

Lavender Snows

With the artists

Nienke Baeckelandt, Sarah Caillard, Lola Daels, Jacques di Piazza, Maëlle Dufour, Valérian Goalec, Lucie Lanzini, Charlotte Lavandier, Muesli Collective, Angyvir Padilla, Kristina Sedlerova Villanen, Paulius Sliupa, Maarten Van Roy

Curated by Maud Salembier

Opening on the 1st of June 2023 from 6pm to 10pm
Exhibition from 2nd June until 29 July 2023

à la Traverse, 16 Traverse Sainte-Hélène, Marseille

The exhibition *Lavender Snows* brings to Marseille a sample of the vibrant, emerging art scene from Belgium. Taking into account La Traverse's focus on ecological issues, the curator Maud Salembier has chosen to subtly tackle these issues without addressing them head-on. The works presented all convey a tension between solidity and fluidity, statics and dynamics, and question the impermanence of matter, which exists as a continuous becoming. They reveal preoccupations concerning many artists today, and inevitably recall the way our planet is warming and liquefying, from permafrost to glaciers. They also evoke the ravages of mass construction and its dizzying tectonic of domino effects.

Anthropologist Tim Ingold thinks about our being in the world in new ways, and his work on the topic of solid fluids in the Anthropocene* seems relevant for considering certain parallels between environmental disruption and contemporary creation. Objects and forms, he argues, are in constant transformation and in dynamic relationship with their environment, rather than being fixed and static entities. This idea is reflected in art forms involving the use of materials and processes which are or appear unstable. Similarly, artists who work with elements such as water, ice, light or organic matter can be regarded as exploring ideas of fluidity and transformation. The porosity between the animate and the inanimate, between animal, mineral and plant life, are also paradigms that they wade into. Finally, this thinking can also be wielded to challenge the economic norms and conventions of the contemporary art world, questioning the notion of the artwork as a fixed and immutable object.

The exhibition contemplates the transitional states of things, exposing our own finitude, that of our species, but also that of art. The title, *Lavender Snows*, synesthetically combines a fragrance, a colour and a tactile sensation. It also recalls the purple reflections of the snows immortalized by the paintings of a Friedrich or a Monet, in the midst of the massive industrialization of Western society and its consequences today.

*INGOLD, Tim, SIMONETTI, Cristián, "Introducing Solid Fluids", in *Theory, Culture & Society*, Vol. 39, Mars 2022, pp. 3-210.

Nienke Baeckelandt (Belgium, °1989)

Nienke Baeckelandt seeks the field of tension between intuition and control. Her works are always the result of «concentrations» or «intensities» of a snapshot. Site-specific installations and sculptures subtly play with the viewer's perception. She draws attention to hidden colours, objects or concepts. Areas of colour visible only from a specific point of view, fused transparent objects and light-coloured shadows. Current media and new technologies encourage that images should be consumed at a glance. Baeckelandt's images, on the other hand, encourage a slowing down.

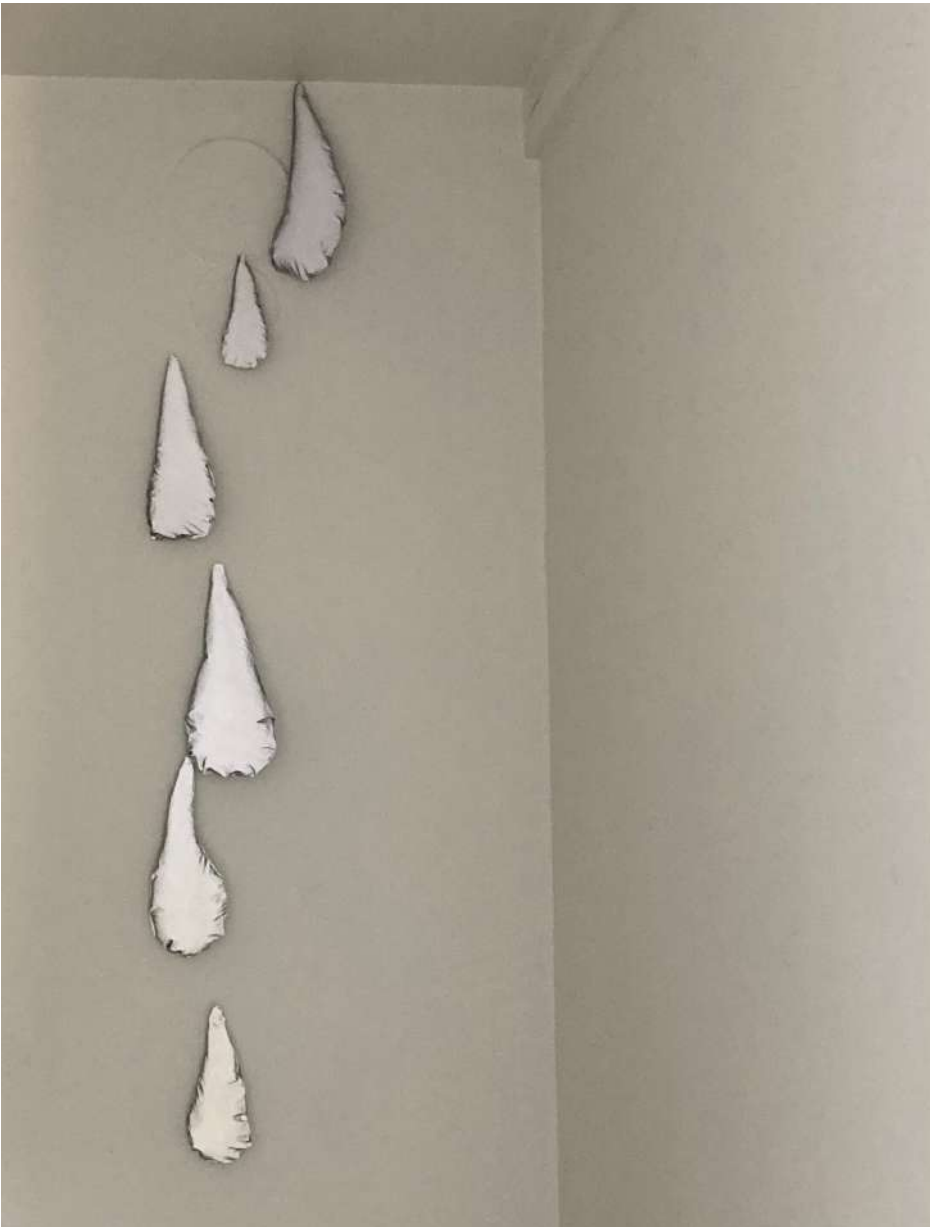


LIQUIDO, 2022, variable sizes, resin

LIQUIDO means liquid, a substance that flows. It is a multiple, but each piece differs slightly from the others because the work consists of the contents of bottles of Perrier water, each time congealed in a different position. The liquid and container become one.

Sarah Caillard (France, °1988)

Sarah Caillard create a sculptural universe that brings together different characters with varied aesthetics. These multiple attempts at figurative representation are not divisible from one another, but complement each other to evoke the complexity and plurality of being, like the different states and stages of matter, the living body and its psychic range. «I use different materials and techniques, making it possible to give a different texture, weight and density to each figure. The sculpture becomes, like the body, the surface layer of being. I am inspired by objects, symbols or gestures that have populated the collective imagination of time, those that we find in mythology, esotericism, literature, cinema, plastic art, fashion, cartoon, reality TV, social networks, tales, legends, news items etc ... defining in this a symbolic invariance. It is about approaching the image with a triple gaze: real, symbolic and fantasmagorical thus allowing several levels of readings of the same "object". These differences in perceptions and positions inscribes us in a fictious relationship in which we become the infinite subject of interpretations and projections. These differences or rather superimpositions (of look, of interpretations ...) construct a narrative. It is these different states of being in the world that I like to try to build.»



Larme(s), 2023
Variable size, retro-reflective fabrics,
fiber

Lola Daels (Belgium, °1990)

Lola Daels is a Brussels based artist whose work and research explores the impact of human activity on its environment. Initially a focus on urban realities and public space dominated her practice, which she partially channelled through a collaborative practice with architect Sebastiaan Willemen. In recent years, thanks to various study residencies in the Global South (Portugal, Morocco and Iran), she has exponentially gravitated towards researching this human impact from an ecological preoccupation. She works site-specifically, both in research scope as well as in execution. Daels probes analytical and critical inquiries about ecological, environmental and socio-political issues from our surrounding reality.

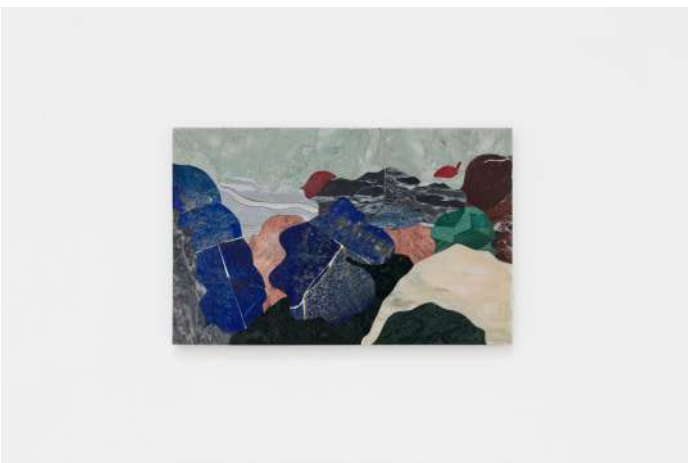


Soapstones, 2020 - 2021

Soap, variable size.

[photo: Britt Guns or Stijn Vanwing]

Iran was already (2019) in an economic crisis following the American sanctions when I bought a stone from a man on the street in Tehran. He found it in the Alborz Mountains, bordering the city. I paid 30 eurocents for the stone. By reproducing the stone with soap, the hard and brittle element becomes soft and ductile.



The Great Barrier, 2021 - 2022

Pietra Dura: Inlay of semi-precious stones, 35 cm x 54 cm x 2,5cm.

[photo: Eline Willaert]

The Great Barrier is a series of pietra dura (hard stone) panels, in memoriam of one of our planet's biggest natural wonders: the great coral reef in Queensland, North-East Australia. In October 2012, research showed that the reef had diminished by 50% since 1985, as a consequence of tourism, pollution, shifting dynamics and balances in the ecosystem, and unprecedented weather conditions. The abundant colours stand in stark opposition to the bleak reality of the current state of these corals, which are losing their colour rapidly and irreversibly. What's gone is gone.

Jacques di Piazza (Belgium, °1996)

Jacques Di Piazza is a visual artist working in Brussels. His work and research questions architecture and the environment as a field of discovery and expression of the sensitive. His plastic interventions often call upon the interstices of the places in which he exhibits to demonstrate their fragility and strength. It is through the work of plaster but also through other mediums derived from the vocabulary of the construction site that Jacques explores the relationships between space, objects (most often gleaned) and the intermediate territories.



Sans-titre, 2023

Plaster cast, painting, 20 x 28 cm.

It is a deposit, a sedimentation. By the flow of this tint, the plaster material is marked here this time of composition passed.



Obombre, 2022

Sculpture in plaster, water and squid ink, 48cm x 35cm.

This is a plaster cast, acting as a filter. The piece is activated during the exhibition by the addition of a diluted cuttlefish ink that flows out, leaving only a thin black film in the receptacle. This black protects, acts as a protection by concealment, similar to the cuttlefish in the sea when it is clouded by fear of attack.

Charlotte Lavandier (France, °1995)

Charlotte Lavandier is a multidisciplinary artist living and working in Brussels who mainly uses sculpture and installation but also video, drawing and photography. «Between frontal and metaphor, I see my practice as a piece of evidence. I question our relationship to genetic, social and political inheritance by removing rough fragments of the real that highlight what we don't see, what we no longer see. I question and urge the public to do the same, on the taboos and repressions that shape the image of oneself and its exposure to the other. In this way I try to bring out a stifled word, places and looks of lives subjected to cruelty in its broadest sense. My artistic gesture is a form of resistance to what keeps us motionless and imprisoned and I am interested, in this sense, in what differentiates and conditions public space and private space. Through my installations, I tend to keep the spectators away from their contemplative posture. To this end, they place them in a position of physical and/or mental discomfort that causes an imbalance conducive to questioning. Solitary bodies experience and experience being contained in narrow spaces whose grip triggers a form of struggle.» (Charlotte Lavandier)



Siamois, 2017

20 x 20 x 5 cm, dried leaf framed by a chestnut tree suffering from genetic degeneration, led lighting
[photo : Charlotte Lavandier]

« In the heart of a green tree lives another white, albino.
Without chlorophyll, the latter cannot
Convert sunlight into vital energy.
Exchanges of sap make possible
The miraculous survival of this shared body.
In winter the leaves fall,
And the trace of this disturbing singularity disappears. »

Maëlle Dufour (Belgium, °1994)

Maëlle Dufour is a visual artist who lives and works in Brussels and Ghent, Belgium. She creates complex systems that challenge the idea of progress during past, known and future eras. She explores the traces of decadence and the beginnings of hope, questioning double-edged progress and bringing awakeners of consciousness who, through protective gestures, reflect on the meaning of human evolution. It questions the origin, memory and rebirth of things (or their absence). Were the ruins destroyed by nature itself or by men who fought for territories? Are they the foundations of renewal?

«The physical confrontation between my work and the spectator is destabilizing, the size and weight of the pieces exceeding any human scale constantly remind us of the vulnerability of our own existence.»

Through sculptures-systems, she explores «an archaeology of waste», precious sources of information of societies, physical legacies bequeathed to those who are still unborn.

Incarnating, her imagination also makes extensive use of the resources of material reverie that Bachelard theorized, and of a metaphorical palette of unusual richness. Thus feeds the paradoxical charm of her work, without ever losing its thread, bitterly abounded in the most rough of the present history. (Yves Randaxhe)



Jusqu'ici tout va bien, 2022

25 ceramics, steels and liquids, 37 cm diameter and variable heights

[photo : Ithier Held et Vincent Erverarts]



Maëlle Dufour evokes the Paardenmarkt, a submerged sand bank 300m from the Knokke-Heist beach, where some 35000 tons of ammunition were stored at the end of the Great War. In recent years, journalists, environmentalists, and scientists have been alerting public opinion to the ecotoxicological effects of this “waste”. Indeed, the casings and barrels will corrode before releasing their toxic contents. The current government believes that the cheapest and safest solution is to leave it untouched. However, the site is marked and monitored.

Valérien Goalec (France, °1986)

Valérien Goalec lives and works in France. The forms of his work are extracted from their context in order to appropriate them and multiply them to obtain new rational forms. Goalec questions the relationship of the human body with the objects, spaces, daily rituals and tries to make visible what we have made invisible.



Actes 16, Can't Be Shared, since 2020
Borrowed glass from the space, water,
variable size

Two transparent glasses belonging to the exhibition space are assembled top against top underwater to maintain the liquid balance. A container must contain enough water to achieve the assembly. Once assembled, these two glasses containing water must be placed on a support such as a table or a stand borrowed from the location. The operation must be repeated every day.

Lucie Lanzini (France, °1986)

Lucie Lanzini cultivates a particular sensitivity to memories and memory. Her work is based on a repertoire of signs, "referent" objects in constant re-creation, between fragmentation and link, presence and absence, emptiness and fullness, which reveal a reality hidden behind the appearance of things. She starts from elements: objects, animals, furniture, ornamentation, architectural details, to treat them in a minimal way while keeping fragments recalling the original source. The usual meaning is bypassed, the artist creates a shift from which arises a strangeness. The whole of its parts can be thought like a total decoration, decoration-world of the tamed, the domestic, expensive and intimate. Her molded objects, her impression-objects, give off, as much by their nature as by their manufacture, something precious, smooth, old-fashioned. They seem to be balanced on a thread, vacillating between a respectful, refined, silent restraint and the unveiling of their facticity, the explosion of their naked truth. If the changeover were to take place, it would then reveal the other side of the stage, where the fantasized beauty is only the made-up reality. Beyond even the objects, Lucie Lanzini exposes an ambiguous present, an evanescent present, tinged with the reminiscences of situations and attitudes accepted, stereotyped. She questions these situations of monstrations / demonstrations, actualizing a past in state of flight which has not yet been deprived of course.



Waves, 2017
Oceanic glass, 70x37cm.
[photo : Hugard & Vanoverschelde]

Waves is a glass piece that blends into its environment and responds to it. A barely perceptible in-situ piece, the light brings it to life. It evolves throughout the day and the reflections projected on the wall create a real dialogue with the exhibition space. The texture of the «oceanic» glass refers directly to the shimmering surface of the ocean and the play of reflections echoes it.



Embrace, 2023
Patinated bronze.

Embrace is a sculpture in patinated bronze. A unique piece, the «original» sponge has disappeared in contact with the molten metal. The movement of pressure operated by the ornamental rod seems frozen in time and the sponge wrung out appears petrified in the bronze.

Angyvir Padilla (Venezuela, °1987)

Angyvir Padilla lives and works in Brussels. In her practice, she invites us to take a closer look at the places we inhabit. By examining how we embody memory, she proposes that, in the journey between immanence and transcendence, the traces of our past seep into a persistent present. The environments Angyvir creates alter our perception of reality. As our presence enters into the dialogue, the sense of otherness we encounter reveals the essence of her work (Mónica Echegarreta)



FOOL'S PARADISE, 2018

Ceramics, charcoal, sound system, variable dimensions

[photo : Chantal Van Rijt]

A group of ceramics appears like falling bodies, collapsing columns, fighting against gravity. They are sitting on a charcoal surface as if it was an architectural ruin or an abandoned landscape. Surrounded by speakers, a popular Venezuelan song, interpreted by the artist, is being sung to them. The lyrics tell us about a cherished forgotten landscape.

«Archaeologist of her inquiring subjectivity, Angyvir raises the mud from Brussels conjuring it with her obstinate mediated voice, sculptural voice that delimits the space of a ritual without bodies, flabby gaps accumulating cold air like the coldness of the bones that does not calm itself down even in the kiln. As a snake charmer, she choreographs a static circus on charcoal, containing an innocuous flame, except for the soul [...]

- Pedro Marrero



UNE VUE QUE TOUT EMBRASSE, 2021

Painted ceramic tiles products in the Terre du Château Coquelle workshops, in Dunkerque, 220 x 80cm

[photo : Silvia Cappellari]

These ceramic tiles reproduce notes about the process of my research and the reflections that emerged during my quest for mountains» in northern France. These visual representations create a fictitious relationship between two very different landscapes: the mountainous valley of the Costa Cordillera and the flat and grey landscapes of northern France.

Muesli Collective (since 2014, Brussels)

The Muesli collective (Hannah De Corte, Louis Darcel et João Freitas) creates works that are permeable to the context in which they unfold. They undergo a visible metamorphosis due to the evolution of invisible factors. In perpetual renewal, unruly paintings* behave in a constant state of transition. Highly sensitive to continuously changing ambient humidity, paintings have an infinite range within a given spectrum, always depicting a specific moment. Water is both the medium and the subject, the binder and the developer of paints. The sensitive materials used (moisture indicator with various fabric fibres, wood and aluminium) interact with each other and with their environment. The paintings inhabit the space and also adapt to its architectural properties. Thus, the work does not derive from aesthetic desires but is the confluence of matter, atmosphere and time and as a result, a canvas is never twice the same.

* We borrow the term “unruly” from sociologist Dominguez Rubio Fernando, who describes objects of art with unstable, elusive and complicated behaviour as “unruly”. works that do not necessarily reconcile with established standards in the field of art conservation.



1) *Peinture indisciplinée*, may 2022 - present
Humidity indicator, water, cotton, aluminum
plate, screws, 40 x 30 cm



2) *Peinture indisciplinée*, september 2021 - present
Humidity indicator, water, silk, 40 x 30 cm

Kristina Sedlerova Villanen (Finland, °1987)

The work of Kristina Sedlerova Villanen can be described as emotionally loaded transitions in perishable matter. She is interested in the inconsistency of human nature, the attraction of humankind towards building unequal systems, creating concepts and the need to believe in them. She works with geological sediments, human made poorly degradable physical matter, immaterial sources and language deposits. She makes transitions in raw materials and the information history they are loaded with, unfolding the structures behind hierarchies and ownership history of natural resources.



Almost There, 2022-2023

40-50 kg, variables dimensions, approximatively 50cm x 35cm x 15cm,
natural salt stone, petanque balls, fish flavor bouillon cubes.

The piece of salt comes from Sicily. It is in a way an ancient sea in a different physical state. It is a game with time and space that deals with the subject of trade (salt, fish). Petanque, too, is probably a business game: while playing, the participants make contracts and seal agreements. Mixed with the strange substance of fish bouillon cubes, small brownish cubes of often unknown origin, visually not very consistent with the sea, the piece plays with the symbolism, content and proportions of its materials.

Paulius Sliupa (Lithuania, °1990)

Denial of the changing environment indirectly affects the individual lives by gradual distancing from nature, alienation, but craving for intimacy and understanding at the same time. The changes are happening on scales that are beyond human reach and maybe they can not be explained by science theories and words? Coming from a family of geologists, I am interested in these frictional relationships between culture and nature, the interaction of natural and artificial ambiences and lights that affect our daily lives. Having spent my childhood between the laptop screen and fishing on the riverside, I constantly sense that experiences are fading away. I wish my art to impact the viewer's psychology, to influence one's way of being present. From video installations and experimental movies for the cinema to object-like paintings, I work with associations to create a journey through different spaces and sensations. By accumulating the flow of painterly images, atmospheric sounds, and poetic energy, I form sensual narratives. Constantly observing screens we develop a habit of suspense when staring at moving images. I am trying to use this skill of ours and bring some mysteries of nature into this process by creating my videos. My artistic research led me to explore the structures of poetic cinema, artist moving image, suspense, magic realism, and sci-fi literature. Most projects consist of multiple works, grouped around specific themes such as organic structures, rituals in nature; the flow of natural and artificial light; expeditions into the mystery of the night, absurdly seducing happenings.



The monk, 2021

4K video, 12:15', 16:9, Dolby 5.1.

The monk, evokes, in a poetic way, man's changing relationship with nature, the consequences this has on people's daily life, and the feeling of loss and alienation this causes on a personal level.

Maarten Van Roy (Belgium, °1985)

Maarten Van Roy combines in his practice handmade sculptures and readymades in order to reveal universal patterns of growth and decay. In his handmade works, like *Rip Curl*, a unique bronze cast included in the exhibition, the artist deals with self-organization and spontaneous order: a material is attentively listened to and given space to develop its qualities. The shapes, textures and patina of these objects bear witness to that intimate dialogue, as much as to the physical processes, the thermodynamic transformations during their genesis.



Rip Curl, 2023
42 x 29 x 27 cm, bronze.

Maud Salembier (Belgium, °1978)

Maud Salembier is an art and Film historian, professor and independent curator. She has curated solo exhibitions with artists such as Denicolai & Provoost, Cristina Garrido, Joao Freitas, and Valérian Goalec at the last Art Brussels fair. Her career is also marked by several group exhibitions with Michel François, Ann Veronica Janssens, Edith Dekyndt, Sophie Whettnall, Michael Van den Abeele, Mira Sanders, Aline Bouvy and Benoît Platéus, among the most well-known. Maud Salembier specialises in discovering emerging artists, and to that end she curated the Generation Brussels exhibition in September 2022 in the former printing office of the National Bank of Belgium. She's a member of the AICA (ABCA/BVKC), a regular art critic for the magazine *L'art même*, but also wrote texts for several exhibition catalogues like Alice Anderson or Bernard Villers. In February 2018, she founded LaSpore, a nomadic curatorial and editorial platform aiming to disseminate and support contemporary artistic creation. In this context, she published a monograph by Joao Freitas, a catalogue for the group exhibition Norma at Pilgrims House, and an artist book by Valérian Goalec, in collaboration with Theophile's Paper and MER. Paper Kunsthalle.



Artists Links

Nienke Baeckelandt

<http://nienkebaeckelandt.be/>
<https://www.instagram.com/nienkebaeckelandt/>

Sarah Caillard

<https://sarahcaillard.com/>
<https://www.instagram.com/sarahcaillard/>

Lola Daels

<https://loladaels.com/>
<https://www.instagram.com/loladaels/>

Jacques di Piazza

<https://www.instagram.com/jacquesdipiazza/>

Charlotte Lavandier

<https://charlottelavandier.com/Siamois>
https://www.instagram.com/charlotte_lavandier/

Maëlle Dufour

<https://maelledufour.be/>
<https://www.instagram.com/maelle.dufour/>

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<https://www.valeriangolec.com/>
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Lucie Lanzini

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<https://www.instagram.com/lucielanzini/>

Angyvir Padilla

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<https://www.instagram.com/angyvirpadilla/>

Muesli Collective

<http://www.muesli-collective.com/>
https://www.instagram.com/muesli_collective/

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Paulius Sliaupa

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Maarten Van Roy

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LA TRAVERSE

*Informations***La Traverse**

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On appointment

<https://www.latraversemarseille.fr>

Exhibition from 2 June until 29 July 2023

Opening of the exhibition on the 1st of June 2023 from 6 pm to 10 pm

Samedi 8th July, from 4pm to 6pm

- Guided tour of the exhibition with the curator Maud Salembier
- Meeting with the artists Lola Daels and Valérian Goalec

> For guided tour of the exhibition on appointment, please contact Maud Salembier
by email : maudsalembier@yahoo.fr or by phone : +32 489 55 00 10