

ARTIST BIO

Bianca Bondi was born in 1986 in Johannesburg, South Africa, currently living and working in Paris, France. Bianca Bondi graduated from l’Ecole Nationale Supérieure d’Arts de Paris-Cergy in 2012. Having previously studied at WITS School of the Arts de Johannesburg.

Multidisciplinary, her practice involves the activation or elevation of mundane objects through the use of chemical reactions, most often by salt water. The materials she works with are chosen for their potential for mutation or their intrinsic and symbolic properties. Her aim being to promote experiences beyond the visual and advocate the life of matter with an emphasis on interconnectivity, transience, and the cycles of life and death. Passionate about ecology and the occult sciences, Bianca Bondi combines the two resulting in pluridisciplinary works of a transformative nature through which the aura of objects is key. Often site specific, the poetic results are very much connected to the places in which they are to exist.

In 2024/2025 Bianca was a fellow at Villa Medici, Rome. In 2025, she was a finalist of the Prix Marcel Duchamp (FR).

Her work has been the subject of solo exhibitions at the Fondazione Palazzo Chigi Zondadari, Siena (IT, 2025); Frieder Burda Museum, Baden-Baden (DE, 2024); Dallas Contemporary, Texas (US, 2023); La Casa Encendida, Madrid (ES, 2023); La Cité des Arts, Saint-Denis, La Réunion (FR, 2023); Crac Occitanie, Sète (FR, 2022); CAP Saint-Fons, Lyon (FR, 2022); Fondation Louis Vuitton, Paris (FR, 2021); Le Voyage à Nantes (FR, 2021); Le Parvis, Tarbes (FR, 2020); Les Limbes, Saint-Étienne (FR, 2018); Hazard, Johannesburg (ZA, 2018); La Cité des Sciences, Paris (FR, 2017); and Villa Belleville, Paris (FR, 2017).

She has also participated in numerous group exhibitions in international institutions such as Museo Sant’Orsola, Firenze (IT, 2025); Musée d’Art Moderne de Paris (FR, 2025); MACRO, Rome (IT, 2025); Villa Medici, Rome (IT, 2025); Fondazione Memmo, Rome (IT, 2024); Noor Festival, Riyadh (SA, 2023); Reiffers Art Initiatives, Paris (FR, 2023); Lafayette Anticipations, Paris (FR, 2023); Kasmin Gallery, New York (US, 2023); Rudolfinum, Prague (CZ, 2022); Frac Franche-Comté, Besançon (FR, 2022); Radius Center for Art & Ecology, Delft (NL, 2022); MAMAC, Nice (FR, 2022); Radicants, Venice (IT, 2022); Villa Olmo, Como (IT, 2022); the 6th edition of Lille 3000 (FR, 2022); Fondation Carmignac, Hyères (FR, 2021); Pera Museum, Istanbul (TR, 2020); Casino Luxembourg (LU, 2020); BOZAR, Brussels (BE, 2019); and Sfer Ik, Tulum (MX, 2019), among others, as well as in the context of the Lyon Biennale (FR, 2019), Busan Biennale (KR, 2020), Thailand Biennale (TH, 2021), and Gwangju Biennale (KR, 2024).

She is represented by mor charpentier.



PHOTO CREDIT: GUILLAUME BLOT

A TEMPORARY SHELTER FOR PERMANENT CONDITIONS

2026

Exposition : *A Temporary Shelter for Permanent Conditions*
Lieu : mor charpentier, Paris (FR)
Dates : January 31 - March 5, 2026
Détails: Solo exhibition

The title of this second solo exhibition at mor charpentier, five years after the previous one, encapsulates the essence of Bianca Bondi’s research by weaving together several thematic strands that shape and redefine much of current visual practice, from posthumanism to ecofeminism and new ecological thinking. *A Temporary Shelter for Permanent Conditions* does not simply evoke these theoretical territories: it absorbs and transforms them, repositioning Bondi’s practice more in the contingency of temporality and, conversely, in the meaning of what endures, of what we perceive as permanent in relation to our own existence.

The title echoes a text by Rebecca Solnit, one of the artist’s major references, entitled Now and Then (Harper’s Magazine, 2017). Solnit begins her reflection by defining the present as that which remains in the memory of those who are still alive, and which only diminishes when the last direct witnesses to an event disappear. As long as these witnesses exist, she writes, ‘the now is something larger than it appears.’ It is precisely this immense yet fragile dimension that Bondi’s works suggest: pieces that circulate freely between scales and formats, engaging a dissonant and vulnerable beauty, made up of ancestral, almost forgotten objects that nevertheless inhabit our historical memory and resurface in our present.

The coexistence of generations, evolution, and social and cultural histories is evident in Bondi’s environmental installations as well as in his sculptural objects. His work goes beyond ecology to closely resemble the posthumanist notion of ‘nomadic subjectivity’ theorised by Rosi Braidó: a way of being that resists fixed identities. This conceptual nomadism describes a subject capable of traversing multiple identities without rigidity, always in relation to other entities, human and non-human, and anchored in the materiality of bodies. The installation occupying the main room of the gallery consists of a salt landscape supporting an unstable tent, held up by salvaged branches, hand-dyed silks crystallised by salt-based chemicals, and roots evoking stalactites, moulded from Salix Tortuosa branches and set with precious stones. The tent is a habitat that rejects permanence: it does not monumentalise. It is an anti-architectural gesture, a way of living that rejects solidity, property, and verticality. The work evokes the fragility of childhood, experiences of displacement, and the primordial need to create a place of protection, whether material or symbolic.

The exhibition embraces the nomadic nature of existence and its vulnerabilities, offering a glimpse into an imperfect and fragile world, marked by inadequate, precarious and deeply contingent physical and conceptual structures.



PHOTO CREDIT: HAFID LHAHMI





PHOTO CREDIT: HAFID LHACHMI



IT HAD SOMETHING TO DO WITH THE TELLING OF TIME / THE LUNAR CALENDAR IS 13 MONTHS / THE FOLDED HOUSE / THE RHYTHM IS INTERNAL / WE HAVE SWALLOWED THE CLOCKS

2025

Show: *Future of Nostalgia*
Venue: Warehouse TERRADA G Building, Tokyo (JP)
Dates: November 5 - November 16, 2025
Details: Site specific installation
Materials: Salt, bronze encrusted with semi-precious stones, crystallized silk
Dimensions: Variable dimensions

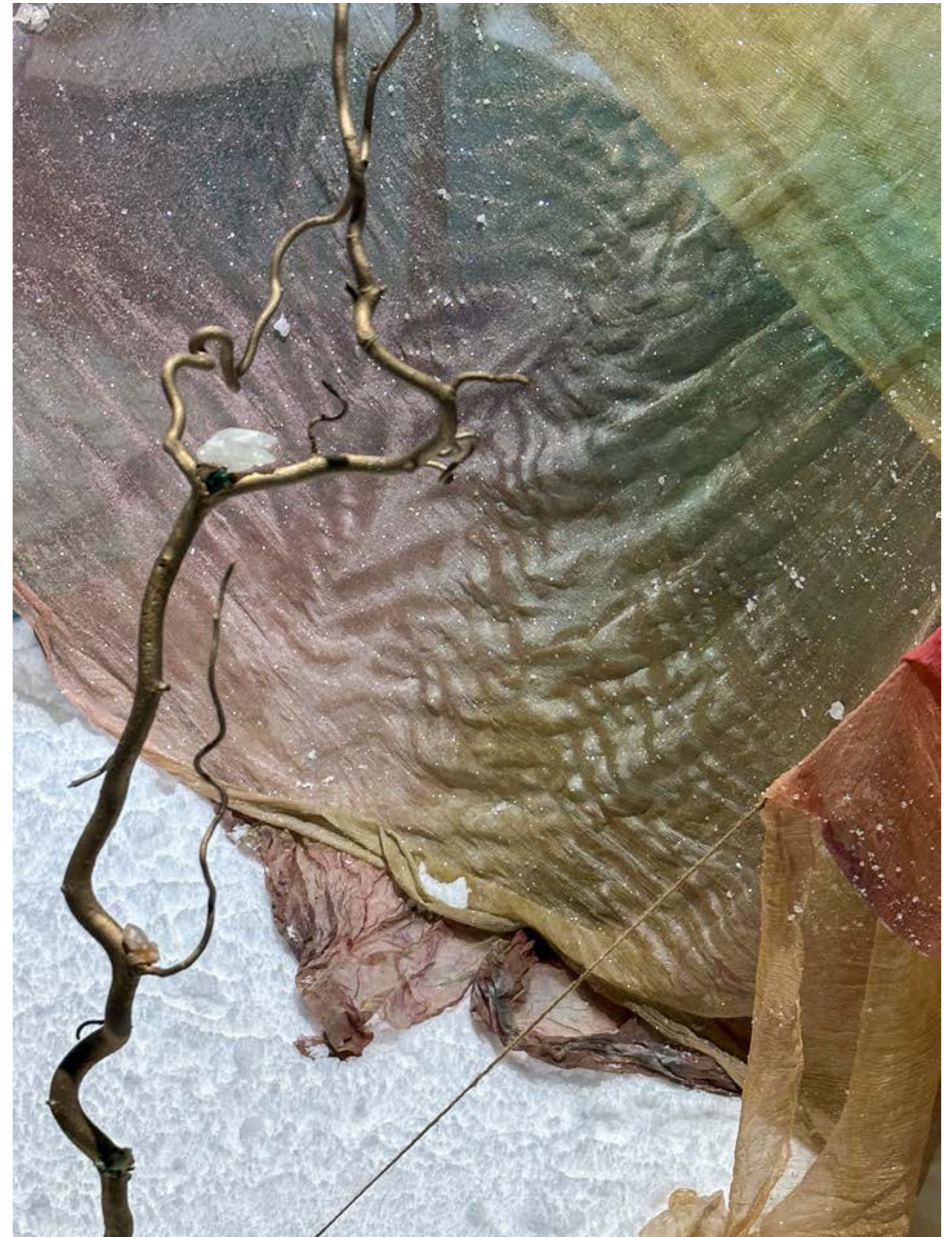




PHOTO CREDIT: TIMOTHÉE LAMBECCQ

GRACES FOR GEROSA

2025

Show: *Orobie Biennial: Thinking Like a Mountain*
Venue: Galleria d'Arte Moderna e Contemporanea di Bergamo (IT)
Dates: October 4, 2025 - January 18, 2025
Details: Site specific installation
Materials: Plaster casting, artificial flowers, salt

Dimensions: Variable dimensions

The work *Graces for Gerosa*—created as part of the Thinking Like a Mountain program (2024–25) promoted by GAMeC – Galleria d’Arte Moderna e Contemporanea di Bergamo—was conceived by artist Bianca Bondi (Johannesburg, 1986) specifically for the deconsecrated Romanesque church of Santa Maria in Montanis. Located in a strategic position, the church stands above the landscape of the Brembilla Valley and the surrounding peaks, overlooking a network of ancient paths that once connected the neighboring valleys. Today, bereft of its religious function, Santa Maria in Montanis still retains all its evocative power. Bondi’s project, developed in dialogue with the sober stone architecture, restores a space full of meaning to the community, accentuating the suspended aura and symbolic vocation of this place.

At the heart of the space is a sculpture group composed of seven life-size figures, made of plaster casts of the bodies of seven volunteers from the village. Each sculpture is created from a direct cast of the body: it is not so much the external surface that is the protagonist, but the interior, which preserves the exact memory of a physical presence. In this way, the empty figures are transformed into true interior sculptures, shells that evoke human fossils, mineralized traces of gesture and movement. Like fossils, they retain the imprint of an existence, restoring the permanence of those who lent their bodies to the work.

In Graces for Gerosa, the reference to a female figure from iconographic tradition—interpreted by historiography as an emblem of *Nachleben der Antike* (“survival of the ancient”)—takes on particular resonance: a dancing maid, light and suspended between corporeality and spirituality. Those same qualities of grace and lightness reappear here, embodied not in an abstract ideal, but in the concrete physicality of the seven volunteers from Gerosa, men and women of various ages. The iconography of the Graces, understood as figures capable of evoking choral and cosmic harmony, thus finds new life in the collectivity of the work, where the human body becomes a medium connecting the earthly and the immaterial, actualizing the continuity of gesture and form through time. The movements, while referencing famous depictions of collective dance in art history—from Botticelli’s Three Graces in *Primavera* (1482) to the female figures in Mantegna’s *Parnassus* (1497) and the Etruscan ritual scenes in the Tomb of the Triclinium (5th century BC)—meet and transform in the bodies of the seven inhabitants of Gerosa who chose to lend themselves to the work: unique bodies, with their own potential and expressiveness, rewriting the original model.



PHOTO CREDIT: NICOLA GNESI STUDIO

SILENT HOUSE

2025

Show: Prix Marcel Duchamp
Venue: Musée d’Art Moderne de Paris (FR)
Dates: September 26, 2025 - February 22, 2026
Details: Site specific installation
Materials: Mixed media (antique furniture, burnt wood, metal, various objects, etc.), preserved vegetation and salt
Dimensions: Variable dimensions

In the immersive installation *Silent House*, the artist reconstructs a fragmented interior – bed, cupboard, chair – with pieces of furniture hung on the walls or placed on the floor. Some objects, positioned vertically, introduce a sense of strangeness, disrupting our usual points of reference. The rooms are empty but charged with past presences. Their surfaces, marked by oxidation, salt, crystals or fire, reveal a process of accumulation or slow dehydration, like a memory formed by layers, non-linear.

The work offers a vision of a domestic space in limbo, reflecting a world where notions of security and stability are faltering. The artist questions the vulnerability of our places of refuge in times of climate, social and geopolitical crises. Yet within this mineral landscape, a root or a branch sometimes emerges, like a faint sign of possible renewal, of a discreet but persistent resilience.



PHOTO CREDIT: NICOLAS BRASSEUR





PHOTO CREDIT: NICOLAS BRASSEUR





FOREST BATHING

2024

Show:

Venue:

Dates:

Materials:

Dimensions:

Clear-skies Country

Forest Festival of the Arts Okayama (JP)

September 28 - November 24, 2024

Antique pharmacy cabinets, found objects, salt, various saline and herbal solutions, oxidation on silk, fresh lemongrass, mint and other local herbs, fern, forest moss

Variable dimensions

We now know that forests release antimicrobial essential oils called phytoncides. These oils enhance mood and boost immune system function, while reducing blood pressure, heart rate, stress, anxiety, and confusion. They also improve sleep and foster creativity. Forest Medicine is an emerging interdisciplinary science within preventive medicine that explores the health benefits of forest environments.

The concept of forest medicine originated in Japan. Known as Shinrin-yoku or “forest bathing,” it involves immersing oneself in nature and engaging the senses of sight, hearing, taste, smell, and touch. By opening our senses, this practice bridges the gap between humans and the natural world.

Forest Bathing is represented here through three healing rooms within the upper level of the José Romance Hall, a former medical center repurposed as a cultural centre. The experience is profoundly sensory: visitors smell fresh herbs and moss even before entering.

Moss, often overlooked as simple and primitive, plays a vital role in maintaining ecosystem balance. These extraordinary organisms sequester carbon, support biodiversity, and absorb heavy metals and pollutants, thereby purifying air and water. Medicinally, moss has been used for over a thousand years, particularly in treating surface wounds before the advent of sterile gauze and modern antibiotics. Sphagnum moss, the most common type, can absorb up to 22 times its weight in liquid, making it twice as absorbent as cotton.

As visitors move from room to room, they encounter medical cabinets mounted on the walls. These cabinets, spanning various eras but aquired either in Japan or France, reflect a blend of traditional Western and Eastern medicine—a timeless homage to humanity’s quest for healing. Some cabinets contain bottles with crystallized liquids or sprouting grains; others display peculiar artifacts.

The Tsuyama Castle is visible from the window of the Antechamber. This architectural detail was designed to frame the castle, allowing visitors to appreciate its beauty while waiting. As Atsuhiko Miyake noted in an email: “The windows in the waiting area of the drawing room were designed to capture Tsuyama Castle in the center so that visitors could enjoy the scenery while waiting. Through this festival, we also wish to highlight the relationship and context between the venue, the city, and its landscape.”

In collaboration with Emi Photo Studio, the middle room features wallpaper depicting an archival view of the same framed scene outside the window, but from a time when the city was predominantly farmland.



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SALT KISSES MY LICHENS AWAY 2024

Show:	I Feel the Earth Whisper
Venue:	Museum Frieder Burda, Baden-Baden (DE)
Dates:	June 15 - November 3, 2024
Materials:	Tapestries: (Jacquard Tapestry, created at the Neolice workshop - Felletin); wool, silk, cotton, various objects, stabilized flowers Installation: composed of a daybed, forest wood, brass bowls, moss, synthetic hair, teeth, bronze, salt, burnt wood, thermal water etc
Dimensions:	Tapestries: Approximately 100 x 80 cm (each) Installation: Variable dimensions

The *Lorelei* series of tapestries were created for the solo show, Salt licks my lichens away, at the Frieder Burda Museum in Germany. They take their inspiration from the legends of the thermal town itself and the surrounding Black Forest.

“Upon researching the various legends, they started to blend into each other which begs the question of what the purpose of legends were and what have they become. Our ancestors passed on legends to explain natural phenomena, to preserve cultural legacy, to pass on moral or ethical lessons etc but then sometimes legends were just stories to entertain and inspire dreaming.” Bianca Bondi says.

The tapestries all come from the same initial visual: antique copper amphores soaking in salt water among sea debris in the studio. The image has been manipulated so that the same image becomes multiple different images, again re-iterating how one source can be the spark for many different results.

“The legends of this region are rich and speak of mischievous young maidens, heroes and dragons, sacred healing waters, forests and elves, and widowed women turned white ghosts. I have picked out certain common elements and elaborated on aspects of them - for example instead of the dragon itself, I have kept only its teeth, of the haunting widows I have placed an antique theatrical tragedy mask with a preserved bright red lily for a tongue; there is some seaweed hair, and the waters of the abyss from which all these creatures arise has been bottled. By borrowing the visuals from these legends, expanding on them and recontextualizing, I am laying the groundwork for new fictions to enchant us with their strangeness.”



PHOTO CREDIT: NIKOLAY KAZAKOV



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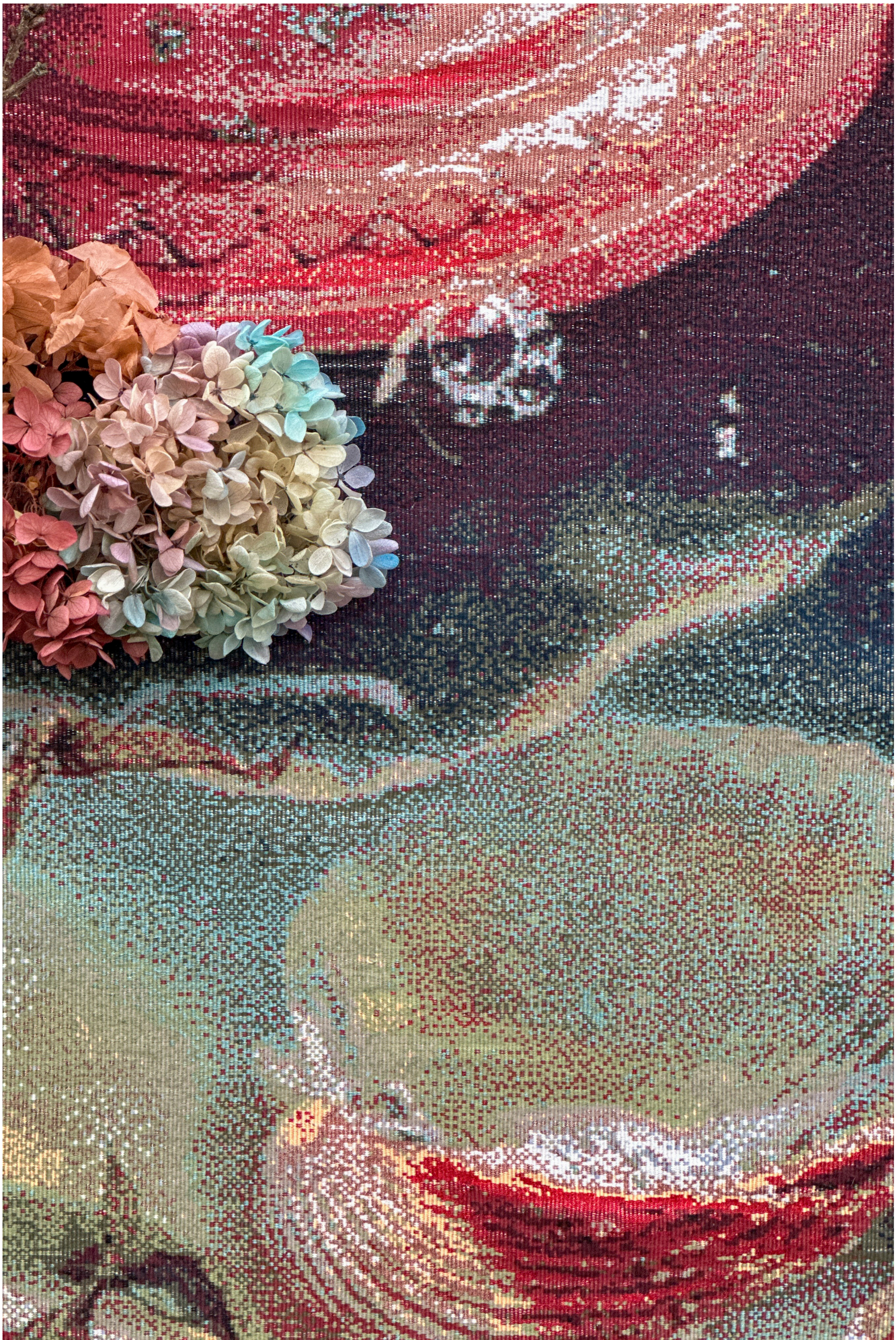


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INCANTARE 2024

Show:	<i>Re-enchantment</i>
Venue:	Galerie Thaddaeus Ropac, Pantin (FR)
Dates:	February 17 - May 11, 2024
Materials:	3 tonnes of sand, Five corten steel bowls (between 60 and 80 cm diameter), tinted salt water, stabilised vegetation The mobiles : Brass and found fragments - Roman and Greek empire antique glass shards, twigs, beads, various animal bones, bronze fragments, amethyst, aquamarine and other unpolished precious stones, stabilised flowers (orchids, hydrangeas) alun potassium crystals
Dimensions:	Variable dimensions

Bianca Bondi has investigated the history of spell casting, which often took the form of whispers said to travel faster on the wind, with spells amplified by elemental forces. This idea around the transmission of words led her to research oral history and fairy tales. Bianca Bondi recently finished a residency in the Middle East and this inspired her to revisit the tale of Arabian Nights in which Sherazade saves herself and the women of the entire kingdom from a murderer king through her captivating story-telling.

In Pantin, Bianca Bondi has created a desert-like dreamscape. Nestled in the sand dune are metal bowls pouring out mineral matter and creating tentacular and natural forms. The vines growing around the bowls sometimes reach upwards towards the wind chime sculptures. These mobile sculptures are a mix of repurposed chandelier crystals and crystallised vegetal matter. Suspended from the ceiling, they catch the light and dance it across the room, spelling casting in the exhibition space through “wind” that we could imagine. Bianca Bondi states ‘There are no Arabian winds blowing into the gallery, no plants are actually growing, but we can imagine the scene as we find ourselves confronted with the suspension of disbelief. And this scene will transport us to the realm of enchantment where alternate realities arm us with the tools to better face the reality in which we live.’

— Oona Doyle (curator, Galerie Thaddaeus Ropac)



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A PRESERVATION METHOD

2023

Show: *Bianca Bondi: A Preservation Method*
Venue: Dallas Contemporary, Dallas (US)
Dates: November 17, 2023 - April 17, 2024
Details: Site specific installation
Materials: Billboard parts, stabilised vegetation, salt, soundscape
Dimensions: Variable dimensions

Bianca Bondi’s practice explores cycles of rebirth and regeneration through the use of chemical reactions, predominately by salt water. Revered throughout history for both its remarkable healing properties and as a preservation method that revolutionized the availability of proper nourishment, salt stands as a symbol for the artist’s interest in lifecycles and ecology. Bondi’s approach manifests in monumental and immersive site-specific installations.

As preparation for her first solo exhibition in the United States, Bondi researched the state’s environmental history and found The Highway Beautification Act of 1965. Passed by Texan President Lyndon B Johnson, it was named after his wife, Lady Bird Johnson, and her passion for the environment. The act was intended to prohibit the erecting of billboards in order to preserve the native plants and wildlife already under risk by the building of highway infrastructure.

Considering where these advertising structures and other monumental trash reside once discarded, Bondi fabricated an abandoned billboard in the gallery, displaying its carcass as a relic of the commercial world in a post-apocalyptic scene. Acidic colors seep into six metric tonnes of salt, carving pathways of toxins around the scrap metal. Indigenous flora and fauna from the state emerge from the white mounds, signifying nature’s inherent capacity for self-healing. A soundscape plays recordings of the intersection of urban and wildlife habitats, recorded at the last remnant of the Blackland Prairie that once covered the Dallas area, the Frankland Preservation.

With this work, Bianca Bondi spotlights land as witness to mankind’s destruction and forgotten laws, but not a silent one. The artist’s multi-sensory artificial environment serves as a poignant reminder that the natural world persists beneath and amidst our bustling urban landscapes, emphasizing our collective capacity to liberate this invaluable terrain.

— Emily Edwards (Assistant curator, Dallas Contemporary)



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PHOTO CREDIT: KEVIN TODORA



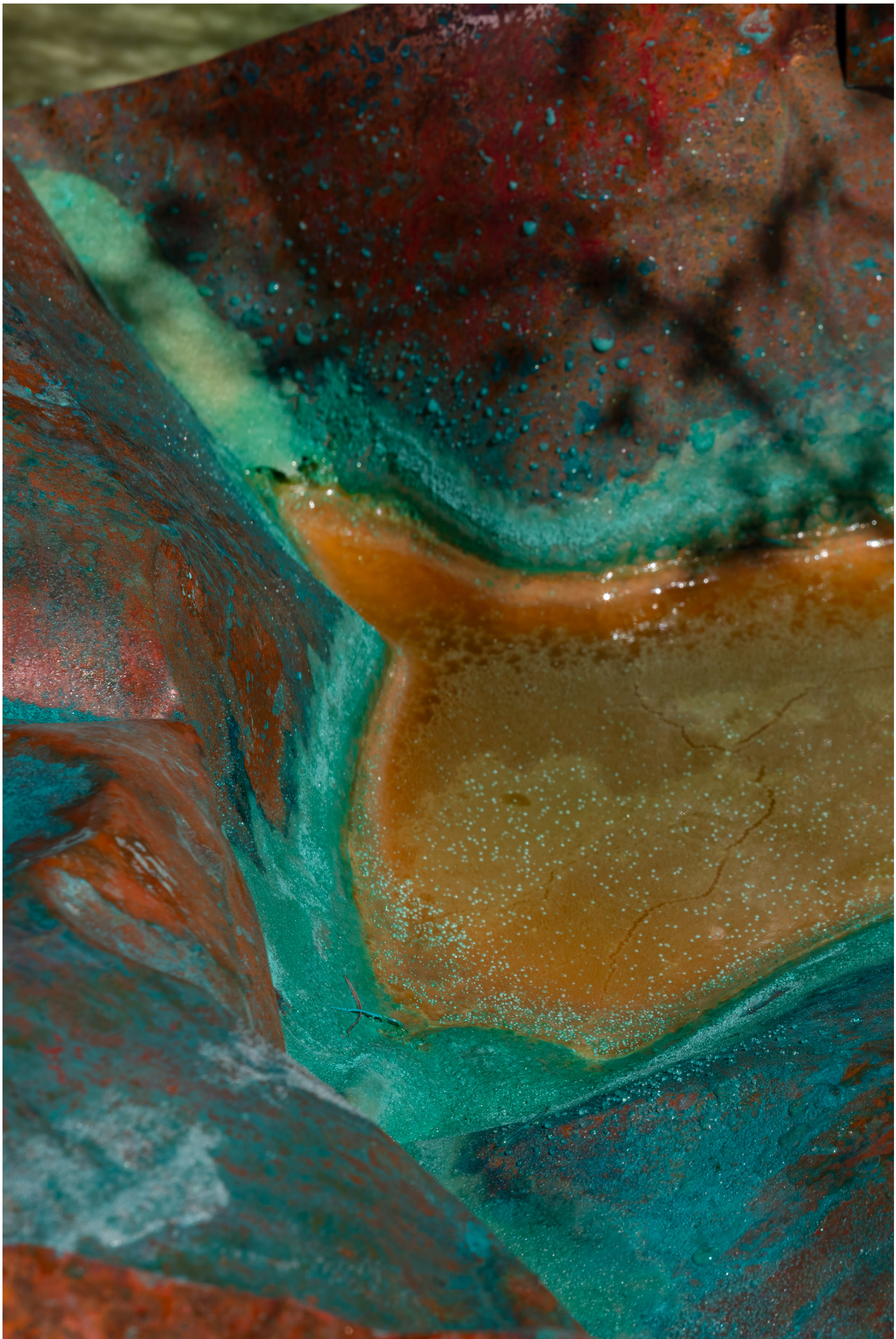
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PHOTO CREDIT: KEVIN TODORA



WARM IN THE WATER

2023

Show: *Infiltrées – 5 manières d’habiter le monde*
Venue: Reiffers Art Center, Paris (FR)
Dates: May 12 – June 16, 2023
Details: 2nd Reiffers Art Initiatives Prize
Materials: Jacquard tapestry: wool, sequins, silk, cotton, copper, salt, wood and stabilized flowers
Dimensions: 240 x 160 cm

This series of tapestries is the result of a collaboration with the prestigious Manufacture d’Aubusson, and Bianca Bondi’s first experimentation with this medium. Here, the traditional tapestry carton is replaced by a digital photograph taken during the artist’s last exhibition at mor charpentier, and the motif is then woven using a combination of silk, cotton and wool threads.

“One of the interesting aspects about translating a photographic image into a woven material is the literal softening that occurs. To weave an image is of course also an act of mending. This inspired me to look at images of various accumulations of oxidation in my work, especially with salt. Salt is an element too often associated with deterioration although it simultaneously has the potential to preserve, protect, and above all to heal. When we think of salt, the grainy coarse texture is what comes to mind. These aspects were great starting “transformative” points for me. The idea is to take an image that represents a proliferation of salt crystals on organic matter and mirror it in order to abstract it which would add a dimension of strangeness but also aesthetic harmony.

I also decided to leave parts of the image thread-bare in order to hand weave in alternative elements such as synthetic hair and stabilized flowers such as amaranths, jasmine, or hydrangea, which have fabulous texture and create a cascading effect. What interests me here beyond the aesthetic capabilities of these flowers, are their various cultural associations such as plants for spiritual communication.

The work was conceived as a “healing talisman” inspired by talismanic carpets that integrate mirrors — the mirror or mirror image long revered as a direct channel to the subconscious mind or to an alternate reality. Instead of integrating actual mirrors, I created a mirror image from the studio and then integrated a bowl of salt water which can be used for scrying purposes (the act of reading the future in reflective surfaces such as polished metal).”



PHOTO CREDIT: AURÉLIEN MOLE

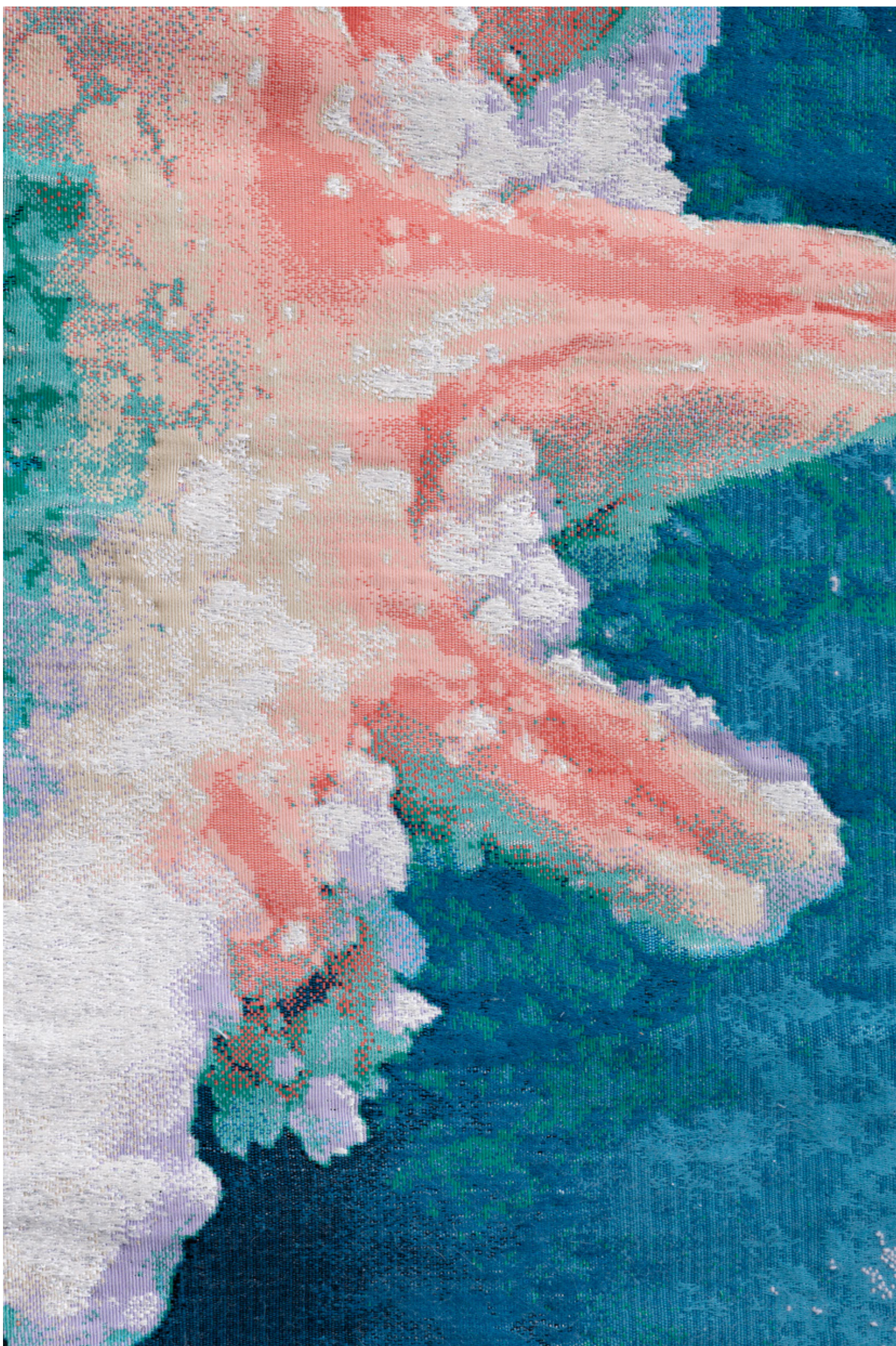


PHOTO CREDIT: AURÉLIEN MOLE

SCRYING IN ASTRAL PONDS

2022

Show: *Devenir Fleur / Bianca Bondi. Scrying in Astral Ponds*
Venue: MAMAC, Nice (FR) / La Casa Encendida, Madrid (ES)
Dates: November 10, 2022 – April 30, 2023 / October 6, 2023 – January 7, 2024
Materials: Sea water, pigment, metal bowls, brass and velvet bench, medicinal plants and stabilized natural vegetation
Dimensions: Variable dimensions

In *Scrying in Astral Ponds*, Bianca Bondi crystallizes time to create an ecosystem incorporating stabilized vegetation, and salt water, conjuring up a transformative micro universe of colors and textures that invite us through an ancient ritual to entertain visions and smells that may not physically be present. This landscape of surreal materials and colors is a call to meditate on the fragile, porous and irreversible relationships linking humanity and the environment. At the frontier between the natural and the artificial, the terrestrial and the cosmic, the visible and the invisible, this work gives us a sense of the respective capacities of humans, plants, minerals and water to heal and cure. Thus echoing a form of resistance, a form of endurance.

This immersive work is inspired by the occult practice of ‘scrying’, an ancient art of revelation that connects us to the world of the Invisible. Scrying is performed using a reflective surface - a mirror, a body of water, a crystal globe. Here, the artist has created a landscape of seven pools of salt water inspired by Wiccan daisy chains; flowers of protection from pre-Christian pagan spiritual practices. These pools of water are home to a surprising syncretism of objects and materials that are activated in the saline solution created by the artist. Copper coins, flowers and shells are immersed in these aqueous environments to evolve over the course of the exhibition. Enveloping the installation, are monumental floral compositions in hyper real colors. A touch of the unreal embedded within reality, as although the flowers are natural, they have been stabilized through a chemical process which lends them a malleability and tonal palette that is heightened.

A bench nestled within the installation invites you to sit down and take your time. Slowness is equal to attentiveness, and it’s in these moments of being still where we allow ourselves to better connect - with our inner selves, within our ecology.. In this manner, this work relates to the concept of ecological resilience, a collective, non-linear process that develops through interactions among people or people and their environment. Manipulations of the living, conservation, care, visions of memory and futuristic projections intertwine to create privileged time-spaces that are sensory, curative and dreamlike.

Bianca Bondi’s works here are active, lively and endowed with a capacity to transform negative waves into positive energies. They introduce and connect us to that part of us that extends beyond ourselves: the aura. And, in so doing, they bend our reality to the laws of the supernatural and the Invisible world.. With *Scrying in astral ponds*, Bianca Bondi gives us access to a precious secret: the world is a series of realms each which are intimately linked.



PHOTO CREDIT: JEAN-CHRISTOPHE LETT



PHOTO CREDIT: MARU SERRANO

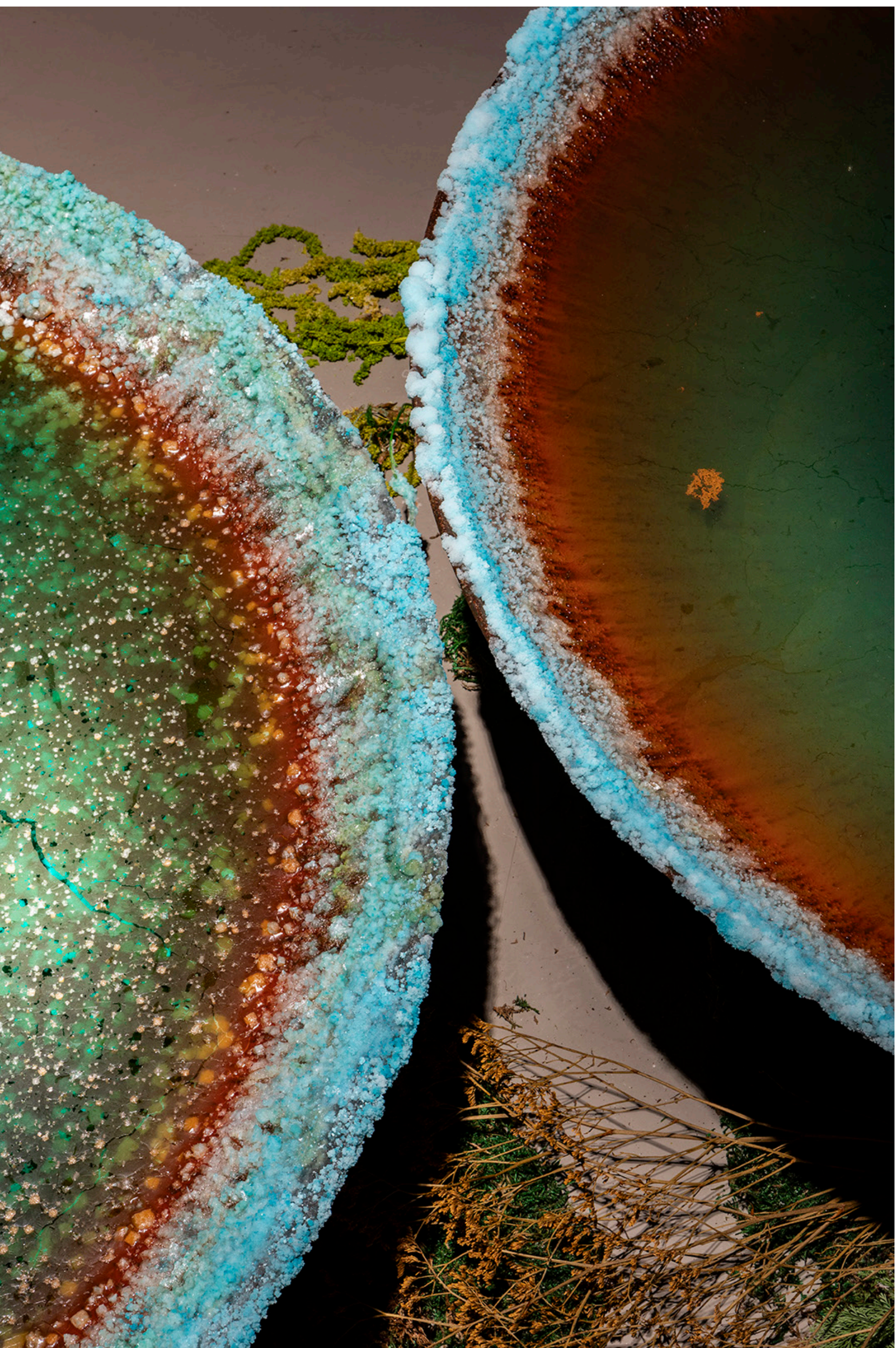


PHOTO CREDIT: ARTURO LASO

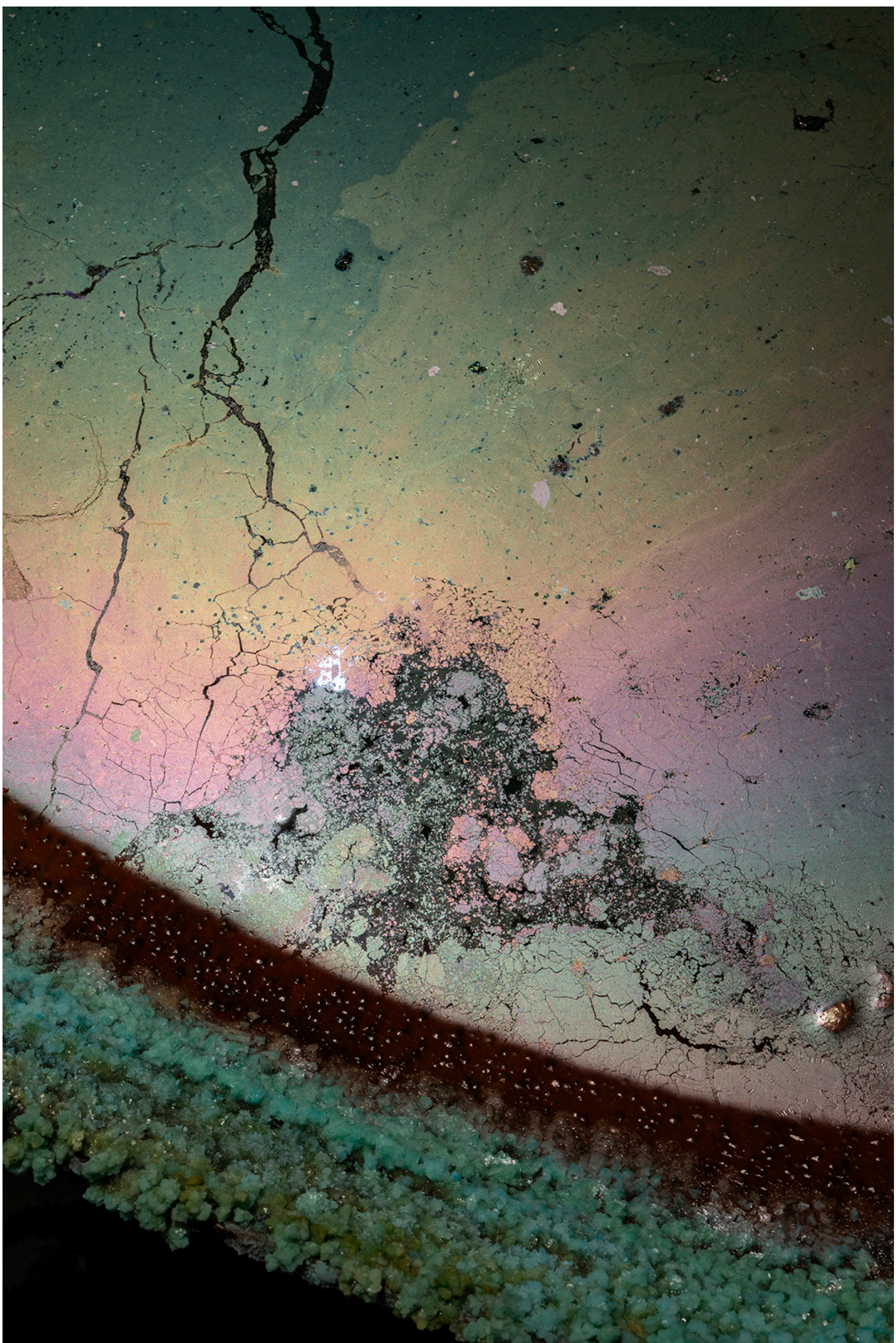




PHOTO CREDIT: MARU SERRANO

LILITH

2022

Show: *Lilith*
Venue: Former sewing factory ‘Lelija’ - Rupert Public Programme, Vilnius (LT)
Dates: May 27 – July 2, 2022
Materials: Medical rooms, salt and saline solutions, poppy heads, fern
Dimensions: Variable dimensions

The Lelija factory, established in 1946, has a rich history as a women’s sewing factory and continues to stand as a symbol of resilience through decades of transformation. Within this complex, the installation is situated specifically in the former infirmary.

The infirmary, closed since 2018, once housed three doctors, including a gynecologist. Much of the equipment, as well as medicine, was left behind, scattered alongside administrative forms, outdated books, unopened apparatus, and deteriorating plastics.

What sets this space apart is its peculiarity as one of the few abandoned environments still harboring such an abundance of objects—‘living’ testaments to its history. Of particular interest is the recurring motif of the snake, which holds symbolic resonance. Snakes, painted on the infirmary’s windowpanes, now peeling and weathered, cast dramatic shadows across the room dividers at around three o’clock in the afternoon. These transient shadows leave a bolder imprint on the scene than the original, physical images.

The snake, long associated with the duality of medicine—to harm or to heal—also evokes the figure of Lilith. As Susan Scott, Jungian analyst and author of *In Praise of Lilith, Eve and the Serpent in the Garden of Eden and Other Stories*, writes: “[She] challenged the patriarchal view that women were to be ‘obedient’ [...] There was no more symbolic way than to put on a new skin and arrive as a serpent, the wisest of creatures. She would live life in abandon but not in abandonment [...] That which can kill can also cure. Bringing Lilith out of the shadows and acknowledging all sides of her is a step towards healing and wholeness.”

The installation, reflects the layered history of this space, its ongoing evolution, and the interwoven realities that define the site. The animistic vitality of the room has allowed it to endure decades of tumultuous change while supporting various eco(nomic) systems. From the grandiose uniformity of the Soviet era to the chaotic choreography of capitalism, the factory complex continues to serve as a testament to resilience.

By emphasizing the connection between materiality, vitality, and speculation, the installation introduces a new layer to the site’s narrative. Where once dust and the hum of machinery marked the dominance of economic production, the re-appropriation of objects through processes such as oxidation, calcification, dripping, ossification, and growth transforms the space. This approach renders a vision of metamorphic storytelling, enriching the already distinct fabric of Lelija.



PHOTO CREDIT: GRETA STIKELYTE



PHOTO CREDIT: LAURYNAS SKESGELA

SOURCE AND ORIGIN

with Guillaume Bouisset, 2022

Show:	Source & Origin
Venue:	91530 Le Marais, Le Val Saint-Germain (FR)
Dates:	June 26, 2022 - June 2023
Details:	A site specific work
Materials:	Earth, salt, water, halobacteria, dead trees, granite, LED grow lamp
Dimensions:	Variable dimensions

Each of our senses are summoned as soon as we enter this historic barn in the Marais. The eye adjusts to the natural darkness and gradually detects a new and mysterious horizon, almost tangible by the diffuse heat emanating from a solitary lamp, heating a blanket of aqueous pink. Components of a mental landscape—unidentified in time and space.

It is within the ground itself that Bianca Bondi and Guillaume Bouisset, in this first collective work, dug a basin—a small mineral pond in which to shelter creation. And here, a primary life form evolves before our eyes: halobacteria, extreme halophiles belonging to the taxonomic classification of archaea. These unicellular microorganisms, from the Camargue salt marshes, are framed by a crystalline crust of salt, forming a barrier between the pink liquid and the raw earth. Being extremophiles, these halobacteria are characterized by their great resilience: everything in their being is geared towards survival. Proliferating in salt water, they feed on carbon, and light. The lone lamp appears to provide the basic requirements for their well-being and reproduction; thus sketches out a study of support for the most primitive and archaic of life forms.

Could this fascinating but fragile eco-system be a fountain of youth? The pink color of these microscopic halobacteria comes from the concentration of carotenoids they produce: antioxidants, necessary and beneficial for the balance of the human body, suggesting a possible ingredient in man’s eternal quest to push the limits of aging. Essential components for ecological harmony, halobacteria use their metabolism to counter balance the carbon emitted into the atmosphere. Their sulfate-reducing powers, allowing for the degradation of heavy metals, play an essential role in a progressive de-pollution of the environment. Primary life or perpetual life, this organism tells of the power of the infinitely small.

Is this the landscape of an original paradise, or that of a desert world, where only the carefree life of the halobacterium persists? It seems the meeting place of the duality of the two artists, where a dialogue between light and earth, horizontal and vertical, and dichotomous but complementary forces are born, and finally merge. Composed of elements found in the local environment of the Marais, the plant microcosm that frames the halobacteria invites new contemplation, like a Zen garden. This small distant country, giving this old grain barn the air of a temple, exists in us like a mental mirage. A massive and vertical stone overhangs this silent and sacred laboratory; while a thin dead tree represents a momentum towards the sky. Alongside it, we are similar—unconscious but blissful witnesses to a cycle of life.



PHOTO CREDIT: GREGORY COPITET



PHOTO CREDIT: PERSONAL ARCHIVE

VANILLA OXIDE

2022

Show:	<i>Vanilla Oxide</i>
Venue:	Centre d’art de Saint-Fons (FR)
Dates:	January 29 - March 5, 2022
Details:	Discarded furniture from the basements of the art venue, salt and various other salt based chemicals, Achillea, Amaranths, Fennel flowers; scent of true vanilla by Yann Vasnier (Givaudan)
Materials:	
Dimensions:	Variable dimensions

Vanilla Oxide brings two worlds together; the one of chemical reactions – oxidation, solidification crystallization – recurring events in the artist’s creative process – as well as vanilla, whose artificial synthetic powder is produced in an historical factory a few hundred meters from the art center. Bondi evokes the many lives and meanings of vanilla; its ritual use in ancient times as well as its exploitation today resonating with globalization, ecology or feminism, all subjects at the heart of the artists’ practice. Used by the Aztecs as a ritual brew to connects with the gods, vanilla has become an ordinary flavor today, since its global appearance and the large-scale production of its artificial counterpart and it is present everywhere from cosmetic to food processing industry and even in activism. The scent of vanilla spreading in the city of Saint-Fons – a key product of the local industry – is opposed to the rare and precious one used for he exhibition and produced in collaboration with Givaudan.

“I decided to use a pure essence of vanilla, in opposition to the artificial one that can be found around here and pretty much anywhere. It is a way to reenchant the mundane – envouter l’ordinaire. Associating this rare and precious element contrasts with the objects I used for the exhibition. These are mostly ordinary found objects directly taken from the surroundings, a kind of contextual ready-made. These are ruins and sculptures at the same time, objects witnessing the past and the present history of this city and of the art center”, Bondi explains. Bondi gathers a whole set of found objects witnessing the passing of time and showing the layers of local history: the past of the industrial working-class city, a newly built and quickly abandoned school, the contemporary art center... Every object is a memento of the past; a time capsule bridging the past, the present and the future, offering a new narrative deployed in the exhibition space. Bianca Bondi creates a symbiotic relation linking the objects and recreating an ecosystem where everything is connected through a progressive and gradual transformation ongoing throughout the duration of the exhibition.

Bondi’s installations are nurtured by the notion of Chthulucène, environment and ecology theories as in Anna Tsing’s writings or Jane Bennet. They offer a new narrative; healing the existent and defying the ruins. Echoing the symbolic and ever-changing patterns of Haraway’s string figures, Bianca Bondi’s sculptures draw a new set of potential narratives in the exhibition space because “it is our imagination at work from the real. It explores its depths in order to open up all the possible worlds”. Bondi’s works are altars for rituals of the future.

— Alessandra Prandin (Director and curator CAP St Fons)



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THE DAYDREAM

2021

Show:	<i>La vie à elle-même</i>
Venue:	Centre International d’Art et du Paysage Vassivière, Beaumont-du-Lac (FR)
Dates:	June 13 - September 5, 2021
Details:	Site specific installation, Open space, Louis Vuitton Foundation, Paris
Materials:	Mixed media, (salt, rainwater, bird bones, shells, stabilised vegetation...); soundtrack, and scent
Dimensions:	Variable dimensions
Sound Design:	Jenn Hutt (Musician), Marc-Antoine Perrio (Guitar)
Floral Design:	Tara Msellati
Olfactive Ambiance:	Yann Vasnier, Perfumer (Givaudan)

Ephemeral, poetic, and in perpetual metamorphosis, Bianca Bondi’s hybrid works result from the meeting of objects with organic and inorganic materials, selected for their symbolic aura. For *Open Space #8*, Bianca Bondi has transformed the gallery into an artificial landscape composed of natural elements. This interior garden – inspired by sacred springs, such as Mexican cenotes – offers a multisensory immersion. Pursuing her interest in ritual practices, offerings and the occult, the artist evokes the act of “scrying” or the ancient art of divination connecting us to the invisible world. A place of meditation, conducive to reflection and reverie, *The Daydream* invites us, according to the artist, to experience “the surreal anchored within the real.”

“I’ve imagined *The Daydream* as a garden-like space. We are met with hydrangeas, fine bleach bone-like ferns, amaranths, eucalyptus, and algae-like leaves spiraling downwards. The heart of the installation is a sculpture with a cascade of colored ponds, seashells, and bird bones. We are accompanied by a soundtrack, in which we recognize distant water and birdsong, a raw guitar and the ripple effect; and on a rare, occasion there is silence. *The Daydream* has a mineral, earthy yet slightly minty smell; it is an invitation to breathe deeply, to slow down and take your time.

The title is a reference to the liminal moment of dreaming with eyes open. There exists a transitional stage of dreaming while still awake, the scientific term is hypnagogia: it is a moment of threshold consciousness where lucid dreaming can occur. In this project, I wanted to continue exploring the concept of daydreaming, which allows our mind to drift.”



PHOTO CREDIT: MARC DOMAGE



PHOTO CREDIT: MARC DOMAGE



THE FALL AND RISE

2021

Show: *Le musée-valise : La Mer imaginaire*
Venue: Fondation Carmignac, Hyères (FR)
Dates: May 20, 2021 - October 17, 2021
Details: Site specific installation
Materials: Mixed media (cristilised whale skeleton replica, salt)
Dimensions: Various dimensions

In part because of the massive size of whales, scientists have long speculated on the ecological effects of whale carcasses sinking to the deep-ocean floor. When great whales die at sea, their bodies shuttle carbon down to the seafloor. Each sinking whale carcass sequesters an average of 33 tonnes of CO₂. The falls of large whales are vast sources of labile organic matter which end up on the deep-sea floor and provide rare minerals and gases to an array of lifeforms that would not have access otherwise. Whale falls become ecosystems unto themselves.

The Fall and Rise (2021) a site-specific 12 metre long whale skeleton, frankensteined together from several different species, some currently living, others from the dinosaur era. This chimeric creature hangs upside down from the museums ceiling, a supine attitude of death but also a suspended position of resurrection - an embodied collapse of the line between life and death, an elegant affront to the linearity of time.

A series of dolphins were created after the whale to continue in this acknowledgement of energy transferral. That an ending can also be a beginning again - from these (natural) deaths, other forms of life emerge.





THE ANTECHAMBER (TUNDRA SWAN)

2020

Show: *Words at an Exhibition*
Venue: Busan Biennale, MoCA Busan (KR)
Dates: September 5 - November 8, 2020
Details: Site specific installation
Materials: Various objects and materials and 6 tonnes of unrefined salt
Dimensions: Various dimensions

Poet KIM Hyesoon writes: “Birth is always a fall” and “death is taking flight”. The work of Bianca Bondi is an attempt to freeze these in-between moments so as to better feel a human connection to our environment. Her installations display found objects covered with crystalized salt, as if the world was breaking apart and cracking in a thousand pieces. Her first work using salt, *A Studden Stir And Hope in the Lungs* (2014), is like the discovery after a storm of a vestige of old copper vessels sunk deep down under the sea. Green-grey rust appears to have taken on life in the dark-blue abyss, almost illustrating the intermediary state called Bardo in Buddhism: between death and rebirth.

Bondi’s new installation for Busan Biennial, *Tundra Swan*, is a translation of KIM Hyesoon’s eponymous poem. As Bondi states: “salt is essential for life but too much brings death”. Taking inspiration from paintings such as Henri Gervex’s *Rolla* (1878) or John Everett Millais’s *Ophelia* (1851-1852), we observe a clinical but feminine bedroom setting composed of a bed with a pond in it, echoing a circular mirror above a dresser at the end of a pathway through the tundra. All is covered with salt except the pond and the mirror. We are then invited to cross over an open-air cosmic digestive space where salt represents preservation but also resurrection. A swan stands alone. It symbolizes the force of art and poetry, capable of singing even better before its death. We are living in a system that leads us to death and we are all survivors in resistance like the phoenix rising from our ashes. Nothing is lost, everything is transformed. The salt can dissolve in water and later recrystallize and oxidize around itself.

Bondi’s installations are ecosystems that pay tribute to both our agencies and vulnerabilities so as to offer a shared moment of meditation on the condition of “hyperobjects”, to borrow philosopher Timothy Morton’s concept: “Instead of inhabiting a world, we find ourselves inside a number of hyperobjects, such as climate, nuclear weapons, evolution, or relativity.” Vital energy emerges from the interaction of human and nonhuman forces. Apocalypse, like in Lars von Trier’s film *Melancholia*, is both the end of a status quo and the possibility for a more sustainable order of things to take place.



PHOTO CREDIT: PERSONAL ARCHIVE

Tundra Swan

A white tundra swan that failed to join the flock flying home
Came to the Busan Wildlife Rehabilitation Center
They had to cover her face with white cloth
And cut away at the damaged wings
With her wings clipped, the white swan stopped eating
Reluctantly, they had to cover her eyes, tie up her beak
And push gruel through the slit

How I used to dwell among clusters of birds
How I, past the cloisters of feathers
Used to drive a train into the caverns of eyes

Feathers of summer are as cool as fans
Feathers of winter are as soft as clouds

Things like this happen:
You cannot walk ever again
Sentenced to this, Mother was placed on a bed
She could not unfetter from that bed and return home ever again

One night when I uncovered her bed
A white swan with a tied beak was lying there
She could not even speak, but pleaded with her eyes:
Please take me home

When I held my mother
It felt like I was embracing her from a time a hundred years later
The blunt place of the swan's clipped wing hit my rib

I was expelled far away from feathers
The train mournfully called out for the eye-cavern as it ran

You cannot soar again
You cannot see her again
When the moment for those words arrives
When the moment when there's nothing to be done arrives

The white tundra swan was in the hospital for four years
And now she is in a reservoir
The white tundra swan that took me on her back
From the chamber of feathers and sailed the black heavens
For ten thousand meters, from the North Pole to the South overnight,
Is now by those waters
Now, the swan's wings cannot fold

Like those waves fluttering into the wind
Through the CCTV screen in the rehab center
We faced each other every day, she and I



PHOTO CREDIT: PERSONAL ARCHIVE



THE PRIVATE LIVES OF NON-HUMAN ENTITIES

2020

Show: *Chapter 3HREE*
Venue: Het HEM, Zaandam (NL)
Dates: January 24 – August 2, 2020
Details: Site specific installation
Materials: Mixed media (salt, salt water, copper, neon)
Dimensions: Various dimensions

Responding to the penetrating cellar architecture of Het HEM, Bondi invites us into an intimate installation setting that breathes the dynamics of being together without necessarily being physically present — is this from the past, from the future, or are we inside a memory. An abandoned dining table as a reminder of companionship; a feeling that is still present in the air or dissolved and fused with its surroundings.

The materials create their own unique bonds with each other. Bondi does not attempt to control the mutual reactions, but guides them to take their own course. In this process the most improbable creations develop: a play of colour, form and space.







PHOTO CREDIT: GUNNAR MEIER



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