

YOLENN
FARGES

CHARLOTTE
GAUTIER VAN
TOUR

LAURE
VIGNA

NICCOLÒ
MOSCATELLI

ADRIANA
KNOUF

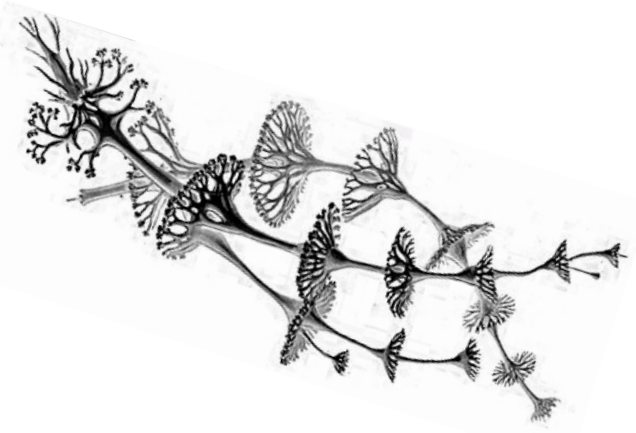


VIVRE EN
LICHEN

15 MARS -
5 MAI 2024

La Traverse
16 Traverse Ste Hélène
Vendredi 15-19h
Sam-dim 12-19h

Commissariat : Colette Angeli



Living as Lichens

a symbiopolitical manifesto

The exhibition *Living as Lichens* aims to explore the phenomenon of symbiosis as an artistic and political manifesto, through works of artists who collaborate with living organisms and with each other.

As we are taking part in an irreversible ecological crisis, it is urgent to find other ways to cohabit and work with the non-human. It is difficult to deconstruct capitalist ideology, which since Darwin's time has made individual adaptation to a competitive environment its scientific justification. Symbiosis provides an answer: this long-term coexistence between two organisms of different species replaces competition as an evolutionary factor and undermines the very notion of biological and sociological individuality. Just like the lichen, a symbiotic organism composed of algae and fungi, all living beings, including ourselves, are made up of beneficial interactions. Let us learn from this organism, as little-known as it is omnipresent, and from its ethos of cooperation, plurality, and resilience.

In this group show, artists and their works exchange, collaborate, contaminate, and mutually enrich each other. The evolving installations populated by bacteria, fungi, and other microorganisms or so-called «pests» question the possibility of an egalitarian co-creation between partners, far from the competitive logic to which the art world is not immune. By weaving such a network, the exhibition functions as a living organism that transforms the mutualism and commensalism of biological interactions into an artistic working method, and finally into a societal model.

Artists: Yolenn Farges, Charlotte Gautier van Tour, Adriana Knouf, Niccolò Moscatelli, Laure Vigna

Curated by: Colette Angeli

On view at: La Traverse, Marseille

Dates: 15 March - 5 May 2024



Yolenn Farges

Yolenn Farges is a French multidisciplinary artist, born in Melun in 1994. She lives and works between Palermo, Marseille and Belle-île-en-mer.

Between art, science and cuisine, Yolenn attempts to weave a porous web between co-inhabiting beings and their mutant ecosystems, envisioning creation through contamination and collaboration. Her work is also a place for the circulation of thought and the transmission of knowledge, where words and exchanges act as a social rhizome with political implications. Her installations, often activated by participatory performances, call on fungi, bacteria, propagating algae and other companion species.

Dans le ventre de la mer, 2024, sedimentary clay harvested on the coast of Belle-île, Posedonia and Pioka ashes, sand, Pioka jelly, micro-organisms, metal chains, plants, fishing lures, approx. 40 x 20 cm

This set of ceramics created from materials taken from the sea (sedimentary sand and clays, seaweed ash) will host a jelly created from Pioka, a Breton seaweed with gelling properties. The agar is destined to be contaminated by the other works, by the public and by all the micro-organisms that inhabit the site; it will transform day by day into a form that the artist cannot control.



1.



11.

Petite histoire de potager, 2024, white stoneware, black stoneware, vegetable garden ashes: citrus fruits, leaves, burnt wood, 43 x 15 cm / 15 x 15 cm

The mixture used inside this ceramic, based on decomposing plant material, was originally created to nourish and fertilize mandarin trees. Metamorphosed into a glaze by high temperatures, it will host Niccolò Moscatelli's commensal foods during the exhibition.

Chrysalide, 2024, blown glass, citron koso, steel, cork, plants, brass, beeswax, 50 x 25 cm

The shape of *Chrysalide* is the symbiotic encounter of glass blown into an oak mold, and burning wood pushing the material in the opposite direction, giving birth to an unpredictable form. This sculpture will ferment citron koso, a drink prepared by the artist that will evolve over the course of the exhibition, to be consumed by the public at an event.

Charlotte Gautier van Tour

Charlotte Gautier van Tour was born in Evian-les-Bains in 1989. She lives and works in Marseille. Fermentations, germinations, putrefaction, macerations... Charlotte Gautier van Tour's practice highlights the phenomena that animate our biosphere. In creating her works, she allies herself with algae and micro-organisms such as yeast, bacteria and fungi, creating surfaces of interaction and territories of sensitivity that demonstrate the interdependence and symbiosis between our bodies and other species, as well as the links between microscopic and macroscopic dimensions.



Lecanora Muralis, 2020, agar-agar, mustard glycerine, spirulina, natural pigments, bacteria, upcycled foam, 120 x 100 cm

Lecanora muralis finds its inspiration in lichen, an organism resulting from the symbiosis of an alga and a fungus that spreads over different surfaces. The work invites a sensitive and collaborative reconnection with the Earth, and although its creative process is similar to painting, its final material results from an alliance with red algae, cyanobacteria, natural pigments and bacteria. The artist thus formulates the idea of a symbiotic becoming of beings and their environment as a desirable future.

Celles qui vibrent, 2024, in situ installation: agar-agar, bacteria, mushrooms, blown glass sculpture, variable dimensions

A pool of algae, in the form of jelly on the first day of the exhibition, will gradually be colonized by bacteria and fungi present in the air of La Traverse, until it shrinks to become similar to the multiple fragments that surround it, relics of the artist's former installations. This installation will be in mutual co-contamination with a work by Yolenn Farges.

Gestante, 2023, glass blown by Arcam Glass, rope, extracted from ponds at the Salin des Pesquiers in Hyères containing the microalgae *Dunaliella Salina* and cyanobacteria, 30 x 15 x 6 cm / 22 x 9 x 5 cm

Like archaic flasks or mysterious ritual objects, these container-sculptures house aquatic microcosms from which, thanks to symbiosis, the life forms we know today originate.



IV.



v.

Adriana Knouf

Adriana Knouf, born in the United States, lives and works in Amsterdam. She works as an artist, writer, musician, and xenologist. She attunes herself to electromagnetic frequencies; studies the interferences of temporalities future, past, and present; and experiments with entities bio, silico, litho, cosmic. She is the Founding Facilitator of the tranxxenolab, a nomadic artistic research laboratory that promotes entanglements among entities trans and xeno.

Fragments of TX-2: MOONSHADOW, 2022, documentation, various materials, variable dimensions

This ensemble is part of a larger work, TX-2: MOONSHADOW: an experiment in speculative satellite construction that aims to show that space missions could serve queer and post-colonial futures, in opposition to current commercial, military and expansionist ends. For several years, the artist has been conducting a research project on lichens as a symbiotic species capable of profound and resilient transformation - for example, by being the first organism to emerge on land scorched by a volcanic eruption, and thus potentially a good candidate for imagining the survival of life forms in the ruins of capitalism, and in space. This research includes a meteorite prototype designed to host a hybrid lichen-human symbiosis for a possible travel to Mars.

Niccolò Moscatelli

Niccolò Moscatelli, born in Cattolica (Italy) in 1992, lives and works in Marseille.

Niccolò Moscatelli's practice begins with attention to the world, its form, movement and interactions. The artist draws on anthropology, the natural sciences and magical and religious traditions in search of new attitudes towards the world. Walking is their primary method of research, in order to gather what is there, assemble it and move it around, in a practice that is always non-extractivist.

Tripudium (La protesta degli uccelli), 2024, filmed action, video installation, variable dimensions

For the exhibition, Niccolò Moscatelli is developing a new production focusing on so-called “pest” species and the commensal cohabitation we can have with them. In a filmed action, the artist organizes a demonstration of pigeons and other urban birds, distributing inter-species food expressly designed for the occasion. While prefectural decrees prohibit this practice as harmful and marginal, this political and poetic demonstration highlights the beneficial interactions between human and non-human beings and their common destiny within the city. Two bowls designed by artist Yolenn Farges in a spirit of collaboration, will offer this same inter-species food to the exhibition visitors.

Lithopanspermia, 2024, calanques stone and lichen, ephemeral installation, variable dimensions

An intervention by Niccolò Moscatelli is designed to cohabit in a mutualistic manner with Adriana Knouf's installation. The stone housing an endemic species of lichen is borrowed from the Calanques for the duration of the exhibition, as a reminder of the speculative potential of symbiosis, not only between two living organisms (the algae and fungus that make up the lichen), but also with the mineral entity that is the stone. The barrier between organic and inorganic, life and non-life, is blurred.



VI.



VII.

Laure Vigna

Laure Vigna, born in 1984, lives and works in Marseille.

Laure Vigna works as a sculptor. Her research lies at the intersection of life sciences, social sciences, environmental studies and the history of science, with a feminist perspective that aims to examine matter from a socio-cultural angle. Her recent research focuses on microbial legacies, examining their memorial, archival and communicative functions.



VIII.



IX.

How she did it twice, 2021, blown glass, cyanobacteria culture, 36 x 26 x 25 cm

Like an experimental microbiology researcher, Laure Vigna maintains cultures of cyanobacteria, the prokaryotic organisms at the origin of oxygen on Earth and thus of life. Through symbiosis with eukaryotes, these bacteria gave rise to chlorobionts, the plant kingdom. This complex architecture in blown glass becomes an ecosystem, an organism in itself, where micro-organisms proliferate and decide on the evolutionary forms of the work.

Intestinal sludge, around the pond, 2024, unfired clay, sand and water samples from the Étang de Berre, micro-organisms, pollutants..., 33 cm diameter

This sculpture, reproduced for the occasion from elements taken from the natural and industrial site of the Étang de Berre, invites the public to take care of - or potentially be contaminated by - pollutants, pathogens, bacteria or viruses contained in matter, and to become aware of our relationship with toxins. Matter is alive, in a balance as precarious and evolving as that of organisms, and translates the toxic entity that inhabits it into tangled forms like termite mounds.

Practical information

Address: La Traverse, 16 traverse Sainte Hélène, 13007 Marseille

Opening hours: Fridays 3 to 7 PM, Saturdays & Fridays 12 to 7 PM

Admission: Free entry

Guided tours upon reservation: office@catherinebastide.com | co.angeli@hotmail.com

La Traverse is an independent art space located in a house of a southern character overlooking the cove of Malmousque, in Marseille. Built in the early 20th century and renovated in 2020 by Marion Bernard Architects on an initiative by Catherine Bastide, it now houses a contemporary art and design space as well as an associative curatorial platform that promotes international cultural exchanges. La Traverse explores contemporary issues through an unconventional lens, attentive to ecological and responsible economic practices.

www.latraversemarseille.fr



X.

Program

Friday, 15 March - 6 PM: Opening at La Traverse, with the artists and the curator (and drinks!)

Wednesday, 27 March (*tbc*): Discussion on Symbiosis with scientists from IMBE (Mediterranean Institute of marine and terrestrial Biodiversity and Ecology), the curator and the artists

Saturday, 20 April: Human-Lichen symbiosis workshop with Amsterdam-based artist Adriana Knouf. Limited access, by reservation (women, trans and/or BIPOC only)

Wednesday, 24 April (*tbc*): Arts & Science workshop for children of Maisons Pour Tous, in collaboration with scientists from IMBE

Sunday, 5 May: Closing day and evening in the context of the PAC Festival (Printemps de l'Art Contemporain) - buffet, guided tours, drinks

... and other events to come !



The curator

Colette Angeli

co.angeli@hotmail.com

Colette Angeli is an independent curator and critic. She lives and works in Marseille, navigating between various projects. She is the co-founder of the art workers collective Polynome, with which she leads projects of exhibitions, events, and texts. Her reflections are driven by an ever-present political and intersectional commitment. The research she conducts with Polynome mainly focuses on the commons and issues related to property. Through this lens, the collective explores social and democratic practices that emerge in contemporary creation in response to late capitalism. In parallel, she is particularly interested in the connections between human and non-human living beings, gestures and know-hows, and countercultural movements.

Colette Angeli holds a Master's degree in museology from the École du Louvre and a Master's degree in curatorial studies from the Sorbonne University. She has worked in various institutions, including the FRAC Île-de-France, the Maison Rouge, the FRAC Lorraine and the Centre Pompidou-Metz. As an art critic, she writes for the magazine O2, galleries and artists. She is a member of c-e-a / Association française des commissaires d'exposition.



Image credits

I. Yolenn Farges, *Il gusto della nebbia*, April 2023, cantieri culturali, Palermo. Glass, EMB agar, growing manna yeast, water plant and swamp water. Petri dish, agar-agar agar and micro-organisms in expansions contained in various samples of Sicilian wild clays harvested. Photo credit: Yolenn Farges.

II. Yolenn Farges, *Être habité.e*, bread, fruit kefir and spirulina. Shells, ceramics. Performative banquet, Les Ateliers Blancarde, Marseille, 21/10/2021. Photo credit: Yolenn Farges.

III. Charlotte Gautier van Tour, *Lecanora Muralis*, 2020, agar-agar, mustard glycerine, spirulina, natural pigments, bacteria, upcycled foam, 120 x 100 cm. Photo credit: Charlotte Gautier van Tour.

IV. Charlotte Gautier van Tour, *Territoire des vies minuscules*, 2023, exhibition view «Les Halotopies», Salin des Pesquiers, Hyères, 2023.

V. Adriana Knouf, *TX-2 : MOONSHADOW MARS LICHEN vitrine*, REWILD exhibition view at MAXXI (Rome), 2022. Photo credit: Adriana Knouf.

VI. Niccolò Moscatelli, *Les maîtres flamants*, action, video 16 min (still), Salin des Pesquiers, Hyères, 2022. Photo credit: Niccolò Moscatelli.

VII. Niccolò Moscatelli, *Le territoire du vide*, installation, Salin des Pesquiers, Hyères, 2022. Photo credit: Niccolò Moscatelli.

VIII. Laure Vigna, *Broadway Fields*, Goldsmiths University of London, 2022. Photo credit: Laure Vigna.

IX. Laure Vigna, exhibition view «La vie à elle-même» curated by Flora Katz, Centre International d'Art et du Paysage de l'île de Vassivière, 2021. Sculpture created with the support of the Fondation des Artistes, CNAP Collection. Photo credit: Aurélien Mole.

X. La Traverse, exhibition view «Mers, Terres, Corps Traversés», curated by Cécile Bourne-Farrell, 2023. Photo credit: Jean-Christophe Lett.

All visuals available in HD on request