08.05.25–
24.08.25

becoming ocean

a social conversation about the ocean

Artists:
Allora & Calzadilla,
Antoine Bertin, Samuel Bollendorff,
Seba Calfuqueo, Stephanie Comilang,
Anne Duk Hee Jordan, Simone Fattal, Nicolas Floc'h,
Max Hooper Schneider, Kapwani Kiwanga,
Sonia Levy, Armin Linke, Courtney Desiree Morris,
Asunción Molinos Gordo, Ingo Niermann,
Diana Policarpo, Christian Sardet et les Macronautes,
Robertina Šebjanič, Allan Sekula,
Janaina Tschäpe, Laure Winants,
Susanne M. Winterling

villa arson

An exhibition co-produced by:
Thyssen Bornemisza Art Contemporary
Fondation taraocéan explorer et partager

With the collaboration of:

As part of:
Nice 2025 Biennale des Arts et de l'Océan
Bloomberg Philanthropies
VILLE DE NICE

nice

Press release

becoming ocean

a social conversation about the ocean*

From May 8 to August 24, 2025, Villa Arson, TBA21 Thyssen-Bornemisza Art Contemporary and Tara Ocean Foundation present *Becoming Ocean: a social conversation about the Ocean*, a major exhibition exploring the main challenges facing the Ocean in a choral way. More than 20 international artists are taking part in the exhibition, to be held at the Villa Arson, through critical and documentary approaches as well as more sensory, poetic or speculative expressions.

Vernissage

Wednesday, May 7, 2025 – 7:00 PM

Artists

Allora & Calzadilla, Antoine Bertin, Samuel Bollendorff, Seba Calfuqueo, Stephanie Comilang, Anne Duk Hee Jordan, Simone Fattal, Nicolas Floc'h, Max Hooper Schneider, Kapwani Kiwanga, Sonia Levy, Armin Linke, Courtney Desiree Morris, Asunción Molinos Gordo, Ingo Niermann, Diana Policarpo, Christian Sardet and the Macronautes, Robertina Šebjanič, Allan Sekula, Janaina Tschäpe, Laure Winants, Susanne M. Winterling.

Curators

Hélène Guenin, Co-curator – Nice Biennal of Arts and the Ocean
Chus Martínez, Associate Curator – TBA21 Thyssen-Bornemisza Art Contemporary
Sébastien Ruiz, General Secretary –Tara Ocean Foundation
Marie-Ann Yemsi, Director – Villa Arson art center

Nice Biennial of Arts and the Ocean

The exhibition is part of the program for the Nice Biennial of Arts and the Ocean, organized by the City of Nice as part of the United Nations Conference on the Oceans (UNOC3) to be held in Nice from June 9 to 13, 2025.

Becoming Ocean: a social conversation about the Ocean is an exhibition co-curated by three international institutions – Villa Arson, TBA21 Thyssen-Bornemisza Art Contemporary and Tara Ocean Foundation – underlining the essential role of collaboration and the conviction that art and culture are drivers of social and environmental change.

Becoming Ocean will feature artworks from the TBA21 Thyssen-Bornemisza Art Contemporary Collection and from the Tara Ocean Foundation's artists-in-residence program as well as a collaboration of the Schmidt Ocean Institute.

The exhibition reflects on our understanding and ignorance of the Ocean and its future. It is a manifestation of the values and methods shared by the participant institutions to bring from the art perspective and through its uncountable forms, an open social conversation about the ocean challenges that we all face as a planet and our opportunity to rethink our connection with the Ocean and act differently for its preservation. The massive fishing effects, the pollution that affects the bodies of water, the progressive increase of the oceanic shipping, the imminent ecological risks that could trigger to allow the activity of the deep sea mining industry, and the negative effects that all these human actions have on the marine biodiversity are the results of the contemporary human relation with the ocean...but, is there any other possible relation that we can imagine, or even regenerate from the past?

For the past few decades, art and artists have been actively working to foster an understanding of climate change from the perspective of Nature. Art has played (and still plays) a crucial role in translating abstract and complex planetary phenomena, as well as large-scale systemic global changes, into narrative imagery, first-person storytelling, and Indigenous perspectives, helping us to name and experience these challenges. Artists have stepped beyond their studios and traditional workspaces to collaborate with experts, policymakers, and scientists, forging a shared horizon where we can strive for a genuine encounter with nature and its interests. Artists—coming from diverse backgrounds and contexts—have been inventing exercises and gestures that address the rupture caused by colonial and capitalist greed, paving the way for the birth of a new history. A history defined by better choices and a deeper connection to the mythical dimensions of the ocean, whose echoes reach our present from ancient times. The purpose of *Becoming Ocean* is to immerse ourselves humbly in these meaningful approaches.

The exhibition opens with an installation by Courtney Desiree Morris, an altar that welcomes us by connecting with the ancestral traditions of respect for the ocean as the birthplace of all living things. *Becoming Ocean* brings together diverse voices to initiate a social conversation, offering personal perspectives on global issues such as industrial fishing and global shipping across the ocean (Allan Sekula) or the colonial past and neo-colonial present (Stéphanie Comilang), where the ocean and the stories it holds serve as a map of colonial histories through the tracking of natural biodiversity (Diana Policarpo).

The bond between liquid bodies and humanity emerges as a reflection of our social, economic, cultural, and political history, as exemplified by the elegant and poetic work of sculptor Simone Fattal about the Mediterranean sea. This bond has become brutal in modern times due to aggressive extractivist practices in our relationship with water and the ocean. Artistic approaches such as Armin Linke's photo essay, which investigates the experiences and activism of local landowners and mine-impacted communities affected by seabed mining for copper, gold, zinc, and silver; Seba Calfuqueo's installation, which highlights the suffering of the Mapuche community due to permanent water titles granted to private companies in Chile; and sculptor Kapwani Kiwanga's critical reflection on the intricate interplay between glass production and sand extraction, all contribute to this urgent dialogue.

This bond has become toxic, as revealed in Samuel Bollendorff's work, where beneath the beauty of seascapes, samples taken from these locations tell a very different story. Sonia Levy's underwater filmmaking in the Venice Lagoon, Robertina Šebjanič's installation, which explores the pollution and threat to marine life caused by weapons abandoned on the seabed, and Laure Winants' work, which examines the impact of pollutants on coastlines using sensitive instruments and experimental photographic techniques, all contribute to broadening our understanding of the invisible toxicity hidden beneath the surface.
A more poetic approach to this issue can be found in Janaina Tschäpe's photo series or in the iconic sculpture *Petrified Petrol Pump* by Allora & Calzadilla.

But the beauty of healing and restoration offers a powerful message of hope through works such as those by Nicolas Floc'h questioning at the same time on our legitimacy and ethics, but also risks, to intervene in nature by recreating artificially the functioning of a complex biodiversity.
These works question our responsibility to react and act before the Ocean's points of no return are reached instead of acting after their destruction. It is precisely in the context of environmental collapse that we find the narrative of the artist Max Hooper Schneider. His work speculates about hypothetical landscapes and forces humankind to abandon morality and think across longer timescales, and not the immediate.

The exhibition also presents more sensory and sensual regards that celebrate marine biodiversity, as the works by Anne Duk Hee Jordan, Christian Sardet or Antoine Bertin as well as the inspiring video *Sea Lovers* (2002) by Ingo Niermann, advocating for a more intimate relation with the ocean, as well as pieces that highlight the commitment of local communities to respectful and harmonious relationships with the ocean, as seen in the narrative presented in Susanne M. Winterling's installation.

Becoming Ocean aspires to ignite within us a desire for new ways of living—ways that go beyond merely repairing damage or recovering from wounds, instead fostering a fundamentally different mindset toward the processes that shape both the Ocean and the Earth.

An exhibition co-produced by

villa arson nice

T B A Thyssen Bornemisza Art Contemporary

Fondation tara océan explorer et partager

With the collaboration of

SCHMIDT OCEAN INSTITUTE

As part of

Nice 2025 Biennale des Arts et de l'Océan

Bloomberg Philanthropies

VILLE DE NICE

Allora & Calzadilla, *Petrified Petrol Pump*, 2010

Fossil-filled limestone
176 × 362 × 120 cm
TBA21 Thyssen-Bornemisza Art Contemporary Collection

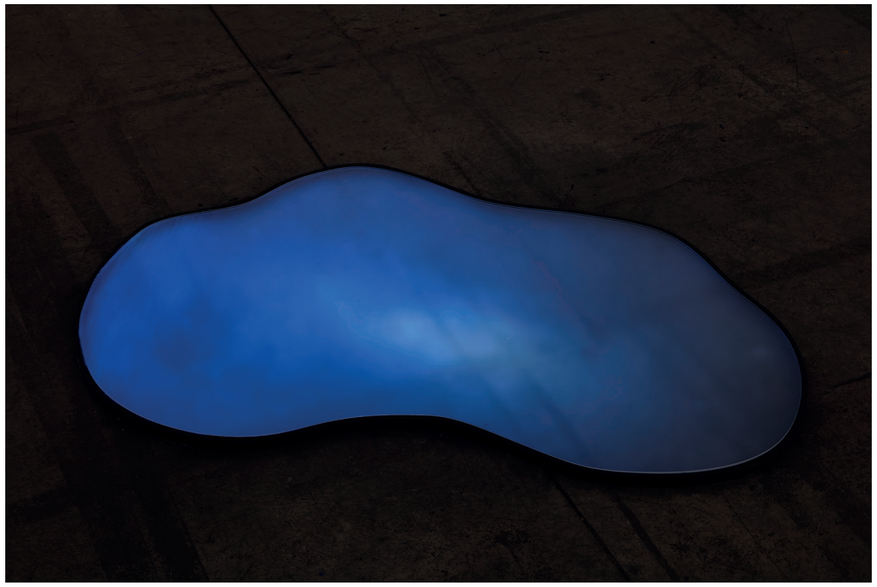
Allora & Calzadilla

Jennifer Allora (born 1974, USA) and Guillermo Calzadilla (born 1971, Cuba) are a collaborative duo of visual artists who live and work in San Juan, Puerto Rico.
Through a complex research-oriented practice, Allora & Calzadilla critically address the entanglements between history, ecology, and geopolitics. Since the beginning of their collaborative career in 1995, Allora & Calzadilla have worked in a variety of media to produce a body of work spanning sculpture, photography, performance art, sound and video.
Allora & Calzadilla have exhibited at Museum of Modern Art, New York; The Serralves Museum, Porto, The Neue Nationalgalerie, Berlin; The Menil Collection, Houston; Serpentine Gallery, London; the Castello de Rivoli Museo d'Arte Contemporanea, Turin; The Walker Art Center, Minneapolis; MAXXI, Rome; Guggenheim Museum, Bilbao; Haus der Kunst, Munich, The Stedelijk Museum, Amsterdam and Dia Art Foundation, New York, or at the Venice Biennale.

Petrified Petrol Pump

Allora & Calzadilla's work often brings together material elements from diverse social, geographical, and cultural systems into a single object. The life-size sculpture *Petrified Petrol Pump*, an abandoned gasoline pump made entirely from fossil-filled limestone, carries an aura of prehistoric times and presents itself like a (fictitious) relic of an ancient life form. Through the process of fossilization, the object is now frozen in time and space—and just like the two pump hoses are immutably hardened, the numbers displayed on the dispenser are engraved in stone for eternity. Eventually, the bottom half has started to decompose and is slowly returning to its earthly, rough material structure.
The physical presence of the work establishes the gas pump as a totem, a symbol referring to the significance of oil in the twenty-first century, but at the same time also questioning the future impact on the planet caused by our fuel dependent culture. *Petrified Petrol Pump* collapses the space between past, present, and future, between nature and consumer society, technological progress and ecological footprint, and ponders the legacy of human culture in the history of the planet.
The sculpture has been identified as resembling a BP pump, which connects the work with the environmental catastrophe caused by the BP oil spill in the Gulf of Mexico in 2010.

Antoine Bertin, *Metabolite Conversation*, 2024



Installation for ultra-directional loudspeaker, glass puddle and sonified metabolites
Tara Microbiomes expedition, 2021
© Benoît Fougeirol

Antoine Bertin

Antoine Bertin works at the intersection of science and sensory immersion, field recording and sound, storytelling, data, and musical composition. He creates listening experiences, immersive moments, and sound meditations that explore our relationships with the living world.
In 2018, he founded the Studio Antoine Bertin in Paris, bringing together a multidisciplinary team dedicated to the design, production, and realization of listening experiences. The work of Antoine Bertin and the Studio has been presented at prestigious venues including Tate Britain, the Serpentine Gallery in London, the KIKK Festival in Namur, Sonar+D, CCCB Barcelona, Dutch Design Week, and the 104 Paris. His works have received awards, including the ACT Award in 2020, and the SferIK Art in Nature First Prize in 2024. Antoine Bertin regularly collaborates with organizations such as Google Arts & Culture Lab, Tara Ocean Foundation, and Greenpeace.
He also produces a quarterly show titled "Edge of the Forest" for NTS Radio, blending field recordings, data sonifications, music, and spoken word. Antoine Bertin is currently a doctoral candidate within the Interfacing the Ocean research group, led by Karmen Franinovic and Roman Kirschner at the ZHDK University, focusing on design with, in, and for the ocean.

Metabolite Conversation

Antoine Bertin uses the scientific data collected during the Microbiomes Mission on board Tara as raw material for the composition of sound meditations on marine micro-organisms. This process of translating digital information into sound is called sonification. It allows him to reveal to our ears the variations, rhythms and conversations of phytoplankton. The *Metabolite Conversation* installation consists of an acoustically reflective surface coupled to an ultra-directional loudspeaker, a system in which sound and light intermingle to immerse visitors in the floating poetry of the language of micro-algae. Science has shown that these tiny creatures have voices: microalgae are constantly sending and receiving chemical compounds called metabolites. At a time when the climate crisis is gathering pace, the voice of the microbiome, the pillar of the marine and planetary ecosystem, cannot remain unheard.
By combining scientific research, creative coding and musical composition, Antoine Bertin has created a series of works exploring the link with another form of intelligence, that of micro-organisms.

Samuel Bollendorff, *Les Larmes de Sirènes (série) [Mermaid Tears series]*, 2024

Photographic installation
© Benoît Fougeirol

Samuel Bollendorff

Samuel Bollendorff, born in 1974, was a member of the agency Œil Public from 1999 until its closure in 2010. He belongs to a generation of photographers who developed their skills in both form and substance. At the Louis Lumière School, he honed his technical and photographic practices. His studies in art history cultivated a strong sense of observation, while his time at the Paris School of Fine Arts taught him the importance of shaping his creations.
Samuel Bollendorff is a photographer and filmmaker who explores all forms of audiovisual storytelling. His photographic work, films, and installations fuel his inquiry into the image as a tool for political and environmental reflection. Among his works are *Voyage au bout du charbon* (SCAM Award 2009), *À l'abri de rien* (Europa Award 2011), Le Grand Incendie (Visa d'Or for Interactive Documentary 2014), *La Parade Étoile* (SCAM 2018), and *La nuit tombe sur l'Europe* (2016).

Mermaid Tears series

In 2018, while crossing the 'continent of plastic' in the North Pacific Ocean between Hawaii and Oregon aboard Tara, Samuel Bollendorff had the idea for a new photographic series, which he entitled *Mermaid Tears*.
In 2019, he will be joining the Tara Microplastique mission, in charge of collecting 2,700 samples from nearly 45 sampling sites located between land and sea. Here he offers a dialogue between the beauty of the seascapes and the sad reality of the samples taken from the same places. Every year, an estimated eleven million tonnes of plastic are discharged into the ocean.

Seba Calfuqueo, *Ko ta mapu ngey ka [Water Is Also Territory]*, 2022

Installation. Single-channel video of the performance at C3A - Roberto Ruiz. TBA21 Thyssen-Bornemisza Art Contemporary Collection.

Seba Calfuqueo

Seba Calfuqueo (born 1991, Chile) lives and works in Santiago de Chile and is part of the Rangiñtulewfu Mapuche collective and Yene magazine. Of Mapuche origin, their work proposes a critical reflection on the social, cultural, and political status of the Mapuche subject within current Chilean and Latin American societies, aiming to make visible feminist approaches and sexual dissidence. Their work includes installation, ceramics, performance, and video, with the aim of exploring both the cultural similarities and differences between Indigenous and Western ways of thinking.

Ko ta mapu ngey ka

This work, by the Mapuche artist Seba Cafuqueo, establishes a poetic and political relationship between water, the body, the Mapudungun (Mapuche language), and the land while exposing the devastating effects of extractivism in causing aridity and depletion.
Using a combination of techniques, Calfuqueo traces a path that departs from the water toponymies in Mapudungun. Meticulously painted toponymies for temuko (temu water), kurüko (black water), likan ko (waters of the likan stone), luma ko (waters of luma) onto the white canvas covering the floor, maps the formerly overflowing and nowadays desiccated waterways onto the territory that today corresponds to Chile. Next to it, the sentence Mapu kishu angkükelay, kakelu angkümmapukey (The soil does not dry by itself, others dry it) encapsulates the suffering inflicted by the Chilean Water Code enacted in 1981 by the dictatorship of Augusto Pinochet, which controls the distribution of the country's water resources by granting permanent water titles to private companies.

Stephanie Comilang, *Diaspora ad Astra,* 2020

Single-channel video installation,
color, sound
5 min 25 sec
Commissioned by TBA21–
Academy with the support of
Institut Kunst HGK
FHNW in Basel.

Stephanie Comilang

Stephanie Comilang (born 1980) is a Filipina-Canadian artist and filmmaker working between Toronto and Berlin. Stephanie Comilang's parents immigrated from the Philippines to Canada in the 1970s to escape the political unrest of Ferdinand Marco's dictatorship.
Her documentary based works create narratives that look at how our understandings of mobility, capital and labour on a global scale are shaped through various cultural and social factors. Comilang's work is concerned with the concept of home, often dealing with ideas of diaspora and migration. Her documentary approach in constructing narratives stresses themes of social mobility, global labor, and cross-cultural communication. Through the medium of video, Comilang explores the conditions migrants face, looking at exploitation and adversity that groups endure when leaving a country for reasons out of their own control.
Comilang has screened her works at the International Film Festival Rotterdam, the Asia Art Archive in America, SALTS Basel, UCLA, and the GHOST:2561 Bangkok Video and Performance Art Triennale among others.

Diaspora ad Astra

Diaspora Ad Astra is a fictional, short video told from the perspective of a Filipino seafarer. There are 400,000 seamen from the Philippines working in an industry that moves 90 percent of global trade. Under brutal working conditions, these men can make ten times more than they earn at home. They sign contracts for seven to ten months, leaving behind their families, with whom these migrant laborers struggle to maintain a connection due to the scarcity and unreliability of internet connectivity onboard. While making this video, stories of ships not allowed to dock in their home ports due to fears of the spread of coronavirus proliferated in the news. What is it like to see your home in front of you and be unable to return to it?

Anne Duk Hee Jordan, *Ziggy and the starfish*, 2016-2022

Single-channel video installation
(color and sound)
16 min 28 sec
TBA21 Thyssen-Bornemisza Art
Contemporary Collection

Anne Duk Hee Jordan

Anne Duk Hee Jordan (born 1978, Korea) Transience and transformation are the central themes in her work. Through movement and performance, Jordan gives materiality another dimension - she builds motorized sculptures and creates edible landscapes.
Her sculptures are intended to draw the viewer into the present and open a dialogue between natural phenomena, philosophy and art. Her work is like an interactive fantasy play with the knowledge and theories about the world and our souls. In the absence of concrete knowledge, fantasy runs riot. Jordan opens up doors to a universe where she humorously and romantically creates machines that juxtapose robotic consciousness with organic cyclic decay and life. She asks questions about an »agency« and encourages a change of perspective. She shifts the focus away from humans towards the entire ecology.

Ziggy and the starfish

Ziggy and the Starfish is a totalizing installation where several sculptural elements and a film contribute to create an environment that explores the diversity of sexuality in the ocean and the influence of climate change on the hydrosphere. The work —named after David Bowie's Ziggy Stardust, a fictional stage persona, an androgynous Martian who indulged in apocalyptic thoughts— is the precursor of a trilogy.
In these works, the invisible Ziggy acts as a counterpart to the starfish and stands for the beauty, strangeness, queerness, and exoticism of the sea creatures, exposed to various mutations and changes to their sexuality as a result of climate change. Through visualizing the sex life of sea slugs, sponges, octopuses and starfish and other living forms, and their vibrant and seductive performative play, the human spectator is drawn into this intimate and hallucinatory sexual world. The three soft sculptures create, together with the original score by Duk Hee and musician Nevo Ron, an underwater fantasy world. There is a certain nostalgia in the work, for a time in which sexuality was not binary but rather hybrid, and which, in the end, responds to this powerful need for adaptation.

Simone Fattal, *Pearls*, 2023

Seven blown Murano glass pearls, hand-engraved, 4x Ø 50 cm, 3 x Ø 40 cm. Overall dimensions variable Commissioned by TBA21–Academy. TBA21 Thyssen-Bornemisza Art Contemporary Collection. Installation view: Thus waves come in pairs: Simone Fattal and Petrit Halilaj & Álvaro Urbano. Ocean Space, Venice Italy, 2023
© Gerdastudio

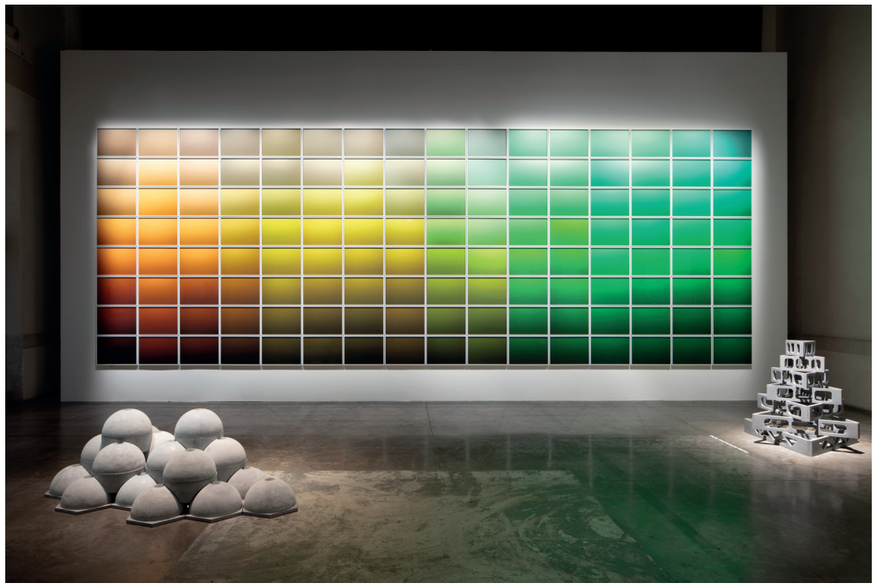
Simone Fattal

Simone Fattal (born 1942, Damascus, Syria), living in Paris. She was raised in Lebanon, where she studied philosophy at the "Ecole des Lettres" in Beirut. She then moved to Paris, where she continued her philosophical pursuits at the "Sorbonne". In 1969 she returned to Beirut and began working as a visual artist, exhibiting her paintings until the start of the Lebanese Civil War. She left Lebanon in 1980 and settled in California, where she founded the "Post-Apollo Press", a publishing house dedicated to innovative and experimental literary work. In 1988 she enrolled at the "Art Institute of San Francisco", which prompted a return to her artistic practice and a newfound dedication to sculpture and ceramics.
Her work has been exhibited at the Museum of Modern Art's MoMA PS1, Sharjah Art Foundation, Sharjah, Beirut Art Center, Beirut, FIAC, Art Dubai, Musée du Luxembourg, Bienal de Venecia o el Musée Yves Saint Laurent Marrakech among many others.

Pearls

Conceived for the exhibition "Sempre il mare, uomo libero, amerai!" (Free man, you'll love the ocean endlessly!), titled after a verse from Charles Baudelaire's poem "L'homme et la mer", *Pearls* comprises seven spheres made of blown Murano glass. They are engraved with the first lines from the "Contrasto della Zerbitana" (The Conflict with the Woman of Djerba), an anonymous fourteenth-century poem recounting an argument taking place on the island of Djerba, off the coast of Tunisia, between a sailor and the mother of a woman he abused. It is one of the earliest examples of the Sabir language. Sabir is a combination of Arabic, French, Greek, Italian and Spanish, and was the lingua franca that merchants, pirates, and slavers spoke along the Silk Road between the eleventh and the nineteenth centuries. This forgotten language linked the different cultures of the Mediterranean. Unlike today's lingua franca—English—which is a testament to British colonialism and domination over countless lands, Sabir was a language without a territory. Poetry is a rich vessel of transmission, from one culture and temporality to another. "The pearl trade was one of the largest industries connecting the Orient and Europe," Simone Fattal says, "and with it came politics, community, and a legacy which we can still see in Venice today."

Nicolas Floc'h, *La Couleur de l'Eau – La Seine*, 2024 & *Structures productives, récifs artificiels*, 2013-2017



The Colour of Water, The Seine : 144 pigment prints, aluminium collage, 2024
Productive structures, artificial reefs: Fibre-reinforced concrete sculptures
© Benoît Fougeirol

Nicolas Floc'h

Nicolas Floc'h lives and works between Paris, Normandy and Brittany. A sailor and diver, he has exhibited his work at venues such as MAAT in Lisbon, the Fondation Hermès in Japan, the SMAK in Ghent, the Fondation Thalie in Belgium, the Centre Georges Pompidou, the Palais de Tokyo and the Rencontres de la photographie d'Arles in France. Nicolas Floc'h's installations, photographs, films, sculptures and performances question an era of transition in which flux, disappearance and regeneration play an essential role.
For the past fifteen years, his work has focused on the representation of habitats and the underwater environment, giving rise to a body of documentary photography linked to global change and the definition of the concept of the underwater landscape. These long-term projects, nourished by experience, scientific research and encounters, give rise to open-ended works rooted in reality, in which evolutionary processes take pride of place.

La Couleur de l'Eau – La Seine

Nicolas Floc'h starts the project *La Couleur de l'Eau* (The colour of water) in 2016. The artist has involved taking photographs in the water column of colour and its variations according to depth and geographical location moving away from the coast towards the open sea or from river catchments towards the Ocean. The photographs are taken wide-angle and at regular intervals, at different depths. This 'grid' of the Seine therefore represents a photographic cross-section over 100 kilometres from the river to the Ocean.

Structures productives, récifs artificiels

Nicolas Floc'h embarked on the schooner Tara between Tokyo and Keelung during the Tara Pacific expedition in 2017. On board, he accompanied the scientists on their dives and worked on his inventory of artificial reefs. He is also continuing his photographic series Productive Landscapes, begun in 2015, which brings together a series of projects on the representation of underwater landscapes and their role as productive ecosystems. This residency also enables him to address global concepts such as Ocean acidification and global warming.

Max Hooper Schneider, *Sand-Writing Craters*, 2024

Installation view, Max Hooper Schneider, LYSIS FIELD, Pansori – a soundscape of the 21st century, 15th Gwangju Biennale, Gwangju, South Korea, 2024.
Image courtesy of the Artist and Gwangju Biennale.

Max Hooper Schneider

Max Hooper Schneider (b. 1982) lives and works in Los Angeles. His polymathic practice brings together the fields of biology, philosophy, and landscape architecture to create objects and environments that speculate on entropic forces and posthuman forms. He develops and explores succession, abandonment, and the uncanny through habitat-like aesthetics, and defamiliarizes human-centered time scales and material culture, returning time and again to the strangenesses and symbioses that have preceded and that will outlast human civilization.
Hooper Schneider received a Master in Landscape Architecture from Harvard Graduate School of Design and Bachelors in Urban Design and Biology from New York University, with additional studies in Marine Biology. He has shown in solo exhibitions including UCCA Center for Contemporary Art, MO.CO Montpellier Museée Contemporain, and the Hammer Museum. His group exhibitions include Centre Pompidou-Metz, Schinkel Pavillon, Leeum Museum of Art, Kistefos Museum, and Musée d'art moderne de Paris. He has participated in the 15th Gwangju Biennale, 16th Istanbul Biennial, 13th Baltic Triennial, and the Mongolia Land Art Biennial. His works are held in major collections, including the Hammer Museum, Museum of Contemporary Art Los Angeles, Musée d'art moderne Paris among others. He was awarded the BMW Art Journey Prize in 2017 and the Schmidt Ocean Institute Prize in 2023.

Sand-Writing Craters

A crater, possibly the geological spawn of a world to come, house kinetic sandbed. The sandbed is manipulated by magnetic balls and operated via continuous machine movements and computer algorithms, will flash symbols, caricatures, glyphs, and patterns, based on endemic marine histories, novel research in the Nice region, and the ecology of the site of Villa Arson, all swirling together in a state of perpetual motion, continuously evolving and writing over themselves, never appearing the same over the course of the exhibition. The installation thermal sensors react to subtle shifts in the surrounding environment, altering the speed and intricacy of the drawing patterns. This constant fluctuation generates a mesmerizing effect reminiscent of evolving layers of history and memory embedded in ancient palimpsests. Considering the urgency of the oceanic climate crisis, the installation functions as a speculative apparatus and reminder of the transformative effects of the present climate crisis in real time.

Kapwani Kiwanga, *Hour Glass #2*, 2022

Glass, silica sand
180 × 55 × 30 cm
TBA21 Thyssen-Bornemisza Art Contemporary Collection

Kapwani Kiwanga

Kapwani Kiwanga, born in 1978 in Canada in a family of Tanzanian origin, lives and works in Paris. Studied anthropology and comparative religion at McGill University in Montreal and fine art at the Ecole des Beaux-Arts de Paris. Her work deals with issues of colonialism, gender, and the African diaspora. Drawing on her background in anthropology, Kiwanga creates art that is based on research, particularly focusing on themes of resistance against colonialism and examining power structures. Her work spans several mediums including film, sculpture, performance, and installation, employing both conceptual and architectural approaches.
Solo exhibitions of Kapwani Kiwanga's work have been held at the Centre Georges Pompidou, CCA Glasgow, the Irish Museum of Modern Art, the Bienal Internacional de Arte Contemporáneo in Almeria, Spain, Salt Beyoglu in Istanbul, the South London Gallery, the Jeu de Paume, the Kassel Documentary Film and Video Festival, Paris Photo, and The Power Plant, the MIT List Visual Arts Center, the New Museum in New York, or the Museum of Contemporary Art of Toronto, among many others. In 2022, she was awarded the Zurich Art Prize (CH).

Hour Glass #2

This sculpture is a profound meditation on transformation, merging the traditional craft of hand-blown glass with an industrial material, fracking sand, a form of sand injected into rock formations along with water to fracture the rock in hydraulic fracking. This process of transformation, bridging the natural with the industrial, is pivotal to Kiwanga's artistic narrative. This work unveils the environmental toll of sand mining used to extract oil and natural gas from Earth. Kiwanga draws attention to the aggressive extraction practices that not only deplete sand resources but also contribute significantly to environmental degradation by facilitating fossil fuel consumption.
In Kiwanga's work, sand transcends its mundane materiality to embody the pressing environmental and political issues of our time. It becomes a symbol of the adverse effects of industrial activity and a poignant reminder of the climate crisis, urging viewers to contemplate the deep-seated implications of our engagement with the natural world.

Sonia Levy, *We Marry You O Sea as a Sign of True and Perpetual Dominion*, 2023

Single-channel video installation, color, sound, 18 min 12 sec. Commissioned by TBA21–Academy with the support of the S+T+ARTS initiative of the European Commission and the European Marine Board 'EMBracing the Ocean' programme. Still: Courtesy SEPOline.
TBA21 Thyssen-Bornemisza Art Contemporary Collection

Sonia Levy

Sonia Levy is an artist filmmaker with a diasporic Berber-Polish background. Her work, marked by site-specific and interdisciplinary inquiries, delves into the implications of Western expansionist and extractive logics, exploring how these forces manifest in the transformation and governance of hydrosocial worlds. Her practice aims to probe the thresholds that have shaped and influenced the conditions necessary for life to flourish.
She is the 2023-24 European Marine Board artist-in-residence, contributing to the UN Ocean Decade. In 2022, Levy was the selected artist for the S+T+ARTS4Water residency hosted by TBA21-Academy in Venice. Levy was a participant in the 2020 Artquest's Peer Forum 'Rewilding' at the Horniman Museum and Gardens. She has exhibited in the UK and internationally, including shows and screenings at Centre Pompidou, Paris; Musée de la Chasse et de la Nature, Paris; Muséum d'Histoire Naturelle, Paris; ICA, London; BALTIC, Gateshead; Obsidian Coast, Bradford-on-Avon; Goldsmiths College, London.

We Marry You O Sea as a Sign of True and Perpetual Dominion

This work engages with Venice and its lagoon "from below," exposing their submerged, life-giving, and altered ecologies. Through underwater filmmaking, the work unsettles Venice's prevailing narratives, exposing a troubled environment that complicates the city's histories of expansion and top-down hydrodefence strategies. Attuned to the Lagoon's ebbs and floods, Levy adopts submerged perspectives that sense the interplay between land and water, life and decay, while reflecting on the forces reshaping this environment.
These histories of transformation unfold through the interweaving of rare archival photographs—documenting the Lagoon's conversion into an industrial frontier for petroleum refineries—alongside perspectives of its present submarine conditions.
An original score, drawn from extensive underwater recordings, weaves human voices into the Lagoon's acoustic lifeworlds—pulses and murmurs of marine life, rumble and whirs of relentless boat traffic. Human voices merge with these submarine soundscapes, gesturing towards the profound interplay between human activities and the Lagoon's shallows.

Armin Linke, *Photoessay Prospecting Ocean*, 2020

Lambda print
Dimensions variable
TBA21 Thyssen-Bornemisza Art Contemporary Collection

Armin Linke

Armin Linke (born 1966, Milan) is an artist working with photography and film by setting up processes that question the medium, its technologies, narrative structures, and complicities within wider socio-political structures. Linke's work observes how human beings (re-)design and use space and time as social forms: it constructs questions, propositions on planning the future, on the hidden entanglements and inter-dependences within collective design practices, and on the shifting of sites of responsibility. Linke's exhibiting practice sets up performative scripts in which different voices and methods come together. The work functions as a collection of tools for demystifying different design strategies and languages. Working with his own collection, Linke challenges the conventions of photographic practice and demonstrates that photography is not the end point.
Currently professor at the Academy of Fine Arts Munich (AdBK), guest professor at ISIA Urbino, and guest artist at CERN Geneva, Linke was also an MIT Visual Arts Program research affiliate, guest professor at the IUAV Arts and Design University in Venice, professor of photography at the Karlsruhe University for Arts and Design (HfG), and artist in residence at the KHI Florenz.

Photoessay Prospecting Ocean

The deep ocean floor is currently being explored for its rich reserves, including manganese, poly metallic nodules, cobalt crusts, gold, copper, and rare-earth elements. This rush to exploit deep sea resources is driven by increasing prices and demand for minerals amid the so-called green transition. The threat of industrial mining comes at a time of growing awareness of the fragility of the hydrosphere, which ensures the survival of the planet thanks to its regulating functions and biodiversity. Along with indigenous communities directly affected by deep-sea mining, ecologists, marine biologists, and activists are calling for a decisive ban on commercial deep-sea mining and for different ways of engaging with the oceans.

Courtney Desiree Morris, *Her Words do not Fall on the Ground*, 2023

Orisha altar to Yemaya with traditional objects
TBA21 Thyssen-Bornemisza Art Contemporary Collection

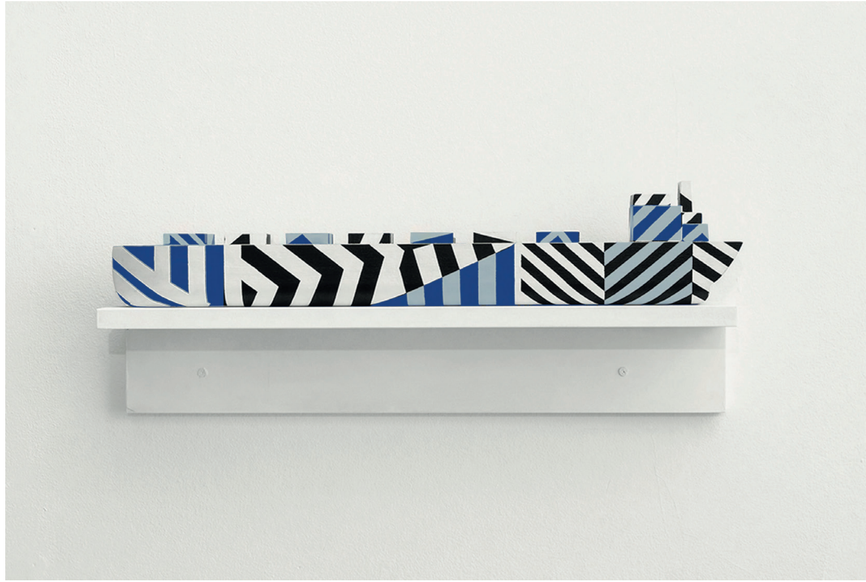
Courtney Desiree Morris

Courtney Desiree Morris is a visual and performance artist and associate professor of Gender and Women's Studies at the University of California, Berkeley. Her mediums include large-format portraiture and landscape photography, experimental video, performance, and installation. Thematically, her work is concerned with ancestral memory, African-based spiritual traditions, ecology, black place-making, and the everyday ritual aesthetics of diasporic communities. She explores how we inhabit places and how places come to inhabit us. This interplay between landscapes and human subjectivity is evident in the ways that she uses her own body to reimagine black people's relationships to the complex social and natural landscapes in which they live.
She has shown work at the National Gallery of Jamaica, the Ashara Ekundayo Gallery, the Photographic Center Northwest, the Museo Thyssen-Bornemisza, the Jordan Schnitzer Museum, Fototeca de Havana, the Museum of the African Diaspora, Yerba Buena Center for the Arts, JACK, SOMArts, C3A, A.I.R. Gallery, Performance Space New York, and the Berkeley Art Center. She is a national member of the AIR Gallery and an alumna of The Austin Project, founded by Omi Jones and facilitated by Sharon Bridgforth.

Her Words do not Fall on the Ground

This work was conceived as part of a performance work, consisting of a ritual urban procession. At its center is the altar of Yemaya —the Ocean Mother Orisha— a deity in Santería, an Afro-Caribbean religion rooted in the Yoruba culture and brought to the Americas, mainly to Cuba and Brazil, by enslaved Africans. The Altar shows the traditional objects offered to the deity in the shrines and rituals dedicated to Yemaya, who has many paths that represent different aspects of her power and divinity, the different natural landscapes she inhabits, and which determine how her devotees should engage with her blessing.
In the Orisha cosmology, Yemaya is not only the mother of all the Orisha, but she is also considered the mother of all planetary life. The ocean, which is her body and her kingdom, is understood to be the birthplace of all living things.

Asunción Molinos Gordo, *Barco Carguero [Cargo Ship]*, 2016



Hand-painted wood bulk-carrier ship
70 × 11.7 × 15 cm
TBA21 Thyssen-Bornemisza Art Contemporary Collection

Asunción Molinos Gordo

Asunción Molinos Gordo (born 1979, Spain) is a researcher and visual artist. Her practice is strongly influenced by disciplines such as anthropology, sociology and cultural studies. She questions the categories that define "innovation" in mainstream discourses today, working to generate a less urban-centric way of understanding progress.
The main focus of her work is contemporary peasantry. Her understanding of the figure of the small or medium farmer is not merely as food producer but as cultural agent, responsible for both perpetuating traditional knowledge and for generating new expertise. She employs installation, photography, video, sound and other media to examine the rural realm driven by a strong desire to understand the value and complexity of its cultural production, as well as the burdens that keep it invisible and marginalized.
She has produced work reflecting on land usage, nomad architecture, farmers' strikes, bureaucracy on territory, transformation of rural labor, biotechnology and global food trade.
Molinos Gordo won the Sharjah Biennial Prize 2015 with her project WAM (World Agriculture Museum) and represented Spain at the XIII Havana Biennial in 2019.

Barco Carguero

During World Wars I and II, warships from the British and North American navies adopted the so-called "dazzle camouflage." Because it's impossible to adapt optically to the ever-changing context of the open sea, the dazzle designs offered an alternative to invisibility, making it difficult for the enemy to determine the speed, direction, and position of the ships.
Today, international waters are still tax-free havens, the perfect place to conceal—only now its large amounts of grain, to hide it from the markets, provoking an absence, generating false scarcity and forcing a price hike. When the merchandise reaches the desired price, the ship docks at a port and sells its wares. Inaccurate data on natural catastrophes, the banning of exports, and bad harvests are other strategies to manipulate the price increases. Rumors are an efficient financial instrument.

Ingo Niermann, *Sea Lovers*, 2020

Video still
Commissioned by TBA21–Academy. Credit: courtesy of the artist.

Ingo Niermann

Ingo Niermann (born 1969, Germany) lives between Berlin and Basel. He is a writer, artist, and the editor of the speculative book series "Solution" published by Sternberg. He is about to release the sequel to *The Army of Love*, an expanded film he made with director Alexa Karolinski.

Niermann is co-founder of the revolutionary collective Redesigndeutschland, and has invented a tomb for all, the Great Pyramid. Together with Rem Koolhaas he has built a public voting tool - Votes - in Gwangju (Korea). In collaboration with the Haus der Kulturen der Welt in Berlin, Niermann initiated the international digital publishing project Fiktion.

His work has been exhibited in venues such as the Fridericianum Museum in Kasel and the Guggenheim Museum in New York.

Sea Lovers

Large parts of the sea are used in a similar fashion to the countryside. Still, its liquidity and enormous size sustain substantial differences. The oceans slip away from national and personal liability.
Sea Lovers portrays a group of people who train for a more intimate relation with the ocean. They try to learn to enjoy not just the cute and the intelligent but also the gloomy and the uncanny. By means of exercise and technology, they work towards a sea of love where all creatures help and celebrate each other.

Diana Policarpo, Cigua Tales, 2022

Four-channel video installation, color, sound
Dimensions variable
TBA21 Thyssen-Bornemisza Art Contemporary Collection

Diana Policarpo

Diana Policarpo (born 1986, Lisboa, Portugal) is a visual artist and composer working in visual and musical media including drawing, video, sculpture, text, performance, and multi-channel sound installation. Policarpo investigates gender politics, economic structures, health, and interspecies relations through speculative transdisciplinary research. She creates installations to examine experiences of vulnerability and empowerment associated with acts of exposing oneself to the capitalist world.
Her work has been exhibited worldwide including recent solo presentations at Kunsthall Trondheim, Galeria Municipal do Porto, Museum of Art, Architecture and Technology - MAAT, Kunstverein Leipzig, Kunsthalle Baden-Baden. Policarpo has recently exhibited, performed and screened her work at Kunsthall Oslo, W139, Amsterdam; Mars Gallery, Melbourne; Peninsula Gallery; New York; and Whitechapel Gallery, LUX- Moving Image, Cafe OTO and Institute of Contemporary Arts in London. Policarpo was the winner of Prémio Novos Artistas Fundação EDP 2019 and the illy Present Future Prize 2021.

Cigua Tales

This installation has its point of departure in a research trip to the Portuguese administered Ilhas Selvagens (Savage Islands) in the North Atlantic Ocean. Policarpo creates a case study of mapping colonial histories through tracking natural biodiversity. Diana Policarpo gives presence to the Ocean and the stories it holds through research that mutates in many ways.
Small as they are, these islands hold symbolic and also ecological importance. What might seem tiny and remote to humans is not so for algae, birds, fishes, and rocks that speak of the geological formation of a continent and the currents that determine the course of the seasons and the survival of many species. The title *Cigua Tales* refers to poisoning that occurs after eating fish contaminated with accumulated ciguatoxins. This results from the fish feeding on toxic macroalgae containing Gambierdiscus. Yet, the exact cause of the intermittent increase in the release of toxins resulting in poisoning up the food chain remains unknown. However, nuclear testing has been suggested as one possible cause. It is an example of various anthropogenic damage caused by humans treating the world as their property.

Christian Sardet and the Macronautes, *Plankton chronicles, 2009-2020*

Single channel video installation,
color, sound, 5 min
© Benoît Fougeirol

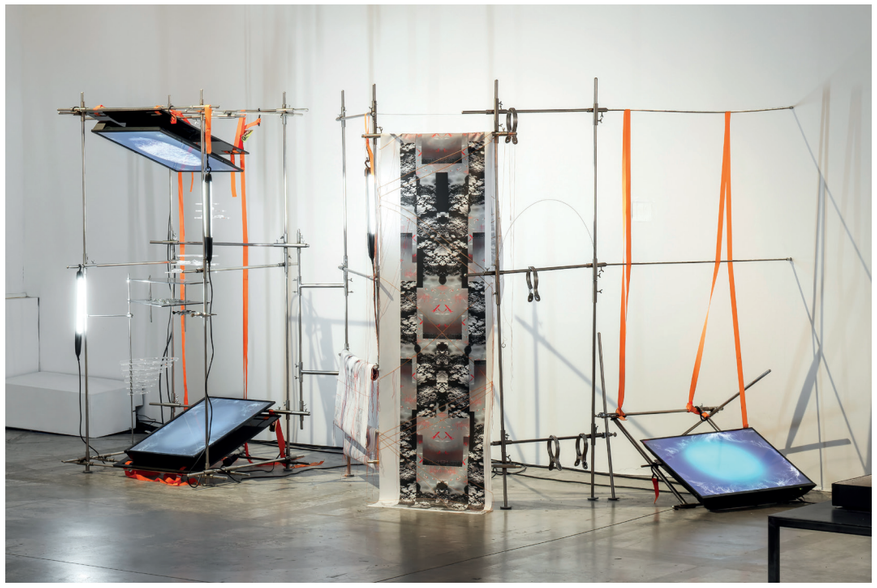
Christian Sardet

Christian Sardet (born in Châtellerault in 1946) lives and works in La Gaude, Alpes Maritimes. Noé Sardet (The Macronautes) born in Villefranche-sur-Mer, lives and works in Montreal. Christian Sardet is an emeritus research director at the CNRS, and his primary research has focused on fertilization and embryo development. In 2013, he published *Plancton: aux origines du vivant* (Plankton: Wonders of the drifting world, 2015) with the Ulmer editions, which has been translated into five languages, and in 2023, *Les cellules: une histoire de la vie*. Christian Sardet has received several awards from the Academy of Sciences and the EMBO (European Molecular Biology Organization) for his scientific contributions and knowledge dissemination.

Plankton chronicles

He is the co-founder and scientific coordinator of the Tara Ocean expedition (2009-2013), dedicated to the study of plankton. As part of this expedition, he, along with his son Noé, launched the documentary series Chroniques du plancton (Plankton Chronicles). Using photography and video, he reveals the beauty of this invisible world to the naked eye. His works, produced in collaboration with the collective Les Macronautes, made up of filmmakers, photographers, and sailors, have been exhibited at Kyotographie (2015) and at the Fondation Cartier for Contemporary Art in 2017 as part of the exhibition Le grand orchestre des animaux (The Great Animal Orchestra).

Robertina Šebjanič, *Echoes of the Abyss – Toxic Legacies Of Oceanic Ecologies*, 2024



Multimedia installation
© Benoît Fougeirol

Robertina Šebjanič

Robertina Šebjanič is an artist-researcher whose work explores the biological, chemical, (geo)political and cultural realities of aquatic environments and the impact of humans on the other organisms that live there. Her projects are a call for the development of new collective strategies based on empathy for a better recognition of non-human entities. In her analysis of the Anthropocene and its theoretical field, the artist uses the terms aquatocene and aquaforming to describe human impacts on the marine environment. Her work has received several awards and nominations, including the Ars Electronica Prize (2016), the Starts Prize, Falling Walls (2021) and RE: Humanism.

Echoes of the Abyss – Toxic Legacies Of Oceanic Ecologies

The artist explores the problem of abandoned weapons lying on the seabed, a source of toxic pollution and a danger to marine life. In particular, she examines how decomposing munitions affect water chemistry and the impact on marine ecosystems. In her research carried out in the Baltic Sea, she links her discoveries to the scientific explorations carried out on board Tara, with the aim of raising awareness of the effects of man-made pollution.

With the support of RÉPUBLIQUE DE SLOVÉNIE
AMBASSADE PARIS

Allan Sekula, *Lottery of the Sea*, 2006

Single-channel video installation, color, sound 179 min. TBA21 Thyssen-Bornemisza Art Contemporary Collection. Still: Courtesy Allan Sekula Studio.

Allan Sekula

Allan Sekula (1951 – 2013) was an American photographer, writer, filmmaker, theorist and critic. Considered one of the most important theorists of documentary photography in the second half of the 20th century. Born in Erie, Pennsylvania, he lived most of his life in California, earning BA and MFA degrees in Visual Arts from University of California, San Diego, and teaching at California Institute of the Arts for over three decades. His work was frequently focused on large economic systems, or "the imaginary and material geographies of the advanced capitalist world". Sekula may be best known for his substantial essays of images and texts exploring the maritime world. He received fellowships and grants from the Guggenheim Foundation, National Endowment for the Arts, Getty Research Institute, Deutsche Akademischer Austauschdienst (DAAD), Atelier Calder and was named a 2007 USA Broad Fellow.
His art works are in the collection of Museum of Modern Art, NY; J. Paul Getty Museum, Los Angeles Museum of Contemporary Art; Art Institute of Chicago; Centre Pompidou, Paris; Ludwig Museum, Cologne; Museo Nacional Centro de Arte Reina Sofía, Madrid; Museu d'Art Contemporani de Barcelona; Tate, London.

Lottery of the Sea

Lottery of the Sea is an essayistic montage or an “offbeat diary,” as Allan Sekula put it, tracing his journey as filmmaker across the globe, moving from port to port, ship to ship, from Athens to Yokohama to Los Angeles and beyond. Throughout the film Sekula depicts, over moving images, various vignettes of the globalized maritime distribution chain, such as butchers cutting meat at a market and port workers loading and unloading goods bound for or returning from global dispersal.
The title of the film is sourced from a passage in *The Wealth of Nations* (1776), in which the economist and philosopher Adam Smith uses the concept of the lottery of the sea as an allegory to explain the idea of risk. There he compares the life of the seafarer to that of a gambler, describing the experience of risk on behalf of the precarious laborer working on board and on behalf of the investor, who may sponsor the ship’s voyage, leading to a discussion of human labor’s interchangeability with material goods (ships, cargo, etc.). Sekula argues that the sea is a source of sublimity but also a site of deep horror and immense unpredictability.

Janaina Tschäpe, *Dormant Chloeia*, 2024

Series of 6 prints. Inkjet on paper
86.3 × 101.6 cm
TBA21 Thyssen-Bornemisza Art Contemporary Collection

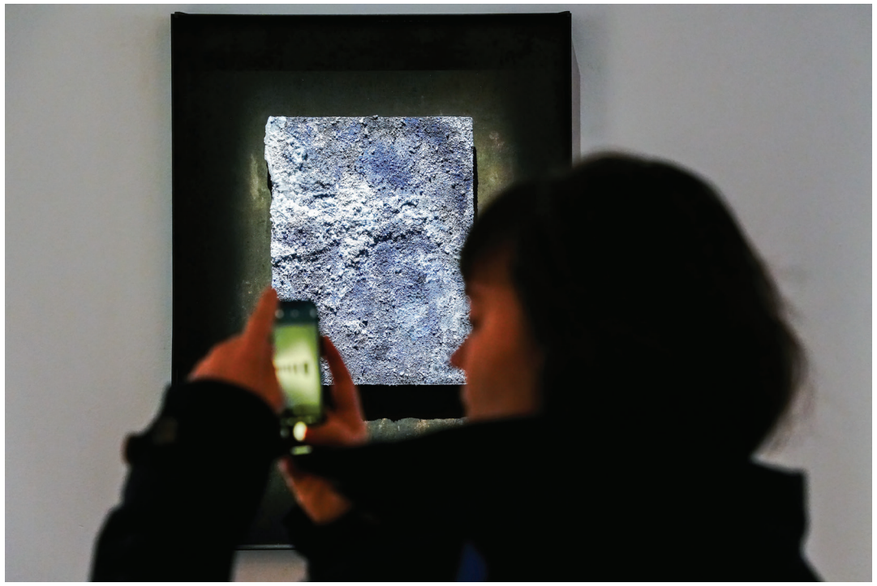
Janaina Tschäpe

Janaina Tschäpe (born 1973, Germany) was raised in São Paulo, Brazil. She lives and works in New York. Tschäpe’s interdisciplinary practice spans painting, drawing, photography, video and sculpture. Incorporating elements of aquatic, plant, and human life, Tschäpe’s universe of sublime forms shift between representation, fantasy and abstraction.
Referencing interests in myth, morphology and the mysteries of aquatic states, she has developed a distinctive language in which blur perceptions of illusion and reality.. Her distinctive compositions convey a sensation of movement, their biomorphic shapes and gestural marks functioning as emotive signifiers of her interior thoughts. Her work can be found in important public collections including Centre Pompidou, Paris; Museo Nacional Centro de Arte Reina Sofía, Madrid ; Harvard Art Museum, Cambridge; Museu de Arte Moderna do Rio de Janeiro; Moderna Museet, Stockholm ; Thyssen-Bornemisza Art Contemporary, Vienna; and the Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum, New York. She has completed public commissions in New York City; Miami Beach, Florida; São Paulo, Brazil; and Holbæk, Denmark.

Dormant Chloeia

In Janaina Tschäpe’s *Dormant* series, mythology intertwines with melancholy, drawing from the lush, enigmatic lore of the Amazon and the shadowed, impassioned narratives of 19th-century German Romanticism. The photographs capture figures draped in heavy, cumbersome fabrics submerged in deep water —a setting that amplifies both the vulnerability of the female form and the frailty of the natural world. As these figures writhe and stretch, gasping for elusive breath beneath their layers, their contorted silhouettes gradually echo the graceful yet inert forms of vast sea creatures adrift on the ocean’s surface.
This haunting visual dialogue speaks to the silent struggle against overwhelming forces —both internal and environmental. Tschäpe’s work invites us to confront a dual vulnerability: the intimate, often unspoken fragility of the human condition and the broader, inexorable decay of our natural surroundings. In every pose and ripple, the Dormant series offers a reflective pause, urging us to recognize life's poignant beauty and inherent transience.

Laure Winants, *Synesthésie Océanique, [Oceanic Synesthesia]*, 2024



Captagora, title *Synesthésie Océanique*
© Captagora

Laure Winants

Laure Winants is an artist-researcher based in Paris and Brussels. She works with cross-disciplinary research groups, including the CNRS/CNES on atmospheric pollution in the Pyrenees via the Albedo 2021 project, the Icelandic volcanology laboratory on the monitoring of natural phenomena with Phenomena 2022, and the Arctic Polar Institute and ESA with the Time Capsule 2023-2024 project. Her research focuses on the interaction of ecosystems from a more-than-human perspective. She works with sensitive materials and creates active works that react to their environment. Her work is exhibited internationally and has entered the collections of several European foundations.

Laure Winants has exhibited her work in Berlin, Reykjavik, Brussels, Paris and soon in Stockholm, Luxembourg, and Osaka. Her work has entered the collection of several foundations, such as the Fondation des Arts du Luxembourg and the Palais de Liège.

Synesthésie Océanique

Laure Winants explores the impact of pollutants on the coastline using sensitive instruments and experimental photographic techniques. On board, the experiments are numerous: capturing the composition of light, printing the chemical composition of water. The works reveal acidification and the interaction of pollutants with marine ecosystems, creating a photographic typology of the seabed and its changes. Using paper that is sensitive to the chemical composition of water, the prints on the wall reveal the diversity of imprints on the seabed. This direct collaboration with the ocean takes on another dimension in the largest capsule on the pedestals. It is destined to be altered and evolve according to atmospheric conditions, temperature and light, continuing the search for a work that is reactive and situated in its exhibition space.

Susanne M. Winterling, *Glistening Troubles*, 2017

Installation with four CGI 3D animations of dinoflagellates; one single-channel video on a monitor; two-channel sound; four mirror columns; eight dinoflagellates in bio resin casts 1:24 min, 2:50 min, 1:09 min, 00:43 min (animations) 7:14 min (video).
TBA21 Thyssen-Bornemisza Art Contemporary Collection

Susanne M. Winterling

Susanne M. Winterling (born 1970, Germany) living in Berlin and in Trondheim, Norway. She works across a variety of media including film, photography, sculpture, and performance. explores the alliances that might be made across bodies of knowledge, technologies, species (animal, vegetal, bacterial), and the material world. Interweaving documentary and fiction, she highlights how such alliances can inform various kinds of thought and awareness. Taking inspiration from both natural and digital contexts, she imagines the living and the nonliving creating aesthetic and political solidarities that could respond to current environmental issues.
Prevailing modernist concepts, power structures and hierarchical historiographies are captured and investigated in her work in the form of spatial constellations. Her practice emphasizes what pure information and form leaves out – including a sensual approach to media and material informed by the understanding of immersion and power as energy flows.

Glistening Troubles

This installation results from the artist's residency at the TBA21 Alligator Head Foundation in Jamaica. The work investigates the bioluminescence of dinoflagellate algae as indicators for the health of coastal waters with toxic potential. For several years, Winterling's research has homed in on these organic bodies that light up when touched or moved, reminiscent of the touchscreens that surround us these days. The computer-generated imagery of enlarged individual algae in her animations transform scale and temporality, and blur the borders between "nature" and culture. A video interview with a Rock-based fisherman, which Winterling shot during her residency, grants insight into the medicinal properties of algae for treating skin infections, known to locals for centuries. The work places the skin—our outer boundaries, with which we touch our surroundings— and luminescent screen technologies—our interfaces to digital realities—in metaphorical proximity.

villa arson nice

Under the supervision of the French Ministry of Culture and became a legal entity of the University Côte d'Azur in 2020, Villa Arson was conceived in the 1960s by André Malraux, then Minister of Cultural Affairs, as part of a major cultural decentralization programme. Inaugurated in 1972, Villa Arson was designed from the outset as a highly innovative establishment that fulfilled several essential and complementary functions in support of creation : teaching, research, experimentation, production, distribution, promotion and support. The uniqueness of Villa Arson also lies in the association of its different areas of activity (the contemporary art center, the school, the library, research and residencies), whose actions intersect and enrich experiences.

The school hosts around 230 students and offers a single Arts department encompassing a wide range of disciplines and practices. The art center presents an exhibition program with a strong international focus, giving priority to emerging creation. Pursuing a commitment to openness to the world, the Villa Arson also welcomes artists-in-residence throughout the year, fostering connections between students and the diverse global art scenes while enriching their artistic projects. Villa Arson is listed as a Historic Monument and holds the "Remarkable Contemporary Architecture" label.

Fondation tara océan explorer et partager

The Tara Ocean Foundation is the first public interest foundation in France dedicated to the Ocean. For over 20 years, it has been striving for a revolution to preserve life, convinced that the Ocean is essential to the equilibrium of our planet. Exploring the Ocean and sharing scientific discoveries to raise collective awareness is at the heart of the foundation's mission. It leads scientific expeditions, in partnership with leading international research laboratories, to study marine biodiversity and understand the impacts of climate change and pollution. It raises public awareness, from the younger generation to political decision-makers. Thanks to its UN Special Observer Status, the foundation plays an active role in international Ocean governance.

Alongside its scientific work and the dissemination of knowledge to various audiences, the Tara Ocean Foundation has also been welcoming artistic residencies since its very beginning. Initiated thanks to agnès b. and Etienne Bourgois, more than fifty artist residencies have been held on board the schooner since 2004. The artistic residencies aboard the schooner are a unique and inspiring experience for the artists in a continuously changing environment, far from the usual conditions of a traditional artist studio. The artists selected for residency - painters, illustrators, photographers, sculptors, writers, sound and video artists - represent a wide range of artistic fields, helping to make the invisible visible and change our perception of the Ocean.

TBA21 Thyssen Bornemisza Art Contemporary

TBA21 Thyssen-Bornemisza Art Contemporary is a leading international art and advocacy foundation established in 2002 by philanthropist and art patron Francesca Thyssen-Bornemisza. The Foundation stewards the TBA21 Collection and its outreach activities, which include exhibitions as well as educational and public programming. TBA21 Art Contemporary is based in Madrid, working in association with the Thyssen-Bornemisza National Museum, and has other important poles of action in Venice (Italy) and Portland (Jamaica). As an advocacy foundation, TBA21 Art Contemporary contributes to the global conversation promoting the role of art and culture in public policy processes, and the opportunity of art and culture as tools for democratic governance especially in ocean and environmental governance. TBA21 Art Contemporary (Observer at the International Seabed Authority - ISA) considers that art is a powerful tool through which to examine and to question the status quo, in order to articulate transformation processes leading to the necessary behavioral change and re-imagined encounters with the world and for the future generations.

TBA21–Academy is the foundation's research arm, fostering a deeper relationship with the Ocean and wider ecologies by working as an incubator for transdisciplinary inquiry, artistic production, and environmental advocacy. All activity at TBA21 is collaborative and fundamentally driven by artists and the belief in art and culture as a carrier of social and environmental transformation, ultimately in the service of peace. Reflecting this commitment, TBA21 presents, during UNOC3, a program of activities aiming to facilitate the integration of art and culture in the policy debate and negotiations, in articulation with both the Biennale des Arts de Nice and the Année de la Mer.

SCHMIDT OCEAN INSTITUTE

Schmidt Ocean Institute was established in 2009 by Eric and Wendy Schmidt to catalyze the discoveries needed to understand our Ocean, sustain life, and ensure the health of our planet through the pursuit of impactful scientific research and intelligent observation, technological advancement, open sharing of information, and public engagement, all at the highest levels of international excellence.

The Schmidt Ocean Institute Artist-at-Sea program, launched in 2015, engages art to illuminate a deeper understanding of and connection with the Ocean. The program is uniquely positioned to facilitate collaborations between artists and the world's leading marine scientists, providing the Research Vessel Falkor (too) as a platform for advanced technology-based ocean research, that lends to artistic exploration and dialogues across disciplines. This artist-led, cross-disciplinary approach encourages explorative perspectives and rekindles a connection to the marine world, sharing new understandings and discoveries that will impact our world today and in the future.

Nice 2025
Biennale
des Arts
et de
l'Océan

VILLE DE NICE

In June 2025, Nice will host the 3rd United Nations Ocean Conference (UNOC 2025). This international summit will bring together leaders and governments from around the world to debate and decide on the future of our planet. To mark the occasion, the City of Nice is placing its 6th Biennial of Arts under the banner of the Ocean, uniting cultural players, institutions and partners around this project. Entitled 'The sea around us*', the biennial is a vibrant tribute to Rachel Carson, a great figure in the world of the oceans, a woman of science, literature and commitment to life. The co-curators, Jean-Jacques Aillagon, former French Minister of Culture and Communication, and Hélène Guenin, Director of the MAMAC, are proposing an original program to match the event and its stakes:
- 11 exhibitions with installations and associated events in
7 museums in the city of Nice, as well as at 109, the city's third venue, and at the Villa Arson;
- a trail of works of Art in the city, a major new feature of this edition;
- two international foundations, Tara Ocean Foundation
and TBA21 Thyssen-Bornemisza Art Contemporary are also partners.

The exhibition *Becoming Ocean: a social conversation about the Ocean* is one of the main events presented in the city as part of the Biennial.

To find out more : anneedelamer.nice.fr

*Rachel Carson, *La Mer autour de nous*, Domaine Sauvage, Editions Wildproject, 2019 Edition originale The sea around us, 1951 – Avec l'aimable autorisation de Wildproject et de l'Estate Rachel Carson.

Practical information

Presented at the Villa Arson, the exhibition will be open to the public every day except Tuesday, from 2pm to 6pm (2pm to 7pm in July and August). Admission is free and no reservation is required.

Address:
Villa Arson, 20 avenue Stephen Liégeard, 06100 Nice

Access:
Tramway line n°1 - Station Le Ray
Bus n°8, direction Las Planas / Sappia - station Deux avenues

Outside areas (gardens and terraces) and exhibition rooms are largely accessible to people with reduced mobility.

villa-arson.fr

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· Sébastien Ruiz, Tara Ocean Foundation
· Marie-Ann Yemsi, Villa Arson Art Center

Coordination
· Cira Pérez, Fundación TBA21 | Thyssen-Bornemisza Art Contemporary

Exhibition Design
· Clara Álvarez

Exhibition Production and Management
· Alexia Nicolaïdis assisted by Victoire Huteau and Alexandre Capan assisted by Arnaud Biais, Maxime Duveau, Cédric Moris-Kelly, as well as the exhibition installers Villa Arson Art Center

Collections Management
· Simone Sentall et Lucía Viadero, Fundación TBA21 | Thyssen-Bornemisza Art Contemporary
· Myriam Thomas, Tara Ocean Foundation
· Haley Ha, Schmidt Ocean Institute

Educational Department
· Christelle Alin, Nina Campo as well as the mediation team Villa Arson Art Center

Communication
· Elodie Mariani assisted by Laura Farache, Villa Arson
· Ludovic Massenat, Fundación TBA21 | Thyssen-Bornemisza Art
· Bérengère Roche, Tara Ocean Foundation
· Kristen Kusek, Schmidt Ocean Institute

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· Alice Dusapin, Villa Arson Art Center

Graphic Design
· In the shade of a tree

Graphic Production
· Stamp

Translation and Subtitling of Audiovisual Works
· 36caracteres

villa-arson.fr

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