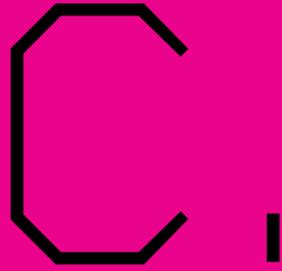


Contemporary Identities

International Art Magazine



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EDITORS' NOTE

After the first issue we are delighted to continue using our abilities to create a platform for other artists on a global level. It is a very honoring achievement to have critics from all over the world to write on different forms of art such as: photography, sculpture, installation etc. In addition, we also had the chance to interview Soheil Hosseini regarding his recent show at Deilaman Art Gallery, Tehran, Iran (see the interview section on the website of ContemporaryIdentities).

The feedback from our contributors, writers and artists make us stronger. Being surrounded by creative people pushes ContemporaryIdentities to be a publication that is unique and adventurous.

Sara Berti & Elham Shafaei

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Front Cover:

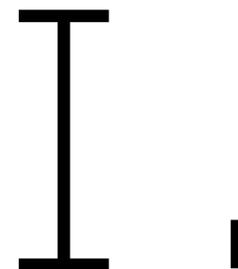
Soheil Hosseini
(From Salad Series, 2019,
Ink & Acrylic on Paper,
50x35cm)

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Emad Pournasiri

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S H .

SHAIKHA AL MAZROU

(UAE)

EMELIA ONG

Bold, minimalist and larger than life, Al Mazrou's arresting sculptures demand attention. In these strong yet delicate structures, the tensile qualities of metal are investigated and manipulated. They adopt an appearance of weightlessness. Her experiments with materiality result in a juxtaposition of opposing notions—soft/hard, heavy/light, cheeky/serious, flexible/rigid. These physical and conceptual dichotomies are wittily presented in contemporary abstract forms. One is tempted to push, press and prod these playful sculptures. The tension they create underscore the subjectivity of sensorial perception and experience. How does the physicality of an object affect our own presence? How does its materiality affect our experience?



Expand, 2018, Coated stainless steel, 244x122x200 cm

A .



Engage, 2018, Wet coated steel, Diptych, 115x233x60 cm



Excel I, 2018, Wet coated steel, 115 cm

V I

VIEL BJERKESET ANDERSEN

(Norway)

SANNA LEHTINEN

In Norway, tunnels are a necessity for everyday urban mobility. These immense structures represent the inevitable compromises that follow from how human life form takes place throughout the terrain. Infrastructure artwork Behind the Breath adds sublime and soothing elements to the claustrophobia-inducing space. Bjerkeset Andersen's use of light and color creates place-quality in an environment, which one is always experiencing in an active movement towards the other side.



Behind the breath, Part of the Ryfast project; 2012-19, One-direction rooms, 12x125x30 m, The Ryfylke tunnel, Rogaland county

B I



Behind the breath, Part of the Ryfast project; 2012-19, One-direction rooms, 12x125x30 m, The Ryfylke tunnel, Rogaland county



Behind the Breath, Part of the Ryfast project; 2012-19, One-direction rooms, 12x125x30 m, The Ryfylke tunnel, Rogaland county

M.

MATT CALVERT

(Australia)

NADIA MEHDI ALHASANI

Matt Calvert's work is a fusion of the soft subject matter and difficult personal experience; an exercise in coming to terms with his childhood memories. Materiality is where he puts his focus, effort and attention, through polished glass and brushed aluminum, bronze glass. This in turn, allows glass and metal to inform his work and provides it with its identity. More recent works seem to step away from the familiar to the more abstract in subject, giving trees and trophies a more primitive profile, or more abstract forms entitled Dieback, Three Friends, and Memorial to name a few. What remains constant is the compressive nature of his work through an additive process of glass fragments rather than manipulating a sheet of glass or blowing it into shape. At the end, it is the process of coming to terms with the pieces of glass rather than the subject matter that prevails in and marks his work.



Aeroplane boy, 2018, Aluminum and toughened-polished glass, 500x380x80 cm, City of Knox, Victoria, Australia

C.



Night Imp, 2010, Aluminum and toughened-polished glass, 470x320x60 cm, Point leo estate sculpture Park, Australia



Kangooroo, 2017, Aluminum and toughened-polished glass, 400x130x60 cm, Kangaroo bay, Tasmania, Australia

U .

UMBERTO CHIODI

(Italy)

EMELIA ONG

Mystical creatures and mythical figures come alive in Umberto Chiodi's enigmatic drawings. Familiar bodies press against unfamiliar ones. Here and there, faces reveal themselves only to dissolve into a labyrinth of abstract shapes. Sinuous forms and intricate lines curiously invite us to lean in and allow the sensual landscape of textures to overtake us. Yet, we are interrupted by the presence of a distant reality. Seemingly ancient beings and characters from a fabled past weave themselves into the present, albeit in disguise. These skilfully composed works seem to suggest that our present reality is continually experienced through our stories of the past.

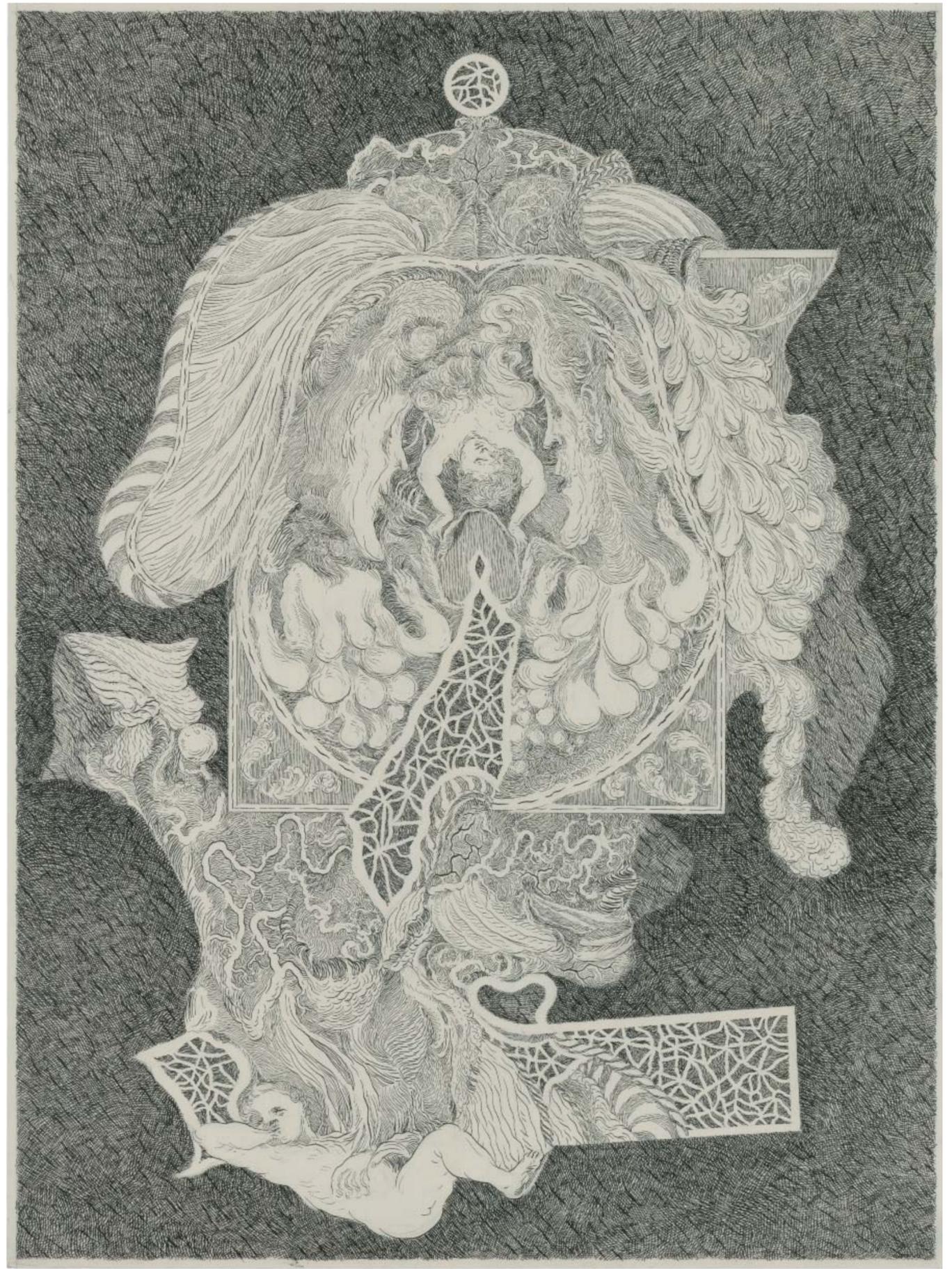


Impromptu 10, 2017, Ink and watercolor on carton,
76.5x55.5 cm

C .



Cuore, 2017, Ink on paper, 70x50 cm



Testa, 2017, Ink on paper, 70x50 cm

T |

THAIER HELAL

(Syria-UAE)

IZMER BIN AHMAD

Beneath the Rubble series represents the artist's continued exploration of abstract landscape with specific geopolitical address. Growing up in the fertile terrain of rural Syria, Helal hearkens to the memory of the land and its present tragedy. The painting's surface was laboriously layered into a spread of tactility, a white rubble that is at once evidence of death and vision of re-birth. Significantly, each canvas began with grid system, albeit one that exceeds (Euroamerican) modernist expectation for Helal's grid always already points outside itself, towards the world and its (dis)content, a witness to the grid as coordinates of knowledge, surveillance and power that have carved the land with undulating pathways of tears. Here, beneath the rubble of each painting, the land trembles with prayers that summon a critical history of cartography where the world is made visible by virtue of the politics and ethics of mapping and counter-mapping.

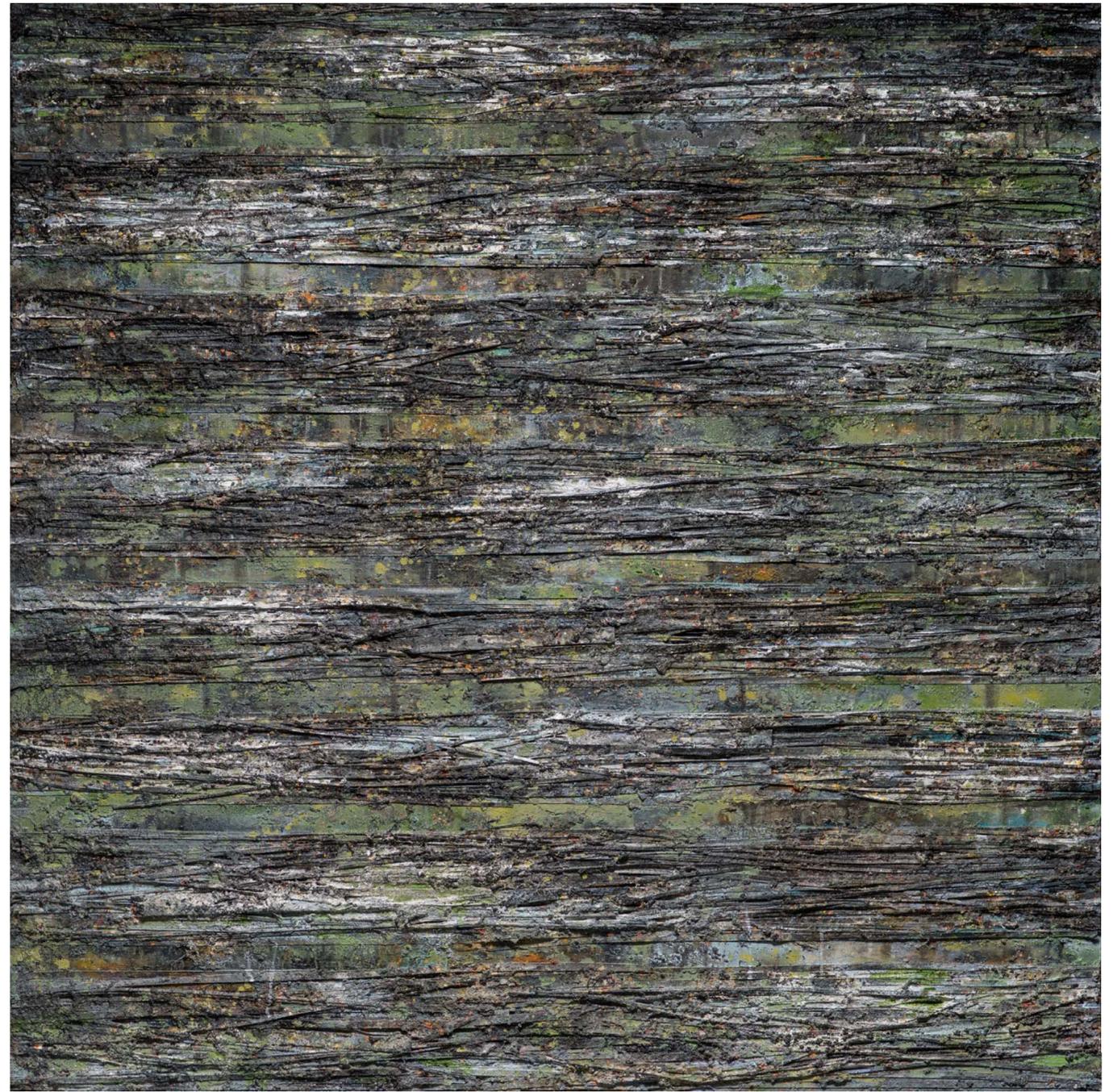


Crack, 2018, Mixed media on canvas, 190x120 cm

H |



Concealment, 2018, Mixed media on canvas, 165x165 cm



Creation, 2018, Mixed media on canvas, 180x180 cm

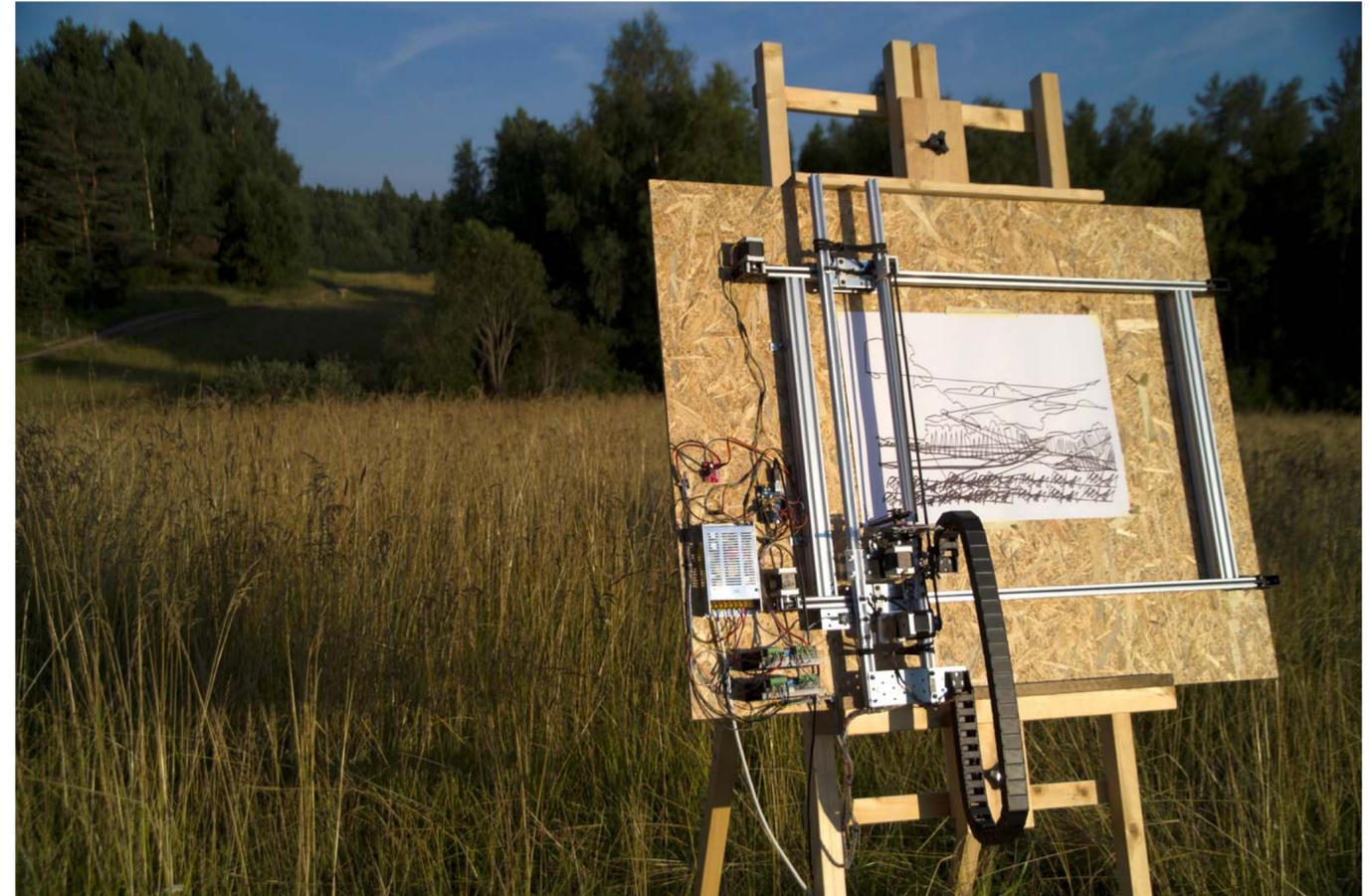
V I

VARVARA & MAR

(Estonia-Spain)

SANNA LEHTINEN

Varvara Guljajeva and Mar Canet observe and show us how different types of technologies play an increasingly central role in mediating our most common experiences. In these recent artworks they employ and collaborate with machine learning and different forms of artificial perception in order to voice ecological concerns using humor to tackle the legitimate fear of new and emerging technologies. As examples of this, the subtle kinetics of an art-inducing AI are employed to reproduce images of plastic bags in the ocean water, or in painted landscapes.



Sunday painter, 2018, Installation, wooden structure, electronics, software, paper, brushes, markers, paint, 225×107×70 cm

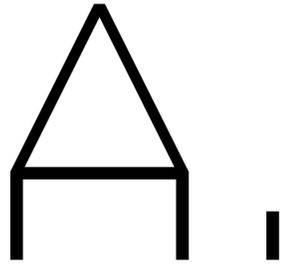
M I



Fantasy of scape, 2019, Installation, 3D-Print, surveillance camera, screen, raspberry Pi, video capture card, aluminum wall mount, 50x40x80 cm



Plastic land, 2019, Installation, 120x20x210.5 cm



ALMAGUL MENLIBAYEVA

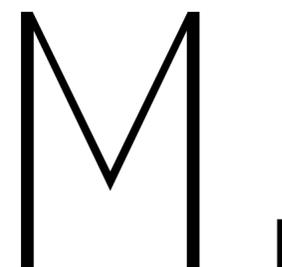
(Kazakhstan-Germany)

ZOLTÁN SOMHEGYI

In the works of the Kazakhstan-born, Berlin-based Almagul Menlibayeva, the viewer can often find an enquiry of self-understanding by the artist through analysing the ways of overcoming the heavy Soviet past of her country in photos and videos shot in the large steppes of Kazakhstan. When re-elaborating the region's history, the artist departs from the concept of "archaic atavism". This is the perspective from which we can interpret her works that deal with the re-invention of personal and collective identity, combining archaic symbols, local context and elements of a ruined modernism.



Red butterfly, 2012, C-print, 71x107 cm





Caspian palms, 2018, Ink jet on archival paper, 71x107 cm



Malevich tank, 2015, Ink jet on archival paper, 71x107 cm

W I

WAWI NAVARROZA

(Philippines)

IZMER BIN AHMAD

These images form a series that explores tapestry as the fabrication and reality of Southeast Asia. While referencing textile as the postcolonial body of the tropics, the compositional strategy also navigates into the memory of sea-faring artists who conspired with their scientific brethren to survey and archive foreign botany in the service of empire from which Tropicality emerged as an environmental other that is simultaneously desired and repulsed, a horror that is so full of life. The artist also employs her own body to exoticize her Tropicality in order to “self-colonize”, as she terms it, both from historical predicaments and medical intimacy. The crutch embalms the duplicitous violence of the body and resistance that props and exposes her otherness as a verticality riveted into the color of life, the red stool that flows towards the ground where her feet blossom under the gaze of memento mori, the delayed promise of death inherent in all organism.



I Want to live a thousand more years, 2016, Self-portrait after dengue, with tropical plants and fake flowers, archival pigment print, 127x102 cm

N I



Start here, A lesson on looking, 2019, Self-portrait with mandarin, 114.3x76.2 cm



Mother, 2019, Still life with blue glass and watermelon, 76.2x60.96 cm

T.

TERE RECARENS

(Spain-Germany)

ZOLTÁN SOMHEGYI

Natural disasters are normally terrible events and cause terrifying experiences; they can nevertheless often become subject-matters of artworks attempting to represent the sublime powers of Nature. In the interactive installation of the Spanish artist Tere Recarens the viewers could themselves decide how to act: different objects were placed on a wooden floor in such a way that through the visitors' movement, and depending on the passing speed, they were on the edge of fall and break. This can also symbolise that very often environmental catastrophes are not at all independent and separable from our own activity in our fragile world.



Terremoto (Earthquake), 1994-2016, Unstable floor with wooden planks, shelves, furniture and fragile objects

R.



Terremoto (Earthquake), 1994-2016, Unstable floor with wooden planks, shelves, furniture and fragile objects



Terremoto (Earthquake), 1994-2016, Unstable floor with wooden planks, shelves, furniture and fragile objects

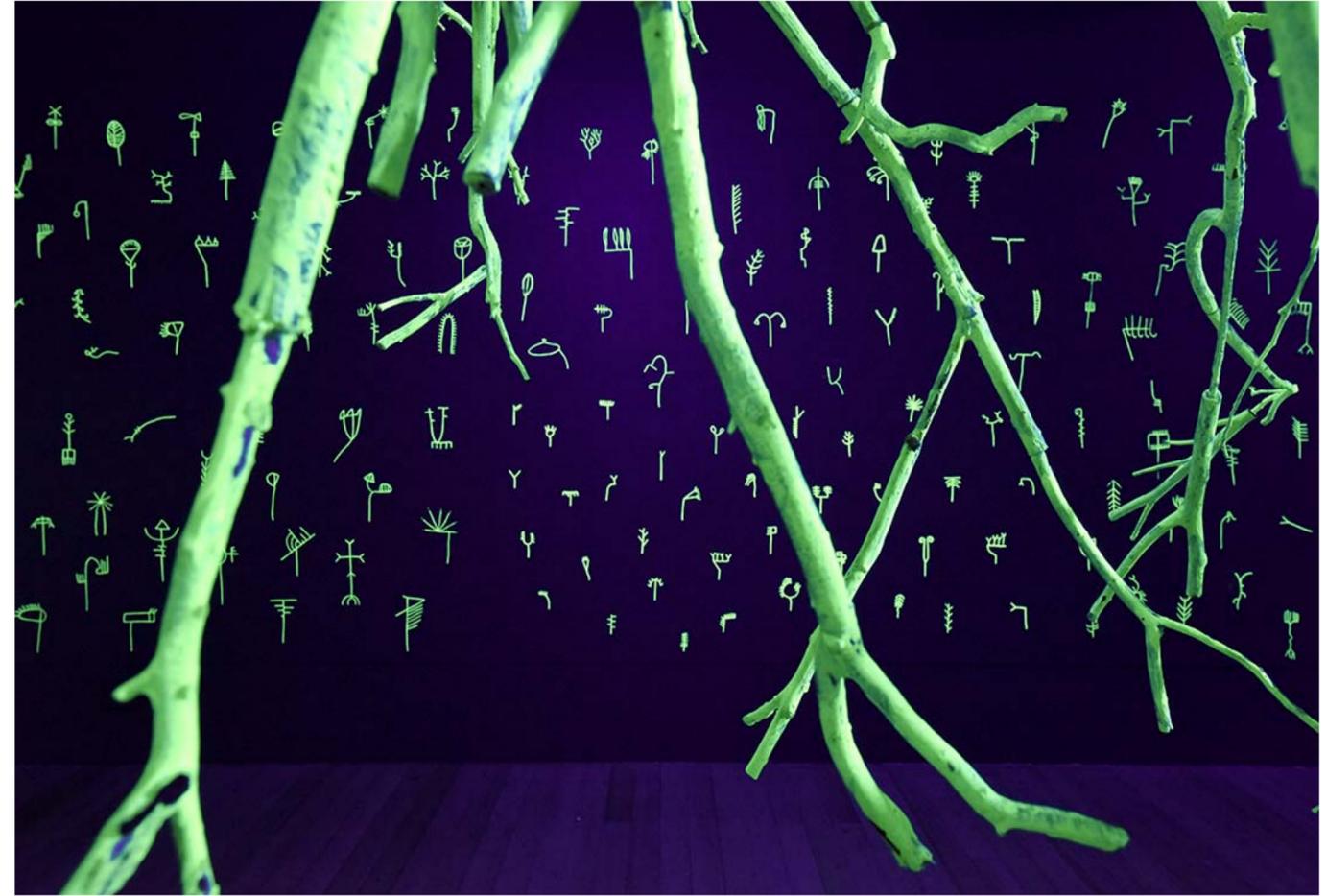
M.

MICHAEL SCHLITZ

(Australia)

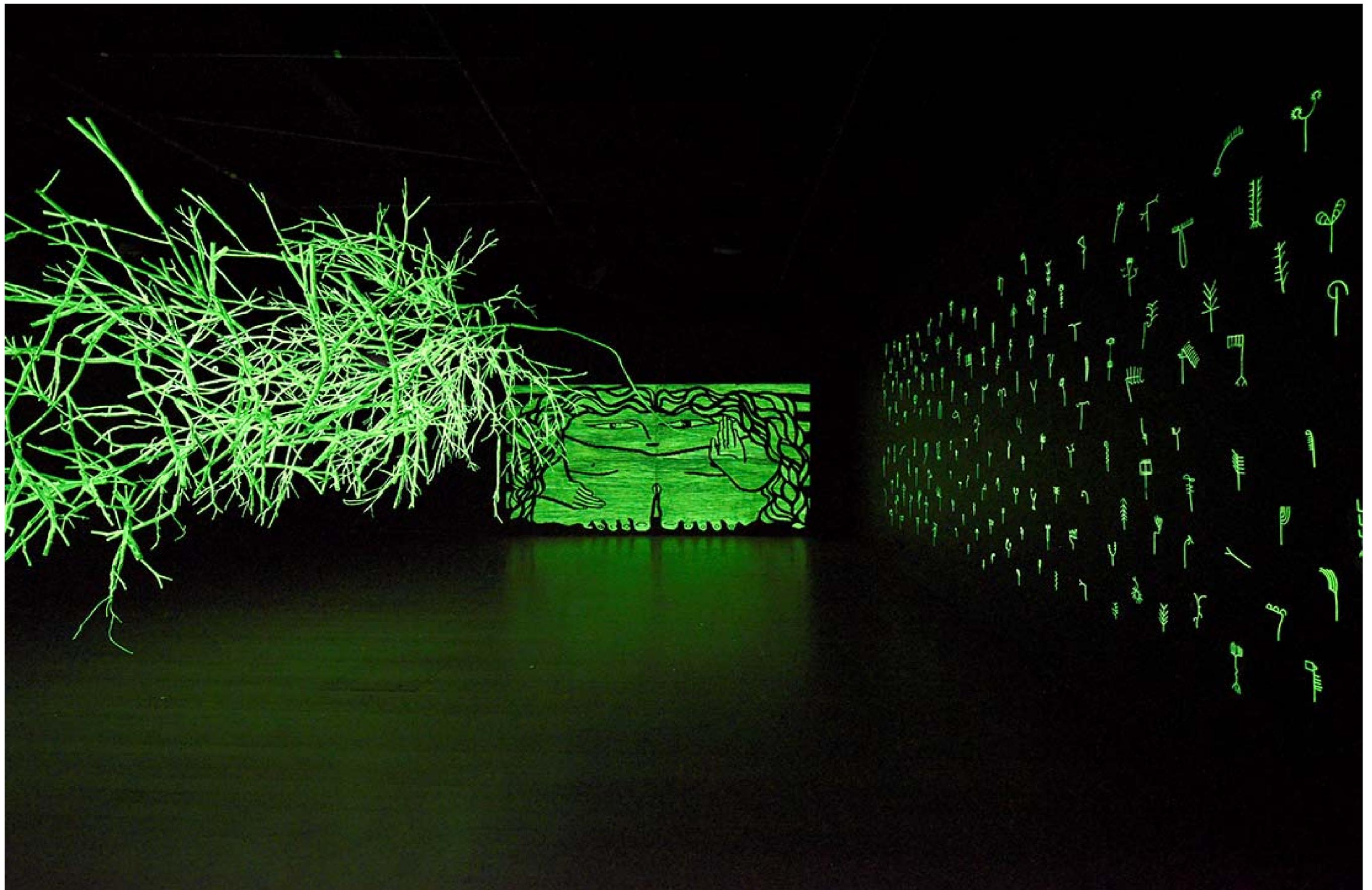
NADIA MEHDI ALHASANI

Oscillating between the unmistakably indigenous images and the enticing wood engravings, there lies the serious matter of mother earth as portrayed by Michael Schlitz. His work is simultaneously light in expression yet heavy with meaning. One is easily drawn to its playful and somewhat primitive disposition. Upon closer inspection the work reveals its true meaning and draws attention to the ongoing plight of environmental degradation. True to his conviction, Schlitz keeps nature represented in a raw and recognizable form. Whether it is a tree stump or twigs, fire or water, earth or air, or fauna or flora, the titles are true depictions of the explored subject. The viewer is free to contemplate the symbols, and reflect internally on its meaning and significance. Ultimately, the artist communicates his advocacy for the environment through an artistic expression embedded in his technique of wood engravings, that is primitive in medium and contemporary in meaning.



Light memory dark ground, 2017, Installation, comprised of various timber twigs from Tasmanian species, carved plywood, glow-in-the-dark paint, acrylic paint and ultraviolet light. Photo by: Lou Conboy

S.



Light memory dark ground, 2017, Installation, comprised of various timber twigs from Tasmanian species, carved plywood, glow-in-the-dark paint, acrylic paint and ultraviolet light. Photo by: Lou Conboy



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