UNCHARTED

LOLA DAELS
OLAFUR ELIASSON
BARBARA SALOMÉ FELGENHAUER
STUDIO FOLDER
NOÉMIE GOUDAL
PIERRE MALPHETTES
STEFAN PETERS
NANNO SIMONIS
CAPUCINE VANDEBROUCK
GIUDITTA VENDRAME
ELS VIAENE
SEBASTIAAN WILLEMEN

Exhibition guide

19.09
– 06.12.2025

The Earth's crust is a surface in tension, fractured, shifting, layered over eons.
It is the site of slow collisions and dissolutions, of magma solidifying into rock, of glaciers grinding minerals into dust.
At the interface between deep time and present moment, it records movements unfolding across scales both immense and minuscule, indifferent to lines drawn or names given by maps tracing the edges of the known world.

uncharted explores these liminal spaces – frontiers not as fixed boundaries, but as zones of transition – unstable, dynamic, elusive. They unsettle the notion of fixed separations between topographic elements, revealing instead overlapping layers of time and matter shaped by transformation often imperceptible to the eye.

Through the works of twelve artists, the exhibition engages with the materiality of the Earth's surface and the complexity of its transformations. In an era where human activity leaves its mark into geological stratification, what still escapes our instruments, our language, our vision? What remains unseen, uncharted?

Rather than one fixed narrative, a mosaic of perspectives emerges, each tracing a different line through what resists fixation. A geology of uncertainty. A reading of the surface, through shifting contours.

Camilla Colombo
Curator of the exhibition

Lola Daels (BE)

***Paesina #2 (drillcores),* 2023 – 2024**
***Paesina (triangled version),* 2023 – 2024**

Belgian artist Lola Daels explores how globalisation shapes our relationship with objects, materials and the environment.
Paesina is a series of works, each composed of seven layers of coloured stones, evoking the many layers of the Earth. Resembling a block of sedimentary material, each layer does not come from a long natural process, but is made up of seven of the most problematic types of waste – oil, contaminated soil, paper and paper pulp, copper, aluminium, steel and construction materials. The artist plays on the name of a Tuscan stone, pietra paesina, known for its landscape-like patterns. In *Paesina*, the artist suggests that, just as sediments containing the remains of marine organisms petrify over millions of years, offering a glimpse into the past, so too do the traces of human activity build up on the Earth's crust, leaving a record of our presence.

By combining industrial materials and mineral forms, *Paesina* questions our understanding of time and geological strata: where does a layer begin? Where does it end? Who decides? These questions resonate with current debates in geosciences around the Anthropocene, a proposed geological epoch defined by humanity's impact on the Earth, which would follow the Holocene. In 2024, the *International Commission on Stratigraphy (ICS) rejected its adoption, arguing that human markers, although undeniable, remain too recent and too thin to constitute a universal milestone in 4.5 billion years of Earth's history. The work thus highlights the stark contrast between the slow pace of geology and the brutal speed of industrial change.**

*Stratigraphy: Branch of geoscience that studies the succession, composition and formation of rock layers (strata) to reconstruct the history of the Earth.
*International Commission on Stratigraphy (ICS): Scientific body of the International Union of Geological Sciences (IUGS) responsible for defining and formalising the geological time scale and its subdivisions.

Above: *Paesina #2 (drillcores),* 2023 – 2024 © photo: Whitehouse Gallery
Below: *Paesina (triangled version),* 2023 – 2024 © photo: Whitehouse Gallery

Lola Daels (BE)

***Ajka – Hungary, Red Mud Spill (2010),* 2023 – 2024**
***Silverton – USA Gold Mine Waste Spill (2015),* 2025**
***Geamăna – Romania, Submerged Mining Village (1978 – present),* 2025**

Pietra dura, developed in Italy during the Renaissance, is a technique that allows decorative patterns to be created by inlaying cut semi-precious stones assembled on a marble or hard stone base. Lola Daels uses this technique, in the past often used to depict idyllic views, to recreate images of landscapes scarred by industrial disasters linked to mining. Ajka (Hungary), Geamăna (Romania), Silverton (United States): three places where human activity has caused lasting pollution — toxic mudslides, submerged villages, contaminated soil. These compositions give form to fragile territories, both frozen and unstable, ravaged by human activity, confronting us with the realisation that contemporary geography bears within it the visible and invisible layers of our industries, our mistakes and our stories.

Environmental *geochemistry and *sedimentology** study these 'scars' left in the soil and water. Toxic spills, mining waste and heavy metals leave lasting marks on sediments and groundwater, altering the chemical composition of environments for decades or even centuries. Most will disappear on a geological timescale, but some traces could last for millions of years, such as the radioactive peaks of the 1960s or microplastic deposits, unless they are degraded by new forms of life. However, in the short term, human activity can cause lasting disruption to ecosystems, leading to the collapse of food chains and compromising our own survival. In this sense, the Gaia hypothesis reminds us that the Earth, viewed as a self-regulating system, will continue to evolve, with or without us.**

*Environmental geochemistry: The study of the chemical composition of the Earth and the processes that alter the distribution of elements in its rocks, soils and waters, as well as their effects on ecosystems and environments.
*Sedimentology: The science of particle deposits (sediments) and their evolution, used to reconstruct the geological history of aquatic or continental environments.

Ajka – Hungary, Red Mud Spill (2010)
The rupture of an aluminium tailings dam spilled more than a million cubic metres of toxic red mud, flooding villages and fields over an area of approximately 40 km², with the flow reaching the Danube.

Silverton – USA Gold Mine Waste Spill (2015)
A spill of 11 million litres of acid water laden with heavy metals from a gold mine devastated the ecosystem along more than 300 km of rivers, killing aquatic life and polluting the land.

Geamăna – Romania, Submerged Mining Village (1978 – present)
The valley was flooded by toxic sludge from a copper mine, submerging the village and leaving only the bell tower and a few roofs visible beneath 90 m of industrial waste.

Silverton – USA, Gold Mine Waste Spill (2015), 2025 © photo: Lola Daels

Olafur Eliasson (DK/IS)

***Earth Perspectives,* 2020**

Olafur Eliasson is a Danish-Icelandic artist whose work uses science and natural phenomena to question how we perceive the world.
Presented online on Earth Day 2020, *Earth Perspectives* proposes a simple yet radical gesture: to refocus the way we look at the planet. Nine satellite images show the Earth from unfamiliar angles, with the horizon vertical and the globe suspended, upending cartographic norms. By focusing on the centre of the video and then staring at a light background, the shapes and colours are imprinted on the retina briefly, creating a floating image that offers the viewer a new perspective. The work engages in a poetic and political reflection on how we see and represent the Earth.
Each site selected – the Great Barrier Reef, Greenland, Pripyat, Ecuador, etc. – evokes a climatic, geopolitical or symbolic issue, acting as a call to recognise the multiplicity of perspectives and possible narratives about our shared planet.

**Maps have never been neutral: they reflect cultural, political or scientific choices about what we decide to represent and how we orient it.
Why is the Northern Hemisphere always placed at the top? Why has the Greenwich meridian become the universal reference point? The *Mercator projection**, the best known and most widely used in the world, distorts distances and areas. It makes Greenland appear the same size as Africa, even though it is 14 to 15 times larger. For centuries, these representations have shaped a Western-centric view, often far removed from indigenous knowledge, local cosmologies or *lived territories**. With this gesture, Olafur Eliasson reminds us that the Earth, space and even maps themselves are cultural constructs that we can reimagine, individually or collectively.**

*Mercator projection: A cylindrical map projection developed by Gerardus Mercator in 1569 for maritime navigation because it preserves angles. Its adoption in education and mapping tools has greatly contributed to the spread of a Eurocentric representation of the world.
*Lived territory: A concept developed in human geography (Armand Frémont, 1976) referring to space as it is experienced and perceived by its inhabitants. It incorporates physical, symbolic and emotional dimensions and provides a framework for analysing the relationships between individuals, societies and spaces.

Above*: The Earth viewed over the Greenland ice sheet,* from the *Earth Perspectives* series, 2020 © Olafur Eliasson
Below: *The Earth viewed over Ecuador,* from the *Earth Perspectives* series, 2020 © Olafur Eliasson

The Earth viewed over the Great Barrier Reef, Australia
The world's biggest single structure made by living organisms, now dying due to human activity and mass coral bleaching.

The Earth viewed over the Mariana Trench, Pacific Ocean
The deepest trench on Earth, reaching almost 11,000 meters below sea level. Despite its extremity, both living organisms and human-made plastics have been found at its bottom.

The Earth viewed over Yakutia, in Siberia, Russia
Rising temperatures are thawing permafrost in this remote region, deforming landscapes, releasing large quantities of methane, and disrupting animal migration patterns.

The Earth viewed over the Ganges River, India
A sacred waterway granted the same legal rights as a human being by an Indian court in 2017.

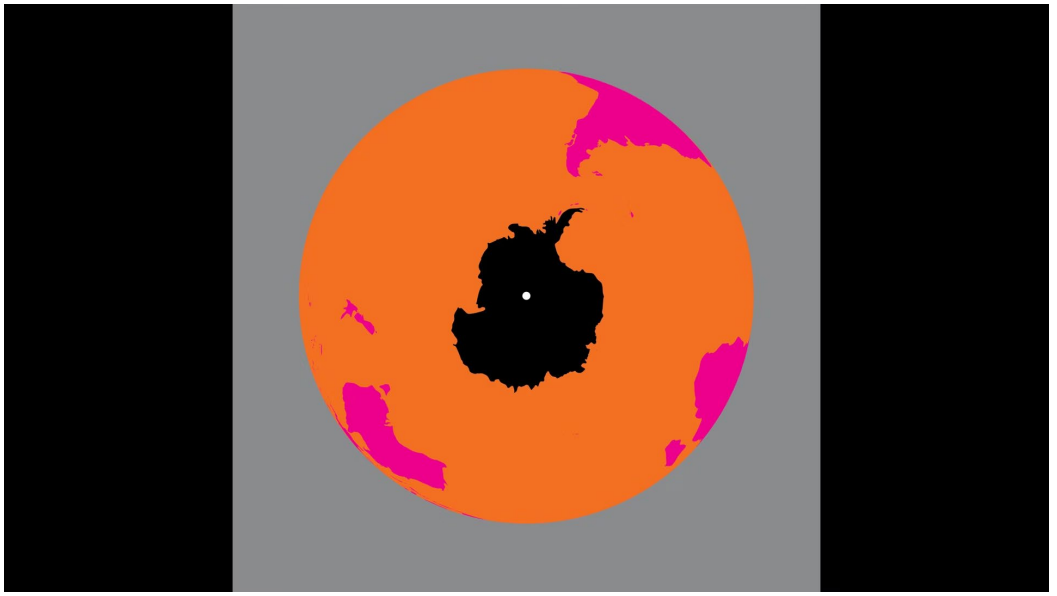
The Earth viewed over the Simien Mountains, Ethiopia
One of the rare places in Africa where snow falls regularly, this range is part of the Ethiopian Highlands, known as the "Roof of Africa".

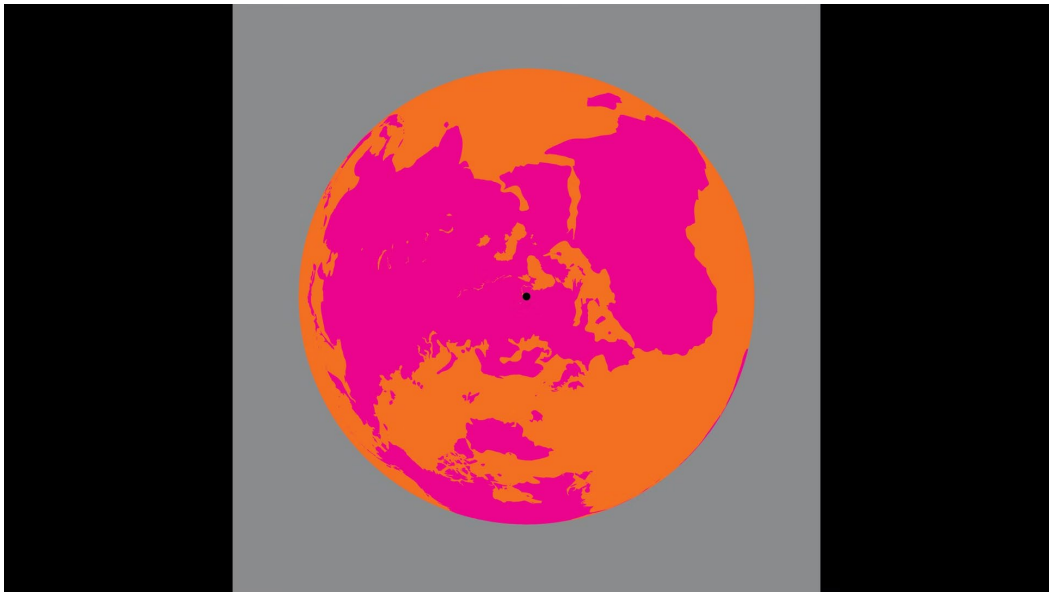
The Earth viewed over Chernobyl, in Pripyat, Ukraine
The site of the worst nuclear disaster in history, where rare and endangered species now thrive in the absence of humans.

The Earth viewed over the Greenland ice sheet
A continent-wide ice sheet produced by falling snow over millions of years, now melting at staggering rates due to human-induced climate change.

The Earth viewed over Ecuador
The first country in the world to recognize Rights of Nature in their Constitution, ratified in 2008. Nature has the *"right to exist, persist, maintain and regenerate its vital cycles"*.

The Earth viewed over the South Pole
The pole is at the heart of the virtually uninhabited continent of Antarctica, a vital ice-covered wildlife haven that is under threat from rapid warming and ice loss.





Above: *The Earth viewed over the South Pole,* from the *Earth Perspectives* series, 2020 © Olafur Eliasson
Below: *The Earth viewed over Chernobyl, in Pripyat, Ukraine,* from the *Earth Perspectives* series, 2020 © Olafur Eliasson

What escapes us

Huge invisible entities roam the world. They appear in flashes – a melting glacier, an unexpected storm, unseasonal heat in November – then disappear again, leaving behind an unsettling sense of invisible vastness. These traces reveal the existence of forces beyond our comprehension, colossal entities of which we perceive only scattered fragments.

Philosopher Timothy Morton calls these elusive giants hyperobjects. Global warming, microplastics, capitalism: phenomena of such immense scale that no single gaze can ever grasp them in their entirety. They are defined by their viscosity – they cling to everything they touch – their non-locality – impossible to pin down to a specific place – and their dizzying temporality, which infinitely exceeds our own.

These entities emerge from the interaction of material and conceptual objects. They manifest intermittently, appearing and disappearing according to time scales that elude our immediate understanding. Faced with their shifting immensity, our usual distinctions – nature and culture, local and global, visible and invisible – dissolve, revealing their arbitrary nature.

Thus the unexplored territories of our age take shape: no longer the blank lands at the edges of ancient maps, but those shadowy areas where our instruments falter and our concepts crack. Physical and mental spaces that resist domestication, revealing what remains beyond our control. In this elusive geography, uncertainty courses through us.

Barbara Salomé Felgenhauer (BE)

***Milieu,* from the *Terrapolis* series, 2022**
***Lichen,* from the *Terrapolis* series, 2022**
***Mondes en formation,* from the *Terrapolis* series, 2025**

Barbara Salomé Felgenhauer is a multidisciplinary artist based in Brussels. Her practice explores the emancipatory powers of storytelling, language and the imagination.
Terrapolis is a speculative fiction combining film, photography, sculpture and performance. The project is inspired by a term coined by philosopher Donna Haraway, which combines terra, the Earth, and polis, the city as a physical entity, to imagine new narratives. Attuned to earthly things – strata, materials, temporalities – *Terrapolis* questions the boundaries of anthropocentrism and the "fiction of reality", the way in which our perception of reality is always shaped by stories and representations. The project connects the scales and species observed with the narratives and devices that frame them, sketching out new ways of being alive where fiction, myth, science and the senses intertwine to open up new forms of attention and cohabitation.

Beneath the dark crusts of volcanic landscapes, life is reborn, quietly but persistently. Among the first organisms to colonise cooled lava fields, lichens play a key role: by attaching themselves to rocks, they begin a slow process of *bioalteration, gradually transforming stone into soil. This primary ecological succession, observed in *calderas** and recent lava flows, intrigues stratigraphers and ecologists alike. What do these living layers reveal about the history of a volcano, the climate, matter, and the colonisation of the first organisms on Earth? Long focused on reconstructing past eruptions, the study of volcanic layers, now enriched by the analysis of lichens as bioindicators, offers a joint interpretation of the geological and environmental dynamics at work.**

*Bioalteration: The gradual transformation of rocks by living organisms (lichens, bacteria, roots, etc.), which alter their structure and chemical composition.
*Caldera: A vast circular depression formed when the summit of a volcano collapses after a violent eruption. It can measure several kilometres in diameter.

Above: *Lichen,* from the *Terrapolis* series, 2022 © photo: Barbara Salomé Felgenhauer
Below: *Mondes en formation,* from the *Terrapolis* series, 2022 © photo: Barbara Salomé Felgenhauer

Studio Folder (IT)

***Italian Limes,* 2014 – 2018**

Studio Folder is an Italian design and research studio that combines visual culture, cartography, information design and digital tools.
Italian Limes is a research project and installation that explores the most remote Alpine regions, where national borders drift with the glaciers.
The project studied the effects of climate change on the retreat of ice caps and the resulting changes to the watershed that defines the national territories of Italy, Austria, Switzerland and France.
Conducted between 2014 and 2018, *Italian Limes* combines archival research, topographic surveys and field expeditions equipped with open-source *GNSS sensors** and autonomous measuring units deployed at altitudes of over 3,300 metres. These devices recorded micro-movements of ice and rock, transmitting the data to visualisation systems that translated the slow geomorphological drift into maps and animations.
The project presents a meeting point between *geodetic** practice, cartographic conventions and political procedures, showing how so-called *natural borders** depend on measurement techniques, legal standards and representational choices. By crystallising data sets, prototypes and open-access publications, the project shows that no border is truly fixed: in a Europe where free movement coexists with the occasional reassertion of controls and barriers, state borders remain fragile and negotiable.

These issues are now at the heart of interdisciplinary research in *geodesy, glaciology and international law. Scientists use *GNSS sensors**, satellite readings and digital modelling to track these changes, but are still struggling to predict their full impact. In this context, the map – far from being a simple representation tool – becomes an unstable, evolving object at the crossroads of knowledge systems and power relations.**

*Geodesy: The science of measuring the shape of the Earth and the deformations of its surface. It is used to track phenomena such as glacier melt, sea level rise and ground displacement, and to update maps and borders.
*Natural border: The boundary between two territories based on a feature of the landscape, such as a river, mountain or ridge line. It gives the illusion of an 'obvious' line dictated by geography, but remains a political construct: it is human societies that choose to turn a natural feature into a border.
*GNSS sensor (Global Navigation Satellite System): A geolocation device that uses satellite signals, such as those from GPS, to locate and track a point on the Earth's surface in real time, with centimetre accuracy.

Italian Limes, 2014 – 2018 © photos: la Biennale di Venezia (2014), Studio Folder

Noémie Goudal (FR)

***Inhale, Exhale*, 2021**

Noémie Goudal is a French artist who explores the relationship between ecology and anthropology through illusionist landscape scenes captured in photography and video.
Rooted in *deep time**, *paleoclimatology** and relational geographies, *Inhale, Exhale* places the viewer on the edge of a swamp surrounded by dense vegetation. Sections of the set, operated by a system of ropes and pulleys, rise and then plunge back into stagnant water. Filmed in a fixed shot, the piece gradually reveals layers of tropical flora that interweave memories and geo-histories. By evoking Alfred Wegener's theory of continental drift formulated in 1912, the work creates a dialogue between perpetual motion and fluctuations in sea level: the waterline becomes a threshold between the visible and the hidden, and the off-screen space becomes fertile ground for the imagination.

The landscapes we inhabit are the result of a slow history, shaped by tectonic plate movements and climatic variations. *Paleoclimatology** **and geology have shown that, around 335 million years ago, all the continents formed Pangaea. Its fragmentation began around 175 million years ago and continued for over 100 million years. Among the clues to this drift are identical fossils of animal and plant species on continents now separated by oceans.**
These timescales illustrate the concept of *deep time, the immensity of geological timescales which, almost inconceivable on a human scale, challenge our historical reference points and our perception of time.**

*Deep time: A geological concept that refers to the vast timescales of Earth's history (several hundred million years), far beyond the human scale. It challenges our perception of time, which is often limited to recent historical or biological reference points.
*Paleoclimatology: The science that studies past climates using fossil, sedimentary or chemical evidence (pollen, ice cores, isotopes, etc.) to better understand the evolution of the Earth's climate.

Inhale, Exhale, 2021, production: Le Grand Café - centre d'art contemporain © photo: courtesy of the artist

Pierre Malphettes (FR)

***Volcans, fleuves et deltas,* 2019**

Pierre Malphettes is a French visual artist whose work explores impermanence and natural phenomena.
Volcans, fleuves et deltas condenses geological processes such as erosion, flow and sedimentation on a small scale. Coloured marble dust, carried by water, alternately draws and erases craters, streams and springs, giving rise to miniature landscapes in constant transformation. Guided by observation but leaving some room for chance, the artist creates an unstable and ever-shifting natural world. By playing with the time scale of these phenomena, the work accelerates them to a pace that becomes visible to the human eye, revealing by analogy the slow-moving dynamics that unfold over geological time.

In geological reality, landforms are created and eroded over vast cycles of erosion and deposition. When water slows down, it deposits sediments that gradually form deltas and alluvial plains; when it accelerates, it carves, dissolves and transports material. These movements sculpt landscapes, but can also influence the Earth's deeper layers. In the past, some volcanic eruptions contributed to ice melt, intensifying erosion. Today, scientists are also observing the opposite: glacial melt is accelerating erosion and lightening the Earth's crust, potentially triggering renewed volcanic activity, particularly in Iceland. These two effects form a positive feedback loop: each phenomenon reinforces the other. This constant back-and-forth between the surface and the subsurface drives slow *morphogenesis, revealing the still poorly understood interconnections between climate, *geodynamics** and landscape evolution.**

*Morphogenesis: All the phenomena that determine the formation and evolution of the Earth's relief.
*Geodynamics: The study of the processes and forces that shape the Earth's evolution, both on the surface and at depth. It includes the study of movements and deformations affecting the Earth, whether related to internal forces (volcanism, earthquakes, plate tectonics) or external forces (erosion, climate).

Volcans, fleuves et deltas, 2019 © photo: Pierre Malphettes, ADAGP

Interior geology

Our senses are calibrated to the human scale – the length of a lifetime, the reach of a glance, the rhythm of the seasons. But when the Earth's crust bears witness to its millennial transformations, our perceptions are overwhelmed, our bearings falter and our psyche reveals its uncharted areas.

This gap between our perceptive abilities and planetary realities creates a particular kind of vertigo. Confronted with geological scales, the human mind oscillates between fascination and disorientation. The strata of deep time generate new emotional configurations.

The geological sublime mingles awe and admiration: the beauty of a wild landscape, the power of a volcano, the infinity of an ocean. These experiences expose our inability to grasp geological dynamics in their entirety.

Yet these spaces are now undergoing brutal changes: glaciers are retreating, ecosystems are migrating, forests are disappearing. Solastalgia – homesickness without a home – arises from this metamorphosis, when our familiar environment becomes alien to us. These transformations generate eco-anxiety in the face of diffuse threats, eco-anger at collective inaction, or guilt tied to our impacts, the scale of which exceeds our capacity to act.

These emotions reflect our vulnerability as much as our attachment to the planet. They reveal an essential truth: Earth's upheavals are not merely quantifiable phenomena. They inhabit our bodies and minds, revealing how deeply our inner balance depends on these surfaces in tension, these liminal zones that resist being fixed.

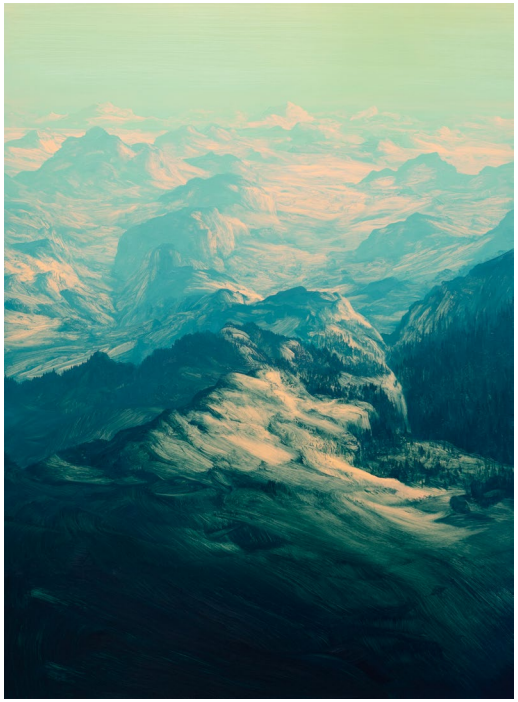
Stefan Peters (BE)

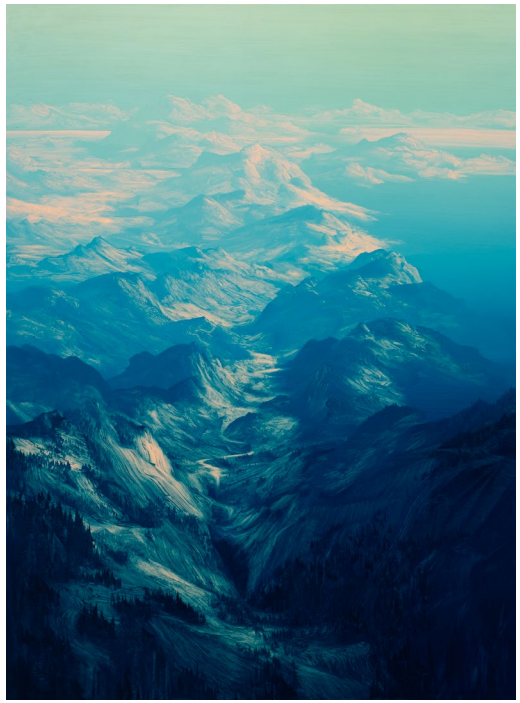
***Vistas* series, 2024**

Stefan Peters is a Belgian artist who explores the mechanisms of representation between reality and image through painting, animation and installation.
The *Vistas* series presents imaginary landscapes inspired by aerial views, evoking territories without a precise location, where the eye is drawn into uncertain depths. Their apparent realistic dimension quickly gives way to the impression of a mental or projected world, both familiar and elusive. These images depict vast, wild, perhaps dreamlike spaces, conveying a sense of the sublime. Here, Peters does not seek to represent nature, but to explore the very possibilities of the medium: the pictorial material — brushed, smoothed, stretched — becomes a subject in itself, inviting a perceptive and contemplative experience.

This sense of vertigo finds a powerful echo in contemporary science. Far from being a mere aesthetic category, the sublime becomes a shared experience across disciplines, encountered by artists, researchers and thinkers alike. In astrophysics, climate science and evolutionary biology, scientists grapple with subjects that transcend established frameworks: the immensity of the cosmos, the complexity of living systems, climate chaos.
Such encounters sometimes give rise to a *liminal experience: a moment of turmoil in which knowledge wavers, perceptions become blurred, and transformation becomes possible. The sublime then emerges as a response to this confrontation: a blend of unease and wonder that can spark intuition, guide research hypotheses, influence ethical choices or nurture a form of *epistemic humility** in the face of the unknown.**

*Liminal experience: A transitional state between two modes of perception or thought, which destabilises familiar reference points and opens up a space of uncertainty, ripe for transformation.
*Epistemic humility: An attitude that involves recognising the limits of one's knowledge and remaining open to questioning, even in areas where one is an expert.





Left: *Untitled,* from the *Vistas* series, 2024 © photo: Stefan Peters
Right: *Untitled,* from the *Vistas* series, 2024 © photo: Stefan Peters

Nanno Simonis (NL)

***To Water Is to Be,* 2019**

Nanno Simonis is a Dutch visual and sound artist exploring perception, reality and energy through sound, image and installation.
To Water Is to Be stages the human act of containing water, a vital and unpredictable element, with a striking, almost violent intensity. The artist captures this tension within glass walls, where water twists, distorts and seems to stage its own captivity. The work plays on this contradiction: a dynamic and untameable element held back by a controlled and artificial structure, whose aesthetics evoke rigidity and sterility. Through this caging, the work exposes the human desire to control and shape nature, to imprison the uncontrollable, to tame what was meant to remain wild.

The movement of water in the oceans does not follow a random pattern: it follows a vast global loop called thermohaline circulation, or the 'ocean conveyor belt'. Driven by differences in water temperature (thermo) and salinity (haline), it redistributes heat, nutrients and carbon across the planet. In the North Atlantic, cold, salty water sinks into the abyss before re-emerging, sometimes centuries later, at other latitudes. Today, *physical oceanographers are observing a slowdown in this process: the rapid melting of glaciers and increased rainfall, particularly in Greenland, are injecting large volumes of fresh water into the ocean, reducing its salinity and disrupting the sinking of deep currents. The consequences, which are still not fully understood, could disrupt climate regulation, with knock-on effects on monsoon patterns, increased tropical storms, cooling in north-western Europe and the stability of *ice caps**.**

*Physical oceanography: Branch of marine science that studies the physical properties and movements of the oceans (currents, waves, tides, salinity, temperature) and their influence on climate, weather and ecosystems. It also analyses the interactions between the ocean, atmosphere and cryosphere.
*Ice cap: A vast expanse of continental ice (<50,000 km²) generally located in polar regions. Due to their size and high albedo (ability to reflect sunlight), they play a key role in regulating the Earth's climate.

To Water Is to Be, 2019 © photo: Studio Nanno Simonis

Capucine Vandebrouck (FR)

***NaCl 2,* 2025**

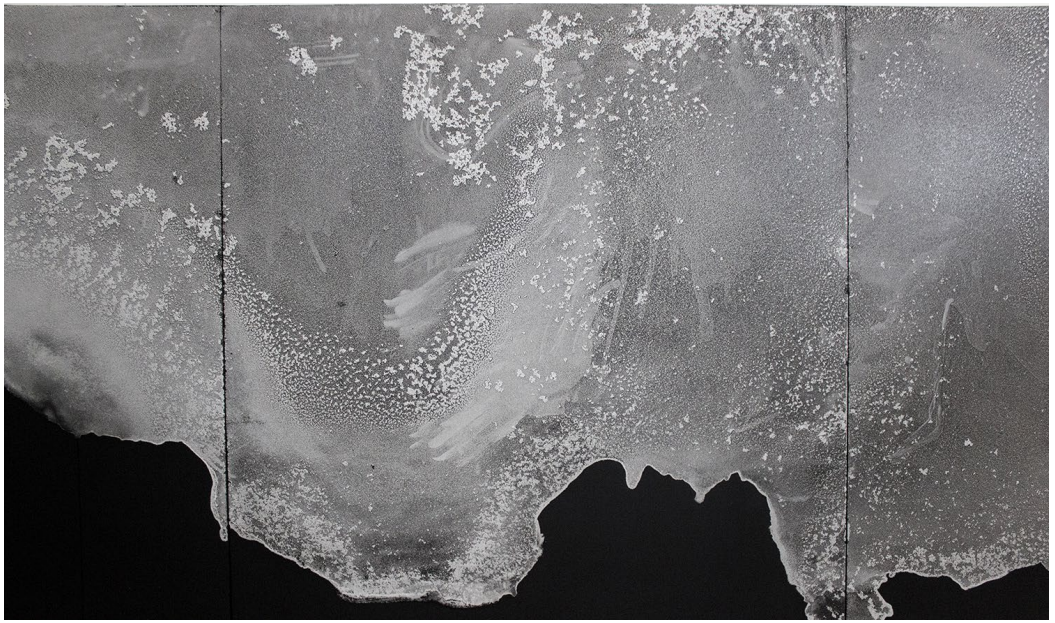
Capucine Vandebrouck is a French sculptor whose empirical practice explores the instability of matter and the thresholds of spatial perception. A white material has slowly settled on the black surface of five panels. These are salt crystals, formed by evaporation in a slow, delicate and unstable process orchestrated by the artist. *NaCl 2* forms an abstract landscape, where the material traces its own patterns, shaped by time and humidity. A fragile but tenacious frieze, the work evokes the border as a porous, transitional zone in constant transformation. Salt, often associated with marine currents, becomes here the vector of a world in formation – between satellite imagery and meticulous sculpture, between geography and chemistry.

NaCl, sodium chloride or table salt, becomes the thread running through a reflection on matter and its metamorphoses. The evaporation of a sea can leave behind crystalline deposits that preserve the memory of ancient oceans or to layers of *evaporite rocks forming new landforms. The *crystallisation** of salt is one example of these slow changes that shape landscapes and ecosystems over time. These processes contribute to global *biogeochemical cycles**, which redistribute chemical elements between the biosphere (living organisms), lithosphere (rocks), atmosphere (air) and hydrosphere (water).**

*Evaporite rocks: Sedimentary rocks formed when the evaporation of a body of salt water causes minerals (e.g. gypsum, halite) to be deposited.

*Crystallisation: The transition of a liquid or gaseous substance into an organised solid (crystal), which can naturally form minerals, salts or rocks from saturated solutions or cooled magma.

*Biogeochemistry: The study of the transfer cycles of chemical elements (e.g. carbon, nitrogen, phosphorus) between non-living environments (rocks, water, air, etc.) and living organisms, as well as the biological, physical and geological processes that regulate them.



NaCl 1, 2015 © photo: Capucine Vandebrouck

Systemic thinking

The Earth forms an indivisible system, one which recognises neither maps nor borders. Tropical forests and polar ice caps, deep oceans and the atmosphere – each element contributes to a fragile balance where the destruction of one part threatens the whole. The green lungs of the Amazon regulate the global climate, ocean currents redistribute heat, and Siberian soils store carbon whose release would disrupt the entire planet.

This vital interdependence reveals the impossibility of fragmenting what is, in essence, a whole. Yet our societies persist in a logic of territorial exploitation that outpaces our understanding of these essential connections. We carve up, extract and pollute as if each territory were isolated, as if the consequences could be contained.

Faced with this systemic reality, our legal instruments and governance models are proving inadequate. How can we regulate cycles that transcend all borders? How can we account for destruction whose effects spread across the entire planet? Tensions around water, climate migration and the race to exploit the poles are all evidence of this collision between extractive logic and ecological realities.

These challenges call for a radical transformation: to stop conceiving of the planet as a sum of territories to be exploited, and instead as a web of relationships where every local act is part of global cycles. For the Earth will continue to undergo metamorphoses long after we are gone. From this geological perspective, our civilisations may be just one stratum among many, a silent trace in the layers of time and matter, part of what will forever remain uncharted.

Giuditta Vendrame (IT)

Planisfero Politico (2017)
Map (2019)
Maps (2019)

Giuditta Vendrame, an Italian artist, uses a multidisciplinary and research-based practice to question contemporary socio-political structures. Borders are physical and legal constructs designed to delineate territories. They are usually drawn on solid, stable land. But in unstable environments – marine, liquid, moving – they reveal their transitory nature. The artist imagines territories where oceans, seas, rivers and lakes cease to be topographical dividers and become connecting elements. A new world order is emerging: less land-centred, less bounded, more fluid. By covering the land with fragments of the sea taken from old maps, these works sketch out alternative images of the world, where water becomes a tool for *deterritorialisation** and dematerialisation.

Like mountains – immutable on a human scale, yet fleeting on a geological scale – *pelagic and coastal environments remind us how much maps remain a temporary simplification of a changing reality. *Palaeogeography** traces these changes: drifting continents, vanished oceans, submerged coastlines. In the 1950s, oceanographer Marie Tharp produced the first map of the ocean floor, transforming our understanding of plate tectonics. But although the ocean covers more than 70% of the Earth's surface, only 20% of its depths have been accurately mapped. We therefore know more about the surface of Mars than we do about our own abyssal zones. Yet exploring them is a major challenge, both scientifically and democratically, in the face of climate change and tensions over marine resources.**

*Deterritorialisation: A concept from critical geography, referring to the loss or questioning of links between a territory and a power, a population or a culture. In the context of the oceans, it suggests the absence of fixed borders and transnational movements.

*Pelagic: From the Greek pelagos ('open sea'), this term refers to the open ocean, far from the coast and the seabed. It describes both the areas of the water column, from the depths to the surface, and the species that live there.

*Palaeogeography: A branch of geoscience that reconstructs the past geography of the Earth at different geological epochs. It traces the evolution of the oceans, continents and landforms, revealing the movements of tectonic plates and the transformations of natural environments over time.

Map, 2019 © photo: Giuditta Vendrame

Els Viaene (BE)

***Vibrant Matter,* 2016**

Els Viaene is a Belgian artist who creates immersive works based on field recordings, translating landscapes into sound experiences.
Vibrant Matter is a kinetic and sound sculpture born out of a field trip to Iceland. Inspired by the visual and sonic power of these contrasting landscapes — frozen in time yet constantly changing — the work explores the links between sound, matter, landscape and the imagination. A simple sheet of paper, mechanically animated, becomes a delicate metaphor: its amplified rustling recalls the slow metamorphosis of a glacier. Beneath the apparent stillness, Viaene reveals a world in tension, traversed by seismic impulses. *Vibrant Matter* gives form and rhythm to imperceptible geological processes, making these hidden tremors audible and visible.

Today, glaciologists record the sounds of glaciers: cracks, rumblings, vibrations, micro-explosions. Caused by the release of air bubbles, water circulation, internal fractures or *cryoseisms, these acoustic signals reveal the internal dynamics of ice masses, which have long remained unheard. Recent studies show that *calving** produces the most powerful underwater sounds in the Arctic, audible hundreds of kilometres away. Acoustics is thus becoming a valuable tool for monitoring melting, even in the most isolated areas. Beneath the thick ice, a sound memory is gradually being revealed, offering new ways to understand how glaciers evolve, anticipate their instability and better understand the upheavals that are reshaping the planet's equilibrium.**

*Cryoseism (or icequake): A seismic phenomenon caused by sudden ruptures or movements within a glacier.

*Calving: The sudden detachment of a block of ice from the edge of a glacier or ice shelf, forming an iceberg.

Vibrant Matter, 2016 © photo: Els Viaene

Lola Daels & Sebastiaan Willemen (BE)

***Lost Landscapes – Vesdre,* from the *Stuwland* project, 2022**
***Lost Landscapes – Ry de Rome,* from the *Stuwland* project, 2022**
***Het gestuwde land,* from the *Stuwland* project, 2025**

Lola Daels and Sebastiaan Willemen are a visual artist and an architect-urban planner, respectively. Their joint projects combine research, landscape and infrastructure, questioning the ecological, social and sensory transformations of territories.
In *Stuwland*, they examine the impact of dams and artificial lakes in Belgium. These structures, expressions of humanity's desire to master and control nature, profoundly transform environments, geographies and ways of life. An imposing suspended flag displays part of the map of Belgian dams that they have created. Two lenticular photographs each show a dam and the valley it replaced, revealing submerged valleys, erased rivers and disrupted habitats. This research project highlights the tensions between artifice and nature, surface and depth, and invites us to conceive of the landscape as a territory in flux, steeped in both human and ecological history.

Sculptures of the Anthropocene, dams embody the illusion of humanity's lasting domination over nature. For half a century, their proliferation – like that of canals and locks – has obstructed more than half of the world's major rivers, disrupting ancient geological processes and fragile ecological balances. The effects are already visible: erosion, droughts and floods exacerbated by the drainage of wetlands – true natural sponges – converted into urbanised areas vulnerable to flooding, as dramatically highlighted by the events of 2021 in Belgium. At the crossroads of *hydrology, *geomorphology** and *environmental geosciences**, these impacts are reshaping territories, fragmenting habitats, interrupting sediment flows, displacing water tables and creating new microclimates, reminding us that human interventions are reconfiguring natural balances at the cost of delayed upheavals that are difficult to anticipate.**

*Hydrology: The science that studies the water cycle, its distribution and movements on and below the Earth's surface, as well as its interactions with natural and human-shaped environments.
*Geomorphology: The geoscience discipline that analyses landforms and the processes (natural or human) that shape them, across all timescales.
*Environmental geosciences: An interdisciplinary field of Earth sciences that studies the interactions between geological, hydrological, climatic and biological processes and their impact on the environment and societies.

Lost Landscapes - Vesder, from the *Stuwland* project, 2022 © photo: Sebastiaan Willemen & Lola Daels

Around the exhibition

Guided tours for groups

By mediators

Upon request

Standing guides

Exhibition mediators

Every Saturday
15:00 → 18:00

Guided tours

By curator Camilla Colombo (Ohme)
+ guest scientists

Sat. 4.10 & 8.11
15:00 → 16:30

Écologies spéculatives

Fen & Zorg
Workshop: collecting, collaging & assembling

Sat. 27.09 (all audiences – ages 12+)
Sat. 11.10 (for children ages 7–12)
14:00 → 17:00

Art, écologie et transformations : repenser notre lien au vivant

Nathalie Blanc
Lecture

Wed. 01.10
18:30 → 20:00

The River and The Devil

Paula Almirón
Performance + Encounter (extra muros)

Thur. 16.10
19:00 → 21:00

Museum Night Fever

A volcanic night with visual and sonic echoes
Audiovisual performance + DJ sets

Sat. 18.10
19:00 → 01:00

D’autres sensibles. Que nous dit l’Histoire environnementale ?

Grégory Quenet
Encounter

Wed. 29.10
18:30 → 20:00

Au-delà de la carte — Écouter, mesurer et imaginer l’inexploré

Roundtable with artist Els Viaene and researchers from the Glaciology Laboratory (ULB)
In collaboration with Laser Talks Brussels

Wed. 26.11
18:30 → 20:00

Podcast

Arts et sciences : voies partagées

Conversation with Lisa Ardoin, glaciologist, and Corentin Caudron, volcanologist, hosted by Raoul Sommeillier and Camilla Colombo from Ohme.

iselp.be/podcasts

Info, rates & reservations: iselp.be – accueil@iselp.be

Ohme

Ohme is a research and curatorial platform operating at the intersection of art and science. Since its founding in 2017, it has been dedicated to exploring new ways of sharing knowledge through collaborative, cross-disciplinary methods. By creating spaces for exchange between artists, scientists, researchers, and students, Ohme supports experimental and educational projects that challenge traditional boundaries and encourage an open dialogue between different forms of understanding.

ohme.be

Credits

Earth Perspectives **- Olafur Eliasson**
Courtesy of the artist and Serpentine Galleries

Italian Limes **– Studio Folder**
Authors
Research and design direction: Studio Folder (Marco Ferrari, Elisa Pasqual, Alessandro Busi, Aaron Gilletti, Claudia Mainardi)
Photography: Delfino Sisto Legnani
Interaction design and engineering: Pietro Leoni
Design and manufacturing: Alessandro Mason
Data processing and web development: Angelo Semeraro
General coordination: Livia Shamir
Scientific Coordination
Prof. Aldino Bondesan, Comitato Glaciologico Italiano, Dipartimento di Geoscienze, Università di Padova, Prof. Valter Maggi, Comitato Glaciologico Italiano, EuroCold Lab, Dipartimento di Scienze della Terra, University of Milano–Bicocca
Geophysical Surveying
Prof. Roberto Francese, Dipartimento di Fisica e Scienze della Terra, Università di Parma, Massimo Giorgi, Stefano Picotti, Istituto Nazionale di Oceanografia e di Geofisica Sperimentale, Trieste
Technical advice
Engineer: Claudio Indellicati
Data handling support Studio Calibro (Matteo Azzi, Giorgio Uboldi)
Drone Footage Nicolò Cunico
Patronage Provincia Autonoma Bolzano Alto Adige

Inhale, Exhale **– Noémie Goudal**
Artist: Noémie Goudal
Director of Photography: Julien Malichier
Chief Decorator: Jules Guy
Executive Producer: Clara Labrousse
Digital Operator: Alexis Allemand
Machinist: Augustin de Vaumas
Set Assistants: Lou Villapadernia & Kevin Cardesa
Stage Manager: Pauline Thoër
Technical advisors: Pierre-Yves Morizur & Hervé Rousseau
Production: Amélie Évrard / Le Grand Café
Postproduction: Siguröur Hallmar Magnusson
Sound Design: Amaury Arboun
Special thanks to: Cécile Laporte, Nicolas Faucheux, Heni Sghaier & Sophie Legrandjacques

To Water Is to Be **– Nanno Simonis**
Commissioned by Z33, House for Contemporary Art,Design & Architecture

NaCl 2 **– Capucine Vandebrouck**
This artwork has been produced with the support of Ohme

Vibrant Matter **– Els Viaene**
Concept and realisation: Els Viaene
Electronics and programming: Jan Wante
Sound advice: Johan Vandermaelen, Carsten Stabenow
This artwork is a production by Werktank
Collaboration: KIKK
With the support of the Flemish authorities and CultuurCulture

Het gestuwde land **from the** ***Stuwland*** **project – Sebastiaan Willemen & Lola Daels**
This installation has been produced with the support of Ohme

Text proofreading:

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Share your photos of the expo!
#unchartedexpo,
@iselp_brussels & **@ohme_projects**

OHME

This exhibition is the result of an invitation to Ohme,
a platform for curation and research
bridging art and science.

www.iselp.be **iselp.brussels** **iselp_brussels** **soundcloud.com/iselp**

Partners: ISELP, Université Libre de Bruxelles, Vrije Universiteit Brussel.
With the support of: Fédération Wallonie-Bruxelles, Innoviris, Commission communautaire française, Brussels-Capital Region, National Lottery and its players, City of Brussels, Embassy of France in Belgium, Embassy of the Kingdom of the Netherlands in Belgium.
Cover: *Map* (detail), 2019 © Giuditta Vendrame

Exhibition from tuesday to saturday from 11am to 6pm
Free entry
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