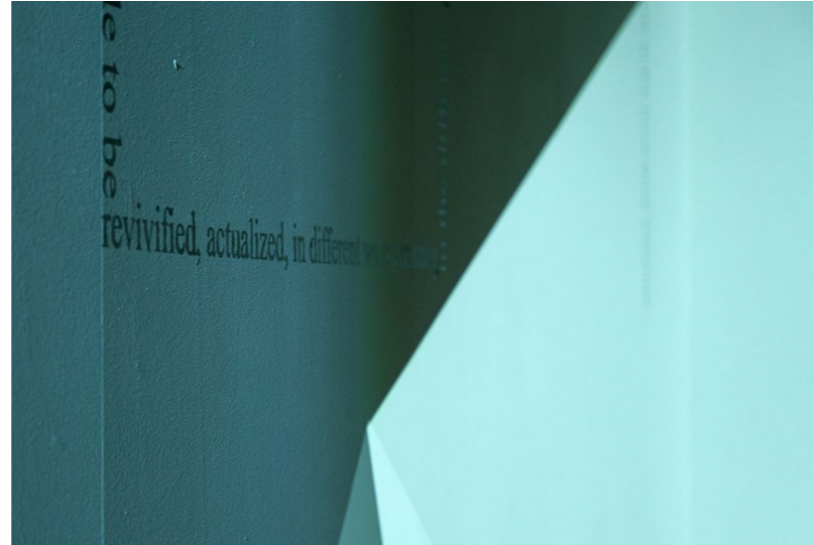
An exhibition together with Severin Halleuer (Performance) and Caroline Baur (Text).

Being close to the things you are close to, my other you: Your self would be most insignificant to esoteric love. The Status of the material is most intriguing. On godforsaken Sundays we sit in proletarian hoods and together we bring the forces of the, atmosphere' of the aging objects to explode. In Central Europe we become 9th Ward, when I share my memories with you about the bum on the bus, who payed for my ticket, the shootings and newspaper clippings, the Empress Hotel with its angelic queers, we are already traveling together to a time and place not to be mapped out in future vacation destinations.

To share is to divide, to intersect, but most of all it suggests inter-space, becomes blurry in the order of numbers. Outside of this order, we traverse ceaselessly and envelope, from one side to the other, our mucus, the pointless space bridging without shores, a pure medium. Memories zap up in electric constellations, memories of a recent past or memories of companions or unknown ones, memories whatsoever.

For a while, lets dwell outside of theocracy, outside of the history of the written word, outside of his-story. Then, with our next journey out of the comfort zone, I wish to forget for one moment a sentence I always remember: Even the dead will not be safe. It has become a fossil. Alien abduction, such as slavery and imperialism in the very present coinciding with splinters of the past resurrect this speech in a conditio nigra – we share it, more and more so.

Text by Caroline Baur



*«The tiger's leap into history is as precise as the bells, trumpets, tambourines, horns and organs chanting.»*

Cosmic Tones for Mental Therapy

installation, 4 channel video projection, text on foil, variable dimensions

Kunstraum ZHdK, Zurich Switzerland, 2015

